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## TECHNOLOGY OF TEACHING READING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LESSONS

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**ABSTRACT:** *The article contains possible types of exercises based on translated fictional texts. The texts appeals to the cognitive faculties of students, motivates their cultural awareness. The article proposes to develop a system of exercises based on psychological mechanisms of text comprehension.*

**Key words:** reading.scanning, scimming,text ,authentic materials,exercises

Reading is a complex process of language activity. As it is closely connected with the comprehension of what is read, reading is a complicated intellectual work. It requires the ability on the part of the reader to carry out a number of mental operations: analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, comparison.

Reading as a process is connected with the work of visual, kinesthetic, aural analyzers, and thinking. The visual analyzer is at work when the reader sees a text. While seeing the text he "sounds" it silently, therefore the kinesthetic analyzer is involved. When he sounds the text he hears what he pronounces in his inner speech so it shows that the aural analyzer is not passive, it also works and, finally, due to the work of all the analyzers the reader can understand thoughts. In learning to read one of the aims is to minimize the activities of kinesthetic and aural analyzers so that the reader can associate what he sees with the thought expressed in reading material, since inner speech hinders the process of reading making it very slow. Thus the speed of reading depends on the reader's ability to establish a direct connection between what he sees and what it means.

Reading peers is the end to be attained. It is possible provided:

1. the reader can associate the graphic system of the language with the phonic system of that language;
2. the reader can find the logical subject and the logical predicate of the sentences:

The man there is my neighbor.

There were many people in the hall.



It was difficult for me to come in time.

3. the reader can get information from the text (as a whole).

These are the three constituent parts of reading as a process.

As a means of teaching reading a system of exercises is widely used in school, which includes:

1. grapheme-phonemic exercises which help pupils to assimilate grapheme-phonemic correspondence in the English language;
2. structural-information exercises which help pupils to carry out lexical and grammar analysis to find the logical subject and predicate in the sentences following the structural signals;
3. semantic-communicative exercises which help pupils to get information from the text.

The actions which pupils perform while doing these exercises constitute the content of teaching and learning reading in a foreign language.

The teacher can use the whole system of exercises for developing pupils' ability to read which may be done in two forms -- loud and silent.

Reading aloud. In teaching reading aloud the following methods are observed: the phonic, the word, and the sentence methods. When the p h o n i c method is used, the child learns the sounds and associates them with graphic symbols -- letters. In the word method a complete word is first presented to the child. When several words have been learnt they are used in simple sentences. The sentence method deals with the sentences as units of approach in teaching reading. The teacher can develop pupils' ability to read sentences with correct intonation. Later the sentence is split up into words. The combination of the three methods can ensure good reading.

Pupils are taught to associate the graphic symbols of words with their meaning already learned orally. All the analyzers are at work: visual, auditory, kinesthetic. The leading role belongs to the visual analyzer, It is necessary that the graphic symbols (images) of words should be fixed in the pupils' memory. In teaching English in schools, however, little attention is given to this. Pupils are taught how, "to sound" words rather than how "to read" them. They often repeat words, combination of words without looking at, what they read. They look at the teacher. The teacher does not realize how much he hinders the formation of graphic images (symbols) in the pupils' memory by teaching to read in this way.



Reading in chorus, reading in groups in imitation of the teacher which is practiced in schools forms rather kinesthetic images than graphic ones. The result is that pupils can sound the text but they cannot read. The teacher should observe the rule "Never read words, phrases, and sentences by yourself. Give your pupils a chance to read them." For instance, in presenting the words and among them those which are read according to the rule the teacher should make his pupils read these words first. This rule is often violated in school. It is the teacher who first reads a word, a column of words, a sentence, a text and pupils just repeat after the teacher.

Teaching begins with presenting a letter to pupils, or a combination of letters, a word as a grapheme. The use of flash cards and the blackboard is indispensable.

Flash cards when the teacher uses them allow him:

- (a) to present a new letter (letters);
- (b) to make pupils compose a word (several flash cards are distributed among the pupils, for example, p, n, e; they compose pen);
- (c) to check pupils' knowledge of letters or graphemes;
- (d) to make pupils recollect the words beginning with the letter shown (p -pen, pencil, pupil, etc.);
- (e) to make pupils show the letter (letters) which stand for the sound [ou], [a:], [ʔ], etc.

When teaching reading the teacher needs a set of flash cards at hand. If the teacher uses the blackboard instead he can write printed letters on it and pupils can recollect the words they have learnt orally which have this or that letter, compose a word, etc.

