

## *Double Didactics to Prepare Future Educators*

Judith Hanke, University of Flensburg, Germany

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### **Abstract**

Reading strategies are very important for students to obtain as they can foster reading comprehension. Additionally, it is not only essential to teach students reading strategies, but also that they know how to use them. The university class discussed in this article is for education students, who want to become teachers or work in the educational sector. The class's focus is reading support in which reading strategies and methods are incorporated. One important focus is the content. The first sessions of the class are destined to give the students an overview of the definition of reading, reading models, their own reading history, etc. The second target of the class is the student-centered learning approach in the form of a double didactics design. After the basics are covered, a prototype of a *group of experts*, which is a student-led class session is presented and explained. A group of experts, composed of students, do research and teach the given topic. The students need to plan *their lesson* by selecting appropriate reading material and determining methods. This means that the student-centered learning approach puts the students in the position of the teacher/lecturer, by having them teach their fellow students. A discussion follows after each session, in which the implementation of the reading strategy and applied reading methods are discussed. This intends that the students do not just give a regular presentation, but that they acquire knowledge, skills, and experience on how to actually implement reading strategies and reading methods in their future classroom.

Keywords: Double Didactics, Student-Centered Learning, Student-Led, Expert Groups, Reading Support, Reading Strategies

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## **Introduction**

The acquisition of reading strategies plays a vital role in enhancing students' reading comprehension abilities. Extensive research studies, such as the PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) conducted by Mullis, I. V. S., and Martin, M. O. (2019), and the RAND Reading Study Group conducted by RAND & Snow (2002), have underscored the significance of students learning and effectively applying reading strategies. These studies have shown that students who possess a repertoire of effective reading strategies demonstrate higher levels of reading proficiency and comprehension.

As a result, it is essential for teachers to possess a deep understanding of how to teach these strategies to their students. They must be adept at integrating these strategies into their instructional practices, ensuring that students have sufficient opportunities to practice and apply them (Lauth et al. 2004). Additionally, teachers should guide their students on when and how to utilize these strategies based on the demands of different reading tasks and materials.

The class discussed in this paper is specifically designed for university students who aspire to become teachers or pursue careers in the educational sector. It aims to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively teach reading strategies to their future students. Through a comprehensive exploration of various reading methods, the class empowers students with a selection of instructional techniques that can be employed to support students' reading development.

By emphasizing the importance of reading strategies (Banditvilai 2020) and methods, the class prepares aspiring educators to create engaging and meaningful learning experiences that foster their future students' reading comprehension, critical thinking, and overall literacy skills. The ultimate goal is to empower students with the tools they need to become proficient and confident readers, enabling them to succeed academically and beyond. The incorporation of double didactics is essential in achieving these goals. Moreover, through the student-led and student-focused nature of the class, students not only gain teaching experience and reflect on this but also engage in reflection throughout the class, particularly regarding their own learning and reading practices.

## **Goals and Competencies**

The course's focus is on professional, methodical, social and self-competency while incorporating a wide range of teaching methods.

**Professional competencies** within the class revolve around developing a comprehensive understanding of reading and effective reading support. Students are guided to acquire a deep and valid understanding of the complexity involved in the act of reading.

Through theoretical discussions, practical exercises, and hands-on experiences, students become knowledgeable about various strategies and techniques that can enhance reading support. They learn to identify and utilize beneficial strategies tailored to different reading contexts and diverse learner needs. This includes techniques such as pre-reading activities, active reading strategies, metacognitive approaches, and effective comprehension monitoring.

Moreover, students are encouraged to internalize reading theories and models that provide insights into the reading process. They explore different theoretical frameworks and models, such as the Dual-Route Model (Coltheart et al. 2001) Reader-Response Theory (Mart 2019), or the interactive model of reading introduced by Rumelhart (1985). By familiarizing themselves with these theories, students gain a deeper understanding of the cognitive, linguistic, and socio-cultural aspects of reading.

In order to apply their knowledge effectively, students engage in practical exercises that allow them to implement and adapt reading support strategies in real-world contexts. They explore case studies, analyze reading interventions, and design reading support activities tailored to specific learners or instructional settings. By actively applying their knowledge and reflecting on their experiences, students develop the professional competence to provide targeted and effective reading support.

Throughout the class, students also engage in critical analysis and evaluation of current research and developments in the field of reading support. They explore empirical studies, scholarly articles, and professional literature.

By developing these professional competencies, students are equipped with the necessary tools and skills to support individuals in their reading journey. They become proficient in selecting and implementing appropriate strategies, adapting to different contexts, and continuously refining their approaches. The students will be able to make a meaningful impact as reading support professionals and promoting literacy.

