Reading strategies in teaching English for Specific Purposes to journalism students

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Abstract. The article explores the ways in which explicit teaching techniques can enhance student's reading comprehension. Proposed comprehension strategies have research-based evidence and aim to help teach journalism students reading for special purposes. Effective comprehension strategy instruction can be accomplished by following pre-, during, and after-reading stages and using leading questions, heuristic conversations or graphic organizers.

Keywords: comprehension strategies, journalism students, explicit instructions, PR texts, reading for special purposes

Introduction. Most of recent studies devoted to the problems of reading comprehension are based on cognitive view. Cognitive Reading Theory emphasizes the interactive nature of reading and the constructive nature of comprehension. It highlights that a reader needs to use a set of flexible, adaptable strategies to make sense of a text and to monitor ongoing understanding. Reading strategies can be defined as abilities that are potentially open to conscious reflection, and reflect a reader's intention to address a problem or a specific goal while reading [1]. Research shows that explicit teaching techniques are particularly effective for comprehension strategy instruction. In explicit instruction, teachers tell readers why and when they should use strategies, what strategies to use, and how to apply them.

Overview of publications on the topic. The research in the field of reading strategies has dealt with identification procedures of reading strategies (A.U. Chamot, A.D. Cohen, J.M. O'Malley, J. Rubin, A. Wenden), terminology and classification of strategies (A.U. Chamot, J.M. O'Malley, R.L. Oxford), the effects of learner characteristics on strategy use (N.J. Anderson, J. Bruen, J.M. Green, R.L. Oxford, G. Wharton), and the effects of culture and context on strategy use (A.U. Chamot, C. Keatley, G. Wharton). Recent studies have also suggested important issues related to instruction such as: explicit and integrated strategy instruction, language of instruction and models for language learning strategy instruction. Most researchers agree on the importance of explicitness in strategy instruction (N.J. Anderson, A.U. Chamot, A.D. Cohen, B.L. Leaver, D. Nunan, J.M. O'Malley, R.L. Oxford, H.-J. Shen).

The purpose of this article is to ground importance of explicit instruction in the process of teaching journalism students how to read professional texts in foreign language (by the example of public relations texts).

Results and their discussion. The current state of knowledge about explicit and integrated reading strategy instruction proves that teachers should certainly opt for explicit instruction and should integrate the instruction into their regular course work. A number of instructional models for teaching reading strategies have been developed (A.U. Chamot, A.D. Cohen, M. Grenfell & V. Harris, R.L. Oxford). These models share some common features. They emphasize students' metacognitive understanding of the importance of reading strategies and the teacher's role in modeling and monitoring this understanding. All the authors agree on the necessity to provide students with opportunities to practise and imply acquired strategies in their further learning process. They also suggest that students should reflect on the use of strategies, evaluating their ef

fectiveness and transferring to new tasks.

Comparative analysis of the three modern models of language learning instructions (Styles and Strategies-Based Instruction Model (SSBI) [3], Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach Model (CALLA) [2] and M. Grenfell & V. Harris Model) [4] shows that despite the differences in teacher's role (leading or assisting) and the level of students' involvement in action planning to improve their personal learning styles all the models share the importance of developing students' knowledge about their own thinking and strategic processes and encouraging them to adopt strategies that will improve their language learning and proficiency. Although the above mentioned models are related to second language learning acquisition, they can also be applied to teaching journalism students to read professional texts of different genres in English.

The analysis conducted allows us to conclude that teacher's ability to provide students with clear and reasonable strategy instructions is crucial for successful reading comprehension. Reading is a strategic process, fluent reading comprehension requires the capacity for recognising reading difficulties, address imbalances between text information and reader knowledge, and make decisions for monitoring comprehension and shifting goals for reading. It means that teacher should be skillful in his/her instructions and address students' needs in instructive response during their reading process.

Reading strategies can be grouped in accordance with the stages of working on the text: before, during and after reading. Below there is a list of strategies that in combination with a teacher's skillful guidance (by means of leading questions, heuristic conversations or graphic organizers) might help journalism students read public relation texts as well as other information texts more effectively and efficiently.

