



DOI <https://doi.org/10.32782/3041-1297/2025-2-15>

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MODERN TENDENCIES IN TEACHING READING ONLINE

Abstract. The article examines the transformative evolution of English language reading instruction in digital environments. The research synthesizes current scholarly work to identify key modern tendencies reshaping online ESL/EFL reading education.

The article presents a systematic analysis of contemporary approaches, beginning with adaptive and personalized learning platforms.

Significant emphasis is placed on gamification strategies that transform passive reading into engaging, goal-oriented experiences through progress tracking, achievement systems, and interactive challenges. The integration of multimedia elements represents another major tendency, with platforms now seamlessly blending text, audio, video, and interactive visual components. Collaborative online reading communities emerge as powerful tools for developing critical thinking through platforms like Flipgrid, ClassDojo, and Google Classroom. These environments facilitate cross-cultural exchanges and peer interaction.

The author highlights the shift toward authentic digital texts from real-world sources, emphasizing digital literacy development through current media, professional publications, and diverse online content.

The challenges including digital equity issues, screen fatigue concerns, and the complexity of such interaction are analyzed in the article.

It is emphasized that successful online reading instruction requires balancing technological innovation with fundamental pedagogical principles while maintaining human-centered approaches to teaching and learning in digital environments.

Key words: digital environment, online education, reading instructions, learning platforms.

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СУЧАСНІ ТЕНДЕНЦІЇ НАВЧАННЯ ЧИТАННЯ ОНЛАЙН

Анотація. Статтю присвячено дослідженню еволюції навчання читання англійської мови в цифровому середовищі. Представлено аналіз досліджень провідних методистів для визначення ключових сучасних тенденцій, що формують онлайн-освіту з навчання читання англійської мови.

У статті подано систематичний аналіз сучасних підходів, починаючи з адаптивних та персоналізованих навчальних платформ, що використовують алгоритми штучного інтелекту та машинного навчання для індивідуалізації навчання.

Значна увага приділяється стратегіям гейміфікації, що перетворюють пасивне читання на захопливий, цілеспрямований досвід через відстеження прогресу, системи досягнень та інтерактивні виклики. Інтеграція мультимедійних елементів представляє ще одну важливу тенденцію, коли платформи органічно поєднують текст, аудіо, відео та інтерактивні візуальні компоненти.

Спільні онлайн-спільноти для читання постають як потужні інструменти розвитку критичного мислення через платформи на кшталт Flipgrid, ClassDojo та Google Classroom. Ці середовища сприяють міжкультурному обміну та взаємодії між однолітками.

У статті висвітлено перехід до автентичних цифрових текстів із реальних джерел, підкреслюючи розвиток цифрової грамотності через актуальні медіа, професійні публікації та різноманітний онлайн-контент. Цей підхід поєднує навчання читання з практичним застосуванням, розвиваючи навички критичного оцінювання цифрової інформації.

Окрему увагу приділено певним складнощам та викликам онлайн-навчання, включаючи питання цифрової рівності, проблеми втоми від екранів та складність надання зворотного зв'язку у віртуальних середовищах. Підкреслено, що успішне онлайн-навчання читання вимагає балансу технологічних інновацій з фундаментальними педагогічними принципами, поєднуючи людиноцентричні підходи до викладання та навчання в цифрових середовищах.

Ключові слова: цифрове середовище, дистанційна освіта, методика навчання читання, електронні навчальні платформи.

The landscape of English language education has undergone a dramatic transformation in recent years, with online learning platforms becoming increasingly sophisticated and widely adopted. Teaching reading skills in English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) through digital platforms presents both opportunities and challenges. As educators worldwide adapt to this digital shift, several key tendencies have emerged that are reshaping how reading comprehension and literacy skills are developed in virtual environments.

Recent research has provided valuable insights into these evolving practices. L.J. Zhang has emerged as one of the most cited researchers in EFL reading instruction, contributing significantly to our understanding of effective pedagogical approaches. Xinyue Zuo and Denise Ives conducted a comprehensive methodological review of Technology-Assisted Reading Instruction (TARI) for English Language Learners, providing crucial evidence for the effectiveness of digital approaches. Additionally, Liu, Zhang, and colleagues have conducted mixed-method investigations examining AI-mediated informal digital learning of English and the relationships among motivation, digital learning, and foreign language enjoyment, offering new perspectives on learner engagement in online environments.

The purpose of our paper is to give a brief overview of modern tendencies in teaching reading online, consider their opportunities and possibilities of using them.

