

**WAYS TO DEVELOP READING SKILLS IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE.
CRITERIA FOR SELECTING TEXTS**

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Annotatsiya

Ushbu maqolada chet tilida o'qish ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirishning samarali usullari hamda o'quvchilar uchun mos matnlarni tanlash mezonlari yoritilgan. Tadqiqotda o'qishning til o'rganishdagi ahamiyati tushuntirilgan va keng qamrovli o'qish, intensiv o'qish, skimming, scanning, bashorat qilish faoliyatlari, lug'at boyligini oshirish hamda autentik materiallardan foydalanish kabi metodlar tahlil qilingan. Shuningdek, maqolada motivatsiya, texnologiyalar va kommunikativ yondashuvlarning o'qib tushunishni rivojlantirishdagi o'rnini ko'rib chiqilgan. Matnlarni tanlash mezonlari sifatida til darajasi, o'quvchilarning qiziqishlari, madaniy moslik, autentiklik va ta'limiy qiymat muhim omillar sifatida baholangan. Tadqiqot natijalariga ko'ra, to'g'ri tashkil etilgan o'qish faoliyatlari va puxta tanlangan matnlar o'quvchilarning kommunikativ kompetensiyasi, tanqidiy fikrlashi va mustaqil o'rganish ko'nikmalarini rivojlantiradi.

Kalit so'zlar: O'qish ko'nikmalari, chet tilini o'rganish, matnni tushunish, keng qamrovli o'qish, intensiv o'qish, autentik materiallar, lug'at boyligini rivojlantirish, matn tanlash, kommunikativ kompetensiya, o'qish strategiyalari.

Abstract

This article discusses effective ways of developing reading skills in a foreign language and the main criteria for selecting appropriate texts for learners. The study explains the importance of reading in language acquisition and highlights methods such as extensive reading, intensive reading, skimming, scanning, prediction activities, vocabulary development, and the use of authentic materials. The article also analyzes the role of motivation, technology, and communicative teaching approaches in improving reading comprehension. Special attention is given to the criteria for selecting texts, including language level, learner interests, cultural relevance, authenticity, and educational value. The research concludes that properly organized reading activities and carefully selected texts contribute significantly to learners' communicative competence, critical thinking, and independent learning skills.

Key words: Reading skills, foreign language learning, reading comprehension, extensive reading, intensive reading, authentic materials, vocabulary development, text selection, communicative competence, reading strategies.

Аннотация

В данной статье рассматриваются эффективные способы развития навыков чтения на иностранном языке и основные критерии отбора текстов для обучающихся. В исследовании объясняется значение чтения в процессе изучения языка и анализируются такие методы, как экстенсивное чтение, интенсивное чтение, skimming, scanning, прогнозирование, развитие словарного запаса и использование аутентичных материалов. Также в статье рассматривается роль

мотивации, технологий и коммуникативных подходов в совершенствовании навыков понимания текста. Особое внимание уделяется критериям отбора текстов, включая уровень владения языком, интересы учащихся, культурную соответствующесть, аутентичность и образовательную ценность. Исследование показывает, что правильно организованные виды чтения и тщательно подобранные тексты значительно способствуют развитию коммуникативной компетенции, критического мышления и навыков самостоятельного обучения учащихся.

Ключевые слова: Навыки чтения, изучение иностранного языка, понимание текста, экстенсивное чтение, интенсивное чтение, аутентичные материалы, развитие словарного запаса, отбор текстов, коммуникативная компетенция, стратегии чтения.

