**Mohamed Kheider University**

**Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages**

**Section of English**

Course: **Reading**

Level: **Second year L.M.D**

Instructor: **Ms. Kenza MERGMI**

1. **What is Reading? (Definitions and Purposes)**

**Reading** is a complicated **process** that comprises of equally complicated skills that require dynamic participation from the reader’s part (Mancilla-Martinez & Lesaux, 2010). Some scholars and researchers point out their perspective about reading and its process in order to highlight its complexity, as it creates questions within the reader’s mind, which requires comprehensive thought to be answered. In other words, reading can be considered as a thinking process that requires the reader to comprehend, understand, and even employ different skills to gain the desired information from a text, such as concluding, predicting, questioning, and drawing conclusions (Zainal & Husin, 2011; Küçükoğlu, 2013). Reading has opened up wide-reaching paths for knowledge that non-readers are unable to access; it is also implied by many recent studies that reading deepens the feelings of empathy, and presents the reader with a greater understanding of others’ mental states, if only temporarily (Koopman & Hakemulder, 2015; Bal, & Veltkamp, 2013).

Reading is a lifelong skill to be used both at school and throughout life. According to Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, reading is a basic life **skill**. It is a cornerstone for a child's success in school and, indeed, throughout life. Without the ability to read well, opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success inevitably will be lost (1985). Despite its importance, reading is one of the most challenging areas in the education system.

Reading is about understanding written texts. It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Reading consists of two related processes: word recognition and comprehension. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving written symbols making sense of words, sentences and connected text. Readers typically make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text and other strategies to help them understand written text.

Reading is an **activity** with a purpose. A person may read in order to gain information or verify existing knowledge, or in order to critique a writer’s ideas or writing style. A person may also read for enjoyment, or to enhance knowledge of the language being read. The purpose for reading also determines the appropriate approach to reading comprehension. The communicative approach to language teaching has given instructors a different understanding of the role of reading in the language classroom and the type of texts that can be used in instruction.

Reading is an interactive process that goes on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension. The text presents letters, words, sentences and paragraphs that encode meaning. The reader uses knowledge, skills and strategies to determine meanings.

Reading isa complex “cognitive process” of decoding symbols in order to construct or derive meaning. Reading is a means of language acquisition, communication and of sharing information and ideas. The purpose for reading also determines the appropriate approach to reading comprehension. A person who needs to know whether she can afford to eat at a particular restaurant needs to comprehend the pricing information provided on the menu, but does not need to recognize the name of every appetizer listed. A person reading poetry for enjoyment needs to recognize the words the poet uses and the ways they are put together, but does not need to identify main idea and supporting details. However, a person using a scientific article to support an opinion needs to know the vocabulary that use, understand the facts and cause-effect sequences that are presented, and recognize ideas that are presented as hypotheses and givens.

**2. Qualities of Good Readers**

Good readers:

-Read extensively

-Integrate information in the text with existing knowledge

-Have a flexible reading style, depending on what they are reading

-Are motivated

-Read for a purpose. Reading always has a function

-Rely on different skills interacting: perceptual processing, phonemic processing, recall…etc

There are for major types of competence that good readers should have:

**Linguistic competence:** the ability to recognize the elements of the writing system; knowledge of vocabulary and how words are structured into sentences.

**Discourse competence:** knowledge of discourse markers and how they connect parts of the texts to one another.

**Sociolinguistics competence:** knowledge about different types of texts and their usual structure and content.

**Strategic competence:** the ability to use appropriate reading strategies for the type of texts, and understand how to apply them to accomplish the reading purpose.

**3. Reading for Learning**

Reading is an essential part of language instruction at every level because it supports learning in multiple ways.

* Reading to learn the language: Reading material is language input. By giving students a variety of materials to read, instructors provide multiple opportunities for students to absorb vocabulary, grammar, sentence structure and discourse structure as they occur in authentic contexts.
* Reading for content information: Reading for content information in the language classroom gives students both authentic reading material and an authentic purpose for reading.
* Reading for cultural knowledge and awareness: Reading everyday materials that are designed for native speakers can give students insight into the lifestyles and worldviews of the people whose language they are studying.
* When students have access to newspapers, magazines, and Web sites, they are exposed to culture in all its variety, and monolithic cultural stereotypes begin to break down.

When reading to learn, students need to follow four basic steps:

1. Figure out the purpose for reading.

2. Attend to the parts of the text that are relevant to the identified purpose and ignore the rest. This selectivity enables students to focus on specific items in the input and reduces the amount of information they have to hold in short term memory.

3. Select strategies that are appropriate to the reading task and use them flexibly and interactively.

4. Check comprehension while reading and when the reading task is completed.