РОЗДІЛ VII. ІНФОРМАЦІЙНО-КОМУНІКАЦІЙНІ ТЕХНОЛОГІЇ В ОСВІТІ

DEVELOPING STUDENTS' READING SKILLS IN AN ONLINE CLASSROOM

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The article focuses on planning and delivering effective reading skills lessons in an online environment. Over the past time, the spread of COVID-19 has immensely forced teachers of all educational institutions to increase the use of technology in the teaching-learning process. The new teaching environment has brought new strategies and techniques to the classes. While teaching reading can feel easier face-to-face in a number of ways, it is possible to adapt and teach reading skills successfully online. In this article, the issue of the similarities and differences between face-to-face reading lessons and online reading lessons is discussed. The outline for an online reading lesson with a detailed explanation of its elements is provided. The structure of the reading class is viewed through the scope of its purpose and targeted reading skills. Common elements of lesson planning include warm-up, objective discussion, present a model, guided or controlled practice, less guided or controlled practise, independent practice, assessment. The article also presents the ways how teachers can display and share reading materials online. It discusses the advantages and disadvantages of each option in depth. Practical ideas and suggestions for tools and activities to help learners develop reading sub-skills and improve students' perceptive skills are presented. It is also offered online resources for developing reading skills and provided a detailed description of their features so the teachers may choose the ones which will best benefit their learners. Implementation of virtual tools helps develop students' reading skills and requires knowledge and practice. Any tool and activity offered in the article allow both teachers and students to improve their reading class cooperatively and interactively.

ФОРМУВАННЯ НАВИЧОК ЧИТАННЯ У ЗДОБУВАЧІВ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ НА ОНЛАЙН-ЗАНЯТТЯХ З ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ

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Ключові слова: *онлайн-навчання, офлайн-навчання, навички читання, способи обміну матеріалами онлайн, структура заняття.*

Стаття присвячена питанням упровадження сучасних дистанційних освітніх технологій під час вивчення англійської мови студентами вищих навчальних закладів. Це дослідження спрямоване на виявлення впливу онлайн-навчання на формування навичок читання. У процесі дослідження конкретизується понятійний апарат навчання в форматі онлайн та офлайн; виокремлюються позитивні і негативні сторони навчання із застосуванням електронних технологій для навчального процесу в закладах вищої освіти; аналізується ефективність дистанційних технологій у контексті розвитку навичок читання. Детально охарактеризовані педагогічні шляхи впровадження мультимедійних засобів навчання під час вивчення іноземної мови як ключової умови фундаментальної підготовки кваліфікованого фахівця, орієнтованого на задоволення потреб сучасності. Вдосконалення навичок читання базується на ретельно продуманих і підібраних вправах, кожна з яких має на меті вдосконалення окремого аспекту навички читання. Автор статті пропонує план проведення онлайн-заняття із детальним роз'ясненням його елементів. Такий підхід допоможе викладачам створити структуру заняття, яка може бути адаптована до будь-якої теми та рівня знань студентів. Ще одним важливим елементом для проведення онлайн-занять є способи відображення та обміну матеріалами для читання. Автор наводить практичні рекомендації та пропозиції передачі інформації, які були апробовані на заняттях зі студентами. Досвід показує, що навички читання активно вдосканалюються із застосуванням сучасних онлайн-платформ. У дослідженні запропоновано окремі онлайн-ресурси з детальним описом їх особливостей. Це дасть змогу освітянам вибрати ті, які найбільше відповідають їхнім потребам. У зв'язку з цим розвиток навичок читання під час вивчення іноземної мови розглядається як шлях до творчості, роботи в новому середовищі та з людьми різних культур.

Problem statement. New teaching environment fosters teachers to provide students with new learning approaches in a more meaningful and interesting manner and motivate them to learn while improving their language skills. While teaching a foreign language to students, reading skills have a great impact along with other skills such as listening, speaking, and writing. Reading is about understanding written texts. It is a complex activity that involves both perception and thought. Readers typically make use of background knowledge, vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, experience with text, and other strategies to help them understand written text.