INTRODUCTION

Reading is considered one of the most important language skills in the process of learning a foreign language. Through reading, learners enlarge their vocabulary, improve grammar awareness, develop pronunciation indirectly, and gain knowledge about the culture and traditions of other nations. Reading also helps students become independent learners because they can obtain information from books, articles, websites, and different educational resources without constant teacher support. In modern education, the development of reading skills plays a central role in communicative competence, academic success, and personal growth. Effective reading instruction encourages learners not only to understand words and sentences but also to analyze ideas, evaluate information, and express opinions confidently in the target language. The process of developing reading skills requires systematic practice and carefully organized teaching methods. One of the most effective ways to improve reading ability is extensive reading. Extensive reading means reading large amounts of

simple and interesting material for general understanding and pleasure. Students who regularly read stories, magazines, short novels, and online articles become more familiar with sentence structures and vocabulary usage. This method increases reading speed and helps learners develop confidence. When students choose materials according to their interests, they become more motivated and engaged in the learning process. Another important approach is intensive reading. Intensive reading focuses on detailed understanding of shorter texts. During this activity learners analyze vocabulary, grammar structures, stylistic devices, and specific information. Teachers usually prepare comprehension questions, matching exercises, gap-filling tasks, and discussions related to the text. Intensive reading develops accuracy and critical thinking because students pay attention to every detail of the reading material. Combining extensive and intensive reading provides balanced language development and improves both fluency and accuracy.

Vocabulary development is closely connected with reading comprehension. Students often face difficulties because they do not know enough words to understand the text. Therefore, teachers should introduce pre-reading vocabulary activities before students begin reading. Flashcards, word maps, synonyms, antonyms, and contextual guessing exercises help learners understand new lexical items more effectively. Repetition and regular exposure to vocabulary in different contexts strengthen long-term memory and improve comprehension skills. Students should also be encouraged to keep vocabulary notebooks where they can write definitions, examples, and translations of unfamiliar words. Reading aloud is another useful strategy in foreign language learning. This activity improves pronunciation, intonation, stress, and fluency. When students read aloud, they become more aware of punctuation and sentence rhythm. Teachers can organize pair reading, role reading, or group reading activities to make lessons more interactive. Although silent reading is important for

comprehension, reading aloud supports oral communication skills and increases learners' confidence in speaking.

Prediction activities are widely used to develop reading skills. Before reading the text, students can look at the title, pictures, subtitles, or key words and predict the content. Prediction activates background knowledge and creates curiosity about the text. During reading, students compare their predictions with actual information. This process develops analytical thinking and improves understanding. Teachers may also ask students to guess the continuation or ending of a story, which increases creativity and engagement.

Skimming and scanning are essential reading techniques that help learners process information more efficiently. Skimming involves reading quickly to understand the main idea of the text, while scanning focuses on finding specific details such as dates, names, or numbers. These strategies are especially useful in academic and real-life situations where students need to manage large amounts of information in a short time. Teaching learners how to use these techniques improves reading speed and comprehension simultaneously. Using authentic materials is another effective way to develop reading skills. Authentic texts include newspapers, advertisements, menus, websites, emails, blogs, and literary works created for native speakers rather than language learners. Such materials expose students to real language usage and cultural information. Authentic reading materials increase motivation because learners understand the practical value of reading in real life. However, teachers should adapt authentic texts carefully according to students' language levels and learning objectives.

Technology has also transformed the teaching of reading skills. Digital platforms, e-books, online dictionaries, educational applications, and interactive reading programs create new opportunities for language learners. Multimedia resources that combine text, audio, and visuals support comprehension and make reading more

attractive. Online reading activities allow students to practice independently and receive immediate feedback. Modern technology also gives learners access to a wide variety of texts from different cultures and academic fields. Motivation plays a crucial role in reading development. Students who enjoy reading usually achieve better results than those who read only because of classroom requirements. Teachers should create a positive reading environment by selecting interesting topics, encouraging discussions, praising progress, and organizing collaborative activities. Reading clubs, storytelling sessions, and project-based tasks increase student participation and foster a love of reading. When learners associate reading with enjoyment and personal achievement, they become more active and independent readers. An important aspect of teaching reading is the selection of appropriate texts. The effectiveness of reading activities largely depends on the quality and suitability of the materials chosen by the teacher. One of the main criteria for selecting texts is the language level of learners. Texts should not be too easy or too difficult. If the material is extremely difficult, students may lose motivation and confidence. On the other hand, overly simple texts do not contribute significantly to language development. Appropriate texts should challenge learners while still remaining understandable with teacher support.

