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# Development of Reading Competence of Non-Philological University Students Through Vocational Texts (On the Example of the English Language)

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**Abstract:** This article is devoted to the methodical problem of teaching reading in English classes, and the description of the methodical problem of teaching reading in English classes is widely covered. It has been suggested that teaching the language based on English texts in English classes is a more effective method, but the development of reading competence in vocational English teaching has not been thoroughly studied. The article also presents the scientific research and expected results on the use of English texts in vocationally oriented English teaching.

**Keywords:** Language Learning, Reading, Types of Reading, Speech Activity, Text, Teaching to Read in English

## Introduction

Currently, in connection with the development of all spheres of society, there is a need for an in-depth analysis of the development path of our country. The situation on the world market has changed dramatically, and competition in the context of globalization is becoming increasingly intense (O'zbekiston Respublikasi Prezidentining PF-4947-son Farmoni, 2017).

The importance of reading in our lives in the modern era of globalization cannot be overestimated (Babayigit, 2020; Metsala, 2021; Wolf, 2019; Zhang, 2022). In the modern era of digital technology, a person receives a lot of information through reading; in addition, this type of speech activity forms the basis of intercultural communication and modern communication in general. It is worth noting that when learning a foreign language, reading is not only the goal, but also the means of learning (Nahatame, 2021; Ritonga, 2022). In general, the success of learning a foreign language directly depends on how well the student mastered reading techniques at the beginning of his studies. This is determined, firstly, by the interrelation of all types of speech activity, and secondly, by the specifics of reading as a type of speech activity (Medina, 2021; Scott, 2020; Towson, 2023).

In world practice, taking into account language experience and the conditions of professional education, it is becoming increasingly important to improve the quality and effectiveness of education. In particular, the content of teaching English in non-philological areas is ESP (English for Special Purposes), teaching some subjects in English in non-philological universities SLIL (Stand for Content and Language Integrated Learning), EMI (English as a Medium of Instruction), STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math), the development of online education and the introduction of educational forms such as DPAP (Digital Practices and Assessment Pedagogy) are of particular importance and explain the need to study these forms, foreign experience and conduct joint research.

The development of speech skills when studying a foreign language (reading, writing, speaking, listening comprehension) of students of higher educational institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan, forms the ability to freely communicate in this language within the framework of their educational field and a comprehensive education system aimed at the development and formation of relevant skills. Tasks such as "the need to train modern personnel who speak several foreign languages, conduct scientific work in foreign languages, and improve language teaching methods" have been identified.

Based on the growing need for multilingual specialists in a market economy, organizing methodological work, studying foreign experience and improving the methods of teaching English in higher educational institutions in economic areas, including the development of students' oral and written speech, is becoming an increasingly important element of personality formation.

The role of reading in English in the education of the individual is incomparable; it is speech activity and a type of action on the path to receiving spiritual and educational food. Learning to read, which is considered a type of receptive speech activity, has an educational goal.

Reading is the process of translating information from a graphic code into a completely different sound code, a type of speech activity aimed at perceiving written speech information expressed in literal symbols, understanding its content and mastering it.

The motive of reading is communication, and the goal is to obtain information. This status of reading in English encourages students to approach it as an independent type of speech activity, increasing its practical significance. The correct approach to reading as an independent type of speech activity also helps to determine its communicative function. But among English language teachers there is still a tendency to perceive the concept of practical language acquisition as the study of oral speech, that is, the development of communicative competence, and not as language acquisition for practical purposes. This incorrect methodological approach leads to a reduction in practice of the role of reading in English as a tool for the formation of oral speech.

Among the researchers, fundamental scientific research in the field of language pedagogy in teaching reading was carried out by M. West, I.M. Berman, V.A. Buxbinder, Z.I. Klichnikova, S.K. Folomkina, Ya.Ya. Jalolov, N.V. Barishnikova and M.L. Weisburd. These studies examined in detail such methodological issues as the features of teaching the type of speech activity of reading in English, the role and importance of teaching reading in English in the acquisition of information, and also expressed valuable opinions on them (Saydaliyev, 2000).

The methods of teaching English in current programs show that reading is taught as both a goal and a means. In order to correctly interpret teaching reading as a goal and a means, it is necessary to pay attention to some stages in organizing the methodology of teaching reading.

Teaching in English in the non-philological direction of universities serves as a tool for the formation of all types of reading. At the initial stage, the main attention is paid to reading aloud, and gradually they become accustomed to reading silently. It makes methodological sense to devote more time and effort to internal study. Reading aloud is mainly useful for long-term retention of learned language units in memory. At the first stages of learning English, types of reading aloud and silently are taught.

