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HOW TO BOOST READING COMPREHENSION OF YOUNG LEARNERS THROUGH INTERACTIVE READ-ALOUD STRATEGY

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Abstract: This article discusses how reading comprehension plays a vital role in the acquisition of a foreign language, particularly for young learners and explains an effective strategy – read-aloud for improving reading comprehension in a foreign language. The research compared an experimental group using an interactive read-aloud strategy with a control group taught through traditional Grammar–Translation Method. The results indicate that students who were motivated to read aloud reading texts showed significantly higher comprehension rates and a greater ability to learn new vocabulary compared to the control group. Furthermore, the study proved that implementing this strategy reduced learner anxiety and improved students’ fluency. These findings suggest that incorporating read –aloud strategy into the curriculum is not only a motivational tool but also allows teachers to model comprehension strategies and correct misunderstandings immediately.

Key words: foreign language, reading comprehension, read-aloud strategy, questions, predictions, discussions, fluency, independent learning, motivation.

INTERFAOL OVOZ CHIQARIB O‘QISH STRATEGIYASI ORQALI YOSH O’QUVCHILARNING O‘QISHNI TUSHUNISH MAHORATINI QANDAY O‘STIRISH MUMKIN

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada o'qishni tushunish chet tilini o'zlashtirishda, ayniqsa yosh o'quvchilar uchun qanday muhim rol o'ynashi muhokama qilinadi va chet tilida o'qishni tushunishni yaxshilash uchun samarali strategiya - ovoz chiqarib o'qish tushuntiriladi. Tadqiqot interaktiv ovoz chiqarib o'qish strategiyasidan foydalangan holda eksperimental guruhni an'anaviy Grammatika-Tarjima usuli orqali o'qitiladigan nazorat guruhi bilan taqqosladi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, ovoz chiqarib o'qish matnlarini o'qishga undagan talabalar nazorat guruhiga qaraganda ancha yuqori tushunish ko'rsatkichlarini va yangi lug'atni o'rganish qobiliyatini ko'rsatdilar. Bundan tashqari, tadqiqot shuni ko'rsatdiki, ushbu strategiyani amalga oshirish o'quvchilarning tashvishlarini kamaytiradi va talabalarning

ravonligini yaxshilaydi. Ushbu topilmalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, o'quv dasturiga ovoz chiqarib o'qish strategiyasini kiritish nafaqat motivatsion vosita, balki o'qituvchilarga tushunish strategiyalarini modellashtirish va tushunmovchiliklarni darhol tuzatishga imkon beradi.

Kalit so'zlar: chet tili, o'qishni tushunish, ovoz chiqarib o'qish strategiyasi, savollar, bashoratlar, muhokamalar, ravonlik, mustaqil ta'lim, motivatsiya.

КАК ПОВЫСИТЬ ПОНИМАНИЕ ПРОЧИТАННОГО У МОЛОДЫХ УЧАЩИХСЯ С ПОМОЩЬЮ ИНТЕРАКТИВНОЙ СТРАТЕГИИ ЧТЕНИЯ В СЛУХ

Аннотация: В данной статье рассматривается, как понимание прочитанного играет важную роль в освоении иностранного языка, особенно для молодых учащихся, и объясняется эффективная стратегия – чтение вслух – для улучшения понимания прочитанного на иностранном языке. В исследовании сравнивалась экспериментальная группа, использующая интерактивную стратегию чтения вслух, с контрольной группой, обучавшейся по традиционному грамматико-переводному методу. Результаты показывают, что учащиеся, мотивированные к чтению вслух, продемонстрировали значительно более высокие показатели понимания и большую способность к усвоению новой лексики по сравнению с контрольной группой. Кроме того, исследование доказало, что внедрение этой стратегии снижает тревожность учащихся и улучшает беглость чтения. Эти результаты свидетельствуют о том, что включение стратегии чтения вслух в учебную программу является не только мотивационным инструментом, но и позволяет учителям демонстрировать стратегии понимания и немедленно исправлять недоразумения.

