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EMC² = comprehension: A reading strategy instruction framework for all teachers

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Comprehension is a critical part of the reading process, and yet learners continue to struggle with it and teachers continue to neglect it in their teaching. Many reasons exist for the lack of focus on reading comprehension instruction, but for the most part, teachers simply do not seem to view comprehension as part of the reading process, are not able to teach the concept, and are seemingly not taught to do so during their teacher training years. In addition to this, comprehension continues to be viewed as part of 'language teaching', and is therefore viewed as the so-called 'language teacher's' domain. In support of effective comprehension instruction in the unique, multilingual South African education environment, this article proposes a framework for reading strategy instruction, aimed specifically at teachers. The framework was developed from a research study, and refined through subsequent application in a university course as well as a further study. The framework acknowledges that reading is a multifaceted and complex process, and accordingly, provides sufficient structure for teachers. It further addresses the issue of comprehension instruction through the use of selected reading strategies, designed to be applied by all teachers in all subjects in a flexible and easy manner.

Keywords: reading comprehension framework, reading comprehension instruction; reading strategies; reading strategy instruction; teachers and reading comprehension

Introduction

Reading is probably one of the most important linguistic skills that need to be developed in young children. Parris, Gambrell and Schleicher (2008) argue that the ability to read is a fundamental necessity for full participation in one's society and economy. One could indeed argue that the ability to read is the cornerstone of everyday modern life. The average person starts reading the minute they open their eyes in the morning: checking for messages on mobile phones, reading labels on breakfast food containers, reading and signing children's school notices, scanning newspaper headlines on the way to work, reading road signs and subway notices. However, reading of course involves more than the ability to recognise letters and decode words. Reading is ultimately about constructing meaning from written text (Bucuvalas, 2002; Graves, Juel & Graves, 1998; Williams, 2008). In other words, the aim of reading is to *comprehend* what is being read. Goodman and Goodman (2009:92) have put it in fact, that "the study of reading is the study of reading comprehension", while Fountas and Pinnell (1996:156) assert that comprehension "is not the product of reading: it is the process". In other words, the two are inseparable. Comprehension is a strategic process in which readers use cues from the text in conjunction with their existing knowledge to make predictions, monitor the predictions and construct meaning from the text. In other words, comprehension is a "fluid process of predicting, monitoring and re-predicting in a continuous cycle" (Block & Duffy, 2008:29). In its essence, the reading process comprises an interaction between reader, text and (socio-cultural) context, and reading comprehension results from "an interaction among the reader, the strategies the reader employs, the material being read, and the context in which reading takes place" (Edwards & Turner, 2009:631).

During the past 20 to 30 years, research has shown that comprehension "can be increased significantly when it is taught explicitly" (Paris & Hamilton, 2009:49). Research into the use of comprehension (reading) strategies for improving comprehension has increased over the same period. In essence, reading strategies are the actions skilled readers perform to ensure that they understand what they read. Pressley (2000) states that providing learners with a repertoire of comprehension strategies assists them in their ability to comprehend text. Anderson (1991:460) describes strategies as "deliberate cognitive steps that learners can take to assist in acquiring, storing and retrieving new information", while Paris, Wasik and Turner (1991:692) describe strategies as "actions selected deliberately to achieve particular goals". However, less-skilled readers do not possess the strategic reading skills of good readers, or if they do, do not apply them automatically in the way a skilled reader would. Furthermore, skilled readers do not use strategies in isolation; they usually employ a number of strategies at the same time. Simply put, skilled readers rely on more than processing skills alone (Koda, 2004); teaching reading strategies enables teachers to look beyond processing competence in teaching reading, and instead towards comprehension.