The class incorporates **methodical competencies** throughout, including criteria-led discussions of theories, models, and research results. These competencies aim to provide students with the skills necessary to critically analyze and evaluate various academic concepts and findings.

During these discussions, students are encouraged to apply specific criteria to assess the strengths, weaknesses, and applicability of theories, models, and research results. They learn to identify key components, analyze underlying assumptions, and evaluate the validity and reliability of the information presented.

By engaging in these discussions, students develop their analytical thinking, argumentation, and reasoning skills. They learn to construct well-supported arguments, consider alternative perspectives, and make informed judgments based on evidence.

Furthermore, these methodical competencies foster an environment of collaborative learning and intellectual exchange. Students are encouraged to actively participate in discussions, share their insights, and respectfully challenge each other's viewpoints. This interactive approach promotes a deeper understanding of the subject matter and encourages critical thinking from multiple perspectives.

Overall, the inclusion of methodical competencies, such as criteria-led discussions, enhances the learning experience by promoting a deeper engagement with theories, models, and research results, and by equipping students with valuable skills applicable in academic and professional contexts.

**Social and self-competence** play a crucial role in fostering independent study skills within the class. Students are encouraged to engage in extensive research by exploring a range of research work, articles, chapters of books, and practical reports relevant to the subject matter.

As part of their learning process, students are tasked with constructing their own lessons. This involves conducting thorough research, synthesizing information, and creating a comprehensive handout and presentation adhering to the standards set by the lecturer. Additionally, students are responsible for designing an activity that will actively involve their peers during the class session.

Throughout this process, the lecturer acts as a guide and facilitator, providing necessary support and guidance as required. The students are encouraged to take ownership of their learning journey, fostering their self-competence by independently seeking resources, critically analyzing information, and presenting their findings in a coherent and structured manner.

To prepare for each class session, students are expected to engage in extensive reading of texts presented in various formats, including articles, studies, and chapters of books. These pre-reading materials serve as the basis for in-depth discussions and analysis during the class sessions. The students actively participate in these discussions, sharing their insights, raising questions, and collectively exploring the key concepts and findings.

By emphasizing social and self-competence, the class cultivates essential skills for lifelong learning. Students develop the ability to conduct independent research, critically evaluate information, and effectively communicate their knowledge to others. Furthermore, the collaborative nature of the class enhances social competence by promoting a supportive and interactive learning environment where students learn from one another's perspectives and contributions.

Overall, the integration of social and self-competence in the class empowers students to take ownership of their learning, strengthens their research and presentation skills, and promotes active engagement and collaboration within the academic community.

The class incorporates various **teaching and learning approaches**. It primarily consists of seminars, with the initial three seminars being predominantly led by the lecturer and focusing on discussions and student self-reflection. The remaining sessions are divided into two parts: a teacher/lecturer-led segment with discussions, and a student-led segment. Throughout the seminars, students engage in introspection, reflecting on their own understanding of reading and reading support, their personal reading experiences, and their reading abilities.

### **Relevant Criteria of Good Teaching**

The seminar is characterized by a high level of structure and organization, with each session building upon the previous ones throughout the semester. A key aspect of the seminar is providing a framework for university students to engage in self-reflection. In the initial session, students are prompted to review their own reading habits and experiences through a questionnaire. They are asked about their enjoyment of reading, the number of books they have read, and how they perceive themselves as readers, among other questions. Furthermore, students are encouraged to create a reading biography, incorporating questions that explore their earliest reading experiences and other relevant aspects.

In the subsequent session, students participate in a word-per-minute (wpm) test (Bamberger 2006), allowing them to reflect on their own reading speed and feelings associated with timed reading activities. These activities aim to deepen their understanding of their own reading habits and experiences, while also fostering empathy and understanding towards struggling readers or those who have difficulty finding enjoyment in reading.

Towards the end of the seminar, the students revisit the initial questionnaire and reading biography, leading to a class discussion on any changes or new insights gained throughout the class. This reflection process enables students to evaluate their personal growth and share their thoughts with classmates.

A fundamental methodology employed in this class is the continuous emphasis on student-centered learning. From the very beginning, the class design prioritizes the needs and perspectives of the students. The entire seminar is designed to be interactive, learner-centered, reflective, and focused on preparing students for their future roles as teachers, equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to create engaging learning environments for their own students.

## **Design**

The class is structured to encompass a total of 11-13 sessions, depending on the length of the semester, with each session spanning 90 minutes. Given the class's primary focus on reading support, the students' own reading practices hold great significance. They are provided with pre-reading materials for each session as well as in class literature.

