Розглянуто деякі аспекти навчання ефективного читання студентів першого курсу філологічних факультетів університетів, які вивчають англійську мову як основну іноземну. Запропоновано низку різноманітних стратегій, прийомів та вправ на передтекстовому, текстовому та післятекстовому етапах читання, де поєднуються елементи ознайомлювального та вивчаючого читання, що дозволяє розвивати у студентів навички та уміння читання не тільки з розумінням основного змісту тексту, а також з повним і глибоким розумінням основної інформації, включаючи розуміння деталей. Особливо увагу приділено таким прийомам читання, як: прогнозування змісту тексту за його заголовком, підзаголовками, ключовими словами; усування деяких мовних труднощів сприйняття тексту з використанням безперекладних спосібів розкриття значень іноземних лексичних одиниць, зокрема зіставлення однієї лексичної одиниці з іншими відомими словами іноземної мови, здогадка за контекстом, дефініція і інші. У статті представлено завдання на вилучення певної інформації з тексту та аналіз його структури, а також вправи на використання вилученої інформації у говоренні та письмі, які пов’язані з читанням як видом мовленнєвої діяльності. Розглянуто деякі аспекти використання прийомів швидкого читання, які дозволяють студентам першого курсу варіювати темпи читання та допомагають їм ефективно використовувати матеріали для читання.

Ключові слова: ознайомлювальне читання, вивчаюче читання, переглядове читання, пошукове читання, передтекстовий, текстовий та післятекстовий етапи роботи з текстом.

Рассмотрены некоторые аспекты обучения эффективному чтению студентов первого курса филологических факультетов университетов, изучающих английский язык как основной иностранный. Предложен ряд различных стратегий, приёмов и упражнений на предтекстовом, текстовом и послетекстовом этапах чтения, где сочетаются элементы ознакомительного и изучающего чтения, что позволяет развивать у студентов навыки и умения чтения не только с пониманием основного содержания текста, но и с полным и глубоким пониманием основной информации, включая понимание деталей. Особое внимание удалено таким приёмам чтения, как: прогнозирование содержания текста по его заголовку, подзаголовкам, ключевым словам; устранение некоторых языковых трудностей восприятия текста с использованием беспереводных способов раскрытия значений иноязычных лексических единиц, в частности

© Lukianenko L.N., 2019
Some aspects of teaching effective reading to first-year students studying English as their major at faculties of foreign languages in universities are considered. A broad range of blended extensive and intensive reading strategies, techniques and exercises are suggested at the pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading stages, which makes it possible to develop learners’ skills not only in reading for gist, but also for detailed comprehension. The main focus of the research is on reading techniques such as making predictions about the content of the text based on the title, subtitles and keywords; removing barriers to students’ understanding the text by using such monolingual ways of presenting vocabulary as matching words to their definitions, synonyms or opposites, guessing from context, explanation and others. Tasks directed at extracting some information from the text and analyzing its structure as well as exercises designed to use the extracted information in speaking and writing, which are connected with reading as a communication skill, are presented in the article. Some aspects of using techniques of expeditious reading, skimming and scanning, which enable first year students to vary the speed of reading and help them use reading materials effectively are treated.

Keywords: extensive reading, intensive reading, skimming, scanning, pre-reading, while-reading, post-reading.

Reading has always been the skill most emphasized in traditional foreign language teaching, and even today it is the mainstay of EFL instruction in many countries. It is a fundamental skill that promotes language and memory development, stimulates imagination, broadens outlook and improves language understanding. Being an effective means of teaching different speech habits and skills, reading is often integrated with listening, speaking and writing and is considered to be the basis of their further development. Without doubt, there is a strong correlation between reading and academic success, as it is the best way of acquiring a large vocabulary, enhancing creativity and immersion in another cultural atmosphere. There is no denying that reading is of primary importance in providing EFL students’ language competence and critical thinking skills. According to Ch. Nuttall, reading widely is a highly effective means of extending our command of language, so it has an important place in classrooms where language learning is the central purpose. However, students also need to learn how to read for meaning, and sometimes it is rather difficult to teach for both purposes at the same time or with the same text [11, p.30]. EFL teachers, in particular those who teach students majoring in English, must be
well aware of the fact that the focus in reading lessons is not only the content, but also the language. They should develop their students’ ability to extract the content from the language that expresses it so that they can become effective independent readers.