Research about comprehension instruction ranges from work as early as 1978, when Durkin performed classroom observations, with a view to determining to what extent comprehension instruction took place, to Palincsar and Brown's (1984) seminal study on reciprocal teaching, and the work by Pressley throughout the 1980s and into the 21st century. Reading strategy instruction has been an education focus in countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand for up to 30 years. Multiple studies have found the teaching of reading strategies effective, for example those of Block and Duffy (2008), Palincsar and Brown

(1984), Pressley (2000, 2005), Pressley and Harris (1990), as well as Williams (2008), to name a few. Up to 45 individual reading strategies have been documented through research, although this number is not finite and often changes; for example, Block and Duffy (2008) identify nine reading strategies that have been validated as highly successful since 2000. Studies also show that reading strategy instruction not only improves comprehension, but that it also benefits other areas related to reading, such as self control and regulating while reading (Haller, Child & Walberg, 1988; Paris, Wixson & Palincsar, 1986), metacognitive strategies in second language (L2) test performance of low-ability groups (Purpura, 1998) and decoding abilities (Van den Bos, Brand-Gruwel & Aarnoutse, 1998).

Various comprehension instruction frameworks which incorporate reading strategies have been developed over the past years, for example Palincsar and Brown's (1984) Reciprocal Teaching, Concept-oriented Reading Instruction (Guthrie, 2003; Guthrie, Anderson, Alao & Rinehart, 1999), Transactional Strategy Instruction (Pressley, 1998), Hedgcock and Ferris' (2009) take on intensive reading, and the Four-pronged comprehension strategy framework developed by McNamara, Ozuru, Best and O'Reilly (2007), to name a few. Palincsar and Brown's (1984) reciprocal teaching takes the form of a dialogue between teachers and students about segments of text for the purpose of constructing the meaning of text, and uses four specific reading strategies, namely: questioning, clarifying, summarizing, and predicting. These strategies are always used in order. Reciprocal Teaching involves a scaffolded approach, beginning with high levels of teacher instruction and modelling, during which the teacher specifically and explicitly models his or her thinking processes out loud, using each of the four reading strategies. The roles are gradually reversed to the point where learners are able to use the strategies independently.

In Transactional Strategies Instruction (Pressley, El-Dinary, Gaskins, Schuder, Bergman, Almaso & Brown, 1992), teachers draw upon a small repertoire of strategies to help students derive meaning from text. The strategies typically include predictions, activating prior knowledge, asking questions, clarification, visualisation, summarisation, story grammar, text structure, thinking aloud and making connections. Transactional Strategies Instruction involves direct explanation and teacher modeling followed by guided practice of application of strategies, with teachers providing assistance as and when needed – in other words, scaffolded teaching. A key difference between Reciprocal Teaching and Transactional Strategies Instruction is that the latter requires no set order of strategy use and is less restrictive about how students participate (Pressley, 1998).

Guthrie's (2003) Concept-oriented Reading Instruction (CORI) is aimed at increasing learners' motivation to read and includes activating background knowledge, questioning, searching for important information, summarising, organising information graphically and structuring stories. As with Reciprocal Teaching and Transactional Strategies Instruction, CORI is based on teacher modelling, scaffolding and guided practice, with a recommendation of 30 minutes per class per day (Guthrie, 2003:118).

Hedgcock and Ferris (2009) include the use of strategies in their view of Intensive Reading, and divide the process into three phases. In the Pre-reading phase activities include surveying the text, making predictions, asking questions, and introducing key vocabulary. During-reading activities include first reading, a "quick read-through of the entire text to develop a sense of its main point(s) and to confirm initial predictions made during pre-reading" (Hedgcock & Ferris, 2009:172), re-reading the text (a more focused second reading looking closely at language, and considering the structure of the text). Post-reading activities include summarising and responding, thinking critically, and reading-writing connections.

Overall it can be concluded that these existing frameworks, while providing their own 'take' on how comprehension can be improved, utilise the explicit instruction of reading strategies and can be described as helping bridge the gap for students who demonstrate a discrepancy between decoding skills and comprehension skills. The question arises: if reading strategies have been shown to increase comprehension, and multiple instruction frameworks exist, why is comprehension instruction not a common practice in schools?

Why do Teachers not Engage with Comprehension Instruction?