Online English reading instruction has moved far beyond simple text-based lessons and static PDF worksheets. Modern approaches leverage multimedia content, interactive technologies, and data-driven personalization to create immersive learning experiences that can rival or even surpass traditional classroom instruction. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the adoption of these technologies, forcing educators to rapidly innovate and discover new methodologies. The war in Ukraine is also the reason many educational institutions shifted to online education because of the security situation.

Having analyzed the latest research, we can define some key modern tendencies:

1. Adaptive and Personalized Learning Platforms

Contemporary online reading instruction increasingly relies on artificial intelligence and

machine learning algorithms to customize learning experiences. These platforms analyze student performance in real-time, adjusting difficulty levels, suggesting appropriate texts, and identifying areas where individual learners need additional support. Leading adaptive learning platforms include **Raz-Plus**, an award-winning reading solution with thousands of leveled readers, lesson plans, worksheets and assessments that automatically adjust to student progress. **Epic Books** uses AI to recommend personalized book selections from its library of 40,000+ titles based on reading level, interests, and past engagement patterns. **Reading Eggs** provides hundreds of adaptive online reading lessons that adjust phonics games and activities based on individual student performance.

Khan Academy offers personalized learning dashboards for kids that track reading progress across multiple skills simultaneously.

Newsela is a differentiated reading platform that takes current news articles and presents them at five different reading levels, with each level having an associated quiz aligned to Common Core ELA Anchor Reading Standards. By using this site the class will be able to read the same article, at the reading level for each learner. The tasks are presented in Multi-Level base, so the texts are of the same content but for different levels. A single news article about climate change, for example, would be available at:

- Elementary level (3rd–4th grade)
- Middle school level (5th–7th grade)
- High school level (8th–12th grade)
- College level
- Max level (original source complexity)

Personalization can help students receive reading materials that match their interests, proficiency levels, and learning objectives, leading to higher engagement and more effective skill development.

2. Gamification and Interactive Elements

Modern online reading programs incorporate game-like elements to maintain student motivation and engagement. These include progress tracking systems, achievement badges, leaderboards, and interactive challenges that transform reading from a passive activity into an engaging, goal-oriented experience.

Interactive reading environments allow students to click on unfamiliar words for instant definitions,

access pronunciation guides, and participate in comprehension activities embedded within the text itself. This immediate feedback and support system helps learners develop independence while building confidence.

The gamification approach has proven particularly effective for younger learners and those who struggle with traditional reading methods. Digital reading platforms now feature story-based adventures where students progress through levels by completing reading comprehension tasks, vocabulary challenges, and writing exercises. Points systems reward consistent practice, while social features allow learners to compete with peers or collaborate in team challenges.

Let us look at some examples from Reading Eggs platform: Children drag words containing specific letters (like “m”) to the correct pictures. For example, **Picture Match Activities**: kids might see pictures of a mouse, moon, and map, and drag the word “mouse” to match the picture.

Letter Grid Game: Children identify specific letters and sounds within a grid format. This helps with letter recognition and phonics skills in an interactive way.

Fast Phonics Mountain Peaks: The program includes 20 fun-filled levels where children learn key phonics skills including letter-sound recognition, blending, and spelling. Each level is a Mountain Peak covering one set of letters with more than 20 exciting activities.

Research indicates that gamified reading instruction can increase engagement; however, successful implementation requires careful balance to ensure that game elements enhance rather than distract from learning objectives.

3. Multimedia Integration

Today’s online reading instruction seamlessly blends text with audio, video, and visual elements. Students can listen to native speaker pronunciations, watch related video content, and interact with infographics and interactive diagrams that support comprehension. This multimodal approach caters to different learning preferences and helps students develop multiple literacy skills simultaneously. Visual learners benefit from graphic organizers and concept maps, while auditory learners can access text-to-speech functionality and listening comprehension activities.

The integration of multimedia elements has revolutionized how complex texts are presented and understood. Interactive timelines help students navigate historical narratives, while 3D models and animations make scientific concepts more accessible. Video introductions provide cultural context for

literary works, and interactive maps enhance geography-related reading materials.

The effectiveness of multimedia integration is supported by cognitive load theory, which suggests that information presented through multiple channels can enhance learning when properly designed.

4. Collaborative Online Reading Communities

Virtual reading communities have emerged as powerful tools for developing reading skills through social interaction. Students participate in online book clubs, discussion forums, and peer review activities that encourage critical thinking and deeper engagement with texts.

These platforms facilitate cross-cultural exchanges, allowing learners from different countries to share perspectives on the same reading materials. This global connectivity enhances cultural understanding while providing authentic contexts for language use.

