THE ROLE OF THINK-ALOUD STRATEGY IN TEACHING READING COMPREHENSION TO ELEMENTARY LEARNERS

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Annotation Reading is regarded as a complex process which constructs meaning from prints and also at the same time it involves word recognition, comprehension, fluency, and motivation [7:2001]. One of the seven key components in reading is comprehension. Comprehension is the most beneficial component in the reading process; without it, reading is meaningless. In comprehending reading materials the ability of reading does not ensure competency. Background knowledge of the reading topics, broad oral and print vocabularies, understandings of printed works, knowledge of multiple types of texts, purposes for reading and strategies for constructing meaning from contexts are significant for readers in improving comprehension. In the reading process readers visualize and build mental models according to the interpretation of the texts. Also, learners' comprehension of the reading materials is influenced by their prior knowledge, cultures, purposes for reading, and motivation.

Key words: *Strategy, teaching, reading, comprehention, elementary, learners.*

Annotatsiya Oʻqish nashrdan ma'no tuzadigan murakkab jarayon sifatida qaraladi, shu bilan birga u soʻzni tanib olish, tushunish, ravonlik va motivatsiyani oʻz ichiga oladi [7:2001]. Oʻqishning yettita asosiy komponentidan biri bu tushunishdir. Tushunish - oʻqish jarayonida eng foydali komponent; usiz oʻqish ma'nosizdir. Oʻqish materiallarini tushunishda oʻqish qobiliyati kompetentsiyani ta'minlamaydi. Oʻqish mavzulari boʻyicha dastlabki bilimlar, keng ogʻzaki va bosma lugʻatlar, bosma asarlarni tushunish, bir nechta matn turlarini bilish, oʻqish maqsadlari va kontekstdan ma'no yaratish strategiyalari oʻquvchilar uchun tushunishni yaxshilashda muhimdir. Oʻqish jarayonida oʻquvchilar matnlarning talqiniga koʻra aqliy modellarni tasavvur qiladilar va quradilar. Shuningdek, oʻquvchilarning oʻqish materiallarini tushunishlariga ularning oldingi bilimlari, madaniyatlari, oʻqish maqsadlari va motivatsiyasi ta'sir qiladi.

Kalit soʻzlar: *Strategiya, oʻqitish, oʻqish, tushunish, boshlangʻich sinf, oʻquvchilar.*

Аннотация Чтение рассматривается как сложный процесс, который конструирует смысл из отпечатков и в то же время включает распознавание слов, понимание, беглость речи и мотивацию [7:2001]. Одним из семи ключевых компонентов чтения является понимание. Понимание — наиболее полезный компонент процесса чтения; без него чтение бессмысленно. При понимании материалов для чтения умение читать не гарантирует компетентности. Базовые знания тем чтения, широкий устный и печатный словарный запас, понимание

печатных произведений, знание нескольких типов текстов, целей чтения и стратегий построения смысла из контекста важны для читателей для улучшения понимания. В процессе чтения читатели визуализируют и строят мысленные модели согласно интерпретации текстов. Кроме того, на понимание учащимися материалов для чтения влияют их предварительные знания, культура, цели чтения и мотивация.

Ключевые слова: *Стратегия, обучение, чтение, понимание, элементарный, учащиеся.*

English has one of the biggest vocabularies of all languages. Due to deficiency of time, you need to devote fairly time to learn the second language and become much more attentive [8,67:2019]. In the reading process learners collect data from the texts, make associations, draw inferences, and make their conclusions on the read context. Learners combine their initial knowledge with the data from the text and their positions concerning to the text. During recent years, learners are also tend to read online materials as additional to printed materials. However, learners, especially those in the primary levels, are not taught the appropriate method to process the data, assess the quality and reliability of the materials, and think metacognitively about their reading. As stated by Carioli and Peru [3,49-61:2016], diverse authoring tools and symbolic expression utilized in piece of writing make it tough for readers to understand the online text. Learners will not have the proper attitudes, strategies, and knowledge to handle the online materials' data without corresponding reading strategies. Furthermore, readers are more likely to come across some problems in reading comprehension without reading strategies, regardless of printed or online materials.

