



**NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY  
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

**AN EVALUATION OF READING PASSAGES IN CUTTING EDGE  
PRE-INTERMEDIATE COURSEBOOK  
FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF  
PREPARATORY  
SCHOOL STUDENTS**

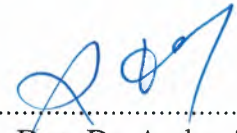
**M. A. THESIS**

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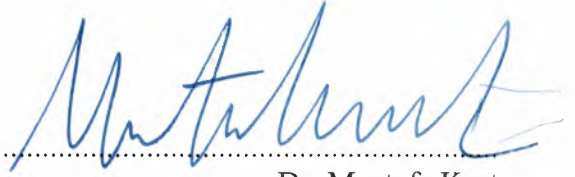
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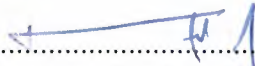
We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by Zalihe Aksular titled “An Evaluation of Reading Passages in Cutting Edge Pre-Intermediate Coursebook from the Perspectives of Preparatory School Students” and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.



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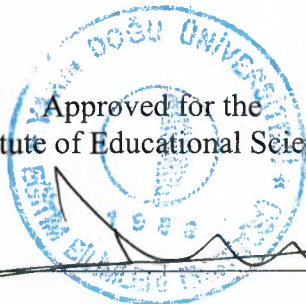


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## ÖZET

Bu tezin amacı “Cutting Edge Pre-intermediate” ders kitabındaki okuma parçalarının Yakın Doğu Üniversitesi hazırlık okulu öğrencilerinin bakış açısıyla değerlendirilmesidir.

Bu çalışmanın birinci bölümünün amacı çalışmanın geçmişini, problemi, amacını ve kapsamını vermektir. İkinci bölüm dil eğitiminin tarihçesi ile başlar, dil öğretimi metotları ve bunların okuma becerisine verdikleri önem ile devam eder ve okumanın öğretimini detaylı olarak anlatır. Üçüncü bölüm elde edilen bilginin analiz yöntemini, metodunu ve elde edilme yöntemini içermektedir. Dördüncü bölümde anket sonuçlarının analizi ve sonuçları tartışılmıştır. Beşinci bölümde “Cutting Edge” kitabından alınan bir parçanın analizi yapılmış ve okumanın öğretiminde kullanılabilecek soru çeşitleri örnek bir parça ile birlikte sunulmuştur. Altıncı ve son bölümde ise çalışmanın kısa bir özeti ve öneriler bulunmaktadır.

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to analyze and evaluate the reading passages of “Pre-intermediate Cutting Edge” which is being used at prep-classes of Near East University from the students’ point of view.

The purpose of the first chapter is to explain the background to the study, the problem, the aim and the scope of the study. The second chapter “Review of Literature” begins with a brief History of Language teaching and the place of reading in the major approaches and methods. Moreover, teaching reading is presented in detail. Chapter three includes the method and data collection and procedures of data analysis. In chapter four, the analysis and evaluation of the questionnaire results are discussed. In chapter five a reading text taken from the course book has been analyzed and a sample reading passage with some question types have been presented as a suggestion for the teaching purpose. The conclusion chapter gives a brief summary of the study and some suggestions for teaching reading.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 Background of the Study

It is known that English has been accepted as an international language so the desire to learn English is increasing day by day. Especially, to read and write in English about one's own field of study is essential. You have to know English if you want to find a good job and to be successful in your future career.

The purpose of learning a foreign language differs from one person to another. In North Cyprus starting from primary schools, colleges, the state secondary and High schools and the Preparatory schools of the universities are trying to teach English. This is also true for the Near East University Preparatory school.

Being an English medium university, the Near East University requires the enrolling students to sit for a proficiency test in order to determine their level of English. Those who satisfy the requirements are sent to their departments and those who are found unsuccessful are expected to study in Prep-school for one term or two.

The course books being taught are Cutting Edge series written by Sarah Cunningham and Peter Moor, (a series of three books; elementary, pre-intermediate and intermediate) which follow a multi-layered syllabus, incorporating systematic work on listening, speaking, **reading** and writing.

The students are expected to complete a 15 weeks program (a semester), regardless of the level they are at (Prep-school first term or prep-school second term)

and move to the upper level provided if they are successful in the exams. If they fail to achieve this, they are asked to continue at their existing level.

Students are provided with twenty hours of instruction a week. They receive four to six hours of instruction a day. Each class has two teachers. One of the teachers is responsible for eighteen hours of instruction including the course book and the other for two hours just for speaking.

According to the syllabus, the elementary level course book and the pre-intermediate level course book are supposed to be completed in the first term of the year and the intermediate level course book are supposed to be completed for the second term of the year.

In this study, the pre-intermediate Cutting Edge coursebook has been taken into consideration in terms of **reading** passages.

In the teacher book (2001:5), “**Reading**” is stated as follows;

There is a wide range of **reading** materials in the students’ book: both short extracts to contextualize new language (often stories or quizzes); and more extensive **reading** texts, often in the form of newspaper articles. As well as comprehension checks, **reading** exercises include vocabulary work and discussion.

**Reading** text can be used for several different purposes and this is reflected in course books:

- Developing **reading** skills and strategies.
- Presenting / recycling grammar items.
- Extending vocabulary.
- Providing models for writing.

- Giving information of interest to students.
- Stimulating oral work.

As can be seen from the above information taken from the teacher book, **reading** takes place in the book but usually appear as a source for listening and speaking activities and to present and recycle grammar items.

### 1.1 Problem

Especially for the university students in prep-schools who want to be successful in their (departments) subjects, **reading** skill is very important. It does not mean that the other skills are unnecessary but **reading** is the most important skill in students' future lives. If students want to continue with their further education, no other language skill is more important than **reading** for building up learner's linguistic competence, general knowledge and cross-cultural understanding.

Nowadays, many methodologists in ELT field claim that **reading** is the most important language skill, particularly, in cases where students have to read English material for their own specialist subject but have no chance to hear and speak the foreign language outside the classroom

Allen and Valette (1977:249) support this view with the following words. 'For many students, **reading** is the one skill they may occasionally use when they have left the classroom. It is also the skill that is retained the longest. **Reading** is more than just assigning foreign language sounds to the written words; it requires the comprehension of what is written.'

I have been teaching in Prep school at Near East University for thirteen years. During this time, I have witnessed that our students suffer from the same problem

mentioned above. That is to say, they graduate from school without acquiring the **reading** skills so as to use it in their later studies.

In order to make the problem clear, I have given a questionnaire to the students to see their needs and to evaluate the coursebook we have been following. When the results of the questionnaire which has been given to the students have been analyzed, I have discovered that most of the **reading** passages of the book which is used in our classes are not suitable for the students because they have a lot of passive vocabulary items, difficult grammatical structures and different cultural concepts.

Also, the **reading** texts are used for different purposes other than developing **reading** skills and strategies. The problem lies in the fact that the **reading** materials in the book are not enough for our students in prep-school to be able to develop their **reading** skills. The students who take 20 hours intensive English courses a week should read different **reading** materials so as to increase motivation and improve **reading** skills. The materials must be chosen according to the students' needs and interests. The deficiency of **reading** text can not easily be seen in the book on the question to manipulate all the types of **reading** skills such as skimming, scanning

## 1.2 Aim and the Scope of the Study

In my opinion, the coursebook Cutting Edge does not include sufficient number of **reading** activities which can allow the students to practice **reading** skills and strategies. The aim of this study is to analyze and evaluate the **reading** passages of 'Cutting Edge' which is being used at prep-classes of Near East University, from the students point of view and learn what the students think about the **reading** passages of the book.

The questionnaire which has been designed for the students is used to find out the difficulties and problems of them in **reading** skill. According to the results of the questionnaire, the students have difficulty in understanding the **reading** passages because they are very long and have complex sentences, structures and cultural concepts.

The scope of this study is limited to only the **reading** passages of 'Cutting Edge' which is being used at prep-classes of Near East University. The other aspects of the book in question will not be taken into consideration.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Presentation

In this chapter, a review of literature related to **reading** will be presented. First of all, a brief history of language teaching will be discussed, then, the place of **reading** in the major approaches and methods will be stated, later, the main principles of these approaches and methods to **reading** and other skills will be given shortly; finally, the importance of **reading** will be examined under various headings.

#### 2.1 A Brief History of Language Teaching

There is a long and notable history in the profession of language teaching. We are the beneficiaries of many hundreds of years of experience in teaching and learning languages. Various influences have affected language teaching. Reasons for learning language have been different in different periods. In some eras, language was mainly taught for the purpose of **reading**. In others, it was taught mainly to people who needed to use it orally. These differences influenced how language was taught in various periods.

The history of the consideration of foreign language teaching goes back at least to the ancient Greeks. They were interested in what they could learn about the mind and the will through language learning. The Romans were probably the first to study a foreign language formally. They studied Greek, taught by Greek tutors and

slaves. Their approach was less philosophical and more practical than that of the Greeks.

In Europe before the 16<sup>th</sup> century, much of the language teaching involved teaching Latin to priests. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, French was a language Franca for speaking to foreigners. Members of the court spoke French, but it was also a necessary language for travelers, traders, and soldiers. French was fairly widely taught during this period, and a study of the theoretical books. And language textbooks from this period indicate that many of the same questions that are being considered today by language teachers were being considered then. These included questions about practice versus learning rules and formal study versus informal use.

The status of Latin changed during this period from a living language that learners needed to be able to read, write in, and speak, to a dead language which was studied as an intellectual exercise. The analysis of the grammar and rhetoric of Classical Latin became the model language teaching between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, a time when thought about language teaching crystallized in Europe. Emphasis was on learning grammar rules and vocabulary by rote, translations, and practice in writing sample sentences. The sentences that were translated or written by the students were examples of grammatical points and usually had little relationship to the real world. This method came to be known as the grammar-translation method. Though some people tried to challenge this type of language education, it was difficult to overcome the attitude that Classical Latin (and to a lesser extent Greek) was the most ideal language and the way it was taught was the model for the way language should be taught. When modern languages were taught as part of the curriculum, beginning in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, they were generally taught using the same method as Latin.

The grammar- translation method was the dominant foreign language teaching method in Europe from the 1840s, and a version of it continues to be widely used in

some parts of the world, even today. However, even as early as the mid-19<sup>th</sup>, theorists were beginning to question the principles behind the grammar-translation method. Changes were beginning to take place. There was a grater demand for ability to speak foreign languages, and various reformers began reconsidering the nature of language and of learning. Among these reformers were two Frenchmen, C. Marcel and F. Gouin, and an Englishman, T. Pendergast. Through their separate observations, they concluded that the way that children learned language was relevant to how adults should learn language. Marcel emphasized the importance of understanding meaning in language learning. Pendergast proposed the first structural syllabus. He proposed arranging grammatical structures so that the easiest were taught first. Gouin believed that children learned language through using language for a sequence of related actions. He emphasized presenting each item in context and using gestures to supplement verbal meaning.

Though the ideas of these and other reformers had some influence for a time, they did not become widespread or last long. They were outside of the established educational circles, and the networks of conferences and journals which exist today did not exist then to spread their ideas.

However, in the late 1800s and early 1900s, linguists became interested in the problem of the best way to teach languages. These reformers, who included Henry Sweet of England, Wilhelm Vietor of Germany, and Paul Passy of France, believed that language teaching should be based on scientific knowledge about language, that it should begin with speaking and expand to other skills, that words and sentences should be presented in context, that grammar should be taught inductively, and that translation should, for the most part, be avoided. These ideas spread, and were consolidated in what became known as the Direct Method, the first of the "natural methods." The Direct Method became popular in language schools, but it was not very practical with larger classes or in public schools.

Developments in other fields have, at times, had an effect on language teaching. In the field of psychology, behaviorism has had a great effect on language teaching. Various scientists in the early to mid-1900s did experiments with animals, trying to understand how animals learned, and through animals, how humans learned.

One of the most famous of these scientists was Ivan Pavlov. His experiments showed that if he rang a bell before giving food to the dogs he was studying, when the dogs heard the bell, they would salivate, even before the food was presented to them. This is called a conditioned response. Pavlov believed that this indicated that this is how animals learned, even in the wild. Pavlov and other studying in fields of animal behavior (including John Watson and B.F. Skinner) came to believe that animal behavior was formed by a series of rewards or punishments. Skinner, in particular, promoted the idea that human behavior could be described using the same model.

In applying his principles to language, Skinner theorized that parents or other caretakers hear a child say something that sounds like a word in their language; they reward the child with praise and attention. The child repeats words and combinations of words that are praised and thus learns language.

