РОЗДІЛ 2. ТЕОРІЯ І МЕТОДИКА ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ОСВІТИ

DEVELOPING READING SKILLS IN A FLIPPED CLASS
РОЗВИТОК НАВИЧОК ЧИТАННЯ: МОДЕЛЬ «ПЕРЕВЕРНУТИЙ КЛАС»

Kornytska Yu.A.,
Ph.D.(Pedagogy), Associate Professor,
National Technical University of Ukraine
"Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute"

Developing reading skills is one of the main goals in the university ESP class since nowadays students have to process substantial amounts of information in academic settings and throughout their future career. The current shift in education paradigm challenges teachers to refocus their teaching strategies and adopt new approaches to make the learning process rewarding in the modern context. Flipped class approach is claimed to have a great potential to provide a refreshing view for the ESP teaching and bring the learning process the new level of efficiency. Therefore, the approach is getting more and more attention from practitioners and researchers. Recent researches report a generally positive impact of the model on students learning outcomes, attitudes and level of satisfaction compared to the traditional models. However, developing reading skills and utilizing text-based activities are not very common in a flipped class model since it is highly associated with video. The lack of clarity about feasibility of this mode for developing reading skills and low technical expertise are among the most common reasons why teachers are hesitant to adopt flipped class model in their practice. The current paper presents the list of potential benefits of flipped reading for an ESP course. In addition, the possible option addressing the lack of technical expertise is described. As a solution, the platform Wizer.me is presented in the current paper. The platform offers free tools for designing interactive reading worksheets and provides special features such as adding audio content, video, links and images to the worksheets. The service enables teachers to gain insights on the students' progress and status and offer a feedback. Having user-friendly interface the platform is available to use by the teachers with the basic level of computer literacy.
Key words: *ESP, reading, flipped class, advantages, technical solutions.*

Розвиток навичок читання є однією з ключових цілей курсу англійської мови фахового спрямування оскільки в умовах сьогодення студентам необхідно вміти обробляти зна-чну кількість інформації під час навчання та в майбутньому в професійній діяльності. Нинішня зміна парадигми освіти стимулює викладачів до переорієнтації стратегій викладання та прийняття нових підходів, щоб зробити процес навчання продуктив-ним та відповідним сучасному контексту. Наявні дослідження підходу «переверну-тий клас» підтверджують його значний потенціал для оновлення навчального про-цесу, підвищення його ефективності, зба-гачення й актуалізації. Підхід привертає дедалі більше уваги з боку викладачів-прак-тиків і науковців. Презентуючи позитивні досліджень науковці відзначають загально позитивний вплив моделі навчання «пере-вернутий клас» на результати навчання, ставлення студентів до навчального про-цесу та рівень їх задоволеності результа-тами порівняно з традиційними моделями. Однак, відсутність чіткого розуміння щодо можливостей «перевернутого класу» для розвитку навичок читання та недостатній рівень технічних знань і навичок викладачів є одними з основних перепон для активного та коректного використання моделі в прак-тичній діяльності. На основі теоретичного аналізу актуальних досліджень і практич-ного досвіду в роботі представлений перелік потенційних переваг використання моделі «перевернутий клас» для розвитку нави-чок читання в курсі іноземної мови фахового спрямування. Як технічне рішення в роботі представлено платформу Wizer.me. яка пропонує безкоштовні інструменти для роз-робки інтерактивних завдань та надає спе-ціальні функції, такі як додавання аудіо кон-тенту, відео, посилань та зображень. Сервіс дозволяє користувачам отримати інформа-цію про успішність та прогрес студентів та надавати зворотній зв'язок. Маючи зруч-ний інтерфейс, платформа доступна для використання викладачам з базовим рівнем комп'ютерної грамотності.
Ключові слова: *англійська мова фахового спрямування, читання, перевернутий клас, переваги, технічні рішення.*

Problem statement. Nowadas reading is one the core skills for students, as they have to absorb massive amounts of professionally relevant information in academic settings and throughout their future career. Since English is the global lingua franca, and it is becoming increasingly true as international relations are expanding, the majority of the topical information is provided in English. Therefore, developing reading skills is one of the main goals in the university ESP class. Nowadays, developing reading skills still falls on the premise of regular teaching mode, where students develop their reading skills and work with content under the guidance of a teacher in a class. However, the current shift in education paradigm tasks teachers to refocus their teaching strategies and adopt new approaches to meet new challenges, incorporate facilitative technologies and to provide models and opportunities for effective and ample practical work. In this context, the flipped class approach is getting more and more attention from practitioners and researchers.

Theoretical framework. Recent researches present the flipped class as an approach, which has a great potential to improve students' learning experience and improve the efficiency of the learning process. Several studies report that students appreciate

the opportunity learning in their own pace, prefer flipped mode to traditional modes and feel more satisfied with the learning process and results [1; 3–6; 11]. Having investigated the learning outcomes researches presented better results of students learnt in a flipped mode as compared to students learnt through traditional teaching methods [4; 7; 8; 10]. However, the majority of educators emphasize that, despite reporting positive findings, the approach still requires further theoretical analysis, empirical research on flipped class approach in higher education and investigations of students' attitudes towards it.

Unsolved problems under consideration. Flipped class approach is gaining its popularity in higher education for teaching a wide variety of disciplines and developing different skills. However, developing reading skills and utilizing text-based activities are not very common in a flipped class model since it is highly associated with video. The lack of clarity about feasibility of this mode for developing reading skills and low technical expertise are among the most common reasons why teachers are hesitant to adopt flipped class model in their practice.