We read for a variety of purposes and, according to these purposes, in a variety of ways. Although reading always involves deriving meaning from a text, our purpose in reading determines the kind and the amount of meaning we look for as well as the way in which we read a text. The terms extensive reading and intensive reading are used to describe different styles of reading. Extensive reading involves rapid reading of large amounts of material or longer contents, such as a whole book, for getting a gist, with the intention of enjoying a text, while in intensive reading setting students try to understand a text as fully as necessary and are focused on the language rather than the text. Of course, extensive reading and intensive reading are not just two contrasting ways of reading “but an infinite variety of interrelated and overlapping strategies” [11, p.38]. They are complementary and both are necessary. Both approaches which are used for developing reading skills have important roles to play in helping learners gain fluency, first in the critical area of vocabulary and word recognition, and then in developing better reading comprehension skills. Together with scanning and skimming, important techniques of fast reading, they cannot be ignored if EFL students are to become competent readers.

Various aspects of foreign language reading, including the problem of teaching intensive and extensive reading skills as well as different reading strategies, in particular two major kinds of expeditious reading – skimming and scanning, have been discussed by a number of researchers whose works are often referred to by EFL teachers in the process of their continual professional development (S.K. Folomkina [5], E. Shabaikovitch [6], O.B. Bigitch [1], Ye. A. Maslyko, P.K. Babinskaya [2], J. Bamford [7], L. Norman [10], Ch. Nuttall [11], R.R.Day [8], S. Krashen [9], and others). Some of them give a thorough analysis of reading skills, others make plenty of practical teaching suggestions concerning activities to use before, during and after reading a book or a article with a class as well as various methods of fast reading that
can help EFL learners make their reading efficient and use reading materials effectively. Although the list of publications dedicated to the problem of teaching reading in a foreign language continues to grow yearly, there are still several aspects which require careful consideration. To become more effective readers, students must learn to use different rates for different materials and different purposes, and must have practice in assessing what type of reading is appropriate in various circumstances.

The purpose of this article is to treat some aspects of teaching effective reading to first-year students majoring in English at faculties of foreign languages. Without pretending to consider all the aspects of the problem, in particular the choice of learner-authentic and authentic reading materials, which are an essential aspect of reading instruction, the author of this article makes it her aim to treat in a more detailed way blended extensive and intensive reading strategies, techniques and activities that can be used and done by EFL students at the pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading stages.

Needless to say, intensive reading plays a more essential role for EFL students who are more often unaware of effective reading and vocabulary learning strategies than native speakers. The crucial role of reading as a powerful means of teaching different speech habits and skills is performed by intensive reading. The English Language Development Curriculum for Universities, Institutes and Faculties of Foreign Languages stresses the importance of developing the four major skills, in particular reading, which is integrated with the others in the first two years and becomes relatively independent in years three, four and five [4,p.4].

According to the Curriculum, the treatment of reading skills involves reading for global understanding, followed by a deeper and more detailed comprehension of the text [4, p.11]. Combining the benefits of both more focused and intentional intensive reading with advantages of extensive reading can help EFL teachers to arrive at a more balanced and effective language programme.

