

An overview
Of
Passive Defense
English for specific purpose

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عنوان: An overview of passive defenses: English for specific purposes

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Preface

The present book is a practical reference for the ESP courses planned for passive defense M.A. students. It intends to help the candidates to practice reading and comprehending the texts they are going to face in their fields of study as well as the manuals in their workplaces.

The author has tried his best to select and modify the collected texts according to the proficiency level of the candidates while preserving the naturalness.

Since most of the applicants have problems reading the field-related texts and are not good enough at their general English, the author has also adopted a lot of useful supplementary material to facilitate the reading passages to accompany the given texts. In other words appropriate dialogues, anecdotes, and quotations are introduced to encourage the students to get prepared for the ultimate goals.

The required grammatical rules are briefly introduced in each lesson in order to pave the way for the students to achieve the intended objectives. The dear professors are recommended to teach this section functionally and avoid emphasizing the unnecessary details through uninteresting explanations.

The students are also advised to do their best to master the new rules through doing the provided exercises in order to learn the reading skill as well as the other necessary language components including vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling.

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Introduction

In today's world, reading is the key to education. Reading is a personal interaction, like a conversation, between a reader and words on a page. As you learn to read in English, you learn new words and new grammar forms. You can learn to pronounce the English words and to understand them, in their printed forms. Reading is also learning to use a set of skills. A skill is an ability to perform an act (to do something) or to make something well. For example, building something out of wood is a skill. Swimming is another skill. A person can learn to become an expert by practicing special techniques. This skill and other reading skills may be similar to how you learned to read in your first language. This book will give you plenty to practice with reading skills. This practice will help you to learn English quickly and well.

Think how an athlete prepares to run. He or she stretches and exercises individual sets of muscles. In doing so, the athlete strengthens those muscles. Learning to be a skilful reader is much the same.

A single word can have more than one meaning (and sometimes different pronunciations). A reader chooses the correct meaning from the situation of the sentence, the word lead, for example, has two common meanings. As a verb, it means to help another person toward a goal, to show the way. Lead is also a noun; it is the name of a very heavy metal (Pb). The context in this case helps the reader choose the appropriate meaning.

We also know that we use printed words to understand ideas. And yet, there is more to reading than words on a page.

Reading is a process, a sequence of related actions. The first thing we do as readers is to anticipate what will be in a reading. We predict what will be about from the clues. The main clues are the titles, the pictures, and the first few sentences. How do you choose a book or an article or a topic? If you need information about the fishing industry, which of these library books do you think will be useful? Which ones will you get from the library? Which one is probably the best?

An Ocean Traveler

How to Become a Weekend Fisherman

Fish of the World

The Geography of the World

The Blue Planet

Harvesting the First Fish of the Oceans

Big Boats and Small Nets

Will any of these books be helpful? Which ones might have information about the fishing industry? Which ones are surely not helpful? You can tell from the titles of the books, can't you? You use your own experience to choose the best books. Reading is the same because your experience helps you become a better reader.

Reading is like having a conversation with a book. You interact with the text. You read a title, and you compare your ideas to what is in the book. You check your ideas with those in the book. All the testing, checking, and comparing happen very fast. If the ideas that are in the text are ideas that we expect, then everything is fine. We don't stop. However, if the ideas are not what we expect, then we stop. We pause. We think. We might change our ideas. We might read something over again, and the reading process is a repetition of these steps.

Anticipating is just one skill. There are others that are also very important. Reading fast or rapidly is one such skill. Can you read a paragraph quickly and get the information out of it? Skimming or scanning is a rapid reading skill. You skim over the surface to understand the general idea of an article. You scan to look for specific information. Surveying, which is reading to understand the lengths and the structure, is also a kind of fast reading. Many readers survey everything they read. It helps them to know the sequence of the parts, to understand how the reading is "built". Good readers use surveying as part of anticipating.

Choosing the right speed is an important part of rapid reading. Perhaps you will read a newspaper fast, but some other reading tasks need more attention. Poems and reading assignments need slower reading. The introduction to a textbook must be read slowly and carefully. That's why it is important to know how, and when, to change the speed of your reading.

Other reading skills are related to understanding. One of these skills is understanding the main idea of a part of a reading or the whole thing. Most paragraphs have a main idea. Unfortunately, not all of them do. All the other ideas in a paragraph should be part of the main idea. Good students are able to pull out (extract) the most important idea from a reading. They also remember them.

Another important reading skill is about vocabulary. A reader who can take

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the meaning from a context has an important reading skill. If you can get the meaning from the clues in the context, then you do not need a dictionary.

Understanding the sequence, or the order of events, is another important reading skill. Sometimes you need to know what happens first, what happened second, what happened next, and what happened last. There are often clues to help you determine the sequence. Words such as first, next, then and finally are such clues.

The last of the reading skills is using the information to make other statements about the topic. We call this skill either making inferences or drawing conclusions. The difference between them is time. We draw conclusions after we finish reading. We make inferences while we read. For example, if a story tells us that a person needs an umbrella, we can infer that it is raining. If a story tells that the cows are going to the barn, we infer that the story takes place on a farm, if the story tells us that a person is wearing a warm coat because of the snow, we know that the weather is cold. Another inference is that it is winter. Many people read a lot, but they do not think about the skills of reading. They simply read. If you know what the skills are, you can develop those skills. That helps you, as a new reader of a language, to think about how you read. Learning and practicing reading skills can make you a more efficient reader.

