Development of Reading Skills and Systems for Working with Authentic Texts

Saida Nuritdinova
Senior teacher, Uzbek State World Languages University

Abstract: The article deals with the issues of methods of formation of skills and abilities of the main types of reading. Reading is one of the factors for improving the quality of language training of students. The published material describes each type of reading for the development of perception, understanding and interpretation of authentic texts. The practical significance of the work lies in preparing students for intercultural communication, which is the main goal of teaching students a foreign language in educational institutions.

Keywords: perception, understanding, interpretation, reading, authentic texts.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important ways of obtaining information in the modern world, regardless of age, education, upbringing of a person, is reading. But for a specialist working in the context of globalization and internationalization of the labor market, the ability to obtain information from various sources, including in foreign languages, becomes a necessary condition for successful professional activity. Therefore, the ability to read and understand foreign literature is one of the main requirements for the level of training of students in foreign language programs of any higher professional educational institution.

According to E. N. Solovova, the fact remains unchanged and obvious that it is the art of reading that is the system-forming basis for the formation of information and academic skills [1]. The modern communicative approach to learning a foreign language requires the subordination of all particular tasks to a common goal - to provide the necessary skills and conditions for the successful implementation of communication. This does not mean the subordination of reading as an activity of oral speech. Each of them has its own specifics, goals and objectives, includes a set of necessary skills and abilities. At the same time, the greatest number of skills is provided for various types of reading and speaking, which also indicates their equivalent role in the formation of a foreign language communicative competence of a specialist.

METHODS AND ANALYSIS

Communicative reading skills (as one of the four main types of speech activity) are part of speech competence, which in turn is a component of foreign language communicative competence. As an activity, reading is characterized by motive, purpose, conditions and results.

“The motive is always communication or communication through the printed word; the purpose is to obtain information on the issue that interests the reader. The conditions of reading activity include mastery of the graphic system of the language and methods of extracting information. The result of the activity is understanding or extracting information from what has been read with varying degrees of accuracy and depth” [3].

Although reading is a receptive activity, the result of the successful application of reading skills is productive actions, that is, the use of the information received in oral and written speech, in everyday and professional communication situations. “The tasks of teaching reading as an independent type of speech activity are as follows: to teach students to extract information from the text to the extent necessary to solve a specific speech task using certain technologies” [4].
Types of reading are a sequence of actions determined by the goal and characterized by “a specific combination of methods of semantic and perceptual processing of material perceived visually” [4, p.192]. The classification of types of reading is related to the communicative goals and objectives of the reader, which determine the necessary degree of completeness and accuracy of understanding the material. This criterion formed the basis of the generally accepted classification of types of reading by S.K. Folomkina, which distinguishes search, viewing, introductory and studying reading [5, p.48].

Scanning reading is “a cursory, selective reading of the text in blocks in order to find out whether this text contains any information useful to the reader” [5, p.75]. The student must get a general idea of a number of issues discussed in the text and assess their awareness of the range of issues under consideration. He must also be able to identify the significance and importance of this material in order to determine whether he will need this or that information to use it in the future. For example, the student will be able to give a specific answer to the question of which museum would be most interesting to visit. To do this, it is enough to get acquainted with the structure of the text, read the headings and subheadings, separate paragraphs. Tasks for this type of reading may include the following: review the text and determine if it fits the topic, what the text is about, what are its keywords.

During introductory reading, it is necessary “as a result of a quick reading of the entire text, to extract the basic information contained in it, that is, to find out what issues and how are resolved in the text, what exactly it says on these issues. It requires the ability to distinguish between primary and secondary information” [5, p.98]. This type of reading involves working with the entire proposed text. The student does not intend to reproduce the text or apply the information in any other way. Tasks for this type of reading suggest answering questions, correlating information with the content of the text, analyzing words, and also choosing a title for paragraphs or for the entire text after identifying a common ideological meaning.

For example, when teaching students in practice, we use a certain paragraph from the text, setting the student to read the text as quickly as possible and determine the main meaning [6, p.27]. Then the student must choose the appropriate heading from among several.

