

USING AUTHENTIC TEXTS TO TEACH READING IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract. The article considers using authentic literary texts to teach reading in a foreign language, from the point of view of Russian and foreign methodologists. Also, the main benefits of using literary texts are analyzed, and different approaches to organizing this process are described.

Keywords: *literary text, teaching reading, TEFL.*

Аннотация. *Статья рассматривает целесообразность использования аутентичного художественного текста при обучении иноязычному чтению с точки зрения отечественных и зарубежных методистов. Также анализируются основные преимущества использования художественного текста при обучении чтению и описываются различные подходы к организации данного процесса.*

Ключевые слова: *художественный текст, обучение чтению, методика преподавания иностранного языка.*

Abstrakt. Maqolada rus va xorijiy metodologlar nuqtai nazaridan chet tilida o'qishni o'rgatish uchun haqiqiy adabiy matnlardan foydalanish ko'rib chiqiladi. Shuningdek, adabiy matnlardan foydalanishning asosiy afzalliklari tahlil qilinadi va bu jarayonni tashkil qilishning turli yondashuvlari tavsiflanadi.

Kalit so'zlar: *adabiy matn, o'qishga o'rgatish, TEFL.*

Introduction. The ability to read foreign language literature is one of the key skills acquired in the process of learning a foreign language. Today, the choice of teaching materials available to a foreign language teacher is quite large - from ready-made methodological developments and teaching aids to accessible, authentic journalistic materials and fiction. However, when choosing a strategy for teaching specific students, the question arises about the appropriateness of using literary texts in the curriculum, as well as the degree of their authenticity or adaptation.

Traditionally, domestic teaching methods are quite favourable towards the inclusion of literary texts in foreign language teaching programs. The subject “Home Reading,” which allows you to pay additional attention to the aspect of reading fiction, is often included in the programs of schools with in-depth study of a foreign language and higher educational institutions. Domestic methodologists see the following advantages in it:

1. Reading fiction allows you to move away from standardised educational texts and introduce students to modern “living” language. [3, p. 231]

2. Working on a literary text allows you to develop language skills - lexical and grammatical. Allows you to overcome the language barrier, allowing the student to express his opinion about what he read, and evaluate situations, characters, and events. Thus, reading a literary text stimulates speech activity. [3]

3. Reading a work of fiction covers the linguistic and cultural aspects - it provides information about the social, and cultural, structure of a foreign language society, allows you to expand the general horizons of students and instil aesthetic taste. [3]

4. Reading a literary text develops independent work skills - processing semantic information, systematizing and analysing what you read, and working with a dictionary. [1, 2].

5. Fiction is a means of forming a secondary linguistic personality, which “implies a person’s ability to communicate in a foreign language, actively interact with representatives of other cultures, and represent their culture at the international level” [3, p. 232]

E. I. Tsvirko highlights the following advantages of a work of fiction over popular science and educational texts when teaching analytical reading:

- The literary text is aimed at general human knowledge, therefore, it corresponds to the aspirations and demands of young people.

- Literary text has a broad topic and does not require specialized background knowledge, unlike popular science and other non-fiction literature.

- The compositional structure of a literary text - the absence of fragmentation, fable - allows you to direct all the elements of the plot to resolve the conflict, which allows you to maintain interest throughout the entire reading process. [4, p. 224-225]

Despite such unanimous approval of the use of literary text for teaching various types of reading and its use in the educational process in general, in foreign methods of teaching a foreign language there are still disputes about the appropriateness of this type of activity. Thus, Alan Maley, author of the chapter “Literature in the Language Classroom” in The Cambridge Handbook of Teaching English to Foreigners, explains this situation as follows. Historically, literature has long been the main source of linguistic information in foreign language teaching. However, with the development of technical means, methods of teaching a foreign language and the availability of language material, the role of a work of art in teaching a foreign language began to weaken. The growing popularity of the English language required the mass production of “functionally competent users.” In this process, the use of literature and artistic expression became inappropriate, and even partly harmful. The debate between supporters of the “old” and “new” approaches continues to this day, however, “recently there has been a gradual rehabilitation of literature and its value in the learning process” [9, p. 180]. Starting from the 1980s of the 20th century, literary text began to gradually return to the practice of teaching English as a foreign language.

Thus, foreign methodologists and practising teachers who use literature in the process of teaching a foreign language face the following objections:

- Literary reading does not meet the criteria of academic excellence and, accordingly, does not fit into the framework of the educational process [7, 8].

A literary text is complex in its grammatical structure and incomprehensible from a cultural point of view [8], and may contain unnecessary lexical units that make understanding difficult [5]. However, for some practising teachers, the grammatical and cultural complexity of the text is a motivation for in-depth study of the text.

Thus, supporters of literature in teaching practice explain the use of literary texts for the following reasons:

Linguistic: literature is authentic material that is a source of “unmodified” language, syntactic, lexical and grammatical patterns that can be used for educational purposes. [5, 6, 7, 8].

Cognitive: Literature helps develop critical thinking skills, encouraging students to express their opinions and thoughts, and defend their points of view. [7, 8]. Literature also helps to establish interaction between students when the reading material is used for further discussions and discussions [6].

Aesthetic: reading a literary text helps to see the beauty of the language being studied at its best. Literature provides examples of descriptions of events, places, characters, and relationships, written by the best authors. [6]

General education: reading broadens your horizons and establishes relationships with the outside world. [6]

Motivating: A literary text is not only a set of grammatical rules and cultural facts; reading arouses interest in further study of sociocultural factors outside the educational process. [5, 10].

Psychological: the literary text meets the needs of students, makes the learning process more creative and attractive, and increases students’ self-esteem [5].

Lindsay Clenfield identifies three main approaches to the study of literary text, combining them into three models:

Cultural model, when a literary text is considered a product, a source of information about the culture being studied. The main emphasis is on the social, political, and historical context, and the text’s belonging to literary movements and genres. This model is focused more on the teacher and is widespread in university teaching practice.

A language model when, when studying a text, much attention is paid to lexical and grammatical structures or stylistic analysis, which allows for a conscious interpretation of the text. This model is more student-centred, improves overall language proficiency, and makes the approach to literature more competent.

The personal growth model focuses on students and the process of learning text. With this approach, students are encouraged to express their opinions, describe their own experiences, and express their attitudes to what they read. This model promotes interaction between the reader and the text, making language learning more memorable and personalised [6].

Conclusion. Regardless of the chosen model and type of reading, foreign practicing teachers observe a positive attitude of students towards reading fiction in English as a foreign language lesson. Teachers note increased motivation, improved reading skills and increased general interest in this type of activity [7, 8].

To summarize the above, we note that both domestic and foreign methodologists observe the positive impact of the use of literary text in English as a foreign language class, noting the undoubted advantages of literary work for the linguistic and aesthetic development of students. Despite some disagreements on this issue, the change in the vector regarding literary text in foreign teaching practice cannot but rejoice. In addition to such obvious advantages of using literature as authentic and natural language, development of language skills, enrichment and development of oral speech, as well as emotional and psychological benefits, there is another one directly related to the academic nature of the learning process. Reading a literary text provides general literacy and allows you to develop the skills of critical thinking, the ability to analyze, and independence, which are necessary for the formation of a competent specialist in any field.

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