Behaviorism, along with applied linguistics, which developed detailed descriptions of the differences between languages, had a great influence on language teaching. Theorists believed that languages were made up of a series of habits, and that if learners could develop all these habits, they would speak the language well. Also, they believed that a contrastive analysis of languages would be invaluable in teaching languages, because points in which the languages were similar would be easy for students, but points in which they were different would be difficult for students. From these theories arose the audio-lingual method. The audio-lingual method is based on using drills for the formation of good language habits. Students are given a stimulus, which they respond to. If their response is correct, it is

rewarded, so the habit will be formed; if it is incorrect, it is corrected, so that it will be suppressed.

In the years following World War II, great changes took place, some of which would eventually influence language teaching and learning. Language diversity greatly increased, so that there were more languages to learn. Expansion of schooling meant that language learning was no longer the prerogative of the elite but something that was necessary for a widening range of people. More opportunities for international travel and business and international social and cultural exchanges increased the need for language learning. As a result, renewed attempts were made in the 1950s and 1960s to

- 1) use new technology (e.g., tape recorders, radios, TV, and computers) effectively in language teaching,
- 2) explore new educational patterns (e.g., bilingual education, individualized instruction, and immersion programs),
- 3) establish methodological innovations (e.g., the audio-lingual method).

However, the hoped-for increase in the effectiveness of language education did not materialize, and some of the theoretical underpinnings of the developments were called into question.

Beginning in the mid-1960s, there has been a variety of theoretical challenges to the audio-lingual method. Linguist Noam Chomsky challenged the behaviorist model of language learning. He proposed a theory called Transformational Generative Grammar, according to which learners do not acquire an endless list of rules but limited set of transformations which can be used over and over again. For example, a sentence is changed from an affirmative to a negative sentence by adding not and the auxiliary verb to, i.e., "I go to New York every week" would be changed to "I do not go to New York every week." With a fairly limited number of these

transformations, according to Chomsky, language users can form an unlimited number of sentences.

Other theorists have also proposed ideas that have influenced language teaching. Stephen Krashen, for example, studied the way that children learn language and applied it to adult language learning. He proposed the Input Hypothesis, which states that language is acquired by using comprehensible input (the language that one hears in the environment) which is slightly beyond the learner's present proficiency. Learners use the comprehensible input to deduce rules. Krashen's views on language teaching have given rise to a number of changes in language teaching, including a de-emphasis on the teaching of grammatical rules and a greater emphasis on trying to teach language to adults in the way that children learn language. While Krashen's theories are not universally accepted, they have had an influence.

Developments in various directions have taken place since the early 1970s. There has been developments such as a great emphasis on individualized instruction, more humanistic approaches to language learning, a greater focus on the learner, and greater emphasis on development of communicate, as opposed to merely linguistic, competence. Some "new methods," including the Silent Way, Suggestopedia, and Community Language Learning, have gained followings, and these reflect some of the above trends. In addition, there has been disillusionment with the whole methods debate, partly due to inconclusiveness of research on methods, and calls for a deeper understanding of the process of language learning itself. Finally, there has been a greater stress on authenticity in language learning, meaning that the activities involved in language learning reflect real-world uses of the language.

Over the centuries, many changes have taken place in language learning, and yet there is evidence that considerations related to language learning have come up again and again through history. No doubt the search for a greater understanding of language learning, and more effective language teaching, will continue.

## 2.2 Major Approaches And Methods In Language Teaching And Reading

### Grammar Translation Method

For many years Grammar Translation Method has been used by language teachers. This method was called Classical Method as it was first used in the teaching of classical languages; Latin and Greek. To prepare the students to be able to read and appreciate foreign language literature was the primary purpose of Grammar Translation Method. Another important goal of this method was to improve the students' capability of coping with difficult learning situations and materials. An understanding of the grammar of the language, and training the students to write the new language by practice in translating from the native language is the aim of this method. The learner can practise a new grammatical rule and vocabulary through translation exercises from the native language into the foreign language or vice versa. Grammar and vocabulary comprehension were put to the test in translation; thus, the students were judged to have learned the language if they could translate the **readings** to the first language. In this method grammar is taught deductively by presentation through translation exercises. The students are given the grammatical rules and expected to study them. **Reading** and writing are the major focus in Grammar Translation Method. It lays little or no emphasis on the speaking of the second language or listening to second language speech.

### The Direct Method

From 1850 to 1900 language teaching reforms aimed to make language teaching more effective by a change from Grammar Translation Method. During this period various methods were developed, but their popularity did not last long. The proposed reforms in this period were called by a variety of names;

'reform method', 'psychological method', 'phonetic method'<sup>1</sup> but the best was the term 'direct method' to describe the various features of new approaches in language teaching.

In Grammar Translation Method the students were not prepared to use the target language communicatively. They were not able to produce and understand foreign language speech, thus the Direct Method became popular. This method is characterized by the use of target language as a means of communication. The students are not allowed to use their native languages in the classroom. The Direct Method is sometimes called a Natural Method as it supposes that learning a foreign language is the same as learning the mother tongue. This method emphasizes language learning by direct contact with the foreign language in meaningful situations.

In this method, the **reading** skill is developed through speaking practice since language is primarily speech. **Reading** in foreign language should be taught from the beginning. When the students are given the **reading** material they read about the things they have discussed orally before. The teacher and the students read the text aloud, and the teacher encourages the students to comprehend the text directly by understanding the meanings of unknown vocabulary from context rather than finding their equivalents in their mother tongue. If the students have difficulty in understanding the meaning, the teacher gives explanations in language being learned and demonstrates using pictures and gestures but he/she never translates into their native language. The students are tested by questioning and discussion in the target language.

## Reading Method

The goal of language teaching is restricted to training in **reading** comprehension by this method. This theory was defended by some British and American educators as a creation of the twenties.

According to Stern (1993, p.460) there is an emphasis on **reading** for two reasons; first, it was the most useful skill to acquire in a foreign language; second, it was the easiest, a skill with the greatest surrender value for the student in the early stages of language learning.

Wilga Rivers (1981, p.35) states than in **Reading Method** '... students were to be taught to read the new language with direct apprehension of meaning, without a conscious effort to translate what they were **reading**.'

That is, a direct comprehension of the texts without translating into mother tongue was the major aim of foreign language teaching in **Reading Method**.

The techniques in this method were similar to those developed under previous methods. First, language could be used in language instruction as in Grammar-Translation. Second, language was introduced orally as in Direct Method; since pronunciation and 'inner speech' were important in **reading** comprehension. For the readers there was vocabulary control in **reading** texts. These words were chosen according to the interests of the readers. The study of language begins orally, where the **reading** method takes place. First, the students are initiated into the sound system and then, they become familiar to listening to and speaking in simple phrases. The distinction between intensive and extensive **reading** is the most important part of this method. Intensive **reading** provides material for vocabulary acquisition, for training in **reading** for comprehension. The students can learn the unknown words from the contexts or from cognates in their own languages, so they are not allowed to

translate. Teachers can check the comprehension degree of each student in intensive **reading**. Intensive **reading** is for detailed study while the extensive **reading** is for general comprehension. The comprehension of the students is tested by questions on the text.

By the help of this method the ability of the students to read in another language is increased. The students are interested in the people who speak the language and their way of life by this method.

Stern (1993, p.462) describes what important new elements this method introduced into language teaching as follows;

- a. the possibility of devising techniques of language learning geared to specific purposes, in this case the **reading** objective.
- b. the application of vocabulary control to second language texts, as a means of better grading of texts;
- c. the creation of graded 'readers'; and
- d. thanks to vocabulary control, the introduction of techniques of rapid **reading** to the foreign language classroom.

During World War II, it was thought that **reading** skill was not enough; therefore, oral communication was demanded and a new approach was developed according to the needs.

## The Audio-Lingual Method

The Audio-Lingual Method was developed in the United States during World War I. because at this time people needed to learn foreign languages for military purposes. This method has been influenced by descriptive linguistics and behavioral psychology. Learning was viewed as a mechanical process not a mental process. Thus, language learning is a process of habit formation.

In Audio-Lingual Method the dominant emphasis is placed on listening and speaking. The natural order of skills is; listening, speaking, **reading** and writing. **Reading** and writing are not neglected, but listening and speaking precede them. The oral/aural skills receive most of the attention. There is a great deal of imitation and repetition. The students are the imitators of their teachers or tapes, and they repeat what they hear. In the classroom the typical approach is to begin with a '**pre-reading**' period. The length of this period depends on the language and age of the students.

After learning some sections of the work orally without textbook, the student is introduced to the **reading** of the printed script. At this point, there are particular difficulties for some languages because there is a different script for students, or because there is no predictable relationship between sounds and symbols.

At the elementary level oral and written practices are important, but at more advanced levels the students give importance to **reading** materials. Well-written passages related with the culture of the people who speak that language are read in the target language. At advanced levels listening and speaking are not neglected; the students discuss the texts orally and they listen to the recordings of them. After the students learn to read fluently in the new language, they are encouraged to read their own choice.

### **Suggestopedia**

This method was developed by Lazanow, a Bulgarian physician and Psychotherapist. The aim of this method is to help the students overcome the psychological barriers to learning. The students should feel as comfortable as possible to be successful. Thus, atmosphere, music and musical rhythm to learning are the most important characteristics of Suggestopedia for the learners to relax. The aim of teaching in this method is not memorization but understanding.

According to Suggestopedia, the more the students feel confident and relaxed the more successful they are in language learning.

Grammar is taught explicitly in this method and vocabulary is emphasized. Students will learn better if they are interested in using the language not language forms. Speaking and listening are the primary skills but students also read-and write the target language. **Reading** is not the Primary skill but it must not be neglected.

### **The Silent Way**

The Silent Way was developed by Caleb Gattegno who is well known for the interest in the use of colored wooden sticks called rods and for his series words in color; an approach to the teaching of initial **reading** in which sounds are coded by specific colors (Richard and Rodgers: 1986, p.99).

In this method language learning is innate; it is not the product of habit formation but it is the product of rule formation. Thus, language learning is the product of thinking brain. Learners use their cognitive abilities, so they

form rules. Learners are not parrots, they have brains and they have the capacity to use them.

The Silent Way is a student centered method. Students should learn to rely on each other and themselves. In order to express themselves and their thoughts, students should be able to use the language. They must be independent while they are using the language. The students' feelings are very important, so the teacher takes what they say into consideration and he/she helps them to overcome the negative feelings. In order to be successful, a relaxed and enjoyable learning environment for the students should be created by the teacher.

Although grammar is not taught explicitly the structural patterns of the target language are given to the students. All four language skills are worked on from the beginning. **Reading** is also worked on from the beginning, but follows from what students have learned to say. In this method students learn to read and write what they have produced orally.

### **Community Language Learning**

This method takes its principles from the more general Counseling-Learning Approach developed by Charles A. Curran. This method advises teachers to consider their students as 'whole persons'. Teachers consider not only their students' feelings and intellect but also they have some understanding of the relationship among students' physical reactions and their desire to learn. It is discovered that adults feel threatened by a new learning situation. In order to deal with the fears of the students, teachers become language counselors. That is, they are skillful in understanding the struggle students' face as they are learning a new language. The basic procedures of Community Language

Learning can be seen as derived from the counselor-client relationship. The client-counselor relationship in psychological counseling can be compared with the learner-knower relationship in Community Language Learning. Teachers who use this method want their students to learn how to use the target language communicatively, and they want their students to learn about their own learning and take responsibility for it. By understanding how students feel, the teacher can help students to overcome their negative feelings, which might otherwise block their learning. The students' native language is used to make the meaning clear. Students feel more secure if they understand everything. In this method language is for communication and for developing creative thinking. The students design the syllabus in the early stages; that is, they decide what they want to be able to say in the target language. The most important skills in this method are understanding and speaking the language. **Reading** and writing are also worked on based upon what the students have already learned.

### **The Total Physical Response**

Total Physical Response is a language teaching method developed by James Asher. This method is built around the coordination of speech and action. It attempts to teach language through physical activity. As this method gives importance to listening comprehension it is called Comprehension Approach. The idea of focusing on listening comprehension during early foreign language instruction comes from observing how children acquire their mother tongue. Students listen and respond to their teacher's target language commands.

In Chastain (1988, p.96) Asher mentions three major strengths of the Total Physical Response Method;

1. Students "acquire" second languages at an accelerated rate.
2. They remember what they have learned for a long time.
3. They do not find second-language learning stressful.

