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THE ROLE OF READING ALOUD STRATEGY ON IMPROVING READING AND PRONUNCIATION FOR EFL PUPILS AT PRIVATE BASIC SCHOOLS: TEACHERS PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract
The study aims at investigating the role of reading aloud on English as foreign language for learners in improving reading and pronunciation at basic level schools. The study used the descriptive analytical method. In order to examine the hypotheses, the study used a questionnaire as a tool for collecting needed data. The questionnaire was distributed randomly to fifty English language teachers at private schools in Bahary locality. The data was analyzed by using SPSS program. The study came up with results that reading aloud is beneficial to develop and promote pupils reading, as well as improving their pronunciation. The study mentioned some recommendations and suggested some points of studies which can convene futurity.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension, Pronunciation, EFL Pupils, Teachers Perspectives

Introduction
Generally speaking, there are four skills in any language, which are listening, reading, writing and speaking. These skills are the basic language components with which a person can communicate with each other. Both listening and reading are estimative skills; they come first before writing and speaking. During the early to mid-1970s, a number of researchers and teacher trainers argued for the greater importance of reading, for example. Goodman (1967) and Smith (1971) said, "Reading is not fundamentally the process of capturing information from the page into letter - letter - letter - word by word." It is important in life. That a society can fail if it is not educated. By reading, people can learn a lot about everything. Reading is a process of comprehension achieved through specific strategies such as (guessing, defining, scrolling, scanning and making inferences about the text. Coady (1979) argued that visualizing the reading process requires three components: process strategies, background knowledge and conceptual abilities. “Reading is a paradigm that the reader's conceptual abilities and strategies work alongside his background knowledge to comprehend the text.” It is true that the

concept of reading requires specific techniques and strategies through which reading can be achieved.

Halliday (1973) stated, "Teachers play a very crucial role in showing children appropriate ways to use language correctly. This demonstration can be done by reading or having a conversation with the child frequently." Reading out loud is especially important as it helps pupils feel comfortable about what they know, and it is a good opportunity to share ideas and thoughts in class about pupils' specific situation. Wood Salvetti (2001) believed that such types of reading aloud strategies allow learners to become more literate. Pupils who do not practice reading aloud are not sure of their pronunciation, and it appears that they are not familiar with the phonemic system of the English language. Children can recognize the language in books and stimulate vocabulary development. Reading Aloud is characterized by the effectiveness of clear expression of words, flexibility in rate, volume and tone, appropriate phrasing and effective use of pauses. For children, especially in the early stages, it can enhance and develop emerging literacy and language development, and it can also promote reading, love and pleasure which is more important than improving specific literacy skills.

This study aims at investigating the role of reading aloud in improving reading fluency for basic level school pupils. Also; to developing and promote pupils' pronunciation.

The pupils of basic level schools encounter many difficulties in reading, as a result he was thinking of these reasons face pupils in reading. He found that there are many beneficial factors to improve reading. Reading aloud is one of these factors which enable pupils to develop pupils reading fluency and pronunciation. The absence of reading aloud causes lack of reading fluency and pronunciation.

This study is important because it seeks to develop basic level pupils' reading fluency and pronunciation by applying reading aloud as a tool to help the readers to read the text fluently and pronounce the words correctly. It is also important for shedding lights on the reading aloud strategies. Reading aloud encourages pupils to love and enjoy reading as well also motivates and stimulates them to read. Moreover it is a good way to introduce them to read books, stories and poems that may otherwise miss them. It improves pupils' reading fluency and pronunciation, which they are essential for learners of English as a foreign language. It encourages pupils to read on their own model. It also seeks to direct English language teachers towards the importance of reading aloud to encourage pupils to develop reading fluency and pronunciation through applying reading aloud.

Questions of the Study

The researchers intended to approach this study with the following questions:

1. To what extent does reading aloud improve pupils' reading fluency?
2. To what extent does reading aloud improve pupils' pronunciation?

This case study is about the role of reading aloud on EFL learners in improving pupils' reading fluency and pronunciation. It was conducted to the basic level pupils at Bahri Private Schools in the academic year of 2019-2020.

Literature Review and Previous Studies

This part introduces the problem of the research in details, and then it discusses the related ideas of scientists and scholars .Finally it mentions the reviewing of the previous studies.

Reading Aloud to Students is on the daily schedule for many elementary classes but lacks many intermediate elementary settings. Previous research on reading aloud includes the benefits and definitions of reading aloud, verbal linguistic intelligence, genres, and listening comprehension. This literature review will highlight the key elements of Reading Aloud in the elementary classroom.

Reading aloud can be defined as an activity 'that provides a context in which adults and children share a common focus, providing an opportunity for children to participate in increasingly sophisticated conversations that move beyond a perceptual focus to encompass conceptually oriented discussions" (Pentimonti & Justice 2010, p. 242). Strachan (2015) continues this definition by describing read aloud more in depth by stating, “During interactive read-aloud, teachers scaffold children’s sense making and support their learning of new concepts through direct instruction; asking questions before, during, and after reading" (p. 209).

An interactive read aloud is time for the teacher to read a book aloud and discuss it with his or her class. The teacher and students take turns asking questions, listening intently to the text and others' comments, making predictions, and discussing the text with others to comprehend the book.

Another advantage reading aloud to students can have is building student ability to make connections. Strachan (2015) wrote, “Regular interactions throughout a read aloud have the potential to help students recognize connections between the text, their lives, and the larger global community" (p. 209). Students who make connections as they read or listen to a text often have a deeper understanding of the text because they are taking time to create meaning (Waller & Barrentine, 2015). The connection or relation with a text can also resonate greater with the student if they can empathize or bond with the character or setting of a text.

