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SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE BOOK PUBLISHING AND READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES

DRUŠTVENO ODGOVORNO NAKLADNIŠTVO I STRATEGIJE ČITANJA

ABSTRACT

Socially responsible book publishing in neoliberal capitalist economy is characterized by production for the market and for the sake of profit. A group of consumers of publishing goods, who at the same time, consume and produce, are referred to as readers. In the process of reading, reading comprehension strategies are in the hands of a reader, his or hers cultural, educational and intellectual development and socially responsible book publishing is built upon knowledge of reading comprehension strategies.

Besides automatic processes of word recognition, successful reading also requires continuous supervision of the degree of understanding of what was read as well as regulation of the process of reading in the direction of set goals and through usage of reading comprehension strategies. Reading comprehension strategies are processes the reader uses in order to deeply understand the text. The main characteristic of reading strategies is that they are used deliberately and consciously and that they are under reader's control. This paper will introduce the 4-Pronged Comprehension Strategy Framework (McNamara, 2007.), which will help represent main characteristics of main reading strategies, their interaction and dynamic. The 4-Pronged Comprehension Strategy Framework consists of Monitoring Comprehension and Reading strategies in the center of the framework and four categories of strategies that comprise the prongs of the framework, including: a) Preparing to read, b) Interpreting Words, Sentences and Ideas in Text, c) Going beyond the Text and d) Organizing, Restructuring, and Synthesizing Information in the Text.

This paper provides guidelines for socially responsible book publishing, which are based on knowledge about reading comprehension strategies. The book publisher who aids the reader to develop and self- actualize through usage of known elements of reading comprehension strategies when producing a book, is considered to be socially responsible book publisher.

Key words: *socially responsible book publishing, reading comprehension strategies, The 4-Pronged Comprehension Strategy Framework, the contemporary reader, meta-cognitive book*

SAŽETAK

U radu će se govoriti o društvenom odgovornom nakladništvu koje u neolibelarnoj kapitalističkoj privredi istodobno proizvodi za tržište radi profita, ali i za tržište čiji se sudionici razvijaju na temelju onog što nakladnici proizvedu. Razmišljajući o ovom drugom impulsu nakladničke proizvodnje potrebno je poznavati čitatelja kao i strategije čitanja. Strategije čitanja pri tome trebaju biti u funkciji čitatelja i njegovog kulturnog, obrazovnog i intelektualnog razvoja.

Osim automatiziranih procesa prepoznavanja riječi, uspješno čitanje zahtijeva i kontinuirano nadgledanje stupnja razumijevanja te reguliranje procesa čitanja u skladu s postavljenim ciljevima putem upotrebe strategija čitanja. Strategije čitanja su postupci kojima čitač pristupa tekstu s ciljem boljeg razumijevanja. Ključno je obilježje strategija čitanja da se koriste i svjesno i namjerno i da su pod kontrolom čitatelja. Radom će se predstaviti četverokraki model strategija čitanja (McNamar i suradnici, 2007.) gdje će se putem ovoga modela razložiti osnovne karakteristike najčešćih strategija čitanja, njihova interakcija i dinamika. Četverokraki model strategija čitanja sastoji se od Nadgledanje procesa razumijevanja i strategije čitanja u centru modela, te četiri kraka modela: a) pripremanje za čitanje, b) interpretiranje riječi, rečenica i ideja iz teksta, c) odlazak "iza" teksta i d) organizacija, restrukturiranje i sažimanje informacija iz teksta.
U radu su postavljene smjernice za društveno odgovorno nakladništvo kao i produkciju onih knjiga koje se naslanjaju na spoznaje o strategijama čitanja.

Ključne riječi: *društveno odgovorno nakladništvo, strategija čitanja, četverokraki model, čitatelj*

1. Introduction

Literacy is one of the main characteristics of contemporary society. It makes it possible for the information to transfer between individuals and to archive information and knowledge for future generations. Literacy is a base of all individual, social and scientific development. Technological development, especially in the area of networks and networking, makes the transfer of information towards an individual easy and accessible. This phenomenon directly affects literacy which is, together with technological development, the base for the creation of new global society.

