



The Effect of Reading Aloud on Pronunciation and Comprehension in EFL Learners

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Abstract: This study explores the impact of reading aloud on the development of pronunciation and reading comprehension skills among learners of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Reading aloud, a traditional yet often overlooked technique, engages multiple cognitive and sensory channels, reinforcing phonological awareness and improving oral fluency. This paper analyzes how regular guided reading aloud sessions contribute to more accurate pronunciation, intonation, and stress patterns. It also investigates the extent to which reading aloud enhances comprehension by encouraging active engagement with the text. Through a review of relevant literature and classroom-based observations, the study argues that reading aloud is a valuable tool for both linguistic and cognitive development in EFL classrooms.

Keywords: Reading aloud, pronunciation, reading comprehension, EFL learners, oral fluency, phonological awareness, language acquisition, speaking skills, reading strategies

Annotatsiya: Ushbu tadqiqot ingliz tilini chet tili sifatida (EFL) o'rganuvchilar orasida ovoz chiqarib o'qishning talaffuz va o'qishni tushunish ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirishga ta'sirini o'rganadi. Ovoz chiqarib o'qish, an'anaviy, lekin ko'pincha e'tibordan chetda qoladigan texnika, ko'plab kognitiv va hissiy kanallarni o'z ichiga oladi, fonologik ongni mustahkamlaydi va og'zaki ravonlikni yaxshilaydi. Ushbu maqola



muntazam ravishda boshqariladigan ovoz chiqarib o'qish seanslari yanada aniq talaffuz, intonatsiya va stress naqshlariga qanday hissa qo'shishini tahlil qiladi. Shuningdek, u ovoz chiqarib o'qish matn bilan faol ishtirok etishni rag'batlantirish orqali tushunishni qanchalik kuchaytirayotganini o'rganadi. Tegishli adabiyotlarni ko'rib chiqish va sinfga asoslangan kuzatuvlar orqali tadqiqot ovoz chiqarib o'qish EFL sinflarida til va kognitiv rivojlanish uchun qimmatli vosita ekanligini ta'kidlaydi.

Kalit so'zlar: Ovozli o'qish, talaffuz, o'qishni tushunish, EFL o'rganuvchilar, og'zaki ravonlik, fonologik tushuncha, tilni o'zlashtirish, nutq qobiliyatlari, o'qish strategiyalari

Аннотация: В этом исследовании изучается влияние чтения вслух на развитие навыков произношения и понимания прочитанного у изучающих английский как иностранный (EFL). Чтение вслух, традиционный, но часто упускаемый из виду метод, включает в себя несколько когнитивных и эмоциональных каналов, укрепляет фонологическую осведомленность и улучшает беглость речи. В этой статье анализируется, как регулярные контролируемые сеансы чтения вслух способствуют более точному произношению, интонации и ударным моделям. В ней также изучается, в какой степени чтение вслух улучшает понимание, поощряя активное взаимодействие с текстом. С помощью обзора соответствующей литературы и наблюдений в классе исследование подчеркивает, что чтение вслух является ценным инструментом для языкового и когнитивного развития в классах EFL.

Ключевые слова: Чтение вслух, произношение, понимание прочитанного, изучающие английский как иностранный, беглость речи, фонологическая осведомленность, усвоение языка, навыки говорения, стратегии чтения



Introduction:

In recent years, there has been renewed interest in the pedagogical value of reading aloud in foreign language classrooms. While it has long been associated with early literacy development in native language contexts, reading aloud also offers significant benefits for EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners. By vocalizing written language, students not only practice pronunciation and articulation but also internalize grammar structures, improve word recognition, and engage more deeply with the meaning of the text.

Pronunciation and reading comprehension are two critical yet challenging aspects of language acquisition. Many EFL students struggle with accurate pronunciation due to limited phonetic exposure and insufficient speaking practice. At the same time, reading comprehension can be hindered by passive reading habits or limited vocabulary. Reading aloud addresses both issues simultaneously by promoting active participation and reinforcing sound-symbol correspondence.

This paper examines the dual benefits of reading aloud for EFL learners, focusing on its impact on pronunciation accuracy and reading comprehension. Drawing from empirical studies and classroom practices, it highlights how this simple yet powerful strategy can support holistic language development, particularly in beginner and intermediate learners.

Main Body

1. Reading Aloud and Pronunciation Improvement

Reading aloud provides learners with an opportunity to practice the sounds of the language in a structured way. When students vocalize texts, they become more conscious of stress patterns, intonation, rhythm, and articulation. This process strengthens phonemic awareness, which is essential for developing accurate pronunciation.



Studies have shown that regular reading aloud can help learners correct common errors such as mispronunciation of vowel and consonant sounds, incorrect word stress, and unnatural intonation. Moreover, teachers can provide immediate corrective feedback, helping learners to internalize proper pronunciation models.

In addition, repeated reading aloud – where learners practice the same passage multiple times – is particularly effective in improving fluency and automaticity, which in turn leads to more confident oral production.