The same devices are applied for teaching pupils to read words, the task being different, however:

- (a) pupils choose words which are not read according to the rule, for example: lake, plane, have, Mike, give, nine;
- (b) pupils are invited to read the words which they usually misread:  
yet -- let cold -- could,  
form -- from called -- cold,  
come -- some wood -- Would,  
does -- goes walk -- work.



(c) pupils are invited to look at the words and name the letter (letters) which makes the words different:

though -- thought since -- science,

through-- though with -- which,

hear -- near content -- context,

hear -- hare country -- county.

(d) pupils in turn read a column of words following the key word.

(e) pupils are invited to pick out the words with the graphemes oo, ow ea, th.

In teaching to read transcription is also utilized. It helps the reader to read a word in the cases where the same grapheme stands for different sounds: build, suit, or words which are not read according to the rule: aunt, colonel.

In modern textbooks for the 5th form transcription is not used. It is given in the textbooks for the 6th and the 7th forms. Beginning with the 6th and the 7th forms pupils learn the phonic symbols so that they are able to read unfamiliar words which they look up in the word-list or a dictionary.

All the exercises mentioned above are designed to develop pupils' ability to associate the graphic symbols with the phonic ones.

The structural-information exercises are done both in reading aloud and in silent reading. Pupils are taught how to read sentences, paragraphs, texts correctly. Special attention is given to intonation since it is of great importance to the actual division of sentences, to stressing the logical predicate in them. Marking the text occasionally may be helpful.

At an early stage of teaching reading the teacher should read a sentence or a passage to the class himself. When he is sure the pupils understand the passage, he can set individuals and the class to repeat the sentences after him, reading again himself if the pupils' reading is poor. The pupils look into the textbook. In symbols it can be expressed like this: T -- C -- T -- P1 -- T -- P2-- T -- Pn -- T -- C (T -- teacher; C -- class; P -- pupil).

This kind of elementary reading practice should be carried on for a limited number of lessons only. When a class has advanced far enough to be ready for more independent reading, reading in chorus might be decreased, but not eliminated: T -- C -- P1P2Pn.

When the pupils have learned to associate written symbols with the sounds they stand for they should read a sentence or a passage by themselves. In this way they get a chance to



make use of their knowledge of the rules of reading. It gives the teacher an opportunity to see whether each of his pupils can read. Symbolically it looks like this: PIP2Pra T (S) C (S -- speaker, if a tape recorder is used).

Reading aloud as a method of teaching and learning the language should take place in all the forms. This is done with the aim of improving pupils' reading skills.

The teacher determines what texts (or paragraphs) and exercises pupils are to read aloud.

In reading aloud, therefore, the teacher uses:

- (a) diagnostic reading (pupils read and he can see their weak points in reading);
- (b) instructive reading (pupils follow the pattern read by the teacher or the speaker);
- (c) control reading or test reading (pupils read the text trying to keep as close to the pattern as possible).

## 2.2 Pupil's mistakes and ways how to correct them

In teaching pupils to read the teacher must do his best to prevent mistakes. We may, however, be certain that in spite of much work done by the teacher, pupils will make mistakes in reading. The question is who corrects their mistakes, how they should be corrected, when they must be corrected.

Our opinion is that the pupil who has made a mistake must try to correct it himself. If he cannot do it, his classmates correct his mistake. If they cannot do so the teacher corrects the mistake. The following techniques may be suggested:

1. The teacher writes a word (e. g., black) on the blackboard. He underlines ck in it and asks the pupil to say what sound these two letters convey. If the pupil cannot answer the question, the teacher asks some of his classmates. They help the pupil to correct his mistake and he reads the word.

2. One of the pupils asks: What is the English for "черный"? If the pupil repeats the mistake, the "corrector" pronounces the word properly and explains the rule the pupil has forgotten. The pupil now reads the word correctly.

3. The teacher or one of the pupils says: Find the word "черный" and read it. The pupil finds the word and reads it either without any mistake if his first mistake was due to his carelessness, or he repeats the mistake. The teacher then tells him to recollect the rule and read the word correctly.



4. The teacher corrects the mistake himself. The pupil reads the word correctly. The teacher asks the pupil to explain to the class how to read ck.

5. The teacher tells the pupil to write the word black and underline ck. Then he says how the word is read.

There are some other ways of correcting pupils' mistakes. The teacher should use them reasonably and choose the one most suitable for the case.

Another question arises: whether we should correct a mistake in the process of reading a passage or after finishing it. Both ways are possible. The mistake should be corrected at once while the pupil reads the text if he has made it in a word which will occur two or more times in the text. If the word does not appear again, it is better to let the pupil read the paragraph to the end. Then the mistake is corrected.

