

## **STUDENTS' ENGLISH-LANGUAGE COMPETENCE IN READING FORMATION BY MEANS OF JOURNALISTIC TEXTS**

*The article analyzes the theoretical prerequisites for students' of higher pedagogical educational institutions English-language competence in reading formation, highlighting the goals of its formation and the difficulties that arise during training. It has been found that reading instruction is subject to practical, educational, developmental, and upbringing goals. An analysis of the difficulties that arise in the process of teaching reading has allowed us to identify the objective and subjective factors that cause them.*

*The practical significance of journalistic texts used for teaching students to read in English has been clarified, as the information contained in such texts has a high aesthetic, educational and developmental potential for the formation of English reading competence. The author defined the requirements for journalistic texts (authenticity; representation of various types and genres of texts; themes; novelty and relevance of information; compliance with the level of reading skills, age interests, and needs of students) and sources of their selection (various Internet resources). The stages of learning to read journalistic texts at higher educational institutions are analyzed.*

*The study concluded that students' English-language competence in reading formation is an essential component of student's foreign language communicative competence formation while studying in higher pedagogical educational institutions.*

**Keywords:** *reading; English communicative competence; journalistic texts; stages of teaching to read.*

**Research justification.** One of the most essential types of students' speech activities is reading, as it is not only a communicative skill but also an effective means of communication in the modern world, and the most common way of communicating in English. According to the current curriculum and the State Standard on Foreign Languages requirements, school leavers must master reading at B2 level, namely reading with a high degree of independence, adapting reading style and speed to different types of texts and goals, selectively using relevant reference materials (Navchalni prohramy z inozemnykh mov, 2017). However, not all pupils are able to master

reading at that level. Thus, competence in reading formation should be continued at higher pedagogical educational institutions. In addition, reading plays an exceptional role in the modern educational process, as it opens access to the key sources of information, expands the student's worldview, and affects the cognitive processes development especially critical thinking. That is why students' English-language competence in reading formation is essential, because insufficiently developed reading skills negatively affect the speech competencies development and, consequently, set the quality of English learning back.

**Research publications.** The issue of English-language competence in reading formation has been the subject of research by Ukrainian and foreign scholars over the past few decades. In particular, I. Zimniia, M. Liakhovytski, G. Westhoff studied the psychological characteristics of reading as a type of speech activity. Scientists and methodologists O. Bihich, H. Boretska, S. Nikolaieva, S. Berardo, W. Grabe, F. Grellet, and others analyzed the process of English-language competence in reading formation.

However, the issue cannot be considered as finally arisen, as some aspects of students' English-language competence in reading formation, in particular with the use of journalistic texts, need further research. It is due to the relevance, interest, and novelty of information of journalistic texts and their use because journalistic style quickly responds to the needs of society in the condition of rapid media development, focuses on essential issues, and reflects the richness of language trends. Therefore, there is a need to study the methodology of students' English-language competence in reading formation by means of journalistic texts.

**The purpose of the article** is to analyze students' English-language competence in reading formation at higher pedagogical educational institutions.

One of the objectives of teaching English in higher pedagogical educational institutions is the formation of students' skills to read and understand authentic texts of different genres and types with different levels of content comprehension. The result of the skill formation is English-language competence in reading. According to S. Nikolaieva, it is the ability to read authentic texts of different genres and types

with different levels of understanding of content in indirect communication (Nikolaieva, 2013).

Reading in English plays a significant role in modern Ukrainian higher pedagogical educational institutions, as it opens access to the main English-language authentic sources of information, expands students' worldview, and affects the development of their cognitive sphere. It is one of the most essential means of carrying out information activities by students and meeting their needs in gaining knowledge about the surrounding reality.

It should be noted that the process of English competence in reading formation, as well as the process of learning English in general, is regulated by clearly defined goals, namely the practical one, the educational one, the developmental one, and the formative one. At the same time, L. Butova emphasized the need for a comprehensive approach to determining the goals of foreign language learning and proved the need for the fair distribution of time on the cognitive, developmental, and educational aspects of learning (Butova, 2013).

According to H. Boretska, the practical goal of students' competence in reading formation plays a leading role and is to teach to read and understand texts on modern topics about the lives of young people, newspaper articles about events in the world and our country, to understand statements, wishes, and feelings in personal letters, be able to find the necessary information about the events in newspaper/magazine articles and brochures (Boretska, 2012).