Flipgrid (now part of Microsoft Teams) serves as a leading video-response platform that allows students to explain their thoughts and show their learning through video, enabling teachers to hear from all students in reading discussions. **ClassDojo** provides classroom management features with behavior tracking and messaging systems that support collaborative reading activities and parent communication about reading progress. **Google Classroom** has become a cornerstone platform for collaborative reading instruction, allowing teachers to share reading materials, create discussion threads, and facilitate peer feedback on reading responses. Students can collaborate on shared documents, participate in reading challenges, and engage in whole-class discussions about texts.

Successful collaborative reading communities require careful moderation and structured activities to ensure productive interactions. Digital platforms become essential to help students engage respectfully and constructively in online discussions about texts and ideas.

5. Microlearning and Flexible Scheduling

Online platforms increasingly offer bite-sized reading lessons that can be completed in 10–15-minute sessions, accommodating busy schedules and shorter attention spans. This microlearning approach allows for more frequent practice and better retention of skills.

Flexible scheduling options enable students to access reading materials and activities at optimal times for their individual learning rhythms, leading to more effective skill development.

The microlearning revolution has fundamentally changed how reading instruction is structured and delivered. Instead of traditional hour-long lessons, content is now segmented into focused modules

that target specific reading skills such as skimming techniques, inference making, or vocabulary building. These micro-sessions can be completed during commute time, lunch breaks, or other brief windows in students' schedules.

Adaptive scheduling algorithms analyze individual learning patterns to suggest optimal study times based on when students demonstrate highest comprehension and retention rates. Some students perform better with early morning reading sessions, while others show peak performance in evening hours. The platform adjusts recommendations accordingly, sending personalized notifications when conditions are favorable for learning.

Spaced repetition principles are integrated into microlearning sequences, ensuring that key concepts and vocabulary are reviewed at scientifically-optimized intervals to maximize long-term retention. Students might encounter the same reading strategy or vocabulary item multiple times across different micro-lessons, each time in a slightly different context to reinforce learning.

Mobile-first design ensures that microlearning modules are optimized for smartphones and tablets, allowing students to continue their reading development anywhere. Offline capabilities enable access to downloaded lessons even without internet connectivity, removing barriers to consistent practice.

Progress tracking across micro-sessions provides detailed analytics on learning patterns, helping both students and instructors identify optimal study habits and areas needing additional attention. Just-in-time learning features allow students to access specific reading strategies or vocabulary support precisely when needed, rather than following a predetermined sequence. This on-demand approach is particularly effective for adult learners who need to immediately apply reading skills in professional or academic contexts.

Sophisticated analytics tools provide detailed insights into student reading behaviors, comprehension patterns, and progress over time. Teachers can track metrics such as reading speed, time spent on different text sections, and common comprehension difficulties.

Modern learning analytics platforms capture granular data about every aspect of the reading process, from eye-tracking patterns to mouse movements, creating comprehensive profiles of individual learning behaviors. Predictive analytics algorithms identify at-risk students before they fall behind by analyzing patterns such as decreased engagement, increased time per question, or changes in accuracy rates. Early warning systems alert instructors to students who may need additional

support, enabling proactive rather than reactive interventions.

Natural language processing tools analyze student-generated responses to reading comprehension questions, identifying common misconceptions and areas where explanation clarity could be improved. This feedback loop helps instructors refine their teaching materials and adjust their instructional approach based on actual student understanding rather than perceived comprehension.

Real-time dashboards provide instructors with immediate insights into class performance, allowing for dynamic lesson adjustments during synchronous online sessions. Teachers can see which students are struggling with specific concepts and provide targeted support without interrupting the flow of the lesson for other students.

Some examples of such boards are *Biblionasium* and *ROAR (Rapid Online Reading Assessment)*. Biblionasium lets you view books students have read, create reading challenges, and track progress. Students can also review and recommend books to their peers. ROAR (Rapid Online Reading Assessment) examines foundational reading skills for students of all ages. Some of the assessments are computer adaptive, so they will give more challenging items to students who are ready for them.

The future of online English reading instruction appears to be moving toward even greater personalization, with AI-powered tutoring systems that can provide individualized support comparable to human instruction. Integration with emerging technologies such as brain-computer interfaces and advanced biometric monitoring may eventually provide real-time insights into cognitive load and comprehension processes, enabling unprecedented levels of instructional optimization.

We concluded that modern tendencies in teaching reading English online reflect a broader shift toward learner-centered, technology-enhanced education that prioritizes engagement, personalization, and authentic application. While challenges remain, the innovative approaches being developed and implemented today are creating new possibilities for effective reading instruction that can reach learners regardless of geographic location or time constraints. The key to success lies in thoughtfully combining technological innovation with sound educational theory, ensuring that the human elements of teaching and learning remain central to the online reading instruction experience.

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Науково-методична

Надійшла до редакції 14.09.2025

Прийнято до публікації 05.10.2025

Опублікована 02.12.2025