Teachers who use this method believe in the importance of having their students enjoy their experience in learning to communicate in a foreign language. This method is introduced in the students' native language, but after the introduction mother tongue is rarely used, and the meaning is made clear through body movements. Grammatical structures and vocabulary are emphasized within imperatives. In this method spoken language is emphasized over written language. Students do not learn to read the commands they have already learned to perform. As it is mentioned listening and speaking are two important skills in this method.

### **The Natural Approach**

The Natural Approach is developed by Krashen and Terrell. They have identified the Natural Approach with what they called 'traditional approaches to language teaching'. Traditional approaches are based on the use of language in communicative situations without recourse to the native language and without reference to grammar. In this approach communication is the primary function of language.

According to Richards and Rodgers (1986, p.134), Natural Approach is for beginners and is designed to help them become intermediates. Krashen and Terrell state that Natural Approach has the expectation that students will be able to

function in target language situation, and they will understand the speaker of the target language and will be able to convey their ideas.

Natural Approach is primarily designed to develop basic communication skills both oral and written. In the classroom the focus should be on listening and **reading**.

### **Communicative Approach**

The origins of Communicative Language Teaching are to be found in the changes in British Language Teaching tradition dating from the late 1960s. In this approach the goal is to have the students communicatively competent. Learning to use the language forms appropriately is an important part of communicative competence. Students need to know linguistic forms, meanings and functions in order to become communicatively competent.

In this approach language learning is not a habit formation, but it is the product of thinking brain. Language is innate and people are born with the capacity to learn languages. Children do not learn their native language by imitation, but they are exposed to language when they are born. They form their own rules about language. How the students use the language is more important than what they know about the usage of the language. That is, their ability to communicate is more important than their knowledge of structural form. In Communicative Language Teaching, learning is creative, so learners can create sentences they have never heard before.

All four language skills can be introduced in the early stages. They are equally treated and used at the same time. The conscious teaching of grammar or of language rules are not rejected by this approach. This approach does not

avoid the presentation of **reading** and writing in association with listening and speaking (Stern 1991, p.470).

### **The Eclectic Approach**

Chastain (1988, p.109) states the definition for Eclectic as follows:

‘...choosing what appears to be the best from diverse sources, systems or styles’.

Teachers need techniques that work in their particular situation with the specific objectives that are meaningful for the kinds of students they have in their classes. Teachers need the stimulation of a new approach to encourage the students in **reading**. In class trying out new ideas is challenging and exciting. For these reasons many experienced teachers are eclectic in their teaching.

Eclecticists always try to take the best techniques of all well-known language teaching methods into their classroom procedures, and they use them in the appropriate situations. A true eclecticist always looks for the balanced development of all four skills at all stages. Teachers adapt their methods to the types of the students who pass through their classes. That is, they change their methods according to the students in their classes. An eclectic teacher needs to be imaginative, energetic and willing to experiment in order to be successful.

In conclusion, at the end of our discussion about major methods and approaches, we should express the fact that there is not one single way of teaching foreign languages. It is not fair to follow only one method or approach and to ignore or avoid others in a foreign language teacher should follow an eclectic approach receiving and combining the best and most available features of different methods and approaches, taking into consideration the needs and levels of his/her learners.

### 2.3 What Is Reading

Many attempts have been made about the definition of **reading**. The word “**reading**”, of course, has a number of common interpretations so, different answers are given to the question “what is **reading**?” Accordingly, it has been defined by several writers in different ways.

According to Smith (1978, p.24), “**Reading** is a process of interpreting / understanding the text in terms of the question that the reader formulates about it”

According to Grellet (1981, p.24) **reading** means “extracting the required information from a written text as quickly as possible”.

Widdowson (1978, p.46) defines **reading** as “a process of matching information in a text to internally activated information. Thus, **reading** is not information processing but rather information interpreting. **Reading** is the interaction of the text and the reader.”

Wallace (1996, p.6-7) has analyzed **reading** purposes under three headings, as follows:

- (a) **reading** for survival, which serves immediate needs or wishes,
- (b) **reading** for learning, which serves the wider role of extending our general knowledge of the world, and
- (c) **reading** for pleasure, which is done for its own sake.

Krashen (1985, p.105) looks at **reading** from a second language point of view and points out that the extensive and intensive practice of the **reading** skill may end up with learners’ improvement in terms of lexis and grammatical forms. He also considers that ‘**Reading** exposure is Low Affective Filter comprehensible input. Thus, language acquisition theory predicts that **reading** exposure will result in

considerable language acquisition in the form of vocabulary growth and grammatical development.

In addition to the above items, Krashen believes that “**reading** exposure, as manifested by sustained silent **reading** programs, self-selected **reading**, living in a print environment, and reported pleasure **reading**... results in development of... **reading** comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, and writing style”.

Deriving his views from Smith (1978, p.106), Krashen states that the basic skills of **reading** can never be taught directly and are only accessible to learners through the experience of **reading**.

A simple definition of **reading** by Williams (1984, p.2) is that “it is a process whereby one looks at and understands what has been written”. This definition of **reading** does not mean that a foreign learner needs to understand everything in a text. It is an accepted view that efficient readers are not passive and do not operate in a vacuum. The art of **reading** is mainly one of concentrating on what the writer is trying to say, instead of on the words themselves. As long as students read by deciphering the text word by word, they are not skilled in **reading** the language. On the other hand, skilled readers can actively work on a text and arrive at understanding without looking at every letter and word. It can be pointed out here that the efficient reader generally reads in groups of words, not word by word or letter by letter. The skilled and efficient reader takes what he needs. Therefore, Goodman (1967, p.126) refers to **reading** as a ‘psycholinguistic guessing game’.

It is an accepted view that **reading** is an activity made up of a large number of skills of both motor and cognitive kind, so recent definitions of **reading** give importance to the current stress on communicative functions of language and learner’s cognitive process in learning. Marcella Kellerman is one of these writers who defines **reading** as the recent view. According to him (1981), **reading** does not

constitute simply by recognition of words, but is the reconstruction of meaning. In other words, two kinds of information are involved in **reading**.

- a) visual information-it comes from in front of the eyeball, from the printed page.
- b) nonvisual information-it derives from behind the eyeball from the brain.

In the light of these views we can, briefly, state that **reading** is a complex skill since it involves a whole series of lesser skills. John Munby (1978) lists the main ones as follows.

Recognizing the script of language.

Deducing the meaning and use of unfamiliar lexical items.

Understanding explicitly stated information.

Understanding information when not explicitly stated.

Understanding conceptual meaning.

Understanding the communicative value (function) of sentences and utterances.

Understanding relations within the sentence.

Understanding relations between the parts of a text through lexical cohesion devices.

Understanding cohesion between parts of a text through grammatical cohesion devices.

Interpreting text by going outside it.

Recognizing indicators in discourse.

Identifying the main point or important information in a piece of discourse.

Distinguishing the main idea from supporting details.

Extracting the main points to summarize (the text, an idea)

Basic reference skills.

Skimming.

Scanning to locate specifically required information.

Transcoding information to diagrammatic display.

(Grellet, 1981, p.4-5)

### 2.3.1 The Process of Reading

**Reading** is both a process and a product. It is more than just receiving meaning in a literal sense. It involves bringing an individual's entire life experience and thinking powers to bear to understand what the writer has encoded. Thus, prior sensory experiences provide the basis for comprehending what is read. Above all, it is the product of human learning. Aukerman (1981) in Badrawi (Forum, 1992, p.16) has divided the process of **reading** into four major categories: perceptual learning, associative learning, cognitive learning and affective learning.

**Perceptual Learning:** Perceptual learning, according to Aukerman, is the ability to progress in establishing perceptual discrimination, first of gross shapes, objects, people, places, etc., and then of finer shapes, such as letters and words.

**Associative Learning:** Learning basic letter sound correspondences is a stimulus-response process. Even though several sounds may be associated with one letter, sounds and letters pattern together in predictable ways. A large part of learning to read is rote memorization. There are, however, so many variables in associative learning that it is impossible to predict exactly how much repetition each individual will need (if any) to establish a connection between a printed word and its spoken counterpart. Intelligence, past experience, motivation, physical alertness, etc., are some of the many variables in the associative process of learning to read. It is enough to say, however, that a learner whose experiences are minimal will have little basis

for the development of associative learning in **reading**, and any other limiting variables will have a further effect on the associative process as it applies to **reading**.

**Cognitive Learning:** Cognitive learning is as essential to learning to read as are perceptual and associative learning (Aukerman 1981). Cognition is the relating of new experiential stimuli to past experiences and to past learning. It involves comparing, recognising similarities and differences, evaluating and interpreting learning, values, and truths in keeping with reality. Inasmuch as the past experiences of each individual are different from those of all other individuals, all learning, especially **reading**, is subject to enormously wide ranges of individual differences. Consequently, some students easily understand what they are **reading**, and others do not. Much of the difference can be accounted for by the breadth and depth of the experiences that are brought to the printed page (Nuttall in McKay 1987; Aukerman 1981).

**Affective Learning:** **Reading** involves another important mode: the affective learning that is triggered by emotions. In **reading** this takes place when the reader's emotions are aroused by the printed word. Joy, delight, excitement, and so on, act as satisfiers to quicken and deepen the learning process. Learning to read, then, should be made as interesting and pleasurable as possible. A poem, biography, or novel, or even a single word may "affect" the reader and provide incentive for learning to read. Obviously, this goal cannot be achieved by mere repetition of words and drills.

## 2.4 Reasons For Reading

In many countries foreign languages are learned by number of students who will never have a chance of having a conversation with native speakers, but who will have access to the literature, scientific and technical journals written in the language they are learning. Many of the students will need these publications to assist them with further studies or in their work; other students will wish to enjoy **reading** in another language in their leisure time to keep them in touch with the wider world.

According to Grellet (1985, p.4) there are two main reasons for **reading**:

1. **Reading** for pleasure
2. **Reading** for information

Williams (1984, p.13) also explains the reasons why learners read in a foreign language in that way:

1. Learners can have further practice of language that they have already met through listening and speaking.
2. They can practice language in order to reuse it in writing.
3. They can learn how to make sense of texts, in order to extract the information they need from them.
4. They can find enjoyment through **reading**.

It is an inevitable fact that efficient **reading** depends mainly on having a purpose for **reading**, knowing why you are **reading** a text. The purpose could be a very general one such as **reading** a novel for pleasure. On the other hand, it could be very specific like looking to a telephone directory for someone's number. The purpose will determine the appropriate type of **reading** and the relevant **reading** skills to be used.

## 2.5 Different Ways of Reading

When we attempt to teach **reading**, one of the most important points to keep in mind is that there is not one type of **reading** but several according to one's reasons for **reading**. For example we do not read a poem in the same way as we read a prose. Students will read efficiently if they can adapt their **reading** speed and technique to their purpose while **reading**.

The main ways of **reading** as Grellet (1981, p.4) listed are skimming, scanning, extensive and intensive **reading**. However **reading** may be done aloud or silently.

### 2.5.1 Skimming

Nuttall (1982, p.34) defines skimming as; "..... glancing rapidly through a text to determine its gist, for example in order to decide whether a research paper is relevant to our own work (not just to determine its / field, which can find out by scanning), or in order to keep ourselves superficially informed about matters that are not of great importance to us."

While skimming, we quickly go through a text to get the general idea of it, to know how it is organized, to get an idea of the tone or the intention of the writer.

It is the technique of allowing your eyes to travel over a page very quickly stopping only here and there to get the gist of it.

For example, in order to decide what we want to read in more detail, we might skim through the headlines of a newspaper or through a book.

### 2.5.2 Scanning

Scanning involves quickly going through a text, but the purpose here is to find a particular piece of information. For example, in order to find the flight time of a particular plane we can scan through a time table. Thus, scanning means **reading** for specific information. Scanning can be used while working with dictionaries, tables, indexes, maps and so on.

Nuttal (1982, p.34) defines scanning as;

“..... glancing rapidly through a text either to search for a specific piece of information (e.g. date, name) or to get an initial impression of whether the text is suitable for a gives purpose (e.g. whether a book on gardening deals with the cultivation of a particular vegetable.)”

Skimming and scanning are useful skills. They do not remove the need for careful **reading** but they enable the reader to select the texts, which are worth spending time on.

### 2.5.3 Intensive Reading

Intensive **reading** means approaching the text under the close guidance of the teacher with each student having the same text. Another definition of intensive **reading** is that it is essentially **reading** in depth. It is linked with the study of grammar and vocabulary. Students' attention is focused on the linguistic features which enable them to decode the message. The major objective of intensive **reading** is developing the ability to decode messages by syntactic and lexical clues. Intensive **reading** is a controlled activity, and it is under the control of the teacher. It is very slow and careful. Easy or difficult materials can be read intensively. The students

could read the passage and discuss the ideas if it is difficult. The teacher should ask questions on every sentence. By the help of these questions, the students can understand what is said in the passage. After the teacher's questions, the students will ask questions to each other.

