Improving Critical Reading in Esl Classes And Strategies For Teaching Reading

Shamsutdinova Lyutsiya Rafailovna

Teacher, Uzbek State World Languages University

E-mail: liya_r15@mail.ru

Annotation: *The article deals with searching the issues based on improving critical reading in ESL classes and strategies for teaching reading.*

Also, author analyzes strategies of teaching critical reading in the ESL classroom and ways of improving this process with the kinds of effective tasks and dealing with the difficulties which learners come across while reading process.

Key words: reading, strategy, ESL classes, critical reading, competence, Linguistic competence, Discourse competence, Sociolinguistic competence, Strategic competence, authentic text.

Critical reading means that a reader applies certain processes, models, questions, and theories that result in enhanced clarity and comprehension. As we know reading is the process of understanding written texts. It is a unit of speech which contains both perception and thought. The process of understanding words is called comprehension so it learns sentences which connected in the text. Readers always use background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text and other tactics to help them comprehend written text.

Most educational theses are devoted to investigating reading materials, then come speaking and writing. First of all, they are doctoral research dedicated to the contribution of various types of reading, for example, skim reading – Agapitova[1], extensive reading – Zhirkova[2] , Widdowson[3] offers a method of

---

[1] Agapitova, T.G. Teaching foreign language skim reading when developing professional culture of the future teacher of a foreign language. PhD thesis (Education), Perm. 2000

[2] Zhirkova, O.P. Teaching methods of fiction extensive reading in the process of training German for students of the second language specialty in the teacher training university. PhD thesis (Education), Vladimir. 2004

[3] Widdowson, H.G.English for Specific Purposes: Criteria for Course Design In

International Journal of Research

Available at https://pen2print.org/index.php/ijr/

e-ISSN: 2348-6848
p-ISSN: 2348-795X
Volume 05 Issue 23
December 2018

teaching multi-language abstracting of texts.

Reading is an interactive process that goes on between the reader and the text, resulting in comprehension. The text presents letters, words, sentences, and paragraphs that encode meaning. The reader uses knowledge, skills, and strategies to determine what that meaning is.

Reader knowledge, skills, and strategies include

1. Linguistic competence: the ability to recognize the elements of the writing system; knowledge of vocabulary; knowledge of how words are structured into sentences

2. Discourse competence: knowledge of discourse markers and how they connect parts of the text to one another

3. Sociolinguistic competence: knowledge about different types of texts and their usual structure and content

4. Strategic competence: the ability to use top-down strategies, as well as knowledge of the language (a bottom-up strategy)

The purpose(s) for reading and the type of text determine the specific knowledge, skills, and strategies that readers need to apply to achieve comprehension. Reading comprehension is thus much more than decoding. Reading comprehension results is when the reader knows which skills and strategies are appropriate for the type of text, and understands how to apply them to accomplish the reading purpose.

Reading effectively requires approaching texts with a *critical* eye: evaluating what you read for not just *what* it says, but *how* and *why* it says it. Effective reading is central to both effective *research* (when you evaluate sources) and effective *writing* (when you understand how what you read is

English for Academic and Specific Purposes: Studies in Honor of Louis Trimbler. Newbury House.2001

written, you can work to incorporate those techniques into your own writing). Being an effective reader also means being able to evaluate your own practices, working to develop your critical reading skills.[4]

There are also several opinions in the process of reading:

1. As we mentioned before reading is not a passive skill. Reading is an incredibly active occupation. To do it successfully, we have to understand what the words mean, see the pictures the words are painting, understand the arguments, and work out if we agree with them.

2. Pupils need to be engaged with what they are reading.

3. Pupils should be encouraged to respond to the content of a reading text not just to the language.

4. Prediction is a major factor in reading.

5. Match the task to the topic.

6. Good teachers exploit reading texts to the full.

All things considered, reading is far from being a passive skill. Pupils need to be engaged with what they are reading. Teachers should match tasks to the topic, choose activities up to the pupils' abilities and develop teaching programs in such a way so that to develop all the reading skills.

Readers process texts in two ways, either Top-Down or Bottom-Up. Bottom-up processing is when the reader builds up meaning by reading word for word, letter for letter, carefully scrutinizing both vocabulary and syntax. This is often associated with poor or slow readers, but can sometimes occur when the readers own schema knowledge is inadequate. Top-Down processing is the opposite, where a global meaning of the text is obtained, through "clues" in the text and the reader's good schema knowledge.

This is often associated with a good reader, who does not read word for word but quickly and efficiently.

---

[4] Adapted from the University of Minnesota's *Student Writing Guide*, 2004. 9–11.

The most comprehensive description of the reading process is interactive models, "…in which every component in the reading process can interact with any other component…" combining elements of both bottom-up and top down models. Reading is considered to be an interactive process (a conversation between writer/reader, even though the writer is not present) and for it to occur both processes are necessary, top-down to predict the meaning and bottom-up to check it. The two are therefore complementary ways of processing a text. Our knowledge and experiences of the world around us also influence how a text is read or processed, this is known as schema theory .

For students to develop communicative competence in critical reading, classroom and homework reading activities must resemble (or be) real-life reading tasks that involve meaningful communication. They must therefore be authentic in three ways.

1. The reading material must be authentic: It must be the kind of material that students will need and want to be able to read when traveling, studying abroad, or using the language in other contexts outside the classroom.

When selecting texts for student assignments, remember that the difficulty of a reading text is less a function of the language, and more a function of the conceptual difficulty and the task(s) that students are expected to complete. Simplifying a text by changing the language often removes natural redundancy and makes the organization somewhat difficult for students to predict. This actually makes a text more difficult to read than if the original were used.

Rather than simplifying a text by changing its language, make it more approachable by eliciting students' existing knowledge in pre-reading discussion, reviewing new vocabulary before reading, and asking students to perform tasks that are within their competence, such as skimming to get

the main idea or scanning for specific information, before they begin intensive reading.

2. The reading purpose must be authentic: Students must be reading for reasons that make sense and have relevance to them. "Because the teacher assigned it" is not an authentic reason for reading a text.

To identify relevant reading purposes, ask students how they plan to use the language they are learning and what topics they are interested in reading and learning about. Give them opportunities to choose their reading assignments, and encourage them to use the library, the Internet, and foreign language newsstands and bookstores to find other things they would like to read.

3. The reading approach must be authentic: Students should read the text in a way that matches the reading purpose, the type of text, and the way people normally read. This means that reading aloud will take place only in situations where it would take place outside the classroom, such as reading for pleasure. The majority of students' reading should be done silently.

References:

[1]. Agapitova, T.G. Teaching foreign language skim reading when developing professional culture of the future teacher of a foreign language. PhD thesis (Education), Perm. 2000

[2]. Zhirkova, O.P. Teaching methods of fiction extensive reading in the process of training German for students of the second language specialty in the teacher training university. PhD thesis (Education), Vladimir. 2004

[3]. Widdowson, H.G.English for Specific Purposes: Criteria for Course Design In English for Academic and Specific Purposes: Studies in Honor of Louis Trimbler. Newbury House.2001

[4]. Adapted from the University of Minnesota's *Student Writing Guide*, 2004.