COGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES FOR COMPREHENSION

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Abstract: Most people think that reading improves the knowledge and widen horizon. However, they do not know when and how reading affects in enhancing knowledge. There are many challenges among readers how to improve their reading skills, not only for non-natives, but also for natives it can be perplexing.

Key words: cognitive reading, visualizing, decoding, dual coding theory, predicting, inference, self-questioning.

Introduction

Reading is a visual process, which is looking at the elements of text, books or any other reading materials. It will be useful when the readers decode reading materials, comprehend the meaning, gain information, understand what does author mean. As Stephani Macceca (2014) mentioned "reading is a dialogue between reader and the author which reader should respond emotionally and intellectually, search for information and infer ideas from the text". While reading, reader should know how to analyze, get the main meaning, the purpose of author by writing this. In order to comprehend the text, reader, firstly, should not only know the reading strategies, but also how to use them while reading.

Since late 1970s, researchers and scholars began to recognize the importance of using strategies in reading and conducted a number of researches about reading comprehension, how to improve this, how can make it effectively and efficiently. Using strategies in reading is one of effective way for readers, especially who are non-natives, in overcoming difficulties in language deficiency and better achievement in on language proficiency tests (Zang,1992). After conducting a number of researches, they classified strategies into four groups: cognitive strategies, compensation strategies, memory strategies and meta-cognitive strategies (Oxford, 1990; Chamot, 2005; Zhang, 1993). In this paper, I will review cognitive reading strategies according to current researches.

Main body

Cognitive strategies make easier reading comprehension and develop thinking skill. It helps learners to manipulate tasks themselves, complete tasks fully (Chamot & Kupper 1989,p 14) and urges to be proficient reader (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Ozek & Civelek, 2006). There are a plenty examples of cognitive strategies. According to

O'Malley & Chamot (1990), cognitive strategies include rehearsal and repeating, organization or grouping and classifying words, inferencing, summarizing, elaboration .But there are also other types of cognitive strategies : predicting based on previous knowledge, analyzing text organization, self-questioning, making summary, taking notes of main points, translating, transferring (Chamot & Kupper, 1989; Oxford, 1990).

Using background knowledge is connected with readers' experiences and serves as scaffolding. By comparing old knowledge with new one makes reader more successful in reading. In interacting process of reading, previous knowledge plays an important role in successful activation (Zhang, 1989, 1992). Because when students read existing information on their mind, it will be better to understand and remember the old one easily. Lee(1986) revealed the effects of background knowledge in reading, understanding and recalling of text and discovered learner's memorizing ability is improved with one of the background knowledge components, like familiarity, context, transparency are presented.

Another cognitive strategy, which is the most discussed among researchers, is asking questions through reading.   By asking questions, learners clarify their misunderstandings and monitor their comprehension. Readers may ask questions for some reasons: to understand characters and events or author's intent and to make predictions. Van den Broek et al.,(2001) studied giving the questions themselves support reading with more understanding the text to be read. However, he discovered that posing questions would be useful for older readers to memorize information not for youngsters. In addition, giving questions concentrates on difficulties in comprehending skill and with these problems (Presley,Symons, Mc Goldick &Snyders,1995). Based on the studies of Nolan, self-questioning and predicting are cognitive strategies that, the former is directed with critical thinking improving importance of understanding the text, the letter is cognitive blueprint, which guides reader while reading (1991).

So far, it has been confusing between predicting and inferencing. Predicting is a process forecasting what might happen next, whereas inferencing inquires what the authors mean by that. Since in inferring, writers do not give all information about topic and processes to the readers as the authors expect that the readers can read by making inference that integrate the information with their previous knowledge. Making inference is one of the main factor in reading successfully (Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Hansen & Pearson, 1983). According to O'Malley and Chamot (1990), in this strategy, reader can predict the content of the text according to its title.

According to Pressley's research, readers who form imaging mentally while reading are better to remember easily text than those who does not image (1976). It is an effective strategy for readers in reading texts, especially narrative ones, to understand what is happening by visualizing places, personalities, conditions. In

visualizing, readers make abstract concepts into concrete ones by transforming words into mental images. It is proved in Allan Paivio's " dual coding theory" that human cognition consists of both a verbal system for language and non-verbal, visual- spatial one is for images (1986, p.53).

Another one study which is conducted by Khathayut and Karav(2011), that summarizing should be shorter than the original text containing main ideas of the text and it has to be written using the writers' own work. Fatma Susar & Nevin Akkaya (2009) conducted a research on Turkish students about using summarizing strategies qualitatively. According to the result, students must improve their knowledge in using summarizing strategies.

As for the next strategy, O'Malley& Chamot (1990) stated that the elaboration is relevant current knowledge to old one, having made personal associations to new information. Meanwhile, Keshavarz & Mobarra(2003) mentioned that elaboration makes double functions both improving reading comprehension and providing learners with further linguistic form. Indeed, in elaboration strategy, students associate new material with older one. These connections improve working memory efficiently. In the studies of Christie & Vukelich (2003) , elaboration strategy is shown as thinking about previous knowledge of the text and connecting it to background knowledge. They also mentioned that comprehension is not just identifying all words of text, it is a link that readers should connect the text information to what they already know.

Conclusion

To conclude, this literature review was focused on cognitive reading strategies for reading comprehension. It helps to identify various types of cognitive strategies along with their efficiency. As it was mentioned above, using background knowledge, self-questioning, predicting, making inference, visualizing, note- taking, elaboration all of them are included the cognitive strategies. This paper deals with each of the category based on different approaches given by notable scholars.

After reviewing the literatures, it was found that using different types of cognitive strategies enhance students' comprehending the meaning of the text in reading. In addition, researchers compare some learners who always use the strategies with others who are not aware of them. From the results, it can be seen that readers can concentrate on the meaning of the passage at the time of reading. It can give efficiency for readers to grasp the meaning and structure simultaneously. In addition to this, cognitive reading strategies, namely note taking can be the most valuable strategy for visual learners. This can create an opportunity for those learners to remember their intake from any reading passage after some period.

This paper aims to describe and evaluate some cognitive strategies in order to make the readers aware with the help of evidences suggested by researchers. It could help to analyze the different notions and ideas derived from different scholars. By the

help of this literature review, one can be informed and provided with valuable sources in terms of cognitive reading strategies. It can be developed with new ideas and implemented differently.

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