In short, intensive **reading** requires a deep and thorough understanding of detailed comprehension of very short texts. The objective is to achieve full understanding of the logical argument, the rhetorical arrangement or pattern of the text such as its symbolic, emotional and social aspects, author's purposes, attitudes and the linguistics means that he uses to reach his ends.

#### 2.5.4 Extensive Reading

The object of such **reading** is to cover the greatest possible amount of text in the shortest possible time and to learn **reading** by **reading**. It simply refers to the outside **reading** students do on their own without any help, guidance and the stricture of pressure from the teacher.

Extensive **reading** is more comprehensive, and it needs training for control of eye movements and also for speed and grasp of the meaning of the text / read. This is an essential skill, and it must be acquired by all the students.

By this type of **reading**, students expand their knowledge, find enjoyment, and improve their technical knowledge in many ways. It also facilitates to increase the amount of vocabulary, ease and fluency in **reading**.

On the other hand, extensive **reading** has two major problems;

- Selecting **reading** materials
- Getting the students to do the **reading** (in other words to motivate them to read.)

These topics will be discussed in a later section in detail.

At the beginning level, the major emphasis is on getting students to read in the target language, so they will need to read books that have been adapted for second or foreign language teaching.

At the intermediate level, the students begin to deal with unsimplified English prose, so the difficulty in text selection occurs. For this level, choosing short stories, novels and plays is useful. Having the students read a book which they have already read in their mother tongue is a technique which works very well.

Therefore, it should be the concern of every teacher to encourage students to read silently at home. The teacher should also try to follow the current developments in young readers' literature and should read as many of the new novels and short stories as he / she can so as to find further examples to use with classes and so that he / she can make useful suggestions when advising individual students in their **reading**.

As it is mentioned there are four main ways that one can read a given text. Besides these ways, **reading** can be done loudly or silently.

### 2.5.5 Reading Aloud

**Reading** aloud is an oral exercise, and it gives practice in pronunciation and intonation. For aloud **reading** only short **reading** passages or short extracts from

longer passages should be used. A great deal of time should be spent on **reading** aloud and dictation practice early in the beginning course. Language laboratory and tape recorder can be used for this kind of practice. The students can listen to the text on tape or a record. Then, they can read the same or similar material aloud and record it on tape. Later, they can listen to it while looking at the written text to practice their pronunciation and intonation. **Reading** aloud can be a productive activity in some classes. For example, the purpose of the activity is to develop comprehension rather than pronunciation in advanced classes. However, the following steps are carried out at elementary level:

- Teaching new vocabulary.
- Setting the scene.
- **Reading** the passage (Teacher reads it at normal speed once.)
- **Reading** the passage (Teacher reads it sentence by sentence, students repeat and also follow it while the teacher is **reading**.)
- Asking questions on the passage.

### 2.5.6 Silent Reading

Teaching the students to be able to read silently is much more important than the teaching of **reading** aloud. This is the most important skill to be developed in students regarding **reading**. Silent **reading** is **reading** for understanding, either to get information or to enjoy a story. This is the kind of **reading** we all do every day, and the kind of skill which may well be very useful for our students when they leave school. Long or short passages can be used for silent **reading** but the student gets more practice with longer passages.

There are some steps we should follow when we use a passage for silent **reading**.

- Make sure that all new vocabulary and structure which may cause difficulty in understanding the passage, are known.
- Discuss the main topic or topics of the passage with the students. Bring into your discussion as much of the new vocabulary as possible.
- Set directed questions, i.e. general questions on the main points of the passage, before the students read. These questions can be written on the blackboard, or dictated to the students. They must really test comprehension, and not just parrot like answers to text.
- Students read silently, find the answers to these questions and write them down. To train **reading** speed, a time limit can be given for this exercise, or students can keep a record of how long they take to find the answers, as well as how many answers they get correct.
- Check answers to the directed questions with the class.
- Ask detailed questions on the passage. This should be done orally. Students read the passage again, as a whole or in paragraphs, before the questions are asked.

## 2.6 Teaching Reading

The overall purpose for teaching **reading** is to develop in the reader the attitudes, abilities, and skills needed for obtaining information, reacting to ideals, developing interests and, finally, deriving pleasure by **reading** through understanding or "comprehension." Comprehension is a mental process. It is not getting meaning from the printed page. Meaning lies not on the printed page but in the mind of the person who wrote the words. Comprehension will not be found on the printer page, but in the mind of the reader who reads those words. If the reader's background, training and attitude, are similar to the writer's, he is likely to interpret the text with no conscious effort.

One reason for **reading** is that we want to understand other people's ideas. The meaning cannot be passively absorbed. The reader often has to work hard to get the meaning out by active "interrogation of the text" (Nuttall 1982).

The fundamental objectives of **reading** may be met by a programme that:

1. Develops in each reader skills in
  - a. Recognizing many words at sight
  - b. Gaining the meaning of unknown words or expressions quickly by using one or a combination of the following:
    - Analysins of structure
    - Phonics
    - Configuration of the graphic symbol
    - Contextual analysis
    - The dictionary
  - c. Comprehending and interpreting the meaning of words, phrases, and sentences.
  - d. **Reading** silently at speeds appropriate to the content and purpose
  - e. **Reading** orally with fluency, suitable speed, expression, correct pronunciation, and attention to enunciation
  - f. Evaluating the content of what is read
  - g. Using books efficiently-locating information, using the library, etc.
2. Provides many opportunities for rich and varied experiences through **reading**;
3. Develops a lasting interest in **reading**; and
4. Fosters the resourceful and creative use of **reading** to meet particular needs and interests.

### 2.6.1 Stages of Reading

The process of teaching **reading** can be divided into various stages. We can categorize them as elementary or beginning **reading**, intermediate **reading** and advanced **reading**. **Reading** is a skill that everyone needs whether he / she is a student in primary school, secondary school or university.

#### 2.6.1.1 Elementary Stage of Reading

At the beginning of the year after a certain period of time, this kind of **reading** is supposed to begin. At the very elementary, stage, as Paulston and Bruder (1976) state, **reading** serves primarily to introduce basic grammar patterns and vocabulary items in context and to introduce this basic knowledge. **Reading** in early stages is primarily on the intensive **reading**.

At this stage, almost all the preparatory work on a **reading** text is first done in class. The passages must be read carefully with necessary explanations, and after this **reading** process the students must be questioned in order to make them understand the passages in detail. At this stage, **reading** aloud can be useful in that it helps to associate the written forms with the spoken form. It also provides help with pronunciation, stress and intonation. The aim at this level is the mastery of the spoken form of the language.

At the beginning **reading** stage, it is extremely important to choose texts containing relatively minimum unknown language. The materials to be chosen should include groups of sentences, phrases and words. Although the primary focus is on understanding the written material it should always be done with comprehension.

### 2.6.1.2 Intermediate Stage of Reading

The purpose of intermediate **reading** is not only recognition of the written symbols for the spoken form but also getting information from what is read. For silent **reading** more time is spent by students. The teacher questions the students on every sentence using the words in the passage to see if they understand what they have read. This kind of **reading** is for exact information, so it is mostly intensive. Because of this, silent **reading** is preferred to aloud **reading** completely.

### 2.6.1.3 Advanced Stage of Reading

This kind of **reading** is done with advanced material in advanced classes. At this stage, the emphasis is largely on extensive **reading**. The advanced reader is able to read and understand the text independently. He can also examine elements of mechanics and style and expose to the author's design without receiving any assistance other than a dictionary.

### 2.6.2 Activities for Reading

Activities for a **reading** lesson are divided into three; 1. **pre-reading** activities, 2. **while (during)-reading** activities, 3. **post-reading** activities.

### 2.6.2.1 Pre-Reading Activities

**Pre-reading** activities are called enabling activities because they provide a reader with the necessary background to organize activity and to comprehend the material. These usually provide a purpose for reading and motivate the students to read the text. There are different types of **pre-reading** activity that encourages a variety of approaches to texts-skimming, scanning, intensive and extensive reading.

Examples to **pre-reading** activities

- **Predicting:** Talking about the title of the text or commenting on the picture or diagrams which accompany the text.

Predicting is important for preparing and motivating the students for the reading text pictures, diagrams and maps in the book can be used as visual aids.

- **Introducing relevant vocabulary items:** Teachers can teach new vocabulary by the help of the relevant vocabulary items pictures, flash cards, stick figures can be used.

- **Setting the scene:** Asking questions about the title or getting the students to predict what sort of information may follow the title, figures, pictures, film strips can be used as visual aids.

### 2.6.2.2 While-Reading Activities

While-reading activities are carried out while the students are reading. Students need to be aware of their level of comprehension as they read, and they also learn to create meaning by asking the proper questions. Students should associate a reading text with having to answer comprehension questions. Reading comprehension lessons have centered on a passage of text which is followed by question like true-false, multiple choice and wh-questions. By the help of these questions, teachers can

realize whether the students have understood or not.

While-reading activities can be stated as follows:

- **Skimming:** Reading the text for general information.
- **Scanning:** Answering specific questions, paying attention to rhetorical devices and reference signals.
- **Guessing the meaning of some unfamiliar words.**
- **Taking notes or underlining important ideas.**

### 2.6.2.3 Post-Reading Activities

After the activity, it is important for the teacher to provide feedback to his / her learners. Post-reading activities can be divided into two basic categories. In the first category students recall information from the text, and in the second category the students develop communicative fluency in the four language skills. These activities may include dramatizations, role-plays, and simulations, changing the text type, discussions and debates.

Post-reading activities can be as follows:

- **Answering inference and opinion questions.**
- **Discussing various viewpoints expressed in the text.**
- **Finding the main idea and supporting details.**
- **Completing a diagram.**
- **Outlining.**
- **Summarizing the text.**
- **Writing a précis or paraphrase.**

## **2.7 Techniques for Teaching Reading Skill**

When we read in our own language we use – often unconsciously – a variety of reading strategies and techniques depending on the text and our reason for reading: for example, we would not normally read a newspaper and a textbook in the same way. Most of the techniques dealt with in this part are already familiar to the students in their native language. But it is necessary to re – train them, as some students have difficulty in applying them to a second language.

### **2.7.1 Sensitizing**

This technique provides exercises for the students to cope with unfamiliar words and complex sentences.

#### **2.7.1.1 Inference**

If reading is interrupted too often as the reader looks up unknown words in a dictionary, global comprehension of the text tends to be lost. The ability to infer the meaning of unknown words quickly and confidently is therefore an essential reading and study skill.

There are several reasons why practice in inferring the meaning of unknown words can improve reading competence. It will first of all sensitize the reader to the fact that it is often enough to appreciate the general meaning of a word or its possible negative or positive connotations to be able to continue reading and maintain the sense of the text.

One possible strategy for inferring the meaning of an unknown word is first to decide its word class (verb, noun, adjective etc.) by considering the position of the word in the sentence, its relationship to other words, and morphological markers (e.g. suffixes, tense markers etc.). Next, a possible meaning may be inferred by considering both the immediate syntactic context and the wider context, over several sentences if necessary. Checking that the class of the word inferred is appropriate, it may then be substituted for the unknown word and the sense of the entire sentence verified.

#### **2.7.1.2 Understanding Relations within the Sentences**

When the students are faced with a new text, inability to infer the meaning of unknown elements often causes discouragement in them. If they cannot understand the sentence structures a similar problem may also arise. This problem is always related with the texts full of relatives, embedded clauses and complex structures. First, the students have to look at the subject and the verb of the sentences, and to do this they can divide the passage, underline or box to find these important elements.

#### **2.7.1.3 Linking Sentences and Ideas**

Another area in which it is essential to prepare the students is in recognizing the various devices used to create textual cohesion and more particularly the use of reference and link-words.

Reference covers all the devices that permit lexical relationship within a text. It is important for the students to realize that a text is not made up of independent sentences or clauses, but that it is a web of related ideas that are announced,

introduced and taken up again later throughout the passage with the help of references.

If the reader does not understand some words of the passage, some of the facts and ideas will probably escape him. But if he does not understand inter-or\_intra-sentential connectors, he may also fail to recognize the communicative value of the passage since those words act as signals indicating the function of what follows (e.g. announcing a conclusion, an example, a supposition). From the very beginning, students should therefore be taught not only to understand them when they come across them, but also to look out for such markers. This will be useful to them when skimming, since the simple recognition of those link-words will help them to understand the development of the argument in the passage.

