

STAGES OF READING PROFICIENCY DEVELOPMENT AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

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Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada o'qish malakasining rivojlanish bosqichlari va ularning asosiy xususiyatlari tahlil qilinadi. O'qish jarayoni murakkab kognitiv va lingvistik faoliyat sifatida talqin qilinib, uning bosqichma-bosqich shakllanishi ilmiy asosda yoritiladi. Har bir bosqich o'ziga xos ko'nikmalar, strategiyalar va tushunish darajasi bilan tavsiflanadi. Tadqiqotda o'quvchilarning oddiy belgilarni tanishdan boshlab, matni chuqur tahlil qilishgacha bo'lgan rivojlanish jarayoni izchil ravishda ko'rsatib beriladi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, o'qish malakasi dinamik jarayon bo'lib, u til bilimlari, tafakkur rivoji va amaliy tajriba orqali takomillashadi.

Kalit so'zlar: o'qish malakasi, savodxonlik rivoji, o'qish bosqichlari, til o'zlashtirish, tushunish ko'nikmalari, dekodlash, o'qish ravonligi, tanqidiy o'qish, kognitiv rivojlanish, lingvistik kompetensiya, lug'at boyligi, fonologik ong, matn tahlili, ta'lim muhiti.

Annotation: This article analyzes the stages of reading proficiency development and their main characteristics. Reading is interpreted as a complex cognitive and linguistic activity and its gradual development is explained scientifically. Each stage is characterized by specific skills, strategies and levels of comprehension. The study presents the process of learners' development from recognizing simple symbols to critically analyzing texts. The findings show that reading proficiency is a dynamic process shaped by linguistic knowledge, cognitive development and practical experience.

Keywords: Reading proficiency, literacy development, reading stages, language acquisition, comprehension skills, decoding ability, reading fluency, critical reading, cognitive development, linguistic competence, vocabulary expansion, phonological awareness, text analysis, educational environment

Аннотация: В данной статье анализируются этапы развития навыков чтения и их основные характеристики. Чтение рассматривается как сложный когнитивный и лингвистический процесс, и его поэтапное формирование освещается с научной точки зрения. Каждый этап характеризуется

определёнными навыками, стратегиями и уровнем понимания. Результаты показывают, что навыки чтения представляют собой динамический процесс, развивающийся под влиянием языковых знаний, когнитивного роста и практического опыта.

Ключевые слова: навыки чтения, развитие грамотности, этапы чтения, овладение языком, понимание текста, декодирование, беглость чтения, критическое чтение, когнитивное развитие, языковая компетенция, словарный запас, фонологическая осведомлённость, анализ текста, образовательная среда.

Reading proficiency is one of the most essential components of language learning and academic success. It is not limited to the mechanical recognition of written symbols, but includes the ability to understand, interpret, analyze and critically evaluate texts. The development of reading skills occurs gradually, moving from simple recognition processes to complex analytical and interpretative operations. This progression reflects both cognitive development and linguistic competence, making reading a multidimensional skill. Therefore, studying the stages of reading proficiency is crucial for understanding how individuals acquire, develop and refine their reading abilities over time.

At the initial stage of reading development, often referred to as the pre-reading or emergent literacy stage, learners begin to develop basic awareness of written language. At this stage, individuals are not yet capable of independent reading, but they start recognizing letters, symbols and visual patterns associated with language. They also understand that written text conveys meaning and serves communicative purposes. This stage is closely connected with listening and speaking skills, as learners rely heavily on oral input. Vocabulary acquisition plays a fundamental role in this phase, as it prepares learners for further development. In addition, visual perception and memory contribute significantly to recognizing and remembering written forms.

As learners advance, they enter the decoding stage, where they begin to associate letters with corresponding sounds. This stage is characterized by the development of phonological awareness, which allows learners to segment and blend sounds within words. Reading at this level is typically slow and requires conscious effort, as learners focus on decoding individual words. Although they can read simple texts, comprehension remains limited because cognitive resources are primarily allocated to word recognition. Nevertheless, this stage is essential, as it forms the foundation for all subsequent reading development.

The next phase, known as the fluency stage, marks a significant improvement in reading ability. At this level, learners begin to read more smoothly, accurately and with appropriate speed. Word recognition becomes increasingly automatic, reducing the cognitive load associated with decoding. As a result, learners can shift their

attention to understanding the meaning of the text. Fluency also involves proper intonation and rhythm, which contribute to better comprehension. During this stage, learners expand their vocabulary and become more familiar with various syntactic structures, which further enhances their reading skills.

Following the development of fluency, learners reach the comprehension stage, where the primary focus is on extracting meaning from texts. At this level, readers are capable of identifying main ideas, distinguishing between essential and secondary information and establishing logical connections within the text. They can also make inferences, interpret implicit meanings and relate the text to their prior knowledge. Comprehension requires the integration of linguistic knowledge and cognitive processes such as memory, attention and reasoning. Therefore, this stage represents a higher level of reading proficiency and intellectual engagement.

The final stage of reading development is critical reading, which represents the highest level of proficiency. At this stage, readers go beyond basic comprehension and engage in analytical and evaluative processes. They assess the credibility of information, identify the author's intentions, and recognize biases or ideological perspectives. Critical reading involves comparing multiple sources, synthesizing information and forming independent judgments. This stage is particularly important in academic and professional contexts, where individuals are expected to engage with complex texts and produce well-reasoned arguments. It should be emphasized that the development of reading proficiency is influenced by a variety of factors. These include the learner's cognitive abilities, motivation, exposure to reading materials and the quality of instruction. For instance, learners who are regularly exposed to diverse and meaningful texts tend to develop higher levels of reading proficiency. Similarly, an encouraging educational environment can significantly enhance motivation and engagement in reading activities. The role of teachers is also crucial, as they guide learners through different stages and provide appropriate support.

Another important aspect of reading proficiency is its close relationship with other language skills. Reading interacts with writing, speaking and listening in a dynamic and integrated manner. A well-developed vocabulary supports not only reading comprehension but also effective communication. Exposure to written texts enriches language input and improves overall linguistic competence. Therefore, reading should be considered as part of a broader language system rather than an isolated skill.

In modern educational contexts, the role of technology in reading development has become increasingly significant. Digital platforms, e-books and interactive tools provide new opportunities for learners to engage with texts in diverse ways. These technologies can enhance motivation, provide immediate feedback and support

individualized learning. However, it is important to balance digital and traditional reading practices to ensure the development of deep reading skills.¹

In addition to cognitive and linguistic factors, emotional and motivational aspects also play a crucial role in reading development. Learners who are interested in reading and have positive attitudes towards it are more likely to practice regularly and achieve higher levels of proficiency. Therefore, fostering a reading culture and creating engaging learning environments are essential for long-term success.

Overall, the stages of reading proficiency development represent a continuous and systematic process. Each stage builds upon the previous one, forming a structured progression from basic recognition to advanced critical analysis. This process highlights the complexity of reading as a skill and emphasizes its importance in both academic and everyday contexts.

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