Polo del Conocimiento

Uso de tareas de lectura para involucrar a estudiantes de EFL de la Universidad Técnica de Babahoyo

Use of reading tasks to engage EFL students of the Universidad Técnica de Babahoyo

Usando tarefas de leitura para envolver os alunos de EFL da Babahoyo Technical University

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Ciencias de la Educación
Artículo de Investigación

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Resumen

El reading como habilidad receptiva, es muy importante en el proceso de aprendizaje de los estudiantes. La diferencia entre la lectura intensiva y extensiva es muy importante para los estudiantes, ellos pueden desarrollar los diferentes aspectos y estrategias, de acuerdo a los diferentes tipos de actividades y textos. Liu y Zhang (2018) declararon que "Gracias a la lectura extensiva, los alumnos pueden desarrollar buenos hábitos de lectura, ampliar sus conocimientos de vocabulario y mejorar sus actitudes positivas hacia la lectura. En particular, se cree que los alumnos pueden encontrar más palabras desconocidas cuando leen de forma independiente" (p. 2). el reading mejora el vocabulario de los estudiantes y refuerza su gramática y las otras habilidades.

Harmer (2008) habló sobre seis principios del reading, el desarrollo y consecución de estos principios, mejora la comprensión lectora de los estudiantes, y también aumentan su habilidad cognitiva. El Reading da a los estudiantes las facilidades para aprender vocabulario y adquirir nuevos conocimientos.

Palabras claves: Reading; Habilidad receptiva; Principios; Estrategias; Habilidad cognitiva.

Abstract

The reading like a receptive skill is very important in the student learning process. The differences between the extensive and intensive reading is very important for students, they can develop the different aspects and strategies according to the different reading tasks and kinds of texts. Liu and Zhang (2018) stated that "Through extensive reading, learners can develop good reading habits, build up vocabulary knowledge and enhance positive reading attitudes. In particular, it is believed that learners may encounter more unknown words when reading independently" (p. 2). Reading enhances students' vocabulary and reinforce grammar and the other skills.

Harmer (2008) talked about six reading principles, the development and achievement of these principles improve students reading comprehension, and also upgrades their cognitive ability. Reading gives students the facilities to learn vocabulary and acquire new knowledge.

Keywords: Reading; Receptive skill; Principles; Strategies; Cognitive ability.

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Resumo

A leitura como habilidade receptiva é muito importante no processo de aprendizagem dos alunos. A diferença entre leitura intensiva e extensa é muito importante para os alunos, eles podem desenvolver os diferentes aspectos e estratégias, de acordo com os diferentes tipos de atividades e textos. Liu e Zhang (2018) afirmaram que "Através da leitura extensiva, os alunos podem desenvolver bons hábitos de leitura, expandir seu conhecimento de vocabulário e melhorar suas atitudes positivas em relação à leitura. Em particular, acredita-se que os alunos podem encontrar mais palavras desconhecidas quando lêem de forma independente" (p. 2). a leitura melhora o vocabulário dos alunos e reforça sua gramática e outras habilidades. Harmer (2008) discutiu seis princípios de leitura, desenvolvendo e alcançando esses princípios melhora a compreensão de leitura dos alunos, e também aumenta sua capacidade cognitiva. A leitura dá aos alunos as facilidades para aprender vocabulário e adquirir novos conhecimentos.

Palavras-chave: Leitura; capacidade receptiva; Começo; Estratégias; Habilidade cognitiva.

Introduction

Lack of motivation is one of the most difficult aspects of teaching a foreign language. Meşe and Sevilen (2021) said "Motivation is one of the key factors that affect L2 learners' success and performance in the language learning process; that is why, widely concerns teachers and researchers." (p. 11). It is essential in the learning process that students have motivation to learn. If students do not want to learn, it would be impossible that any pedagogical theory enhance students' knowledge.

Reading skill is one of the receptive skills, and its importance in the learning process is invaluable. According to Harmer (2008),

"There are many reasons why getting students to read English texts is an important part of the teacher's job… Reading is useful for language acquisition. Provided that students more or less understand what they read, the more they read, the better they get at it. Reading also has a positive effect on students' vocabulary knowledge, on their spelling and on their writing… Lastly, good reading texts can introduce interesting topics, stimulate discussion, excite imaginative responses and provide the springboard for well-rounded, fascinating lessons." (p. 99).

Likewise, Reading enhances productive skills, if students read, they could be able to write better, and also is going to improve their vocabulary, and it would be possible to use it in writing and speaking.

There are different kind of readings, extensive and intensive readings, extensive reading should involves reading for pleasure, students generally read novels, web pages, newspapers, magazines or any other reference material, away from the classroom. Liu and Zhang (2018) stated that "Through extensive reading, learners can develop good reading habits, build up vocabulary knowledge and enhance positive reading attitudes. In particular, it is believed that learners may encounter more unknown words when reading independently" (p. 2). Intensive readings refers to the detailed focus on the construction of reading texts which takes place usually in classrooms, intensive reading is usually accompanied by study activities. Insuasty (2020) expressed that "intensive reading itself is effective for developing reading skills because students in an EFL context can comprehend a text step by step and not as whole. In conclusion, intensive reading is deemed as an effective tool for improving reading comprehension." (p. 71).

Likewise, one of the more important aspects when we talk about the reading skill, is the effect of choose a text according to the reading level of the students. It means, it is important students do not feel that the text is beyond their capabilities, nevertheless, the other side is also a mistake, is the text and exercise is very easy, it would be a possibility that students even do not read the text and only infer the answers. According to Petersen and Ostendorf (2010) "Reading proficiency is a fundamental component of language competency. However, finding topical texts at an appropriate reading level for foreign and second language learners is a challenge for teachers." (p.89). This is related also with Collins-Thompson et al. (2011) who stated "Perhaps the most fundamental challenge is simply that of providing relevant results at the right level of reading difficulty" (p. 403). The importance of an adequate reading level it is going to affect directly the motivation that students have to the reading, and lack of motivation is one of the biggest problem that teacher of English as a Second Language have.

Reading strategies

The reading strategies are diverse according to different authors, but most of them agree that the more important skill are:
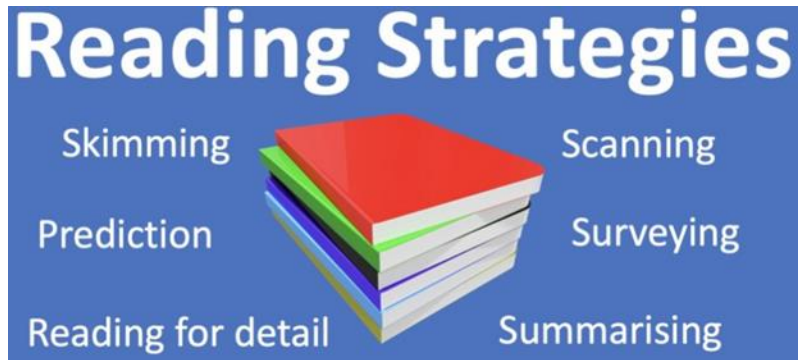
Figure 1

Skimming

Skimming in reading only refer to the action of look for the general idea of a text, this kind of strategy is important if we only want to do exercises like find the tittle, or express what it is about. According to Wahyuningsih (2018) "Skimming refers to looking only for the general or main ideas, and works best with non fiction or factual material." (p. 30). in this aspect, skimming is not appropriate if you want specific information. With skimming you do not read everything, sometimes you only can read the abstract or the first and last line of a text, or only some words in each line, or also, a mix of these strategies.

Skimming is necessary when you have to read a lot, or you want to identify a text that is necessary, it serves you to save time, and it is very important for the students. Actually, we find a lot of information on the internet, and we need to identify which of them is necessary and which not.

Scanning

Scanning is the technique that readers use to search for specific information. Sometimes information is very visible, for instance, when you look for dates, phone numbers, names of characters, etc. Touriz (2020), stated that "scanning is a quick technique of reading to locate specific information … means quickly searching for some particular pieces of information in a text. By scanning readers only need to extract specific information without reading throughout the whole text" (p. 7). Reading for specific information does not require read all the text. For example if students are looking only for the year when something occurred, in that cases when they find the information, they do not need to continue reading.

Prediction

Predicting is an essential reading strategy. It allows learners to utilize info from the text to anticipate what will happen in the story. When making predictions, learners envision what will come next in the text, based on their prior knowledge. In this case, if reader have a lot of prior information, they are going to have the possibility to infer more possible situations. If a person is a good reader, prediction is going to be very useful for them, they can predict more things, and are prepared to have prior knowledge of different aspect, also predict about different reading's topics.

Fan (2020), based on his study on Chinese to the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Learners, stated that predicting or guessing strategies can improve learners' vocabulary mastery. Also, it supported that vocabulary learning be strategically integrated into the whole English learning process. Predicting gives students the possibility to have a better idea, and comprehension of the text even before of read it.

Surveying

Surveying helps you gain an understanding of the chapter and how the material is organized. It also provides insight into the main ideas of the sections. Surveying is a comprehension strategy that helps students think about the text they are reading while they are reading. Safrianti (2020) said "Surveying is a systematic reading strategy to help students organize the reading process into manageable units. It is only of many similar strategies that teachers can use to improve comprehension." (p. 361). Surveying helps readers when they have along text, they can organize and get a better comprehension of the text.

