

Along with the studies of Coltheart, Ziegler & Goswami, and others regarding the dual-route hypothesis, according to which both a lexical and a sublexical route are involved in the process of reading, we examine the specific cases of *abyad* scripts, in which vowel sounds are generally not represented in writing unless strictly necessary, as in the case of children's books, poetry, or liturgical books, among other cases. Thus, we observe that the dual-route hypothesis applied to these scripts becomes nothing short of problematic. In consequence, a possible new solution is considered, in the form of a third route.

The dual-route hypothesis for reading acquisition states the two routes are involved in the reading process. On one hand, through the lexical route we recognize words visually insofar as they are incorporated in our mental lexicon. On the other hand, through the sublexical route we must convert graphemes to phonemes one by one in order to utter a written word. An adult, literate and fluent reader is supposed to process most words by means of the lexical route, which implies less cognitive effort made, resulting in more cognitive energy to spend on reading comprehension. However, they would normally make use of the sublexical route only for unknown words not incorporated in their mental lexicons. Someone who is learning to read, on the other hand, makes much more use of the sublexical route at first, as they still do not recognize words visually and automatically, and for that reason they need to convert graphemes to phonemes in order to fully understand the word.

Within the frame of the Psycholinguistic Grain Size Theory (PGST) Ziegler and Goswami (2005) state that during the process of learning to read not all sublexical unities are equally relevant.

Ram Frost (2006), from the University of Jerusalem, has maintained that Hebrew represents an interesting case of PGST, and analyzed as well how two structurally different processes are projected depending on whether diacritic marks are used or not.

Our hypothesis is that there is a third possible route involved in the reading process, applicable to readers of abjad-type alphabets.

EXAMPLES

Among our examples are to be found two cases of Hebrew words that can be read ambiguously in absence of diacritical marks and/or grammatical context. These words are mgdl → megadel/megudal and šmr → šamar/šomer. In Hebrew they are as follows:

מגדל → מגדֵל / מגדֶל

שמר → שֶמֶר / שֵמֶר

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