Existing literature seems to point to various reasons for the 'non-uptake' of strategy instruction:

1. A lack of proper teacher education, where Sailors (2008:653) for example, points to a "distinct lack of research into and professional development of teachers in terms of reading comprehension instruction", and where most development seems focused on reading *instruction* and teaching learners to decode words.
2. The fact that "becoming a comprehension strategies instruction teacher is painfully difficult" (Pressley & Beard El-Dinary, 1997) and time consuming. What remains evident is that "without professional development, teachers will have difficulty implementing comprehension instruction" (Block & Duffy, 2008:23).
3. Teachers seem to remain unconvinced about the effect of strategy instruction on their learners' progress (Gersten, Vaughn, Deschler & Schiller, 1997; Pressley & Beard El-Dinary, 1997), and prefer to receive 'physical evidence' of the effect

of an intervention or method on their learners' results (Klapwijk & Van der Walt, 2011).

4. Teachers do not seem to know how to teach comprehension – this links to point (1) above and is an impression substantiated by studies in South African schools by, amongst others, Klapwijk (2011), Pretorius & Lepalala (2011) and Zimmerman (2010), and evidenced in the 2006 and 2011 PIRLS results for South African learners (Howie, Van Staden, Tshele, Dowse & Zimmerman, 2012; Howie, Venter, Van Staden, Zimmerman, Long, Du Toit, Scherman & Archer, 2008).
5. Klapwijk (2011) argues that a further reason exists for the non-uptake of strategy instruction by teachers: the fact that traditionally the teaching of any skills related to language (listening, speaking, reading and writing) is allocated to the so-called language teacher and restricted to the so-called language classroom. In other words, since 'language problems belong in the language classroom', teachers of other subjects simply assume that any language-related problems (spelling, comprehension, writing) are the language teacher's problem, or worse, the learner's problem. Similarly, the focus of teacher training institutions seems to be aimed along precisely those lines – limiting courses about comprehension instruction (where this occurs) to future 'language' teachers only, rather than requiring all students to acquire comprehension instruction skills. Klapwijk (2011) argues that it is not only the so-called language teacher's domain to instruct reading comprehension, and identify reading and reading comprehension problems, where it is the responsibility of *every* teacher, regardless of the subject they teach. All teachers should acquire specific skills for teaching and learning towards literacy and language acquisition, and comprehension instruction must form part of every teacher's skill set and be taken into every class in school every day, regardless of the subject.

However, since it seems teachers are loathe to take on comprehension instruction, and teacher training institutions do not seem to actively incorporate comprehension instruction into their curriculum, the focus of this article is to introduce a framework for promoting and increasing comprehension instruction and development for teachers of all subjects. The focus is also particularly aimed at a school environment, where comprehension levels have been proven to be poor, teachers are not always adequately skilled, and the language of learning and teaching is more often than not learners' second or even third language. It is this last point in particular that distinguishes the framework proposed in this article from existing frameworks, where it focuses on the allowing/enabling of multilingual communication in the classroom.

Effective comprehension instruction becomes particularly important for addressing the so-called 'Grade 4 slump' when learners, in moving from the Foundation Phase (Grades 1 – 3), shift from learning to read to reading to learn (Chall, Jacobs & Baldwin, 1990). With an increased demand on independent reading in the Intermediate and Senior Phase (Grades 4 – 9), poor comprehension skills compound the learners' learning load, both cognitively and physically. What is required is the incorporation of comprehension instruction in all classes and all subjects. The framework proposed in this article is aimed at doing exactly that. With a view to addressing the reasons for teachers' reluctance to take on comprehension, the framework proposed in this article was developed with a focus on teachers (and by association, ultimately also on learners) with the intention of being *easy to use, easy to implement and easy to understand and suitable for multilingual environments*.