A teacher should always be on the alert for the pupils' mistakes, follow their reading and mark their mistakes in pencil.

Silent reading. In learning to read pupils widen their eyespan. They can see more than a word, a phrase, a sentence. The eye can move faster than the reader is able to pronounce what he sees. Thus reading aloud becomes an obstacle for perception. It hinders the pupil's comprehension of the text. It is necessary that the pupil should read silently. Special exercises may be suggested to develop pupils' skills in silent reading. For instance, "Look and say, read and look up." (M. West) To perform this type of exercises pupils should read a sentence silently, grasp it, and reproduce it without looking into the text. At first they perform such exercises slowly. Gradually the teacher limits the- time for the pupils' doing the exercises. It makes them read faster and faster. All this lead to widening their eyespan.

Teaching silent-reading is closely connected with two problems:

1. instructing pupils in finding in sentences what is new in the information following some structural signals, the latter is possible provided pupils have a certain knowledge of grammar and vocabulary and they can perform lexical and grammar analysis;

2. developing pupils' ability in guessing.

Pupils should be taught how to find the logical predicate in a sentence. The teacher may ask his pupils to read a text silently and find the words conveying the new information in the text according to their position. There are some signals which may be helpful in this respect. These are -- the Passive Voice (The doctor was sent for); the indefinite article (A man came



up to me); the construction "It is/was" (It was not difficult for him to finish his work in time), etc. Grammar and lexical analyses help pupils to assimilate structural words, to determine the meaning of a word proceeding from its position in the sentence, to find the meanings of unfamiliar words, and those which seem to be familiar but do not correspond to the structure of the sentence (e. g., I saw him book a ticket). Pupils' poor comprehension often results from their poor knowledge of grammar (syntax in particular). The teacher should instruct pupils how to work with a dictionary and a reference book so that they can overcome some difficulties independently. Although in school the teacher often applies grammar and lexical analyses, however, he often" does it lot with the aim of the "actual division" or parsing of the sentence and better comprehension of the sentence or of the text, but with the aim of checking or revision of his pupils' knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. This does not mean that the teacher should avoid grammar and vocabulary analyses for revision. However much more attention should be given to teaching pupils 'how to carry out the actual division of sentences to get information from the text. Here are a few examples of structural-information exercises:

- Read the following sentences and guess the meaning of the words you don't know.
- Read the sentence an idea struck me and explain the use of the indefinite article.
- Find the logical predicates in the sentences with the words alone, even, so.
- Read the text. Stress the words conveying new information in each sentence.

E. g., I have a bag. The bag is black.

It is a new bag. I like my new bag.

- These sentences are too complicated. Break them into shorter sentences.
- Find the sentence which summarizes the paragraph.
- By what words is the reader carried from sentence to sentence in this paragraph?
- What is the significance of the tense difference?

What is the effect of the series of repetitions in the paragraph?

To read a text the pupil must possess the ability to grasp the contents of the text. The pupil is to be taught to compare, to contrast, to guess, and to foresee events.

One of the most frequently used methods by which children attack new words is through the use of picture clues.



The use of context clues is another word-getting technique. The pupil discovers what a new word is when that particular word is needed to complete the meaning of the sentence.

In teaching pupils to read much attention should be given to the development of their ability to guess. One of the best ways to develop this skill is to give the pupil the text for acquaintance either during the lesson or as his homework. He can read it again and again.

"Before questions" may be helpful. They direct the pupil's thought when he reads the text. If the work is done during the lesson, the teacher can direct his pupils in guessing new words.

The teacher instructs pupils how to get information from the text. Semantic-communicative exercises are recommended. They are all connected with silent reading. These may be:

- Read and say why Jack does not take the apple.
- Read. Find answers to the following questions.
- Read the text. Find the words which describe the room.
- Read the text. Say what made the Prime Minister leave the country (Newspaper).
- There are two causes of the strike. Find them in the text (Newspaper).
- There are three main features of the substance mentioned in the text below. Find them (Popular Science).
- The author describes his hero with great sympathy.
- Find in what words he expresses his attitude (Fiction).
- Read the text and prove that ... is a kind woman.
- Read the text and find arguments to prove that ...

The three types of exercises are distributed differently depending on the stage of teaching.

In the 5--6th forms graphemic-phonemic and structural-information exercises should prevail. In the 7--10th forms structural-information and semantic-communicative must be mostly used; the latter should prevail.

