

THE ROLE OF READING IN THE EDUCATION OF UNIVERSITY PHILOLOGY STUDENTS

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Abstract : this paper explores the integral role that reading plays in the education and intellectual development of university-level philology students. Focusing on both the theoretical underpinnings and practical applications, it examines how different genres, reading strategies, and curriculum designs can impact language proficiency, critical thinking, and cultural awareness.

Keywords: philology, reading strategies, language learning, higher education, curriculum development, literature, critical thinking.

Reading is a fundamental component in the education of philology students, serving as a key medium through which they acquire linguistic, literary, and cultural knowledge. In the university context, reading not only aids in language acquisition but also fosters analytical thinking, interpretation skills, and scholarly discourse.

It enables students to engage critically with texts, understand the historical and cultural contexts of language, and develop a nuanced appreciation of literary styles and genres. Furthermore, consistent reading practice enhances vocabulary acquisition, grammatical awareness, and stylistic sensitivity—elements crucial to both written and oral academic performance. As such, reading functions not merely as a tool for comprehension, but as an essential practice that shapes the intellectual

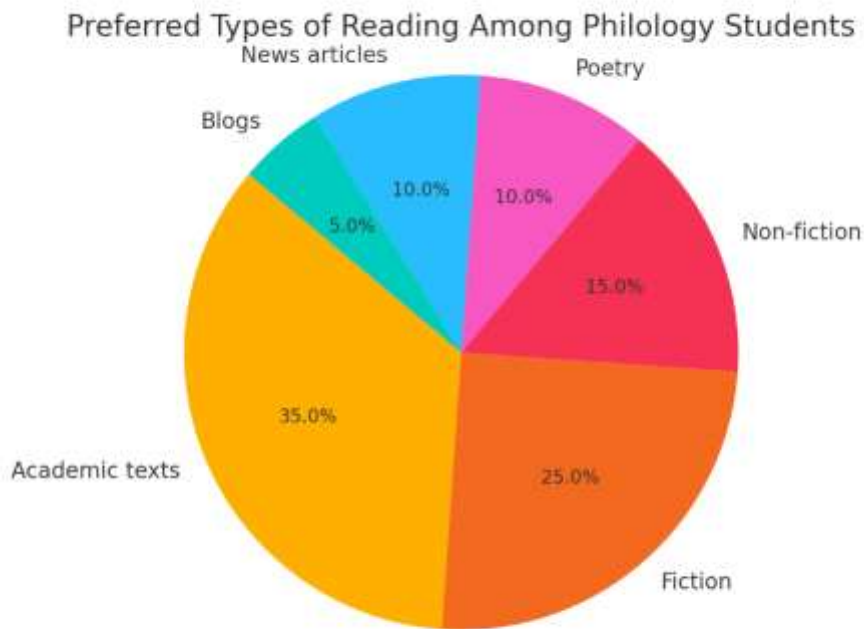
and professional development of future linguists, educators, and researchers. This study aims to investigate the types of reading materials most beneficial to philology students, the strategies they employ, and the outcomes of structured reading practices.

The role of reading in language acquisition has been extensively studied in applied linguistics. Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1982) posits that comprehensible input, largely delivered through reading, is essential for second language acquisition. Tsang, Paran, and Lau (2020) explored how short stories, poems, and songs are perceived to gain a deeper understanding of whether different literary genres are viewed alike or differently. Their findings suggest that short stories tend to be regarded more favorably than poems and songs, although each genre is seen as offering certain unique benefits.

Many practicing teachers note that students often display positive attitudes toward reading fiction in English during foreign language lessons. They observe that such engagement can lead to higher motivation, enhanced reading skills, and a greater overall interest in the activity. Kramsch and Kramsch (2015) highlight the significance of the "principle of obligation"—the idea that exposure to classic literary works is essential. They argue that this principle is most effective when paired with a scientific and methodological approach to language learning, stating that "the study of language in those days meant the study of literature."

Philology students, whose curriculum typically includes both language and literature components, benefit from engaging with varied texts, from classical literature to modern journalistic articles. Such exposure helps refine their linguistic competence and interpretative abilities.

To understand what kinds of texts university philology students prefer, a survey was conducted involving 120 respondents. The diagram below illustrates their reading preferences.



Illustrated in the pie chart, philology students demonstrate a clear preference for academic texts (35%), indicating a strong inclination toward scholarly and subject-related materials. Fiction is the second most popular choice (25%), followed by non-fiction (15%), suggesting that students also value imaginative and informative reading. Poetry and news articles each account for 10% of preferences, while blogs are the least favored at 5%. This distribution highlights the importance of incorporating a variety of reading materials into the curriculum to cater to diverse student interests and promote comprehensive language development.

A thorough engagement with textual analysis necessitates significant effort to complete tasks with accuracy and depth. Nonetheless, such engagement is frequently met with rewarding outcomes and a strong sense of achievement. As students come to value the linguistic richness and diversity of the language they are acquiring, they often become more inventive and self-assured in its use. This progression not only enhances their communicative competence but also lays a foundation for potential future academic research.

Reading remains an indispensable part of philological education. By analyzing student preferences and aligning curriculum content with effective reading strategies, educators can greatly enhance both language proficiency and critical engagement with texts. This study encourages a diversified approach to reading, incorporating both classical and contemporary texts to address the evolving needs of philology students.

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