TEACHING READING: ROLE OF EXPERIENCE IN READING DEVELOPMENT

by:

Simeona B. Suayan
Teacher III, Saint Francis Elementary School

Teaching pupils how to read in the foundational stage that is both enjoyable and tedious. It is enjoyable because pupils' development can be explicitly seen through their achievement from letter recognition, phonological representation to word recognition and comprehension. On the other hand, it is tedious because there is a need for the teacher for application of differentiated instruction and rigid monitoring to gauge and to determine their reading development and progress. Nonetheless, teachers in reading necessitates to search for appropriate strategies, techniques and mode in helping out the pupils to attain required competencies in reading.

An old epitaph said, "experience is the best teacher". This highlights the value of experience in learning reading process. Experience plays a vital role in achieving the set competencies set by the standards in reading. A great empiricist, Aristotle established the superiority of experience in knowing something - "nothing can be known unless it passes through senses". Likewise, he also brought out the value of experience as an edifice of acquiring information. These ideas converge with Rumelhart's Schema Theory explaining the role of "schema" or prior knowledge in reading process (Rumelhart, 1978). In simple sense, as the pupils translates textual representation into its phonological equivalent, it parallels with the experiences as they comprehended the text. Therefore, reading is easily facilitated because in the first place the text that is being read is not remote to what is known to them.

With this premise, the prime question is how to support pupils with necessary and vivid experiences they need in reading. It is prerogative of the teacher to make every
opportunity for the pupils. Providing empirical data through psychomotor activities will aid them to have good schema of the possible and related things that they will be reading. Teaching reading in the modern classroom is not only confined within limited space within the classroom. This crosses the boundary of the conventional setting where the pupils learn. It has been approved that the more senses are involved in learning, the more information they will acquire. Therefore, they can go out to experience things while they are reading. This is one way of preparing their mood and schema in reading selections.

On the process of teaching reading, it is also a good practice to provide a corresponding reference while the pupils understand the term. This can be a real thing or something that they can see and hear like short video clips or pictures. The more realistic it will be, the more effective it will be. On this manner, the pupils will have an immediate reference to what they are reading. They will not just deciphering the text into phonetic way but also at the same time will have a realistic grasp of the world. Contextual reading is also advisable. This technique in reading is outsourced on the educational theory of contextualization. Contextualization in reading is basically explained as giving reading materials that can provide good schema to the readers. These sorts of materials can be cultural, situational and relational connected to the pupils (Bonganciso, 2016). Wherein they can easily grasp what they are reading because they know, and they have a good experience out of the textual meanings of what they are reading.

Teaching pupils to read is indeed enjoyable and a tedious task. Its demanding task remains as the source of difficulty with elementary teachers. However, bringing out the vital role of experience in reading, it will aid both teachers and students in the process. Realizing the value of experience, teachers are ought to maximize the utilization of experience - schema. Bringing out and building up the schema can help pupils to learn and master reading. Thus, the general objective of education that is literacy is met.
References:
