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Scaffolding L2 academic reading and self-regulation through task and feedback

Work in progress

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A good reader:

"... automatically and routinely applies combinations of effective and appropriate strategies depending on reader goals, reading tasks and strategic processing abilities [and] is also aware of his or her comprehension effectiveness in relation to reading goals and applies sets of strategies appropriately to enhance comprehension of difficult texts."

(Grabe, 2008, p. 220)

Self regulation (Zimmerman, 2000)

Forethought

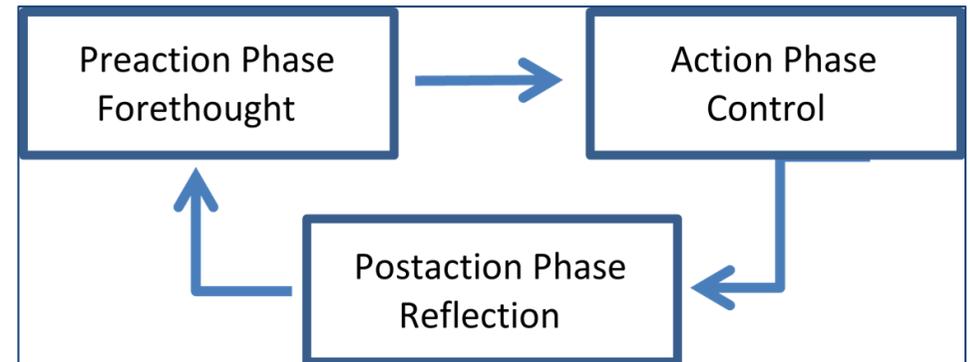
- goal-setting
- planning/strategy selection

Performance control

- implementation of strategies
- monitoring efficacy
- changing strategy if required

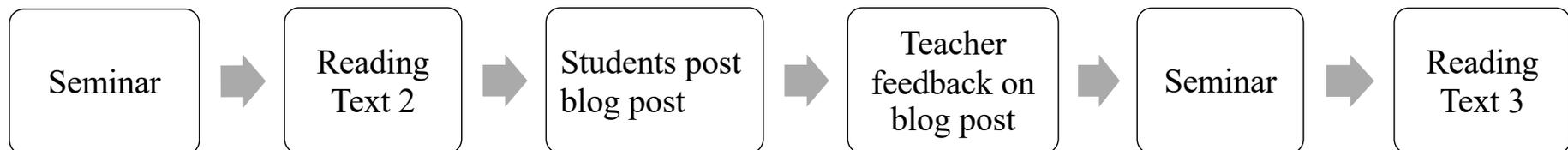
Self-reflection

- evaluating performance vis-à-vis goals
- attributing reasons to success/failure
- experiencing self-satisfaction



The intervention

- 15 first-year English L2 students on an academic reading and writing module at a large Swedish University;
- Seminars on reading and reading strategies delivered;
- Students read 5 texts (one per week) and posted blog posts about their reading;
- Lecturer feedback provided on each post.



Our study

Aim:

To scaffold L2 students' self-regulation when academic reading through task design and feedback.

Research questions:

- What/how was feedback given on the blogs?
- How did the feedback and the blog scaffold students' self-regulation of reading?

Blog instruction

Reflect on your reading experience:

- What kind of strategies did you use?
- Did you have problems with the reading? What could be the reason?
- Is there something you should do differently next time. Why?
- If you did something differently, did it work? Why yes/no?

The feedback

Success criteria:

- Reading selectively and according to purpose;
- Identifying important information;
- Initiating comprehension support strategies and processes;
- Monitoring reading strategies and comprehension;
- Evaluating and forming feelings about the text.

(Grabe, 2008)

Where am I going?
How am I going?
Where to next?

(Hattie and Timperley, 2007)

Data and data analysis

- 75 student blog posts (51-495 words)
- 63 teacher feedback posts (23-219 words)
- inductive coding for the feedback, and SRL framework for the blogs

RQ1

What feedback was given on the blogs?

Frequency of feedback type

	Feedback instances	
	n	%
Scaffolding question	214	72
Positive reinforcement	58	20
Suggestion	14	5
Celebration of success	6	2
Criticism	2	1
Response to student's query	2	1
Clarification request	1	0
Total	297	100%

- Most common type of feedback was scaffolding question, followed by positive reinforcement.
- Positive reinforcement was much more common in the later blog posts.

RQ2

How did the blog and feedback scaffold students' self-regulation of reading?

Engagement with the feedback

Feedback: You do not specifically mention unknown words but I suppose there might have been some.

Did you look up all of them? Were you able to guess the meaning of some? If so, what helped you to guess? (Feedback 2)

Response: And to answer to your questions about **the unknown words**, I usually try to infer their meaning from the context, considering that I do not always have the time to look up in a dictionary.
(Blog 3)

Forethought (goal setting)

Feedback: It is very positive that you had a clear purpose for reading in mind, as this is a sign of effective reading. You are right that because the way of reading is different for the summary and the evaluation, that means you used different strategies when reading to write a summary vs reading to write an evaluation. (Feedback 4)

Response: The purpose for my reading this week is to write a synthesis. Before I started going through the articles, I have decided a specific argument that I will discuss (This is a crucial part because then I know what information to look for). (Blog 5)

Performance control and evaluation

Feedback: You are right that reading on autopilot is a danger, especially if you have not decided why it is what you're reading in the first place. Text 2: It is great that you felt more confident in your understanding. What gave you this impression? Other than pre-reading, did you use any other strategies to help your comprehension? **As for the challenges you mention, there are certain strategies which might aid your focus and memory, e.g., highlighting and note taking** (Feedback 1)

Response: The main point of my reading this time was to try and keep focus on the reading, **as you suggested I used markers to become more active in the reading** and I felt that it actually worked out very well ... Overall **the reading was quite interesting** and I believe **that I had an easier time** following the unity of the text than before. (Blog 2)

Impact of feedback across blog posts

Blog 3: **After this I read the first and last sentence of each paragraph.** By doing this I wanted to get a better idea of the text, though I am not sure that this helped much. I did get clearer picture, but not necessarily, enough for it to have been worth the time spent. Next week I will probably return to the method I employed last week: **reading the text after formulating ideas and questions.**

Blog 4: I found that this technique works best for me.

Blog 5: I found that this was the best strategy for me as it helped me follow the text and understand it better

Forethought
Goal Setting

Performance
Control

Evaluation
Attribution

Task-prompted self-regulation

I was positively struck by the fact **that I was absorbing the content a lot faster** of text three, and I think it depends on the fact that **by now we have been exposed to some literature that deals with the subject** about language learning and acquisition of vocabulary. In other words, a lot of the terms that were new to me were this time repeated in a context I am a bit familiar with and therefore **making the reading more enjoyable.**

Preliminary findings and conclusions

Concluding points

- The blog task and feedback seemed to facilitate all three phases of self-regulation among the students;
- Students engaged with the feedback given;
- Students were most likely to respond to scaffolding questions;
- The students' focused not just on text comprehension but also strategies and goal setting.
- The intervention seemed to scaffold self-regulation in academic reading:

The difference of my comprehension skills after those weeks is incredible. Today I can read faster and more effectively as well as having a better understanding of the subjects and sentences presented in the texts.
(Blog 5)

Thank you!

References

Grabe, W. (2009). *Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practice*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Hattie, J. & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77 (1), 81-112.

Zimmerman, B. J. (2000). *Attaining self-regulation. A social cognitive perspective*. Handbook of self-regulation.

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