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The Acquisition of Reading in Children: A Concept Paper

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ABSTRACT It is of paramount importance that children interact with the text with different experiences that will enable them to understand the notions rooted within the text so that children may be able to comprehend what they are reading. This paper highlights the strategies that can be used to teach the learners how to read. Children, who are always in contact with text, learn to read very fast. As a result, learners should be exposed to a variety of reading materials. Therefore, the objective of this paper is an attempt to discuss the various knowledge and skills needed to acquire the habit of reading. The paper is based on a literature review and the author's own experience.

INTRODUCTION

Children should always be exposed to the use of particular terms for the fundamental elements of spoken language such as noun, verb, adjective and adverb to enable teaching. When children come to school, some will have by this time mastered the elementary ideas of reading before they enter school, while others will still need the explicit instrument to lay the basic concepts for reading. They also need to grasp specific things concerning spoken language, literatures and words when they initially practice prescribed reading instruction in school. They also have to comprehend the way in which text functions and to be able to associate text with the resonances and terms in verbal language. The topic on the acquisition of reading in children was reviewed through the use of a systemic literature review utilizing both the contextual and conceptual review methods (Snow and Matthews 2016; Meniado 2016; Zhussupova 2016).

OBSERVATIONS

Knowledge and Skills to Acquire Reading

For children to acquire reading effectively they need to master various skills and strategies. In the first place, children need to know what reading is all about and how it functions, that the spoken words can also be put into writing to be read by others. As soon as they validate these abilities, they begin to develop fluen-

cy, which encompasses identifying words in a text very fast and with ease. This result in children reading with improved pleasure and comprehension. For children to acquire reading they need knowledge and skills such as the oral language, previous knowledge and experience, print concepts, awareness of phonemic, the relationship between letter and sound, vocabulary, semantics and syntax, metacognition, as well as higher- order reasoning expertise (Adams 1990; Reid 2014).

Oral Language

Children begin reading with substantial verbal language knowledge. Most of what children are acquainted with concerning oral language is acquired by paying attention to and speaking with other people like parents, siblings, friends and teachers. Children also construct the vocabulary, semantic knowledge, which is concerned with being conscious of the meaning, as well as syntactic knowledge, which is concerned with being conscious of the structure that forms the basis for reading and writing as a result of the experience with oral language. Children who have a strong foundation for reading are those who are proficient in oral language. This background enables them to recognize words precisely and to predict interpret connotation to the transcribed language (Biemiller 1999; Snow and Matthews 2016).

Not all the children start attending school having possessed a strong basis in oral lan-

guage. Some children are from the families that have a poor language experience, and as a result it influences the development of a vocabulary that is plentiful as well as the language structure that is compound. For those children who have a problem with speech and difficulties with language may possess a limited vocabulary while their grammar is less developed than other children of their age. Sometimes some children who communicate in the first language or dialect that is diverse from the verbal teaching may start schooling with an inadequate vocabulary in the language, which is used for teaching, but they may have strong conceptual expertise and a language base, which is plentiful to develop fluency as well as an understanding in their latest language. These types of children need encouragement for constructing a durable bridge to transport them from the known to the unknown (Biemiller 1999).

Previous Intelligence and Familiarity

It is of paramount importance that children interact with the text with different experience that will enable them to understand the notions rooted within the text so that children may be able to comprehend what they are reading. These proficiencies facilitate children to anticipate the content. In turn the expectation heads to simpler deciphering of the text and have a greater comprehension of its meaning (Ontario Ministry of Education 2003; Snowling et al. 2014).

Previous knowledge and experiences play an important role in the acquisition of reading because it is concerned with the world of comprehension that children take along to school. In other parts of the world like Ontario, children come to school from different nations and traditions. As a result, these learners' previous knowledge and experiences may vary to a great extent from those experiences of their fellow pupils and teachers. This situation can cause these learners to encounter problems in associating with both the subject matter and setting of the materials commonly employed in Ontario classrooms (Ontario Ministry of Education 2003).

Concepts Concerning Print

When children initially come into contact with print they are not conscious that the text, which is on the page stands for verbal language that is, they carry meaning. The word concept concerning print is concerned with the consciousness of how language is carried in written words. These concepts are concerned with:

- Directionality, which has much to do with the understanding that text, that is Venda or English text is read from left to right and from top to bottom.
- Diversities between letters and words, as words are constructed by different letters and there are gaps in between the terms.
- Realization of capitalization and punctuation, and diacritic signs, such as accents in Venda.
- Typical characteristics of books, which include the front and the back of the book, title, as well as author.