Research Methodology and Procedure

The framework proposed in this article was developed from the results of a mixed-methods research study (see Klapwijk, 2011 for full details of the study) which focused on creating a framework for strategy instruction for the Senior Primary phase. Quantitative data were used to determine learners' reading age and comprehension levels before and after the research intervention, and qualitative data (the main source for the design of the framework) were gathered through extensive classroom observation and unstructured interviews with teachers. By using existing research on strategy instruction (see Introduction), a reading strategy instruction framework – for teachers – was created and presented to three teachers at a Western Cape primary school. After being given time to internalise the concepts, and with unlimited access to the researcher for assistance (both during and after classes), the teachers implemented the framework in their classes (a total of 163 learners) over a period of two school terms. The original framework was refined based on observation of how teachers came to grips with strategies (or did not), how teachers adjusted their lesson planning and preparation in terms of the framework, how they changed their own interaction with texts, how they changed their interaction with learners (and, in turn, how learners adjusted to the changed interaction with their teachers), how teachers applied the framework and the strategies contained in it, and the type of underlying knowledge teachers seemed to require to effectively apply reading strategies. After completion of the research study, the framework was further refined by the researcher after applying it to third and fourth-year student teachers in a formal Bachelor of Education (BEd) university course over the course of two separate years. A study detailing the effect of the use of the framework on student teachers' comprehension instruction and discourse was also performed (see Klapwijk, In press). The final framework is presented in the sections that follow.

Introducing the EMC Framework

The framework (see Figure 1) is called the EMC framework, where the acronym "EMC" is derived from the first letter of the name of each phase: Establish, Maintain and Consolidate meaning making processes. The title of this article reads *EMC² = comprehension.* 'Squared' describes where a number, or in this instance a concept, is multiplied by itself; in other words, it is repeated multiple times. Essentially the reading process is an endless cycle of reading-predicting-checking of predictions (multiplication of processes) to create meaning. The EMC framework is constructed along the same principles: using reading strategies in a continuous cycle, but with the ability to adjust to the recursive nature of the reading process.

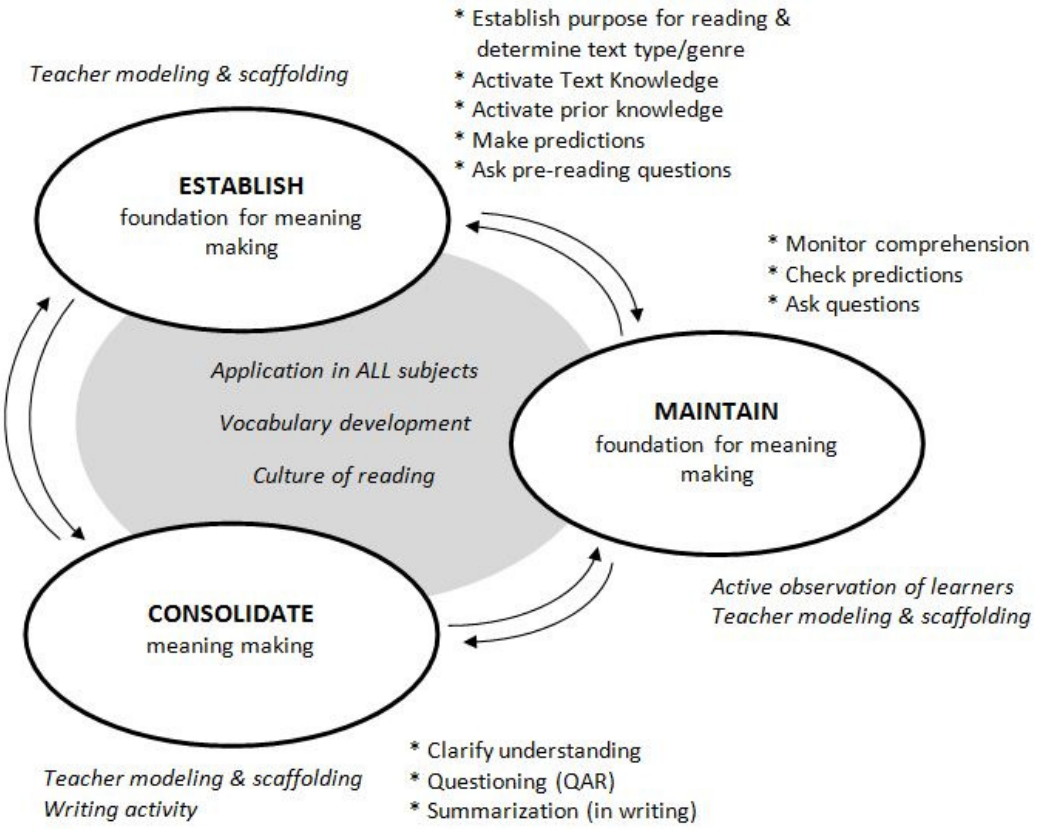

Figure 1 EMC strategy instruction framework (Klapwijk, 2011)