The topic of the text is another important criterion. Learners are more interested in reading materials related to their age, needs, experiences, and interests. For younger learners, stories with colorful characters, adventures, and simple dialogues are usually effective. Teenagers may prefer texts about technology, social media, sports, travel, or friendship. Adult learners often benefit from academic, professional, or cultural topics. Interesting content increases motivation and encourages active participation in classroom discussions. Text length should also be considered carefully. Long and complex texts may overwhelm beginners, while very short texts may not provide enough language practice. Teachers should select texts according to lesson objectives, available classroom time, and students' reading abilities. Short texts are suitable for

intensive reading activities, whereas longer texts can be used for extensive reading and independent study.

Cultural relevance is another important factor in text selection. Reading materials should introduce students to the culture of the target language while respecting learners' own cultural background. Culturally rich texts help students understand traditions, customs, values, and ways of life in other countries. At the same time, teachers should avoid texts that may cause misunderstanding or discomfort due to sensitive cultural or social issues. Balanced cultural content promotes intercultural competence and global awareness. Authenticity and educational value are also essential criteria. Texts should provide meaningful information and support language learning goals. Reading materials should help students improve vocabulary, grammar, comprehension, and critical thinking skills. Educational texts that encourage analysis, interpretation, and personal response are particularly valuable in foreign language education. Teachers should also ensure that texts contain clear organization, logical structure, and coherent ideas to facilitate comprehension.

Variety in text types is necessary for comprehensive reading development. Students should work with narratives, dialogues, articles, reports, essays, poems, and informational texts. Different genres expose learners to diverse language styles and communicative purposes. Variety also prevents boredom and prepares students for real-world reading situations. Exposure to multiple text forms improves flexibility and adaptability in language use. In conclusion, developing reading skills in a foreign language is a complex but highly rewarding process. Effective reading instruction requires a combination of strategies such as extensive and intensive reading, vocabulary development, prediction activities, skimming, scanning, authentic materials, and technological tools. Teachers play a key role in motivating learners and creating supportive reading environments. At the same time, careful text selection is essential for successful language learning. Appropriate texts should correspond to

learners' language levels, interests, cultural backgrounds, and educational needs. When reading activities are organized effectively, students become confident readers who can use the foreign language for academic, professional, and personal communication.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

The development of reading skills in a foreign language has been widely discussed by linguists, psychologists, and educators for many decades. Researchers emphasize that reading is not only a process of recognizing words and sentences but also an active cognitive activity that involves understanding, interpretation, analysis, and critical thinking. Early theories of foreign language reading mainly focused on grammar translation methods where learners translated texts word by word. In traditional classrooms reading was often used only for vocabulary memorization and grammar practice. However, modern educational approaches consider reading as an interactive and communicative process that helps learners acquire language naturally and meaningfully. Many scholars have contributed to the theory of teaching reading in foreign languages. The works of Stephen Krashen highlighted the importance of extensive reading in language acquisition. According to Krashen's Input Hypothesis, learners develop language competence when they are exposed to understandable and meaningful input. Extensive reading provides learners with opportunities to encounter vocabulary and grammar structures in authentic contexts, which improves fluency and comprehension. Krashen also argued that reading for pleasure increases motivation and encourages independent learning habits. Christine Nuttall emphasized that successful reading instruction depends on meaningful interaction between the reader and the text. She explained that learners should not only decode linguistic forms but also connect information with their background knowledge and personal experiences. Her research demonstrated the importance of prediction, inference, and interpretation in reading

comprehension. Nuttall also underlined the role of authentic materials in helping learners understand real language usage and cultural contexts.

