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SPECIFIC FEATURES OF ENHANCING READING COMPETENCE AMONG PHILOLOGY STUDENTS

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Abstract

This article examines the specific features of developing and enhancing reading competence among philology students. It emphasizes the role of literary and academic texts, critical thinking, metacognitive awareness, and reading strategies in shaping students' intellectual and professional skills. The paper explores cognitive processes involved in reading, the importance of linguistic and intertextual analysis, and the pedagogical-psychological characteristics necessary for effective reading instruction. Furthermore, it highlights the integration of technology, multimodal resources, and literature in language classrooms. The findings suggest that a combination of literary and academic materials, supported by appropriate pedagogical approaches, significantly contributes to the development of philology students' reading competence.

Keywords: Reading competence, philology students, literary texts, academic texts, critical thinking, metacognitive approach, reading strategies

Introduction

Reading competence is a fundamental requirement for students in philological faculties, as it directly contributes to their future roles as linguists, translators, and literary scholars. Beyond basic comprehension, philology students must acquire the ability to analyze, interpret, and critically evaluate texts. Their reading competence encompasses linguistic, stylistic, and cognitive skills, which together form the foundation for successful academic and professional performance.

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The present paper explores the pedagogical and psychological aspects of enhancing reading competence among philology students, with a focus on both literary and academic texts.

Reading competence in philology goes beyond general language learning. It includes: Linguistic analysis – phonological, morphological, syntactic, and semantic interpretation of texts (Halliday & Hasan, 1976).

Critical reading – analyzing context, author's perspective, and stylistic devices (Paul & Elder, 2006).

Intertextual approach – identifying connections between texts in literary and cultural contexts (Kristeva, 1980).

Discourse analysis – understanding genre-specific features and communicative purposes (Swales, 1990).

Thus, philology students must be able not only to understand words and sentences but also to identify stylistic features, cultural references, and intertextual links.

Cognitive and Metacognitive Processes in Reading

Reading requires several cognitive processes, including:

• Decoding – recognizing words and grammatical structures (Perfetti, 1985).

• Global comprehension – extracting the main idea of a text (Kintsch, 1998).

• Inferential reasoning – identifying implicit meanings and author's stance (Van Dijk & Kintsch, 1983).

• Metacognitive monitoring – consciously controlling comprehension and applying strategies (Flavell, 1979).

These processes are essential for building deeper reading competence.

Literary Texts. Literary works provide opportunities for:

Contextual understanding of linguistic and stylistic devices (Lazar, 1993). Intertextual analysis and cultural exploration (Kristeva, 1980). Exposure to innovative language use across genres and authors (Simpson, 2004). Reading literature not only develops linguistic awareness but also fosters aesthetic sensitivity and cultural appreciation.

Thus, the integration of literary and academic texts provides a comprehensive approach to developing philology students' reading competence.

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Pedagogical Approaches to Reading

Effective instruction should include:

Use of Reading Strategies – skimming, scanning, close reading, and critical analysis (Jalolov, 2012).

Metacognitive Awareness – encouraging students to monitor comprehension, reflect on strategies, and regulate their own reading.

Vocabulary Expansion – extensive reading, word mapping, and contextual learning to strengthen lexical competence.

Motivation and Engagement – incorporating book clubs, literature circles, and discussions to foster active participation.

Technology Integration – e-libraries, audiobooks, podcasts, and online forums to diversify learning resources (Renandya & Jacobs, 2002; Hyland, 2016).

Literature in Language Teaching

Recent research (Collie & Slater, 1987; Paran, 2008) supports the inclusion of literature in language classrooms. Short stories, in particular, are highly effective due to their concise structure, accessibility, and ability to stimulate emotional and intellectual engagement (Abrams, 1970).

Using literature develops authenticity, cultural awareness, and personal growth (Carter & Long, 1991). It also bridges the gap between language and literary studies, creating a holistic learning experience.

Discussion

While literature offers rich pedagogical potential, challenges such as time limitations, complexity of poetic language, and classroom constraints remain. Nevertheless, short stories and selected literary texts are practical and adaptable across all proficiency levels and age groups.

Integrating literature into English language teaching ensures that students engage with authentic texts, enhance their critical thinking, and develop comprehensive reading competence.

Conclusion

Reading competence in philology is not limited to comprehension but involves linguistic, stylistic, and cognitive skills. The integration of literary and academic

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texts, combined with effective pedagogical strategies and technological resources, significantly enhances students' ability to analyze, interpret, and evaluate texts. This competence equips philology students with the necessary skills for their academic pursuits and professional careers as linguists, translators, and literary scholars.

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