The framework is divided into three phases: establishing meaning making (Before Reading); maintaining meaning-making processes (During Reading); and consolidating meaning making (After Reading). Each phase utilises recommended reading strategies. However, it must be emphasised that the phases do not imply that the meaning-making process consists of a set of sequential before, during and after steps. Rather, the phases are intended to ease the acquisition of reading strategy instruction for teachers new to the concept and provide sufficient structure to ensure it is sustained. As shown in a study which entailed the application of the EMC framework by student teachers at a South African university (Klapwijk, In press), student teachers were able to successfully apply the framework precisely due to the structure it provided; once student teachers' levels of familiarity and comfort with comprehension instruction increased, so did their insight into the reading process and their creativity in using comprehension instruction.

The EMC framework does not purport to replace any of the existing frameworks (as discussed earlier) – in fact, it was inspired by many of the existing frameworks. Rather, the framework aims to complement existing research about comprehension instruction while at the same time adding some unique features inspired by the unique South African educational environment. Similarities with existing methods or frameworks include teacher (lecturer) modelling and scaffolding, the explicit instruction and use of multiple strategies, the use of Before, During and After Reading phases and learners' active interaction with text. However, what makes the EMC framework *different,* is the following:

(1) The focus is firstly on *teachers'* ability to teach comprehension (through the use of strategies). Instead of focusing directly on improving learners'

reading comprehension (which seems to be the case in most existing research about comprehension instruction), the framework was designed for increasing teachers' comprehension instruction abilities, and assumes that learners will benefit by association.

(2) The use of multilingual instruction or translanguaging (Garcia, 2009; Lewis, Jones & Baker, 2012), at least during the Before Reading Phase (particularly in establishing prior knowledge, making predictions and asking pre-reading questions). In a country where the majority of learners receive instruction in their second or third language, increasing participation and the potential for meaning making through the use of more than one language is *crucial.*

(3) Application across all subjects. As Snow, Met and Genesee (1989:211) argue, in the case of bilingual (multilingual) schools, the teacher "plays the roles of the content teacher teaching subject matter and the language teacher seeking out opportunities to maximize language development". This fusion of roles requires teachers to "plan consciously for language growth as an integral part of content instruction" (Snow et al., 1989:214). Therefore, the content teachers must be able to analyse learners' linguistic and academic needs and skills to guarantee that students, by the end of a lesson, master not only the concepts of the content area but also effectively communicate using the target language.

Overall, the framework has the following aims:

1. Maximising meaning making throughout the reading process, with a strong focus on establishing the meaning-making process in the Before Reading Phase by increasing teachers' interaction with the text before reading it.
2. Continuous vocabulary development – either formally (explicitly) or informally throughout all lessons, in all classes.
3. Establishing a culture of reading – this could be as 'extreme' as implementing an extensive reading programme, but at the very least should include the active promotion of reading by teachers and schools.
4. Improving overall reading motivation (the idea being that the more successful learners become at comprehending, the more enjoyable reading becomes).

Based on the observation of teachers' use of the framework during the original research study, as well as subsequent observations of student teachers' application of the framework, it is best applied as described below.

Applying the EMC Framework

The framework and its strategies are best applied as follows (also refer to Figure 1):

Establish meaning-making processes (before reading)

A key point in the Before Reading Phase is the use of two strategies as basis for pre-reading: determining the purpose for reading, and determining text type (or Activating Text Knowledge). Because most South African learners go to school in and from print-poor environments, it is important for them to learn to establish a purpose for reading, so that their meaning-making process is "activated" in the correct manner even before starting to read.