Reading strategies for PR texts

Before reading:

- determining a purpose for reading and previewing the text;
- predicting the content based on the title of text, specialized vocabulary, illustrations, introductory information or personal experiences;
- recalling previous experiences, feelings and knowledge related to the subject by means of elements of corporate identity analysis (logos and slogans): identifying the name and type of an organization; determining the ways how symbols, letters and colours are used to represent company's aims and policies; describing emotions and feelings associated with the proper elements;

– text structure analysis (for press release: identifying the headline and the lead, main body with details of the event and comments, contact details and editor's note; for press statement: introduction, main body, conclusion; for corporate social responsibility report: byliner, theoretical part, reports and so on for other genres of PR texts);
– finding the obligatory visual parts of a profile interview: a photo of the interviewee, his/her position, biography and other background information, the name of a company he/she represents, company fact-sheet with sales turnover and income figures, the name of a journalist, who prepared the material;
– predicting the content using strategy Anticipation Guide;
– lead content analysis by means of finding answers to questions Who? What? Where? Why? How?;
– identifying text paragraphs and their news value in accordance with the rule of inverted pyramid.
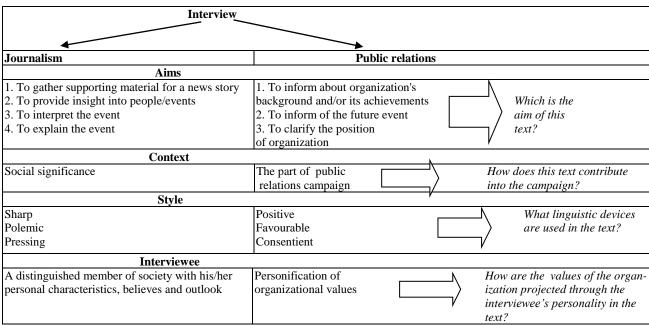
During reading:
– content analysis (for press statement: finding the main structural elements, which contain company representation with the help of positive characteristic; acknowledgement of the problem (usually in the form of a manager's quotation): proposal mitigating crisis negative consequences; details of planned measures and actions;
– finding key words, that help to define the target audience;
– reading any overviews, summaries or questions;
– reading the opening and concluding sentences or paragraphs;
– guessing the meaning of the words by context, grammar category or morphological structure;
– skipping new words that don't prevent comprehension;
– identifying the most and the least important information;
– finding the means of objective and argumentative narration in PR texts (Passive Voice, self-quotation; absence of first person pronouns, neutral lexis, figures and other statistic data);

– recording any questions on the topic.
After reading:
– paraphrasing information from the text and noting similarities and differences in the retelling;
– creating a mental, oral or written summary of information;
– comparing the ways how classical composition of an information text (according to the inverted pyramid model) is realized in a news report and in a press release, where the final part can be modified by adding alternative forms like graphs, numbered lists and so on;
– comparative analysis of the genre of interview in journalism and public relations in accordance with the following steps:
   1) identifying the aim of an interview (there are only three aims of feature interview: informing about company developments and achievements, informing of a future event; interpretation of a company policy).
   2) clarifying the role of this interview in PR campaign;
   3) analysis of linguistic means which are used to create positive communication environment (positive lexis, quotations);
   4) determining the style differences from those of a journalistic interview (lack of polemic bitterness, controversy and the like);
   5) analysis of information about an interviewee (absence of any personal information, views and opinions, personification of an organization);
– defining the text functions in accordance with public relations activities (internal communication, corporate PR, media relations, crisis management and so on);
– critical analysis of one-side and biased representation of events in such PR texts as press statement and feature interview using strategy Both Sides Now;
– information with the facts from other sources;
– analyzing the realization of the reading purposes;
– reflecting on the way how the information from the text ad to or alter the knowledge on the topic.

Interview			
Journalism	**Public relations**		
Aims			
1. To gather supporting material for a news story 2. To provide insight into people/events 3. To interpret the event 4. To explain the event	1. To inform about organization's background and/or its achievements 2. To inform of the future event 3. To clarify the position of organization		*Which is the aim of this text?*
Context			
Social significance	The part of public relations campaign		*How does this text contribute into the campaign?*
Style			
Sharp Polemic Pressing	Positive Favourable Consentient		*What linguistic devices are used in the text?*
Interviewee			
A distinguished member of society with his/her personal characteristics, believes and outlook	Personification of organizational values		*How are the values of the organization projected through the interviewee's personality in the text?*

Drawing 1. Template for Profile Feature Article (Interview) Analysis

As it was mentioned above the use of graphic organizers is one of a teacher's guidance technique that can help students read and understand texts of different genres. It is advisable for teachers to design their own organizers taking into account genre or type of the text and stage at which it should be applied. The following graphic organizer is designed to teach student to compare genre of interview in journalism and public relations at the after-reading stage.

Conclusions. Thus, the list of presented strategies is based on the modern research that investigates the feasibility of helping students become more effective language learners by teaching them some of the reading comprehension techniques. The important role in improving students' reading proficiency belongs to explicit teacher's instructions that must be taken into account when develop the methodology of teaching reading for specific purposes.

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