*Table 2*. *Understanding of academic reading in academic literacy practices*.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Broad approach to text and example schools of thought  | Understanding of text  | Understanding of reading  | How reading might be taught  | Examples of empirical / theoretical work  |
| ***Traditionalist:*** ***skills oriented*** -Study skills | -texts as objective carriers of knowledge -text as object whose meaning can be deciphered via close reading | Reading as:-a tool to gain knowledge -comprehension of study materials -individual, intellectual activity -one of university requirements | -reading strategies: scanning, skimming, prediction, etc. -speed reading-texts not always authentic-critical reading[[1]](#footnote-1): examining the argument  | -Taillefer and Pugh (1998)-Andreson (1999)-Beglar et al. (2012)-Pecorari et al. (2012)-McGrath et al. (2016)- McVeigh (2016) |
| ***Social: text oriented*** -Genre approach-Textual approaches -Community of practice -Reading to write | -text represents expert academic practices and novices benefit from analyzing its features -text communicates authors’ purpose   | Reading as: -gaining access through developing knowledge and absorbing disciplinary practices -reacting to authors’ rhetorical choices -an important pre-writing stage  | -exposure to authentic texts -teaching features and structure of different genres-considering purposes and audiences-the effect of rhetorical devices-critical reading1: examining the argument and disciplinary value  | -Hazel and Hallam (2000)-Abbott (2013)-Ohata & Fukao (2014)-Kuzborska (2015) -Liu (2015) |
| ***Critical: practices oriented*** -Academic literacies-Critical EAP-Critical pedagogy-SFL | -text not neutral but ideological and may serve to position and induct hegemonic ways of knowing -text production and consumption embedded in power relations-text as “usable resource” rather than a sacred object | Reading as:-positioning act -epistemic and identity act -social and political activity -resource to forward students’ agendas and negotiate positions  | -exploiting readers’ inner capital-interest in readers’ affective reactions to text-appropriating text by simplifying and fragmenting it-critical reading1 of words and worlds  | -Clarke (1993)-Van Pletzen (2006) -Gimenez & Thomas (2015) -Good (2016)-Fox & O’Maley (2017)  |

 *Source*: own work

**Bea’s reading story: “READING IN SECOND LANGUAGE IS LIKE DOING MATHEMATICS BUT IT CAN HELP ME BREAK THE WALL IN MY BRAIN”**

Academic reading is complicated. I think it’s a language problem. At school English was my weakest subject, but there are many other reasons <to study abroad>… It’s just language and I don’t want it to stop me from learning things.

<In reading>, there is a lot of information and a lot of tasks. When I get the task, I read a lot, many times. When I read, my brain, eyes and body struggle. I read sentence by sentence and I’m not familiar with the content. The content is too much. <For example, for the Corporate Social Responsibility essay> I read the article 4 times because I was afraid to miss important points. <I do it because> I want to know if there’s a strong argument against my own, if there is, I’ll be worried. More reading and understanding other perspectives gives me safety, so I tried to read as much as possible. I prefer reading to writing because with writing nobody can help you check <whereas> by reading again and again you can check yourself.

In semester two it was getting much better <but in the first semester> sometimes it’s not clear what the author means, maybe I read one part and get my understanding from the other part but a native speaker can see the whole picture and why the authors think like that, argument is not the same. If I have different understanding in different sections I’ll read again. Sometimes I understand the sentences but in the second reading the meaning is different. And I don’t know why, I thought I’d understood… It feels as if you did nothing <so> I will read it again. I don’t want to give up because then it’s really for nothing. To ensure my understanding is correct I need to go back; in Chinese I find it very quickly but in English I can only remember the page and part, so I need to find it again. And if you check all new vocabulary you forget what the previous part said. Compared to native speakers I spend a lot of time. Sometimes I have mistakes in understanding, but sometimes my understanding of different information depends on how I <want to> use it. After finding another article I realise I can use the information differently.

<This is how I read>. The first time is passive, I just highlight, but if just read passively I can only get one idea from the author. <On the other hand> if I read actively by offering my idea and questions then I can get more. <So> in the second reading I take notes and try to find logic between them, categorise the arguments and I sometimes write my own ideas on the side or translate. I ask questions “why?”, “is that enough to rely on this information?” or draw a star – to check this information <in the original source>.