### **2.7.2 Improving Reading Speed**

Students who read too slowly will easily get discouraged. They will also tend to stumble on unfamiliar words and fail to grasp the general meaning of the passage. One of the most common ways of increasing reading speed is to give students passages to read and to ask them to time themselves. A conversion table, taking the length of the text and the reading time into account, will tell them what their reading speed is and this will make it easier for them to try and read a little faster every time. Reading should also be followed by comprehension questions or activities since reading speed should not be developed at the expense of comprehension.

### **2.7.3 From Skimming to Scanning**

One of the most important points to keep in mind when teaching reading comprehension is that there is not one type of reading but several according to one's

reasons for reading. Students will never read efficiently unless they can adapt their reading speed and technique to their aim when reading. By reading all texts in the same way, students would waste time and fail to remember points of importance to them because they would absorb too much non-essential information.

### **2.7.3.1 Predicting**

This is not really a technique but a skill which is basic to all the reading techniques practiced in this part and to the process of reading generally. It is the faculty of predicting or guessing what is to come next, making use of grammatical, logical and cultural clues. This skill is at the core of techniques such as 'anticipation' or 'skimming'.

### **2.7.3.2 Previewing**

Previewing is a specific reading technique unlike predicting. It involves using the table of contents, the appendix, the chapter and paragraph heading to find out where the required information is. It is very useful during skimming and scanning.

### **2.7.3.3 Anticipation**

Before we read a passage, we expect to find certain things in it. These may be answers to certain questions in our minds about the subject or ideas that interest us. Our anticipation of what is in the passage is therefore related to our own personal background knowledge on the subject. A passage becomes much easier to read when we already have some ideas on the subject or look forward to reading it. But when we are faced with a passage that we have no idea about, then even understanding the

main points becomes difficult. Reading widely and increasing our knowledge would be the obvious solution to improving this important skill of anticipation.

#### **2.7.3.4 Skimming and Scanning**

Both skimming and scanning are specific reading techniques necessary for quick and efficient reading. When skimming, we go through the reading material quickly in order to get the gist of it, to know how it is organized, or to get an idea of the tone or the intention of the writer.

When scanning, we only try to locate specific information and often we do not even follow the linearity of the passage to do so. We simply let our eyes wander over the text until we find what we are looking for, whether it be a name, a date, or a less specific piece of information.

Skimming is therefore a more thorough activity which requires an overall view of the text and implies a definite reading competence. Scanning, on the contrary, is far more limited since it only means retrieving what information is relevant to our purpose. Yet it is usual to make use of these two activities together when reading a given text. For instance, we may well skim through an article first just to know whether it is worth reading, then read it through more carefully because we have decided that it is of interest.\* It is also possible afterwards to scan the same article in order to note down a figure or a name which we particularly want to remember. When you are skimming, move your eyes quickly over the text or passage and ask yourself, "What is this passage about?" Look at the important parts of the passage: the beginning, the end, the titles and the first sentence in each paragraph, which usually contains the main idea.

## 2.8 Aim And Function of The Text

It is obvious that being aware of the function of a passage is vital to its comprehension. Therefore, one of the very first things students should be led to do is to find out whether the text aims at convincing the reader, giving him information, asking him for something, etc. In many cases, the very form of the passage, the way it is printed, laid out, or the place where it was found, are sufficient to give us clues as to its function, and students should always be encouraged to make use of these non-linguistic elements. But it may sometimes be more difficult to determine the exact function of the passage and for this reason it is worth devoting some time to activities.

### 2.8.1 Organization of The Text

The organization of a passage is not always determined by its contents and by the nature of the information to be conveyed. The thematic pattern used is often a choice on the part of the writer and this choice, in its turn, alters the message. It is essential for the students to grasp the method used to present the information is that once they have recognized the pattern that is being used, they can apply their reading strategies to the text and predict what is likely to follow. If, for instance, we recognize the text as an argumentative one, we will look for arguments and counter-arguments, then for some kind of conclusion drawn from these arguments.

We can give a list of organizations as

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. <i>Main idea and supporting details</i> | 4. <i>Analogy and contrast</i>                   |
| 2. <i>Chronological sequence</i>           | 5. <i>Classification</i>                         |
| 3. <i>Descriptions</i>                     | 6. <i>Argumentative and logical organization</i> |

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **STUDENTS' EVALUATION OF READING PASSAGES AND ACTIVITIES IN CUTTING EDGE PRE-INTERMEDIATE COURSE BOOK**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter deals with the research design, context and the instrumentation of the current study which examines the reading strategies in foreign language classes and difficulties of preparatory school students of NEU with the book "Cutting Edge". It also analyzes and interprets the results of the data collected through a questionnaire.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This project is firmly school based, and all the fieldwork has been carried out in normal school conditions. The student questionnaire forms filled out by the preparatory students of Near East University at pre-intermediate level and the books related to the subject were researched to have satisfactory information.

The study is descriptive in nature; the researcher tries to describe the current situation of the participants and the book they are using.

The method is a survey type research on all of the pre-intermediate participants of English randomly selected from the list of 520 students who take the preparatory school second term course at Near East University. The data has been

obtained by the questionnaire administrated to 208 students. The student questionnaire was administered in the class during the teaching hours.

The questionnaire was supported with the survey of related literature and use of my own teaching experience and observations made on student competencies during reading activities.

### **3.2 Participants**

The participants included 208 students from nine classes. They were questioned in 3 main items such as.

- a. Their educational background
- b. Their knowledge of reading strategies and
- c. Their satisfaction with the reading passages of the book Cutting Edge.

40,8 percent of the participants who completed the questionnaire have not studied English before coming to this university. From the results of the student questionnaire we can see that 59,2 percent of the students know some English. Moreover, it seems that the students are not satisfied with the reading passages of the book "Cutting Edge".

### **3.3 Instrument**

The student questionnaire was made up of 21 questions. The introductory questions were intended to reveal the participants' identity and their language background. The subsequent questions aimed to reveal their reading habits. The aim of part two was to put forward the importance of reading skills and to find out whether the learners were aware of the suitability of the reading passages in the book

“Cutting Edge”. The concluding questions in part three concerned whether they favored reading strategies being taught to them and whether they needed more reading practice. The students’ answers helped me to get a clear view of their present situation and what they think about the reading passages in the book that we are using in prep-school.

### **3.4 Procedures**

The participants were informed about the study and the essential data was collected from 208 students through completing a questionnaire. They were asked to answer 21 questions.

Firstly the answers in the questionnaires were read one by one with great attention to spot the incomplete ones however all the copies were complete. Therefore, every item in these 208 questionnaires was evaluated during the study.

In the evaluation stage, the responses of the students for each of the items have been analyzed and the results were recorded. These recorded results are displayed in tables. The results are calculated in percentages.

Finally, the responses of the students have been analyzed and recorded results have been taken into consideration.

### 3.5 The Student's Questionnaire

In order to find out the difficulties in reading comprehension a questionnaire (see Appendix) has been applied to the pre-intermediate students of the prep-school. The questionnaire was administered to 208 students enrolled in prep-classes.

The questionnaire is composed of three parts. The first part has been designed to elicit some educational background knowledge about the subjects. The 6 questions in the first part are related to learning English and introduction to reading.

The second part of the questionnaire consists of 12 questions. These questions have been chosen carefully to examine the ideas of the students about the reading passages of their course book. The third part of the questionnaire consists of 3 questions. These questions are related to the ways that are used by the teachers to make the reading passages understandable and to the activities to make the reading passages clear. The students are asked to choose the right answers for each item.

### 3.6 The Evaluation of the Students' Responses

As it has been stated before, the questionnaire has been filled out by pre-intermediate students, and it is composed of three parts including 21 questions.

The data gathered from the questions of the questionnaire are shown in the following tables.

**Item 1:** The school that you graduated from.

- ☐ Lycee
- ☐ Anatolian lycee
- ☐ College (Private secondary school)
- ☐ Others

	Percent
Lycee	57,7 %
Anatolian Lycee	16,3 %
College (Private Secondary School)	6,3 %
Others	19,7 %

**Table – 1.** The schools that the students graduated from.

**Item 2:** How long have you been studying English?

( ) For one year      ( ) For two years      ( ) For three years or more

	Percent
For a year	40,8 %
For two years	8,7 %
For three years or more	50,5 %

**Table – 2.** How long the students studied English.

According to the answers given to the second item many respondents have been studying English for three years or more

Items on questionnaire	Yes	No
3	94,2 %	5,3 %
4	8,7 %	91,3 %
5	54,6 %	45,4 %
6	72,0 %	28,0 %

**Table – 3.** Students background.

In item 3, the students are asked if they want to be offered new ways to develop their reading comprehension. The results show that the students need new ways to develop their reading as they have a lot of difficulties. They think that by the help of these new ways they will understand the reading passages easily.

In item 4, they are asked if they had a private lesson/education about reading before, 91,3 % of the students respond that they did not have a private lesson/education about reading, but the rest 8,7 % had a private lesson/education.

The results of item 5 reveal that the students have some difficulties in understanding reading passages in English.

Accordingly in item 6, the students are asked if they have a special interest in reading and the results show that they have interest in reading. They want to read but they have some difficulties.

In the first part of the questionnaire it is seen that the students have not studied reading before, they do not have specific education on reading and they have also some difficulties, so they need new ways to develop their reading and understanding ability. These factors should be considered by the teachers, and they should teach reading step by step without making it difficult and boring.

The second part of the questionnaire consists of 12 questions, and these questions are related with the reading passages of the course book. The data gathered from the twelve questions of the second part in the questionnaire are shown in tables representing the responses of the students.



Items on questionnaire	Yes	No
7	42,2 %	57,8 %

**Table – 4.** Students' satisfaction with the reading passages of the book.

Item 7 has been asked in order to find out whether they are satisfied with the reading passages of the book used in prep-classes, and the results show that the students are not happy with them.

**Item 8:** If you are satisfied with the reading passages of the books please put a tick for the suitable ones. You can mark more than one.

- ( ) The pictures of the units are related to the topics and they are interesting.
- ( ) Activities are not mechanic.
- ( ) Subjects do not need memorization.
- ( ) Language can easily be understood, and it is not complex.

The pictures of the units are related to the topics and they are attractive	24,9 %
Activities are not mechanic *	5,9 %
Subjects do not need memorization	49,7 %
Language can easily be understood, and it is not complex	19,5 %

**Table – 5.** Reasons why students are satisfied with the reading passages.

**Item 9:** If you are not satisfied with the reading passages of the books please put a tick for the suitable ones. You can mark more than one.

- ( ) The pictures of the units are not related to the topics, they are childish.
- ( ) Activities are boring and mechanic.
- ( ) Subjects need memorization.
- ( ) Language is complex.

The pictures of the units are not related to the topics, they are childish	9,8 %
Activities are boring and mechanic	36,3 %
Subjects need memorization	39,4 %
Language is complex	14,5 %

**Table – 6.** Reasons why students are not satisfied with the reading passages.

The total is more or less than 100 % in these items because the students gave more than one answer, or they did not put a tick for some of the choices.

Items 8 and 9 have been asked to find out the ideas of the students about the reading passages of the course book.

According to the responses of the students to these two items, it can be understood that for the students the activities of the reading passages are boring, the subjects need memorization and the language of the reading passages is complex. However, they think that only the pictures of the units are related to the topics and they are interesting. As a result, the responses show that all the students have negative ideas about the reading passages of their course book.

Items on questionnaire	Yes	No
10	51,5 %	48,5 %
11	73,4 %	26,6 %
12	62,4 %	37,6 %
13	53,0 %	47,0 %
14	77,7 %	22,3 %
15	76,7 %	23,3 %
16	44,3 %	55,7 %
17	54,0 %	46,0 %
18	42,6 %	57,4 %

**Table – 7.** The characteristics of the reading passages from students' perspectives.

The characteristics of the reading passages are measured by the items 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

When the students are asked in item 10 if they are interested in the subjects of the reading passages in their book 51,5 % of the respondents express that they are interested in the subjects and the rest 48,5 % are not. They have found the subjects interesting, but they have found the activities boring and language complex. They are not satisfied with these ideas.

Item 11 asks the appropriateness of the length of reading passages. In this item, 73,4 % respondents state that the length of the reading passages is appropriate for them.

In item 12, the students are asked if they read the reading passages till the end, 62,4 % responses express that they read the reading passages till the end. But 26,6 % of the students respond that the length of the reading passages is not appropriate for them. And 37,6 % of the students respond that they don't read the reading passages

till the end in order to understand the whole. So these two figures show that some students have some problems and some difficulties about the length of the passages.