Teaching reading to students of non-philological specialties is organized as a process of language learning; through the text, the student tries to assimilate and obtain new and useful information from it. We all know that obtaining information is the driving force of cognitive activity. The result of reading activity is a tool leading to knowledge. Of course, in order to assimilate the information of the text read, the student must have reading skills in English. Reading skill is a three-stage activity consisting of the stages of seeing a speech unit, reading it and understanding its meaning. Mastery of all three levels indicates the formation of reading competence (Jalolov, 1996).

## Methodology

The approach to reading as an independent type of speech activity helps to determine its practical communicative function. The limited academic time allocated for studying a

foreign language in non-philological areas of higher education institutions, the uniqueness of educational programs, the lack of a natural language environment and the age characteristics of students can create obstacles to fully reading texts in English. Therefore, in practice it is necessary to correctly define goals and objectives in this area. This increases the practical significance of studying in English. Learning a language for practical purposes largely depends on the future goal of the English language learner, the direction of the educational institution and his ability to obtain information in practical activities. Theory and practice have proven that reading for the purpose of obtaining information is, firstly, a practical goal, and secondly, an educational means.

Familiar reading (fluently reading) involves obtaining useful and interesting information from an English text and understanding its general content. When reading an English text for reference, a superficial perception of the content usually occurs, as well as familiarization with the general meaning. At the same time, reading occurs quickly and superficially, and up to 75% of the information should be understandable. For this type of reading, it is recommended to choose large texts written in fluent language. Tasks to control introductory reading may include the following: (1) tell the main content of the text (Retell the main content of the text); (2) find the keywords of the text (Find keyword and expressions of the text); (3) list the facts that served as the basis for the author's conclusions (Name the main facts); (4) determine which of the events reflected in the text are primary and which are secondary (Find the main facts of the text), etc.

Close reading means the study and analysis of text, including the expressive means of language. Academic reading is a type of reading that involves reading the content of the text, studying all the details of the content of the text, and studying the information/data thoroughly. This type of reading requires full understanding of the information received and subsequent reconstruction.

Understanding is taken to a higher level. You can reread difficult parts of the text that the student did not understand. Training is carried out first in the classroom and then at home. Translation is used as one of the methods for checking understanding. Usually, complex parts of the text are translated. It is recommended that the text size for this reading should not be too large. The information contained in the text is carefully studied. When studying, the student must be able to express his attitude to the content of the text, think critically, interpret, and comparatively analyze information.

Skimming reading is a type of reading aimed at creating a general idea of the content of the text. This type of reading was defined by the famous methodologist M. West as "understanding the cream of the content of the text," "observant reading in search of a specific topic." In this type of reading, the reader needs to read the text completely and quickly, starting with more headings and subheadings. Observational reading requires knowledge of language material, as well as a search for information such as a certain number or a quote from the text. Observational reading is a type of reading based on finding the answer to a question in the text, understanding that the information obtained during reading must be used in the future (Abdujabbarova, 2007). The above types of