<How long does it take?> Too long. I spend a lot of time, the day is gone, all my day on reading. Sentence structure is complicated <so> I have to make it simple - find a person <subject>, verb. <I think> reading in second language is like doing mathematics, a technical skill. In the first reading you just try to understand, there is no time to enjoy it. Second time you enjoy it.

Second reading is better, you feel interested. After I know the structure or when it’s simple it’s much better. When the structure is complicated I don’t know what they want to say, just always repeat the content. At first I thought they have to do it to meet the word limit; now I <still> think some things are useless but many are necessary to repeat. <In CSR essay> in the first reading I only got the main idea so I thought the author repeats. <Later, it changed and> I felt I can use all parts differently in my essay, but because of the structure, I didn’t know its effect. Now I always scan the whole thing to see the structure, it saves the time. In the exam if I hadn’t scanned the structure I would have been nervous.

I sometimes read in Chinese but there’s a drawback. When I use <English> key words from these articles I only get Chinese researchers, not the foreigners. And sometimes when I have my own idea and want to find evidence, this evidence is only in Chinese; it seems what Chinese people think is important is the same. <So> I thought I had to change my logic and then many foreign articles showed up. <I think> it’s very important to read authors with different experience, <for example> when I read I found the basic idea such as the role of price in online business is different in Britain. If I hadn’t read <about it>, I wouldn’t have understood why, I wouldn’t have shown the whole perspective <in my essay>. <It’s true that> British articles are often not applicable <to my context>, but I want my supervisor to understand me so I need to talk about the UK. If I want them to think it’s rational and makes sense I need to do it.

I read and think about <the articles> with my own experience so I’ll read them according to *me*, but if <the topic> is totally new, maybe it doesn’t speak to me. <With topics such as> freedom or else, <there’s> different understanding and values. I found some articles online, not academic reading, in which they will think it’s correct and totally right and want to communicate to other westerners and just enjoy their world (soft laugh). At first, after discussing it with my English friends, I adapted my idea, but after I thought about it again <I concluded> I’m not *just* affected by <government> propaganda. However, this feeling has been changing. Recently I read an article talking about the reason why western people have different value about the concept of country, so I start to understand the understanding gap of government between us, thus I think articles about this kind of topic is speaking to me now, I enjoy getting new idea from different values). <In terms of other topics> for humans, we have similar experience and many academic articles are universal. <For example>, CSR communicated with me, but with Culture shock essay the feeling was different. This article made me

realise something is wrong, like I have culture shock <so> I tried to discuss it with my classmates, ask if they have similar experience. With CSR essay, I wasn’t very familiar with the topic, so I had to rely on the article to find sources. I didn’t put me in there, I took ideas from others, rather than create by myself. If you just base on others, for teachers with much experience, my idea will be similar to previous students. With Culture shock, because you might think what the author says is wrong or not perfect and you have a lot of your own ideas against it, it will help you find other sources.

<Do I like reading?> Kind of. Most of the time I just want to learn the language so I have to read articles. I’d like to read like a native speaker one day, like that I will enjoy it. It’s easy to read simple books but complicated things with good things inside, I struggle for language and not content. Now I still feel bad, but want to read. Sometimes, wow, there is like a surprise, something unexpected, interesting content that makes me break the wall in my brain. In China it’s enough to go with your initial idea and here people value you to break your wall, so it’s very positive to me. And I think if teachers value it, students will value it, people will be brave to discuss it in class. Before that I was really fed up with reading when I couldn’t find the evidence for my initial idea, but now it’s not a problem as I will show all.

Now I also value my own effort, what I did for this research and my own idea, I know what’s a very important point. Maybe before I didn’t care about my own idea, I just wanted to finish it, or <do> what the teacher prefers. <Now I just say to myself> “don’t look for specific information, get as much as possible and then offer your own idea”.

**Guided reflection on reading a journal article**

***Background and description***

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Had you ever read an academic article before?
2. How did you feel when you were given the task of reading the Culture Shock article? Why?
3. Describe how you approached and read this journal article
 |

***Analysis***

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Approaching and reading the article
* What sort of information were you looking for in the abstract (=reading purpose)?