The interactive model of reading developed by David Rumelhart and other cognitive psychologists became another important contribution to reading theory. This model explains that reading comprehension results from the interaction between bottom-up and top-down processes. Bottom-up processing focuses on recognizing letters, words, and grammatical structures, while top-down processing involves using prior knowledge, expectations, and contextual clues. Modern reading instruction combines these two approaches to help learners become effective readers. Research by Jeremy Harmer and Jack Richards demonstrated that reading activities should be learner-centered and communicative. They stressed the importance of motivating students through interesting texts and purposeful classroom tasks. Harmer explained that pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading stages help organize reading lessons effectively. Pre-reading activities activate background knowledge, while-reading tasks guide comprehension, and post-reading activities develop speaking, writing, and critical thinking skills.

Studies on vocabulary acquisition also show a strong connection between vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension. Nation argued that learners need repeated exposure to lexical items in meaningful contexts to improve understanding. Through regular reading practice students gradually increase their vocabulary size, which positively influences fluency and comprehension abilities. Researchers additionally point out that guessing unknown words from context is an important strategy that should be taught systematically in foreign language classrooms. Recent literature highlights the role of technology in reading development. Digital reading platforms, online libraries, educational applications, and multimedia texts provide learners with interactive opportunities for practicing reading skills. Researchers note that technology increases learner autonomy and motivation because students can

choose materials according to their interests and proficiency levels. Online reading environments also support collaborative learning through discussions, forums, and shared tasks.

The methodology of this study is based on qualitative and descriptive approaches. Various scientific articles, methodological books, educational journals, and theoretical sources related to teaching reading in foreign languages were analyzed. Comparative analysis was used to examine different teaching strategies and approaches proposed by foreign and local researchers. The study focused on identifying the most effective methods for improving reading comprehension and selecting suitable texts for learners at different proficiency levels. Observation of classroom practices and analysis of modern teaching techniques also formed part of the methodology. Special attention was given to strategies such as extensive reading, intensive reading, skimming, scanning, prediction activities, vocabulary instruction, and the use of authentic materials. The study examined how these methods influence learner motivation, comprehension, fluency, and critical thinking skills.

The research additionally analyzed the criteria used by teachers when selecting reading materials. Factors such as language difficulty, text length, cultural relevance, authenticity, educational value, and learner interest were examined carefully. Different types of texts including narratives, informational articles, dialogues, and digital materials were compared to determine their effectiveness in foreign language classrooms. The methodological foundation of the research is based on communicative language teaching principles and learner-centered education. These approaches encourage active participation, interaction, and meaningful communication during reading activities. The study also considered psychological and pedagogical principles related to motivation, cognitive development, and individual learning differences. Overall, the literature review demonstrates that reading is a multifaceted skill requiring both linguistic and cognitive development. Modern research supports the use of

interactive, communicative, and technology-supported approaches for effective reading instruction. The methodology applied in this study aims to analyze these approaches comprehensively and identify practical ways to improve reading skills in foreign language education.

RESULTS

The analysis of theoretical and methodological sources demonstrated that the development of reading skills in a foreign language significantly improves learners' overall communicative competence. Students who regularly participate in reading activities show better vocabulary knowledge, stronger grammatical awareness, improved pronunciation, and greater confidence in language use. The study revealed that reading is not an isolated skill but a foundation for the development of speaking, writing, and listening abilities. Learners who read frequently are able to express their thoughts more clearly and understand authentic language more effectively.

The findings showed that extensive reading positively influences learners' motivation and reading fluency. Students who were exposed to interesting and understandable texts developed greater interest in foreign language learning. Regular reading practice helped learners recognize sentence structures more quickly and increased their reading speed. Extensive reading also encouraged independent learning habits because students became more willing to read outside the classroom environment. Learners demonstrated improved comprehension abilities when they selected texts according to their interests and language levels. The research also indicated that intensive reading activities are highly effective for developing analytical and critical thinking skills. Detailed work with texts improved students' ability to identify main ideas, understand supporting details, analyze vocabulary usage, and interpret meaning from context. Intensive reading tasks such as comprehension questions, discussions, summarizing, and text analysis strengthened learners' attention

to grammatical and lexical accuracy. Students who participated in systematic intensive reading activities showed noticeable improvement in academic reading performance.

