STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING CRITICAL READING AT THE UNIVERSITY STAGE
Nalbandyan N. A.

The article provides a brief overview of critical reading and higher level thinking skills at an advanced stage of education.

In modern society, even in everyday life people frequently deal with complicated public and political issues, make decisions, and solve problems. At the university stage lecturers are likely to enhance students' skills and abilities of evaluating critically about what they see, hear or read thus making the learning process more effective. In addition in the age of "information explosion" students do not always feel confident. As a rule, this comes from accumulated information, which leads to misunderstanding of the text material and underestimation of situations. Thus, the educational material should be selected so that it arouses students' interests and contribute to developing skills and abilities of critical thinking.

In this sphere, the role of the teacher is decisive. When compiling educational programs for the university, it is necessary to take into account all possible tasks for the formation of critical reading and thinking skills.

Keywords: critical reading, critical thinking, reading comprehension, critical thinking skills, analytic activity, independent learning, guideline, comprehension instruction, supporting ideas, comparing information, contrasting information.

Introduction. University students' critical thinking skills should be developed to efficiently meet the 21st century learning skills. To undertake this they are bound to learn how to read. In this respect, the critical reading strategies should be employed.

The article includes the analysis of the notion "critical reading" as it is considered one of the basic skills of a university teacher. It implies that students of professional English classes are viewed more as language users and less as learners.

Therefore critical reading in the teaching process is of great importance which aims at enhancing university students' problem solving and decision making skills.

To foster critical thinking skills, the university teacher should utilize critical reading strategies. The elaborated system can be implemented by university teachers to support the learners' own critical thinking skills (analyze, synthesize, and evaluate) in order to be able to read critically.

Critical Reading as a High-Level Comprehension Skill. Everyone can read, but not everyone can read critically. Critical reading is a high-level of comprehension skill, which enables the reader to go beyond the literal interpretation of what he reads.

Having heard about critical reading, people may think about critiquing the text or characters. Yet, critical reading is a 'critical' attitude to reading. It refers to a careful, active, reflective, analytic reading [7].

Kress states that the current change from the book page to the screen and the traditional print-based media to the new information and communication technologies intensifies the need of potential and communicational action by their users (as far as the reader is concerned). It means that nowadays in information era people are demanded to be more critical as they face a set of information sources [6].

Meanwhile Wallace asserts that as a critical reader, readers not accepting the point of view of the text in silence, analyze the reasons why the author develops it, then continue to evaluate its credibility. In this regard, critical reading actively involves the writer and the reader and can be seen as a dialogic connection. As previously stated, in critical reading readers actively try to discover information and ideas within the text. It is done by analyzing, synthesizing, drawing the inference, forming interpretations and evaluating what they read [12].

Whereas to Flynn, critical reading involves "an interactive process using several levels of thought simultaneously", for example, analysis – the clarification of information by examining the component parts; synthesis – the combining of relevant parts into a coherent whole; and evaluation – which

involves establishing standards and then judging ideas against the standards to verify their reasonableness [4, 664].

Moreover, while reading the text the readers try to understand the author's tone and persuasive elements through classifying the nature of language choices and recognizing bias through classifying the pattern of content and language.

Critical reading originally comes from the concept of critical thinking. It is the application of critical thinking in the process of reading.

Therefore we should consider the fact if there is a difference between critical thinking and critical reading or not. One can distinguish between critical reading and critical thinking in the following way:

- Critical reading is a technique for discovering information and ideas within a text.
- Critical thinking is a technique for evaluating information and ideas, for deciding what to accept and believe.

By the same token Kurland defined critical reading as an analytic activity involving readers' to analyze, interpret, evaluate, and comprehend reading materials. Therefore, readers need to analyze and evaluate their reading text before synthesizing their belief or thought in order to read critically. They also need to apply their critical thinking skills to monitor their understanding of the text, while connecting their background on what they read [7].

In this respect Thistlethwaite points out, critical thinking skills frequently listed in textbooks for teaching critical thinking are similar to, or perhaps the same as those listed in reading texts described as critical reading skills [9, 587].

Commeyras also raises this issue. She states that the claim that critical thinking is closely related to reading comprehension is similar to the view that reasoning is an integral part of reading. Critical thinking, which involves reasoning, is the process the reader uses to determine which interpretations are consistent with textual evidence and background knowledge [1, 201].

In short, the definitions of critical thinking and of critical reading may suggest the close similarity between what is said about critical reading and what is said about critical thinking.

