

**TECHNIQUES AND METHODS OF TEACHING
READING IN ENGLISH**

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Abstract. *The article discusses issues related to teaching various types of reading. The role of reading in teaching foreign language texts is determined. The types of reading are considered in detail and the tasks are selected for each of them to practice the skills acquired by students within the English language course.*

Keywords: *teaching reading in English, reader strategies, skimming, scanning, extensive reading, intensive reading.*

**ПРИЕМЫ И МЕТОДЫ ОБУЧЕНИЯ ЧТЕНИЮ
НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ**

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Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются вопросы, связанные с обучением различным видам чтения. Определяется роль чтения в обучении иноязычным текстам. Подробно рассматриваются виды чтения и подбираются задания для каждого из них, позволяющие отработать навыки, приобретенные обучающимися в рамках курса английского языка.

Ключевые слова: обучение чтению на английском языке, стратегии чтения, скимминг, сканирование, экстенсивное чтение, интенсивное чтение.

In today's constantly developing world knowledge of foreign languages is a necessary need of an individual. In modern society it is English that is recognized as the basic language, since it is an international language.

In our opinion, reading is one of the most important aspects in a foreign language teaching process. The English language programs contain the following tasks for a teacher: to teach children to read texts, understand and comprehend their content. But unfortunately, teachers all over the world note a decrease in the level of students' interest in reading even their native language texts.

As practice shows, reading is not a means of obtaining information, and is perceived as a purely educational task. The purpose of the work is to study the problems of mastering the reading techniques of schoolchildren by considering the existing teaching methods and strategies.

Reading is one of the four language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking. This skill includes both perception and thinking-based activities. When reading a person understands some features of a text or a message. To understand what a sentence is about, it's important to recognize the letters that make up the words, the meaning of the words and grammar constructions. Word recognition refers to the process of perceiving how written symbols correspond to one's spoken language. Comprehension is the process of making sense of words, sentences and text parts.

For more explanation of the importance of reading, Harbert and Digaentani argued: “Reading is also important to everyone who wants to be informed what is happening in a professional world, not to mention the word by reading regularly. It adds somebody’s professional knowledge and it actually increases the ability to communicate” [Harbert, 1984: 59].

The study of the problem of learning to read at different stages of a child's development has always been important for a great number of scientists, linguists, methodologists, etc. (N.D. Galskova, N.I. Gez, G.V. Rogova, I.L. Bim and others).

It’s worth noting, V. Meshcheryakova has developed her own methodology for teaching young children to read English texts. It is called “flower reading” and teaches to read and understand at once what children already know well and actively use in speech. 26 English letters, each of which has up to 12 reading options, have been converted into color letters, each of which has only 1 reading option [Meshcherykova, 2013: 80].

One more methodologist, O. Soboleva, suggests teaching children at the initial stage using the "Colorifmika" technique. It represents a text with a color study of rhymed endings. The technique allows starting drawing quickly and artistically [Soboleva, 2006: 15].

And another method of teaching reading at the initial stage is the method of "whole words" by Glen Doman. The main idea is to teach the child to memorize the whole words without adding syllables [Doman, 2005: 120].

The problem of learning to read is relevant in our time. Linguists for many years have not come to a consensus in the methodology of teaching reading. That is why there are many different approaches, techniques and methods of teaching.

When isolating the most effective teaching strategies to use with a group of students, the English language teacher should consider the following reading strategies:

1. Skimming;

2. Scanning;
3. Extensive reading;
4. Intensive reading.

Skimming (reading for general comprehension or reading for gist) allows quickly finding the necessary information in the text. The reader may not read the text, but simply look it through. In this way the purpose of such reading is to understand the general meaning and find an answer to the question of interest. The reader does not pronounce every word of the text, rather focusing attention on the subject matter, an overall view of the text, and preparing to do such activities as:

1. Summarize the given text;
2. Extract the central idea of the text;
3. Give a suitable title to the given passage;
4. Give main points of the text;
5. Rewrite the subject matter in your own words.

Scanning or reading for specific information is a skill that allows not reading the entire text, but searching for the necessary information. The purpose of this type of reading is to collect certain information from the text. For example:

1. Look up a word in the dictionary for meanings;
2. Extract the list of works from the biographical sketch of a writer;
3. Fill in the blanks;
4. Mark True or False;
5. Short answer/question.

Extensive reading is reading for fun. Students read the entire text, but they can read whatever they want. Day and Bamford suggest that the motto of extensive reading can be “reading gain without pain”. In this mode people read art or scientific literature, without being distracted by new and unfamiliar words, if their meaning can be approximately understood from the context.

Intensive reading is used for careful reading of a short text, most often educational. If students need to study the details or accurately understand the content of the text, then intensive reading is ideal. This type of reading is aimed to read academic texts, as it allows storing information in memory for a long time.

Teaching reading sub-skills depend on the age and the first language of the students. Sometimes there may be students who haven't yet learned to read in their own language but are learning English. It is important for them to learn to connect letters in order to create words and they should also learn how written words relate to spoken words in their native language as well as in English. The texts that teachers choose for students to study should not be too difficult because a student can lose the interest. If the text language is too complicated or is about a topic that the students have no clue about, it will be too difficult for them. English texts should be enjoyable enough for the students because this helps them to be more motivated and inspired.

