



Promoting Prediction Strategy in Comprehending PISA Reading Text for Students at Universitas Timor

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Abstract

The ability to comprehend a higher level of text is important in this new era. In order to achieve the comprehension, students need more effective strategy in reading. Thus, this activity is promoting making prediction strategy in purpose to help students to engage with PISA reading text that require higher level of thinking. This activity was conducted in Universitas Timor and attended by 29 students in critical reading class. The results showed that prediction strategy effectively improve students' comprehension and change their reading behaviour. The prediction test classified 70% of the students were in grade Very Good and Good at making prediction while the 30% were in grade Fairly and Poor. The excellent students were exposed that making prediction help them to actively interacting with the text and trained their mind to think and predict before, during and after reading. The students with low grade revealed their difficulties were in understanding the main idea and didn't know how to use their prior knowledge. Therefore, it is necessary for the students to practice brainstorming to activate their prior knowledge.

Keywords: Higher level thinking, Making prediction, Reading strategy, Prior knowledge

Abstrak

Kemampuan untuk memahami teks bacaan dengan level berpikir tingkat tinggi merupakan hal penting dalam era saat ini. Untuk mencapai pemahaman yang benar, mahasiswa perlu menguasai strategi membaca yang efektif. Kegiatan pengabdian ini mempromosikan strategi prediksi ketika membaca teks terutama dari PISA test agar mahasiswa memiliki keterikatan dengan teks yang membutuhkan level berpikir tingkat tinggi. Kegiatan pengabdian ini dilaksanakan di Universitas Timor dan diikuti oleh 20 mahasiswa dikelas membaca kritis. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan bahwa strategi prediksi dapat meningkatkan pemahaman mahasiswa dan merubah perilaku membaca mereka secara efektif. 70% mahasiswa memperoleh nilai Sangat Baik dan Baik dalam membuat prediksi yang tepat dan 30% mahasiswa memperoleh nilai Cukup dan Sangat Kurang. Mahasiswa yang memperoleh nilai tinggi mengungkapkan bahwa strategi prediksi membantu mereka bisa berinteraksi dengan aktif ketika membaca dan melatih pikiran untuk menerka atau memprediksi sebelum, ketika, dan sesudah membaca. Sementara, mahasiswa dengan nilai rendah masih menemukan kesulitan dalam memahami gagasan utama dan tidak tahu cara menggunakan pengetahuan awal mereka. Oleh karena itu, mahasiswa wajib dilatih teknik mengumpulkan gagasan untuk mengaktifkan pengetahuan yang sudah dimiliki.

Kata Kunci: Berpikir tingkat tinggi, strategi membaca, membuat prediksi, pengetahuan awal

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Introduction

The recent problem and issues shows that students are having lack interaction of the text as students only focus on word level rather than meaning level (Ntereke & Ramoroka, 2017). Yulita & Saijao (2022) exposed that students who try to focus on word by word are in word level that classified as lower thinking skills. While students who read to find the meaning and text purpose are on meaning level that classified as higher order thinking skills. However, it is difficult for students to move from their lower thinking level up into their higher thinking especially when reading and engaging with PISA text.

Specifically, the problem of students in Universitas Timor is rarely engage with PISA reading test. The preliminary observation showed that the students' score in reading class was low that they couldn't answer the questions in full credit. The students at Universitas Timor are lack of strategy to comprehend higher level of text. They have difficulty in elaborate the hidden meaning in the text because they didn't know how to making inferences, making prediction that could help them to guess the hidden meaning in the text. This small example represents the Indonesian students' ability in dealing with PISA Reading test (Ismawati *et al.*, 2023). The PISA results showed Indonesian students rank at 69th or the 12th lowest with total score 1.108 (OECD, 2022). The average of 15 years old Indonesian students got 359 points in reading which is low compared to 476 points by other nations. Based on that data, it revealed that students have difficulties in comprehending PISA text that cover some themes and proficiency level. The characteristic of PISA text itself has another level difficulty than what Indonesian students read in the textbook. It requires more analytic skill and thinking activity that employed brainstorming and constructing the meaning.

