

Investigating the Relationship between Comprehension and sound

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Abstract

Reading comprehension is the ability to read text and understanding its meaning. One of the ways for understanding the meaning is reading aloud. Furthermore, reading aloud improved our vocabulary and comprehension. Reading aloud is the best practice for retention. The sample of the study consisted of 30 students chosen from Goyesh institute in the region of Isfahan. The subjects were divided into two groups. The researcher takes the pretest for selecting the same level. The first group read the short stories slowly, however, the second group read the short story loudly and at last both of them answer to the comprehension question. After that the researcher prepared some questions based on the short stories. The collected data were analyzed through Statistical description for Social Science (SPSS, version 13.0). Descriptive analysis in the form of percentage was computed. Result showed that the second group answers the question better than the first (read short story slowly). This indicated that reading aloud by the teacher may have a significant positive effect on learners' reading comprehension and retention the vocabulary and also motivate them for more reading. The researcher suggested read-aloud instruction for teaching vocabulary and comprehension was a good way and also it facilitated word learning.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, EFL learners, Reading aloud, vocabulary development, facilitate

Introduction

The relationship between sounds and their graphic representations should receive major stress as soon as the written word is introduced. Early in a beginning course, much time should be spent on the relationship between sounds and their written symbols and vice versa through reading aloud and dictation practice. Reading aloud to establish the connection between the pronunciation of a sound and its written symbol should be limited to the initial stages of second language learning for most students. The reading goal is to read for meaning or to recreate the writer's meaning. Reading to improve pronunciation, practice grammatical forms, and study vocabulary do not constitute reading at all, because by definition, reading involves comprehension. When readers are not comprehending, they are not reading (Chastain, 1988-1976).

Another important factor that influence on reading in addition to the reading aloud is the length. Language teachers usually favor short reading passages. This tendency may have its roots in a desire not to overload the students, but it probably is an outgrowth of the idea of reading as a laborious process of deciphering a complex and sometimes unfamiliar linguistic code for which the students were required to know all the grammar and vocabulary (Chastain, 1988-1976).

Reading aloud establishes a mutual relationship between the teacher and the students through encountering the same stories and characters and experiencing common reactions towards the events. Rog (2001) states that reading stories aloud also means to develop children's "concepts about print, story structure, and other elements of text" and "provides the child with a wealth of information about the processes and functions of written language" (p.49). It develops children's attention span and listening skills Dragan (2001), and improves the precision of recall, sequencing ability and ease in writing (Reed, 1987). Moreover, McCarrier (2001) point out that read aloud stories introduce students to new topics that they can use when they engage in writing and provide a

good model of how writers express their thoughts .Terblanche (2002) explains that reading aloud also expands children's repertoire and teaches a large number of new vocabulary words in context rather than in isolation Franzese (2002) which affects their reading ability as teachers involve them in discussions about the content of the book.

Reading aloud has positive effects on the development of reading comprehension and vocabulary. Reading comprehension has been shown to improve in meaningful ways when read-aloud is used regularly in the classroom. Reading aloud to students can be used proactively to avoid problems in reading such as poor vocabulary and lack of comprehension and motivation towards reading in general and would guarantee reading success. In addition, Needlman (2004) asserts that there are many good reasons to read aloud to students. These include: (1) reading together is fun; (2) reading aloud keeps interest high; (3) reading aloud is especially important if your child is having difficulty learning to read; (4) reading aloud builds listening skills; (5) reading aloud builds vocabulary; (6) stories are the building blocks of imagination and (7) stories help teach character.

Literature Review

Reading is an important language skill and a highly complicated act that everyone must learn. Reading is not solely a single skill but a combination of many skills and processes in which the readers interact with printed words and texts for content and pleasure.