Reading strategies are the steps readers take for them to comprehend the reading materials. Afflerbach, Pearson and Paris [1,364-373:2008] identified these strategies as aimful, objective-driven endeavors to lead and alter a reader's attempt to interpret, comprehend and built meanings from contexts. Reading strategies as to how readers perceive a task, how they make sense of what they read, and the steps taken by the readers when they do not comprehend. Reading strategies are significant in aiding readers in solving their language flaws and gaining better reading outcomes efficiently, and improving readers' self-esteem. High leveled readers can decide on the relevant reading strategies to be taken according to the contexts.

However, low leveled readers lack the skills in applying suitable reading strategies during reading process. Thus, they require to be represented to diverse reading strategies to better comprehend the reading sources. Reading strategies consists of three phases that readers take before, during and after reading a text. The first phase covers identifying the goal, defining the topic, and utilizing background knowledge. In the second phase, readers attempt to make relations between the words and sentences. Readers control their comprehending and determine the basic ideas of the contexts, besides making conclusions from the contexts. In the third phase, readers attempt to reflect on the data collected and connect the new data with their initial knowledge. Metacognitive strategies are included

in the reading process when readers outline, guide and control their thoughts. Teachers must teach the learners suitable reading strategies to improve their reading proficiency.

Teachers require to break down productive reading into some parts to allow learners to be aware of the various components, how these components function together with each other and integrate reading strategies into reading. Some of the methods that teachers can take to assist the learners to be succeed to competent readers involve teaching decoding skills, aiding learners improve fluency, forming and motivating their prior knowledge, teaching vocabulary words, providing motivation and encouraging them in individual answers to the contexts.

To improve reading comprehension of elementary learners think-aloud is often used as an effective one. Think-aloud, or in other words, expressing one's thoughts, is a reading strategy that has been utilized for many years. As stated by Alzu'bi [2:2019], think-aloud is a strategy for teachers to improve their learners' thinking processes and comprehend what they are reading. This strategy can assist readers improve the ability to control their comprehending of the reading sources. It allows learners to use relevant approaches to help their comprehending.

On the basis of the previous researches, this approach has efficiently aided elementary learners to increase the skills required for reading comprehension. This strategy raises metacognition as learners think about their thinking while reading and what others think. Learners express their thoughts during the think-aloud process while reading, solving problems, or answering to questions. Furthermore, learners can take notice and comprehend how high leveled readers understand the reading sources through the strategy. It is profitable to low leveled readers when they take notice how high leveled readers think during reading process.

Walker [9,688-692:2005] also stated that think-aloud boosts struggling readers' motivation in reading and develops their self-effectiveness towards reading. There are some approaches to utilizing think-aloud while reading. One of the approaches is through teacher-modelling. In this approach, the teacher explains and represents the thinking process while reading to learners. This approach is significant as it allows learners to take notice how high leveled readers think while reading, enabling them to learn about metacognition and analyze their thinking strategies and patterns[6:2005].

Another approach is through reciprocal think-aloud. Learners work together in small groups or as a pair to think aloud. In reciprocal think-aloud, learners turn by turn represent the thinking aloud process, to listen and record their pair's opinions. Learners have the same opportunity of practicing think-aloud while observing the process as they exchange roles. This approach allows learners to make reflection and exchange what works and what demands to be developed when they think-aloud. It is supported by Vygotsky's theory that knowledge is socially constructed. Learners can form new knowledge or overcome problems effectively when they express their ideas. Learners will be able to connect their initial knowledge with the new data received to build new knowledge. The third approach is through individual think-aloud. This approach