The tendency of students to read for general comprehension such as for pleasure and getting information (Nanda & Azmy, 2020). Commonly, students prefer to read fiction, fairytales, internet article, or social media caption. Aprilia *et al.* (2023) added these types of reading are literal reading which only to get literal comprehension. It is purposed only to understand explicit information in the text that can entertain the reader. In literal reading, the students focus on remember most of specific details. So, they rarely engage with the text such as finding the main ideas and supporting details, and constructing the main ideas to be relate with background knowledge.

Meanwhile, the PISA reading test characteristic including cognitive processes, text forms, types of text, test formats, situations, types of questions, levels of questions, text medium and text environment (Ismawati *et al.*, 2023). All those aspects assess students' ability to understand, use, evaluate and reflect on text, as well as their ability to engage with text to get the purpose. It requires the students to be able to locate information, to describe, to expose and give argument on the particular situation such as personal, public, educational, or occupational.

Elihami & Ismail (2017) stated that reading comprehension is the ability to understand information from the text and interpret the meaning accurately. It involves understanding at word level, sentence level and meaning level. In addition, Nanda & Azmy (2020) said that reading comprehension is the ability to process and construct meaning by connecting or comparing the information from the text with what the readers already have in their knowledge bank. This process requires critical thinking to synthesize the ideas in the text to get new interpretation.

Since it is a complex activity, there are several factors that affect student's ability to comprehend the text which dominantly from their affective sides. These affective sides includes the students' motivation, background knowledge, their purpose of reading, their interest towards the text and their perception about the text difficulty. Moreover, some technical factors also contributed to students' reading ability, such as type of genre of text such as descriptive, narrative, recount, procedure and expository text; the reading frequency and the reading habits (Yuzulia, 2021). Another factor is students' anxiety that affect students' reading ability. Yulita & Saijao (2022) revealed that the students with high level of anxiety are mostly affected their comprehension about the text. This anxiety mostly caused by the students' perception that comprehending the text is difficult.

Based on several factors and problems above, students need strategy to engage and apply active reading activity that require higher order thinking skills. Thus, this activity is purposed to improve students' engagement when reading PISA text that require higher order thinking skills. It means that the students must be able to give response in a form of open constructed response that require a more detailed and elaborated answer. As PISA reading text require complex cognitive process, Brod (2021) proposed prediction strategy to improve and control students' cognitive while reading. It could help the students to elaborate their answer and reflect while reading is making prediction. Since cognitive also relates to prior knowledge, it boosts students' ability in constructing meaning by connecting their prior knowledge with the new information.

Pitogo (2021) and Prastika *et al.* (2020) explained that prediction strategy intellectually having vision about the events or information that occur next based on all the clues and information written in the text. In order to make a good and accurate prediction, reader needs to involve prior knowledge as reference. It is a strategy most relied upon before reading. By doing prediction before reading, the reader anticipates the meaning by perform active reading. And by the time during reading, the reader make revision about the prediction. Aliah *et al.* (2025) added that the important part of making prediction is to combine the clues in the text and to connect it to previous experiences or prior knowledge to make valid guesses about what will happen.

Researchers have explored several aspect of the role of prediction in reading. Aprilia *et al.* (2023) listed the significance of prediction strategy which are (1) to help the students to ask questions while reading; (2) encourage the students to re-read and recall the facts; and (3) provide a way to monitor the reading process. Moreover, Dewi *et al.* (2023) added some advantages of making prediction strategy, those includes assisting the students to quickly engage with text information both on word level and meaning level, improving their concentration and motivation and also it makes the students being attentive and energetic in reading process.

