

FORMATION OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE INFORMATIVE COMPETENCE OF 10TH GRADE STUDENTS USING CONTINUOUS AND NON-CONTINUOUS TEXTS

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Abstract

In this study, the problems of the reading literacy of 10th grade Kazakhstani students in PISA studies and the necessary skills in the formation of informative competence using continuous and non-continuous texts are considered. The purpose of this study is to analyze the possible formulations of text tasks aimed at implementing the strategy of forming informative literacy and determine skills which are needed for Kazakhstani students.

Keywords: foreign language education, informative competence, continuous texts, non-continuous texts, PISA study, reading literacy.

Introduction

Informative competence means the student's readiness to work independently with information from various sources, search, analyze and select the necessary information, organize, transform, store and transfer it. Zurkowski (1974) considered that: "People who are trained to use information resources in their work can be called information literate. They learned a wide range of information tools, as well as techniques and skills to use primary sources to generate informed solutions to their problems." For example, the ability to work with the contents of a textbook, an alphabetical catalogue in a library, a textbook, an encyclopedia text, and electronic information sources belong to informative competence. Students become critical thinkers, ask relevant questions, and view information from a variety of sources. Information literate learners restructure and repackage the information they find to create and communicate ideas that reflect their deeper understanding (Todd, 1996). Information literacy skills and knowledge are the ability to: ask a focused question (or determine keywords from an assignment question), develop a search strategy from this question, search databases and other digital tools, find needed information, critically evaluate and reference what is found, and ultimately implement this in practice (Boruff and Harrison, 2018). Consequently, a set of skills for working with information is formed both during class and outside of class. Formed skills are used when performing tasks and working on projects, which involve active learning, information search, processing, organization. [9]

One of the reading literacy tests which are conducted to see students' reading performance is the Programme of International Student Assessment (PISA) Reading Literacy conducted by Organization for Economic Co-operation Development or OECD every three years. It is a collaborative effort among the OECD member countries to measure how well youngsters at age 15 are prepared to meet the challenges of today's knowledge societies (OECD, 2000, p. 12). According to the OECD's published PISA 2018 international study of learning skills, indicators of the quality of Kazakhstan's education have significantly decreased. The OECD average reading literacy score is 487. In 2018, 15-year-old Kazakhstani students scored 387 points (-

100 points below the OECD average). The PISA reading literacy score is based on changing text dimensions (a range of learning material) and scenarios (a wide range of contexts) or objectives (where to study) with one or more thematically related texts. Thus, individual differences in reader factors based on each student's skills and experience are likely to exist, but these are not addressed in the cognitive instrument, but are captured by the survey assessment. [7]

The modern language field that surrounds a person consists of two types of texts: continuous and non-continuous (Buneeva, 2014). Continuous texts include short texts of various types (description, narration, reasoning) and genres (story, story, poem, parable, article, essays, interviews, summary of the film / performance, materials from various sites, blog post, messages, etc.). [2]

Generally, "non-continuous texts" can be in the form of a variety of graphics, lists, tables of contents, or texts aggregated from several consecutive passages (Murong Xun, 2020). Therefore, "continuous texts" are reading materials, while "non-continuous texts" consist of sentences and paragraphs, mainly in the form of statistical diagrams, pictures, etc. Meaningful understanding of the text is the basis of all effective reforms in education. Since the goal of education at school is the success of every student, the formation of reading literacy is the main source of formation of a self-sufficient person who can independently search for new knowledge and use it in comprehensive activities. [6]

The study showed readiness of 10th grade Kazakhstani students in implementing continuous and non-continuous texts. Differences between performing these two types of texts were caused by insufficient amount of non-continuous texts in English language textbooks of schoolchildren. Thus, it led to low results in PISA reading literacy results in 2018 (OECD, 2018). Yet, methodology on the aspects of language learning through non-continuous texts is still rare. The discussion on implementation of texts types in language learning linked to students' informative competence could be generated to get a better understanding. It is hoped to reveal a new perspective in understanding the low achievement of students' reading literacy. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate necessary skills for Kazakhstani school students' English language learning through reading two types of texts. [10]

Consequently, these factors need to examine in more detail skills that are needed in perceiving continuous and non-continuous texts by 10th grade students. Specifically, this study addresses the following research questions:

1. What skills are necessary for 10th grade students in order to perceive continuous texts?
2. What skills are necessary for 10th grade students in order to perceive non-continuous texts?
3. Is there a difference between the skills usage of continuous and non-continuous texts by 10th grade students?