Determine Purpose for Reading: generally, the purpose for reading can be enjoyment (informal reading at home, or in class), information (tasks in class, comprehension texts, reading for assignments – generally a large component of academic literacy), and learning (as for examinations or tests). By determining the purpose before reading learners' thinking is channelled in a specific and focussed manner. This is linked to **Activating Text Knowledge** (a strategy named specifically for this framework) or identifying the text type. Once learners become exposed and accustomed to a variety of fiction and non-fiction text types, their ability to identify the text type in conjunction with the purpose for reading, lays the first foundations for meaning making. For example, an expository text with a Geography topic (identified by, for example, the main heading, subheadings, bulleted lists, graphs, figures, italic print, etc.) will indicate that the purpose is most likely to find information, or to read for learning. On the other hand, a poem (identified by stanzas, rhyme, short lines) will indicate that the purpose is bound to be reading for enjoyment, or for information. Knowing the text type (once all types and genres become familiar to learners after an extended period of exposure to different text types) 'primes' the learners' attitude towards the text and directs their motivation and concentration for reading. Knowing that reading a particular text will be for enjoyment (a story or poem in class), or for information (completing an assignment) focuses their attention and concentration in a specific manner.

Activating Prior Knowledge – new knowledge is learnt best when linked to existing knowledge. Erten and Razi (2009:61) explain that "when readers bring relevant background knowledge to the reading process, they can allocate more attentional space for textual analysis and interpretation." During the use of this strategy, the aim is to elicit as much information as possible from learners about the topic in a discussion format. It is recommended that (within reason) no information is disregarded or disallowed, in order to make allowance for linguistic and cultural differences (particularly in a multilingual and multicultural environment). It is also recommended that (within reason and ensuring mutual comprehension) some form of **multilingual communication and/or translanguaging** be allowed in this strategy. By allowing the use of more than one language, it could encourage shy learners to participate, increase participation as a whole, and allow learners whose first language (L1) is not the same as the language of learning and teaching (LoLT), to participate in a non-

judgemental environment, and to unlock their own schemata.

Predictions – this refers to learners making predictions about the text before reading it. Lubliner (2001) states that predictions help learners set a purpose for reading and anticipate what they will read. Predictions are directed by the text type, and serve as "guide posts" (Kelley & Clausen-Grace, 2007:79) in the During Reading Phase, when learners check their predictions, and adjust them where necessary (which encourages sustained engagement with the text). Teachers can also create a Prediction Guide, instead of asking learners to make predictions – particularly in the early scaffolding stages when learners are still learning to apply the strategies independently. A Prediction Guide consists of statements about the text which must be marked True or False by the learner before reading the text – once the text has been/is being read, learners are able to check their 'predictions'.

Pre-reading questions – this refers to learners' (not the teacher's) ability to ask questions of the text before reading the text. It is much the same as making predictions, but in question format. In other words, by looking at the text, and identifying the text type, perhaps after only seeing the title, learners formulate questions about the text. These questions are then used throughout the reading process as 'way points', by checking for their answers as the reading of the text progresses.

Maintain meaning-making processes (during reading)

The important aspect of the During Reading Phase is for teachers to realise that both the teacher and learner are active participants in the reading process. Although reading a text out loud to the class, or having individual learners read specific paragraphs is perfectly acceptable and has its place in the reading classroom, emphasis must be placed on the fact that there is much more to the reading of a text than simply reading it together, whether silently or aloud. Also, if comprehension instruction is applied in all subjects, the 'traditional' reading aloud of texts will not suffice, since content subject lessons are not typically structured around a text being read aloud. The During Reading Phase attempts to teach the following: learners' monitoring of their own understanding' teachers monitoring learners; the use of so-called fix-it strategies; and learning to apply different reading techniques.

In terms of **monitoring** their own understanding, learners must be taught to ask themselves "Do I understand what I am reading?" throughout the reading process. While good readers automatically stop or slow down or apply a fix-it strategy when they realise that they no longer understand what they are reading, poor readers simply plough ahead without realising that they no longer understand what they are reading, or if they realise they have stopped comprehending, do not know how to remedy the situation. In the EMC framework, learners are taught to monitor their understanding by continually asking themselves "Do I understand what I am reading?" and if not, to apply one or more fix-it strategy, such as slowing down their reading, or speeding up their reading (slow reading tends to allow a reader's attention to wander), looking back, re-reading or asking the teacher for help.

