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LINGUISTIC AND PSYCHOLINGUISTIC FOUNDATIONS OF READ-ALOUDS IN TEACHING ENGLISH

Annotation

Read-alouds have been widely recognized as an effective pedagogical tool in English language teaching (ELT), fostering listening comprehension, vocabulary development, and literacy skills among young learners. This article explores the linguistic and psycholinguistic foundations that underpin the use of read-alouds in ELT, drawing from theories of language acquisition, cognitive processing, and literacy development. A mixed-methods approach was employed, involving a small-scale experimental study with young learners aged 8-11 to assess the impact of read-alouds on language development. Results indicate that read-alouds significantly enhance phonological awareness, syntactic processing, and semantic comprehension while promoting engagement and interactive learning.

Key words: Read-alouds, linguistic foundations, psycholinguistic foundations, reading literacy development, young learners.

INGLIZ TILI O'QITISHDA OVOZ CHIQARIB O'QISH METODINING LINGVISTIK VA PSIXOLINGVISTIK ASOSLARI

Annotatsiya

Ovoz chiqarib o'qish ingliz tilini o'qitishda (ELT) samarali pedagogik vosita sifatida keng e'tirof etilgan bo'lib, yosh o'quvchilarda tinglab tushunish, so'z boyligini rivojlantirish va o'qish savodxonligini rivojlantiradi. Mazkur maqolada tilni o'zlashtirish, kognitiv va savodxonlikni rivojlantirish nazariyalaridan kelib chiqib, ingliz tili o'qitishda ovoz chiqarib o'qitish metodining lingvistik va psixolingvistik asoslari o'rganilgan. Ovoz chiqarib o'qishning ingliz tilini o'rganishga ta'sirini baholash uchun 8-11 yoshli o'quvchilar bilan kichik eksperimental tadqiqotni o'z ichiga olgan aralash usullar yondashuvi qo'llanildi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatadiki, ovoz chiqarib o'qish fonologik ongni, sintaktik va semantik tushunishni sezilarli darajada oshiradi, shu bilan birga tilni faol va interaktiv tarzda o'rganishni rag'batlantiradi.

Kalit so'zlar: Ovoz chiqarib o'qish, lingvistik asoslar, psixolingvistik asoslar, o'qish savodxonligini rivojlantirish, o'quvchilar.

ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЕ И ПСИХОЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЕ ОСНОВЫ ЧТЕНИЯ ВСЛУХ ПРИ ПРЕПОДАВАНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

Аннотация

Чтение вслух широко признано эффективным педагогическим инструментом в преподавании английского языка (ELT), способствующим аудированию, развитию словарного запаса и навыкам грамотности среди учащихся младшего возраста. В этой статье рассматриваются лингвистические и психолингвистические основы, лежащие в основе использования чтения вслух в ELT, опираясь на теории усвоения языка, когнитивной обработки и развития грамотности. Был использован подход смешанных методов, включающий небольшое экспериментальное исследование с учащимися младшего возраста в возрасте 8-11 лет для оценки влияния чтения вслух на развитие языка. Результаты показывают, что чтение вслух значительно улучшает фонологическую осведомленность, синтаксическую обработку и семантическое понимание, одновременно способствуя вовлеченности и интерактивному обучению.

Ключевые слова: Чтение вслух, лингвистические основы, психолингвистические основы, развитие грамотности чтения, учащиеся младшего возраста.

Introduction. Read-alouds play a fundamental role in English language instruction by exposing learners to fluent reading, authentic pronunciation, and rich linguistic input. The practice aligns with key linguistic and psycholinguistic theories of language acquisition, including Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis and Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory, which emphasize the importance of meaningful, comprehensible input and interactive learning.

The use of read-alouds in teaching English is particularly beneficial for language learners, as it facilitates exposure to complex syntactic structures, pronunciation patterns, and contextual vocabulary acquisition. By engaging with well-structured and expressive oral readings, students develop their phonemic awareness and listening comprehension, both of which are critical for second language development (Beck & McKeown, 2001). Furthermore, read-alouds serve as an effective means of fostering engagement and motivation in learners by making reading a shared and interactive experience (Trelease, 2019).

Beyond language learning, read-alouds also contribute to cognitive and socio-emotional development. The interactive nature of read-alouds allows students to engage in discussions, make predictions, and ask questions, fostering critical thinking and analytical skills (Fisher, Flood, Lapp, & Frey, 2004). Additionally, when teachers model expressive reading, they

provide students with an example of fluent and prosodic speech, which enhances their ability to internalize pronunciation and rhythm.

Given the increasing emphasis on communicative language teaching (CLT) and student-centered learning, integrating read-alouds into ELT classrooms aligns with modern pedagogical approaches. This article explores the linguistic and psycholinguistic foundations of read-alouds, providing a theoretical and empirical framework for their implementation in ELT.

Literature Review. Linguistic theories provide a fundamental framework for understanding the effectiveness of read-alouds in English language teaching. Read-alouds expose learners to essential linguistic components, including phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics, which are integral to language acquisition (Pinker, 1994). Phonological awareness is particularly enhanced through exposure to sound patterns, intonation, and rhythm in speech, which strengthens students' ability to decode and pronounce words accurately (Rasinski, 2003). Additionally, read-alouds contribute to syntactic and grammatical development by exposing learners to complex sentence structures and variations in syntax, allowing them to internalize rules of language formation and use (Beck & McKeown, 2001). Furthermore, the semantic richness found in

read-aloud texts aids vocabulary acquisition by providing meaningful contexts that reinforce word meanings and encourage deeper comprehension (Elley, 1989).