As mentioned earlier, the initial three sessions serve as an introduction to the topic, aimed at building the students' foundational understanding and knowledge. The first session covers organizational aspects such as the expert groups, class expectations, and the essay assignment. It also includes engaging activities like a metaphor exercise and a mind map activity focused on reading. Through the mind map activity, students reflect on the multifaceted nature of reading, recognizing that it contains numerous elements. Additionally, students get the opportunity to experience a wpm test, gaining insights into the perspective of a student taking a reading assessment and prompting them to reflect on their own reading abilities.

Throughout the first session and the following two sessions, students receive essential information about reading while engaging in activities that foster self-reflection on their personal relationship with reading. They are provided with the previously mentioned questionnaire that prompts them to consider aspects such as their enjoyment of reading, their self-perceived reading proficiency, the number of books they possess, and the time they allocate for reading. Furthermore, students are tasked with crafting a reading biography, which includes questions as a starting point for their writing, such as their first book read or their initial reading experiences.

These activities are designed to support students' future work in enhancing the reading abilities of their own students. However, for the students to become effective educators, it is crucial for them to develop a comprehensive understanding of their own feelings and experiences with reading, including what has aided their reading progress and what challenges they have encountered. By engaging in these activities, they can engage in honest and meaningful conversations with their future students about reading. These methods are

also discussed and analyzed during class sessions. In the final class, students revisit their reading questionnaires and reading biographies, reflecting on any changes or insights gained, and considering how these reflections can inform their future teaching practices.

## Topics

The class centers around the significant theme of **reading support**, exploring how teachers can best assist students in their reading journey. The significance of reading support is thoroughly examined, exploring various aspects that contribute to fostering successful reading experiences.

Throughout the class, a wide range of crucial topics related to reading are explored, including **reading engagement** (Rieckmann 2020), **reading motivation** (Goy et al. 2017), **reading culture** (Garbe et al. 2010; Nickel-Bacon & Wrobel 2012), and **the socialization of reading** (Garbe 2020; Garbe et al. 2010; Steinbrecher 2007). These discussions intertwine with the core concept of reading support, highlighting the interconnectedness between these elements and their collective impact on students' reading development.

Furthermore, the class presents and discusses essential **reading strategies** (Banditvilai 2020; Dretzke & Keniston 1989), **models** (Baha 2017), and **methods** (Garbe 2020). The lecturer and students collaborate to examine and share effective approaches for supporting students' reading abilities. They examine the practical application of various strategies, exploring their benefits and limitations. Moreover, reading models are discussed, providing valuable insights into different theoretical frameworks of the reading process. By addressing these components, the class equips students with a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of reading support and empowers them with practical tools to implement in their future teaching endeavors.

The focus of reading support lies primarily on the implementation of **reading strategies** (Armbruster et al. 2001; Mastropieri et al. 1999; Mullis & Martin 2019; RAND & Snow 2002). Throughout the class, students are introduced to various reading strategies, including **previewing** (Kruse et al. 2015; Li 2021; Miqawati & Sulisty 2014; Neuland & Peschel 2013; Zhaohua 2004), **thinking aloud** (Konrad 2010; Sönmez & Sulak 2018), **predicting** (Duke et al. 2022; Hußmann et al. 2017; Neuland & Peschel 2013; Park & Kang 2018; Sumirat et al. 2019), **questioning** (Clark et al. 1984; Lindauer et al. 2012), **summarizing** (Gold 2007; Hußmann et al. 2017; Idris et al. 2008; Müller 2014; Neuland & Peschel 2013; Spörer et al. 2009), **making inferences** (Kruse et al. 2015), **goal setting** (Barzen 2012; Sächsisches Bildungsinstitut 2016; Wittwer et al. 2019), as well as **modeling** (Armbruster et al. 2001), **scaffolding** (Gibbons 2015; Klewitz 2017; Kniffka 2010; Wessel 2015), and **feedback** (Butler 2005; Ryssel 2012).

In terms of content, the students delve into different reading models such as **the multilevel of reading** proposed by Rosebrock and Nix (2020), **the situation model** developed by Lenhard (2013), and **the interactive model of reading** introduced by Rumelhart (1985), among others. Furthermore, they explore reading theories like **the reader-response theory** (Mart 2019) and the **Dual-Route Model of Reading** by Coltheart (Coltheart et al. 2001). The class also covers topics such as **self-regulated strategy development** (Graham et al. 2007), **reading culture** (Garbe et al. 2010; Nickel-Bacon & Wrobel 2012), the **reader's self-concept** (Garbe 2020; Goy et al. 2017), **brainstorming** (Ghabanchia & Behroozniab 2014), **KWL-strategy** (what I know, what I wonder, and what I learned) (Sholeh et al. 2020), **self-monitoring** (Cola et al.