Thus, based on the current curriculum, we can state that the practical goal of English-language competence in reading formation is to teach students to read with great independence, adapt reading style and speed to different types of texts and goals, selectively using relevant reference materials; read letters related to personal interests and easily identify the main idea; quickly skim the texts, finding the right details; determine the content and relevance of news, articles, and reports on various topics; understand articles and reports related to current issues; understand instructions; read for fun, adapting the style and pace of reading to different texts (Navchalni prohramy z inozemnykh mov, 2017).

The educational goal of students' competence in reading formation involves the acquisition of various pieces of knowledge and cognitive information from texts, as well as the formation of students' learning skills and reading strategies (Boretska, 2012). It is essential that the information obtained by students from the texts contributes to their socio-cultural competence formation, as it may contain facts about the culture of English-speaking countries (history, geography, economy, government, state symbols, literature, art, customs, and traditions) and introduces students to youth subculture of English-speaking countries (life ideals of English-speaking peers, their interests and problems, favorite activities and games, communication topics, preferences in music, clothing, literature, stereotypes of behavior in typical situations, building relationships with peers and adults).

The developmental goal is aimed at the development of students' cognitive processes, as they are psycho and physiological mechanisms that provide the act of reading. The development of visual perception, attention, different types of memory (visual, operational, long-term), thinking and various mental operations, imagination is an integral part of learning to read (Nikolaieva, 2013). N. Hryniaieva and I. Zuieva note that a great mental work, which is performed in order to penetrate the content of the text, develops language guessing and anticipation, independence in overcoming language and semantic difficulties, interest in mastering a foreign language (Hryniaieva and Zuieva, 2018).

The process of mastering a foreign language should be focused on students' personal development and the formation of their social qualities. The result of learning at each stage is the student's personality, who realizes himself as a bearer of national and cultural values and has a worldview. In this context, the formative goal of English-language competence in reading formation involves educating students in reading culture, as well as emotional and value attitudes to reading, as this is a responsible period of forming tastes and personal preferences.

According to T. Yeremenko and the team of authors, the process of English-language competence in reading formation can be complicated by a number of objective and subjective factors (Yeremenko, 2018).

Based on S. Nikolaieva's opinion and the team of scholars, the objective factors, the presence of which causes difficulties in the process of teaching to read, include the linguistic characteristics of the text and the conditions of its perception (Nikolaieva, 2013).

The linguistic characteristics of the text itself, which complicate the process of English-language competence in reading formation, cause lexical and grammatical difficulties, as well as difficulties caused by the spelling system of the English language.

The difficulties of the spelling system that have developed historically cause the incorrect reading of sounds, words, phrases, or sentences. Examples of such difficulties are the peculiarities of reading words with 'silent' letters (Wednesday, know, apple); transmission of the same sound in different letters and letter combinations (car, kitten, school, question); misreading of identical letters and letter combinations (cut-put), etc. It should be noted that such mistakes are especially noticeable in the process of reading aloud. Although they do not significantly affect the perception of what is read. In addition, such mistakes are most common at the initial stage of learning to read (Nikolaieva, 2013).

It should be noted that the purely technical difficulties of reading that students have to overcome at the stage of learning reading techniques, lexical and grammatical difficulties of reading texts can cause obstacles to the proper understanding of the content and details of the text. Such difficulties include the following: ambiguous and convertible words; indirect word order; inflections with adjectives and adverbs; conditional conjunctionless sentences; gerundial inversions; complex sentences and constructions (Nikolaieva, 2013).

The linguistic difficulties in understanding journalistic texts require particular consideration in the context of our study. The main lexical difficulties of journalistic texts are displayed in the presence of vocabulary that has no equivalents, namely proper names, polysemous words, abbreviations, neologisms, specific terms, figurative phraseology. This is due to the significant sensitivity of journalistic texts to the demands of time, which contributes to the fullness of such texts with neologisms, modern terminology, and imagery of vocabulary, which, in turn, require additional elaboration at the pre-reading stage.

I. Kholod emphasizes that the content of the English text and its type can also cause certain difficulties. Students may not understand the substantive content of the text, the facts set out in it, the general idea, motives, and actions. In addition, complications can cause an understanding of presentation logics (Kholod, 2018).

