Methods for Developing Reading Competence of Secondary School Pupils in English Lessons

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Abstract: Reading competence is crucial for academic achievement. Reading competence is linked to success at school and over the life. It is also regarded as one of the most challenging areas, thus any educational institution has to give it greater focus to develop pupils' reading competence. This article presents the effective reading approaches in order to develop secondary school pupils' reading competence in English lessons.

Keywords: Reading, Reading Skills, Reading Competence, Reading Approaches, Reading Techniques, English Lessons

Introduction

It is known that reading is regarded as the most important collaborative ability in both education and life. Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson (1985) assert that reading is an essential life skill that guarantees a child's success in school and even in life. At schools, pupils must acquire a variety of reading skills(Hasan, 2022; Kamaruddin, 2023; Rivas, 2023). Pupils' personal accomplishments and professional achievements will undoubtedly be lost if they are not used to reading (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, and Wilkinson, 1985). Reading is therefore becoming particularly important topic in teaching foreign languages. However, the current situation at secondary schools is characterised by a lack of interest for reading among children and their parents, particularly reading fiction, and a poor degree of reader perception. Because, childrens' desires to read and free time were stolen by the TV and computer(Chambers, 2019). A lot of parents and instructors are disappointed that children don't enjoy reading. Teachers take the reading proficiency of their pupils very seriously. However, they cannot force all pupils to learn and to read. A question arises, how can we encourage children to read so they acquire a lifelong passion for reading? This issue is especially crucial at secondary schools. According to the new state educational standards, the goal of school lessons is to develop a proficient reader who has a developed spiritual

desire for books as a way to learn about the world and about oneself. In order to accomplish this goal, the following tasks must be resolved by teachers at schools:

- to organise extracurricular activities to foster a proactive, develop reading habits independently;
- to organise literary reading lessons, literary games, creative contests, and theatricalised classes;
- to encourage pupils' creativity as a means of developing reading competence.

The foundations of secondary school pupils' reading competence were examined in various research conducted by foreign and domestic scholars. The approaches enable us to view the object of study as an integrated system, accounting for the distinctive qualities of reading and age-related attributes of pupils, with the goal of determining the individual position of school pupils in reading activities.

Methodology

For several decades, the concept of "reading competence" has been studied in methodology, and it contains a collection of knowledge, skills, and abilities that allow the learner to work on learning texts. The following definition of the notion of reading competence was developed based on a review of scientific literature aimed at investigating the structural and substantive relationship between the words "reading literacy", "reading activity", "reading ability", and "competence". Reading competence is a combination of knowledge and abilities that enable a person to choose, comprehend, and organise information offered in printed (written) form, and then successfully use it for both personal and public purposes (Sultana, 2014).

Richard & Schmidt (2002) defines reading in two ways; first, reading is perceiving a written text in order to understand its contents. This can be done silently (silent reading). The understanding that results is called reading comprehension. Second, reading is saying a written text aloud (oral reading). This can be done with or without understanding of the contents.

When taken as a whole, the elements of reading competence reflect both the learning experience and text-working skills. The pupils log the activity approaches used in specific real-world scenarios to address daily issues. Vital experiences in reading can be seen in three ways: as a drive to read (motivational component); as a cognitive component arising from the experience of reading and the reader's perspective; and as an activity component arising from the skills of conscious reading for the purpose of utilising the information for future use.

Famous Russian scholars Belkin and Verbitskaya (2001) created the theoretical foundations for vitagenic training. Vitagenic training is defined as training that is based on an individual's life experience, intellectual and psychological capacity, and educational goals. Based on vitagenic training technology approaches, we developed methodological guidelines for improving all components of reading competence in English lessons so that pupils develop their reading competence interactively.

We know that fairy tales in English assist to extend perspectives, teach readers how to perceive and analyse material, and assess character behaviour. Well-known fairy tales are

ideal to develop reading competence since school pupils are already familiar with the narrative while learning a variety of new vocabulary and phrases. Therefore, we chose the fairy tale "Little Red Riding Hood".