Great research projects dealing with exploration of reading processes, reading theories and interventions came about in the late 20.th century as a result of realizations about the importance of reading and literacy for the society. The research has proven the reading processes to be more complicated than originally thought and that repeated research deepens the complexity of knowledge about mentioned processes.
The research, therefore, progressed during late 1970s, ranging from research in psychology of reading to reading interventions (Grosman, 2010:12). In her study Mia Stokmans (1999) identified four main dimensions influencing attitude towards reading: individual development, utility, enjoyment and escape from daily life and worries.
The publisher is responsible for the society it operates in. Publishers need to learn basic characteristics of their potential customers/readers (Tomašević, 2008b). One of these characteristics is the ability to apply known reading comprehension strategies during the process of reading. Application of these strategies allows readers to better comprehend the text and learn from it.

This paper presents a theoretical overview of socially responsible business with special accent on publishing practice. Issues such as; the process of reading, some reading comprehension strategies

known in practice of reading and 4-Pronged Comprehension Strategy Framework, suitable for application in publishing business developing socially responsible behavior will be described.

2. Socially responsible business

Social responsibility is an obligation of all companies which work for two main goals; to maximize profit and to maximize positive and minimize negative influence their business has on surrounding society(Krkač, 2007:224). Socially responsible business is widely accepted practice in developed countries. Modern business systems are required to achieve more than what their shareholders demand. They have to fulfill requirements of the society. *World Business Council for Sustainable Development*[118]is an organization which defines socially responsible business as a dedication of general economy to contribute to sustainable economical development by working with and investing in employees, their families, local community and overall society in order to promote the quality of living.

Mušura (2007: 437) claims that the term *corporation social responsibility* became an integral part of everyday life of companies, managers, civil society subjects, governments and some individuals in the past ten years. In Croatian language the most common terms are društveno/socijalno odgovorno poslovanje" and „korporacijska/korporativna društvena odgovornost".It is clear, therefore, that we are dealing with a concept whose precise meaning and definitions often depend on real context.

Socially responsible way of leading a business is important for all companies who nurture trust as one of their key components; most business partners are more inclined to make business with companies who have a reputation of active social responsibility(Ćorić, 2007: 381). Differentiation of relationships is caused by variety of industries various economic subjects are involved in as far as social responsibility and socially responsible business in practice are concerned, as well as by rather complicated processes involved in socially responsible business administration in practice.

Books are means of education and instruments of knowledge and they have social and educational role. It is therefore obvious that publishers will in the near future have to develop specific capabilities which will help them integrate their service in all of its segments− from relevant equipment to strong support of information systems, safe access to communication networks, rich databases, etc. (Tomašević, 2008a: 69). In order to achieve above mentioned "integrated service", the future will demand improvements in educational structure of employees which should correlate with new requirements of specific industry and technology. Socially responsible publishing and integrated service it provides is surely responsible towards the society it operates in, especially taking into consideration that each published book takes part in the process of (in)formal education. By publishing books that ease the application of reading comprehension strategies, socially responsible book publishing induces the flow of knowledge and information from various fields.

3. Reading as a process

Grosman (2010: 20) describes reading as a cognitive process that consists of early recognition of letters made out of graphic elements (lines and dots), recognizing words and sentences and finally, connecting them into meaningful text. The meaning a reader applies to a text is something psychologists refer to as "mental representation of text", and textologists and literature experts as "textual world". The final goal of reading process is understanding the meaning of the text (comprehending). For overall text comprehension it is important to understand all three levels of the text, or, in other words, all three of its components − letters, words and sentences.

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[118]WBCSD−World Business Council for Sustainable Development

Understanding text on the level of words, letters and sentences is referred to as a reading skill. Once adopted, reading skill becomes an automatic function. The reader remembers only those meaning he or she based on previous life experience considers to be important (Grosman, 2010:29). Comprehending what was read is not an easy process and often creates difficulties for the reader, depending on reader himself and characteristics of the text. It is therefore often necessary, and in order to achieve or deepen level of understanding of the text, to use one or more strategies of reading comprehension.

3.1. Strategies of reading and the role of metacognition

According toMcNammara and associates(2007) strategies are, compared to skillsdeliberate, conscious and effortful actions aimed at reaching a goal and they can be thought. Reading comprehension strategies allow reader to elaborate, organize and evaluate information from the text. Strategies are under the control of the reader who can consciously use them.

Kolić-Vehovec andBajšanski (2006) define metacognition as awareness of own cognitive processes during reading and self-regulation of the process of understanding. According to this definition, metacognition during reading has two prerequisites: knowledge of reading (knowledge about oneself as a reader and awareness of activities that take place while reading) and mechanisms that regulate reading (processes the reader engages in order to improve reading comprehension). These processes, which a reader uses in order to comprehend the text, are called reading comprehension strategies (Paris and associates, 1983).

