

WAYS OF USING FICTION IN TEACHING ESP

Reading fiction plays a vital role in ESP development. Reading is considered to have strong influence on formation of the language skills and also the whole personality of the student. It is believed that fiction enhances language learning, creates a positive atmosphere in the classroom and gives the feeling that language learning is instructive and enjoyable.

The **aim** of this article is to study aspects of using fiction in teaching ESP. To reach this aim we will fulfill the following **tasks**: to identify the reasons for using fiction in teaching ESP; to outline the main principles of selecting fiction for ESP; to specify language features of the selected book; to classify and analyze a variety of activities that can be used at different stages of instruction.

The **subject** of the research finds itself in the investigation of peculiarities of using fiction in teaching ESP.

Selection of an appropriate book to be used when teaching English is essential. Moreover, there are various possible approaches to using fiction in class. These range from occasional use of stories to supplement a topic in a course book, to using a story-based course book, and possibly supplementing this with additional stories as well, and even to basing the whole language programme and syllabus on a selection of books which the students study over a period of time.

We believe it is important to discuss possible reasons for using fiction and how language learners can benefit from them. Since choosing a relevant book could present some difficulty, we are going to outline principles to be taken into account. Furthermore, there are many types of stories we attempted to select those that are the most suitable for teaching ESP English and give characteristics of their language features.

We may all agree that most fiction is very motivating and challenging for students. They can help develop positive attitudes towards the foreign language, culture and language learning. Books can provide opportunities for developing continuity in students' learning. They can link English with other subject areas across the curriculum [1, p. 97]. Reading books develop students' learning strategies such as listening for general meaning, predicting, guessing meaning and hypothesizing. It can develop all students' skills [2, p. 198]. They also provide ideal opportunities for presenting cultural information and encouraging cross-cultural comparison.

Reading books allows the teacher to introduce or revise new vocabulary and sentence structures by exposing learners to the language they study in varied, memorable and familiar contexts, which enrich their thinking and gradually enter their own speech. Stories allow teachers to use an acquisition-based methodology by providing optimal input. It is great to use books in the original because they add variety and provide a springboard for creating complete units of work that constitute mini-syllabuses and involve students personally, creatively and actively in an all-round whole curriculum approach [2, p. 199].

There are many good reasons for using fiction as language material in ESP language teaching. However, they not only provide authentic examples of language use but also offer literary, cultural and professional elements. Thus, reading fiction facilitates the development of students' personality, imagination and intelligences and language use are highly beneficial in ESP teaching programs.

Ability to select is one of the key general competences of foreign language teachers. They always need to select some materials, resources, methods and other things to make the process of learning as effective as they can. Since there are different books, it means that there are numerous options for a language teacher to choose from. Thus, the decision can be far from an easy one. Therefore, it is necessary to consider what aspects should be taken into account and what principles should be followed when selecting a story to be used in a language classroom.

Many authors, among them Ur, Carter, Long, Duff, Maley, Lazar, Collie and Slater suggest some guidelines for choosing books for reading effectively. To our mind, the most complete list of selection criteria was proposed by Ellis and Brewster [2, p.188]. They suggest analyzing *level, literary devices, content, illustrations, educational potential, motivation, values, global issues, language, content, potential for follow-up work*. Let us consider these in detail.

– **Level**. The teacher should evaluate the difficulty of vocabulary and structures of the language. It is important to decide if the level is accessible and if an appropriate level of challenge is provided.

– **Literary devices**. We should observe what literary devices the book contains and how these will help students understand, encourage anticipation and remembering, enrich their language.

– **Content** should be relevant, informative, memorable.

– **Educational potential**. We should remember that the novel has to enable language learners to become aware of and develop their learning strategies. The teacher should examine what students can learn about the world and other cultures from reading and if the book can link in with other subjects across the curriculum.

– **Motivation.** The teacher should analyze if the book can motivate students by drawing on their personal experience and develop their imagination. It is important that students respond positively to the book and develop positive attitudes towards the target language, culture and language learning including ESP.

– **Values.** We should take into account the following values: emotional development, cooperation, collaboration, self-esteem. Reading books has to help children become aware of and question important values.

– **Global issues.** The chosen book should offer students a broader view of the world. That is why we should analyze if it develops awareness and understanding of environmental and ecological issues, gender issues, racism, sexism, human rights, health and safety, tolerance, etc.