Therefore, it is essential that critical reading and thinking skills should be taught in order to have them take the ownership of their learning, and form their ideologies independently in the context of their immediate experiences.

Many teachers think that children will develop critical thinking and critical reading skills automatically as they grow older and become more experienced in different fields of knowledge through reading in school, and through life itself, but this view has been challenged by various researchers in the field.

The development of students' critical thinking ought to start in the early grades [5], [8].

Thistlethwaite, for instance, strongly emphasizes that focusing on critical reading should not wait until presumably lower level reading skills have been mastered [9, 586].

On the other hand, some consider high school the ideal time to develop this skill [3], [10].

Their justification is that in senior high school and college, as it is known, most of the instruction is presented through textbooks, thus, students must know at that stage how to learn from text. Indeed, at college their course work will demand a high level of independent learning. Students will need the abilities to interpret a wide range of literature and to defend their interpretations, for which the skills of questioning, making inferences, predicting outcomes, distinguishing fact from opinion, identifying an author's bias, evaluating the writer's authority, comparing and contrasting information, classifying or categorizing information, analyzing information, synthesizing information from various sources, making judgments, drawing conclusions, making generalizations, among others, are a prerequisite.

Davidsan also considers that critical reading skills have been of vital significance in the higher education sector and are considered to be essentially acquired in academic discourse [2].

But students definitely need guidance to achieve active and critical reading comprehension of difficult text concepts. Therefore, critical reading strategies are best taught by using "real" assignments. They can be taught in one-to-one sessions with consultants, in classroom settings by teachers, or at home by parents, siblings, or friends.

Thompson and Frager present guidelines for university teachers to prepare their own lessons to teach critical thinking in reading and in the content areas. They also present a model lesson illustrating the five guidelines:
(1) stimulate personal interest;
(2) generate active/interactive participation by all students;
(3) use prior student knowledge and experience;

(4) facilitate and encourage skill transfer;

(5) extend comprehension instruction beyond the 40-minute class period [10].

Critical Reading Strategies. Based on all these facts, the following critical reading strategies are suggested by Tovani to help the reading process:

- set a purpose for reading (before reading a text),
- preview the text before reading,
- pay attention to print features and text structures,
- mark the text while you read,
- make connections between the text and reader personal experience and knowledge,
- monitor your comprehension of the text,
- summarize the key points when you're finished reading [11].

Thus, a university lecturer should work out a system for professional English classes which includes the steps the students are likely to follow while reading creatively. Below a sample of a system is implemented by us:

How to Start Reading Creatively

1. *The students should understand the book*. Therefore they are going to study:

   a. *the title page* which provides basic information about the book (e.g., title, author, publisher, publication date);

   b. *the table of contents* which details section and chapter titles;

   c. *information about the author* which offers details about the author's background, research, and research interests;

   d. *the preface/introduction* which gives an overview of the book;

   e. *chapters* which develop the topic of the book with specific information;

   f. *appendices* which provide additional information on specific topics in the chapters;

   g. the glossary which lists definitions for key terms in the chapters.

2. *The students should use Preview-Read-Review reading system*

Step 1: Preview

   ✓ Examine sub-headings and introduction;
   ✓ Develop preview questions about the topic ;
   ✓ Circle keywords (in bold or italic type);
   ✓ Recall prior knowledge.

Step 2: Read

   ✓ Read each sub-section at a time;
   ✓ Look up unfamiliar words;

- ✓ Rephrase the section in your own words;
- ✓ Compare information with prior knowledge;
- ✓ Answer preview questions; ask new questions.

In this step marking the text might be beneficial to many students. They need to highlight the main idea in a specific color, circle major supporting ideas in a new color, underline specialized vocabulary words, use symbols (MI = Main Idea; 1, 2, 3 ...), write key words or phrases to summarize sections, draw a chart or graph to illustrate an argument.

Step 3: Review
- ✓ Return to the main idea (what has the chapter argued?);
- ✓ Scan each subheading to review the supporting details ;
- ✓ Review and answer the reading questions;
- ✓ Organize the material in your own way for retrieval.

Conclusion. Whatever critical reading strategies are determined to be of the most importance, the literature shows that certain pedagogical methods hold empirical weight when implementing them in the language classroom. This means explicit modeling from the instructor is crucial and dealing with one item at a time will reduce cognitive load. Conscious awareness on the learner's behalf will aid retention and explaining the real world value, coupled with adequate assessment weighting, will increase motivation.

