

Reading for Language Acquisition: A theory-based workshop

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WHAT SHOULD WE KNOW ABOUT READING?

- Reading is a multilevel and interactive process in which *readers* construct meaning of text using their *schemata*.
- Reading and writing are strongly connected by having essentially similar processes of *meaning construction*.
- Reading must be *meaningful, effective* and more *long-lasting learning experience*.

WHAT DO LEARNERS NEED TO READ EFFECTIVELY?

“The key to effective reading is activating [schemata] or building background knowledge, using **cognitive strategies**, and **relevant materials...**”

(David and Ivonne Freeman)

WHAT READERS BRING TO THE TABLE

“Any text, either spoken or written, does not by itself carry meaning...”

(Barlett, 1932; Rumelhart & Ortony, 1977)

WHAT READERS BRING TO THE TABLE

- *The return creases are perpendicular to the other two; they are adjoined to the ends of the popping crease and are drawn through the ends of the bowling crease to a length of at least 2.4 m.*

- *The part of the field enclosed by the bases and several yards beyond them is the infield; the area farther beyond the infield is the outfield. In the middle of the infield is a raised pitcher's mound, with a rectangular rubber plate (the rubber) at its center.*

WHAT READERS BRING TO THE TABLE

SCHEMA

- Knowledge already stored in memory; it is used to interpret new information and allows it to enter and become part of the knowledge stored.

(Anderson & Pearson, 1984:255)

SCHEMA THEORY

- It is a theory of how knowledge is acquired, processed, and retrieved.
- Schemata reflect the experiences, conceptual understanding, attitudes, values, skills and strategies...[we] bring to a text situation.

(Vacca & Vacca, 1999, p. 15)

SCHEMA AND READING COMPREHENSION

“ Students’ apparent reading problems may be problems of insufficient background knowledge [content, formal, and linguistic] ”

(Carrell, 1988b:245)

SCHEMATAS

- **Content Schema:**
 - Refers to the familiarity of the subject matter of the text. It is cultural determined. It includes:
 - Types of text people read
 - Purpose of the reading
 - How reading is perceived
 - How readers view themselves
 - Topics

SCHEMATAS

- **Formal Schema:**
 - Knowledge the reader has about the “rhetorical organizational structures of different types of texts (Carrell, 1987)
 - Is it a persuasive essay?
 - Is it a letter from a friend?
 - Is it a piece of news?

SCHEMATAS

- **Linguistic schema:**
 - Definitions,
 - Vocabulary,
 - Classifications

ACTIVATING THE SCHEMATA

Not only is it important for the reader to have the background knowledge to read more efficiently, but that knowledge also needs to be activated.

(Carrell, 1981)

PRE-READING

- Discussion of titles, subheadings, photographs,
- Identifying text structure
- Previewing
- Brainstorming
- Think-alouds
- Clustering
- KWL+A
- Anticipation guide (making predictions)
- etc.

DURING-READING

- Think-alouds (actively exploring meaning as you read)
- Anticipation guide (making predictions)
- Reading aloud
- Dramatic role-plays
- Response notes
- Talking to the text
- Bookmarks
- Sketching my way through the text
- Drawing
- It says/I say
- KWL+A