Further, when working with a titled text consisting of several paragraphs, we suggest that students carefully read the title or the subtitle present in this material, and only the first sentence of each paragraph. This is enough to extract the basic information of the text. Moreover, we set the student the task of skimming through each line of the text, while he must mentally highlight for himself all the key and significant words that correspond to the main theme of the text, but do not pay attention to new unknown words, as well as conjunctions, prepositions, personal and possessive pronouns, etc. With this introductory reading, the student develops reading skills, and also increases the speed of reading.

“Studying reading provides for the most complete and accurate understanding of all the information contained in the text and its critical comprehension” [7, p.25]. This type requires a significant amount of time for thoughtful reading of the text and analysis of its content. The proposed tasks may also require answers to questions, but for successful completion it is necessary not only to return to the desired section or paragraph, but also to fully understand and be able to interpret the information provided.

The purpose of exploratory reading is a quick “finding in the text of quite specific information (facts, characteristics, figures, etc.)” [7, p. 43]. The student does not analyze the text in whole or in parts, but only selects the necessary data, focusing on the structure of the text.

In practice, we, first of all, make it clear that students should not read the text thoughtfully, but only read it superficially. According to the technique of scanning reading, as well as search
reading, the student should only skim through the entire text, directing his eyes up, down and around the text. We compare this type of reading with dictionary work, when the student has to find the meaning of a certain word. At the same time, he skims the page and finds the word he is looking for, but it is not his task to read the entire page containing various words.

The human body is about 65 percent water. If you stopped drinking water (or drinks and food containing water) you would die within three or four days. However, the water you drink must be clean. Each day an average person uses the following amounts of water:

Cooking and drinking 30 liters bathing 30 liters. Using a shower 12-20 liters the average daily a total person is 140 liters. The average family uses 480 liters of water a day.

Thus, the student "scans" with his eyes an authentic text, in which an important skill is to master the speed of viewing information [6, p.48]. For example, when reading a foreign language text presented below, a student was given the task of answering 4 questions. This involves, first of all, highlighting the keywords in each question, on the basis of which the student must skim the text and determine the correct answer. For each question, a specific answer is contained in the text in accordance with specific facts and figures. Reading text looks like this:

Water can carry diseases. According to a recent report published by the United Nations, every day throughout the world about 25,000 people die from diseases related to dirty water. It takes 31,600 liters of water to make one car and 4,124 liters to make one ton of steel. It takes 53 liters of water to make one pair of leather shoes and 9 liters of water to make every comic that you read.

Skimming, students answer the following questions:

1. How much of the human body is water?
2. How much water does the average person use for bathing?
3. How many people die per day from diseases related to dirty water?
4. How many liters of water does it take to make one pair of leather shoes?

Each type of reading corresponds to certain generalized skills: the ability to understand the general content (viewing reading), the ability to understand the main content (introductory reading), the ability to extract complete information (learning reading), the ability to extract the necessary information (search reading) [7, p. 44]. Each of these skills is based on a set of skills and abilities (language, speech, compensatory, etc.), including, for example, the ability to identify basic facts and highlight key words.

Obviously, to work with material in a foreign language, a specialist will need the skills and abilities of all types of reading; they are interconnected and logically follow from each other. When working with foreign literature, a specialist should be able to look through an article and determine whether it relates to his topic, whether it contains the necessary information, and whether the material should be read more carefully (viewing reading). If the text corresponds to the request, then the specialist can familiarize himself with its content and find out what it says on the issues of interest to him (introductory reading) and, if there is new (interesting) information, proceed to a careful reading of the text in order to fully understand and analyze it. Content (learning reading). In some cases, a specialist will need to find the necessary information in it (exploratory reading). Thus, the dominance of one type of reading over another, as well as the isolated development of the corresponding skills, is completely wrong. This approach is acceptable at the initial stage of teaching a foreign language, when students do not have enough language, speech and other skills and abilities. In the future, it is desirable to cover all types of reading, developing skills and abilities in an interconnected manner. Therefore, at the final stage of preparing students for a foreign language, it seems not logical to use a separate text for each type of reading. It seems more appropriate to perform the exercises sequentially in exactly the order in which they correspond to the logic of the work of a specialist with a foreign
language text. For example, the student must get a general idea of the proposed material, identify whether the text contains the required (interesting) information, find the main idea and separate the information of paramount importance from the secondary, establish the chronological and logical connection of events, identify the relationship of facts and ideas, compare data, find the necessary information, summarize, draw conclusions, etc. [7, p.44] Such a sequence of actions corresponds to the logic of the work of a specialist with an unfamiliar foreign text and reflects the following relationship between types of reading: viewing reading - introductory reading - studying reading / search reading.