H. Boretska determines the time allotted for reading among the conditions that affect the text perception and can cause certain difficulties, namely the number of text presentations; the volume of text; the presence of hints (Boretska, 2012). It is advisable to read the text once. However, it should be noted that double reading of the text is considered necessary if there are difficulties in comprehension. A variety of questions to the text, sample tests, tables to fill, drawings, diagrams can support and be reference points when reading (Boretska, 2012).

Subjective difficulties that arise in the process of teaching to read are directly related to the student's personality. However, they are divided into difficulties that arise in the process of learning to read aloud (intelligence; the ability to read in their native language; the ability to quickly grasp the subject of the text; the ability to relate the subject to a broad context) and silent reading (motivation; visual sensitivity; visual memory; forecasting; reading field; attention) (Boretska, 2012).

Agreeing with L. Kozhedub's opinion, we believe that essential factors in overcoming students' subjective difficulties in reading are to improve the skills needed for reading; clarify the principles of teaching to read organization, and develop the aesthetic need for reading by involving interactive methods that correlate with organizational forms of teaching to read journalistic texts (Kozhedub, 2010).

In modern conditions, an essential question arises of the practical significance of journalistic text usage during English classes. This is due to the active development of the media, which actively responds to the needs of society. Modern journalistic text fully reflects the changes taking place in public life and can provide students with access to reliable and interesting information.

M. Brandes defines that journalistic style is associated with objectivity, truthfulness, the authenticity of content, efficiency, relevance, and optimality of information. Reliability expresses the truth of socio-political information for its recipients, as well as the

degree of its assimilation by society, and therefore associated with its characteristics such as completeness, depth, accuracy, certainty.

Efficiency and relevance are, in our opinion, important characteristics of English-language journalistic texts that help increase students' interest and motivation in learning. V. Tereshchuk notes that the practical benefit of educational texts is to highlight the practical information, which reflects the picture of the world of the English-speaking country (Tereshchuk, 2013). In addition, students acquire knowledge of behavioral and communicative algorithms in different types of situations and can express their subject-activity position.

Reading texts play an exceptional role in teaching English as they are a carrier of linguistic, speech, and thematic information. According to H. Boretska, there are certain requirements for the choice of foreign language texts for reading. Such requirements are the cognitive value of texts; correspondence of the content of texts to readers' age features and interests; the educational and developmental potential of texts; the presence of different forms of speech: dialogic speech and monologue speech and different types of texts that function in situations of real communication (Boretska, 2012).

According to O. Biriuk (Biriuk, 2006), the criteria for selecting English-language journalistic texts are the main features related to the content, structure, and scope of messages, which are used to evaluate textual material for use or non-use as educational material in accordance with learning objectives.

In the conditions of teaching to read by means of journalistic texts, it is necessary to determine the requirements for their selection. Based on the views of H. Boretska, we offer the following requirements for the selection of journalistic texts: thematic compliance; availability of socio-cultural potential; informativeness; grammatical and stylistic correspondence of the genre (Boretska, 2012).

In addition, we agree with N. Nikonenko and O. Schalko that journalistic texts should meet the reader's cognitive and communicative needs and interests and be guided by the purpose of each text in real life (Nikonenko and Schalko, 2014). Given the rapid pace of information technology development, it is necessary to monitor the relevance of data. It is necessary to meet the criterion of information novelty contained in journalistic texts.

Taking into account the above requirements and criteria for the selection of journalistic texts, we believe that the materials of English-language Internet resources are the optimal source of their selection. Such authentic texts guarantee high school students an encounter with English in real situations and natural forms of communication. In addition, such texts demonstrate the authentic context of the use of certain lexical and grammatical units. We consider 'News in Levels' and 'Breaking News' to be Internet resources, periodicals such as 'The Washington Post,' 'The New York Times,' 'Publisher's Weekly,' and texts published on the British Council.

Thus, we have identified the following main criteria for selecting journalistic texts: 1) authenticity; 2) representation of various types and genres of texts; 3) thematic; 4) novelty and relevance of information; 5) compliance with the level of reading skills development, students' interests, and needs.

The initial criterion for creating a system of exercises for teaching to read we have identified the stage of reading skills formation. Therefore, it is advisable to divide the work with the text into the following stages: Pre-Reading; While-Reading, and Post-Reading. The goal of the pre-reading stage is the formation of semantic and linguistic anticipation skills, which provide preparation for the perception of the text by activating the background knowledge and students' experiences, as well as eliminating language difficulties. To do this, it is suggested to use speaking activities, which might be performed individually and in pairs. To achieve this goal, the following techniques can be used: active listening and answering to the teacher's questions; removal of language difficulties; reading in chorus; a combination of lexical units from the text with definitions; guess about the meaning of neologisms; activation of lexical units on the topic; grammatical analysis, translation to eliminate grammatical difficulties of comprehension.

