

# READING MODELS AND APPROACHES IN SCHOOL

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**Abstract:** *Reading competence is a crucial problem in school. So, our work proposes many ways to explore the reading process in school: models, design, approaches, thematic grouping of school texts. In this work, we formalise our reading teaching experience, so we haven't answers but we have more interpellations around opportunities and kinds of text. We propose a double-articulated occurrence teaching sequence: unit (theme) and variety (processes, activities), at which the teacher adds the methods. Finally, it is important to read for student, and the school and teacher tasks are to bring the reading in school through reading exercises and pleasure.*

**Keywords:** *reading process, models, design, approaches, exercises, unit, variety, thematic grouping.*

Reading competence is a major problem of school and goes from the determining a minimum level of competence to the growing **functional letterism**. As the letterism can cover a wide range, from the reading a board to the scientific comprehension, the **illetterism** is not necessarily mean a complete lack of reading proficiency.

## 1. Models of reading

Most models of reading can be divided into three levels of development (Albert J. Harris, Edward R. Sipay, 1980, Lionel Bellenger, 1978):

*1.1. The bottom-up models* propose a complex process of reading consisting in symbolic transfer, in translation, in the decoding-encoding (Lionel Bellanger, 1978).

The reader is involved in:

a) recognition of letters or larger units, anticipation, reading transfer in internal language;

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- b) understanding of the text is determined by the automated reading;
- c) transfer of graphic symbols in oral language;
- d) use writing as a support of oral language.

### ***1.2. The top-down models***

In these models, the reader and linguistic knowledge plays a key role in the construction based on the text's meaning. Most models in this category are based on the psycholinguistic theory, the **interaction between thought and language**.

Constants of these models:

- a) understanding is achieved by using the necessary information, starting from the graphics syntactic and semantic system;
- b) in contrast to reading models by translation, these top-down models involve the reading skills, going directly from print to understand, without going through oral expression.

***1.3. The interactive models*** (G. Rumelhart, 1986) involve the simultaneous occurrence of two processes belonging to the above models. Understanding depends on both processes of graphics information and reading memory of the reader. Understanding may be hampered by lack of critical judgments or ways of interpretation. Reading teaching strategies are based on these interactive models, and also take into account the limits of its application.

## **2. Design teaching of reading**

In order to take into account the heterogeneity of the class, in a teaching sequence should combine harmoniously unit (theme) and variety (processes, activities). We propose a double-articulated teaching sequence in this occurrence:

On the one hand, around a center of interest (**thematic axis**), which is considered sufficient grounds for student and teacher;

For example:

- high school - search for identity;
- for secondary - character adventure literature or S. F;
- for preschool and lower – seasons, fruits, vegetables, etc..

On the other hand, around a particular text type, exhibiting a type of fiction, of the dominant textual interrelation of them (**the axis of action**): for example, anecdote.

In the designing of reading process, it is necessary to consider the basic components of this system:

a) **multiple readings**: initial reading, re-reading, reading selective reading plural, etc. methodical reading, especially, for preschool and lower school children;

b) **meta-textual reflections** that highlight certain aspects of the text, typical or atypical on:

- language of the text (in relation to the use of "standard");
- techniques of story;
- some intercultural issues (eg. self-discovery / discovery of another character, adventure literature, etc..)

c) **related activities**:

- using available documentary sources (dictionaries, encyclopedias, etc.);
- activity of producing text meaning:
  - joint work (with the whole class);
  - work groups (monitors);
  - work in tandems (two students, one teacher plays);
  - individual work.

During reading, based on objectives relating to the validation, interpretation, meaning of global production or part of the text, it is important that learning tasks given to the pupils rely on playful nature of the activity.

d) **sets of evaluation**: evaluation sheets, self-assessment.

**3. Reading approaches** are logically and methodologically ordered:

- (1) before reading;
- (2) reading;
- (3) after reading.

For reason of space, we'll analyze briefly the first and third sequences of reading.

### ***3.1. Before reading: to prepare reading***

Given the difficulties of vocabulary or syntax of literary texts, the teacher must, first, to seek ways to maintain the pleasant literary text (read pleasure), reducing or removing possible obstacles. **Playful aspect** remains essential in all cases.