– **Language and content** should be authentic and appropriate. The teacher should examine if the language is representative of the variety spoken in the target culture. It is important that the story provides some information about life in the target culture. The teacher should also decide if the topic raised in the book is of interest to the students.

– **Potential for follow-up work.** We should analyze if the book provides a starting point for related language activities and lead on to follow-up work in the form of concrete outcomes, such as making something, organizing some event or other activities based on the book [1, p. 38].

To our mind, the last criterion is of primary importance as we want to use books for developing all four language skills – reading, writing, listening and speaking. Many students find reading in a foreign language difficult and laborious. Students often complain that there are too many new words they do not understand and so initially, they give up. Teachers or students can design a questionnaire to find out about their class's reading habits which can enable teachers to choose the appropriate type of stories as well as level.

Whatever the source, the most important thing is that the story chosen is suitable for the language learners it is intended for. The teacher needs to check that the content is relevant, interesting, appealing and memorable. The book should be selected in reference to the course objective, the learners' profile, and the book content in order to make the best of it.

Some types of books are more suitable for use in a language classroom as they are more relevant to the aims and the objectives to learning English as foreign language than others. Any book is a microcosm of how people act, feel, and think, and what they value as an individual or as a member of a community or institution [3, p. 48]. What are specific features and structure of books which are most often used by language teachers?

To make a well-balanced choice of a book a teacher should consider different aspects and typical characteristics of different types of books. It is necessary to examine what a book can offer to language learners and choose the one that would meet their learning needs and abilities. English language teacher should take into consideration such factors in choosing the novel for reading: age, intellectual maturity, emotional understanding, motivation, needs, language proficiency, cultural and literary background of the students, teaching a foreign language through stories will not be so complicated; contrarily it will be enjoyable and advantageous.

While creating a book-based lesson plan or syllabus, we need to know what aim we want to achieve and think about activities during the students' work with the book. Here we will concentrate our attention on activities to be done at *pre-reading* or before reading stage, *while-* or during reading and post- or *after reading stage*. It is advisable to provide different types of activities during the lesson and thereby keep students in constant interest. In order to use reading books effectively, teachers need to apply a wide range of procedures at each of three stages:

- *functions of pre-, while- and after-reading stages;*
- *types of reading based activities;*
- *Need for variety of activities.*

Pre-reading activities try to prevent failure and help support the students' comprehension of the novel. Many methodologists (Chatman, Ur) share the idea that pre-reading stage is of utmost importance.

Pre-reading activities are important because they introduce the topic, they motivate students to read the book. Besides, they provoke initial interest in the topic and students start to think about it. Activities of pre-reading stage prepare learners' minds and show what they already know about the topic. These activities help teachers anticipate problems in terms of language and concepts and give space to pre-teach complicated language [4, p. 141]. Pre-reading activities are a variety of warming up activities which relax students. Thus, the main function of the pre-reading stage is to activate learners' schemata and to prepare learners for reading.

It may be necessary to study or discuss vocabulary and grammar, to arouse curiosity about the content and stimulate imagination before actually reading the text. This will depend on the type of the book and the level of students' English language competence. Activities at the pre-reading stage involve students in the process of communication in the foreign language. This in turn can contribute towards developing their reading comprehension skill as well as their oral proficiency.

The while-reading activities are designed to help students respond cognitively, emotionally and imaginatively to a story. Through the activities, students become familiar with the features of the book, such as characters, setting and plot, and this contributes to their understanding and appreciation of the text. Students can read or listen to the story in class and at home. In class it can be silent reading or reading aloud. Moreover, they can read for different purposes, which in turn demands different types of reading.

Jeremy Harmer stresses the need to distinguish between intensive and extensive reading. He explains that intensive reading refers to the detailed focus on the construction of reading stories which takes place usually in classroom. Meanwhile, extensive reading refers to reading which students do often at home [5, p. 210].

The essential element of extensive reading is reading for pleasure. This kind of reading is highly recommended not only for native speakers of English, but also for learners of English as a foreign language. Furthermore students can read in different ways: browsing, skimming, scanning, detailed reading or reading for relaxation. Students can browse the headlines to get an overall view, or skim the chapter of the book to get the gist or the general sense without understanding everything. When browsing or skimming, students read for the main ideas, focussing on the key point in each paragraph. It is a way of speed-reading or efficient reading to get a lot of understanding in a short time without looking for anything in particular. If students scan a story, they read for specific information, selecting key information on a particular issue.