POST-READING

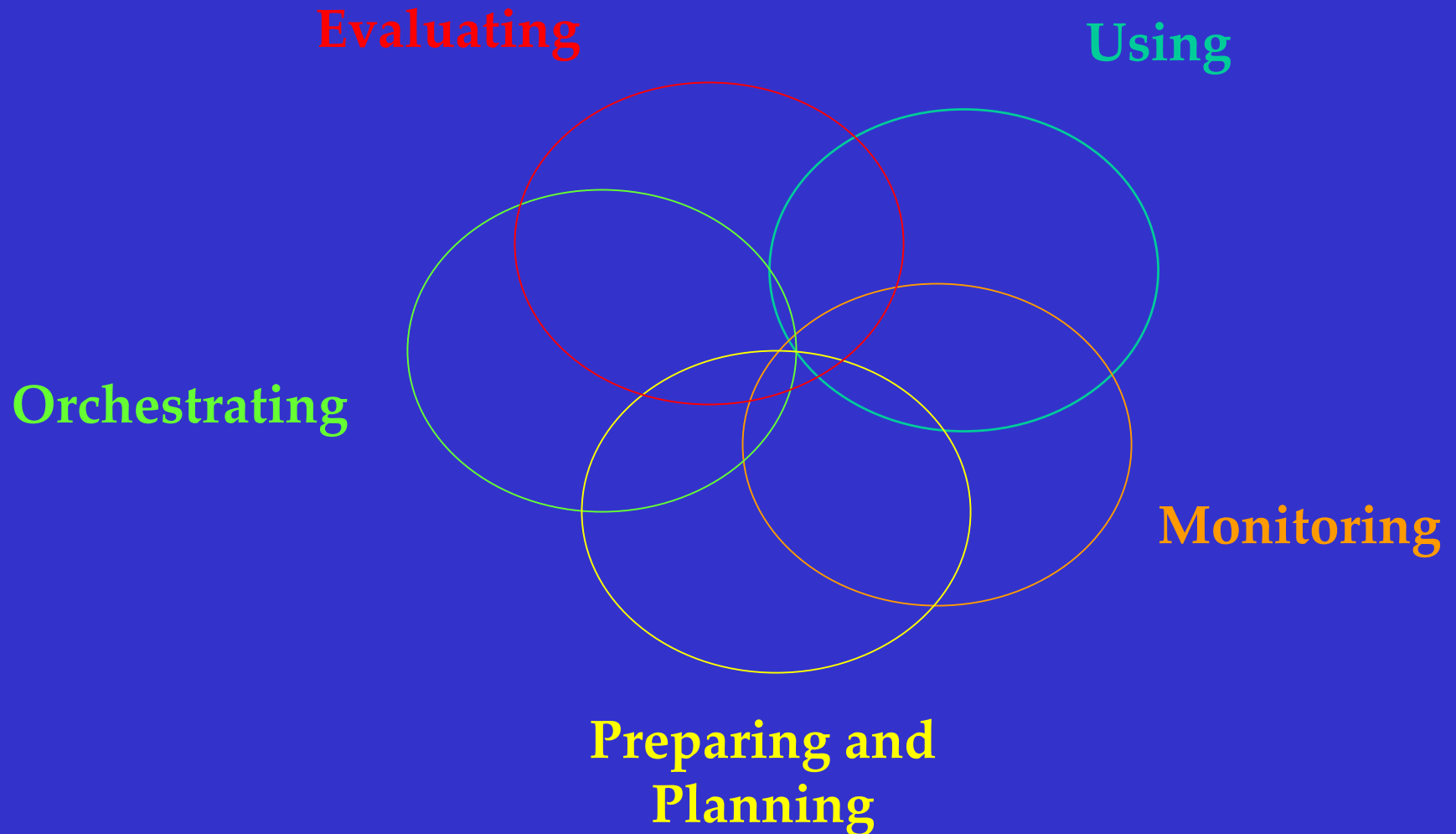
- Response notes/essays
- KWL + A
- Sketching my way through the text
- It says/I say
- Say something
- Mapping
- Written conversations
- Retelling in various perspectives and genres
- Extended projects
- Graphic organizers
- Dramatic role play

Is it that simple?

- Most research on reading now focus on the role of metacognition in reading comprehension.