2021; Mayer & Marks 2018), *Jigsaw* (Rahmatina 2019), *anticipation guides* (Evans et al. 2022), *Directed Reading Thinking/Activity* (DRT/A) (Erliana 2011), *question-answer relationships*, *inquiry charts*, *think-pair-share* (Mundelsee & Jurkowski 2021), *graphic organizers* (Bonyadi, 2013; Culbert et al. 1998; Roozbeh et al. 2016) (e. g., story sequence (Gouldthrop et al. 2017), story wheel), *reciprocal teaching* (Pilten 2016; Spörer et al. 2009), *rubrics* (De Silva. 2014; English et al. 2022; Jescovitch et al. 2019), *reading guides*, *Gradual Release Model* (Frey & Fisher 2013), *the workshop method* (Hill & Crevola 1999), *the grid method* (Ostrowski 2020), *reflection* (Jenert 2008), *SQR3* (Anjuni & Cahyadi 2019; Koch 2017), and *concept sort*, among others.

Through this comprehensive exploration, students gain a deeper understanding of the diverse strategies, models, theories, and instructional approaches related to reading. These insights equip them with a broad repertoire of tools and techniques that can be applied in their future teaching practices to effectively support their students' reading development.

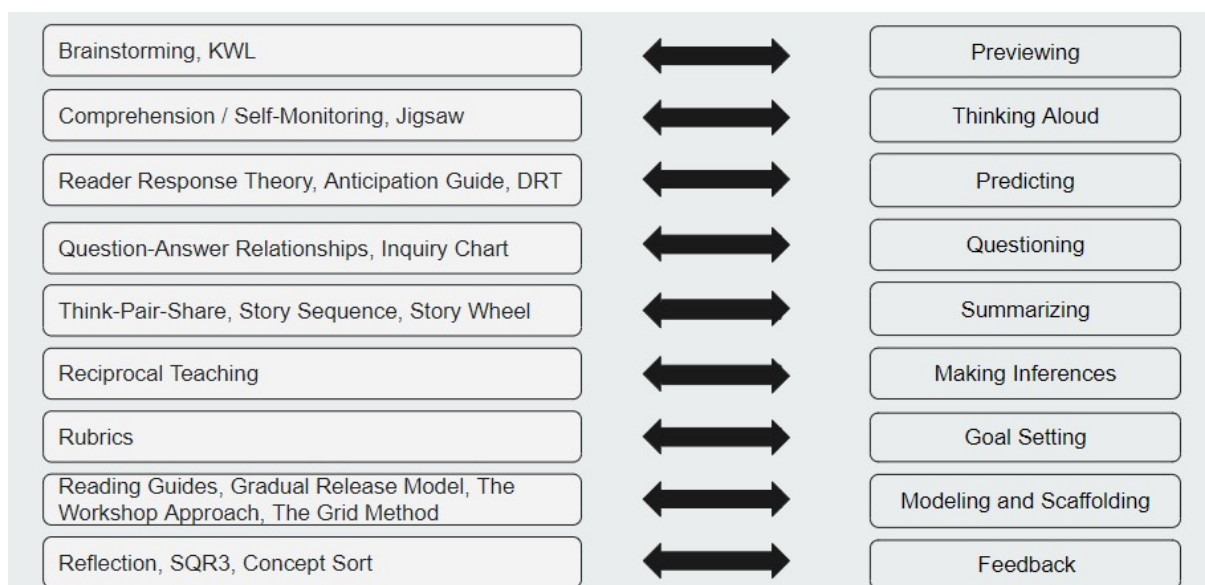


Figure 1: Topics, Reading Strategies aligned with Strategies and Methods, Hanke, J.

### Example of Expert Groups

The lecturer provides an illustrative example of an expert group, demonstrating to students the expectation and utilizing the strategy of modeling. Throughout the class, students have the opportunity to inquire about reading strategies and their integration into future classroom settings.

The example of the expert group begins like every session, with the students preparing for class through pre-reading material. This material is specifically related to the topic of schemas or graphic organizers, as this is the strategy chosen for the example of an expert group. The pre-reading materials enable students to establish a foundational understanding of the topic, upon which they can further build during the session.

