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Reading is a receptive, reactive type of speech activity aimed at extracting information from a written, fixed text. It is a motivated, mediated form of speech activity that occurs internally (or both internally and externally) based on processes of visual perception, voluntary short-term memory, and information recoding. The subject of reading is the thought encoded in the text, which is to be recognized through visual perception. The product is an inference, an understanding of the semantic content.

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[1]

Optimal conditions for developing reading skills in foreign language education are achieved by organizing the learning process based on the theory of speech activity.

The theory of speech activity is an approach in foreign language teaching that views speech as an active, purposeful, and motivated activity. It examines functions, motives, connections with thinking, processes of speech production, speech mechanisms, types of speech, the relationship between language and speech, and processes of mastering speech in native and foreign languages. This theory is grounded in psychological research from the school of L.S. Vygotsky, A.N. Leontiev, A.R. Luria, and, in the linguistic aspect, on the works of L.V. Shcherba [2].

As an activity, reading is characterized by motivation, purposefulness, and its connection with other types of speech activity. Reading is motivated as it fulfills a complex interaction of needs, realizing the communicative orientation in personal development. Like any other activity, reading is always purposeful: it aims at extracting information contained in the written speech work—the text. In this context, information refers to the content of the text. The purpose of reading can also be entertainment or an interest in the process itself; however, in this work, we consider exclusively academic reading. Since reading is directed at obtaining information, it involves the perception of an already prepared text; for this reason, it is classified as a receptive type of speech activity.

Reading is closely connected with other types of speech activity (listening, speaking, writing), and is «related to all cognitive human activity and aimed at communication and value-orientational activity».

Like any human activity, reading has a three-phase structure, namely:

The motivational-impelling phase of this activity, i.e., the emergence of a need, desire, or interest in its implementation. It is activated by a specific communicative task that sets up the reading activity and focuses on extracting either the full, main, or specific information. This defines the intention and strategy of reading.

The analytical-synthetic phase of reading takes place either only internally (silent reading comprehension) or both internally and externally (reading aloud comprehension) and involves certain mental processes: from visual perception of graphic signs, known and partially unknown language material, and its recognition to awareness and semantic decision-making, i.e., understanding the meaning.

Control and self-control constitute the third phase of reading as a type of speech activity, ensuring the externalization of comprehension. This can be carried out through productive types of speech activity—speaking and writing—as well as nonverbally, for example, through signaling or actions.

According to the Vygotsky-Leontiev concept, the psychological structure of activity distinguishes two planes: the substantive (components of the objective content of the activity) and the procedural (elements of the activity process, actions implementing its psychophysiological functions), with the leading role always belonging to the former. [3]

The substantive aspect of any activity consists of its goal—the result towards which the activity is directed—the conditions under which it takes place, primarily the means of achieving the result, and the task—a goal correlated with the conditions. The goal of reading is comprehension, and the expected result determines both the amount of information extracted from the text and the nature of its processing. Depending on the goal, the reader may extract all information from the text or a greater/lesser portion of it, strive to remember the verbal formulation, or focus exclusively on the content of the read text. In other words, depending on the goal and the reading situation, the outcome for the same reader can vary: their comprehension varies in completeness, depth, and accuracy, even when using sources of the same nature.

The expected outcome also determines how a person reads: slowly or quickly, carefully considering each word or skimming, rereading certain sections or skipping entire parts of the text, etc., meaning it influences the course of the activity, the reading process. The procedural aspect of reading is thus supported by perceptual (related to perception), mnemonic (related to memory function), and cognitive processes.

S.K. Folomkina identified six principles for teaching reading in a foreign language:

Learning to read should be the training of speech activity, which involves the solution of communicative tasks (cognitive or practical), the focus of his attention primarily on understanding the readable. Learning to read should be built as a cognitive process. Learning to read should include, along with receptive activities and (re) productive student activities. Learning to understand the readable should rely on mastering the structure of the language (its structural and structural elements). Learning to read in a foreign language should be based on the experience of students in reading in their native language.

The functioning of reading as a speech activity requires automation of its implementation techniques, in other words, the development of reading speed [4].

The principles of teaching reading, highlighted by S.K. Folomkina, are relevant for the course «Home Reading» and are implemented by us when working with students of a language university. Representing speech activity, learning to read involves students solving many problems: communicative, cognitive, practical. Working on a foreign-language artistic text is always a cognitive process: in addition to expanding the lexical and grammatical stock, students continue to get acquainted with the traditions and customs of the country of the studied language, various forms of literary works and author's styles.

The system of exercises, developed by us on the basis of the methodology of working with artistic text in the course of home reading proposed in this dissertation study, ensures the reproductive and productive activity of students both in classroom classes and in independent work, contributing to a deeper understanding of the text read taking into account the drill and structural elements. The principle of reliance on the native language is also taken into account.

Folomkina, E.I. Passsova, N.D. Galskova, the following reading skills can be distinguished:

- perceptual - skills of correlating the visual image of a speech unit with its auditory-speech-moving image; the sum of perceptual skills amounts to a «reading technique»; 1) lexical - skills of correlating sound samples of words and
- phrases with their meanings; grammatical - skills of correlation of grammatical forms with their meanings. There is a close relationship between reading skills, and the lack of formation of any group of skills negatively affects the functioning of the reading ability [4].