The study confirmed the importance of vocabulary instruction in reading development. Learners with broader vocabulary knowledge experienced fewer comprehension difficulties and demonstrated higher confidence while reading authentic materials. Pre-reading vocabulary exercises, contextual guessing activities, and repeated exposure to lexical items helped students remember new words more effectively. The results showed that contextual vocabulary learning through reading is more productive than isolated memorization because students understand how words function in real communication. Another important result of the research was the effectiveness of prediction, skimming, and scanning techniques. Learners who practiced prediction activities became more active readers because they approached texts with curiosity and purpose. Skimming improved students' ability to identify general ideas quickly, while scanning helped them locate specific information efficiently. These strategies increased reading speed and reduced learners' dependence on word-by-word translation. Students gradually became more confident in handling longer and more complex texts. The findings additionally revealed that authentic materials have a strong positive impact on learner engagement and cultural awareness. Texts such as newspapers, blogs, advertisements, and online articles exposed learners to real-life language use and modern vocabulary. Authentic materials increased students' interest because they could connect classroom learning with practical communication situations. Learners also developed greater understanding of cultural traditions, values, and social practices associated with the target language.

The integration of technology into reading instruction produced positive educational outcomes as well. Digital reading platforms, online dictionaries, multimedia texts, and educational applications made reading activities more interactive and accessible. Students showed higher motivation when technology was incorporated

into lessons because digital resources provided immediate feedback, audio support, and visual materials that facilitated comprehension. Technology also encouraged autonomous learning since students could practice reading independently outside the classroom. The research demonstrated that learner motivation is one of the most influential factors in reading development. Students who experienced supportive classroom environments and engaging reading activities participated more actively and achieved better results. Teacher encouragement, collaborative tasks, group discussions, and creative post-reading activities contributed to positive attitudes toward reading. Motivation increased significantly when learners felt that reading activities were meaningful, enjoyable, and connected to their personal interests. The analysis of text selection criteria showed that appropriately selected materials directly affect reading success. Texts that matched learners' language proficiency levels produced better comprehension outcomes and reduced anxiety. Materials that were too difficult often discouraged learners, while overly simple texts limited language growth. The results emphasized that successful reading instruction requires balance between challenge and comprehensibility. The study further showed that topic relevance is essential for maintaining student interest. Learners demonstrated greater participation and understanding when texts reflected their age, educational needs, hobbies, or real-life experiences. Texts related to modern technology, culture, travel, education, and social issues generated more active classroom discussions and deeper comprehension. Interesting and meaningful topics increased learners' emotional connection with reading activities.

The findings also highlighted the importance of cultural appropriateness in text selection. Reading materials that introduced aspects of the target culture while respecting learners' cultural backgrounds created positive learning experiences. Students became more open-minded and developed intercultural communication skills through culturally informative texts. At the same time, the research emphasized the

need for teachers to avoid culturally insensitive or overly complex materials that could create misunderstanding or discomfort. Another significant result was the effectiveness of using a variety of text genres in foreign language teaching. Learners benefited from exposure to narratives, dialogues, articles, essays, poems, and informational texts because different genres developed different reading strategies and language skills. Variety prevented monotony in the classroom and prepared students for diverse real-life reading situations. In general, the results of the study confirmed that effective reading instruction depends on the combination of appropriate teaching strategies, learner motivation, technology integration, and careful text selection. The research demonstrated that reading development becomes more successful when teachers apply communicative and learner-centered approaches. Properly organized reading activities not only improve language proficiency but also encourage independent learning, critical thinking, and intercultural awareness in foreign language education.

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