Students do detailed reading when they need to deeply understand and analyse what they read. Students may come up with supporting ideas, consider arguments for or against, and/or take notes for future use. They may study setting, plot and character, or relationships and conflicts in the novel.

When students start reading a book, it is important that they have some “guidelines” about what to look for while reading it. Such guidelines could be given in the form of an introduction and should be simple at first. The idea is to help the students make discoveries which might otherwise pass them by [6, p. 137]. Still, there is always a dilemma in connection with reading fiction regarding how much the students should try to explore, discover and enjoy on their own, and how much teachers should come in and interpret or analyze the text for or with them [7, p. 242]. This is the dilemma that should be considered carefully.

After-reading activities develop students’ skills especially their productive ones such as writing (e.g. writing letters and postcards, note-taking, etc.) and speaking (e.g. interviewing, role-play, questionnaires, etc.). In these activities students can work individually or in groups or they can work on a project as a whole class. After-reading activities provide enjoyment and satisfaction as they allow students to complete a piece of work in English. They can also gain self-confidence which, in turn, can create a more positive attitude to learning English. Students may express their own ideas in after-reading activities that means that students’ creativity is encouraged [8, p. 158]. According to Chatman, post-reading activities help readers to clarify any unclear meaning where the focus is on the meaning not on the grammatical or lexical aspects of the text [9, p. 126]. Activities at this stage may be done in class or used as homework. What is the most important, they should provide opportunities to extend and consolidate language or topics introduced through a story.

Conclusion. Summing up, we may state that using fiction is a very effective method in teaching English at Law school and most teachers gladly use them as a language teaching material. Moreover, a variety of activities based on the novel are provided at all reading stages. The emergence of the Internet has made it possible to select books more quickly and efficiently. Despite a number of problems accompanying the use of fiction in a language classroom, they make the educational process more effective and contribute to the development of all language skills.

Teachers also use a whole range of activities based on novels at all reading stages: group or pair work activities; whole-class discussions; debates; role plays; dialogues; translation; reading comprehension exercises (matching and gap-filling tasks); retelling; vocabulary exercises; sentences or story completion activities; making up the end of the story; paraphrasing or putting sentences in the correct order; like/dislike and true/false tasks. However, there are some difficulties teachers’ experiences when trying to use fiction: sustaining students’ interest to work hard, initiating and sustaining discussions based on the book read, lack of technical resources, dealing with unknown words and structures and lack of time.

At present time there is a tendency to use fiction more often in teaching English at Law School of Lviv University. On the one hand, this can be due to the fact that the number of lessons of English per week has increased. On the other hand, it seems that more and more teachers realize the potential of using stories in their teaching as a useful language learning tool.

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Summary

A. ARTSYSHEVSKA, N. HRYNYA. WAYS OF USING FICTION IN TEACHING ESP

The article deals with reading as one of the aspects in teaching ESP. Special attention is paid to fiction, how to select the appropriate text for reading; the list of selection criteria has been proposed. Three reading stages are overviewed and analyzed. A whole range of activities based on novels at all reading stages can be used in the classroom.

Key words: reading, fiction, to select the text, reading stages.

Анотація

А. АРЦИШЕВСЬКА, Н. ГРИНЯ. СПОСОБИ ВИКОРИСТАННЯ ТВОРІВ ХУДОЖНЬОЇ ЛІТЕРАТУРИ В НАВЧАННІ ESP

У статті розглядається читання як один з аспектів у викладанні ESP. Особлива увага приділяється художній літературі (як вибрати потрібний текст для читання). Запропонований перелік критеріїв відбору творів. Проведений огляд і аналіз трьох етапів читання. У класі на всіх етапах читання можна використовувати різні комплекси вправ.

Ключові слова: читання, художня література, вибір тексту, етапи читання.

Аннотация

А. АРЦИШЕВСКАЯ, Н. ГРЫНЯ. СПОСОБЫ ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЯ ПРОИЗВЕДЕНИЙ ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОЙ ЛИТЕРАТУРЫ В ОБУЧЕНИИ ESP

В статье рассматривается чтение как один из аспектов преподавания ESP. Особое внимание уделено художественной литературе, выбору подходящего текста для чтения; был предложен список критериев отбора произведений. Просматриваются и анализируются три этапа чтения. В классе на всех этапах чтения можно использовать различные комплексы упражнений.

Ключевые слова: чтение, художественная литература, выбор текста, этапы чтения.