Recently many research papers were conducted to ascertain the effectiveness of the reading aloud strategy in schools and universities. Although reading aloud receives considerable emphasis in English as a first language, EFL teachers traditionally discourage it. Reading aloud, in fact, is particularly important for EFL learners at the early stage of learning second language. Beginning readers tend to read word by word. Reading aloud helps them read larger semantic units rather than focusing on graphic cues. Numerous scholars believe students especially at the first grade learning second language can benefit from listening to reading (Alna, 1999, Erikson, 1995, Genisio and Soundy, 1994, Isbell et al., 2004 and Meyer, 1995). Also, Trelease (1994), found that students who had a story read aloud to them by the teacher and then asked to complete several artistic assignments produced more creative work than their counterparts who saw the movie version of the same story. Vivas (1996) studied the effect of systematic reading aloud on language comprehension and language production of pre-school and first grade children. The findings of the study showed that reading aloud by the teacher may have a significant positive effect on learners' reading comprehension and developed vocabulary .Amer (1997) investigated the effect of the teacher's reading aloud on the reading comprehension of EFL students reading a story. The researcher in the study showed that, the experimental group read aloud to them by the teacher, whereas the control group read silently. Results showed that the experimental group performed better than control group measurement. This indicated that reading aloud by the teacher may have a significant positive effect on learners' reading comprehension and retention the vocabularies.

Methodology

The sample of the study consisted of 30 students chosen from Goyesh institute in the region of Isfahan. The researcher takes the pretest for selecting the same level for each group. The first group read the short stories slowly without any sound, however, the second group read the short story loudly and at last both of them answers to the comprehension question .The population of the study consisted of male and female students in Goyesh institute. Then, the 30 students were chosen into experimental and control groups at the same level and each group consisted of 15 students. The researcher chose a passage from Ackert (2000).The passage were chosen according to length and difficulty level. The students were instructed to read the passage and answer the questions .Moreover, the researcher also developed a 10 item multiple choice test on a reading passage .The

items had four choice only one of choice is correct .The test was designed and administrated by the researcher. The main purpose of the questions were acquisition vocabulary and comprehension the texts. The questionnaire was distributed among students. The collected data were analyzed through Statistical description for Social Science (SPSS, version 13.0). Descriptive analysis in the form of percentage was computed. Quantitative analysis and percentage were used in study and compare the two groups with each other.

Discussion and Conclusion

Table 1: The item percentage of the questionnaire among control and experimental group

Item	Control group		Experimental group	
	Incorrect	correct	Correct	incorrect
1	10 66%	5 33%	13 86%	2 13%
2	14 93%	1 6.6%	15 100%	0 0%
3	7 46%	8 53%	13 86%	2 13%
4	13 86%	2 13%	14 93%	1 6.6%
5	13 86%	2 13%	13 86%	2 13%
6	14 93%	1 6.6%	14 93%	1 6.6%
7	12 80%	3 20%	15 100%	0 0%
8	8 53%	7 46%	12 80%	3 20%
9	11 73%	3 20%	15 100%	0 0%
10	13 86%	2 13%	15 100%	0 0%

According to the table (1), the experimental group has positive attitudes toward comprehension and vocabulary tests. Moreover the experimental group improved in vocabulary development and comprehension. The data analyzed via the statistical SPSS software and percentage , the students who were taught through read aloud method (experimental group)would show better achievement in answering questions than those who were taught through the traditional method or silent way (control group). The result showed that using read-aloud has positive effects that helped students develop their comprehension and vocabulary .It increased interest in reading texts , motivated in reading aloud and strengthen self-confidence .Read –aloud gave even poor readers to show their abilities. The study showed that reading aloud to students helped them to develop understanding of the reading process and build vocabulary in their mind and identify reading as an enjoyable activity .The positive effects of reading –aloud were transferred to the students where students scored higher in comprehension than those who did not participate in this way .Furthermore ,the findings of the study indicated that using the oral voice like reading-aloud more positive responses than those independent reading without read-aloud Addressing these and other research questions will enable researchers and teachers to take better advantage of reading

aloud as an effective use of instructional time and as a powerful tool for enhancing students' language development and literacy learning .

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