In case of the making prediction process, Pitogo (2021) broke it into the five steps, those are (1) sees the title of the text; (2) looks at the picture or cover; (3) read the first line; (4) activate the prior knowledge; and (5) make hypothesis of prediction. This steps are also commonly called as think, predict, read and connect that helps the students get better comprehension to the text meaning. This strategy assists the students to make relationship between the prior knowledge and thinking skills that can improve students' thinking activity and learn independently.

Based on the phenomenon above and the positive impact of the prediction strategy, this activity is purposed to improve students' comprehension in reading PISA by promoting the making prediction strategy. This activity is designed for students to boost

students' thinking skills when dealing with higher level reading text. Additionally, this activity also has significant benefits for teacher in improving their teaching strategy in reading class.

Method

This activity of promoting Making Prediction Strategy was conducted in Universitas Timor at English Study Program in East Nusa Tenggara. The participants of this activity are the second year students that took Interpretative and Affective Reading class. It consisted of 29 students.

This activity was conducted in two meetings which divided into different activity. The first meeting was introducing the students about Making Prediction Strategy. The material for this meeting was taken from BBC Learning English. The students were being taught about how to make prediction and the benefits of it. They were trained to follow three steps of making prediction which are before reading, during reading and after reading. They also were trained to ask questions, guessing and seeing clues within the text to support their prediction. For details of the material can be seen in figure below.



Figure 1. Making Prediction Material

The figure above displays the three steps in Making Prediction Strategy which will be explain as follows:

(1) Before Reading

This step starts before the students read the text. They were asked to activate their prior knowledge about the title given. The students could use clues from scanning the text first before read it. It helped them to predict or guess about the what happened in the text.

(2) During Reading

This step requires more reflection in each sentence or paragraph. The students were practiced to think a few moments to predict what will happen next by constructing ideas or information they read.

(3) After Reading

The last step is asking questions about their prediction. The students checked whether their prediction was correct or not and learn to ask question about how and why their prediction correct or wrong.

In the second meeting, the exercise was given to the students. The students were given a Making Prediction Worksheet that consisted of 4 reading PISA text and 10 questions related to the text. The text genre is narrative with dominant topic was about environment and climate change. The topics of the text were (1) Dessert, (2) Storm, (3) Farming, and (4) Animals. The students were asking to predict what will happen or occur in the story and what evidence from the text that supports their prediction.

In order to help the students to predict the text and use thinking skills, the chart was given so that the students could make notes about what is on their mind while reading. After the meeting finished, the students' worksheets were analyzed qualitatively in two parts. The first analysis is by using scoring rubric where their comprehension was classified to 4 grade level which 4 is the highest and 1 is the lowest. The second analysis is using element of good prediction with also range from level 1 up to level 4.

Results and Discussion

The results are presented in two sections. The first section explains the students' grade in making prediction. The second section exposed how the students understand the element of good prediction.

The students' grade in Making Prediction

The first meeting was held to promote Making Prediction Strategy in doing PISA reading text. Firstly, the students are reminded of the important of using strategy in to get a better comprehension in reading. Secondly, they were introduced to this strategy and how to apply it in reading process. Thirdly, the students practiced to use the prediction strategy in reading exercise This activity can be seen in the figure below.



Figure 2. Promoting Prediction Strategy

The figure showed the class situation when students practice making prediction strategy. They were given two narrative texts and asked to answer what will happen next in the text and why did they think about that. Two students were asked to explain their answer and reason in front of the class.



Figure 3. Students practiced prediction strategy

After they practiced making prediction in reading text, their worksheets were analyzed to their ability in applying this strategy appropriately. The result of students' worksheet in applying prediction strategy was shown in this figure below.

