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Several benefits of reading online

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Abstract. It is no secret that interest in the adoption of innovative technologies in the process of education has really spiked over the last few years. The author proves that its useful for students use the internet resources during their preparing before the seminars on English. Some advice how to choose the online texts for home reading and also some useful tips for working with these texts are described in this article. We give the examples of benefits to getting students to read in their own time with the help of the internet.

Keywords: *computer technologies, reading, online articles, seminar*

The actuality of the article is that nowadays the social and economic developed countries of the world assign very important place in the development of educational system to modern informational technologies, specially to the development of distance learning system. The scientists investigate the problems of informatization of education and forming a person's informational culture in different aspects. Such outstanding scholars as I.E. Bulah, B.S. Gershunskyi, Y.O. Doroshenko, T.V. Karamysheva, L.A. Kartashova, N.M. Lavrychenko, V.V. Lapinskyi, I.I. Markhel, E.S. Polat and many others devoted their works to the problems of using the computer in the process of education.

The goal of the article is to show how computer technologies can be used during seminars in higher educational establishment.

Let's examine the educational process in higher educational establishments. As an associate professor of foreign language department I try to introduce some innovations in the process of learning. It was proved that there are a lot of advantages of using computer technologies during the process of education. Firstly they are very useful for students' effectiveness increase when they study in their own. Secondly such technologies provide with the high level of interactive and enlarge the motivation of education [5].

But on the other hand, some teachers react negatively to new technologies or they are opposed to new innovations being brought in to their classrooms. There are different reasons and the most important is low digital literacy. Without training and support, it seems likely that most teachers will become frustrated with the current trends in education where technology is concerned.

My colleagues pay a lot of attention to reading during their seminars. And we try to supports our students' classroom reading with extra help from the internet. Yet how many of us fill our reading lessons by asking our students to read short extracts and then analyze them profusely? Obviously there are many reading skills which can be developed in the classroom, such as skimming, scanning, and identifying grammar structures and vocabulary in context. However, working on these skills means that our students do not actually spend that much time actually reading. In order to fill this gap, therefore, it is always a good idea to try to motivate them to read more in their own time. In this article I want to describe how we can do this by sending students online articles to support their classroom work.

We believe that reading done in a student's free time, when combined with classwork, can greatly influence their linguistic development. If the free-time reading follows the same theme as the classwork, students can repeat and reinforce vocabulary, and think about the topic from a

different point of view. This is essential for students who need English for higher or further education.

A great way to do this is to send them weekly links to between two and four online articles which support the contents of that day's or week's lessons. For example, if the second year students study the topic "Diseases and Health problems", I would send my students links to some articles connected with this theme - perhaps an article about promoting healthy lifestyles etc. These links could be sent via email or by using an online environment like *Blackboard*, or even *Facebook* as many of my students have *Facebook* accounts [3].

For example, by the end of the second year of study the trainees of foreign language department of our university are expected to understand and respond communicatively to both general and specific information within the range of topics specified by the second year syllabus and presented in the following text types:

- articles;
- reports;
- advertisements;
- original texts of fiction;
- brochures.

Here are some ideas for using online articles in order to support classwork. Students are sent links to the texts and are simply asked to read them. They are told that if they read them, this will support their classwork. However, they are not obliged to do this. So it is up to the teacher to impart a positive attitude about the activity of reading. Many students need to be introduced to the idea that through reading there lies an entire world of new ideas, fantasy and wonderment. Even though the materials for reading may relate to topics according the syllabus, the teacher can play a pivotal role by showing students how the topics in textbooks are carried over into real world outside of the classroom. By providing additional materials for reading such as the internet, the teacher can help make academic subjects come alive.

The texts taken from the internet can be used as the basis for classroom discussion. For example, the students receive links to two texts (e.g. 500-800 words each according the syllabus for second year students): one putting the case for keeping fit and one more skeptical about health problems among teenagers nowadays. They are asked to read the articles and come to the next lesson prepared to discuss their responses. Alternatively, the students could read hard-copy versions of the texts in the classroom and then, in groups, orally summarize what they have read. One student from each group could then present the main points of their article to the rest of the class.

