

Developing reading skills and strategies

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Annotation. The following article deals with The acquisition of reading skill in a second or foreign language is a priority for millions of learners around the world, and there is a growing demand for both effective reading courses as well as high-quality second language reading materials. Those involved in teaching reading or in teacher education for language teachers will therefore welcome this comprehensive introduction to the teaching of the second language reading. In it the authors demonstrate that sound second language reading pedagogy draws on a variety of sources, including psycholinguistic theories of the nature of second language reading, information about the strategies employed by effective second language readers, and the accumulated knowledge and wisdom acquired from the study of effective teaching practices.

Keys words: psycholinguistic theories, independent reading, guided reading, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, shared reading, reading aloud.

It goes without saying, reading skill has several strategies to achieve the purpose of reading. As Nuttal (2005) states that “the aims of reading program are to enable students to enjoy (or at least feel comfortable with) reading in the foreign language, and to read without help unfamiliar texts, at appropriate speed, silently and with adequate understanding.” The students are able to enjoy reading some texts if they understood well, so it needs more comprehension, as the comprehension means the capability to give details about grammar and structure of a page of text, it also means the ability to sum up the thesis and argument of a whole book in a few sentences (Ann and Lee, 1997). However, of late researchers have come up with a great deal of information about strategies that are applicable to reading. This paper reviews two authors’ strategies, they are Luis (2007) and, Pinnel, Su and Foutas (1996). And also pints point which one of these strategies might be the most appropriate for teaching reading as one of language skills today.

As we know, teachers have some methods to teach English as second language, to make the students are able to speak fluently and write well, and also comprehend the text. Those are named by “language skills” (listening, reading, speaking and writing). Reading is a part of language skills. Brynes (1998, 2) states: “Reading is an interactive



process that goes on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension. The text presents letters, sentences, and paragraphs that encode the meaning.”

According to Brynes’ (1998, 2) definition, reading can be either language skill or process which determines the reader to use knowledge, skills and strategies. Reader knowledge, skills and strategies include:

1. Linguistic competence as the ability to recognize the elements of the writing system; understanding of vocabulary: comprehension of how words are structured into sentences.
2. Discourse competence it is the knowledge of discourse markers and how they fix parts of the text to one another.
3. Sociolinguistic competence as knowledge about different type of texts and their usual structure and content.
4. Strategic competence it is the ability to use top down strategies as well as knowledge of the language (Bryners 1998, 2).

Moreover, reading and the type of text have the purpose to determine the specific knowledge, skills and strategies that the reader need to apply to achieve reading comprehension. Because reading comprehension is more than decoding, it results when the reader knows which skill and strategies are suitable for the type of text, and understands how to relate them to complete the reading purpose (Bryners 1998, 2).

Skill and strategy both are sounded similar, but in fact, they have different usage and function especially for teachers and students. As Robb (1996, 7) states that “skill has described a set of helpful tools that students practiced in order to improve reading. (They include, but are not limited to: vocabulary in context, sequencing, making inferences, coping with unfamiliar words, and many more).”

Robb (1996, 7) also states that the understanding of skills and strategies are shades of the same thing, but representing different stages of development. A skill becomes a strategy when the learners can use it independently. When she can reflect on and understand how it works and then apply it to new reading materials when it occurs, the student has become a strategic reader.

READING STRATEGIES

Good reading strategies help the student to read in very efficient way. By using those strategies, the student aim to get the maximum benefit from the reading with the minimum effort. Many researches discuss about the reading strategy. This paper should review the strategies which are applied by Luis (2007) and, Pinnel, Su and Foutas (2006).

Luis states that there are six strategies that should be done for teaching reading in ESL classroom. They are:

1. Knowing what you want to know.

You have to know why you are reading the text. What do you want to know after reading it? Are you reading with purpose or just pleasure?

If you know this, you can examine the text to see whether it is going to move you towards this goal.

