

TEACHING READING AND MODERN TECHNOLOGIES

There is no doubt that modern education should meet modern requirements. The main demand is to possess a proper level of foreign language knowledge that would allow people to decide their own lives and social problems freely.

The purpose of foreign languages study comprises communicative competence, which includes linguistic and socio-cultural competence. It is important to understand that the subject includes the following:

- a foreign language is a means of communication in typical situations;
- when learning a foreign language, students acquire knowledge of objects already known to them;
- a foreign language is the formation of his ideas about the culture of other countries, not getting new information about the environment.

The above-mentioned features indicate not only the specificity, but also the benefits of learning a foreign language as the actual content and purpose of language teaching are providing personal approach to learning activities. The teacher can create an environment in which students will really communicate rather than perform a series of exercises.

The purpose, content, structure, focus, methods and tools in the classroom should reflect the communicative orientation of each training and employment system as a whole. To achieve these objectives it is necessary to observe the following principles.

1. In developing a lesson a teacher should be aware that this is an element of the system, sequential step to achieve the main goal. An integrated approach to the planning of the structure is very important.

2. The initial stage of designing training is required to achieve diagnostic and operational objectives.

3. A student should be productive. New material input needs to practice speech student solving urgent problems, establish links between known and new developments language. Any type of student should have a personal sense of fulfillment.

4. A lesson should be based on solving real, not imaginary problems and issues.

5. Communicative focus of training should be reflected in the diversity of organizational forms of educational process. They help a teacher create situations of communication that are close to real life.

6. A teacher is an equal participant in the dialogue with the student. The task of the teacher is not to be a bystander and participate directly in the process of communication, most accurately reproduce the real situation.

Technology is changing rapidly and creating a number of opportunities for teachers.

Multimedia sources provide better opportunities and access to increasing online courses and content. Social networking represents tools for learning and professional education, too.

Unfortunately, educational establishments rarely include technological innovations because it requires upgrading of technological infrastructure and creating new applications. The quality of educational technology depends on a number of issues, rather than just simple access to the web. It is important to upgrade technological infrastructure.

It should be noted, that educational demands have changed.

Online education takes various forms. Students nowadays have a number of possibilities when they want to try e-learning. Among them there are online schools; online learning courses; and plenty of other digital material. In addition to courses that suggest an online teacher, some scholars say that students have had the most success with so-called hybrid or blended education. That means that students use digital content with a face-to-face instructor, and an online instructor and an in-class teacher may work together to help students.

As it was mentioned above, there exist a lot of possibilities of e-learning, they cover lots of issues and presenting text on a screen is among them. It is stated that reading is a complex cognitive and physical skill that demands thorough analysis if technology is trying to support rather than hinder the reader. The necessity of individual study of texts paying attention to a content and purpose of reading, as well as the type of information they contain is important.

Importance of reading educational texts is considered one of the most necessary abilities that students need to acquire. It should be stated that mostly reading tasks in academic courses tend to focus on text processing, on the reader's understanding of the language of the content. To help learners cope with a text it is important to involve reading skills and strategies that are practiced on the basis of some simple texts with general meaning and then practiced on authentic reading specialized material.

In the current Internet age, however, with its influence of information needed for learning goals, students are exposed not only to ordinary text presentation but also to perception and representation of electronic texts. The kind of skills readers require in order to cope with academic reading of both ordinary and electronic texts includes basic academic reading skills, abilities and strategies as well as critical literacy skills. Critical literacy is defined as the ability to clarify purpose, make use of relevant background knowledge, focus on major content, critically evaluate content, draw and test inferences and monitor comprehension [8]. Critical literacy also includes reflective thinking and metacognition [3].

A lot of scientists have encouraged the use of a computer software for writing and reading instruction [2, 6, 4, 5, 10], as well as for achieving higher level literacy skills. It was said that the network computer environment creates a climate whereby learners gain autonomy and thus become empowered for reading beyond the language learning classroom [9]. It was suggested that authentic learning situations replicated through the medium of networked computers contribute to the acquisition and implementation of critical reading skills.

As it was earlier stated, "Computer applications to support the storage, retrieval and presentation of information are now emerging which offer the ability to interact with published material in previously impossible ways. Hypertext is probably the most obvious and discussed example but document delivery systems that provide readers with access to remotely stored material are also worth noting. Such facilities are likely to be increasingly offered to end-users in libraries, schools and universities as more cost effective means of storing and presenting information are sought." [1, 4]

Naturally, researchers pay great attention to differences between reading from paper and reading from a screen. Some scientists suggested a performance deficit in terms of speed and accuracy for screen reading [7] though recent research suggests that under

optimal conditions (i.e. improved image quality) these can be overcome. Therefore it appears that there is no inherent technological restriction to presenting text on screen.

Psychologists have long recognized the complex nature and variety of skills involved in text perception. On the physical side, the rather simple operation of understanding a text supplies a reader with information on content, style, and other issues. Manipulatory skills, such as jumping back and forth to various parts of the text make acquiring easier. Moreover, these physical skills are universal across most reading situations.

The physical and psychological aspects of reading are inter-related and depend on each other. "Without the ability to manipulate texts physically many of the reader's cognitive demands would be unfulfilled. This may seem a plain point but in the design of electronic systems to facilitate reading it is important to identify and support both kinds of needs. Presenting black text on a white background, on a high resolution screen, may satisfy some human factors needs but will lead to user rejection if suitable manipulatory facilities are not available, or only partial use if optimal text structures are not considered." [1]

The networked computer environment gives the reader the possibility of using authenticity in academic or professional reading. It provides a learner with relevant virtual situations providing a higher level of motivation and enabling the students to make transition from the learned reading skills to authentic reading skills easier and faster.

Studying in a networked computer environment, readers at a lower level of proficiency can understand their reading and learning problems, study the text in order to highlight the problematic sections and thus deal with close and global reading skills better. Students can proceed at their own speed, monitor their own progress and critically estimate their reading.

Presenting text in a digital form is very complex and challenging. Existing formats for paper texts are not easy and simple to transfer to screens. Selecting one from the diversity of texts currently available to readers is not an easy task. There are no simple solutions in considering each text in terms of how it can be read, reader's access and the type of information it contains. In libraries the majority of texts are academic journals and books. Currently, technology best supports storage and retrieval of these texts rather than presentation of new ones. Thanks to these innovations quick access to remotely stored texts is a benefit to learners. Screen presentation of a text will be an important issue so that the teacher can perform a lot of other activities involved. Understanding the readers' background, education and their task we can exploit the technological developments and get the best results.

Literature

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