The role of the literature is also essential to interpret knowledge that is adaptable to a set of texts to engender autonomous replication. Regarding core skills, such as contextual clues and inference, will aid learners with lower vocabulary profiles and time for reflection will deepen productive response tasks and enlarge cultural acceptance.

Eventually, balancing strategy instruction between reading for academic success and reading for social purposes will provide a balanced critical pedagogy. For example, the reading strategies of "distinguish between fact and opinion" and "make relevant inferences about a text", fall more within the critical reading for academic success tradition, whereas identifying rhetorical devices and power relations can be categorized as critical reading strategies for social purposes.

ՔՆՆԱԴԱՏԱԿԱՆ ԸՆԹԵՐՑԱՆՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԶԱՐԳԱՑՄԱՆ ՌԱԶՄԱՎԱՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԸ ԲՈՒՀԱԿԱՆ ԿՐԹԱՀԱՄԱԿԱՐԳՈՒՄ
Նալբանդյան Ն. Ա.

Հոդվածում ներկայացված է համառոտ ակնարկ քննադատական ընթերցանության հմտությունների ձևավորման վերաբերյալ:

Ժամանակակից հասարակության մեջ, ինչպես գիտենք, մարդիկ հաճախ բախվում են սոցիալական և քաղաքական բարդ խնդիրների և հարկադրված են դրանց ինքնուրույն լուծումներ տալ։ Հետնաբար քրթության բուհական համակարգում անհրաժեշտ է առավել կարևորել ուսանողների քննադատական գնահատման հմտությունների ու կարողությունների զարգացումը։ Բացի այդ, տեղեկատվական տեխնոլոգիաների դարաշրջանում ուսանողական լսարանը միշտ չէ, որ իրեն վստահ է զգում։ Որպես կանոն՝ դա գալիս է կուտակված տեղեկատվությունից, ինչը հանգեցնում է տեքստային նյութի թյուր ընբռնման և իրավիճակների թերագնահատման։ Այսպիսով, անհրաժեշտություն է առաջանում ընտրել այնպիսի ուսումնական դասանյութ, որը մի կողմից կհետաքրքրի ուսանողին, մյուս կողմից՝ կձևավորի քննադատական ընթերցանության համար անհրաժեշտ հմտություններ և կարողություններ։

Այս համատեքստում ուսուցչի դերը վճռորոշ է։ Բուհի համար քրթական ծրագրեր կազմելիս անհրաժեշտ է հաշվի առնել բոլոր տեսակի առաջադրանքները՝ քննադատական ընթերցանության և մտածողության ձևավորման նպատակով։

Բանալի բառեր. քննադատական ընթերցանություն, քննադատական մտածողություն, ընթերցանության ընբռնում, քննադատական մտածողության հմտություններ, վերլուծական առաջադրանք, ինքնուրույն ուսուցում, ուղեցույց, հասկանալու հրահանգ, ամրապնդող զաղափարներ, տեղեկատվության համեմատություն, տեղեկատվության հակադրություն։

СТРАТЕГИИ И РАЗВИТИЕ КРИТИЧЕСКОГО ЧТЕНИЯ НА ВУЗОВСКОМ ЭТАПЕ ОБУЧЕНИЯ

Налбандян Н. А.

В статье дан краткий обзор навыков критического чтения и формирование мышления на продвинутом этапе обучения.

В современном обществе, как известно, люди в повседневной жизни часто сталкиваются со сложными общественными и политическими вопросами, принимают самостоятельное решения проблемы. Для того, чтобы сделать процесс обучения на вузовском этапе обучения более эффективным, у студентов необходимо формировать навыки и умения критического оценивания: то, что они видят, слышат и читают. Кроме

того, в век «информационного взрыва», студенческая аудитория не всегда себя чувствует уверенной. Как правило, это исходит из накопившихся информаций, что приводит к недопониманию текстового материала и недооценки ситуаций. Таким образом, появляется необходимость отобрать учебный материал так, чтобы, с одной стороны заинтересовать студента, а с другой, формировать необходимые навыки и умения для критического чтения.

В этом сфере роль учителя является решающей. При составлении образовательных программ для вуза необходимо учитывать всевозможные задания и кейсы для формирования критического чтения и мышления.

Ключевые слова: критическое чтение, критическое мышление, понимание прочитанного, навыки критического мышления, аналитическая деятельность, самостоятельное обучение, руководство, инструкция по пониманию, поддерживающие идеи, сравнение информации, противопоставление информации.

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Information about the author

Nalbandyan N. A. – *PhD in Pedagogy*
State University of Shirak
E-mail: nalbnelly@mail.ru