A simple way of doing this is to look at the introduction and the chapter headings. The introduction should let you know at whom the book is targeted, and what it seeks to achieve. Chapter headings will give you an overall view of the structure of the subject.

Ask yourself whether the book meets your need. Ask yourself if it assumes too much or too little knowledge. If the book isn't deal, would it be better to find a better one?

1. Knowing how deeply to study the material

Where you only need the shallowest knowledge of the subject, you can skim material. Here you read only chapter headings, introductions and summaries.

If you need a moderate level of information on a subject, then you can scan the text. Here you read the introductions and summaries in detail. You may then speed read the contents of the chapters, picking out and understanding key words and concepts. At this level of looking at the document it is worth paying attention to diagrams and graphs.

Only when you need detailed knowledge of a subject is it worth studying the text. Here it is the best to skim the material first to get an overview of the subject. This gives you an understanding of its structure, into which you can fit the detail gained from a full, receptive reading of the material. Where you are reading a document in detail, it often helps if you highlight, underline and annotate it as you go on. This emphasizes in your mind, and helps you to review important points later. Doing this also helps to keep your mind focused on the material and stops it wandering.

This is obviously only something to do if you own the document. If you own the book and find that active reading helps, then it may be worth photocopying information in more expensive texts. You can read and mark the photocopies. If you are worried about destroying the material, ask yourself how much your investment of time is worth. If the benefit you get by active reading reasonably exceeds the value of the book, then the book is disposable.

The most effective way of getting information from magazines is to scan the content tables or indexes and turn directly to interesting articles. If you an article useful

then cut it out and file it in a folder specifically covering that sort of information. In this way you will build up sets of related articles that may begin to explain the subject.

Here are some information should be given in detail to make students understand more.

1. Reading Aloud.

Here, the teacher or tutor reads a text loud to students. This allows tutors to model reading, engage students in a text that may be too difficult for them to read on their own, and let students sit back and enjoy the story.

2. Shared Reading.

In Shared Reading, tutors and students read together, thus allowing student to actively participate and support one another in the process. Tutors point to text as they read to build word recognition. And tutors also read slowly to build a sense of story.

3. Guided Reading.

Guided reading prepares tutees with strategies that allow for more independent reading. In guided reading, tutors create purposeful lessons that extend beyond the story. These lessons challenge tutees in a number of areas: vocabulary building, character comparisons, story structure comparisons, relating text to personal experience, and so on. The goal is to provide tutees with strategies that they can repeat independently.

4. Independent reading.

Even those who support transactional definitions of literacy typically also engage students in independent reading since successful independent reading strategies will help them succeed in school. Students read by themselves or with partners, choose their own texts, and employ strategies that they have learned through other reading activities.

Conclusion

As one of the language skills, reading has a main role to achieve language competency. It has changed for many periods about its strategies, as many researchers study the best strategies to be used in reading activities. According to Luis (2007, 3), reading activities have different strategies and techniques that students can use to read more effectively. These are: 1). Knowing the needs to know, and reading appropriately, 2) Knowing how deeply to read the document; skimming, scanning or studying, 3). Using active reading techniques to pick out key points and keep your mind focused on the material, 4). Using the table of contents for reading magazines and newspaper, and clipping useful articles, 5). Understanding how to extract information from different article types, 6). Creating table of content for reviewing material, and 7). Using indexes of table contents, and using the glossaries to help the students to assimilate technical

information. Those strategies can be adopted by students to achieve the purposes of reading comprehension if they study this subject themselves. While the teacher cannot use these strategies because they have some disadvantages. First, only strong student can apply those strategies while the weak one cannot use those strategies because of lack of vocabularies. It is suggested for the students who want to apply those strategies to enrich their vocabularies then they can apply those strategies in English learning. Second, there is no interactivity using those strategies, because they are applied individually as the teacher cannot do his function as an instructor for learning English. Besides the advantage of these strategies is the full achievement of students' comprehension about their reading.

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