But how to assess the difficulty of a text for a student? Some useful tips:

– **Predicting.** The purpose of this activity is to quickly determine the structure of an article and identify the key ideas. Look at the title of the passage. Think of ten to fifteen words, which you are likely to find in the passage. Now read the passage and check whether the words you predicted actually appeared.

– **Dealing with unfamiliar words.** Building student vocabulary is incredibly important. Pay attention to all unknown words and try to understand or guess their meaning in their immediate context. If you can't do it, use the dictionary. One more useful method is to write out new words into cards and on the back side write down their translation. Learn these words by heart. Study them. Try to find the synonyms and antonyms to each word.

– **Extracting the main ideas.** Read the text through. In your opinion, which of the statements here best sums up its main idea? Understanding of all details isn't necessary. Reading the text which intended for understanding general contents is necessary to understand the main meaning without a dictionary. The reading for extracting the main idea consists of such abilities: to guess about the meaning of unknown words on the basis of wordbuilding signs and context; to see the international words and state their meaning; to find the familiar grammar forms and constructions and state their equivalents in Ukrainian; to use the formulae, the schemes, the pictures which are in the text etc.; to apply knowledge on special subjects as the basis of meaning and language guesses.

– **Reading for specific information.** Read all text again and make notes about the following points. The exact and full understanding of a text carries out by studying reading. The studying reading is the ability to realize the lexical and grammatical analyzes using the methods of special subjects knowledge. The main goal of such reading is the accurate translation of a text into native language. Carrying out such kind of translation one should develop the skills of text interpretation with the help of trade, terminological and abbreviation dictionaries.

– **Editing the text.** You could try to edit the text. This would mean either replacing the words with synonyms or rewriting it completely.

In addition students **complete a diary**, noting down what and how much they read every day. As well as recording the online articles, they can also include anything else they might have read. The contents of the diary could then be used to promote discussion [2].

I would like to pay your attention to the recording new vocabulary items from the other side. A vital aspect of learning new vocabulary is how your students actually record it, and it's very important to show them different ways of doing this. Some learners prefer keeping vocabulary notebooks, others like making lists, still others like cards, charts, diagrams or mindmaps. Some learners may want a translation, and/or an example sentence.

There are also online learning tools that some learners may like, such as *Quizlet*, *Flashcard Machine* or *Cramberry* – these create and store sets of flashcards for memorizing and self-testing vocabulary items. If you google "online flashcards", you'll quickly find these or other similar websites.

The key is to connect what you do in the classroom with that you do for homework. It is also vital to build up a structure that the students can use.

Orchestrating activity with texts in the classroom.

I will try to provide specific suggestions and examples of planning for classroom activity.

In managing the learning the texts in context teachers found that they needed to orchestrate activity according to the flow of the project and the needs of the students. But we would like to pay your attention to a vital aspect of learning. It by doing goes beyond reading itself for it moves into peer discussion activities. The talking which follows reading is an important part of language learning. Proceeding from this we can tell that the teacher's responsibility to ensure:

- whole class consideration of a text (using data projector or interactive white board if available); this is useful for focusing together on textual features or vocabulary and usage which is unfamiliar
- pair or small group work on texts.
- individual or group research and creative work
- student presentations
- review of learning

The students will be expected to employ the reading skills specified in the syllabus, which can be linked into four main categories: understanding gist, understanding detail and text structure, and identifying specific information. You may do it with the help of such exercises [1].

Table 1. The main categories of reading skills

Main Focus	Item Type
Understanding gist	Matching Open-ended short answers Multiple choice Selection from 2 or 3 possible answer
Understanding detail	Multiple choice Labelling Cloze
Identifying specific information	Multiple choice Matching Filling in a table/chart Sorting out events, names, object,t etc.
Understanding text structure	Gapped text Labelling

Sending your students online texts, with or without support, is extremely motivating as students are dealing with authentic, real English and understanding it: they will get a boost from knowing that they are reading articles written for native speakers. They don't waste time looking for information in the worldwide web. We can say that students find such learning meaningful and attractive.