It's important to take a closer look at the methods of teaching reading on the example of the secondary school (grades 3-4).

Pre-reading

It is recommended that teachers "...use the illustration at the beginning of most units as a means of preparing students to communicate on the topic. These illustrations can be used to generate interest in the topic and present any new vocabulary or required structures through prediction, discussion and vocabulary development activities" [Method, 2002: 48].

To teach children in skimming a teacher can suggest the following text and exercises:

Read the text and determine what it is about.

A. My mother is a teacher. My father is a doctor. I've got a younger brother. He is five. In summer we go to my Granny's village.

B. I've got a cat, Timmy. Timmy is white with grey spots and a long tail. I enjoy playing with Timmy.

Начальная школа

C. Yesterday we went to the Zoo and I saw a kangaroo there. Its front legs are short and its back legs are long. Kangaroos can run very quickly.

D. I like summer. I like swimming and playing volleyball. I don't like winter because it's cold in winter.

E. It's nice today. It's warm but not hot. The sun is shining and the sky is blue. Yesterday it was raining but today there are no clouds in the sky.

The text about...

1. a wild animal;
2. the weather;
3. a family;
4. seasons;
5. a pet.

When skimming the readers only have to take important information and the main idea.

To teach the scanning type of reading a teacher can suggest the following text and exercises:

Where I live

My name is Sarah. I live with my mother and father in a flat. The flat is on the fifth floor of a tall building. It has 14 floors and a car park in the basement. My father parks his car there.

Our flat is not in the centre of the city. It is 3 kilometres from the centre. My father works in the city so he goes to work by train every day. He doesn't drive his car. He uses his car only at weekends. Then he takes us into the country or to the beach.

Our flat has three bedrooms. There is a bedroom for my mother and father, one for me and one for my brother. There is a sitting room, a kitchen, a bathroom and toilet. We do not have a garden, but there is a small balcony. There are some plants on the balcony. In summer we often sit on the balcony because it gets very hot inside the flat. Our flat is small, but we are very happy in it.

Answer these questions in sentences.

- 1) Who does Sarah live with? She lives with her mother, father and brother.
- 2) Where does Sarah`s father work?
- 3) When does Sarah`s father use his car?
- 4) How many rooms are there in Sarah`s flat?
- 5) Are there plants in Sarah`s flat? If so, where?

Scanning is unlike skimming because the readers don't focus on general information of the text but on details. Using this technique the readers quickly look for specific information such as dates, years, names, places, among others [Yusuf et al., 2007: 46].

Extensive reading involves students in reading foreign language fiction. A teacher can choose authentic or adapted literature corresponding to the level of language proficiency of schoolchildren.

Discover yourself and share the information with your classmates (make a presentation or a short report on one of these topics).

1. Aladdin (simplified version);
2. Goldilocks and the Three Bears (English version of the fairy tale about Masha and the three bears);
3. Red Tractor;
4. Easy-to-Read Stories;
5. Three Little Pigs.

Intensive reading involves a complete analysis of the text in order to obtain as much information as possible. The ideal exercise for training intensive reading is reading and translating short stories. For example:

A Good Lesson

Once a rich Englishwoman called Mrs Johnson decided to have a birthday party. She invited a lot of guests and a singer. The singer was poor, but he had a very good voice. The singer got to Mrs Johnson's house at exactly six o'clock as he had been asked to do, but when he went in, he saw through a door that the din-

ing-room was already full of guests, who were sitting round a big table in the middle of the room. The guests were eating, joking, laughing, and talking loudly. Mrs Johnson came out to him, and he thought she was going to ask him to join them, when she said, «We're glad, sir, that you have come. You will be singing after dinner, I'll call you as soon as we're ready to listen to you. Now will you go into the kitchen and have dinner, too, please»?

The singer was very angry, but said nothing. At first, he wanted to leave Mrs Johnson's house at once, but then he changed his mind and decided to stay and teach her and her rich guests a good lesson. When the singer went into the kitchen, the servants were having dinner, too. He joined them. After dinner, the singer thanked everybody and said, «Well, now I'm going to sing to you, my good friends». And he sang them some beautiful songs.

Soon Mrs Johnson called the singer.

– «Well, sir, we're ready».

– «Ready»? asked the singer. «What are you ready for»?

– «To listen to you», said Mrs Johnson in an angry voice.

– «Listen to me? But I have already sung, and I'm afraid I shan't be able to sing any more tonight».

– «Where did you sing»?

– «In the kitchen. I always sing for those I have dinner with».

Giving learners lots of opportunities for extensive reading, in/or out of class, helps them to develop their fluency in reading. We need to choose the right texts for our learners. Texts should be interesting for learners in order to motivate them. Texts should be at the right level of difficulty. A text may be difficult because it contains complex language and because it is about a topic that learners don't know much about» [Spratt 2005: 23].

The development of reading skills plays a huge role in teaching English. By mastering all types of reading, schoolchildren get the opportunity to replenish their

vocabulary, better assimilate grammatical constructions and train their spelling with the help of visual memorization.

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