

ANTICIPATION GUIDE : A STRATEGY OF TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION

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Abstract

This paper reveals an alternative model for teaching reading comprehension at senior high schools. An anticipation guide is a comprehension strategy that is used before reading to activate students' prior knowledge and build curiosity about a new topic. Before reading, students listen to or read several statements about key concepts presented in the text; they're often structured as a series of statements with which the students can choose to agree or disagree. Anticipation guides stimulate students' interest in a topic and set a purpose for reading. They also create curiosity for the reader, provides the reader with a purpose, gives a focus to the reading and can be a way for the teacher to be cued into how much scaffolding his/her students need. The teacher generates a number of statements based on the reading. Some of the statements are confirmed by the reading, while other statements are contradicted by the reading. Students are asked to evaluate the accuracy of the statements. Students from differing opinions can explain their thinking. This model is designed and hopefully will be useful for English teachers who are training students to read and face the implementation of Curriculum 2013 at senior high schools.

Key words: *model, anticipation guide, reading comprehension*

A. INTRODUCTION

Like many other fields of knowledge, reading has undergone a tremendous change in facing the 21st century learning. This change is the fruit of innovative theories of reading, which have come as a reaction against the views that claimed that reading is a passive skill wherein readers do no more than assigning sounds to letters and reinforcing grammatical structures. The innovative theories say that reading is an interactive process of communication between the writer represented by the text and the reader with his prior knowledge.

One question in particular that is the mind of English teachers is how to encourage students to bring background knowledge to bear during reading. The answer is to activate schema. It presupposes that students already possess relevant background knowledge to bring to a specific reading situation, but may not be aware of its importance to reading or does not know how to activate it. One way to do it is to create a classroom environment in which students are encouraged to anticipate and predict what a reading situation is going to be about.

B. DISCUSSION

Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is a process in which the reader constructs meaning using as the building materials the information on the printed page and the knowledge stored in the reader's head. To teach comprehension effectively, we need to understand what the process involves.

Reading is no longer seen as a static process and reader is not merely a passive one. Reading is seen as a process of constructing meaning through a dynamic interaction among the reader, the text and the context of reading situation (Wixon, 1987). Meaning is actively created in the readers' mind as a result of his/her prior knowledge and information given in the text. Based on the ideas above, it is clear that reading involves comprehension, and successful comprehension depends on the reader, the text and the reading context.

Research has shown that the prior knowledge that a reader has about the topic helps him to understand a text better. What does this mean for the teacher in the class? Wong (2004) clarifies that there are three factors that must be considered in teaching reading comprehension. First, Building prior knowledge is an important aspect of teaching comprehension. Students may have knowledge, but they may not know how to link it to the topic. The teacher has to think of ways to provide the background knowledge so that students can make the necessary links. Then, the teacher can help students by providing for successful reading lesson. The text is another factor to consider. The teacher needs to consider types of text she has chosen for reading. Comprehension can be affected by the writer and the way she writes. The last factor to consider is the reading context. involving the setting, the task set and the purpose of reading. For the teacher, then, developing conducive setting for reading lessons can aid students' understanding. Setting questions for written work. During instruction, setting the purpose of reading at the beginning the lesson is a good way focusing students' reading and encouraging them to develop skills like predicting, skimming, scanning, locating the main idea, and details within the reading lesson.

In implicating the three factors above, teachers must include explicit reading strategies as an integral element of their instructional plans. They should integrate effective comprehension strategies before, during and after reading.

- *Pre-reading* prepares students for learning by activating their prior knowledge. Pre-reading activities can benefit those whose background knowledge, command of key concepts and vocabulary may be insufficient. In addition, pre-reading activities help students focus attention on what is most important... Pre-reading strategies often used by proficient-level readers involve making connections, generating questions and determining important concepts...
- *During-reading* activities prompt students to visualize, make inferences and monitor their comprehension. . . Using during-reading activities, the teacher can help students prioritize what is most essential and connect this information in a meaningful and organized way.
- *After-reading* activities deepen understanding, helping students summarize and understand what they read. . . [these activities] go beyond merely identifying what was read and assist students with integrating new learning with previous knowledge"

Anticipation Guide

Activation of schema and background knowledge is one of the most beneficial strategies that teacher can engage in before reading to increase comprehension (Murtagh, 1987). They can be activated in many ways: by previewing vocabulary, making predictions and assessing what is already known about the topic. If preparation by determining and building background knowledge is neglected, students may have trouble setting a purpose for reading, they may have difficulty in distinguishing ideas and answering questions. By engaging in strategies which develop background knowledge before reading, teacher can find how much background knowledge the students have. The more students know about the subject, the more interesting it

becomes. As a result, it motivates students to read and learn from the texts (Hearn and Hopper, 2006).

