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|  | **BACKGROUND**  ***The Importance of Understanding the Development of Comprehension***  Previous volumes of the Handbook did not cover comprehension specifically.  It is very helpful for teachers to have a full understanding of the development to better help students in all capacities and levels of learning ability.  “Language and Literacy acquisition in schools mutually reinforce each other.” (p.199)  **COMPRHENISIONS PROCESSES**  Define: Language and reading comprehension.  “Language is the knowledge and use of a set of symbols to present ideas and intentions.”  “Comprehension refers to the listener or reader’s understanding of the message expressed by the speaker of writer.” (p. 200)  Comprehension is a complex process and requires many steps to be successful.  Three preliminary distinctions are helpful in characterizing comprehension development—   1. Distinguish between mastery constructs and growth construct.    1. Learning the alphabet, for example, as opposed to learning to read more deeply 2. Distinction between deliberate, conscious, strategic interventions during reading and other intelligent processing that goes on below the level of conscious introspection.    1. Being able to shift between “automatic pilot to debugging.” 3. Distinction between development and instruction    1. Development = change over time    2. Instruction can influence comprehension development   Comprehension is often presented as a product or outcome assessed by score on test, etc.  ***Listening and Reading Comprehension***  Written language presents as symbols to be decoded  Oral language lacks permanence  Some processes exist with written text, such as the ability to re-read, that are not available orally.  While there are apparent differences between written and oral comprehension, there are also similarities. And developmentally intertwined.  **INTERPETIVE ANALYSIS**  ***Comprehension Development in the First Years of Life***  Strongly linked to home environment.  Children who were read to have certain advantages in terms of making a link between language and text. |
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| What is parental SES?  Socioeconomic status | Other factors influence the ability for children to gain comprehension by early reading of stories. These include SES, race, ethnicity cultural background, parent-child relationships, text genre.  ***Predictors of Later Reading Comprehension***  Five construct measure prior to kindergarten entry appear linked to the level of development of children   1. Phonologic short-term memory 2. Alphabet knowledge 3. Visual perception 4. Oral language 5. Phonological awareness   What seems to be apparent is that higher abilities early in life (birth to pre-school) has implications much further in the future. Often two year or in some cases, 5 – 10 years.  ***Reading Comprehension in the Early Elementary School Years***  Differences in rates of learning are influenced by:   * Time devoted to instruction * Aspects of language and reading that are emphasiezed * Availability of materials * Instructional activities used by the teacher   Snowling: learning to read demands an interplay of different language skills that may interact to an extent yet to be determined. Reading acquisition is a dynamic process that draws differentially on different language resources in different developmental phases.” (p. 206)  Each year, children learn 3,000 words and only 300 are taught “explicitly in schools”  Students become increasingly able to convey ideas to peers  Students learn the language and discourse patterns of school.  Learning from books is related to both student and the text but also the environment.  Fluency is important to reading comprehension because it relieve the reader from doing too many tasks at one time.  Ability to read well = time spent in class reading and in reading instruction.  This was linked to future success in later years.  ***Predictors of Reading Comprehension***  Senechal: Parents reading storybook to children is “informal” literacy.  Parents engaged in teaching about literacy to children is termed “formal”  Home and school factors interact to impact reading comprehension levels.  Teachers that are more active and actually serve more as **coach** or **guide** had better results. |
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| Define **hypertext** | ***Comprehension in the Later Elementary School Years***  Shifts in emphasis.  Larger content area reading becomes increasingly important as subject matter stretches out. Clearly high levels of competency in reading will carry over into other subjects IF the student excels in reading comprehension first.  “Later, understanding of the characteristics of narratives is a strong predictor of reading comprehension in these years.” (p. 213)  “Reading and writing, accompanied by hands-on experiences, appear to enhance, rather than detract from, content area learning.”  Teacher talk is also important.  Interest in reading is also seen to be important.  ***Predictor of Reading Comprehension***  Later elementary years, stronger emphasis on language development and less on word recognition and fluency.  Authors state, “It is important to recognize that language development may only seem more important to reading comprehension in the later than the earlier elementary years.” (p. 214)  Other strategies, when employed by students, led to higher levels of comprehension. For example, previewing and re-reading afforded higher scores on tests.  ***Reading Comprehension Beyond the Elementary Years*** |
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| The authors provide a detailed understanding of comprehension regarding how comprehension, particularly in regards to language and literacy. They state that the process is very complex and must take into account a complex meshing of interpreting symbols, linking those symbols to units of meaning in words.  Both written and oral comprehension necessary to fully comprehend.  They look into the various phases of development and present information regarding links between home environment and levels of comprehension.  They examine the links and indicate how various factors, such as visual perception and phonological awareness, can indicate delays in reading development.  Because of these factors, which may be determined and assessed, it is important to intervene early- perhaps, if possible, even within the home. Teachers who can serve as coaches may be able to share strategies with parents to help their children become better readers through heightened comprehension.  But the authors continue to offer insight into heightening reading comprehension at upper levels of education, too. By teaching strategies to middle and high school students, scores can continue to be increased.  Perhaps too much attention is placed on only intervention at the preliminary levels. Just as learning continues, learning to read also continues. | |