The while-reading stage provides, on the one hand, a test of text comprehension, and, on the other hand, the activation of language and speech material based on what information has been read. To do this, students do exercises aimed at finding the necessary language and content information. The technique of silent reading and answering questions aimed at testing the general understanding of the content of the text should be used.



In order to test the detailed understanding of what is read, the teacher develops tests of various types. Testing allows us to check the text comprehension, helps to intensify students' activities in the classroom, to test the understanding of a fairly large amount of text in a short period of time, and diversify the lesson.

The use of tests to control reading comprehension requires mandatory instruction of students. Their use does not take much time and minimize the difficulties. In addition, the use of tests stimulates the following students' intellectual activities: analysis and synthesis, generalization and specification, comparison, and distinction. The test becomes a kind of educational support.

The tests of alternative choice require managing students' attention, directing them to search for relevant information. The test stimulates students' intellectual activity. To choose the right alternative, they have to read the text with general coverage of the content, comprehend the alternatives, correlate each of them with the content of the text, and accept the desired alternative.

The multiple-choice test is aimed at choosing the correct answer from several options. The combination of the right form and the wrong alternatives are designed to stimulate students' reasoning, to intensify the necessary mental operations. It is based on the simultaneous visual perception and retention of some information in memory to find the correct answer.

The tests for filling/completion involve the restoration of distorted text based on the information read. One of the advantages of this set of tests, in our opinion, is the use of adequate forms of control and the ability to test the receptive type of speech activity through productive forms with maximum activation.

All types of tests help to focus on extracting information with the necessary completeness and depth, and stimulate intellectual activity. The test is a good material for adaptation, as the test material itself serves as reinforcement. It is worth noting that an important psychological moment is an opportunity for students' individual work at the most comfortable pace, atmosphere of friendliness, and comfort.

The goal of the post-reading stage is to improve oral speech, in particular, to prepare students for a brief retelling of the main content of the text. The teacher can stimulate students' speech activity with the help of methods of searching for English equivalents in the text and a short translation by students of the main content of the text.

**Conclusions.** The study allowed us to conclude that students' English-language competence in reading formation is an essential component of the foreign language communicative competence formation during English classes at higher pedagogical educational institutions.

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Ольга Палеха

## ФОРМУВАННЯ У СТУДЕНТІВ АНГЛОМОВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ В ЧИТАННІ ЗАСОБАМИ ПУБЛІЦИСТИЧНИХ ТЕКСТІВ

У статті проаналізовано теоретичні передумови формування англомовної компетентності в читанні студентів у закладі вищої педагогічної освіти, виокремлено цілі її формування та труднощі, які виникають у ході навчання. З'ясовано, що навчання читання підпорядковується практичній, освітній, розвивальній та виховній цілям. Аналіз труднощів, що виникають у процесі навчання читання студентів дозволив виокремити об'єктивні і суб'єктивні фактори.

З'ясовано практичну значущість використання саме публіцистичних текстів для навчання читання студентів під час викладання навчальної дисципліни «Іноземна мова». Вона полягає в тому, що інформація, котра міститься в таких текстах, має високий естетичний, виховний і розвивальний потенціали, які підвищують ефективність процесу формування в майбутніх учителів англомовної компетентності в читанні. Автором визначено вимоги до публіцистичних текстів (автентичність; представленість різноманітних типів і жанрів текстів; тематичність; новизна і актуальність інформації; відповідність рівню сформованості вмінь у читанні, віковим інтересам і потребам студентів) та джерела їх добору (різноманітні Інтернет-ресурси). Проаналізовано етапи навчання читання публіцистичних текстів на практичних заняттях з іноземної мови.

Здійснене дослідження дозволило дійти висновку, що формування англомовної компетентності в читанні студентів є важливим складником формування їхньої іноземної комунікативної компетентності в умовах навчання в закладах вищої педагогічної освіти.

**Ключеві слова:** читання; англомовна комунікативна компетентність; публіцистичні тексти; етапи навчання читання.

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