Literature Review

Features of teaching English to 10th grade students

The needs of society, especially education system have changed as a result of widespread changes in the social and educational system. Because of this, the function of teaching foreign languages has changed, but a number of questions regarding teaching English to school students remain to be addressed. This has also been explored in prior studies by Kulybayeva D.N. (2002), the theory of foreign language teaching methodology is still based on the traditional educational platform, focused on learning and teaching a foreign language, not on the study of the processes of foreign language acquisition in real and changing teaching conditions. A number of authors have recognised that, communicative activity in the classroom should create a dialogue between the teacher and the student, who interprets the situations in a meaningful way, both in the mother tongue and in the foreign language (Ramírez Ortiz & Artunduaga, 2018). In this way, the student and the teacher can share their affective world, emotions, hopes and feelings with others. Thus, learning English appears as an easy, pleasant, useful and effective task and becomes relevant. [4]

In the current period of education, the transition from traditional teaching to active development teaching, to personality-oriented teaching with wider educational independence and active methods of students. A more comprehensive description can be found in the work of Monsalve and Correal (2006), the teaching process should encourage communication from the English teacher and avoid the monologue, in which only the teacher knows and passively conveys knowledge without taking into account the cognitive ability of the students with their preconceptions and concepts. The goal of teaching is to provide the student with the resources to express, understand, and reflect on language use (Vergara, 2015). Cognitive processes of schoolchildren include qualities that improve and make them flexible, and the development of such tools is somewhat ahead of the real personality development of children. The question that then naturally arises is the ways of implementing real and altering conditions of foreign language teaching.

Basics of formation of informative competence

Information competence is a set of skills that ensure finding, processing and using information to solve educational tasks. The term information literacy was firstly considered in the 1970s by Zurkowski (1974),

which is generally considered to be the first documented use of the term "information literacy". Zurkowski concluded: "People who are trained to use information resources in their work can be called information literate. They learned a wide range of information tools, as well as techniques and skills to use primary sources to generate informed solutions to their problems" (Zurkowski, 1974).

Petrova E.V. (2015) considers informative competence as a person's ability to understand the reality of the information society and a means of realizing all the opportunities it provides. It is necessary to use all the educational opportunities offered by modern information and communication technologies to train a specialist whose qualifications meet the ever-changing demands of society. A similar point of view was expressed by Ermakov D.S. (2011), who shares that informative competence is "meaningful acquisition of theoretical knowledge, skills, ways of thinking, values that allow self-realization in specific types of information services; ability, training and experience of independent information service". A set of skills for working with information is formed both during class and outside of class. Although there are many studies, the research in informative competence remains limited. [3]

Continuous and non-continuous texts

The methodology for working with continuous texts has been worked out and is being successfully applied. Information in such texts is easy to find due to font and color selections, signs and symbols of the orientation apparatus of educational publications (Dobrotina I.N., 2011). According to Buneeva (2014): "Continuous texts include continuous short texts of various types (description, narration, reasoning) and genres (story, story, poem, parable, article, essays, interviews, summary of the film / performance, materials from various sites, blog post, messages and etc.)". [5]

Non-continuous texts are texts in which information is presented in a non-verbal or not only verbal way (Buneeva, 2014). Leading researchers of the texts of the "new nature" E.I. Kazakova (2016) and G.V. Danilova (2016) note that at present there is a trend of a qualitative change in the nature of the text: instead of a rather traditional verbal construction, supplemented by illustrations and elements of the simplest graphics (tables, charts, diagrams), texts are coming that are characterized by hypertextuality, the synthesis of multimedia and verbal structures, active use of infographics, augmented reality and other elements of meaning expression.

Thus, the above-mentioned studies have shown that systematic tasks aimed at different types of activities realize the main goal in teaching the reading of non-continuous texts - the formation of the ability to understand what is read and extract the necessary information from the text, transform and create students' own text in the form of continuous and non-continuous text types.

