Using Metacognitive Strategies For High-Level Reading Skills In Digital Environments

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"The vice of the poor reader is to say the words to himself without actively making judgments as to what they reveal."

- *E. L. Thorndike, 1917*

Workshop Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:

1. be aware of the importance of applying metacognitive innovative reading strategies for digital text analysis to enhance reading effectiveness and fluency; and

2. use practical applications of these strategies new technology in the classroom to enhance the high-level reading skills of the digital native language learner.

Metacognition: Thinking about how you think

Before anyone can truly improve his/her reading skills, he/she needs to understand what happens in good readers' minds while they read. He/she may even be doing these things already. He/she just doesn't know it…yet.

More About Metacognition

Good readers have developed good strategies when they read. Strategies help readers understand, connect to, and determine the importance of what they are reading. They also visualize, ask questions about, and read between the lines of what they read.

Need for metacognitive strategies for developing high-level language learning

There is a clear consensus among researchers that a key to high-level successful language learning is metacognitive knowledge — that is, thoughts on how to control learning, selecting study strategies, monitoring the learning process in different states, and analyzing the effectiveness of the learning strategies and changing them according to tasks and personal needs.

Need for metacognitive strategies for developing high-level reading skills

- In fact, students can be trained to develop these metacognitive skills (Coiro & Dobler, 2007).

- A stronger emphasis on developing learner-centered environments and autonomous learning will call more attention to language learning strategies. Among these strategies, reading strategies have received a lot of attention in the field of reading research. Because reading is a major skill in first and second language learning, good readers' strategies can provide invaluable insights into the nature of reading comprehension and how it could be taught (Stevenson, Schoonen, & Glopper, 2003).

The Net Generation: the digital natives

- The Net Generation has been branded as “digital natives” (Prensky, 2006). They are “native speakers” of the language of computers, video games, and the Internet.
- Their experience with the technology has enabled them to master complex tasks and make decisions rapidly (Junco & Mastrodicasa, 2007; Prensky, 2006).
- Classroom exercises need to extend these capabilities that our students already possess.
- In contrast to these digital natives, most instructors are digital immigrants. Many of us still have one foot in the past, and “digital” is our second language; we continue to learn and sometimes struggle with it on the fly. For example, digital immigrants may still print out an e-mail, print a document to edit it, or phone someone to see if he or she received their e-mail.

Metacognitive reading strategies in digital environments

Reading online has become an integrated part of language education, which requires students to have additional skills. Awareness and usage of online reading strategies, known as metacognitive online reading strategies, are proven tools to enhance reading skills in online environments.

Metacognitive reading strategies in digital environments

Making Connections:

- Text to Text (books, movies, T.V., etc.)
- Text to Self (similar events in your life)
- Text to Life (real world events)

Metacognitive reading strategies in digital environments

Making Connections

Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, Text-to-World

Rationale

Reading comes alive when we recognize how the ideas in the text connect to our experiences and beliefs, events happening in the larger world, our understanding of history, and our knowledge of other texts. “Text-to-Text, Text-to-Self, Text-to-World” is a strategy that helps students develop the habit of making these connections.

Making Connections

A high-level online reader should ask himself/herself:

- What do I already know about this?
- How do the ideas in this text remind me of another text (story, book, movie, song, etc)?
- How do the ideas in this text relate to my own life, ideas and experiences?
- How do the ideas in this text reading relate to the larger world – past, present and future?

Seven specific metacognitive reading strategies in digital environments

- a. Previewing: Learning about a text before really reading it.
- b. Contextualizing: Placing a text in its historical, biographical, and cultural contexts.
- c. Questioning to understand and remember: Asking questions about the content.
- d. Reflecting on challenges to your beliefs and values: Examining your personal responses.

Seven specific metacognitive reading strategies in digital environments

- e. Outlining and summarizing: Identifying the main ideas and restating them in your own words.
- f. Evaluating an argument: Testing the logic of a text as well as its credibility and emotional impact.
- g. Comparing and contrasting related readings: Exploring likenesses and differences between texts to understand them better.
- Furthermore, Burmeister (1986, qtd in Cherney 1986) defines critical-creative reading and thinking as requiring the skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

Comprehension Monitoring

- Evaluation
  - Keeping track of the success or failure of one's own ongoing efforts to understand
- Regulation
  - Taking appropriate steps to deal with whatever difficulties arise

Metacognitively competent reading

"Throughout the reading of the text, good readers do much monitoring, are very aware of characteristics of the text (e.g., its difficulty; relevance to their reading goals; when the text is ambiguous; when the author is attempting to bias the reader; and, how the ideas in text relate to prior knowledge, for example, recognizing the ideas in the text as familiar to ones encountered before). The readers also monitor when they are having problems reading, for example, losing concentration or failing to understand terms in the text or get the meaning of the text. Such awareness of difficulties (or lack of them) can cause the reader to adjust reading, either speeding up or slowing down, or perhaps even seek other text to provide some background."

Pressley & Gaskins, 2006

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