Pupils perform graphemic-phonemic exercises reading them aloud. The teacher uses individual, group, and full class reading. He checks the pupil's reading by making him read aloud.

Pupils perform structural-information exercises by reading them aloud and silently. The teacher uses individual, group, and full class reading when pupils read sentences, paragraphs of the text aloud, and when the aim is to teach pupils correct intonation in





connection with the actual division of sentences. He checks the pupil's reading asking him to read aloud.

The teacher uses mass reading when pupils read sentences, paragraphs of the text silently; the objective may be different: either to widen their eyespan or to find new information. The teacher checks the pupil's silent reading by asking him to reproduce a sentence or a paragraph; through partial reading of a sentence or a clause; through the pupil's interpreting the text; by utilizing true-and-false statements, questions and answers, and, finally, translation.

Pupils perform semantic-communicative exercises reading the text silently. If the work is done during the lesson the teacher uses mass reading. He checks his pupils' comprehension by asking the pupils individually. The techniques the teacher uses to check pupils' ability to get information from the text may be different. The choice depends on the stage of teaching, on the material used; on pupils' progress.

In the junior stage the following techniques may be suggested:

- Read and draw.
- Here are the questions. Find the answers in the text. (Before-questions are given.)
- Find the following sentences in the text. (The teacher gives Russian equivalents.)
- Correct the following statements which are not true to fact.
- Translate the sentences (the paragraph) beginning with the words (The teacher reads the words).
- Recite the text.
- Read the sentences you find most important in the text.

Some of the assignments may be done in writing. In the intermediate and senior stages the following techniques may be recommended.

- Answer the questions. (All types of questions may be used. However, why-questions are desirable.)
- Tell your classmates what (who, when, where, why)...
- Read the words (the sentence or the paragraph) to prove or to illustrate what you say.
- Find the words (sentences) from which you have got some new information for yourself.
- Read the paragraph (paragraphs) you like best, and say why you like it.
- Translate the paragraph when (where, why, etc.).



- Translate the text. (This may be done both orally and in written form).

Write a short annotation of the text. (This may be done either in English or in Russian or Kyrgyz).

The choice depends on the material used.

If the text is easy, i. e., if it does not contain unfamiliar words and grammar items (as is the case in the junior form) the teacher uses those techniques which are connected with speaking, with the active use of vocabulary and sentence patterns. Similar techniques may be used in intermediate and senior stages if the text is not difficult for the class. The teacher asks his pupils a few questions to test their understanding. The interrogation should be carried out briskly. The teacher passes from pupil to pupil without waiting if a particular pupil has not got his answer ready. For the most profitable results of this work speed is essential. It ensures that all get a chance to answer. With books open one of the pupils asks a question or a number of questions and another answer. The teacher asks the pupils to retell the text. One pupil begins retelling the text, another continues. Each pupil says a few sentences. The teacher asks the first group of pupils to be ready to say everything they know about X, the second group -- everything they know about J, the third group -- about Y, and so on. The teacher arranges a discussion on the text read by pupils in class or at home.

The work must be carried out in a way which will be of interest to pupils and develop not only their reading ability but their aural comprehension and speaking abilities as well.

If the text is difficult, i. e., if it contains unfamiliar words and grammar items, and pupils must consult a dictionary or a reference book to understand it the techniques the teacher uses should be different, as the pupils read the text not only to get information but to improve their knowledge of the language and intensive work is needed on their part. The intensive work may be connected with:

- (a) lexical work which helps pupils to deepen and enrich their vocabulary knowledge;
- (b) grammar work which helps pupils to review and systematize their grammar knowledge and enrich it through grammar analysis;
- (c) stylistic work which helps pupils to become acquainted with stylistic use of words and grammar forms (inversion, tense-usage, etc.);
- (d) content analysis which helps pupils to learn new concepts quite strange to Russian-speaking pupils. For instance, the Houses of Parliament, public schools, etc.



The exercises are mostly connected with recognition on the part of the learners, namely, find ... and read; find ... and analyze ... ; find ... and translate; read those sentences which you think contain the main information; answer the questions, etc. The choice also depends on pupils' progress. If pupils are orally skilful, the techniques the teacher uses are to be those connected with conversation, If pupils are poor in speaking the techniques the teacher uses should be those of recognition, translation, retelling in the mother tongue, etc. Unfortunately, some teachers have a tendency to test instead of teach during classroom work and they often confine themselves to reading and translating the text. This is a bad practice. Pupils are tested and not taught. Moreover, the procedure becomes monotonous, and the work is ineffective. A pupil who has been called on to read and received a mark will not usually listen to his classmates.