Recent research and publications. The students learn in different ways, and there are various approaches to learning which highlight different aspects of the process [1; 3; 7; 9]. Our work follows the theory, which focuses on how information is given to learners and refers to visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic learners [1, p. 24]. Visual learners respond well to pictures, colours, images. They need to see things to help them learn and remember. Auditory learners learn best by hearing things. Kinaesthetic learners like movement. They need movement and hands-on tasks to help them learn. In any class we teach, the learners will have a range of learning styles. This

means that to improve students' reading skills using an online setting, we have to use a range of activities and techniques so that different styles of learners are interested and can learn from the lessons.

The purpose of the article is to demonstrate that it is possible to adapt and teach reading skills successfully online. It discusses theoretical and practical approaches to planning and delivering effective English classes focused on developing students' reading skills online.

Presentation of the main material. There are several skills involved that students need to be effective in reading. The most common are scanning (reading a text quickly to pick out specific information), skimming (reading a text quickly to get a general idea of what it is about), and inferring (deciding how a writer feels about something from the way that they write rather than the words they use). Some educators distinguish other reading skills such as predicting, recognising links, establishing context for reading, guessing meaning from context, identifying the target audience, identifying the main message [3, p. 240]. It is the teacher's role to work with the students to analyse what these skills are and to show them how they can be improved. Having this in mind, the teacher also needs to ask comprehension questions and conduct activities to practice these specific skills. There are many reading activities [5], which give opportunities to teach learners of different types a variety of strategies:

– silent reading – everyone reads a paragraph or page silently, and then questions are asked about the task or vocabulary, etc.;

– listen and read – participants watch part of the movie and then read the same portion of the story in the book (this is a good review and a way to cover more difficult passages twice for better comprehension);

– read and listen – participants read a passage in the book and then review the same part in the movie (this is an excellent way to focus on listening to dialogue, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension);

– read and discuss – the leader can ask questions about the reading or how the participants feel about a topic or idea presented in the book or movie;

– read and write – participants can write book reports or short essays in a class environment;

– share your favourite part – after students listen to (or read) the book, have them share their favourite part and explain why they like it. This will be good speaking practice, and can even spark discussion if other students are allowed to ask clarifying questions.

The outline for an online reading lesson varies, and many models might evoke a similar look to lesson planning. The essential elements of lesson planning do not differ much whether you are teaching face-to-face, online, or perhaps in a hybrid/flipped classroom model (both online and in person) [10]. While teaching reading skills in an online environment, the teachers should think about the following structure of the lesson: 1. Are there tasks for learners before, during, and after reading? 2. Are there a range of tasks that appeal to different learning styles? 3. What reading skills do the tasks practise? 4. How can you make these skills explicit to learners and help them identify how to improve their skills? However, it is important to remain adaptable and flexible if something is not working. In this case, the teacher may disregard the plan and respond to what is happening in the classroom.

An outline allows a teacher to follow a logical sequence from one activity to the next, leading to a pre-determined objective. Common elements of lesson planning include warm-up, objective discussion, present a model, guided or controlled practice, less guided or controlled practice, independent practice, assessment [5, p. 34]. A reading lesson plan in an online environment includes these basic steps. Still, they may be put together on a variety of ways, using a number of strategies to fulfil the lesson aims and objectives:

– warmer – to introduce the topic; setting the scene (show the students some pictures, ask some questions, encourage students to relate their personal experience where relevant);

– pre-teach vocabulary – to facilitate understanding of the text (highlight several words necessary for students to understand, drill pronunciation using the phonemic chart);

– skimmimg – to get a general idea/check students' understanding (ask students to read through the text (giving them a time limit)) and check their understanding);

– scanning – reading for specific information/ detailed understanding (students then re-read the article, this time for more detail and attempting to answer some questions which are shared on the screen);

– follow-up activity – students do extra activities to develop reading techniques;

– review – cover vocabulary/grammar items taught.