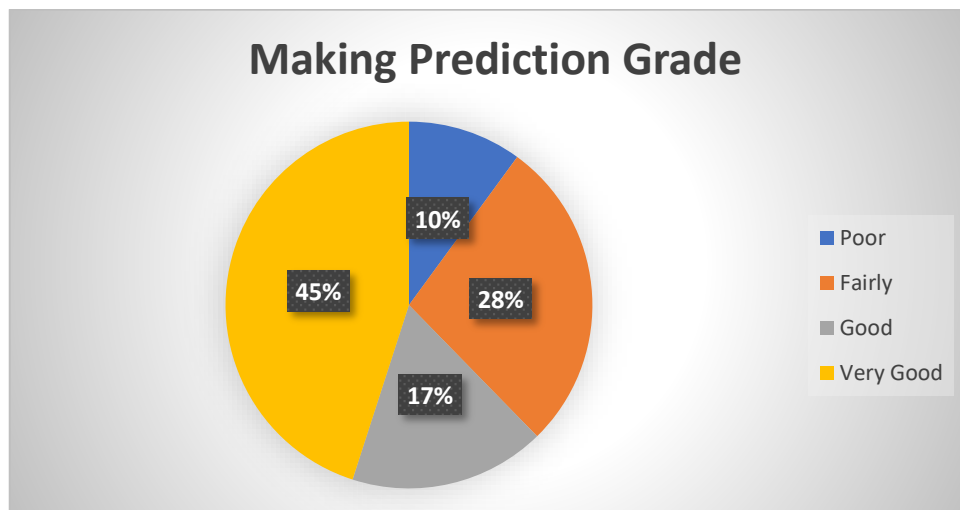


Figure 4. Prediction Test Grade

The figure showed that 45 % of the students were very good at making prediction and could elaborate the evidence from the text. They can proficiently make a variety of predictions about a plot in the text successfully. Students stated that they used this strategy regularly before, during and after reading. More importantly they could clearly identify the evidence in the text and understand how to use this reading strategy. It shows that the high grade students already improve their engagement with the text. These results are supported by Prastika *et al.* (2020) who reported that the usage of making prediction strategy is to help the reader to actively interact with the text in order to gain the contextual meaning.

Meanwhile, there were 17% of the students were good at making prediction. In this level, students could moderately make prediction from the text and used this strategy appropriately before, during, and after reading. They also could identify features of the text as proof to support their predictions. And lastly, they could demonstrate an understanding of using this strategy. This related to the report from Alfisyahrin (2022) that concern on the benefits of making prediction strategy in a place to make the students easy to grasp the information that help them to predict the next event in the text. It also impacted their motivation and concentration while reading since they have purpose to make an accurate prediction.

For lower grade, there were 28% of the students who were fairly at making prediction occasionally before, during and after reading. They didn't fully identify the features of the text as proof to support their prediction. The students also only didn't fully understand the importance of making prediction while reading. And the 10% percent of the students who were poor at making prediction. They experienced difficulty making predictions about the given text. They rarely identify features of the text as proof to support their predictions. Lastly, the lowest grade students showed only little understanding of using this reading strategy.

The previous studies had found the weakness of low grade students have difficulties in comprehending the text. Study by Zawadzka & Hanczakowski (2019) reported that students only read without getting the idea of the text. Obviously, comprehending is the issue that decrease the students' ability in making prediction. Moreover, Sholikhah & Azizah (2019) added that students' prior knowledge holds an important role in making prediction. Most of the low grade students didn't or little have any knowledge about the given topic. For example, they didn't have any prior knowledge about how the storm is coming or the story that related to snowflakes. This problem leads to their incapability to predict what will happen next in the story as they couldn't catch the element of surprise in guessing (Zawadzka & Hanczakowski, 2019).

However, the problem above is only minor since the students have been instructed to use list of clues as a guidance that lead them to make prediction. Below is the example of list of clues made the students.