2. Impact on Reading Comprehension

Reading aloud is not only beneficial for oral skills; it also has a positive influence on reading comprehension. When learners read aloud, they must slow down and process the text more attentively. This slower pace allows them to focus on sentence structure, vocabulary, and meaning.

Furthermore, reading aloud encourages active engagement with the content. Students often ask questions about unfamiliar words, sentence meanings, or the context of the passage. This curiosity leads to deeper cognitive processing, which enhances comprehension and retention.

Research also suggests that reading aloud improves learners’ ability to identify the main idea, make inferences, and recognize discourse markers. These are all critical skills for academic reading and everyday understanding.

3. Cognitive and Affective Benefits

In addition to linguistic gains, reading aloud supports cognitive development by improving attention span, working memory, and concentration. It also fosters self-monitoring skills, as learners must listen to themselves and adjust their performance accordingly.



Affective benefits are equally important. Many EFL learners experience anxiety or lack confidence in speaking. Reading aloud in a supportive environment helps reduce this anxiety and builds self-efficacy. It offers a low-risk setting for oral practice, especially for shy or reserved students.

Group reading activities, such as choral reading or paired reading, also create opportunities for collaborative learning, increasing motivation and classroom participation.

4. Challenges and Limitations

Despite its advantages, reading aloud is sometimes criticized or neglected in modern communicative classrooms. One challenge is that some learners may become overly focused on pronunciation, neglecting the meaning of the text. Another concern is that excessive correction by teachers can lead to embarrassment or decreased motivation.

Additionally, reading aloud may be less effective if students are not familiar with the vocabulary or grammar of the passage, which could hinder fluency and comprehension. Therefore, it is important for instructors to choose level-appropriate texts and provide pre-reading support.

Finally, reading aloud should be balanced with other skills (e.g., silent reading, listening, speaking tasks) to ensure a well-rounded language learning experience.

5. Pedagogical Strategies for Implementing Reading Aloud Effectively

To maximize the benefits of reading aloud, teachers must implement it strategically. Simply asking students to read aloud without support can lead to mechanical reading and missed learning opportunities. Effective practices include:

- **Model Reading by the Teacher:** Teachers should first model proper pronunciation, intonation, and pacing before asking students to read. This sets a clear standard and provides auditory input.



- **Echo Reading:** In this technique, the teacher reads a sentence or phrase aloud, and students repeat it. This reinforces correct pronunciation and rhythm, especially for younger or lower-level learners.
- **Paired and Group Reading:** Peer-supported reading helps students feel less anxious and builds cooperation. They can correct each other, discuss meaning, and share pronunciation tips in a collaborative environment.
- **Use of Audio Support:** Allowing learners to listen to native speakers (via audiobooks or text-to-speech tools) before or after reading aloud helps reinforce correct sounds and patterns.
- **Focus on Expressive Reading:** Encouraging learners to read with emotion and expression enhances comprehension, especially in narrative or dialogue-rich texts. This also helps learners internalize sentence-level meaning.

6. Teachers’ Role in Monitoring and Feedback

The role of the teacher is essential in guiding reading aloud sessions to ensure linguistic growth. Teachers should:

- Provide constructive and timely feedback, focusing on common pronunciation issues without interrupting fluency.
- Use formative assessment techniques, such as observation checklists, to monitor student progress in pronunciation and comprehension.
- Differentiate tasks based on learners’ proficiency levels. Advanced learners can be challenged with longer or more complex texts, while beginners may start with simple, repetitive language.
- Encourage self-assessment and peer-assessment, prompting students to reflect on their own pronunciation and comprehension skills after reading.



By fostering a supportive environment and integrating reading aloud with other language skills, teachers can ensure that it becomes a purposeful and rewarding activity.

7. Integration with Other Language Skills

Reading aloud is most effective when integrated with listening, speaking, writing, and silent reading tasks. For example:

- Pre-reading tasks such as vocabulary previews and prediction exercises prepare learners to read more fluently.
- Post-reading discussions can deepen comprehension and encourage speaking practice.
- Students can write summaries or personal reflections after reading, reinforcing vocabulary and grammar in context.
- Recording their own voices and listening back allows learners to self-correct and track progress over time.

By embedding reading aloud into a larger skills-based curriculum, educators can make it both meaningful and motivating.

Conclusion

Reading aloud remains a powerful yet underutilized strategy in EFL education. It plays a dual role by simultaneously developing learners' pronunciation and reading comprehension skills. Through the process of vocalizing written language, students become more attuned to the sound system of English, allowing them to improve their phonological awareness, fluency, and spoken confidence. Moreover, reading aloud encourages active engagement with texts, supporting better comprehension and critical thinking.

For reading aloud to be truly effective, teachers must implement it with clear goals, appropriate scaffolding, and learner-centered strategies. Activities such as teacher



modeling, echo reading, peer reading, and integration with listening and writing tasks ensure that learners derive maximum benefit from this practice. In addition, regular feedback and opportunities for self-assessment can foster long-term improvement in both oral and cognitive aspects of language learning.

As EFL instruction continues to evolve with digital tools and communicative methods, reading aloud should not be seen as outdated. Instead, it should be reimagined as a dynamic, interactive component of a balanced language learning program.

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