How hard was it to understand this section? Why (*consider* *text properties and your reading skills*)?* What sort of information were you looking for in the literature review (=reading purpose)? How hard was it to understand this section? Why (*consider text properties and your reading skills*)?
* What sort of information were you looking for in the empirical study (=reading purpose)? How hard was it to understand this section? Why (*consider text properties and your reading skills*)?
* What sort of information were you looking for in the discussion (=reading purpose)? How hard was it to understand this section? Why (*consider text properties and your reading skills*)?
1. Do you think you understand what the difference between **reading for basic understanding** and **reading critically** is? If you do, use your own words to explain it. If you don’t, what can you do to find out?
2. Critical reading process
* Was it hard to find claims? Why? How did you find them?
* Was it hard to find evidence? Why? How did you find it?
* Was it hard to see where the authors were evaluating? Why? How did you find it?
* Was it hard to find conclusions? Why? How did you find them?
1. Did you face any other problems? How did you overcome them?
 |

***Self – assessment***

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Based on what you’ve written above (points 1-7), what do you think you did well?
2. Based on what you’ve written above (points 1-7), what do you think are your learning needs?
 |

***Future actions***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. How can you address your learning needs?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| target | action  | resources | Success criteria  |
|  |  |  |  |

1. What will you do differently next time when you approach and read an article? Why?
 |

***New understanding***

|  |
| --- |
| 1. What do you think is the relevance of this task to your other modules (especially SaRS)?
2. Look back at question 2. How have your feelings about approaching an academic text changed throughout the process? Why?
3. What is the most important point you can take from this experience? Why? \**Remember it can be related to your academic performance, things you learnt about yourself or* ***anything else*** *you consider important.*
 |

**AN EXTRACT FROM A RELFECTIVE ESSAY ON ACADEMIC READING (1)**

After the research for the extended essay and culture shock, my understanding of academic journal articles was deepened. (…) because of the burden and limited research resources, one journal article usually has to focus on a very narrow area under a subject. The speciality of the article increases the difficulty of reading, even somehow dampens my interest on reading. The difficulty to me directly presented on my speed of reading. According to my reflective record, I firstly thought my learning needs should focus on improving my reading speed:

  *I should improve my reading speed without losing the understanding of information. Read faster and understand more information at the same time. Slow down in the beginning, reflect the information and then try to move on faster gradually* (Reflective Writing Journal, p.11).

Now it seems that this observation is quite superficial. My problem on reading is *not* about the speed, my knowledge level of the content and the ability of critical thinking are need to be improved. This is because even when my reading speed increased, my digestion process of the information was still slow and I cannot fully keep up with authors’ line of argument. So now I believe this might be because when I was introduced a profound theory which was too strange for me, I would do sub-translation and lose the argument. I found a solution to this problem in semester two. I found when I approach easier articles such as the editorial articles online, some blogs or even Wikipedia, this situation would become better. Therefore, I read those materials in advance to widen my knowledge before I started my research, and my problems with reading decreased.

**AN EXTRACT FROM A RELFECTIVE ESSAY ON ACADEMIC READING (2)**

Since we did not have to use any primary data in any of our assignments it was clear that we will be doing a lot of reading. This is where it starts when my EAP teacher gives us the thick and long article to read in class, at first I was astound by looking at it. Although I have read articles before, this type was something I saw for the first time. ‘I simply began to read the culture shock article like a novel or a story’ (Reflective writing journal, pg 7).

**PROMOTING INTERACTIVE READING THROUGH THE USE OF CORNELL NOTES**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Content information:** Questions about the **introduction**  | **Comments:** Do **not** answer these questions for homework |
| **1)** Look at **paragraphs 1 and 2** of the Introduction (pp. 24-25)1. What is happening to international student numbers?
2. Why is this happening?
3. What are the 2 key reasons given for the internationalisation of higher Education (HE)?
4. Who does global mobility create changes for?
5. What do “traditional institutions” expect international students to do?
6. Why is this a problem, according to Kelly and Moogan (2012)?
 | 1. Is this information up-to-date?

b) Do you agree?c) Are these the reasons why *you* came to study in the UK?d) Do you agree?e) What do you think would be a contrasting word to “traditional”? do you think Kelly and Moogan are using this word in a positive way?f) Do you agree? |

**Week 2: Kelly and Moogan reading preparation questions: introduction and background**

**PROMOTING INTERACTIVE LISTENING THROUGH THE USE OF CORNELL NOTES**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Lecture notes: Main points / Evidence / examples (3:14-5:20)** | **Speaker’s attitude / your reactions / questions / understanding** |
| * The future of Higher Education
 |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Reflection** |
| The main idea of this lecture … What I still don’t understand is …. This is / isn’t relevant to my life because ….  |

1. cf. Davies and Barnett (2015) and Wilson (2016) on three approaches to criticality [↑](#footnote-ref-1)