– Thinking about thinking –

THINKING ABOUT THINKING



INTRODUCING READING STRATEGIES

“Give a man a fish and he eats for a day. Teach him how to fish and he eats for a lifetime”

INTRODUCING READING STRATEGIES

- Kinds of knowledge:
 - **Declarative** knowledge of what the cognitive strategies are
 - **Procedural** knowledge of how to use cognitive strategies, and
 - **Conditional** knowledge of when and why to use cognitive strategies

(Paris et al., 1983)

COGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES

(Olson, 2003)

- **Planning and goal setting:**
 - Creating and setting goals
 - Establishing a purpose
 - Setting priorities
- **Activating schemata:**
 - Mobilizing knowledge
 - Searching existing knowledge

COGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES

(Olson, 2003)

- **Asking questions and making predictions:**
 - About genre, topic, author, purpose, audience, pictures
 - Directing attention
 - Predicting what will happen next
 - Establishing focal points for confirming or revising meaning

COGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES

(Olson, 2003)

- **Constructing the Gist:**
 - Visualizing
 - Making Connections
 - Forming preliminary interpretations
 - Identifying main ideas
 - Organizing information
 - Expanding schemata
 - Adopting and alignment

COGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES

(Olson, 2003)

- **Monitoring:**
 - Directing the cognitive process
 - Regulating the kind and duration of activities
 - Confirming reader/writer is on track
 - Signaling the need for fixing strategies
- **Revising Meaning: Reconstructing the Draft:**
 - Backtracking
 - Revising meaning
 - Validating interpretations
 - Analyzing text closely
 - Analyzing author's craft

COGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES

(Olson, 2003)

- **Reflecting and Relating:**
 - Stepping back
 - Rethinking and reshaping what one knows
 - Formulating guidelines for personal ways of living
- **Evaluating:**
 - Reviewing
 - Asking questions
 - Evaluating/assessing quality
 - Forming criticisms

READING FOR REAL

Reading for meaning is comprehensible input, and it is the source of much of our competence in literacy, our reading ability, writing style, much of our vocabulary and spelling competence, and our ability to use and understand complex grammatical constructions

(Krashen, 2002c, p.5)

OPTIMAL INPUT

- Comprehensible
- Interesting and/or relevant
- Not grammatically sequenced
 - In sufficient quantity

(Stephen Krashen, 1982, 1985)

OPTIMAL INPUT IS COMPREHENSIBLE

- Topics should be easily identified.
 - Language directed at learners should be simplified.
 - The content should be relevant.
 - Language learners can acquire language through reading material that contains vocabulary and structure that can be beyond their current level of competence ($i + 1$)
- * Consider $i - 1$ and $i + 1 + 1$

OPTIMAL INPUT IS COMPREHENSIBLE

- The materials must:
- Be clear and well organized.
- Have a simplified format
- Include known vocabulary, less slang, fewer idioms;
- Include shorter sentences and syntactic simplification.
- Teachers must provide non-linguistic support

OPTIMAL INPUT IS INTERESTING and/or RELEVANT

- The best input is so interesting and relevant that the learner may even "forget" that the message is encoded in a foreign language.
- Readers must have the option of only reading things that are of personal interest.

OPTIMAL INPUT IS NOT GRAMMATICALLY SEQUENCED

- Learners have individual differences
- Learners do *NOT* have the same $i+1$
- They are *NOT* at the same developmental stage in the second language
- Grammatically-based texts reduce the quality of comprehensible input and distorts the communicative focus.

OPTIMAL INPUT MUST BE IN SUFFICIENT QUANTITY

- Students profit more from reading for meaning, and reading great quantities of material.
- Read large amounts of materials for pleasure and for information
- Teachers need to consider availability of materials, their cost, and the students' time

OPTIMAL INPUT: Questions to consider

- Do students understand the text?
 - Do they enjoy it?
- Would they read it on their own?

WHAT DO LEARNERS NEED TO READ EFFECTIVELY?

“The key to effective reading is activating [schemata] or **building background knowledge, using cognitive strategies, and relevant materials...**”

(David and Ivonne Freeman)

BOTTOM LINE

“There is no evidence that ESL learners need notably divergent forms of instruction to guide or develop their cognitive reading process”

(Fitzgerald, 1995)

Thank you!

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