The study aims to present the list of potential benefits of flipped reading in ESP course and to report the findings about technical solution for providing out-of-class content, that do not require extra technical expertise and available to use by the teachers with the basic level of computer literacy.

Main body. Having analysed recent studies and experiences, in the current paper we are able to outline six benefits of flipped mode for developing reading skills.

1. Optimization of the in-class time.

Among the major challenges, both for teachers and students, within the ESP course at university are complex curricula and very limited amount of in-class hours. The time spent in the classroom now is not enough for all the explanations and analysis, discussions, collaboration, reflection and assessment. Flipped class format enables students to review the materials before the class and then, having all the fundamental information they participate in interactive learning activities that push them to apply their knowledge in practice [5; 11]. The reserved in-class time may be utilized for teamwork, comprehension tasks, in-depth analysis and discussions, collaborative or individual assignments etc. It provides students with more opportunities for interaction, developing their critical thinking, analysis and problem solving skills [4].

2. Enhancing students' engagement and motivation.

Developing reading skills and utilizing text-based activities are not very common in a flipped class model since it is highly associated with video content. However, reading activities in a flipped model differs from traditional class where reading is assigned as a homework and student's responsibility is not enforced

because in-class activities are based on the same content included in the home assignment. In traditional class student not always complete the reading assignments properly, especially weaker students and students with the highest level. In flipped class, student's accountability for participating in the in-class activities is often built in through out-of-class reading assignments. After individual review of the material students come to the class prepared to ask questions and share the ideas. It is a great opportunity for them to shape the class sessions, which raises the sense of meaning, and engagement, understanding their role in the learning process and capacity to influence it [1; 6; 11]. As the class becomes the place for student-centred interactive environment, where students can develop the skills and employ the theory in practice it addresses in the responsibility for their own learning success [3; 8; 10].

3. Personalized learning.

Teachers are trying hard to manage big classes since each student has different learning abilities. However, reading the students' level of comprehension in real time, monitoring understanding the subject, engaging all the students to class activities, trying to adjust to individual student's needs and peculiarities often leads to "teaching to the middle". The flipped class offers teachers the flexibility in time needed to spend with each student [1; 6]. Everyone can get the portion of attention and layered teacher's support as he or she needs. Since students have an opportunity to review materials in the time, place and pace they need it works for their efficiency and productivity. The chance to go over important or unclear details as often as necessary and out-of-the-class access to the teacher and groupmates lowers the level of frustration and creates positive motivating learning environment. In addition, students who missed classes can catch up with their groupmates faster and easier as all the fundamental material and tasks are available [3-5; 10].

4. Support in building and expending relevant vocabulary.

Vocabulary is an integral part of ESP and it is crucial to build a consistent body of terms that are specific to and occur frequently in their field of study. It also facilitates further personal and professional development making available resources that would otherwise be inaccessible due to the language barrier [2]. Flipped reading activities have a good potential to enforce the process of vocabulary acquisition since the tasks may be enriched by the extra relevant sources. Also, the ability to go over new or difficult lexis as often or long as necessary helps students to reduce stress in class and clear the language barrier for class activities.

5. Relevant and topical content.

In a traditional class, students are exposed to the content on that a teacher offered them in the class-

time. This content usually composed with texts in a coursebook that often claimed to be not topical and relevant since the modern science, technology and business are very dynamic. Flipped content can be richer. Relevant materials predominantly found in English, as it has become lingua franca in many domains, and available on the Internet. With the advance of technology they are easily accessed and could be utilized to enrich learning process and bring learning experience to the new level.

6. Developing critical reading skills.

While technology advances make information available, they also challenge users regarding the selection, analysis and evaluation of information. A critical reader is able to detect bias, prejudice misleading opinion and illogical conclusions, understand different viewpoints and make own judgments and assumptions [9]. Flipped reading offers students an opportunity to explore more accessing multiple sources and this information diversity facilitates the developing of critical reading skills that nowadays are so highly necessitated in academic, social and professional domains.

Since developing reading skills in a flipped mode does not impose passive reading, simple selection of the appropriate text content is not enough. It is crucial to offer activities that motivate and encourage students to invest their time and efforts to read and learn. Students need to understand the sense in the offered activities and connect them to instructional goals. In other case, it will be just another homework exercise. As the major challenge of flipping reading is to avoid passiveness, it necessary to make it interactive.

In our practice, we have a positive experience using Wizer.me. (http://wizer.me./) to design interactive worksheets for flipped reading. It is a platform where teachers can create digital interactive worksheets. It offers free, user-friendly and quick tools for designing and sharing worksheets online and requires only basic level of computer literacy. The service enables teachers to gain insights on the students' progress and status and offer a feedback. Teacher can provide both instruction and practice, which means the service may be used to reinforce the topic or introduce it. To create an interactive worksheet teacher is free to load any appropriate content and then complete it with a variety of tasks. The service offers eight types of tasks: Multiple choice, Blanks, Matching, Open questions, Table, Sorting, Drawing, Fill on an image. Some of this tasks are considered to be a staple of standardized tests, but being properly shaped they can be beneficial for students. The most special features for this tool are the feasibility of recording audio questions, loading pictures as answer options and self-grading. In addition, the service offers the opportunity to enrich the content by adding to worksheets extra links, images, audio and video content.

Conclusions. Flipped class mode has a great potential to foster developing reading skills within an ESP course. Being implemented appropriately and suitably, the approach can enrich the traditional learning process and make it more productive and student-centred. It is compatible with the regular curriculum and has a good potential to reform the traditional time-consuming in-class components of the ESP course and make it more topical and motivating. However, the process of implementing new formats of training requires careful planning, proper design and monitoring the students' and teachers' feedback to detect and correct possible shortcomings.

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