One of pre reading strategies that builds schema and background knowledge and motivate students to read is the anticipation guide. It builds them by presenting a small number of statements related to the texts. The statements may be correct or incorrect. The reader must decide if he agrees or disagrees with them.

Specifically, a number of experts in teaching reading have clarified the definition of anticipation guide. Beers (2003) defines it is a set of generalizations related to the theme of the selection. Students decide whether they agree or disagree with each statement in the guide. The statements elicit a discussion that encourages students to anticipate what they will read, to find out how these statements play themselves out in a text, and to return to the statements after reading, ready to have discussions.

Kozen, Murray and Windell (2006) state that an anticipation guide is a pre reading strategy that combines literacy instruction and content-area learning. It provides teachers with the skills and tools necessary to address the needs of all learners, including those with disabilities. It can be effective in promoting decoding skills, enhancing word meaning, and strengthening comprehension.

Moreover, anticipation guide is a strategy in which students forecast the major ideas of a reading passage through the use of statements that activate their thoughts and opinions. This strategy is helpful in activating students' prior knowledge and stimulating student interest just before a reading assignment is given

The primary instructional purpose of an anticipation guide is to increase student comprehension of a text. A teacher would use this strategy to help students understand themes or ideas in a text. The anticipation guide creates a scaffold from which students are able to more readily identify major themes in a text, make self to text and text-to-text connections, and analyze their thinking. It can also help to identify any misconceptions students have about a topic; therefore, teachers can “begin to modify these misconceptions through a well-formulated instructional sequence” (Readence, Bean and Baldwin, 1981). The language arts goals achieved through the use of an anticipation guide are the use of enabling strategies to read and write, comprehension of text, locating major themes, making connections and being able to communicate ideas effectively.

Moreover, they added that anticipation guides are also a best practice for accommodating diverse learners in a classroom, as they help to set students up for success. A secondary purpose of the anticipation guide is as an assessment tool. Teachers can use the post-reading responses to gauge student learning and understanding. These guides activate student’s prior knowledge, encourage them to make personal connections to what they will be reading, make predictions, and give them a chance to become an active participant with the text before they begin reading. Then, they allow students to look for cause and effect relationships as they read. In addition, dependent readers will read better if they anticipate what it is they are going to read. Finally, they allow students to generalize, to discuss those generalizations, and to explore their own responses to a text.

Anticipation guides can be used with students in all levels of elementary school, as well as in the upper grades. Students as young as kindergarteners can respond to an anticipation guide tailored just to them. For example, pictures can replace text to make meaning clear for younger students. Statements can be shortened and simplified to ensure comprehension.

Anticipation guides are appropriate for all content areas, and can be a tool for integrating subject areas (for example writing about how thinking changed after reading a text).

Furthermore, Kozen, Murray and Windell (2006) discuss the use of an anticipation guide not only for content comprehension but also as a means of literacy instruction. It contends that middle school students are expected to have the literacy skills necessary to learn content, but for those students lacking in these skills, anticipation guides help bridge the gap. They help direct students' attention to read for meaning and locate major themes. Other benefits highlighted by the authors are that anticipation guides are liked by students and easy to implement, that they can be used as study guides, that they are a best practice for meeting the needs of all learners, and that they can be used as an assessment device.

According to Jacobs (2010), by using anticipation guide, students take part in class discussion about the subject matter and this strategy encourages them to discover their thoughts and opinions. As a result, anticipation guide also helps students to be critical thinkers and able in understanding different kinds of information. This strategy prevents students to be just passive receivers of knowledge. This study also helps instructors to develop their capacity in finding different ways for removing instructional barriers

In conclusion, anticipation guide can be used to activate prior knowledge before reading, encourage readers to use that prior knowledge during reading, and continue students' involvement into a post reading stage by reacting again to the guide. Briefly, the anticipation guide is designed to introduce a chapter or lesson and cause readers to focus their attention on the topic that is to come. The readers' previous thoughts and opinions about the concept are activated by their responses to a series of statements about the topic. These statements are carefully worded so as to challenge the students' beliefs, which are based on their past experience with the subject. The controversial nature of the statements serves to arouse their curiosity and to motivate them to read to resolve the conflict. Any misconceptions they have held prior to this time will be brought out, and subsequent reading can help the students to correct these inaccuracies. Additionally, teachers can use the statements after reading as a reaction guide, so that the students can observe how their thinking has changed as a result of the new information they have encountered.