Reading Strategies:

1) Getting the Main Ideas

You should practice finding general ideas. If you know what the topic is, it will be easier to understand the new words and structures. In English, each paragraph should have a main idea. A main idea is more than one word. One word cannot tell enough about the idea to be the central idea for a paragraph. The main idea limits the meaning. In other words, how wide or how narrow is the discussion going to be?

The most common place for a main idea is in the first sentence of a paragraph. It is a good rule to follow: Write the main idea first and then write sentences that supports it. Some writers, especially in a long piece of writing, include some introductory words. Being able to pull out (to extract) the main idea is an important reading skill. Sometimes, the main idea is not stated clearly. It is implied rather than stated.

2) Making Inferences

A reader can use the ideas in the reading to connect to other ideas. These

related ideas are inferences or new conclusions.

Every reader needs to understand the thinking of the writer. The author tries to make all his or her ideas clear to the reader. Every word that an author uses gives the reader some information besides the “meaning” of the words. Words carry a feeling with them and these feelings give additional meaning. They imply more information than just the word meaning.

For example, these pairs of sentences have the same “meaning” but they have a different feeling.

- a) The old man died last night.
- b) The old man passed away last night.
- a) The baby is getting fat.
- b) The baby is getting chubby.

In each of these pairs, the second sentence is a nicer way, more positive way of giving the same fact.

After reading “The old man died last night”, what can the reader expect? Usually it will be a medical reason for his death or some fact as information. After “The old man passed away last night”, the reader expects something personal, perhaps the emotional reaction of his family.

There is also a difference in the feeling between fat and chubby. Fat is a negative word; no one wants to be called fat. Chubby, on the other hand, means “cute and fat”. Chubby has positive meaning, especially for babies and children. There is no single rule but the common word is usually less positive. The longer term is generally more positive.

3) Surveying

As you survey, you look over a whole reading. The purpose of a survey is to understand how a reading is organized.

- What are the main ideas?
- What kinds of support are there?
- What is the purpose of the article?
- How long is the reading?
- Does the article have several sections?

All kinds of reading can be surveyed. The purpose is to understand the structure or form first.

4) Reading for Specific Purposes

Sometimes you read for special or specific purposes. Perhaps you need to find one particular fact in an article, on a list, or in a chart. Perhaps you want

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to know the general idea about a reading before you read the whole article carefully.

5) Reading for Details

- To find a date, look for numbers, capital letters, commas, and the names of months and days of the week.
- To find a name, look for capital letters and abbreviations.
- If you are looking for a fact, notice the punctuation. Percentage marks (%), dollar sign (\$), italic type, and "quotation" marks, for example, are useful clues.

6) Reading to Understand the Meanings of the Words

a) Identify the word type.

Look at each new word carefully. Decide what kind of word it is. Is it a noun? Or a verb? Or an adjective? Or an adverb? Sometimes you can figure out the meaning if you know the type of word.

Is it a noun?

- A noun may have an article (a or an or the) in front of it. [an orbit, the Earth]
- A noun may be plural and have an -s or an -es at the end. [radios, printing presses]
- A noun could have a possessive ending. [Ben's car or the Johnson's' cat]
- A noun may have an adjective (a describing word) in front of it and may be a verb after it. [the first signal; the waves travel]
- A noun can follow a preposition. [to a big city; on a fresh horse] Is it a verb?
- A verb follows a noun [Waves travel in straight lines.]
- A verb may follow helping verbs like can, must, may, should, and have to. [A satellite can relay a message.]
- A verb may have an ending of third person singular (do/does _ or a past tense ending (walk/walked)

Is it an adverb or an adjective?

- Adjectives and adverbs are modifying words, words that describe.
- Adjectives add meaning to nouns. [three satellites]
- An adjective can come between a or an or the and the noun. [the long straight road]
- Adverbs add meaning to verbs. [satellites always seem to be in the same

place above the Earth]

- Adverbs of manner tell how an action appears, what it looks like. These adverbs often end in -ly. [Children dance beautifully and naturally.]

b) Look for a form of the verb “to be”

It is easy to find a meaning for a new word when the definition uses the verb “to be” (am, is, are, was, were, has been, have been). Here is an example: A skill is an ability to perform an act (to do something) or to make something well. For example, learning to read quickly is a skill. Sewing is another skill. A person can learn to become an expert by practicing special techniques. The sentence in the example actually defines the word skill. It acts as an equal sign (=).

It also shows examples of the defined word; for example, sewing or learning to read.

c) Look for clause markers.

A clause might give the meaning of a noun. Words such as that, which, whose, who or whom, and where can begin a clause. You can use the information that follows one of these words to help you find the meaning.

d) Look for appositives

An appositive is a group of words with the same meaning as a noun. These words explain the noun by stating the meaning a second time. Usually there are commas before and after appositive.

e) Look for punctuations

The fifth strategy for finding a word meaning is punctuation. Commas [,], dashes [-], quotation marks [“ ”], and parentheses [()] might help you find meaning.

f) Use your knowledge to guess.

The meaning of a word is usually found in the sentences around that word, not in its own sentence. The reader must try to determine which words are clues to the meaning.

Remember also that the sentence itself gives you help. An a or an or the before the new word means that it is a noun. Also before a noun, you will find adjectives like this, that, these, etc. These words show that the idea had occurred already in the reading. You may find a clear synonym nearby. This second noun, in fact, may be a clue.