Item 13 intends to find out if they read the reading passages only to find the answers of the questions. The responses of the students show that they read the passages only to find the answers of the questions. As it is stated in item 12, they read the whole passages; they read them to understand the general meaning and to find out the answers of the questions related to them.

Item 14 has been asked to find out whether the students read the passages again (return to the passage) to find the answer of each question. It can be understood from the responses that most of the students return to the reading passage in order to find the answer of each question. They have to return to the passage for the answers as they cannot understand the whole.

Responses to item 15 show that majority of the respondents have difficulty in understanding the reading passages because of the unknown vocabulary items. They think that reading passages consist of a lot of unknown vocabulary items. They cannot guess most of the vocabulary items from the context as they are not active vocabulary.

Accordingly, items 16 and 17 have been asked in order to discover if the students find the grammar of the sentences in reading passages difficult and if they have any difficulty in understanding the reading passages because of long sentences. The results of item 16 show that sentence structures of the reading passages are not so difficult for most of the students. By the help of the results of item 17, it can be said that they have difficulty in understanding the reading passages because of long sentences.

The importance of the foreign culture in reading passages is measured by item 18. Reading passages of Cutting-edge Pre-intermediate have some concepts about foreign cultures, and as it can be inferred from the responses, the students do not understand the concepts about the foreign culture in reading passages. They have difficulty in understanding these concepts and the concepts about culture make the reading passages difficult for the students to understand.

The last part of the questionnaire is composed of 3 questions. These questions are asked to find out how the teachers make reading passages understandable, and what kind of methods they use to make the passages clear. In this part, we also try to understand if the activities of the reading passages are enough for the students; or if they need any supplementary activities.

**Item 19:** In order to make the reading passages understandable which of the following does your teacher apply in the class? You can mark more than one.

- ☐ ( ) Motivates the students in order to study the riding passage effectively.
- ☐ ( ) States the aim of studying the reading passage.
- ☐ ( ) Gives importance to some vocabulary items.
- ☐ ( ) Asks general questions about the reading passage beforehand.
- ☐ ( ) Asks Yes – No, True – False, Fill in the blanks, Complete Sentences, Multiple Choice types of questions to find out whether the students have understood the reading passage or not.
- ☐ ( ) Makes the students act out the subjects of the reading passages in the class.
- ☐ ( ) Makes the students ask questions about the characters and the objects in reading passages.
- ☐ ( ) Makes the students change the type and style of the reading passages.
- ☐ ( ) Finds discussion topics about the reading passages.

Motivates the students in order to study the reading passage effectively	24,2 %
States the aim of studying the reading passage	15,5 %
Gives importance to some vocabulary items	63,3 %
Asks general questions about the reading passage beforehand	17,9 %
Asks Yes-No, True-False, Fill in the blanks, Complete sentences, Multiple choice types of questions to find out whether the students have understood the reading passage or not.	36,7 %
Makes the students act out the subjects of the reading passages in the class	15,9 %
Makes the students ask questions about the characters and the objects in reading passages	41,5 %
Makes the students change the type and the style of the reading passages	5,8 %
Finds discussion topics about the reading passages	27,5 %

**Table – 8.** Reading skills used in the classes.

According to the responses of the students to item 19, most of the teachers motivate the students in order to study the reading passage effectively. After motivating them, they give importance to some vocabulary items as most of them are passive; that is, the students do not use them in their daily life. They some times ask the students general questions about the reading passage before reading it as they want their students to have some background knowledge about the topic. After these general questions, the teachers ask different types of questions about the passages in order to find out if the students have understood them. Helping the students to understand the passages by these questions, the teachers make them ask questions about the characters and objects in the passages. At the end of the lesson, most of the teachers find some discussion topics about the reading passages in order to make the passages clear and the lesson enjoyable.

Items on questionnaire	Yes	No
20	46,7 %	53,3 %
21	79,4 %	20,6 %

**Table – 9.** The percentage of the students who think activities are not enough and need supplementary activities.

The last two items are related to the activities of the reading passages in the book.

In item 20, the students have been asked if the activities in the book that they make together in the class are enough for them to understand the reading passages. Their responses show that the activities are not enough for them to understand.

In the last item, they have been asked if they need any other supplementary activities about the reading passages. According to the responses given to item 21, they need supplementary activities about the reading passages.

According to the results of the questionnaire the pre-intermediate level students in prep school have some difficulties in understanding the reading passages of their course book. As most of the students want to read and have been studying English not more than a year, they want to be offered new ways to develop their reading comprehension. They have some difficulty in understanding the reading passages but most of them have special interests in reading. 57 % of them are not satisfied with the reading passages of the book used in prep – classes because some of the activities are boring and mechanic and language is complex. 51,2 % of the respondents are interested in the subjects but 48,3 % of them are not. There are some difficulties about the length of the passages so some of the students don't read the reading passages till the end. They have some difficulty in understanding the reading passages because of the unknown vocabulary and sometimes because of the foreign cultures in reading passages. Most of the students to whom the questionnaire has been

applied state that reading is difficult for them and the activities in the book that they make together in class are not enough for them to improve their reading skills. Therefore they need some other supplementary activities about the reading skills.

## CHAPTER 4

### EVALUATION OF A READING ACTIVITY

#### 4.0 Presentation

In this chapter an example of a reading text taken from the coursebook in question will be analyzed and evaluated and then a sample reading passage with some question types will be given as a suggestion for the teaching purpose.

#### 4.1 Analysis of a Reading Text

This section is concerned with the analysis of a reading text given in Appendix 2.

In order to get a desired analysis, we should have a brief look at the reading activities, **pre-reading**, **during-reading** and **post-reading** activities as can be seen in the tables.

Pre-Reading Activities	Visual Aids
1-Predicting (talking about the title of the text or commenting on the picture or diagrams which accompany the text) Predicting is important for preparing and motivating the students for the reading text.	Pictures, diagrams and maps in the book.
2-Introducing relevant vocabulary items. Teachers can teach new vocabulary by the help of the relevant vocabulary items.	Pictures, flash cards, slides, film strips, stick figures... etc.
3-Setting the scene (Asking questions about the title or getting the students to predict what sort of information may follow the title.)	Figures, pictures, slides, film strips, stick figures... etc.

While-Reading Activities	Visual Aids
1-Surveying/Skimmming (Reading the text for a general purpose)	Pictures, diagrams in the book.
2-Scanning (Answering specific questions, paying attention to reference signals)	Pictures, diagrams, maps, fill-in-the-chart.
3-Guessing the meaning of some unfamiliar words.	Pictures, diagrams, maps in the book.
4-Taking notes or underlying important ideas if necessary.	

Post-Reading Activities	Visual Aids
1-Answering inference and opinion questions.	Pictures, maps, cue words, diagrams ... etc.
2-Discussing/writing various viewpoints expressed in the text through visuals.	Various visual aids.
3-Dagraming (classifying information)	Completing a diagram on the chart.
4-Interpreting descriptions (outlining and summarizing the text)	Drawing a picture, a plan, a map... etc.
5-Classroom games for reading.	Scrabble, bingo, scrambled sentences, jigsaw reading... etc.

It is inevitable to analyze and evaluate the text taken from the coursebook in question; the text was randomly selected for the purpose of this study.

To begin with we should say that in this example the topic of the reading text "Health problems", the vocabulary items and its length are suitable for the students. However, when we analyze it in terms of the activities, we can easily notice that it is not well-designed. As it is seen, it's pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading activities are not appropriate. The teacher can use the picture and the title of the text to talk about and motivate the students as pre-reading activities. On the other hand when we look at the questions 3, 4, 5 we can understand that the purpose of this text

is “stimulating oral work and extending vocabulary”. We can not see any activities for developing reading skills and strategies. The students learn vocabulary related to illnesses, listen to a dialogue as a model, prepare some short conversations in small groups and then act out their conversations.

Therefore, the class teachers should prepare supplementary activities to make the reading passages more understandable and also more useful in order to practice reading skills. They should state the aim of studying the reading passage, give importance to some useful vocabulary items, ask general questions about the reading passages before hand, ask Yes-No, True-False, Fill in the blanks, Complete sentences multiple choice types of questions to find out whether the students have understood the reading passages or not.

They should have enough activities for while-reading and post-reading. There should be questions for skimming, scanning, taking notes, underlining important ideas, changing the text type, making discussions and finding the main idea... etc.

## 4.2 Question-Types

The following list aims at giving an idea of the most commonly used kinds of exercises. Before giving the list of question-types, a possible way of dealing with the text has been suggested as a kind of summary of the various kinds of activities mentioned before.

### 1 Anticipation

Look at the title and at the drawing that accompanies the story.  
What can you infer from the two? What is a unicorn?  
What do you think the story is about?



### 2 Organization

Is the text organized in a ☐ logical way?  
☐ argumentative  
☐ chronological

What link-words or expressions reflect this organization?

- 3 There is obviously a great difference between the behaviour of the husband and that of his wife in the story. Read it again, paying particular attention to the various ways this difference is revealed, then complete the following table:

	Husband	Wife
How they react to the unicorn		
Pronoun used to refer to the unicorn		
Attitude towards their wife/husband		
Their surroundings		
How does the vocabulary/style reflect the differences in their rhythm of life?		
How you interpret their behaviour		

4 Find another *title* for the story:

5 Find another *moral*:

6 In what 'literary genre' would you classify the story?

- ☐ short story
- ☐ fairy tale
- ☐ legend
- ☐ tale

### The unicorn in the garden

Once upon a sunny morning, a man who sat at his breakfast looked up from his scrambled eggs to see a white unicorn with a gold horn quietly cropping the roses in the garden. The man went up to the bedroom where his wife was still asleep and woke her. 'There's a unicorn in the garden,' he said. 'Eating roses.' She opened one unfriendly eye and looked at him. 'The unicorn is a mythical beast,' she said, and turned her back on him. The man walked slowly downstairs and out into the garden. The unicorn was still there; he was now browsing among the tulips. 'Here, unicorn,' said the man, and he pulled up a lily and gave it to him. The unicorn ate it gravely. With a high heart, because there was a unicorn in his garden, the man went upstairs and roused his wife again. 'The unicorn,' he said, 'ate a lily.' His wife sat up in bed and looked at him, coldly. 'You are a booby,' she said, 'and I am going to have you put in the booby-hatch.' The man, who had never liked the words 'booby' and 'booby-hatch', and who liked them even less on a shining morning when there was a unicorn in the garden, thought for a moment. 'We'll see about that,' he said. He walked over to the door. 'He has a golden horn in the middle of his forehead,' he told her. Then he went back to the garden to watch the unicorn; but the

unicorn had gone away. The man sat down among the roses and went to sleep.

As soon as the husband had gone out of the house, the wife got up and dressed as fast as she could. She was very excited and there was a glint in her eye. She telephoned the police and she telephoned a psychiatrist; she told them to hurry to her house and bring a straight-jacket. When the police and the psychiatrist arrived, they sat down in chairs and looked at her, with great interest. 'My husband,' she said, 'saw a unicorn this morning.' The police looked at the psychiatrist and the psychiatrist looked at the police. 'He told me it ate a lily,' she said. The psychiatrist looked at the police and the police looked at the psychiatrist. 'He told me it had a golden horn in the middle of its forehead,' she said. At a solemn signal from the psychiatrist, the police leaped from their chairs and seized the wife. They had a hard time subduing her, for she put up a terrific struggle, but they finally subdued her. Just as they got her into the straight-jacket, the husband came back into the house.

'Did you tell your wife you saw a unicorn?' asked the police. 'Of course not,' said the husband. 'The unicorn is a mythical beast.' 'That's all I wanted to know,' said the psychiatrist. 'Take her away. I'm sorry, sir, but your wife is as crazy as a jay bird.' So they took her away, cursing and screaming, and shut her up in an institution. The husband lived happily ever after.

Here is a list of the main question-types that can be used.

1. **Multiple-choice questions:** Under a similar appearance, multiple-choice exercises can cover very different types of activities and involve very different skills.

- a. The *aim* of the multiple-choice question may differ. It may be used:
  - i. To *test* the students' comprehension of the text.
  - ii. To *help* the students understand what would otherwise be too difficult to understand.
  - iii. To *help* the students *think* about a word and infer its meaning, or think about the text, their attention being drawn to an idea-expressed or implied-which they might not have noticed otherwise.

e.g.