In Ukraine English instruction at the university level, in particular at faculties of foreign languages, is usually the “intensive reading procedure”, which implies
close study of short texts, including their syntactic, semantic and lexical analyses as well as translation into the mother tongue in order to study meaning. Extensive reading is mainly a complement to an intensive reading programme, an extracurricular activity where students read out of class. The main focus of an extensive reading programme is individual reading of material which students choose themselves with follow-up activities such as writing a book report, a summary or doing a short presentation on what they have read. The role of a teacher is restricted to guiding students in choosing appropriate levels of material and assessing their reading reports, which may be submitted in writing, or their oral presentations. When EFL teachers focus on teaching reading strategies and extensive reading, they can also assess their learners’ effort which they put into enlarging their vocabulary while reading long texts for general understanding.

Teaching communication skills, reading in particular, to first-year students studying English as their major, university teachers may encounter some difficulties. The first problem is mixed-ability classes. They are composed of a wide variety of students, all with their own needs reflecting the amount of education they have had in their native language and the types of previous instruction in English. Students of heterogeneous classes are at different levels – some with quite competent English, intermediate students, for example learners from specialized and private schools where the medium of instruction is English, some who have not yet achieved intermediate competence which involves greater fluency and general comprehension of some general authentic English, and some with a low level on entry who are not equipped with an adequate vocabulary to master their academic courses which are taught in English. The reading skill is difficult to be developed in the case of first-year students who have to read in a foreign language but who do not have this skill in their mother tongue. Apart from that, without mastering efficient reading techniques such as scanning to find a book or a chapter and skimming to know the general meaning of a passage, learners can easily get lost in the amount of literature they have to read on a daily basis.
To solve these problems, teachers working with first-year students studying English as their major should acquaint their students with peculiarities of extensive and intensive reading as well as skimming and scanning, which are considered search techniques rather than reading strategies. Besides, they ought to familiarize them with a variety of techniques for approaching texts of various kinds, to be used for various purposes. To be good readers, EFL students must be taught to vary not only their speed, but also their whole manner of reading, according to the text and their purpose in reading it. Learners should know which parts of the text can be ignored, which can be skimmed to get the gist and which are better to be studied closely.

Apart from supervised or instructed extensive reading [8,p.297], which is a good start for first-year students who are not equipped with extensive reading strategies, in particular predicting the content of the text from the title or the beginning of the text, guessing the meaning of unknown words from context, ignoring some unfamiliar words which do not prevent from comprehension of the gist of the text, blended extensive and intensive reading, another direction that the practice of extensive reading may take [8,p.297], can not only help the students develop a skill of reading for gist, but also read for detailed comprehension.

Though extensive reading is mainly independent silent reading of long texts with a view to increasing reading rate of individual students, it is advisable that first-year students start with reading the same text in class so that they can discuss the topic together and learn specific blended extensive and intensive reading skills. Stories and articles selected by the teacher for this purpose should be of real interest to the students and suitable for their age level. Authors ought to be chosen with less complex structure and less extensive vocabulary range. The selection of texts is very important in teaching extensive reading. However, the text is only one element in it. It is also necessary for EFL teachers to design suitable activities and exercises for teaching first-year students effective reading at the pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading stages.

*The pre-reading stage* is designed to prepare learners for what they are going to read. The task of the teacher is to activate learners’ background knowledge, to
introduce key vocabulary items and preview the text with students. Pre-reading activities include warm-up exercises which are done to elicit something associated with the topic and encourage learners to exchange their ideas about it. Two main strategies of warm-up activities are *elicitation* and *brainstorming*. The former is a technique by which the teacher gets students to give information rather than giving it to them. It is normally based on the title or visuals. The latter involves learners’ expressing hypotheses about the content of the text based on previous knowledge by writing notes down. Efficient reading depends on students’ ability to make correct predictions, which will greatly increase their reading speed and enhance their comprehension. Learners should be taught to make predictions based on the title, subtitles and quotations taken from the text. By setting guiding questions, EFL teachers can also increase the students’ curiosity and willingness to read a text. Guessing the answers before reading is one of the most effective ways of motivating learners to read an article or a story. Producing a reasonable hypothesis about the text, instead of starting with negative factors such as unfamiliar vocabulary, can help EFL teachers start a lesson on a positive note.