For this, the teacher has several means:

**Preparation of intuitive perception of the text:** space exploration of sensory perception codes of the child: visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory. Of course, the complementary use of these codes to take over the reality, in complex synapses, has a greater potential for exploration. For example, a theme about nature can be treated even in nature.

**Explain unfamiliar or difficult elements of literary text:** because there is here the flatness risk assumed in the role of professor in this teaching instance, is preferably an active approach based on induction.

**To manufacture a filter text** for beginner readers, oriented to the authentic text, purged of difficulties. Signifying meaning of the text is then facilitated by this chosen supra-text, especially, by the teacher. In extended use, however, this procedure will contribute to an immediately reading, but it will not build an active lecturer position, **producer of meaning**.

In terms of the formation of autonomous skills of interpretation and understanding of literary text, it is preferable that the students themselves find the meanings of terms which **build the problem in reference works:** dictionaries (for vocabulary), grammar (meaning functions) or encyclopedia (for referential elements). On the basis of access is designed the work *Grammar, style, composition*, by Ion Coteanu, from a teaching functional perspective. Author's aim is to situate reading of literary text in teaching positions of communication act, providing *a network of concepts* that help students to work autonomously.

### 3.2. Overcome reading

Once done reading, you can move forward, going from reading to the communication.

a) In the first time, it will be about **the return text**.

- **Storing the text**

- Through **exercises based on fidelity to the text**, readers are going to prove that they understand the literary text, summarizing the impressions of reading. This can be done in different ways:

- Based on a **simple individual summary**, taking over the key points, especially, for the preparation of drafting;

- Based on **heuristic scheme: the main idea / secondary ideas / details**

- Based on **reading notes**, which summarize the content in the form of sheets, useful in a later phase;

b) The second time, the reader will be asked **to produce his own text**. The terminal objective can be achieved in several ways:

- Establishment of *an obliquely meta-text* or, better said, a personal commentary on the text, where each can be expressed in a manner as possible original. The reader will be able to express this opinion that will not be a simple reproduction of joint activity;

- **Global transformation of the text**, for which the reader is requested to modify the story at will or teacher instructions.

For example:

- to change the narrative perspective, moving from person I to person III (or vice versa);
- to transform a narrative text into a dialogical text;
- to transform a story into a diary;
- to move from a comic strip to a written text (without images) or vice versa.

Producing a **derived text**, inspired by the starting text, rooted in the exercises of parody:

- To write in a way of an author it is a way to remove the secret mechanisms which constitute the literary text. Respecting the original literary text, you should not make it a mere object of contemplation - the teaching position that would promote the rediscovery of an infinite source of meta-texts. For this type of teaching option, there is the risk of entering in a paradoxical teaching situation of construction: teaching series of meta-texts deny the primary text, initial.

- **Exercises consisting in variations in view plan and text content:** to change a detail, to give a different conclusion, the change of vision.

- Also, **can be made the exercises consisting in variations in terms of enunciation:** to change individual and time of story, to turn direct speech into indirect speech, in free indirect speech or vice versa, to transform dialogue into monologue, etc..

#### **4. Methodical reading and textual typology**

Methodical reading approach leads to the methodical confrontation between two passages or two different texts. Replacing the problem of meaning is not sufficient, because the reader is emotionally involved. Then, we can talk about *the negotiation of meaning based on literary text*, consensual teaching situation between teacher and readers, between teacher and students, between students and students. These distinctions

allow and require, the same time, to clarify guidance for the teaching system that is chosen.

For each type of speech or type of text, the analysis tools can be adapted. Far from proposing a unique grid for deciphering all texts, the methodical practice of reading takes into account the specificity of each of the texts.

For example:

If a **theatrical text**, we are taking into consideration the fact that theatre is not only a genre but is a show art and a theatrical practice. Then, the teacher takes into account the determinations, structures and specific modes of theatrical discourse as well as the specific procedures of drama language. Reading methodical sends to the study of the order of entry to the scene of the characters, the balance of forces, the dynamics of the game, the emotional and intonation distribution spaces on the word, the various situations of enunciation and forms of dialogue, the distribution and chaining replicas, the multiple-use of the word theatre, the presence and function of the speechless characters.