To teach young children these concepts, they need to interrelate with experienced readers such as teachers, family members at home and observe them when using the print material. They must also be provided the chance to show off their comprehension of the concepts. Teacher-librarians should provide children with a variety of print material such as books, children's encyclopedias, charts, signs and labels so that they will be able to practice demonstrating the understanding of the concepts concerning print (Adams 1990; Wyse et al. 2014).

Phonemic Awareness

According to the National Reading Panel 2000, "phonemic awareness and letter-sound knowledge account for more of the variation in early reading and spelling success than general intelligence, overall maturity level, or listening comprehension." Moreover, the above are the foundation for learning the system of an alphabetic writing. The knowledge that the words one articulates are constructed of sounds is referred to as phonemic awareness. Learning First Alliance 2000:14 and National Reading Panel 2000 asserted that phonemic awareness is an important basis for distinguishing terms. Phonemic consciousness assists children to be able to learn and to read. In the absence of phonemic awareness children struggle and carry on to experience reading difficulties. There is also confirmation that phonemic awareness can be taught to children and that the role of the teacher in progressing phonemic awareness is important in nearly all children in order to acquire reading.

For children to acquire reading, they need to be conscious of phonemic awareness so that they will be able to categorize and employ the specific expresses in oral language. Children may come upon speech sounds that do not occur in their mother tongue when learning the second language. As a result, they need sufficient time to acquire phonemic awareness in their language of teaching. Children will be able to demonstrate an understanding by identifying that the spoken word "play" is made up of four different sounds that are $pl + a + y$.

Teachers should involve children in participating with and employing different sounds of the language so as to develop phonemic awareness in them. This can be achieved by means of songs, rhymes, as well as events that encourage learners to mix specific sounds together to create words in their minds. They can also split down words that they hear into their component sounds. Both combination and splitting up of speech sounds in oral language afford an important basis for both reading and writing. Phonemic awareness set up children for deciphering and translating the sounds of the language in text (Adams et al. 1998; Snow and Matthews 2016).

Letter- Sound Relationship

When children develop an understanding about both the phonemic awareness and the concepts concerning print, they in turn understand that there is a means through which to associate the sounds they hear with the text on the page to transfer meaning. According to Peregoy and Boyle (2001), in both the English and French writing systems, one letter may not essentially signify one particular sound, and so it is important that children get universal and precise teaching about agreements between the speech sounds and individual letters and groups of letters.

Children are able to understand the connection that exists between the graphemes that is the letters of a written language and the specific sound that is the phonemes of a spoken language, as a result of phonics instruction. Moreover, both organized and precise phonics instruction is the most applicable means for advancing the skill of children to recognize words in print (Zhussupova and Kazgekova 2016).

Vocabulary for Reading

For children to acquire reading they need sufficient vocabulary of words that they comprehend and can also utilize them appropriately to trademark their knowledge and experiences. Both the width and deepness of the terminology of a child offer the basis for effective comprehension. The words that are utilized when speaking or identified when listening are referred to as oral vocabulary. While on the other hand, words that are utilized or identified in the text is referred to as reading vocabulary (Biemillier 2001; Snow and Matthews 2016).

Biemillier (2001) and Snow (2016) revealed that the majority of children's vocabulary is indirectly mastered by participating in oral language on a daily basis by listening to adults read to them and by reading comprehensively on their own. Children who read regularly have a huge pond of words that they recognize at a glance, while on the other hand, those children who read occasionally have a very limited pool of words that they are able to distinguish at a glance.

Semantics, Syntax and Pragmatics

According to Biemiller (2001), Ehri (2014) and Snow and Matthews (2016), usually reading engages the decoding of phrases and sentences that are dependent on the words as well as these words are organized, even though words alone convey meaning. As a result it is essential to teach children the meaning of the particular words and also the meaning of expressions and concluded sentences.

- Semantics are concerned with meaning in language as well as the meaning of words, phrases and sentences.
- Syntax has much to do with the foreseeable formation of a language and the way in which words are mixed to form phrases, clauses and sentences. Syntax consists of classes of words, for example, nouns, verbs, and adjectives as well as their tasks such as subject and object.

Semantics and syntactic understanding is essential in assisting children to be able to recognize words in perspective and result into bottomless intensity of understanding. The person who is a beginner in reading may not require describing noun or verb but they require com-

prehending that a word, for example, "hail" can stand for something or an accomplishment reliant on the context.