Ключевые слова: иностранный язык, понимание прочитанного, стратегия чтения вслух, вопросы, прогнозы, дискуссии, беглость чтения, самостоятельное обучение, мотивация.

Introduction

Reading comprehension is a fundamental component of foreign language learning that enables learners to construct meaning from written texts. [38] Reading comprehension also fosters **vocabulary development** in foreign language learning. Through reading, young learners are exposed to new words in specific meaningful contexts, and this helps them to understand usage, collocations, and nuances of meaning. Compared to isolated vocabulary lists, reading motivates learners to encounter words repeatedly and naturally, strengthening long-term retention. [39] Furthermore, reading comprehension has contribution to the acquisition of **grammar and sentence structures**. Through reading well-constructed texts, learners can internalize patterns of the target language, including word order, verb forms, and

[38] Grabe, W. (2009). ***Reading in a second language: Moving from theory to practice***. Cambridge University Press.
[39] Nation, I. S. P. (2001). ***Learning vocabulary in another language***. Cambridge University Press.

connectors.[40]This implicit learning supports both written and spoken language development. In addition, reading comprehension enhances **cognitive and metalinguistic awareness**. When young learners successfully understand foreign language texts, they begin to notice similarities and differences between their first language and the target language, which supports deeper language processing and overall language competence.[41] Moreover, reading comprehension promotes **independent learning and motivation**. Learners who can understand texts can feel a sense of achievement, which increases confidence and encourages further engagement with the foreign language. This positive attitude is particularly important for young learners, who benefit from enjoyable and meaningful learning experiences. For these reasons, improving reading comprehension of learners from very young age matters both academically and practically. As reading comprehension support vocabulary, grammar, and overall language proficiency, young learners need strong comprehension skills early for long-term success. Since poor comprehension hinder foreign language acquisition. Unfortunately, thanks to lack of attention to organize some strategies to boost reading comprehension in classrooms, although many young learners can decode words in reading passages, they fail to understand meaning. Many teachers still use traditional methods like translation or memorization rather than comprehension. Thus, doing some research in terms of how to address these issues and improve overall reading comprehension of young leaners is really a necessary issue. This article aims to highlight the importance of reading comprehension in foreign language acquisition and to discuss an effective strategy- read –aloud for enhancing this skill among young learners.

Methodology

This study employed an experimental group taught through Read-aloud strategy and a control group in which traditional translation methods were taught. The main aim was to measure the causal effect of interactive read-aloud instruction on reading comprehension among young learners compared to traditional instruction. The sample population of this research included 24 young learners aged 8-9 who were selected from School 16 in Norin district. Participants were divided into an Experimental Group and a Control Group. To ensure initial equivalence, placement was organized according to reading comprehension tests which were balanced for the students age and it was demonstrated that all students showed below-average reading comprehension levels in initial assessments. The participants were 8-9 years old students with two years of prior English study. As research materials age-appropriate narrative or informational passages, and pre-test and post-test with literal and inferential questions were used. In the experimental group 3 sessions were organized every week for 4 weeks. To organize a Read-aloud strategy in the experimental group, a teacher followed three stages: pre-reading, during reading and post reading stages. In the first stage – pre-reading stage- the teacher introduced the text topic, and then explained key vocabulary and comprehension strategy – predicting and questioning. Following this, in the next – during

[40] Ellis, R. (2002). ***The study of second language acquisition***. Oxford University Press.
[41] Cummins, J. (2000). ***Language, power, and pedagogy***. Multilingual Matters.

reading stage the teacher read aloud and paused to model thinking aloud in order to show how to predict, ask questions, infer meaning. Finally, the teacher encouraged learners to share their thoughts. In the final stage – post reading- the teacher encouraged students to retell the story and answer comprehension questions. They also discussed key vocabulary and ideas. By contrast, at this time, in the control group, learners were taught reading through traditional methods – grammar translation. To measure students' progress in reading comprehension pre and post-test scores of students in both groups were compared. In addition, the participation, engagement and strategy use of students were recorded and colleagues- teachers who were asked to observe the lessons were encouraged to give feedbacks. Pre-test and post-test scores were compared using descriptive statistics to identify changes in comprehension performance. Observation data were analyzed qualitatively to examine learner engagement and strategy use.