The revision. There are several benefits to getting students to read in their own time. Here are some of them:

- reading more, students can improve their reading speed. By reading as much as possible, students are able to increase their speed of word recognition.
- students can improve their vocabulary by reading. Reading in quantity will help students extend their vocabulary, understand words in context and cope with different forms of words.
- they can practice reading longer texts to increase their reading stamina and to improve their global reading

skills, such as understanding the wider meaning of a text. This is essential for students who need English for higher or further education.

- free-time reading can ensure improvements in general language ability by giving learners the possibility to move from intermediate to more advanced levels of proficiency

The analysis of 65 students reveals that those students who were engaged in such type of learning show better results including also grammar, speaking, writing and using the vocabulary.

Table 2. Percentage of students' language productivity

	Grammatical accuracy Control and range	Lexical Resource Range and appropriacy
High level productivity	73%	76%
Low level productivity	27%	24%

Some useful websites which help the teachers to choose the material for their lessons

www.loudlit.org/

This brilliant site offers a collection of books and poems and is especially good for high-level classes. The texts all come with an audio version, so you can read and listen to them being read aloud at the same time. During the year we have home reading seminars where we discuss authentic texts which were read at home by the students. This is a wonderful resource if you want to get the students to read a book every term, as they don't need to buy it and can access it from the internet and even download the sound file and the text.

www.digitaldialects.com/

This site offers vocabulary exercises in a whole array of language. Each language has a certain number of topics. You can first learn the words by hearing them and being shown illustrations, and then you can check your understanding by doing simple "click on" type exercises. This is a site that is well worth recommending to your students.

www.soudboard.com/

This site has an enormous collection of extracts from films, TV and historical events, which provides excellent listening material for a lesson or useful content for discus-

sions. It would be great for project work. The third year students study such topic as "Cinema". You can use this site for preparing for the seminars. You can choose the extract from a film that the students have seen and to start your lesson by showing it and getting them to go through the story briefly. The students can contextualize it and talk about what part of the film it is from, what happened before and what happened after. Of course, you can then go on to analyze the text and the vocabulary.

Some useful websites which are helpful for students during their homework

www.wordle.net

To get a "wordle" or "word cloud" (a decorative way of displaying a text, which gives more prominence to words which occur most frequency within it), copy and paste a piece of a text into the box and click on "Go". You can customize the front, colors, layout, etc of the wordle when you have created it. Use the resulting wordle for the following activities:

1. The students predict the main words from a text before they read it. Then you wordle it, and they compare their key words with the wordle. Then they read the text.
2. The students predict the content of a text, based on the size of the words in a wordle.
3. The students pick out five words from a wordle and try to connect them to one story/topic etc.

www.wordcount.org/main.php

The WordCount website ranks the 86 800 English words in order of frequency of use. Each word is scaled to reflect its frequency relative to the words that precede and follow it, giving what the site owners call a "visual barometer of relevance". The larger the size of the front, the more frequent the word is. The smaller the front, the more uncommon it is.

www.googlebattle.com

Type in two words and see which has more Google hits. You can ask the students to choose two words – two similar words, for example, and predict which will win the Google Battle.

<http://savethewords.org>

This is very interesting site purely for your pleasure – thousands of rare words that ask to be chosen and adopted.

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Радзиевская О.В. Некоторые преимущества онлайн чтения

Аннотация. Не секрет, что в последние несколько лет значительно возрос интерес к внедрению инновационных технологий в процесс обучения. Автор доказывает, что при подготовке к семинарам по английскому, очень полезно для студентов использовать интернет ресурсы. Предложены некоторые советы по выбору онлайн текстов, а также полезные подсказки для работы с этими текстами. Приводятся примеры преимуществ такого чтения студентами в их свободное время.

Ключевые слова: компьютерные технологии, чтение, онлайн статьи, семинар