While learners must be taught to monitor their own understanding, the teacher's role is also to monitor the learners' understanding and reading behaviour. The teacher's role in the During Reading Phase is not that of a passive bystander or a director who indicates who should read which paragraph, or sits down at her/his desk while the learners read the text silently. Apart from teaching learners how to monitor their comprehension and how to apply the fix-it strategies, the During Reading Phase presents an opportunity for teachers to study their learners carefully and learn more about their reading behaviours and problems. It is an opportunity to identify learners who struggle to concentrate, who have lost interest during reading, whose attention has started to wander, or who are hesitant to ask for help when they struggle. It is an opportunity to ensure that optimal reading conditions (limiting noise and other outside interference) are maintained.

The During Reading Phase is also an opportunity for teachers to teach learners different **reading techniques** – techniques that assist learners in reading not only narrative texts more successfully but especially expository texts (i.e. continuing to develop their academic literacy). Reading techniques include speed reading, skimming and scanning. Nuttall (1996:128) states that "speed, enjoyment and comprehension are closely linked with one another". Skimming and scanning are especially important for content subjects, where learners are required to find important information, summarise and read critically across multiple texts. It can be practised in all classes, including the so-called language class, through simple exercises. For example, learning to scan can (initially) be as simple as counting the number of paragraphs in a text, finding a specific word or phrase, identifying subheadings, and so forth. The more familiar learners become with text types, the more effective these different reading techniques will become.

Consolidate meaning-making (after reading)

A key principle of the After Reading Phase is the consolidation of the meaning-making process *in writing*. This does not necessarily entail traditional full-sentence answers to pre-set questions, which is a concept that decreases learner motivation for answering questions, and often leads to incomplete

work, because the lesson time routinely runs out before learners have answered all questions, causing more marking for teachers than necessary. A common existing method of testing comprehension is to present learners with pre-set questions based on the text; these questions are often predetermined as part of a prescribed textbook or prepared by the teacher, and may not always adequately address inferential levels of comprehension. Teachers also tend to regard this time (when learners answer questions in their workbooks) as an opportunity to do other work (such as administrative activities). Instead, apart from checking pre-reading questions and predictions at the end of the reading of the text, the EMC framework proposes that it is also important to teach learners how to *ask questions,* through use of the Question-Answer Relationship (QAR) strategy (Raphael, 1982). Tovani (2000:86) states that learners "who ask questions when they read assume responsibility for their learning and improve their comprehension". Four types of questions are used in the QAR strategy, namely *Right There* questions (answers can be found in the text, and questions often use the words as they are used in the text), *Think and Search* questions (the answer is found by searching for and putting together information from different parts of the text), *Author and You* (based on information in the text, but the learners must relate it to their own experience; the answer is not necessarily in the text), and *On My Own* questions (the answer is not in the text, but learners must use their prior knowledge to answer it). In the early stages of teaching learners to ask questions, teachers can formulate questions for each of the QAR categories, and ask learners to identify the question types. Here again, explicit teaching of question types is important, with sufficient modelling by the teacher, and extensive scaffolded practice.

Lastly, teaching learners to *summarise* a text is regarded as an important skill for successful schooling and academic literacy; in fact, Marzano, Pickering and Pollock (2001) go so far as to describe summarisation as one of the top nine effective teaching strategies in the history of education. Kelley and Clausen-Grace (2007:156) state that teaching summarisation can be challenging because learners may not understand a text sufficiently, and because summarisation is time consuming and "requires strong comprehension and higher-level thinking." Generally it seems few teachers know how to teach it (this was true for the teachers in the original research study as well as the student teachers to whom the framework was presented), and most go about it in a complicated manner, or ignore it altogether. Various simple methods exist for teaching summarisation, starting with single, short exercises and gradually building up to summaries of complete texts. Learning to summarise may also be 'eased' – at least initially – by using narrative texts, and providing a one-sentence summary for the start, middle and ending of the text, or providing an alternative title for the entire text. The summarisation of expository texts can start at a paragraph level, and progress to multiple paragraphs, and finally complete texts. Ultimately, irrespective of the grade level, the ability to summarise must be taught explicitly (particularly in content subject classes) by starting with short, simple exercises which increase to full-length texts.