Results

This section reveals the findings of the study by comparing the reading comprehension performance of the experimental and control groups before and after the instructional intervention. The results are based on pre-test and post-test scores as well as classroom observation data and other teachers' feedbacks. The pre-test results indicated that both the experimental group and the control group demonstrated below-average reading comprehension levels at the beginning of the study. At the beginning of the study, students in both groups scored 70% on average in doing reading comprehension questions. The scores of the two groups were relatively similar, showing no significant difference in reading comprehension ability prior to the intervention. This confirmed that the two groups were equivalent at the start of the experiment and suitable for comparison. After four weeks, the post-test results showed a noticeable difference in reading comprehension performance between the two groups. The experimental group, which received instruction through the read-aloud strategy, showed a clear improvement, achieving 87% in both literal and inferential comprehension questions. Besides, learners demonstrated better understanding of main ideas, details, and implied meanings in the reading passages more easily. In contrast, the control group, which was taught using traditional grammar-translation methods, showed only a slight improvement in post-test scores – 72%. While some learners improved in word recognition and sentence-level understanding, their overall comprehension gains were limited compared to those of the experimental group. Classroom observations further supported the test results. Learners in the experimental group were more actively engaged during reading passages. They participated actively in predicting, questioning, and retelling activities, and they showed increased confidence in expressing their ideas. Students also demonstrated greater use of comprehension strategies introduced during the read-aloud sessions. Feedbacks given from observing teachers indicated that learners in the experimental group were more motivated and attentive during reading activities. In contrast, learners in the control group were generally less interactive and relied more on teacher explanations and translation.

Discussion

The aim of this study was to measure the efficiency of Read-aloud strategy in reading comprehension. The findings indicated that this strategy is really helpful not only improving reading comprehension of young leaners, but also it increased students' engagement and motivation towards reading questions. This improvement may be attributed to the teacher's modeling of comprehension strategies such as predicting, questioning, and inferring during reading. By thinking aloud, the teacher made invisible cognitive processes visible, enabling learners to understand how meaning is constructed while reading. This supports the view that comprehension is an active and strategic process rather than a passive decoding activity. It suggests that traditional methods focus primarily on word-level understanding and sentence translation, which may have restricted learners' ability to construct overall meaning from texts. While such methods may support vocabulary recognition, they do not adequately promote higher-level comprehension skills, such as inference and critical thinking. However, as this study was organized in relatively small and drawn from a single school context, which may affect generalizability, it may have several limitations that need direction for future inquiry.

Conclusion

This study was conducted examine the impact of the read-aloud strategy on the reading comprehension of young foreign language learners. The findings of this study clearly indicate that interactive read-aloud instruction is more effective than traditional grammar-translation methods in improving learners' reading comprehension skills. The findings demonstrated that learners in the experimental group showed greater improvement in understanding both literal and inferential meanings in texts. In addition to improved comprehension performance, these learners displayed higher levels of engagement, motivation, and use of reading strategies. These outcomes suggest that read-aloud instruction supports not only comprehension development but also positive learning attitudes among young learners. This study highlights the essence of using interactive and meaning-focused approaches in foreign language reading instruction, especially at an early age. Read-aloud strategies provide learners with meaningful exposure to language, encourage active participation, and help learners to develop essential comprehension skills that support long-term language learning success. Although the study was conducted in a limited scale, findings of this study can be concluded as valuable insights for classroom practice and future researchers and EFL teachers can explore the long-term effects of read-aloud strategy across different age groups and proficiency level adjusting some components.

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