However, dealing with new language cannot be ignored if we want our students to become competent readers. Removing barriers to understanding the reading material does not envisage presenting all the new words and structures in the text before reading. Firstly, the new language can often be more easily and effectively learnt during the process of reading. Secondly, properly designed language-based tasks at this stage do not always require complete comprehension of the text. Although in the extensive reading procedure learners are taught to comprehend sentences in the text containing unfamiliar words which do not prevent students from getting the gist, there are always a number of unknown keywords which should be presented at the pre-reading stage with a view to preparing learners with language to use at the while- and post-reading stages. Teaching effective reading to first-year students majoring in English, EFL teachers should give preferences to such ways of presenting vocabulary as *guessing from context, matching, definitions, synonyms,*
Typical exercises that can be done at the pre-reading stage are:

1. **Exercises directed at identifying the subject-matter of the text with the help of its key words and word combinations.**

   Using such a technique of fast reading as *scanning*, learners are supposed to find in the text the key words and word combinations that can help them identify its subject-matter. Apart from that, students can be acquainted with some new words and word combinations from the text supplemented with their translation into the learners’ mother tongue. Without reading the text, they have to guess what the text is about.

2. **Exercises aimed at learners’ comprehension of sentences containing unfamiliar words which do not prevent them from getting the gist.**

   Trying to understand the main idea of some sentences, paragraphs or parts of the text, learners are supposed to ignore unfamiliar words which can be adverbial modifiers of time, manner and place.

3. **Exercises designed to determine the structural components of a text and making hypotheses about its content.**

   Doing these exercises, students learn how to divide the text into the introduction, main body and conclusion. They can also read the title of the text, its sub-titles, topic sentences, the first and the last paragraphs in order to determine its subject-matter. Learners can use pictures, photographs and illustrations in a book or article to predict what the text is about [2, p.117-123].

   The aim of the *while-reading stage* and its reading activities is to encourage learners’ critical thinking and increase their comprehension of the text. During this stage students should have the opportunity to confirm their predictions, gather and organize information. Exercises that can be done at this stage provide opportunities and motivation for repeated purposeful interaction with the text. They are connected with reading and rereading of the whole text and its parts to determine its gist, to search for specific pieces of information and establish logical connection between separate facts. In this case the techniques of *scanning* and *skimming* are widely used. These valuable reading strategies enable the reader to select parts of the text that are
worth spending time on, in particular those which the students did not understand and need to be interpreted or discussed later. The while-reading stage can be represented by such exercises:

1. *Exercises directed at singling out the main points of the text and understanding separate facts.*

   Students can read carefully some paragraphs and choose the most suitable heading from the list for each of them. After reading the whole text, they can identify the main problems raised in the text, answer some general questions and say which of the statements are true or false.

2. *Exercises aimed at establishing semantic or logical connection between separate facts of the text.*

   Learners can read jumbled sentences or paragraphs and then put them in the correct order. They can also put questions to the text the answers to which could be used for retelling the text [2, p.123-127].

At the post-reading stage EFL teachers can check their learners’ comprehension of the text by means of some fast reading techniques which do not remove the need for careful reading, but make it possible for the students to choose parts of the text which require special attention. They are *multiple-choice* (choosing the correct variant among suggested), *true/false statements* (choosing the right variant while comparing the answer to the content of the text), *table-filling* (writing the necessary information in the table) [3, p.20-21] and others.

The function of the post-reading stage and its activities is to help learners connect what they have read with their own ideas and experience. At this stage teachers should engage students in discussion in which they evaluate the information they have obtained from the text. They can check learners’ comprehension of the gist of the text. Some exercises which are recommended at this stage are designed to *identify the communicative purpose of the author and the main function of the text.* To help students cope with the task, teachers should offer several variants of their answer to choose from, for example *to give information, to estimate some facts, to affect readers* or *persuade* them. Other exercises can be directed at developing
learners’ skills to express evaluative judgements about the text. Students can discuss with their groupmates what information they gained from the text. They can find out if there are any points in the article they disagree with and whether there is any information they did not know before reading the article [2, p.128-129].