To achieve a methodical reading of a **lyrical text**, the teacher associates the accurate analysis of metric procedures, the versification, the prosody (and their effects) with those of themes, motives and images. It pays a particular attention to the number of syllables, different types of poems, metrical feet or accents, game sounds, game system and rhymes, rhythm and stanza organization in relation to syntactic assemblies. This teaching leads readers to the integration of developing modes of poetic language.

To take a methodical reading of an **argumentative text type**, the teacher would take into account the linguistic categories (instances of speech, enunciation, theme), and elements of rhetoric, logic and argument. The reader analyzes the syntactic organization of the text, speech variables, rhetorical means, art of persuasion. Methodical reading, in this learning situation, may remove the sophisms and paradoxes.

## **5. Methodical reading of literary texts**

The design of **educational opportunities** for reading can be done in two interfering planes:

### **a) Study of diagonal:**

- i) to spot the reading experience space, throughout the text;
- ii) to make up the list of characters, to spot their distribution and to reveal elements of description;

iii) to reveal the events on the basis of paragraphs, topographic features, and their symbolism;

iv) to capture the sequence of reported events.

b) **Intertextuality**, based on reading and composition, starts from this point of the text, from tracking and transferring its literal meaning in imagery, and, in the aftermath of reading, the approach to be recovered vice versa. Call for intertextuality, the use of external means epitext is appropriating meaning to the text, which is not sufficient for a full reading of meaning. Confrontation in the form of groups of texts, which would seem to reveal the same thing, it will provide some pretext reveal to deeper layers of the text as figures of reading.

Jean-Marie Schaeffer (1989) differentiates **the literal status from the figural one** of the semantic structure in reception of the features content (subject, motive, and theme). There are (1) texts providing a literal and figurative interpretation or (2) other types of texts, in which the figurative sense is left to the reader, that interpretation is an effect designed to operate at its functional level of intentionality. A fast and efficient reading of text on anecdotal structured densely (eg., fairy tales, story, fable, and parable) would allow the tracking of semantic functioning of its structures in two stages: the story itself and its implementation shown. For example, to watch the story in chronological order is already to reflect on events in order to have the significant all - its configuration order (Jean-Michel Adam, 1985).

c) **Reading method** is opened to the previous readings, as well as to the autonomous or selected ones, requiring different learning paths, flexible ways to aggregate the issues.

Given the above mentioned on the contexts of reading achievement meanings, we believe that it is better to operate simultaneously in the reception of the literary text plans by:

i) *Learning exercises*: deals methodology and analysis (to observe, to reveal, to classify, and to compare) and the super-reflexive knowledge structure. The assumptions of these steps are that the representation of organization of the text involves the significance building, realized by student immediately that the understanding begins;

ii) *Exercises to explore*: solving reading difficulties. Assumptions, in this case, are those in the cognitive reorganization of reading approaches.

iii) *Exercises to compose*.

- filling in the missing lines;
- interpretation of poetry, without a critical apparatus of footnotes;
- prose transcript of lyrics etc..

## 6. Successive readings

Issue of informed judgments about a poet is, usually, based on reading several books, but just as well, are rare readers who read a whole volume. A poetic text is often the **emergence of a suite of many other previous texts or variants of human action elements** with a tendency towards full, for perfection, which could come also under a reading teaching. Variants, which usually are subject to critical identification, offer an opportunity to reconstitute the creative movement of the text. This may be reproduced reading assumptions of students by:

- filling in the missing lines;
- interpretation of poetry, without a critical apparatus of footnotes;
- prose transcript of lyrics etc.

**Construction of meaning** is through successive readings of the first reading auditory / visual reading, followed then by the operative reading task.

Given the approaches set out how the literary text, we propose below a typological inventory of exercises:

a) *Exercises to identify*, through different ways of reading, the reading experience space, determined by spatial and temporal parts – so, students cross time and space experience;

b) *Exercises to reveal the outside references of text*: indication on pagination, location of paragraphs, information that the student can make a citation, not a story. These exercises are done in writing and target, in particular, the acquisition of autonomous methods of work.