Method

Research Design

This study investigated a quantitative research design to reveal necessary skills in perceiving continuous

and non-continuous texts by students. The data were gathered through test and then analyzed using the raw data. Exploration of factors affecting students' attitudes through questionnaire items revealed the underlying key feature that affected students' communicative competence. The underlying primary factor that affects students' informative competence was discovered by examination of skills influencing students' understanding of texts through test items.

Participants

This study involved 20 school students of the 10th grade of science profile as the research participants of 39 school-lyceum. Half of the students were chosen to take part in control group, while another 10 students in experimental group. The average age of the taken sample students was thirteen to fourteen (15–16) years. Attempt was made to choose participants who were proficient English users B2-C1 CEFR level. The number of participants remained 20 unchanged from the beginning till the end.

Instrument

A test was utilized to collect the data, adapted from PISA (2018) comprised of opinion-based questions (open ended) was jointly administered to the subjects of the study to determine the difference between the control and experimental group skill usage. There were 10 questions for control group using continuous texts and 10 questions for experimental group with non-continuous texts.

Research Procedure

Before conducting the study, the researcher has reviewed the related literature, constructed the test. After meeting the requirements, the test was distributed to the

target participants. It was also emphasised that all information is given with the utmost confidentiality. The utmost confidentiality in all information given was also emphasized. In addition, the study of key skills influencing students' perception of continuous and non-continuous texts in learning English in terms of informative competence was discussed.

Results

The aim of the study was to find skills that are necessary in reading continuous and non-continuous texts for school students. The study's findings are presented in accordance with the study's posed question. Google Forms was used to analyse and interpret the data obtained from the test given to the control and experimental groups. To address the research questions, the study's findings were applied.

Altogether, 20 10th grade students joined the study: 12 males and 8 females. They were divided into the experimental group (non-continuous texts, 10 students) and the control group (continuous texts, 10 students).

Research Question 1: What skills are necessary for 10th grade students in order to perceive continuous texts?

The Table 1 depicts the results of analysis of control group test, number of students who chose correct answers and demanded skills for text questions. Overall, all 10 students chose right answers to Analytical skills questions (Q1 and Q2 – True/False questions). Conversely, the lowest results with 6-7 participants correct answers is connected to Information search and Inferring skills.

Table 1.

Question	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
Marks	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Correctly answered	10 Students (Ss further)	10 Ss	8 Ss	8 Ss	7 Ss	9 Ss	6 Ss	7 Ss	7 Ss	9 Ss
Necessary skills	Analytical skills				Information search skills			Discourse skills	Inferring skills	

Research Question 2: What skills are necessary for 10th grade students in order to perceive non-continuous texts?

Table 2.

Experimental group test results of reading non-continuous texts

Question	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
Marks	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Correctly answered	3	3	5	3	4	2	7	10	7	3
Necessary skills	Logical thinking		Critical-thinking skills			Comparing skills		Interpretation skills		

The Table 2 shows the results of analysis of experimental group test, number of students who chose correct answers and demanded skills for text questions. Correspondingly, only 1 question of Comparing skills (Q8) has highest number of 10 correctly responded students. Meanwhile, all other 3 skills (Logical thinking, Critical-thinking, Interpretation skills) showed lowest results altogether starting from 2 students to 5 students, whose answers were counted as correct.

Research Question 3: Is there a difference between the skills usage of continuous and non-continuous texts by 10th grade students?

Differences Between the Two Groups

The first research question addressed skills that are needed in the perception of continuous texts, while the second question illustrated necessary skills in perceiving non-continuous text type. The average score of each group was calculated by adding all correct answers and dividing the result of 10

Table 3.

The average score counting formula.

$$\frac{Q1 + Q2 + Q3 \dots + Q10}{10}$$

Table 4.

	Control group	Experimental group
All items	10	10
Maximum score	10	10
Minimum score	6	2
Average score	8	4.4

The Table 4 depicts Maximum, Minimum scores of both Control and Experimental groups. Furthermore, average score was counted using Formula in Table 3. The difference between the two groups was statistically significant (8 and 4,4). It can be concluded that, there is a lack of in perceiving skills which are necessary in completing non-continuous text tasks.