The advantages of applying anticipation guide have been discussed by many researchers based on their studies. Kozen, Murray and Windell (2006) studied the use of anticipation guides in Middle School Classrooms. They cited several advantages to using anticipation guides. The first advantage is that it is a tool that can be used in a variety of disciplines. Students can use the same literacy strategy in multiple classes and become more proficient in their pre-reading skills. Secondly, anticipation guides can be multi-sensory and involve multiple intelligences. Students could map or diagram their ideas, students could write in the top margins on a copy of the text, or students could talk with other students. Third, anticipation guides create a community of learners. Students build a shared knowledge base. Finally, students have a record that they can use to evaluate how their understanding of a concept has changed.

Mitchell (2006) described the different results of teaching both with and without the use of an anticipation guide. She found that those students who did not use an anticipation guide were less able to discuss the major themes of the book or to make relevant self to text connections. Those students who had used an anticipation guide were able to locate major themes, make connections, and used more higher order thinking skills when discussing the book. She believes that the anticipation guide helped to activate her students' prior knowledge, which then led to greater comprehension, interest and motivation when reading the text. She states that,

“the anticipation guide serves to connect a student to the reading selection”, thereby increasing comprehension because the student is more vested in the text.

Woelders (2007) studied the use of anticipation guides in secondary school history classrooms before watching historical films or documentaries. Students can complete the anticipation guide based off their prior knowledge and by viewing previews of the film or other promotional material. Students can then revisit their anticipation guide to identify missing information in the film, inaccurate information in the film, and potential sources they might consult to clarify information. Anticipation guides in the history classroom help students to understand the interpretive nature of history as a discipline . One key purpose of an anticipation guide, particularly useful for analyzing films but also other sources, is that it helps students to think about the credibility of a source.

In their research on the Effect of Using Anticipation Guide Strategy on Iranian EFL Learners’ Comprehension of Culturally Unfamiliar Texts, Roozkhon and Rahmani (2013) found that using anticipation guide had positive effect on Iranian EFL learners’ comprehension of culturally unfamiliar texts. This study encourages instructors to construct authentic environment in educational settings through employing beneficial strategies in an efficient manner in their instructional schedules. Moreover, anticipation guide as a pre reading strategy arise learners’ curiosity and provide authentic environment in class. Moreover, the mentioned pre reading strategy helps students cooperate with each other during class discussion and this kind of cooperation can be useful for all aspects of their lives. Also, in this strategy, the students learn to plan before starting to read. So, it is one way to instruct students shoulder some responsibility and become more active throughout learning process.

From the ideas above, it could be concluded that the anticipation guide is a pre-reading comprehension strategy that offers several benefits:

1. An anticipation guide takes the process of reading content material from a purely passive state to active participation and discussion. Through prediction, reaction, and controversy, the guide acknowledges students’ interests, knowledge about a topic, and personal experience.
2. Anticipation guide is usable across content areas. Articles or selections from text can be taken from any content area.
3. It is liked by students. Students appreciate the clear and direct format that anticipation guides afford. The strategy appeals to students because it is interactive and social, encourages discussion, is nonthreatening, and engages them in controversy, which they love at the middle school stage
4. It is fairly easy to implement. After constructing and implementing a few anticipation guides, teachers appreciate their ease and simplicity.
5. It is appropriate for at-risk student or students with disabilities. Anticipation guide can be completed by individuals, peer duos, or small groups. In addition, instructional flexibility and the use of adaptations give teachers the means to address a variety of student needs.
6. It can be used as study guides. Anticipation guide, when completed, may serve as excellent study guides for students who have difficulty learning material for content mastery. On the basis of the use of anticipation guide as study guides, teachers can easily see the results of student progress when they assess student learning.
7. It can be used as formative evaluation devices. Students’ pre- and post responses along with their explanations and appropriate textual references afford teachers an excellent

means for assessing students' understanding, content mastery, and ability to locate effective textual support for ideas.

C. CONCLUSION

The anticipation guide is a way to activate readers' prior knowledge and encourage them to use it in making predictions about the material to be read. As they read the material following the initial presentation and discussion of the statements, they think about their original beliefs and the opinions of others. After reading, students integrate the new information they have received with their previous knowledge to form modified beliefs. The processes incorporated—using prior knowledge, making predictions before reading, monitoring comprehension during reading, and using fix-up strategies after reading—represent comprehension processes that good readers possess. Thus, we can see how the use of the anticipation guide can enhance comprehension.

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