During the session, students are introduced to the definition, theory, and historical context behind the reading strategy. They are then presented with an overview of different groups or classifications of graphic organizers, accompanied by illustrative examples. The advantages and disadvantages of employing graphic organizers are also discussed. While reading

strategies are undoubtedly helpful, teachers must ensure they are taught at the appropriate moments, effectively integrated into lessons, and students are guided on when and how to use them. Additionally, teachers need to consider the time required to adequately prepare and utilize graphic organizers.

Following this theoretical discussion, the example of the expert group transitions into an activity where students receive a graphic organizer, specifically a story map, from the lecturer. This story map is specifically created for the session and serves a crucial purpose. Rather than using graphic organizers simply for the sake of using them, they are thoughtfully incorporated into the session to fulfill a higher purpose. In this particular activity, students are tasked with reading a short text on reading engagement, and the story map serves to enhance reading comprehension and retention.

Through the modeling of an expert group, the students have a better understanding of the expert group and can plan their own.

By providing practical examples and opportunities for application, the class equips students with the necessary skills and understanding to effectively implement reading strategies, such as graphic organizers, in their future classrooms.

## **Expert Groups**

The central focus of each session revolves around the expert groups, which serve as a cornerstone of the dual didactic approach implemented in the seminar. The seminar itself is designed to be learner-centered and student-led, creating an interactive and engaging learning environment.

During the expert group sessions, the seminar time is divided into two distinct halves. The first half is dedicated to the lecturer's guidance, where they cover the pre-reading material that is relevant to the entire session. This ensures that all students have a shared foundation of knowledge and understanding. The lecturer facilitates discussions with the class, delving into topics that align with the specific reading strategy to be presented by the expert group on that particular day. For instance, if the expert group is focusing on the reading strategy *previewing*, the lecturer may engage the class in discussions on related techniques such as brainstorming (Ghabanchia & Behroozniab 2014) and the KWL-strategy (what I know, what I wonder, and what I learned) (Sholeh et al. 2020).

The expert group experience goes beyond mere presentation or discussion. Students are tasked with planning and designing their own class, mirroring the responsibilities they will face as future educators. They conduct in-depth research on their assigned reading strategy, exploring various teaching methods and approaches that can effectively integrate the strategy into the classroom. Moreover, they carefully select appropriate texts for their classmates to read, considering the relevance and engagement level of the materials. This comprehensive preparation ensures that the expert group session is not only informative but also actively involves the participants. To solidify their plans, students are required to create a handout, prepare presentation materials, and design an interactive activity. These materials are then submitted to the lecturer one week prior to their designated teaching day, allowing for constructive feedback and quality control.



On the teaching day, students take on the role of instructors, delivering their prepared class to their fellow students who assume the role of eager learners. This provides them with a valuable opportunity to put their teaching skills into practice and examine the effectiveness of their chosen reading strategy. Following the presentation, a collaborative discussion ensues, where participants reflect on the strengths of the class, brainstorm potential implementation scenarios, and consider the optimal contexts in which the reading strategy can be employed. The lecturer also contributes to the discussion, offering valuable feedback to the expert group, highlighting areas of improvement, and providing guidance for future development.

This structured approach to the expert groups encourages active engagement, practical application, and continuous feedback, equipping students with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their future roles as educators. By actively involving students in the learning process and providing them with hands-on teaching experiences, the seminar empowers them to become confident, competent, and reflective practitioners in the field of education.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, reading support is a crucial subject for both students and educators.

The class under discussion is specifically tailored to enrich students' comprehension of reading support while equipping them with the necessary tools, guidance, and hands-on experience to effectively implement reading support strategies. The integration of double didactics plays a key role in realizing these objectives. By adopting a student-led and student-centered approach, the class empowers students to actively participate in their own learning journey as a student but also as a future teacher and develop a deep understanding of reading support principles and practices.

Throughout the course, students not only acquire valuable teaching experience but also engage in continuous reflection, particularly in relation to their own learning and reading habits. This reflective component fosters self-awareness and a critical examination of their instructional approaches, enabling students to refine their strategies and enhance their effectiveness as future educators. By actively analyzing their experiences, strengths, and areas for improvement, students become active agents in their own development, cultivating a sense of ownership and autonomy in their learning process.

Furthermore, the incorporation of double didactics ensures that students receive comprehensive guidance and exposure to diverse teaching methods. This approach allows them to explore various instructional techniques, assess their efficacy, and adapt them to meet the unique needs of their future students. As a result, students complete the course not only with theoretical knowledge but also with practical skills and a deep understanding of how to provide effective reading support in educational settings.

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