Conclusion

It must be reiterated that reading is a complex, multifaceted process. It can be argued that no single framework or model could ever cater for all facets, processes and skills required for successful reading. At best, a single part of the reading process can be addressed in detail, or a selection of processes can be combined and addressed. What is ultimately important is that teaching comprehension must become part of every teacher's skill set. It must no longer be only the so-called language teacher's domain to instruct reading comprehension, and more importantly, identify reading and reading comprehension problems. This is not to say all teachers should be language teachers and forego the instruction of their own subjects in order to 'teach language'. It merely means that all teachers should have the ability to identify and address reading and reading comprehension problems as they occur, instead of leaving it to the language teacher, or worse still, ignoring it altogether. It means that if a learner is struggling in, for example, Maths, the Maths teacher will be able to identify whether the learner's problem is purely numeric literacy or whether it is being compounded or caused by poor reading ability. It means that when handing out homework or an assignment that involves reading (as it inevitably does), all teachers will be able to ensure that learners are using reading strategies and monitoring their understanding; and if they are not able to, that they have the ability to revise such strategies, and to confirm their importance with the learners.

Generally it would seem that teachers may not have the skills needed for teaching comprehension effectively, which was also clear from the study on which the framework is based (Klapwijk, 2011). Teachers' seeming lack of comprehension instruction skills begs the scrutiny of the development of teacher training courses in the area of literacy skills and in-service teacher training programmes, which currently do not seem to focus specifically on issues of comprehension. Sailors (2008:653) states that "teachers are taught basic skills of reading instruction and sent out to teach with the understanding that, in time, they will learn all that they need to know to support comprehension. This is simply not true." Resources must be deployed to

develop a teaching corps capable of exercising judgement and taking decisive and appropriate action (Hill, 2003). This, of course impacts the role of institutions that train teachers. Effective teachers do not come cheap: the quality of their delivery will depend on the quality of their own education (Hill, 2003). In-service teachers, while not as captive an audience as student teachers, can benefit from the explicit structure and guidelines provided by a framework such as the one presented in this article.

In terms of pre-service teachers, teacher training institutions have a captive audience and have the ability to effect change 'from the inside out' by equipping student teachers with the skills required to tackle a teaching environment facing seemingly insurmountable challenges (e.g. in South Africa where literacy statistics are abysmal and many schools lack the necessary infrastructure and resources), instead of trying to work 'from the outside in' through yet another well-intended but short-lived 'development programme', which are generally implemented without the proper post-implementation teacher support. Transforming all teachers into comprehension experts will, however, require a change in thinking and a change to curriculums. The traditional approach of equipping only student teachers who elect a language as a main subject (as opposed to a content subject) with the requisite language teaching skills, must change to include all student teachers. In order to increase literacy rates, a dedicated focus on reading comprehension instruction is required, which means the inclusion of explicit comprehension instruction using, for example, a framework such as the one proposed in this study. Student teachers should learn what reading comprehension is, what the characteristics of a good reader are, and know which aspects in a reader influence the reading and reading comprehension process and the role of metacognitive knowledge in learning and reading. They should learn what reading strategies are, which strategies have been proven to work through research, and they should practice these strategies until their use (and instruction) becomes automatic. Every student teacher should leave their training institution as at least an amateur reading specialist. In this way, best practice in reading instruction, as identified and proven through research, will take hold in schools from the inside out through our graduate teachers.

Ultimately, just like comprehension instruction must not be separated from reading, reading comprehension instruction must not be separated from teaching. If every teacher is contributing to solving the reading literacy problem, it is more than likely that the poor literacy rates will start to show improvement within a relatively short period of time.

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