The grouping of tasks familiar to many teachers for the development of reading skills is consistent with the classification under consideration by type: reading with the extraction of basic information (introductory reading), with the extraction of the necessary information (browsing / search reading), with the extraction of complete information (study reading).

When studying foreign methodological literature, we found that the basis of the foreign classification of types of reading is similar skills and abilities. It should be noted that in the foreign methodology, three types of reading are classified, where the search and viewing types are included in scanning.

1. Skimming or in other words reading for gist - reading with an understanding of the main content, with the extraction of basic information, an initial review of the text, determining the main idea, the topic of the text, i.e. introductory reading.

2. Scanning - reading with selective extraction of information of two types: specific information (search reading) and information about the usefulness of the text (browsing reading).

3. Reading for detail - reading with a full understanding of the text, with the extraction of complete information, a detailed understanding of the text not only at the level of content, but also meaning. Thus, it is obvious that the existing differences between the types of reading in the domestic and foreign methods are only terminological in nature. At the same time, the ability of students to use various methods of working on texts is characterized by their individual level of reading proficiency as a complex integrated speech skill. The issue of the content of texts in foreign languages offered for study is extremely important for methodologists. The content of education offered by programs in foreign languages in non-linguistic universities is determined by the peculiarity of “a combination of professional business and socio cultural orientation as two interrelated components of intercultural communication of non-philologists” [7, p.5].

This leads to the use of texts of a cultural and regional orientation as a material for reading, as well as information reflecting the amount of knowledge and modern achievements in the field of future professional activities of students. When selecting texts containing socio-cultural, linguistic and cultural knowledge and elements of professional knowledge, it is also necessary to take into account the diversity of genres and styles [7, p.10]. The level of complexity of texts is determined by the requirement of various programs in foreign languages for the formation of foreign language communication skills corresponding to the threshold level on the scale of the Common European Standard for Levels of Proficiency in Foreign Languages, since “proficiency in a foreign language in the volume of levels is considered as one of the conditions for the free movement of ideas and people on the European continent, the basis for further language learning for professional purposes” [8].

The development of skills in reading foreign literature is necessary in the training of personnel for any field of professional activity. Without this, it is impossible to form a foreign language communicative competence of a specialist. Reading literature in a foreign language broadens a person's horizons, provides him with the necessary knowledge, provides him not only with professional, but also with country-specific, general cultural information. To achieve these goals, it is necessary to master the types of reading, such as: search, viewing, introductory and
studying.

Thus, reading texts of a socio cultural and professional orientation can be a means for solving a number of problems:

- formation of understanding of the essence of socio cultural competence and its role in the process of intercultural communication;
- increasing the level of language training of students;
- development of skills of perception, understanding and interpretation of texts;
- Preparation of students of a non-linguistic university to work with narrow-profile texts.

In connection with the introduction of multilingual education in universities, the need arose to revise the existing methods of teaching the reading of authentic texts, both for students and teachers.

CONCLUSION

So, in conclusion, we can draw the following conclusions: in the process of our study, the main goal of teaching a foreign language in a non-linguistic university was revealed, which is to teach reading authentic professionally oriented texts that reveal the basics of the specialty in the form in which it is understood in the country of the language being studied. The selection of texts, made according to the concept of bilingual education, and the consideration of their pragmatic, compositional and structural features made it possible to identify the skills necessary for understanding the proposed materials. On the basis of these skills, test tasks can be developed that can control the degree of formation of communicative competence in the field of reading.

References: