

## Moving from Practice to Theory

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**Abstract :** This paper aims to reflect upon instruction in English classes with the specific purpose of reading comprehension development, having as its paradigm the considerations presented by William Grabe, in his book Reading in a Second Language: Moving from theory to practice. His concerns regarding the connection between research findings and instructional practices have stimulated the present author to re-evaluate both her long practice as an English reading teacher and as the author of two reading textbooks for graduate students. Elements of the reading process such as linguistic issues, prior knowledge, reading strategies, critical evaluation, and motivation are the main foci of this analysis as far as the activities developed in the classroom are concerned. The experience with university candidates on postgraduate courses with different levels of English knowledge in Bahia, Brazil, has definitely demanded certain adjustments to this author's classroom setting. Word recognition based on cognates, for example, has been emphasized given the fact that academic texts use many Latin words which have the same roots as the Brazilian Portuguese lexicon. Concerning syntactic parsing, the tenses/verbal aspects, modality and linking words are included in the curriculum, but not with the same depth as the general English curricula. Reading strategies, another essential predictor for developing reading skills, have been largely stimulated in L2 classes in order to compensate for a lack of the appropriate knowledge of the foreign language. This paper presents results that demonstrate that this author's teaching practice is compatible with the implications and instruction concerning the reading process outlined by Grabe, however, it admits that each class demands specific instructions to meet the needs of that particular group.

**Keywords :** classroom practice, instructional activities, reading comprehension, reading skills

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