encourages learners conduct the reading and thinking aloud process separately. According to Davey[4,44-47:1983], there are five techniques in using think-aloud. Self-assessment sheets improved to aid struggling readers be more active and participate in the reading and thinking process has been efficient.
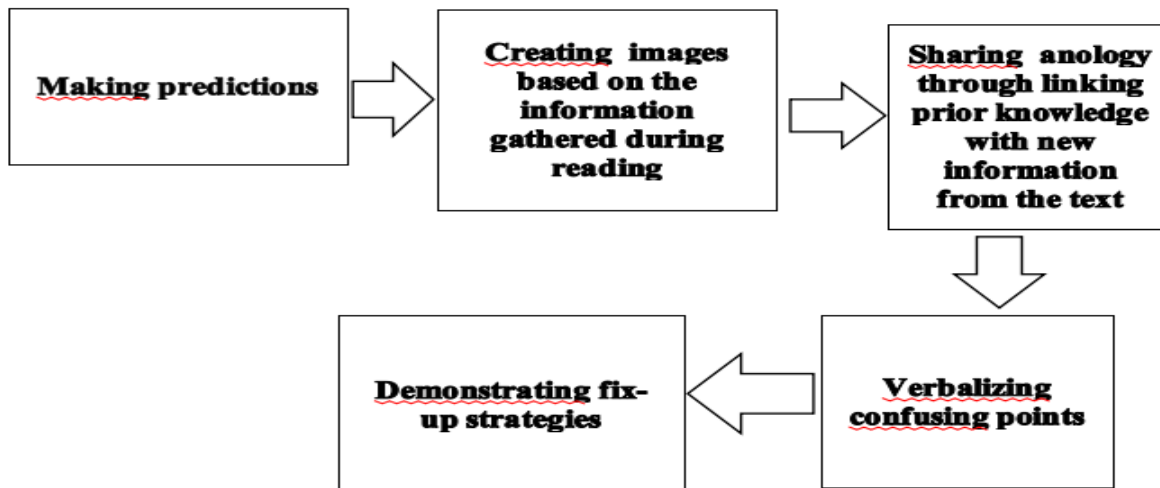

Figure 1. Five techniques in think-aloud strategy by Davey

Besides evaluating learners in their reading, think-aloud can also be applied as assessment tools for teachers. Through expressing thoughts, teachers can observe their students' strength and weaknesses in reading. Afterwards, teachers will outline for correct instructions for reading classrooms and supply support and guidance for learners to increase their comprehension. This strategy could also help classroom discourse.

Previous studies have shown that think-aloud in reading demonstrated positive outcomes in developing learners' engagement and motivation in reading and learning. Learners' attitudes towards reading and how they imagine themselves as readers developed utilizing this strategy. This strategy improves learner' strategy utilization, raises self-effectiveness and enhances learners' engagements. Besides, learners' rashness is deduced, and they can have more reflective and strategic reading. This strategy efficiently helps learners in creating a wide ranges of approaches to assist them comprehend the reading sources and tackle barriers in comprehension.

Fawcett [5,95-104:1993] stated that for several young children, their conscious thought processes are in the zone of proximal improvement. Therefore, learners can be aided to utilize think-aloud through scaffolding. Besides that, the usage of think-aloud as a scaffolding model to increase higher thinking, additionally, to the clarifications of challenging concepts or tasks. The efficiency of this strategy is not restricted to printed materials. Carioli and Peru [3,49-61:2016] stated the significance of the think-aloud strategy in helping learners to tackle online reading materials. Think-aloud, when represented and guided efficiently, will allow readers to be active, engaged, and reflective of their online reading materials.

A study with university students on their perceptions towards the usage of think-aloud in reading. It was informed from the study that learners have various opinions on the think-aloud strategy. Learners defined having diverse preferences on the think-aloud approaches, where some consider reciprocal think-aloud while others consider to think-aloud personally. Comprehending learners' preferences towards the various approaches are crucial as it allows teachers to outline and provide supports for the respective approaches.

Think-aloud has been applied in reading comprehension for many years. Thus, it would be useful to learn the efficiency of the strategy in enhancing reading comprehension in the 21st century learning environment. The researches carried on the usage of think-aloud in reading were mainly presented in western countries. Some researches were presented in Asian countries where the cultures are comparatively distinctive from western culture. In some Asian cultures, children are brought up in environments where they cannot verbalize their opinions, mainly to the elders of the society. It would be profitable to learn how the distinctions in sociocultural practices impacts on the efficiency of this strategy.

There had been several contradictory ideas where think-aloud was regarded as to be less efficient for learners with low leveled proficiency of reading. These learners were also considered to be less assured in utilizing the strategy. Moreover, there has been a deficiency of studies being carried on relating learners' perception towards utilization of the strategy in helping their reading comprehension as most of the prior studies focused on the influence of the strategy on learners' reading comprehension performances.

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