The goal of the pre-text stage of working with the text of the fairy tale is to actualize personal experience, predict the content of the text based on the pupils' knowledge, their life experience, titles, pictures, etc(Dhuliawala, 2016; Jurado, 2019; Kerremans, 2018; Marello, 2020; McCrae, 2017). For example, pupils are asked to determine from the title what the text is about: "The text is called "Little Red Riding Hood ". Look at the title and suppose what the text is about". Instead of a title, pupils can be shown an image and asked to express their own ideas about the content of the text: "Look at the picture and suppose what the text is about." The technique is especially effective and the pupils' creative potential is also actualized. Therefore, pupils can be asked to read the key words from the fairy tale written by the teacher and guess its plot: "Read the words, think about the story and suppose what the story is about." Having a personal attitude to reading a fairy tale and actively expressing own versions of events or themes of the text based on their life experience contribute to the development of the motivational component of reading competence(Cavaghan, 2017; Martinez-Roig, 2022; Nissan, 2014; Omar, 2020; Tamsah, 2020). The text stage involves reading the text in order to solve a specific communicative task. The goal of the post-text stage of working with the text is to use its content to develop pupils' skills in expressing their thoughts. At this stage, pupils can discuss the behavior of the fairy tale characters and give them their own assessment. The task of the pupils is to continue the incomplete sentences, giving an assessment of the behavior of the main character in the fairy tale based on their own experiences: "Read the sentences and finish them. Little Red Riding Hood was going in the forest along. Suddenly ...".

This technique contributes to the development of the activity component of reading competence through analytical and evaluative activities. Thus, the use of this teaching technology will develop all components of school pupils' reading competence(Arndt-Lappe, 2014; Elisa, 2019; Erarslan, 2019; Qiu, 2022; Schlieckmann, 2024).

Result and Discussion

Currently in reading classes, developing critical thinking skills is also promoted as critical thinking helping pupils think differently, use prior knowledge, question facts, identify issues, provide solutions, connect with the text and the world, and justify arguments with examples(Shcherbakova, 2021; Shei, 2014; Shield, 2014). When teaching different types of reading, teachers must focus on various techniques to comprehend and summarise the text, isolate key words and moments (description), write down and present the content of the text in graphic form, use the recorded notes as verbal support for:

In order to support working with texts that involve a graphic representation of information based on the texts pupils read during English lessons, the technique **"thin versus thick questions"** is suggested. Pupils independently compose "thin" questions on the content of the text, i.e. closed-type questions that require short answers (who, where, when) and "thick" questions, i.e. open-type questions that require detailed, reasoned

answers. Working in pairs, they answer the questions of their mates. See an example of this technique below:

The story Last Leaf by O.Henry

Thin questions	Thick questions
What is the story's setting? (Where is the story happened?)	What do you think what is the massage of last leaf?
Who are Johnsy and Sue?	What will happen when the last leaf falls?
How did Johnsy and Sue meet?	Why did the doctor visit Sue's and Johnsy's place?
What does the doctor say about her illness?	How Sue helped Johnsy?
Who is Mr Behrman?	What saved Johnsy's life?
What is Mr Behrman's dream?	How does Mr Behrman's painting influence Johnsy's life?
What happens to Old Behrman at the end of the stody?	What is ironic about the masterpiece?

This technique aims to promote realistic language usage while also fostering critical thinking in English lessons. Of course, it can be challenging for pupils and takes practice. Thinking critically becomes considerably more difficult when done in a foreign language. However, teachers are encouraged to select reading based tasks focusing on critical thinking abilities while simultaneously fostering language use and reading competence.

Discussions.
Another technique K-W-L strategy KWL which stands for Know-What-Learned.

What I know	What I want to know	What I leaned

KWL involves three major cognitive steps: assessing students' background knowledge about the topic, and evaluating what they learned about the topic. This can be used in reading classes in various ways:

- Ask students to talk in pairs about what they already know about the topic of the text. This information should be freely volunteered and written in column 1 of the table.
- Ask students to categorize the information they have voluntered. This can be done through various grouping strategies, such as, semantic webbing or word map.
- Ask students to make predictions about the information the text will contain. These predection should be based on students' background kowledge and on the categories of information genered in pairs.
- Have students generate their own questations about the text this can be discussed and recorded in the "W"- what we want to find out section.
- Have students read the text and record any answers to their question.
- Upon completion of the task, provide students with an opportunity to discuss and record the information learned and how that data relates to their prior knowledge (Pranata, 2019).

Conclusion

To conclude, the techniques presented above make English reading classes more interactive, school pupils learn to find the most important points from the texts, formulate their thoughts briefly and clearly, actively reconstruct sentences from the sample text, build conclusions and logical chains of evidence of their point of view, conduct a discussion, which ensures the formation of reading competence, and the development of critical thinking and creative abilities. Modern methods and techniques for teaching meaningful reading significantly increase the effectiveness of the process of teaching foreign languages.

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