The methods and techniques suggested above will help the teacher to teach pupils reading as the syllabus requires

Developing reading activities involves more than identifying a text that is "at the right level", writing a set of comprehension questions for students to answer after reading, handing out the assignment and sending students away to do it. We can use the guidelines for developing reading activities given here as starting points for evaluating and adapting textbook reading activities. We can use existing or add our own new reading activities. We shouldn't make students do exercise simply because they are in the book, this destroys motivation. As we design reading task, we should always keep in mind that complete recall of all the information in a text is an unrealistic expectation even for native speakers.

Strategies to use to introduce texts:

Research undertakes text-based research to access and report on information about unfamiliar topics and concepts to be encountered in the text and sample particular groups (parents, friends, shopkeepers, peers) using questionnaires to research attitudes, values and opinions related to issues in the text.

Parallel Narrative uses a decontextualized skeleton plot (boy and girl go on an errand across difficult terrain - an accident happens - medical attention is given - the culprit is punished = Jack and Jill) to help students create their own stories and role plays which fill in the plot outlines. Or selects a concept value which represents an important theme in the text and



have students explore the issue in discussion before creating their own texts in which the concept of value is an important theme.

Vocabulary Awareness:

1. If there are particular words which might be unfamiliar to students, spend some time introducing the words to students.

2. Students could prepare a noticeboard or “big-book” glossary of terms with clear explanations from the list provided by the teacher.

3. Students could use “Who am I?” riddle structure to explain the vocabulary to their peers.

Displays display and explore visual texts (posters, paintings, video clips) which represent perspectives on themes or issues relevant to the text. Students could use scavenger hunt quiz sheet to locate and describe details that appear in the story.

Mindmapping - individually, using colored texts and a large sheet of paper, have students construct visual/verbal mindmaps (mostly images with some words) of their understanding of issues, genres or concepts with which the text they will be reading will be concerned.

Choosing and using texts for reading.

All learning areas use texts, but English focuses on three particular kinds:

Literature Texts (Classic, Contemporary, Popular)

Mass Media Texts

Everyday Texts

New types of texts, especially electronic-based texts such as hypertext, hyperfiction and e-mail, are making different demands on students as readers and viewers.

A challenging, rich and balanced English program gives access to:

- texts beyond those which students may encounter in their daily lives
- texts for personal enjoyment, aesthetic appreciation and critical analysis
- texts for conducting the business of everyday life (at home, at school, in the workplace).

The texts for reading acquisition should:

provide a framework that gradually introduces strategies required for skilled reading

deal with themes and issues relating to the everyday lives of the readers

provide opportunities to revisit some subjects, themes and characters

use a simple language structure, so that students don't have to review many oral language forms to access meaning



provide opportunities for the acquisition of alphabet letters, letter clusters and common sight words in natural contexts

presents many of the conventions of written language including spelling, punctuation and capitalization

encourage problem solving on text by having to make analogies, predictions, checking and self-corrections

have illustrations that give maximum support for the emergent reader, gradually extending experience as reading is more confident

use appropriate book structure, text size, spacing and layout to match text type, text difficulty and reader skill.

A person who needs to know whether she can afford to eat at a particular restaurant needs to comprehend the pricing information provided on the menu, but does not need to recognize the name of every appetizer listed. A person reading poetry for enjoyment needs to recognize the words the poet uses and the ways they are put together, but does not need to identify main idea and supporting details. However, a person using a scientific article to support an opinion needs to know the vocabulary that is used, understand the facts and cause-effects sequences that are presented, and recognize ideas that are presented as hypotheses and givens. The factors listed below can help educators judge the relative ease or difficulty of a reading text for a particular purpose and a particular group of students.

How is the information organized? Does the story line, narrative, or instruction conform to familiar expectations? Texts in which the events are presented in natural chronological order, which have an informative title, and which present the information following an obvious organization are easier to follow.

How familiar are the students with the topic? Misapplication of background knowledge due to cultural differences can create major comprehension difficulties.

Does the text contain redundancy? At the lower levels of proficiency, listeners may find short, simple messages easier to process, but students with higher proficiency benefit from the natural redundancy of authentic language.



Does the text offer visual support to aid in reading comprehension? Visual aids help students preview the content of the text, guess the meaning of unknown words, and check comprehension.

We should remember that the level of difficulty of a text is not the same as the level of difficulty of a reading task. Students who lack the vocabulary to identify all of the items on a menu can still determine whether the restraint serves steak and whether they can afford to order one.

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