Table 1. Sample of List of Clues

What I predict will happen	Clues that I used to predict	What really happened
<i>Text 1</i>		
<i>Frank is most likely to collapse from dehydration and heat exhaustion</i>	<i>Empty canteen, intense heat, and exposure of the harsh dessert</i>	<i>Frank feel and fainted due to extreme heat and dehydration</i>
<i>Frank fainted</i>	<i>Frank was lightheaded his knees get wobbly</i>	<i>Frank feel and fainted due to extreme heat and dehydration</i>
<i>Text 2</i>		
<i>The animals are likely to escape from the barn</i>	<i>Danny's forgetfulness to lock the barn door</i>	<i>The horses escape the barn</i>
<i>Danny get the new task and work again</i>	<i>Danny was off to see farmer green</i>	<i>The horse escape the barn</i>

Based on the table above, there were significance differences between the high grade students and low grade students in analyzing the text. The high grade students looked into each clues from the text and they conclude what happened before they predict what will happen next. The could the clues words accurately such as *extreme heat*, *empty canteen*, and *harsh dessert*. Meanwhile, the low grade students focus only on literal meaning or

word level to understand the text. They didn't make any conclusion or finding explicit meaning but only on understanding some information written. This little understanding lead to problem in making wrong or even irrelevant prediction.

The Students' Understanding of Element in Good Prediction

In regards of the element in good prediction, the students shown vary understanding that divided into groups, those are the high grade and low grade students. The details of their understanding is presented in this table below.

Table 2. *Students' Understanding of Element in Good Prediction*

Element in Good Prediction	1	2	3	4
Accuracy	Prediction were not connected to the story	Prediction were related to the story but were not accurate	Predictions were related to the story and somewhat accurate	Predictions were related to the story and very accurate
Frequency	Only make prediction BEFORE reading	Make a prediction before reading and once while reading	Make prediction before reading and at least twice while reading	Make prediction before reading and at least three while reading
The use of prior knowledge and information in the text	Making prediction by only using prior knowledge and not the information in the text	Make prediction by using prior knowledge but not able to explain the prediction with information	Make predictions by using prior knowledge and information from the text and tried to explain it	Make predictions by using prior knowledge and information from the text and were able to explain it

In regards of the element in good prediction, the high grade students stated that they make prediction related to the story and the prediction were accurate that helped them to understand the text better. For example, from the first text about *Dessert*, the high grade students understood about the dessert environment such as extreme heat, dryness and lack of water. This prior knowledge helped to predict the character would have gotten dehydration and feel wobbly.

Meanwhile, for the low grade students which around 30% from the total students, their ability in making prediction that connected to the story were limited. Even if they could make prediction, it's rarely accurate. In terms of time, they only make prediction before reading or at least one while they were reading. And related to the use of their prior knowledge, they have little knowledge on environmental challenge and were not able to explain their prediction with information from the text or their prior knowledge.

The results above showed that students have weakness in maximizing their prior knowledge to understand the new content or information. As suggested by Brod *et al.* (2018) the use of prior knowledge are important in reading as a framework for processing and interpreting new information, retention, getting comprehension and adjusting learning experience. In order to make a good prediction, Rahmawati (2019) emphasized the reader to have prior knowledge including facts, rules, principles, personal experiences. These provide a foundation for building new knowledge. Thus, teachers can actively train students to develop their prior knowledge by using by practicing brainstorming and questioning the text.

Conclusion

The results conclude that making prediction strategy are effective in helping the students to actively engage with the text, especially PISA reading text that require higher level of thinking. By using prediction, the students are trained to use their prior knowledge and connecting it to new information. The use of prior knowledge and information are helping the students to make prediction accurately which is improving their comprehension about the text. The promoting of making prediction effectively increase students' comprehension up to 70% of the students who could make prediction correctly. Unfortunately, there were 30% of students who still have difficulty in making prediction due to their lack of vocabulary and prior knowledge. These weaknesses can be improved by practicing intensely in developing prior knowledge and learning to ask question about the text.

The further studies and activities are possible to enhancing students' prior knowledge in making prediction. Since this activity only use narrative PISA text, it is recommended to promote making prediction with various kind of text such as expository and recount text. Moreover, the students must encourage to recognize their strength and weakness in reading PISA text and find some idea to solve it.

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