Reading comprehension strategies can be divided intotwo categories: cognitive and metacognitive (Paris and associates, 1983). Strategies belonging to the first category are used during reading and their goal is to derive meaning from given information. Metacognitive strategies, on the other hand, are used as self-regulating functions during reading and can include planning reading activities as well as revising the level of understanding of what was read through summarizing (Kolić-Vehovec andBajšanski, 2006). Using reading comprehension strategies requires concentration and effort as well as knowledge of strategies on the part of the reader. The reader also needs to be willing to use reading strategies when needed.

Reading comprehension strategies are, as mentioned above, conscious, deliberate actions, used to reach a set goal-to comprehend a text, to learn from the text. In order to effectively comprehend a text it is needed to start using reading comprehension strategies even before reading itself takes place. It is therefore likely to conclude that readers will in the process of preparing for reading, reading and after reading, be using one or more of these strategies. Publishers try to find out which one of these strategies will be used when reading for a specific book. As a response to this, the researchers have developed models of reading comprehension strategies, which sum up and ease their understanding and use. In the following paragraph one of these models will be represented. The socially responsible publishers will be given recommendations as how to use certain elements of each of the analyzed reading comprehension strategies.

4. The 4-Pronged Comprehension Strategy Framework

In their book "Reading Comprehension Strategies: Theories, Interventions, and Technologies", McNamara and associates (2007) present their *4-Pronged Reading Comprehension Strategy Framework*where they classify various reading comprehension strategies and organize them within a single framework.The 4-Pronged Reading Comprehension Strategy Framework consists of Monitoring Comprehension and Reading Strategies in the center of the framework and four categories of strategies that comprise the prongs of the framework (table 1.). In next paragraphs each of the four prongs of the framework will be explained and applied to novel *AZ* (Jasna Horvat,

2009). Novel AZ informes the reader about Glagolitic script system and historical context of the 9th century, as well as about St.CirilConstantin's (the inventor of Glagolitic script) biography.

Table 1 The 4-Pronged Reading Comprehension Strategy Framework
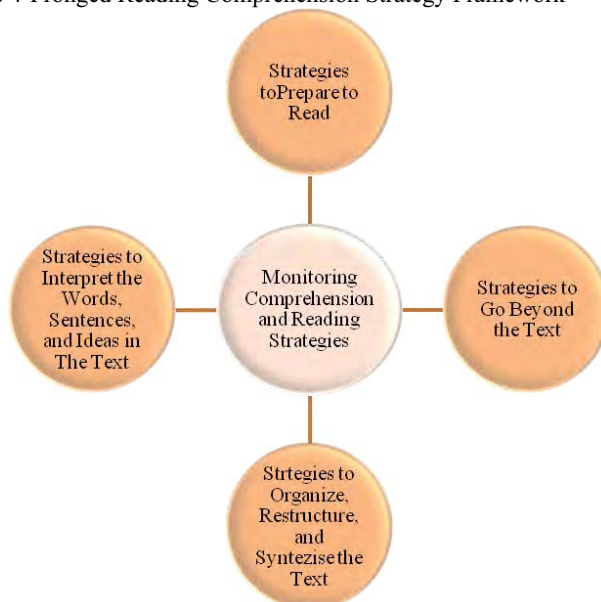
There are two underlying notions of this framework. The first notion is that reading comprehension occurs on two levels; a) on the level of understanding words and sentences in the text, and b) on the levelof readers understanding that goes beyond the text, that is, integration of the text with reader's prior knowledge. According to the second theoretical notion that drives this network, skilled readers create meaningful mental representations based on world knowledge and experience, understand the text more deeply and precisely and use metacognition during reading in order to oversee the process of reading and using reading comprehension strategies.

The center of the framework (Monitoring Comprehension and Reading Strategies) is linked to the way the reader uses the other four prongs of the framework. This very segment of the 4-pronged model is the most important for socially responsible publisher.What this means is that socially responsible publisher, when producing books, assumes a reader who uses reading comprehension strategies when reading. Not only that, socially responsible publisher uses knowledge of strategies of reading and applies it when shaping and producing a book. By doing this socially responsible publisher helps the reader to define a level of understanding during and after reading.Strategies include conception of key terms from the text, testing and various kinds of mental maps.

