

Redefining the Meaning of EFL “Reading” in the New Digital Paradigm

Saturday, 27 July 2024 14:20 (30 minutes)

In recent years, a range of new digital technologies and websites such as Quizlet and Extensive Reading (ER) Central have given instructors an array of new methods for helping students read more effectively, especially in all areas related to vocabulary acquisition and retention. Despite widespread adoption of these new tools, however, the default notion of “reading” remains largely unchanged and still can be defined as scanning and interacting with a block of continuous text on either paper or a screen. In the real world, however, a significant portion of the English text seen or consumed by students’ eyes outside of formal education, is in a non-traditional format. These include infographics, advertisements and posters as well as captions embedded in a movie or in a video-based platform such as *Youtube*, *Tiktok* and *Instagram*. Given this reality, it may be argued that both curriculum creators and instructors need to confront this new paradigm by expanding the meaning of a “reading” source to include these new types of text-based content in reading classes. This presentation will detail how videos with exportable closed captions, infographics with a combination of text and images, and other forms of non-traditional written content can be effectively and seamlessly integrated into a required university reading course focusing on environmental issues and sustainability.

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Session Classification: Parallel Oral Presentations

Track Classification: Teaching Methods and Applied Linguistics