

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES IN EFL TEACHING

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Mastering reading skills is one of the crucial factors which influences the progress in studying a foreign language. When students develop their reading skills, they do not only enrich their vocabulary and learn grammatical structures in the target language; there is always a transfer of reading skills to others types of speech activity: listening, speaking, and writing. As a result, the students' ability for language acquisition significantly improves. Because of the fact that a large number of educational materials has a text form, reading itself helps students to get the information they need and acquire new knowledge.

It is generally known that working with the text can be divided into three stages: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading. Pre-reading can be characterized as extensive activities, which encourage students to share their knowledge and opinions about the topic proposed [2].

There are two main approaches to teaching students to read in a foreign language: the first approach is based on the text itself, and it determines pre-reading activities as mostly an explanation of new words and complex grammatical structures to students; according to the second approach, pre-reading activities should build bridges between students' existing knowledge (their previous life experience, knowledge of the proposed content, vocabulary, grammar) and new knowledge, which they have to master [1].

The most common types of pre-reading activities are as follows:

- pre-questioning: questions are asked to arouse students' interest and encourage them to establish associations between a topic and their basic knowledge);
- pre-reading plan: the topic of a text is announced to students in a short sentence in order to stimulate discussion;
- KWL discussion: know – want to know – have already learned;
- previewing: students should learn certain things to navigate in the available classification (headings, lists, names, abbreviations, highlighting) in order to immediately form their first idea about the content;
- guessing: after looking at the text, students hypothesize what the reading will be about or ask questions about why the author chose to write that text;
- skimming: getting a general idea of what the text is about;
- scanning: searching for specific information in the text.

Observing the impact of pre-reading activities on the quality of students' understanding of what they read in an EFL classroom proves that all kinds of such activities greatly contribute to high-grade reading.

References:

1. Ajideh P. Schema theory-based pre-reading tasks: a neglected essential in the ESL reading class. *The Reading Matrix*. 2003. Vol. 3. No. 1. P. 1–14.
2. Wallace C. *Critical reading in language education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. viii, 217 p.