From a psycholinguistic perspective, read-alouds support cognitive processes involved in language learning, including lexical access, working memory enhancement, and the development of comprehension strategies. Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis suggests that learners acquire language best when exposed to comprehensible input that is slightly beyond their current proficiency level. Read-alouds serve as a valuable source of such input, particularly when accompanied by teacher scaffolding and discussion. Moreover, Sweller's (1994) Cognitive Load Theory emphasizes the importance of reducing extraneous cognitive load in learning. Read-alouds facilitate comprehension by allowing learners to focus on meaning rather than struggling with decoding, thereby promoting efficient information processing. Another significant psycholinguistic aspect of read-alouds is their role in interactive learning and scaffolding. Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) suggests that learners benefit most from guided instruction that bridges the gap between what they can do independently and what they can achieve with support. Read-alouds provide such scaffolding through teacher modeling, guided questioning, and interactive discussions, fostering an engaging and supportive learning environment (Fisher, Flood, Lapp, & Frey, 2004).

Empirical studies further highlight the positive impact of read-alouds on various aspects of language learning. Elley (1989) conducted a study on vocabulary acquisition and found that children who were exposed to read-alouds demonstrated significantly higher vocabulary gains than those who engaged in silent reading. Similarly, Brabham and Lynch-Brown (2002) explored the effects of interactive read-alouds on listening comprehension and reported improved student engagement and understanding of the text. Rasinski (2003) examined the relationship between read-alouds and fluency development, concluding that exposure to expressive and fluent reading enhances pronunciation, prosody, and overall reading fluency. These studies collectively underscore the cognitive, linguistic, and pedagogical benefits of integrating read-alouds into English language teaching.

Practical Implications of Read-Alouds. Read-alouds can be implemented in ELT classrooms in various ways to maximize their effectiveness. Teachers can integrate pre-reading activities such as activating background knowledge and introducing key vocabulary to facilitate comprehension. For example, before reading *Charlotte's Web*, teachers can discuss farm life and introduce key terms like "barn," "web," and "friendship." During read-alouds, educators should model fluent reading, use expressive intonation, and encourage student participation through predictions and discussions. For instance, pausing at a suspenseful moment in *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* allows students to predict what will happen next.

Post-reading activities, including summarization, storytelling, and dramatization, can further reinforce comprehension and linguistic development. For example, after reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, young learners can sequence the story using picture cards. Additionally, incorporating digital tools such as audiobooks and interactive reading applications can enhance student engagement. Platforms like Epic! or Audible provide access to professional narrations that support listening skills.

Teachers may also utilize differentiated instruction by selecting texts of varying complexity levels and providing visual aids, ensuring accessibility for all learners. A teacher might use *The Cat in the Hat* for beginners and *The Giver* for advanced learners to scaffold understanding appropriately. Collaborative learning approaches, such as small-group discussions, peer questioning, and reciprocal teaching strategies, can encourage deeper interaction with the text and promote language production. Performance-based assessments, including student-led storytelling, role-playing, and creative writing tasks, can help measure comprehension and engagement while fostering critical thinking and creativity.

Furthermore, teachers should consider cultural relevance when selecting read-aloud materials, ensuring that texts resonate with students' backgrounds and experiences to increase motivation and personal connections. Integrating cross-curricular content into read-alouds can support interdisciplinary learning, allowing students to explore themes related to science, history, and social issues through engaging narratives.

Research Methodology. We employed a mixed-methods approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative research methods. A quasi-experimental design was used to assess the effectiveness of read-alouds in English language learning among young learners. Participants included 30 EFL learners aged 8 to 11, divided into experimental and control groups. The experimental group received structured read-aloud sessions over a 12-week period, while the control group engaged in silent reading activities.

Data collection involved pre-tests and post-tests measuring vocabulary acquisition, listening comprehension, and fluency development. Additionally, classroom observations and teacher interviews were conducted to gain qualitative insights into student engagement and participation during read-aloud activities.

Results and Discussion. Statistical analysis of pre-test and post-test scores indicated that young learners in the experimental group demonstrated significant improvements in vocabulary retention ($p < 0.05$), listening comprehension ($p < 0.01$), and reading fluency ($p < 0.05$) compared to the control group. Qualitative findings revealed that students in the read-aloud group exhibited higher levels of engagement, participation, and motivation. Teachers observed that students in the experimental group were more confident in oral responses, asked more questions, and displayed increased enthusiasm for reading activities.

The findings support previous research that highlights the benefits of read-alouds in enhancing phonological awareness, syntactic processing, and semantic comprehension (Beck & McKeown, 2001; Elley, 1989). Teachers noted that young learners who participated in read-aloud activities displayed increased confidence in oral language production and comprehension. Additionally, the interactive nature of read-alouds encouraged collaborative learning, as students actively discussed stories and related them to personal experiences, further reinforcing comprehension and critical thinking.

Conclusion. Read-alouds are deeply rooted in linguistic and psycholinguistic theories of language acquisition. They provide learners with structured, meaningful exposure to phonology, syntax, and semantics, while also engaging cognitive mechanisms that support language processing and comprehension. Our next research articles will explore the long-term impact of read-alouds on fluency development and the integration of digital read-aloud technologies in ELT classrooms.

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