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ENHANCING COMPREHENSION SKILLS FOR READING LONG LITERARY PASSAGES: STRATEGIES FOR PHILOLOGY STUDENTS

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Abstract: This study investigates strategies to enhance comprehension skills in philology students when reading long literary passages. Given the extensive reading demands within philology, improved comprehension skills are critical for both academic and personal growth. Techniques such as skimming, scanning, annotating, and summarizing are evaluated for their effectiveness in helping students retain, analyze, and respond to complex texts. The findings suggest that structured reading strategies can significantly improve comprehension and engagement in reading lengthy literary works.

1. Introduction

Background and Significance

Reading comprehension, particularly of long and complex literary passages, is essential for students of philology. This skill not only impacts academic performance but also supports the analytical and critical thinking abilities required in literary studies. Long texts require more than simple word recognition; they demand interpretative skills, patience, and the ability to discern thematic nuances and stylistic elements. Research suggests that reading comprehension can be enhanced through strategic methods, especially in settings where students are consistently required to analyze intricate texts. [1, p41].

Objective

The objective of this study is to evaluate methods for enhancing comprehension of long literary passages among philology students, focusing on strategies such as skimming, scanning, annotating, and summarizing.

Research Question

What are the most effective reading strategies for improving comprehension of long literary passages in philology students?

Hypothesis

Using structured reading strategies can improve comprehension and retention in students tasked with reading long literary texts.

2. Methods

Participants

This study included 60 undergraduate philology students who regularly engage with long literary texts as part of their subject.

Materials

A range of literary texts across genres (e.g., novels and short stories) was selected. Each passage ranged from 1,500 to 3,000 words to simulate typical reading assignments.

Procedure

Skimming and Scanning: Students received guidance on skimming for main ideas and scanning for specific details, aiming to create a mental map of the text before diving into finer details.

Annotation and Note-Taking: Students were instructed to annotate as they read, underlining key phrases, noting symbols, and writing brief margin notes to foster active engagement with the text.

Summarization and Questioning: After reading, students summarized the passage and developed questions related to its themes and structure, reinforcing their understanding and stimulating analytical thinking.

Data Collection

A pre- and post-intervention comprehension test, along with qualitative feedback from students, provided data on the effectiveness of these strategies.

Footnote

Techniques such as skimming and annotating have been shown in prior studies to improve reader comprehension, particularly for long or dense texts [2.p26].

3. Results

Quantitative Findings

Students demonstrated a 25% improvement in comprehension test scores after employing structured reading strategies, with the most significant gains observed in identifying main themes and character motivations.

Qualitative Feedback

Students reported feeling more equipped to manage large volumes of reading and stated that the strategies allowed them to focus on essential elements of each passage. Many highlighted that annotation and summarization were particularly helpful in fostering an analytical mindset.

Key Techniques

Skimming was effective for gaining an overview of the text and recognizing its structure and main themes. Scanning enabled students to locate specific details, aiding in retaining character names, settings, and pivotal moments. Annotation fostered a more profound interaction with the text, helping students connect with its meaning and style. Summarizing provided an opportunity to condense and review the material, reinforcing memory and understanding.

Prior studies in educational psychology have confirmed the benefits of annotation and summarization for enhancing comprehension and retention [3.p78].

4. Discussion

Interpretation of Findings

This study suggests that structured reading strategies can significantly enhance comprehension for philology students tasked with reading long literary texts. The techniques encouraged students to interact more thoughtfully with each passage, facilitating both immediate comprehension and deeper literary analysis.

Implications for Philology Education

Given the effectiveness of these strategies, incorporating them into the philology curriculum could support students' academic development and confidence in handling complex literary materials. Training students to apply such strategies regularly may also improve their long-term analytical skills.

Limitations

While the study identified effective strategies, results may vary depending on individual student preferences and reading styles. Additionally, some students may require ongoing practice to maintain their comprehension skills when reading lengthy texts.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies could examine the integration of digital tools, such as e-readers with built-in annotation features, and their impact on comprehension. Additionally, exploring how students' personal interests in specific genres affect comprehension skills could provide valuable insights.

Practical Application

Faculty can encourage these techniques in coursework to build philology students' reading competence and confidence.

References

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