For example:

To reveal words and phrases that describe the space in the tale *Harap Alb*, de Ion Creangă: references, nominal structure, issuer, actants, etc.

c) *Exercises to compare*, referring to disparate parts of the text, sometimes distant, and focus on key changes to the text, critical developments on the plot;

d) *Exercises to imitate*, that are punctual exercises, have the function of revealing and appropriating to handle certain techniques and forms of writing. These exercises build the notion of expansion text in reader's consciousness;

e) *The questionnaires*, oral or written, are part of school habits, but the grid with questions can include the learning levels of readers;

f) *Exercises to awareness build the micro-textual language issues* (eg, insertion of a description in a narrative passage).

These types of exercises, especially, for long texts are complementary and indispensable to notions of assimilation and stabilization discovered through reading. Some of these are punctual, limited quantitatively to a precise area of text, other ones are circumscribed to an element of detail, and other ones are synthetic. Some of these have an intensive nature, because they are an operative purpose, simply or pragmatic. The debates in the group of students, limited duration, are effective teaching forms, as well as the research or literary acculturation raised by the teacher requirements. All these are based on the fact that reading is always inter-textual.

### 7. Lexical fields

Teaching operation of **determining the lexical fields** is one of methodical reading instruments.

This allows:

- text approach based on his own material, language, thus cancelling any *a priori* distinction between its substance and form, leaving aside the issue of fiction perspective of author;
- transfer between different texts (the optimal method of refining the use of this instrument, which can be applied to any text, regardless of genus or type);
  - certain range of readers;
  - new aspect of aesthetic perception, although the text is disjointed.

For the determination of lexical fields and forming to be effective, it is necessary to relate the teaching job of elucidating the concept of isotope (Ion Coteanu, 1979). An isotope is a characteristic property of a semantic unit that allows the perception of coherent meanings in speech.

Teaching operation would make sense, because are spotted those relevant isotopes giving to the text a new meaning. For teachers, it is essential to understand that a simple highlighting of the lexical field is not an instrument of reading method, but, especially, *organization in the synapses of the reading language*, which means not only reception but also validation and production of meaning through global coherence of the text meanings.

We note below some aspects of a teaching approach using instruments of reading methods:

a) **Revealing a number of lexical fields** is considering the preliminary operations to be clarified, as follows:

- why a word cannot have any meaning?

- what key words, which come into synapses lexical, be taken as meaning use of the text?

Here, to the rule that an isotope produced by a lexical field not only gives meaning to a verse or a fragment, but also to the poem in its entirety. Also, we remember that everything is meaningful; it is possible to reconstruct a context by justifying the relationship of two or more terms. For reading, the notion of immediate valence is available and opened to the word as the possibility of paradigmatic combining of the word.

Production process of meaning of the text, based on lexical fields in the formation of isotopes, can be achieved in different ways. Teaching dissociation of the text meanings and words, based on minimum operations of interpretation, does not affect the ineffable unity of the literary text.

#### b) **Building isotopes**

*Lexical field and isotope concepts* situations become operational in reading teaching situations designed by the teacher, as readers are trained to observe the many meanings of the words. This means accepting the idea that, in the same text, a lexical field can be read on several isotopes, even beyond the school canonical sense. But for the teacher is not to multiply successively and sterile lectures of students, but to give them tools to enable them to reach a plural reading of texts, based on lexical fields. There, may be introduced any circumstances of a poetic sequence, even biographical notes under observation.

Interest in this approach is to focus the perception of a meaning desired by the author, as well as other possible meanings. At this point of reading, teaching approach departs from scientific analytical approach, which reaches sometimes the same meaning, but in different ways. Essentially, the teaching approach is that students accept the idea that an isotope is exclusive of the other and that the pleasure of reading the full text is beyond the possible reception of certain ways. It is also important for the teacher to establish the principle that any new isotope offers the possibility of another reading of words and expressions already read, organized around this isotope. It would be wrong if the teacher would isolate the isotopes in each sequence of the poetic text.