Discussion

This study set out with the aim of finding out skills that are necessary in perceiving continuous and non-continuous texts by 10th grade students, also to determine differences between continuous and non-continuous texts usage by schoolchildren. Two experimental groups were asked to pass the test, which was sequenced differently based on two types of texts. One group was given continuous text and related questions as T/F questions, fill the missing gap, etc. Whereas, the second group tried to analyse non-continuous text and find relevant answers. The result of the present study revealed essential 4 skills in reading continuous texts and 4 skills for non-continuous texts. All these 8 skills were retrieved from sub-competences of informative competence. Namely, they are Analytical, Information search, Discourse and Inferring skills of continuous texts; and Logical thinking, Critical-thinking, Comparing and Interpretation skills of non-continuous texts.

The findings of the present study are based on formulated research questions which first research question sought to find out skills in reading continuous texts. The outcomes of this research question indicated that the students get used to continuous text types, as they work with such information on daily basis at the lessons. Based on the Figure 1, the results clearly depict that most of the students who took part in the test showed that they acquired almost all necessary skills. Even though 3 skills were well formed, still there is a necessity of working more with formation of Information search skills, which had the lowest result among other ones.

The second research question identified the lack of the skills formation used in non-continuous texts by experimental group students. It should be noted that work with non-continuous texts is interdisciplinary in nature and allows updating various kinds of knowledge: developing the ability to interpret symbols, forming behavioral stereotypes in different situations, and other types of knowledge that are an important part of forming skills (Alekhina N.V., 2022). According to PISA (2018) 15-year-old Kazakh students scored 387 in reading (-100 points off the OECD average), which mainly

consists of non-continuous text types. The given classification of texts was developed by the compilers of test items for the international PISA study. The results of this study help Kazakhstani students who need to get information from a table, diagram or graph to complete a task, even find specific information, compare information from different sources, combine it, etc. indicates that it will be difficult. Accordingly, the results of both Experimental group and PISA test demonstrated skills like Logical thinking, Critical-thinking, Comparing and Interpretation of non-continuous texts is not sufficiently perceived by the students.

Regarding the third research question, it showed tangible difference between skills perception in continuous and non-continuous texts. The results of the study revealed that the students of control group had overall lower results on skills perception ($A_v=8$) as compared to experimental group results ($A_v=4.4$). According to the research of Alekhina N.V., Sterligova E.A., Kazhaeva N.A., Tukhvatullina S.Yu. (2022), in the process of working with a non-continuous text, as a rule, it turns out that each student, despite the fact that the text has some basics common to all, sees it in his own way. This fact is a kind of starting point in the formation of necessary skills. Obviously, this difference should be reduced, and skills that are demanded in the comprehension of non-continuous text types should be taught at schools. [1]

Overall, it can be sum up that skills implementation in continuous and non-continuous texts differ, including perception of above-mentioned skills by 10th grade students. If there is not a sufficiently developed level of reading skills, the further quality of the educational process is a double-edged issue, because it (reading literacy) is the basis of the student's literacy and has a great influence on the general development and education (Assanbayeva E.B., 2018).

Conclusion

The body of literature has considered the features of teaching English to 10th grade students, but little research has empirically investigated the formation of informative competence with its skills. Moreover, little attention has been devoted to the difference between skills perception in continuous, non-continuous text types. The present study addressed these gaps, confirmed the claim regarding the role of structure difficulty, and provided evidence for the lack of perceiving skills in non-continuous text types. The findings have further enriched and tested skills usage in two text types by 10th grade students. In fact, the results of this study

indicated that there are significant differences between continuous and non-continuous texts' skills. The knowledge of "continuous text" and "non-continuous text" can support and transfer each other, and the two should be properly converted and alternated in order for students to learn to read various text types from various perspectives, which is favourable to enhancing students' reading literacy (Murong Xun, 2020).

This study has provided evidence for the insufficient skill perception in the usage of non-continuous texts by participant and PISA test results (2018). Obviously, future research is needed regarding the skills perceived in the process of working with non-continuous text types and on the learners' performance on different tests.

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