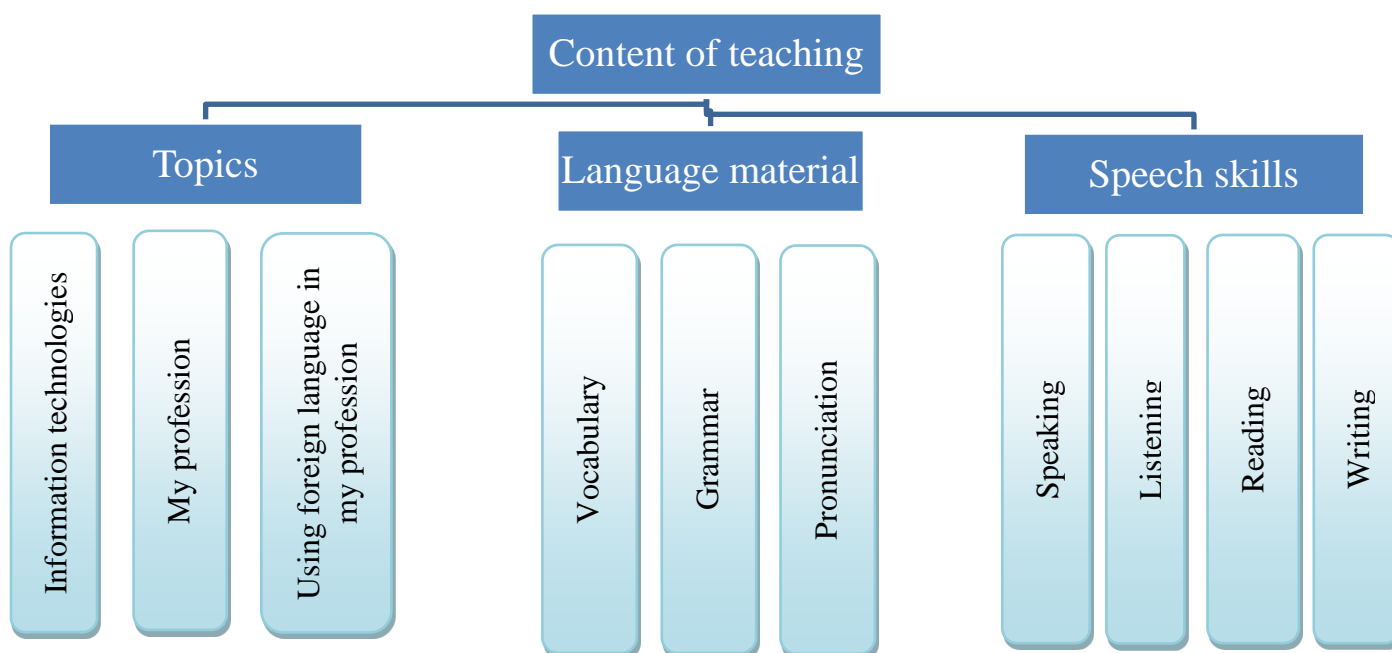
familiarizations, study and introductory reading are widely used to obtain useful information about regional studies in the upper strata of society when teaching English.

Learning English for practical purposes allows not only to use it in future professional activities, but also to develop the student's general culture and thinking. To this end, increasing the effectiveness of English classes requires regularly informing students about the geography, history, economics and political system, as well as the literature of the countries where the language is being studied. The above objectives also encourage us to look at reading in English as the main means of obtaining information.

## Result and Discussion

Typically, students of non-philological specialties at universities feel the need to read more interesting and educational texts related to their profession and field of activity. However, reading such texts is much more difficult than reading ordinary conversational or literary texts. The reason for this is the increased use of official symbols and industry terms in professional texts. When a student reads such texts, he can determine the meaning of an unknown word based on the context, and he can answer tasks given in the text based on the base words.

In the methodology of teaching English, the following requirements are imposed on the content of the text intended for reading: (1) attention is paid to the educational value of the text. One of the goals of teaching English is education, instilling public morality, that is, texts are selected aimed at moral education; (2) texts are selected that serve to increase students' life knowledge, that is, to enrich their worldview. This is one of the important conditions for the development of a student's cognitive activity. Reading a text that is rich in information creates an attraction for the reader. Since the student is in a hurry to learn, if his inclination to study is stimulated, his interest in the subject will increase; (3) it is required that the text recommended for reading objectively reflects scientific events; (4) the highlighted text must relate to the student's field of activity (see figure). Meeting the student's needs is an important measure to encourage speaking activity in English. Therefore, the content of the text must correspond to the spiritual level of the student and meet his cognitive and emotional needs (Jalolov, 2012).



**Picture 1.** Components of the Concept of “Educational Content” in Teaching English

Thus, in addition to the practical purpose, training also plays a big role in the realization of professional, educational and developmental goals. Students' observation skills increase and their ability to analyze/synthesize language material and text content improves. Reading aloud is an important step in learning pronunciation and listening comprehension. In addition, it is considered as a tool for developing reading and speaking skills. Questions and answers on the content of texts read, storytelling, and conversations are widely used. Students learn to speak through reading, acquiring reading skills in English in non-philological areas of education of higher educational institutions, firstly, they prepare students for oral communication in this language, and secondly, they improve their acquisition of language competence, which serves the general level of their development and learning a foreign language.

## Conclusion

To summarize, we can highlight the features of teaching reading in non-philological educational areas of universities, which we identify in this study:

1. For non-philological educational areas of higher educational institutions, texts related to the socio-economic, artistic, political, cultural, educational and professional spheres are selected as educational material.
2. The role and place of studying a foreign language in non-philological educational areas of higher educational institutions are accompanied by more complex program requirements than those given in textbooks on teaching a foreign language for universities, especially in the context of working with text (reading, understanding, analysis).



3. Studying in English allows students to communicate in the target language, receive information in certain areas, and improves their overall level.
4. Students are regularly informed in English about the field they are studying and the profession they want to acquire in the future.
5. The choice of subjects for reading depends on the general level of students and stages of learning; learning to read in English is interpreted as a practical goal and an educational tool.

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