### **8. Lexical fields and semantic networks**

Using *semantic network* concept in the teaching of reading, the teacher requires auxiliary steps designed to lead students to the idea that an author uses not only language, but working on it. Certain words,

integrated into revealed lexical fields, possess only certain meaning they would have in another context - thus it is expressing the author's vision of the world. Determination of semantic network is based not only on the text idea, transformed chronologically but on dichotomous poetic series of the ontology, the philosophy, the ethics (life / nothingness, good / evil, beautiful / ugly, truth / lie). This approach leads to a synthesis reflection on the text, generated, primarily, by a hypothesis of the author's outlook on existence. This hypothesis is confirmed, usually, even by the author, through the text title, but the teacher should start the initiative of other collateral approaches, pursuing to drive the reader to achieve its own synthesis on the text.

### 9. Semantic network and perspectives reading

Teaching action to track semantic networks can intersect the operation to disclose the valued or devalued terms that refer to levels of text communication. Any text provides to readers as a coherent set of effects of language, opening the potential effects of meaning through reading. As noted in a previous chapter, there are texts, in particular, ideological, offering more much several potential effects of meaning than the effects of language. Or literature value, by its initiation statute, is fair and generous in terms of language effects offer, beyond the effects of meaning through reading.

Another point of interest of methodical reading, based on lexical fields is to achieve a dynamic vision of the text, asking the students not only the revealing the lexical fields and also observation of their evolution within the text, in free variations or oppositions:

- The evolution of lexical fields based on opposition (human / animal / vegetable, animated / non animated, valued word / devalued word) can be exploited by an explanation of teaching figures of speech;
- The free changes of lexical fields can be, often, made on interplay between appearance and reality, that corresponds to the thesis assumed by the author and also the thesis addressed the reader.

For example:

Revealing the lexical fields in **argumentative text** leads to understanding the ordering of his ideas: consequently, it can be seen that the amount of lexical fields is equal to the summary of terms that could help the reformulation of an isotope.

Or, if **dramatic work**, we might talk about a genuine case of reading, if at the theatrical representation, directing means, stagecraft, technical or

otherwise, is added the public reaction, thus achieving the status of work integrally received. Text of theater can have both narrative and lyrical passages, but it is only a simple score a series of guidelines for representation, which only a normal reading cannot validate. Therefore, the role plays, common in teaching, and theatrical representations in vivo, it is better to be followed by an analysis of the effects of constituents of meaning.

### **10. Thematic grouping of school texts**

Eveline Martin (1992) emphasizes the role of a thematic contexts recognition system in exploration action of certain various texts. The author builds the list of topics presented in the communication base, which, in a speech, participate in the development of themes. Based on thematic fields, we propose the composition of sets of pre- texts for reading school, around which it may hold a referential key construction, expressed in phrases as semantic content units of proposed texts. These correspond to conceptual constant, as well as to some extra-linguistic coherence of the real or imaginary.

Our proposal on reading themes takes into account hierarchy of general culture and integrative marks, depending on the age particularities, social interests, motivations and needs of students.

a) Below is **a typology of the school literary reading thematic axes:**

(1) **Actants:**

- Animated: human types, known figures, animals;
- Non-animated: vegetable, objects;

(2) **Activities:**

- behaviour;
- situations;
- conditions;

(3) **The universe referential:**

- -sensitive natural;
- affective;
- playful;
- space: sites, existential frames, topography;
- temporal: historical-events, relative to the ages of life;
- professional;
- moral and philosophical;
- aesthetic and cultural.

b) Also, we suggest the following possible **types of relationships** established between thematic fields which enter into the reception:

i) equivalence (e.g., it likes ..., it is comparable with ..., it is synonymous with ... etc.).

ii) antonymy (e.g., it is the opposite ...);

iii) inclusion and belonging (e.g., included in ...):

- synecdocha (e.g. belonging to ...);

iv) the composition:

- with respect to matters or countable items (for example, it is forged from ..., it is part of ... etc.).

v) local, space fields:

- metonymy (for example, it has the frame..., it occurs ..., etc.);

vi) time (for example, it takes place ..., it is on ...);

vii) setting in cause:

- setting in cause (e.g., acting on ...);
- action - counter-action (for example, despite ...);
- cause - effect (for example, it has a role in the ...);
- effect - cause (rebuilt for ...);
- result - cause (for example, produced by ...).

In formulating the general content of reading teaching, we meet certain interests, needs and motivations of readers reading, especially, in school. It is important to read for student, and the school and teacher tasks are to bring the reading in school through exercises and reading pleasure.

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