**Purposes of reading :**

One of the key characteristics of reading, at least in reading outside the classroom, is that we have a clear purpose for doing it. Grellet (1981, p. 4) identifies two main reasons for reading: reading for pleasure and reading for information. However, each of these categories is very broad and could be further subdivided. For example, reading for pleasure might include reading humorous posts on social media or reading a novel, as well as many things in between. Reading for information could also be broken down into related but separate areas, such as reading quickly to identify appropriate information, evaluating information, and integrating information from multiple sources.

An undergraduate consulting a range of sources while writing a final dissertation is likely to read more carefully and extract more detail than someone flicking through a magazine while in a dentist’s waiting area. The undergraduate is reading to learn and will need to both integrate information from multiple sources and evaluate the strengths and usefulness of each text. This will require detailed, careful reading. The dental patient, on the other hand, is reading for pleasure (or at least distraction) and is more likely to read quickly, paying less attention to details. So, the way in which we set about reading a text will depend very much on our purpose for reading it. The implication of this is that learners need to develop flexible reading skills so that they can be successful in a range of situations. In L2 learning contexts we may be able to add a further category to those proposed by Grellet as learners may choose to read not primarily for pleasure nor to gain new information, but as a language learning strategy. In these cases the primary purpose for reading is to develop language knowledge (for example, building vocabulary range) and skills (such as reading fluency). In terms of developing language knowledge, this could involve consciously looking out for and exploiting the learning opportunities a text offers or may rely simply on the benefits of exposure to the target language.