The first step of achieving deep text understanding is **preparing to read**− identifying the purpose and goals of reading, browsing through table of content, titles, subtitles and paragraphs, creating concepts and maps that graphically define connections between key concepts, generating prereading questions before reading. Socially responsible publisher uses this set of strategies when shaping the book and helps here with, the reader to formulate his/her goals, define what he/she already knows about the subject of the text, finally to choose a way to process information from the text. As first of *preparing to read strategies* used in novel *Az* is a structured table of content, which explains two main parts of the book (firs part is St. CirilConstantins's biography told through 29 signs of Glagolitic script and the other one is a *Slovarij* – detailed genesis of each Glagolitic sign also shown through 29 separate chapters). A table of content structured this way helps reader understand the system of Glagolitic signs, their numerical and symbolic value.

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Picture 1 Table of content of *Az*

The second prong of the framework (**Strategies to Interpret the Words, Sentences, and Ideas in The Text)** refers to deriving meaning from explicit information given through the text. Socially responsible publisher is aware that many readers have difficulties with this level of understanding especially when they run into unknown words or complicated syntactic structure which they try to overcome by using reading comprehension strategies(repeated reading, paraphrasing, and chunking, making notes and bridging terms from different parts of the text) and the publisher aids them by adopting the very product (book) to these strategies. In the novel *Az*the reader is provides with special explanation of each of the Glagolitic signs at the beginning of each chapter of the book, and in *Slovarij*at the very end of the novel.

Strategies to Go Beyond the Text (where information is hidden in previous knowledge and experience)are the third prong of the framework. Socially responsible publisher is aware of the level importance understanding the text and learning from the text has. The publisher is aware of so called conceptual gaps each reader has to fill himself and of the fact that understanding and learning, almost by definition, includes connecting the content of the text with reader's previous knowledge. Novel *Az*, besides graphemes of (proto)glagolitic script consists of various definitions connected to Glagolitic script, family trees and explanations. In this way the reader can deepen his/her knowledge of this script's creator, of the very idea of Glagolitic script, its historical and social value as well as of main characteristics of Glagolitic signs (*Slovarij*).

The fourth prong of the framework deals with **strategies to organize, restructure and synthesize the text**. Socially responsible publisher develops awareness of the fact that the prerequisite of comprehension are well organized mental representations of the content, and helps its readers by creating some of the following input:
- Graphic representations (they help make sense of the whole macro structure and connections among key terms and concepts)
- Reading guidelines
- Summarizing

The strategy of summarizing contributes to better comprehension. Similar to paraphrasing, summarizing is the process of retelling the content in own words. In this process it is more likely that the reader will connect explicit information from the text with previous knowledge.

(McNamara and associates, 2007).Novel *Az* presents all graphemes of Glagolitic script and in*Slovarij* its genesis is described in so much detail that the reader can learn not only about the genesis of Glagolitic but also Latin script as well as other ancient scripts.

Publishing practice[119]shows that good, concise and clear marketing materials help in making a certain title visible on the market. Socially responsible book publishers who are informed about reading comprehension strategies can use this knowledge and turn it into two unique selling propositions: they can differentiate their brand and build loyal customer base. In other words, by using mentioned strategies publishers can attract those readers who are eager on achieving individual development and utility (Stokmans, 1999; Tomašević, 2008). The second group of readers, those who enjoy reading for the purpose of escape will also be able to find that purpose in reading (for example, story of St. CirilConstantins life), but will not learn with difficulty because the publisher will prepare mental maps which will help them remember content.

Applying knowledge of reading comprehension strategies to their work, socially responsible book publishers fully comply with their role of a socially responsible subject on the market of educational and cultural goods.

5. Conclusion

In the world where all inhabitants of this planet, literate or illiterate, are from morning till night surrounded by words, ability to read becomes necessary for survival. Develop reading skills allows readers to get to various information and general human knowledge and builds critical reading abilities as a main weapon against manipulation with various texts.Developed reading skills also have a positive effect on education and generally, better quality of life (Grosman, 1998).

Book publishing is a business branch dependent on the lows of the market but also has a strong responsibility in creation of social good such as education, culture, critical thinking, all things that have influence on shaping future generations in this age of information overflow (Tomašević, 2008a).

Reading comprehension strategies are techniques that help readers to achieved better comprehension of the text and their effective usage is the main tool to ease this comprehension. Knowledge of reading strategies in publishing business is not only a prerequisite to better understanding between publishers and their customers (readers), but also a tool to build better readers. Producing goods which in this way educate and build new readers contributes to better understanding of published texts.

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[119]Novel Azis a winner of the literary prize given by Croatian Academy of science and art in 2010.

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