Teachers have an important role in modeling accurate sentence structure so that children can learn to anticipate these structures when reading print. It is the study of how people choose what they say or write from the range of possibilities available in the language, and how listeners or readers are affected by those choices. Pragmatics is concerned with the comprehension of how the context influences the way in which sentences transfer data. A sentence can convey various meanings determined by on the circumstances or setting in which it is utilized. The sentence can be a mere statement or confirmation, it can be a caution, an assurance, an intimidation, or something different. Readers who understand pragmatics are able to decode these various meanings from the context (Biemiller 2001; "Reading First Impact Study, Final Report," Abt Associates (2008).

Metacognition and Comprehension Strategies

The main motive for reading is comprehension. The readers will have achieved the goal of reading if only they can recognize the words and also understand what they are reading. The foundational knowledge and skills of oral language, previous knowledge and experiences, concepts concerning print, phonemic awareness, letter-sounds relationships, vocabulary, semantics and syntax are imperative for comprehension in reading. Children should incorporate their prior knowledge and experiences with the text itself. They should indicate on what they already know and what they need to know, which is referred to as metacognition and draw on a diversity of understanding approaches to generate meaning of what they read (Tavakoli 2014; Blachowicz and Ogle 2001; Baker and Brown 2001).

High-order Thinking Skills

The development of higher order thinking skills is of paramount importance throughout the primary grades when learners acquire reading. High-order thinking can be acquired at the oral stage by making use of teacher read-aloud and shared reading during early phases of acquiring reading. In the reading-to-learn phase, teachers want to inquire matters that encounter them to progress further than what they remember of the print and on to what they comprehend owing to gratitude, evaluation, combination, and appraisal. High-order thinking is what causes the learners to perform at the provincial standard for reading (Paris and Winograd 1990; Meniado 2016).

DISCUSSION

Teachers should continuously demonstrate grammatical organization that are more complicated and diverse than those used by children when they are not inside the school premises so as to benefit all children. That is why they should also be involved in utilizing these constructions and differences for themselves. For that reason, children should regularly be provided chance to inquire and to respond to queries, take part in conversations and be able to arrange information so as to build their competence for advanced organization, as well as critical reasoning (Biemiller 1999; Zhussupova and Kazbekova 2016).

For learners to acquire reading effectively, it is therefore consistent that the teachers should be conscious of the children's experiences, beliefs and capabilities so that they can offer suitable teaching. As learners acquire reading best if they relate reading material to their previous knowledge and experiences, teachers must give all children from different backgrounds the opportunities to share and relate their previous knowledge and experiences (Ontario Ministry of Education 2003; Ladnier-Hicks et al. 2010; Snow and Matthews 2016).

As far as vocabulary development is concerned, it is concerned with comprehension of unknown words and being able to utilize them properly. Consequently, children encounter difficulties when reading words that do not exist in their oral vocabulary. Teachers should therefore demonstrate how to utilize a number of different approaches to comprehend the meaning of the word, in order to advance the learner's vocabulary. For that reason, certain strategies can be used to help learners develop vocabulary. These include using the surrounding context, or using smaller, meaningful parts of words, such as prefixes or suffixes. The child's oral vocabulary will be improved by making use of well selected material for reading materials for reading aloud (Biemillier 2001; Ladnier-Hicks et al. 2010; Meniado 2016).

Metacognitive levels are those at which effective readers plan and monitor their own reading. When learners encounter difficulties while learning, they assess their reading to find out the finest strategies for enhancing their understanding of the print. As a result, children who read at a metacognitive level know the strategies that affect their own reading (for example, decoding hard words, connecting with prior experiences, understanding word meanings, identifying main ideas, drawing inferences from text, and synthesizing information. Therefore, teachers play a vital role in demonstrating how to reason metacognitively to assist learners to reckon what they already know and what they want to recognize. Comprehension strategies are deliberate plots that readers utilize to construct meaning of the text. There are different effective comprehension strategies that teachers can utilize to assist learners to master the meaning of the text (Moats 1998; Baker and Brown 2001; Blachowicz et al. 2001; Tavakoli 2014).

CONCLUSION

Children should have the chance to employ and condemn the ideas and comprehension of what they have read. Children start to verbalize thoughts and replace their reasoning. The thinking skills are of importance for reading even though they on their own cannot turn a learner into a successful reader. These children utilize various approaches to decipher and comprehend print and to realize when and why to employ specific strategies such as recognizing they do not require utilizing a phonics strategy in order to identify a word they already know by sight.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers should teach the vocabulary directly by initiating to learners identifiable words before reading, and offer them the opportunities for effective participation with new words and repeated exposure to the vocabulary in numerous situations. Learners should indulge in reading books more often, so that it will be easy for them to master how to read. Teachers must teach learners to read by giving them easy text and when they have mastered those texts, then introducing to them text with a little bit challenging words. Teachers should not at any cost

discourage a learner who is struggling to recall some words, but instead should assist them.

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