Effective reading can lead to improvement in first-year students’ writing and speaking skills. At the post-reading stage learners move fluently from reading to speaking or writing as a follow-up to reading activities. They may interview each other about their reading or do short presentations on what they have read, write summaries of their reading or a book report. It is very essential that EFL teachers review their students’ summaries at the beginning of the course because many first-year students have not had training in summary writing. Although in an extensive reading programme students’ main task is reading, writing summaries is valuable not only to provide a means for teachers to check comprehension, but because the writing of summaries improves comprehension.

In conclusion, to be effective readers EFL students need to use a mixture of the above strategies and techniques varying the type of reading they employ and the speed at which they do it. Well-organized work with a reading text within the framework of blended extensive and intensive reading helps first-year students studying English as their major to exploit it to the full in order to achieve the most important purposes in reading and, what is more, to make the process of reading both interesting and useful. The task of EFL teachers is it to use a variety of teaching methods and activities with the aim of stimulating students’ interest and motivation and making a reading class a pleasurable and positive experience. Thanks to an effective combination of extensive and intensive reading, EFL students’ ability to read may go further and thus the habit of good reading may be developed to deal with the infinite horizons of knowledge which are waiting to be explored. Teaching effective reading to first-year students majoring in English, university teachers should also acquaint them with two major kinds of expeditious reading, therefore a promising area of future research might be the problem of teaching the techniques of
skimming and scanning in the EFL classroom which are used to make reading fast and flexible.

References

1. Бігич О.Б. Вправи для навчання читання на матеріалі американських автентичних підручників / О.Б. Бігич // Іноземні мови. – 1999. – № 4. – С. 60-62.
2. Настанова книга преподавателя іноземного языка / Е.А. Маслыко, П.К.Бабинская, А.Ф. Будько, С.И. Петрова. –Минск: Выш. школа, 2000. – 522с.
3. Ощепкова Т.В. Приёмы обучения различным видам чтения / Т.В. Ощепкова // Иностранные языки в школе. – № 3. – 2005. – С.15-21.
4. Програма з англійської мови для університетів/Проект/ Колектив авт.: С.Ю. Ніколаєва, М.І.Соловей та ін. – Київ, держ. лінгв. ун-т та ін. Британська Рада, Міністерство освіти і науки України: Нова книга, 2001. – 245с.
5. Фоломкина С.К. Обучение чтению на иностранном языке в неязыковом вузе/С.К.Фоломкіна..– Методическое пособие для вузов.– М.:Высш. шк.,1987.– 207с.
6. Шабайкович Е. Навчання читання іноземного тексту/ Е. Шабайкович // Лінгводидактична організація навчального процесу з іноземних мов в вузі. – Львів: Світ,1996. – С.145-161.
7. Bamford J. Extensive Reading by Means of Graded Readers/ J. Bamford// Reading in a Foreign Language. – 1984. – 2/2. – Р.218-260.
8. Day R.R. Extending Extensive Reading/R.R. Day// Reading in a Foreign Language. – 2015. – 27/2. – Р. 294-301.
9. Krashen S. The Power of Reading: Insight from the Research/ S. Krashen. – Westport, Conn: Libraries Unlimited, 2004. – 119p.
10. Norman L. How to Read Better and Faster/ L. Norman. – Delhi: Binny Publishing House,1986. – 239p J. Bamford//Reading in a Foreign Language . – 2002. – №14 . – р. 136-141.
11. Nuttall Ch. Teaching Reading Skills in a Foreign Language/Ch. Nuttall. – Oxford: Macmillan Heinemann English Language Teaching, 1998. –282p.