Reading for detail

Also known as reading for detailed comprehension, whether this entails looking for detailed information or picking out particular examples of language use, should be seen by students as something very different from the skills mentioned above. Careful reading or reading for detail is probably the most commonly used reading strategy. This is a slower reading process that starts at the beginning of a passage and proceeds to the end. When reading for detail, students should read every sentence, but they should not try to know the exact meaning of each word.

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Detailed reading is a technique that involves carefully reading and analyzing every word for a deeper understanding of the material. Detailed reading is used to extract accurate information from a material. It is different to analyze the words, or search for the meaning. It means, readers have to know what the sentence express, and they need to understand the main idea, and the supported information of the paragraph, but it is not indispensable if they do not know the meaning of only one or two words, if they do not change the meaning of the whole text.

According to Arifin et al. (2019) the importance of reading for details is indispensable for reading comprehension, "Comprehending reading material started from understanding the topic and finding the details of information of the text. Therefore, applying an interesting strategy is needed to improve the students' ability to comprehend the reading material" (p. 1177.).

Summarizing

The reading strategy of summarizing is very important for readers, specially in academic environment. The definition of summarizing is when we take large selections of text and reduce them, making sure to include the main points and the general idea of the article. The purpose of this strategy is to pull out the main ideas out of the passage and focus on the key details. In this case is necessary a deep reading, the summarizing need to transmit the message of the text you read and in this case readers must understand the whole text and manage correctly the information to summarize it.

Zahra and Mehdi (2022), citing Ozdemir (2018), has remarked that "summarizing indicates the degree of reading comprehension and needs to be incorporated in all reading studies. Moreover, researchers have demonstrated that summarizing is a complicated cognitive skill that nurtures and flourishes in the long run" (p. 12). In this case, summarizing implies the use of other skill like speaking or writing, but only to transmit the message of the reading.

Reading Principles

Other very important point of the reading skill are the principles. According to Harmer (2008), there are 6 principal readings. The most important aspects of each one are:

- Encourage students to read as often and as much as possible

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This is the first principle because of its importance. It is necessary to encourage students to read, at the beginning could be any kind of text, it is important that if a person do not like reading, start reading about topics they like. When they start to have a habit, they could continue reading about different things. According to Harmer (2018) "The more students read, the better." (p. 101).

- Students need to be engaged with what they are reading

This point is different with the previous one. Students need to be engaged what they are reading, and sometimes the topic must not be liked by the reader, but they need to be interested, they need to want to learn more, that is the best way to they continue reading.

- Encourage students to respond to the content of a text (and explore their feelings about it), not just concentrate on its construction

One of the problems of the reading skill is that students only read to answer to make the exercises given, for that reason, it is important to motivate students with activities that make them read deeply and go beyond, this would make students not only look for the information of the exercises, and make them read to improve their reading comprehension, and learn something about a new topic.

- Prediction is a major factor in reading

Expectation is the clue. When teachers introduce the reading with some exercise, maybe a discussion about some topics, or general questions, or also a vocabulary to hint about the reading topic, in that situations students will start creating expectations about the text they are going to read. This expectation could engage them to the topic, and make they read the text because they want to know more, and not only to answer an exercise.

- Match the task to the topic when using intensive reading texts

Intensive readings generally refers to readings make in a classroom, given to the students by the teachers, and not chosen by themselves. In this cases, teachers need to select the correct activities according to the text and the level of the students. Teachers need to choose good reading tasks, the right kind of questions, appropriate activities before, during and after reading.

The most useful and interesting text can be undermined by boring and inappropriate tasks; the most commonplace passage can be made really exciting with imaginative and challenging activities, especially if the level of challenge is exactly right for the class.

- Good teachers exploit reading texts to the full

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If a text and activities have been chosen to apply, it is because teachers have analyzed them, and thinks that with that text, students are going to learn something new, and are going to improve their reading skills. Therefore, it is necessary to take advantage of the reading as much as it could. It is a waste of time and resources make students read again in another class the same text, students are going to be bored about it. Thus, teachers must use the text correctly and exploit it with all the tasks and knowledge students could acquired with it.

Conclusions

Reading skill is extremely important in the learning process, it helps students to improve their comprehension, stimulate their imagination, acquire more vocabulary and knowledge about different and new aspects. The different reading strategies are necessary to apply in the different parts of the learning process, students must learn to apply different strategies to answer the different kind of tasks. From skimming to summarizing, all the strategies develop the students capabilities to enhance their reading skill.

The reading principles stated by Harmer (2008), also help teachers to engage with the students in their reading process. The different aspects of the reading skill are covered in this six principles, and if students follow them, they will make their reading easier and better. And if students enhance their reading skill, the other skills, and also their grammar and vocabulary, are going to improve their learning process.

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