The key difference in a reading lesson structure is whether the reading is done in the lesson or for homework. Many teachers do not feel sure about how the text should be read itself: is it better to read it in class or for homework? The answer to the question depends on a number of factors, which involve the learners' level of language command. Students having higher skills are more reasonable, so they have more autonomy and more motivation. If the text is quite long, students should read it at home and take notes. It also allows them the preparation time that they need to complete it. If the lesson focus is on reading for specific information, the learners can do the reading in class. It pushes learners to scan-read and not read everything. The teacher can set a time limit. But if the lesson focus is on reading for

Table 1

Strengths and weaknesses of sharing reading material

Means of sharing reading material	Strengths	Weaknesses
Display the text on a whiteboard.	Can be displayed quickly and easily in class. All learners can see what you want them to see.	Can only show a very short text, or it will be too small to see. Learners cannot see the text after the lesson has ended.
Display the text on your screen and share your screen with learners during the lesson.	Can be displayed quickly and easily in class. All learners can see what you want them to see.	Can only show a short text or rely on learners reading at the same pace when you scroll down. Learners cannot see the text after the lesson has ended.
Provide learners with a handout before the lesson, e.g. via email.	Learners can print the handout and have it easily to hand. Learners can see the whole text and read at their own pace. Learners have the text after the lesson has ended.	Teacher has to prepare and share the handout with the learner before the lesson. Teacher has to make sure the learner can access the tool used to share the handout. Teacher cannot see what the learner is looking at.
Provide learners with a link to the text during the lesson.	Learners can quickly click on the link and access the text. Learners can see all of the text easily and read at their own pace. Learners have access to the text after the lesson has ended.	Teacher has to make sure the link works. In a group setting, one or two learners may have trouble accessing the links. Teacher cannot see what the learner is looking at.

detailed information, the learners can do the reading for homework. In class, it is the follow-up work summarizing any other additional work the teacher wants to do. The purpose of the reading lesson should never be just comprehension. It needs to be more purposeful, more tangible. The teacher can then use the text in class to focus on specific reading skills that might be skimmimg, scanning, reading between the lines, determining fact from opinion, evaluating, summarising, etc. Before reading, learners may be given a sheet of questions to answer, a list of vocabulary words to look for, or other language tasks. Here are some techniques which are well-practiced for a successful development of reading skills online:

– be sure that every student has the story sent to them digitally ahead of time;

– if possible, watch a movie clip version after you have read a particular chapter;

– use visual aids to establish context and generate interest;

– teach learners to predict text content;

– help learners to understand that they don't need to know the meaning of every new word in the text;

– give learners explanations about reading skills terminology, for example, prediction and skimming in their first language [7, p. 202].

When planning reading lessons, it is crucial to think about how the text will be shared with learners [2; 4]. Based on our experience, we would consider the following means of sharing reading material: 1) displaying it on the screen and sharing it with students during the lesson; 2) using an online platform's whiteboard; 3) providing learners with a handout to print before the lesson; 4) giving students a link to the text during the lesson. Each of the methods has its advantages and disadvantages, which are presented in *Table 1*.

It only depends on the level of students and the purpose of the lesson, which means of sharing reading tasks to use.

Besides providing students with the activities prepared in advance by the teacher, online materials are also good ways to improve reading skills. Below there are useful resources that teachers can use to create exciting and level-appropriate online reading lessons for their students and websites that learners can access themselves.

Breaking News English is a free website that teachers can use to prepare lessons. Full lesson plan materials are provided, along with texts aimed at different levels. These are for teenagers or adults rather than children. All lessons come out every two days and are based on stories currently in the news – as the world's news breaks, the teachers may discuss it with the class using reproducible handouts. The site also offers exercises to improve reading speed. The students may choose a faster or slower speed that best fits their level. This activity helps to develop both reading and speaking skills.

News in Levels is a website and a mobile application that takes authentic news stories and simplifies them for mid and lower levels. Each article is written in three levels. Level 1 has the 1000 most important or often-used words. Level 2 has the 2000 most impor-

tant or often-used words. Level 3 has the 3000 most important or often-used words. While audio/video is available, the written texts provide useful vocabulary in bold. The application is also good for self-study as the words are repeated in one level, so when the students read it every day, they remember them.

Cambridge Assessment English has some free material for learners of different levels. Teachers could adapt this material for classroom use. The activities are usually short and last 5–10 minutes and are best suited to adult learners.

Thus, the online tools for developing listening skills we'd like to recommend you are as follows: https://tedxesl.wordpress.com/about/; https://breakingnewsenglish.com/; https://www.newsinlevels.com/; https://www.cambridgeassessment.org.uk/.

Conclusion. With the right tasks and the right level of support, students enjoy and appreciate the chance to practice reading online. They find it satisfying and motivating, and it adds an extra dimension to the reading skill – the one that is becoming more and more useful in the world beyond the classroom.

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