COMPREHENSION DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CONTEXTUALIZED GRAPHICAL READING MATERIALS

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Basic education is confronted with serious problem in reading comprehension among second language learners (ESL) readers. Poor reading comprehension is related to failure on the reading written test manifested through limited verbal expression. This difficulty, according to Ponskhe (2013), hindered learning progress. For this reason, various studies have evaluated different kinds of reading material to test their potentiality in overcoming the aforementioned reading difficulty. Fernandez (2017) defined contextualized graphic novel is a sequential art in graphic novel form that is composed of plots that are related, connected or near to the experience and schema of the readers. On this premise, the proponent believes that contextualized graphic novel is an effective reading material in alleviating students’ comprehension difficulty. Henceforth, its credibility is grounded on the following justifications: it motivates readers to read and it enriches ESL readers’ schema.

Motivation is a vital factor in reading process especially in comprehension. According to Tonegato (2012), motivation happened when educator attempts to provide students with reading materials that meet a diverse range of interests. Likewise, Goldsmith (2005), affirmed that graphical materials are undoubtedly fun to read. He added that it is reasonable to give these to students to give them opportunity of extensive reading. Further, these appeal to the senses of visual learners. It is because young learners are more exposed to illustrations so they can learn better. These are accepted and recognized as a bridge for the transition to written texts. Evidently, these contained more visuals than text, which draw the students’ interest so that they will approach the task more eagerly.
These have overall optimistic effect on the students specially those who have difficulty on reading. Hence, students will be enticed to read and later engrossed to reading.

Contextualized graphic materials enrich ESL readers’ schema. According to Rumelhart (1978), schema is an organized knowledge structure. He added that human brain is analogically compared to a library. This is a vital role in reading comprehension for it contributes to the decoding process of readers from textual material to drawing meaning. Specifically, this sort of materials offers two facets in enriching schema. These are on the basis of its graphical content and the on the ground of its contextualized feature. As Explained by Laflamme (1997), these materials are like poem that fewer words but full of messages and meanings contained in visual. Henceforth, improving students’ vocabulary knowledge and training them to decode the words and illustrations is possible through graphic novels. Furthermore, Krashen (2004) those graphic narrative materials were appropriate means of reducing the affective filters of anxiety and lack of confidence that hinders student’s pleasure in language learning. Fernandez (2015) explained, in producing rich schema that can be used by readers when they read again. Illustrations provide immediately meaning for the readers to know. Its context will aid the readers to easy process the text that they are reading in relation to the schema they possessed. Therefore decoding of word is aided with contextual visual presentation of the graphic material.

In conclusion, contextualized graphic materials are competent reading tools in developing reading comprehension among readers. Henceforth both motivation and schema drive the readers to know, understand and continuously engrossed themselves to reading. Its massive application will aid readers in overcoming reading comprehension difficulties. Soon, reading literacy problems will gradually decrease.

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References:

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