E.I. Passov identifies the following reading skills that characterize a mature, experienced reader:

- the ability to highlight its individual elements in the text: the main idea, keywords, the most significant and significant facts for the development of the plot;
- ability to predict at the semantic level, generalize, synthesize information, highlight the main and secondary in the text;
- ability to relate separate parts of the text to each other, establish connections between facts, build them in a logical/chronological sequence, group facts according to any criterion;
- the ability to extract factual information from the text, to understand what is read at the level of meaning;
- ability to make own judgments based on the read text, to establish the idea and intention of the author, expressed implicitly in the text;
- ability to interpret the text [5].

S.K. Folomkina divides the basic reading skills into three groups.

The first group includes skills related to understanding language material. Reading skills of this group ensure the processing of information at the language level, as well as the accuracy of understanding the text, its decoding. The development of skills related to the understanding of language material is carried out on the material of words and sentences. Students must be able to: recognize words in the context of a sentence; relate the meaning of the word to the context; establish semantic connections at the level of words, sentences, paragraphs; Identify the primary and secondary in a sentence or paragraph predict at the language level; Determine the meaning of words based on language guesswork use a bilingual dictionary. [6]

The second group of reading skills includes skills related to understanding the content of the text. This group of skills provides complete understanding of the text, extraction of meaningful information and understanding of the text at the value level. The development of the skills of this group is implemented on the basis of a paragraph and a fragment of text, or a whole small text. Students should be able to: highlight the basic elements of the text being read; synthesize and summarize individual facts given in the text; combine parts of the text in meaning and relate parts of the text to each other; arrange facts and events of the text in a certain sequence and group them according to a certain criterion; identify and determine the nature of the links between facts, events and phenomena of the text being read.

The third group of reading skills includes skills related to comprehending the content of the text. The skills of this group provide semantic processing of factual information extracted from the text and understanding of the text at the level of meaning. The development of reading skills of this group is implemented on the material of the text. To successfully work with text at the meaning level, students must have the following skills: make a judgment and draw a conclusion based on the facts set forth in the text; establish the idea implicitly laid down in the text, the intention of the text; evaluate the facts set forth in the text and the content of the text as a whole; determine the nature of the implementation of the author's plan; interpret the text [7].

N.D. Galskova divides reading skills into basic and compensatory.

The main ones include such skills as:

- ability to understand the main content of the text: to identify and highlight the main text information, to distinguish between information of primary and secondary importance; establish a logical and chronological relationship between events and facts; anticipate a possible event in the development of the plot of the text; summarize the facts set forth in the text; draw conclusions based on the material read;
- the ability to extract complete information from the text: fully and accurately understand the details; highlight information that explains or clarifies something; establish the relationship of events; disclose causal relationships between events; Define the main idea of the text compare and contrast the information obtained from the text;

- ability to determine the necessary/interesting information: to determine the subject of the text in general terms; Define a genre of text identify information related to any issue; determine the importance of the information obtained from the text [8].

Compensatory skills include such skills as:

- language and contextual conjecture (conjecture about the meaning of unfamiliar words by context, consonance with the native language, word-forming elements);
- ability to identify words that are significant and not significant for understanding the plot and ignore words that do not have key positions in the text;
- use of supports available in the text: illustrations, explanations, footnotes, references, etc.;
- use of dictionaries and reference literature [9].

We believe that all these skills, both basic and compensatory, are relevant for home reading, and the formation to improve these skills deserves attention in foreign language classes.

Learning to read in a foreign language is focused on ensuring that by the end of the period of teaching a foreign language, the student can use the acquired skill both for professional purposes and in his daily activities.

In accordance with the requirements set forth in the "European Language Portfolio" for philologists, a future teacher of a foreign language must have formed skills in reading an artistic/journalistic text and be able to:

- quickly determine the topic, content and significance of messages, articles, reviews on a wide range of topics and conclude that more careful reading is needed; reading a book on a certain topic, highlight important semantic fragments in it in order to then read them more carefully, using a dictionary;
- reading an artistic text, determine the topic and course of argumentation, distinguish essential information from insignificant; understand the general content and many details of modern plays, novels, stories;
- view the text and identify the most important topics that are covered in it, as well as key thoughts and various points of view set forth in the text;
- to use the images, metaphors and interconnection of events contained in it to understand the artistic text; ^ to understand the feelings, emotions and attitude of the author to what is said in the literary text;
- by the relationship of characters and the course of events, determine in the artistic text the assessment and attitude of the author to a particular hero;
- to understand the texts allowing different interpretation, as well as to evaluate the reliability, veracity of events, facts and characters;
- interpret in an artistic narrative descriptions, comments, reasoning and observations, as well as the relationship of events and facts;
- predict the development of events in the text and suggest the development of the plot based on their life experience and knowledge of fiction;
- to understand and interpret various stylistic techniques in the artistic text [11].

One of the most important tasks of teaching a foreign language is the ability to read foreign fiction and journalistic literature in the original language.

The concept of "reading ability" involves the ability to vary different reading styles depending on the goal that the reader sets for himself. Mastering various techniques, skills and reading skills, an experienced reader combines them in different ways, using each time those that are most effective in a particular case.

It is home reading classes that are designed to form and develop all these skills and abilities.

The most important component of reading skills is the choice of a reading strategy that corresponds to the goal set by the reader.

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