***In the sentence 'You are a booby', the word 'booby' means:***

- a) *An animal*
- b) *A person who is ill*
- c) *A person who is mad*

***The husband said he had never seen a unicorn because:***

- a) *He didn't like psychiatrists and did not want to tell them the truth*
- b) *He was hoping to get rid of his wife that way*
- c) *He didn't remember what had happened to him in the morning*
- d) *He had never seen a unicorn and had told his wife a lie, knowing she would call the psychiatrist and be shut up in an institution*

- b. The function of the multiple-choice question can also vary.
- i. In a multiple-choice question such as the following the student is asked to understand what was actually said in the text. He may have to think in order to understand the structure of the sentence or try to infer the meaning of unfamiliar words, but he is basically asked to retrieve some information from the text.  
e.g.

***At the end of the text:***

- a) *The husband succeeds in getting rid of his wife*
- b) *The wife succeeds in obliging her husband to admit he'd never seen a unicorn*
- c) *Both husband and wife gain something*

- ii. This second type of multiple-choice question may be a little more difficult but is essential to help the student to read 'between the lines'. Here, the answer is not actually given in the text.  
e.g.

***The police and the psychiatrist looked at the wife with great interest because:***

- a) *They were interested in knowing more about the husband*
- b) *They were already quite sure she was crazy*
- c) *It was part of their job always to seem interested in what people told them*

2. **Right or wrong?(True/false):** In this kind of exercise, the student is given a list of statements about the text and must decide whether they are true or false.

e.g.

***Write R or W next to each sentence:***

- *The man found it hard to believe there could be a unicorn in his garden.*
- *The wife didn't believe in unicorns.*
- *The wife told her husband he was stupid.*
- *The wife was worried when she called the police and the psychiatrist.*

An extension of the preceding exercise consists of asking the students to justify their answers underneath. They can do so by quoting a few words from the text when it is possible, or by briefly giving their reasons, in their own words.

3. **Can you tell?:** The student is given a list of points to look for in the text. The answers to some the questions will be fairly obvious; in other cases the information will be more difficult to find. But it will not always be possible to find an answer as there may not be enough evidence in the text.

e.g.

***Can you tell***

- *Whether the unicorn is real?*
- *What the wife told the police and the psychiatrist on the telephone?*
- *Why the unicorn went away?*
- *Whether the husband was sincere when he said: 'The unicorn is a mythical beast'?*
- *What happened to the wife after the police took her away?*

**4. Find the reason:** In this kind of exercise, the students are provided with a list of sentences or phrases from the text, describing an action, an event, or quoting a character. What they must do is briefly explain why things happened that way. The interest of the exercise lies in the fact that the answer is not often given in the text and must be inferred from the rest of the information given.

e.g.

*How would you explain the following statements (particularly the underlined expressions):*

- *The man walked slowly downstairs (para. 1)*
- *The wife got up and dressed as fast as she could (para. 2)*
- *They sat down in chairs and looked at her with great interest (para. 2)*

**5. Expanding statements:** This exercise may be useful to show how different parts of a text may contribute to convey the same idea since the students will find supporting details all through the passage.

e.g.

*Find as many details as you can to expand the following statements:*

- *'The man had never liked the words "booby" and "booby-hatch".'*
- *'I'm going to have you put in the booby-hatch.'*

**6. Find the link-word:** The students are asked to supply the missing link-words in a series of sentences. Several are structurally and semantically possible but only some (and their equivalents) are in keeping with the meaning of the text.

e.g.

**Supply the missing link-words so that the sentences reflect the meaning of the text:**

- *The wife telephoned the police.....her husband was asleep in the garden.*
- *.....the wife looked excited, the police and the psychiatrist thought she was crazy.*
- *.....she wanted the police to arrest her husband, she was arrested herself.*

**7. Complete the summary:** The students are given a summary of the text in which certain words, expressions or sentences have been left blank. The exercise will be more interesting if it requires a global understanding of the text and if the summary has to be completed in the students' own words.

e.g.

*This is the story of a man who, one day, ..... in his garden. His first reaction is ..... but she.....When he goes back to the garden the man.....and he is so happy and excited that he goes back.....However, she threatens to.....When he wants to see the unicorn again,.....*

**8. Complete the sentences:** Instead of asking the students to complete a summary one can ask them to complete a number of sentences that some of the characters in the text might have said.

**9. Find the errors:** For this exercise, the students are given a summary of the text in which a certain number of errors have been inserted.

e.g.

1- *When the husband went out, the wife left the house as quickly as she could and called the police and the psychiatrist. 2-When they arrived she told them there was a Unicorn in the garden and they realized she was mad. 3-They finally jumped on her and had no difficulty putting her into the straight-jacket.*

The students must rewrite and correct the summary.

**10. Sentence-building:** The students are given all the elements (words or expressions) of a sentence but they have been jumbled and must be reordered.

e.g. Reorder the jumbled sentences.

- *more / husband / the / poetic / wife / is / the / than*
- *crazy / psychiatrist / never / was / believed / that the / the / husband*
- *life / in / enjoyed / the / an / live / had / his / husband / wife / his / after / to / institution / gone*

Another possibility is to give only the key-words of the sentences which have to be formed.

e.g.

- *wife / want / husband / asylum*
- *man / not / question / unicorn / garden*

**11. Inferring what happened before:** In this kind of exercise, the students are asked to use the information in the text to make deductions about facts and events that are not actually mentioned.

**12. Could they have said it?:** Another way of encouraging students to deduce meaning is to give them several opinions (some derived from the text) and to ask them to decide whether one or several characters in the text would agree or disagree with these opinions.

**13. Open questions:** Questions can obviously be more or less open. They can be interesting as a straightforward way of drawing the students' attention to one particular sentence or fact. It is often more useful to ask questions to which there is not *one obvious answer*. They will oblige the students to return to the text constantly and to scrutinize it for details to support their opinion.

e.g.

- What does the wife think of unicorns?
- What happens when the husband goes back to the garden the second time?
- What made the psychiatrist and the police suspect the wife?
- Why did the husband say he hadn't seen a unicorn?

**14. Drawing up a list:** The students can be asked to draw up a list of nouns, verbs, words, sentences, ideas, characters, arguments for and against, etc.. in the text or in a passage from the text.

e.g.

*In the second part of the text, list the words that show the wife's excitement.*

*Find three words or expressions showing how violent the wife becomes at the end of the text.*

15. **Classifying:** Students can be given a list of words, expressions, names, etc. drawn from the text and asked to classify them according to various criteria.

e.g.

- *Classifying words under two or three main ideas*
- *Classifying expressions according to their degree of politeness, strength, formality, etc.*
- *Classifying characters according to their reactions*

16. **Selecting words or expressions from a list:** The list can be a list of people, events, actions, etc. from which the students have to make a choice.

e.g.

*The following verbs all appear in the text. Which one of them implies most hatred?*

*Scream                      tell                      curse                      say*

17. **Find the equivalent sentence:**

e.g.

*Find the sentences or clauses equivalent to the following (from paras. 2 and 3).*

- *It was difficult to calm her.*

.....

- *Unicorns do not exist.*

.....

- *Your wife is completely mad.*

.....

- *They put her in an asylum.*

.....

18. **Find the equivalent:**

e.g.

*Read the first paragraph carefully and find words or expressions which mean the same thing as:*

- *Eating*:.....
- *To wake somebody up*:.....
- *Happily*:.....
- *A madman*:.....
- *Imaginary*:.....

19. **Find the right word:**

e.g.

*Find the words which mean: (from para. 1)*

- *A lunatic asylum*:.....
- *To wake somebody up*:.....

20. **Find the opposite:**

e.g.

*Read para. 2 carefully and find the words or expressions which mean the opposite of:*

- *To excite*:.....
- *To let someone go free*:.....
- *It was easy for them to*:.....
- *She did not resist*:.....

**21. Choose the right adverb:** The aim of this exercise is to make the students ask themselves questions about the degree or intensity of certain feelings, ideas, etc., in the passage.

e.g.

*The wife is ☐ almost happy at the idea of sending her husband to a 'booby-hatch'.*

☐ rather

☐ very

☐ extremely

**22. Find the reference:**

e.g.

*Explain what the underlined word refers to in the following sentence:*

*'We 'll see about that'*

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

#### 5.0 Summary

Being able to read efficiently is clearly an extremely significant issue in the field of education, particularly in an English medium university environment like that of the N.E.U. It should receive adequate attention from both learners and instructors.

Learning to read is a process that goes on at several levels and continues over many years. It is only when the learner successfully overcomes all the difficulties inherent in every one of the stages he has to pass through that we can confidently say that success in learning to read has been attained. At every one of the stages many problems may arise. Problems related to material taught (course books), the method of teaching adopted, the pressure put on the learner and the personality of the teacher are some examples. Whenever a problem is not successfully overcome, some difficulty remains.

According to Feitlson (1973 cited in E.L.T Forum Vol. 30. No:3), success in learning to read clearly requires careful “mapping” out of all the stages of learning to read and an attempt to co-ordinate materials, methods, and procedures, and suit them to the special requirements of each case. Differences among groups of learners have to be taken into account when preparing learning materials and devising teaching techniques.

It is only when these carefully mapped strategies are carried out stage by stage and the planned goal is attained in every one of them, that we can speak of a successful situation in learning.

In most programmes or books, although it has been claimed that equal importance is given to listening, speaking, reading and writing, it seems clear that reading receives less importance than the other language skills. Cutting Edge Pre-intermediate is one of the these books claiming that it offers thorough practice in four skills-listening, speaking, reading and writing-based on a multilayered syllabus. If we look at Cutting Edge Pre-intermediate book we see the features of the task based approach. We can say that the task which means extended oral activity is the main element in the book. The primary goal is; to achieve a particular outcome or product. All these show that the book has a communicative aim which encourages students to speak and understand what is spoken. Beside these aims the book has a multi-layered syllabus, which includes a comprehensive grammar and vocabulary syllabus, in cooperating systematic work on listening, speaking, reading and writing. It takes an integrating approach to pronunciation and includes learner training and revision.

So we can say that Cutting Edge includes all the skills in different intensity according to its aim and syllabus. It places strong emphasis on listening and speaking. Reading and writing skills also take place but they usually appear as a source (reading materials) or product (writing) for listening and speaking activities.

The finding of the present study show that the students who are supposed to follow Cutting Edge have some problems in understanding the reading texts of the book because they are not related to their needs and interests. The book does not provide students with sufficient practice they need.

Since reading skill will be crucial in their future careers the student should get used to reading comprehension from the beginning. The more the students read the

more they will develop proficiency in understanding a passage written in English. If they are systematically guided about what strategies they should follow in their intensive reading, they will be more aware of the processes related to reading and will apply these consciously, hence achieving success.

It can be seen from the results of the questionnaire that the pictures and some activities of the passages are well designed, but the language used in these texts is complex. So it is not easy for the students to get the message easily from the context.

The study also shows that many learners are concerned that they can't read the passages till the end. The reason for this is that the passages are difficult in terms of their structure, vocabulary, length and cultural concepts. The teachers should make the passages appropriate for the students by giving them some necessary background knowledge about the context.

It can also be seen from the results of the questionnaire that the students are not satisfied with the activities of the reading passages because the reading passages appear as a source for the listening or speaking skills. The reading passage is not for developing reading skills and strategies. The teachers should support these reading passages with different materials appropriate to the students needs.

## **5.1 Suggestions**

It is important for English Language learners, to have an adequate number of reading skills and strategies to help them comprehend what they read and hence, be successful in their academic studies. Much work has to be done in order to provide students with an awareness of possible strategies and materials should be designed to suit their needs. Teachers must not neglect intensive reading in their classes which has value in the learning process. The students participating in this research

themselves stressed their need of supplementary activities about the reading strategies.

It is obvious that in order to increase the motivation the course books used in prep-classes should be supported. The teachers should take the students' subjects and interests into consideration while supporting the course books by extra materials. The more the students read the better they become in reading comprehension. In short, reading can be learnt by reading.

Before coming to the end of this study I myself should say that, it is known that a lot of theses on reading have been carried out in ELT and each of them has importance in terms of foreign language learners and teachers. Although we try to emphasize the importance of reading and to make some suggestions to improve the reading skill in this study, some further studies and changes can be made according to the various needs and interests of the learners.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1

#### ÖĞRENCİ ANKETİ

#### STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Sevgili Öğrenciler,

Bu anket okulumuzda takip edilen Peter Moor & Sarah Cunningham tarafından yazılmış Cutting Edge ders kitabının okuma parçalarını değerlendirmek ve sizin okuma becerinizi geliştirmek için hazırlanmıştır. Güvenilir ve doğru sonuçların elde edilebilmesi için, soruları lütfen doğru ve net olarak cevaplayınız.

Vereceğiniz cevaplarla, bu ankete katkıda bulunduğunuz için teşekkür ederim.

Zalihe AKSULAR

Dear Students,

This questionnaire is designed to evaluate the reading passages of Cutting Edge Pre-Intermediate Coursebook, published by Peter Moor & Sarah Cunningham, which is being used in our school.

Your answers must be clear and correct in order to get a reliable and valid result.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Zalihe AKSULAR

## ANKET

## QUESTIONNAIRE

## BÖLÜM 1

1. Mezun olduğun okul
- ( ) Normal lise
- ( ) Anadolu lisesi
- ( ) Özel okul
- ( ) Diğerleri

## PART 1

1. The school that you graduate
- ( ) Lycee
- ( ) Anatolian lycee
- ( ) College (Private secondary school)
- ( ) Others
2. Kaç senedir İngilizce öğreniyorsunuz?
- ( ) 1 ( ) 2 ( ) 3 ve yukarısı
2. How long have you been studying English?
- ( ) For one year ( ) For two years ( ) For three years or more
3. Size okuma ve anlama becerinizi geliştirecek yeni yollar önerilmesini ister misiniz?
- ( ) Evet ( ) Hayır
3. Do you want to be offered new ways to develop your reading comprehension?
- ( ) Yes ( ) No

4. Okuduğunuzu anlama ile ilgili özel bir ders / eğitim gördünüz mü?

☐ Evet ☐ Hayır

4. Did you have a private lesson / education in reading?

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. İngilizce okuma parçalarını anlamakta zorluk çekiyor musunuz?

☐ Evet ☐ Hayır

5. Do you have any difficulty in understanding the reading passages in English?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Okumaya karşı ilginiz var mı?

☐ Evet ☐ Hayır

6. Do you have a special interest in reading?

☐ Yes ☐ No

## BÖLÜM 2

7. Hazırlık programında takip edilen kitapların okuma bölümlerinden memnun musunuz?

☐ Evet ☐ Hayır

## PART 2

7. Are you satisfied with the reading passages of the books used in prep-classes?

☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Eğer takip edilen kitaplardan memnunsanız okuma parçaları ile ilgili aşağıdaki seçeneklerden uygun olanları işaretleyiniz.
- ☐ Ünitelerdeki resimler konulara uygun ve ilgi çekici.
  - ☐ Aktiviteler mekanik değil.
  - ☐ Konular ezbere yönelik değil.
  - ☐ Dili anlaşılır, karmaşık değil.
8. If you are satisfied with the reading passages of the books please put a tick for the suitable ones. You can mark more than one.
- ☐ The pictures of the units are related to the topics and they are interesting.
  - ☐ Activities are not mechanic.
  - ☐ Subjects do not need memorization.
  - ☐ Language can easily be understood, and it is not complex.
9. Eğer takip edilen kitaplardan memnun değilseniz, okuma parçaları ile ilgili aşağıdaki seçeneklerden uygun olanları işaretleyiniz.
- ☐ Ünitelerdeki resimler konulara uygun değil, çok çocuksu.
  - ☐ Aktiviteler sıkıcı, mekanik.
  - ☐ Konular ezbere yönelik.
  - ☐ Dili ağır.
9. If you are not satisfied with the reading passages of the books please put a tick for the suitable ones. You can mark more than one.
- ☐ The pictures of the units are not related to the topics, they are childish.
  - ☐ Activities are boring and mechanic.
  - ☐ Subjects need memorization.
  - ☐ Language is complex.
10. Kitaptaki okuma parçalarının konuları ilginizi çekiyor mu?
- ☐ Evet ☐ Hayır
10. Are you interested in the subjects of the reading passages in your book?
- ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. Okuma parçalarının uzunluğu sizce uygun mu?  
☐ Evet ☐ Hayır
11. Is the length of the reading passages appropriate for you?  
☐ Yes ☐ No
12. Okuma parçalarını sonuna kadar okuyor musunuz?  
☐ Evet ☐ Hayır
12. Do you read the reading passages till the end?  
☐ Yes ☐ No
13. Okuma parçalarını sadece soruların cevaplarını bulmak için mi okuyorsunuz?  
☐ Evet ☐ Hayır
13. Do you read the reading passages only to find the answers of the questions?  
☐ Yes ☐ No
14. Her soruda cevabı bulmak için parçaya tekrar dönüyor musunuz?  
☐ Evet ☐ Hayır
14. Do you read the passage again to find the answer of each question?  
☐ Yes ☐ No
15. Okuma parçalarının içinde çok fazla bilinmeyen kelime olduğundan anlamakta güçlük çekiyor musunuz?  
☐ Evet ☐ Hayır
15. Do you have any difficulty in understanding the reading passages because of the unknown vocabulary items?  
☐ Yes ☐ No

16. Okuma parçalarındaki cümle kalıpları gramer yönünden sizi zorluyor mu?  
☐ Evet ☐ Hayır
16. Do you find the grammar of the sentences in reading passages difficult?  
☐ Yes ☐ No
17. Okuma parçalarının içindeki cümleler uzun olduğundan anlamakta zorluk çekiyor musunuz?  
☐ Evet ☐ Hayır
17. Do you have any difficulty in understanding the reading passages because of long sentences?  
☐ Yes ☐ No
18. Okuma parçalarında geçen yabancı kültürlerle ilgili kavramları kolayca anlıyor musunuz?  
☐ Evet ☐ Hayır
18. Do you understand the concepts easily about foreign cultures in reading passages?  
☐ Yes ☐ No

### BÖLÜM 3

19. Okuma parçalarını anlaşılır hale getirmek için öğretmeniniz sınıf içinde aşağıdakilerden hangilerini uyguluyor?
- ☐ Okuma parçasını etkili şekilde işleyebilmek için öğrencileri motive ediyor.
  - ☐ Okuma parçasının okunmasındaki amacı belirtiyor.
  - ☐ Bazı kelimelerin üzerinde duruyor.
  - ☐ Parçayı okumadan önce parça ile ilgili genel sorular soruyor.
  - ☐ Okuma parçasının anlaşılıp anlaşılmadığına dair Evet – Hayır, Doğru – Yanlış, Boşluk doldurma, Cümle tamamlama, Çoktan seçmeli şeklinde sorular soruyor.

- ☐ Okuma parçalarındaki konuların, sınıf içinde öğrenciler tarafından canlandırılmasını sağlıyor.
- ☐ Okuma parçalarında geçen karakter ve nesneler hakkında sorular sorduruyor.
- ☐ Okuma parçasının, şeklinin ve stiline değiştirilmesini sağlıyor.
- ☐ Okuma parçası ile ilgili tartışma konuları ortaya koyuyor.

### PART 3

19. In order to make the reading passages understandable which of the following does your teacher apply in the class? You can mark more than one.
- ☐ Motivates the students in order to study the reading passage effectively.
  - ☐ States the aim of studying the reading passage.
  - ☐ Gives importance to some vocabulary items.
  - ☐ Asks general questions about the reading passage beforehand.
  - ☐ Asks Yes – No, True – False, Fill in the blanks, Complete Sentences, Multiple Choice types of questions to find out whether the students have understood the reading passage or not.
  - ☐ Makes the students act out the subjects of the reading passages in the class.
  - ☐ Makes the students ask questions about the characters and the objects in reading passages.
  - ☐ Makes the students change the type and style of the reading passages.
  - ☐ Finds discussion topics about the reading passages.
20. Sınıf içinde birlikte yaptığınız kitaptaki aktiviteler okuma parçasını anlamak için size yeterli geliyor mu?
- ☐ Evet                      ☐ Hayır
20. Are the activities in the book that you make together in the class enough for you to understand the reading passages?
- ☐ Yes                      ☐ No

21. Okuma parçaları ile ilgili, kitapta olmayan ek ve destekleyici aktiviteler yapmayı ister misiniz?

☐ Evet ☐ Hayır

21. Do you need any other supplementary activities about the reading passages?

☐ Yes ☐ No

## APPENDIX 2

# Take care!


- ▶ Used to
  - ▶ Vocabulary: health problems, accidents
  - ▶ Past Continuous
- Task: describe a rescue and decide who is Hero of the Year


## Reading, listening and vocabulary

- 1** a) Make a list of common health problems.

For example: a bad cold

- b) Read the quiz quickly. Which problems from your list are mentioned? Which others are mentioned?

- 2**  Do the quiz in pairs. Which answers do you think are correct? (More than one answer is possible.)

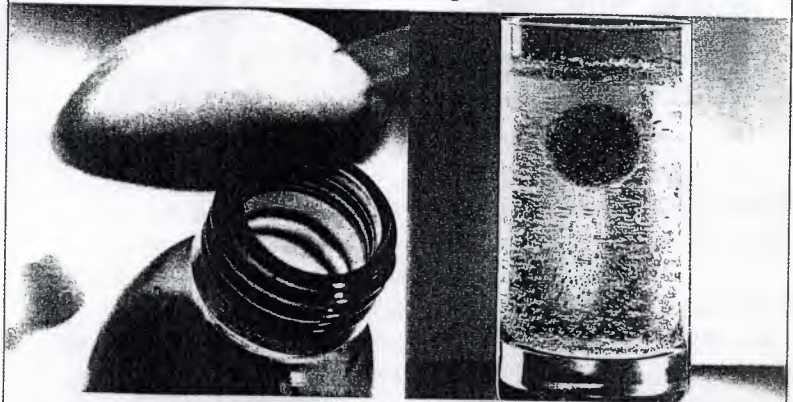
- 3**  [10.1] Listen to Dr Sandra Cabot and check your answers. Did any of her answers surprise you?

- 4** How many more word combinations can you find using these verbs from the quiz?

I've got .... a headache  
a bad cold  
to take .... medicine  
to put ... some cream ....  
on it

## Health problems

How much do you know?



- 1** If you burn yourself on a hot pan:
  - a you should put butter or oil on the burn.
  - b you should put a plaster on it.
  - c you should put lots of cold water on it.
- 2** If you've got a temperature:
  - a you should stay in bed and keep warm.
  - b you should take aspirin or paracetamol.
  - c you should rest and keep cool.
- 3** If you've got a bad cold:
  - a you should go to the doctor's and get some medicine.
  - b you should take aspirin.
  - c you should go to bed and have a hot drink.
- 4** If you want to lose weight in a healthy way:
  - a you should stop eating potatoes, bread and pasta.
  - b you should take regular exercise.
  - c you should eat less fat and sugar, and more fruit and vegetables.
- 5** If you are taking a prescription of antibiotics:
  - a you should take them at exactly the same time every day.
  - b you should finish the prescription.
  - c you should never drink alcohol.
- 6** If you've got bad backache:
  - a you should go to bed and rest until it gets better.
  - b you should go for short walks and keep moving.
  - c you shouldn't lift anything heavy.

### Pronunciation

- 1 Mark the stress on the following words.

• • •  
 medicine plaster aspirin  
 antibiotics exercise  
 headache healthy  
 prescription temperature

- 2  [10.2] Listen and check.

- 5 a)** Prepare short conversations in small groups. A has a health problem, B and C give advice. Some is good, some is bad!

**For example:**

- A: I've got terrible backache!  
 B: Well, you should go to bed and rest.  
 A: Really?  
 C: Mmm... I'm not so sure. I think you should keep moving – go for short walks and things like that.  
 A: Oh, right.

- b)** Act out some of your conversations for other students.

### Language focus 1

#### Used to

- 1** Two or three hundred years ago most people didn't live as long as we do today. Think of three reasons why.

- 2** Match the pictures a) – d) with the paragraphs 1 – 4 opposite.

### Did you know ... ?



- Two or three centuries ago people had much shorter lives – the average age was forty-five. But this was mainly because a lot of babies used to die. If people survived to be adults, they could often live to be seventy or even eighty, like today.
- Having children was much more dangerous than it is today. Families often used to have ten or twelve children, but many babies died, and unfortunately many women died in childbirth.
- In those days they didn't know how to cure all the diseases that we can cure now. Many people didn't use to have enough to eat, or did not have enough money to pay for doctors. Even if you had a doctor, some of their methods were very strange. They used to believe that cutting open their patients and 'bleeding' cured almost any problem – unfortunately, it often killed them instead!
- And people knew less about hygiene in the past. Even rich people didn't use to wash very often, and most poor people didn't have toilets or clean water. It was difficult to keep food fresh too, so they used to cook with a lot of strong spices to cover the taste of the bad meat.

### Grammar analysis

- 1** Underline all the examples of *used to* above. Cross out (X) the **wrong** explanation below.

We use *used to* for:

- things that happened more than once in the past.
- feelings, thoughts, ideas, etc. in the past (past states).
- things that happened only once in the past.

- 2** What are the negative and question forms?

► **Language summary A, page 154.**