There have been many noted benefits for reading aloud with younger elementary children. Younger students benefit from read alouds for many reasons. Wiseman (2011) stated, "Interactive read alouds are important learning opportunities for emergent readers because teachers and peers can actively model and scaffold comprehension strategies, engage readers, and cultivate a community of learners" (p. 431). Teachers can use an interactive read aloud to model fluent reading. Teachers may also use read alouds to help scaffold a text that would be too difficult for the students to read on their own. Pentimonti and Justice (2010) define scaffolding as "the process of temporarily providing support to a learner and then gradually withdrawing this support as the learner becomes capable of independence in performing tasks" (p. 241). Strachan (2015) continued to write about the importance of reading aloud to primary students. She researched impacts of read alouds for kindergarten students.

Strachan (2015) stated that discussions about a text help clarify the information of the passage for younger students.

There is limited information on the impact for intermediate students and their responses to read aloud texts. One study by Clark & Andreasen (2014) explores impacts of read aloud to sixth grade students. The findings of their study indicate that students had mixed feelings about being read to aloud, but that all students

could state instructional benefits of read alouds (Clark, 2014). A second study researched comprehension and higher-level thinking skills. Wolf, Crosson, and Resnick (2005) researched elementary and middle school students' comprehension and thinking skills during read aloud. Their findings concluded that the discussions associated with read aloud texts did help improve student comprehension (Wolf et al. 2005). My current study continues to fill this research gap of limited information by observing the impact of reading aloud to fourth grade students.

Method

This part aims at explaining the methods, the procedures and the description of the population as well as the sample of the research. The questionnaire is used as a tool to collect data. Then the researcher describes the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, and shows the procedures used to analyze data.

The researcher adopted the descriptive and analytical method, which is suitable to this study, to investigate the impact of reading aloud on improving pupils' reading fluency and pronunciation, who study English as a foreign language. The descriptive method is used to collect the needed data through questionnaire.

The population of this study is the basic level school English language teachers. The participants consists of (50) English language teachers, male and female of different qualifications and experiences who have randomly chosen from the population at the private schools of Bahri locality

A questionnaire was used to collect data about the problem, which consists of (10) statements .The questionnaire was designed for English language teachers who teach English Language in the basic level schools. The task of collecting data is to investigate the impact of reading aloud in developing pupils' reading fluency and pronunciation. The questionnaire is divided into two parts: The first part is designed to obtain information from the teachers about the developing of reading fluency through reading aloud. The second part is about the information concerning the developing of pronunciation through reading aloud. The questionnaire statements were given to (50) English Language teachers regardless of their degrees and qualifications.

Findings and Discussion

This part contains of questionnaire data analysis of this study, the result and the discussion for each statement.

The analysis of data of this study was made manually by the researchers to obtain the frequency of the sample answers. Computer programs (Word and Excel) for tables are manipulated. All samples answers were changed into numbers and percentages. Tables are explained in texts.

Questionnaire Analysis and Discussion

Table 1. Reading aloud enables pupils to read fluently and normally.

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly agree	30	60%
Agree	17	34%
Neutral	3	6%

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table (1) shows that the high percentage is in "strongly agree and agree" statements which indicates that reading aloud is a significant role in proving pupils with aspects of fluency, that enables them to read fluency and automatically.

Table 2. Reading aloud can increase the speed of reading fluency

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly agree	27	54%
Agree	17	34%
Neutral	4	8%
Disagree	1	2%
Strongly disagree	1	2%
Total	50	100%

Table (2) show that the high percentage is in "strongly agree and agree", which indicates that practicing reading aloud gives pupils opportunity to expose the fluency aspects through which they can read fast and fluently.

Table 3. In reading aloud teachers can evaluate pupil's reading fluency level of achievement

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly agree	35	70%
Agree	15	30%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Show that the high percentage is in "strongly agree and agree" which means that whom pupils read aloud, teachers should follow them carefully to evaluate and measure their reading fluency level.

Table 4. Teacher's model reading should be slow"

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly agree	19	38%
Agree	15	30%
Neutral	7	14%
Disagree	6	12%
Strongly disagree	3	6%
Total	50	100%

Table (4) describes the high percentage obtained above, that shows the speed of teachers' model reading aloud for pupils is very important, so it should be as slow as pupils 'level and ability to read.

Table 5. To improve reading fluency, reading aloud should be practical regularly.

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly agree	30	60%
Agree	17	34%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	1	2%
Strongly disagree	2	4%
Total	50	100%

Table (5) show that the respondents of "strongly agree and agree" are high ascriptions which means the importance of practicing reading aloud regularly in order to apply reading fluency aspects and to answer the correct pronunciation.

Table 6. Reading aloud improve pupils' phonological awareness achievement"

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly agree	26	52%
Agree	19	38%
Neutral	4	8%
Disagree	1	2%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table (6) describes the high degree of agreement with the statement above that presents the importance of the phonological awareness of English sound system for pupils of basic level schools which can be acquired and improved through reading aloud.

Table 7. Through reading aloud pupils exposure to the use of phonics and phonemes will be enhanced

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly agree	29	58%
Agree	19	38%
Neutral	2	4%
Disagree	0	0%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table (7) show the high percentage of respondents who agree with the statement that pupils read aloud enhanced and strengthen the use of phonics and phonemes of English in clear way.

Table 8. Through reading aloud pupils expose to supra Segmental features of pronunciation "e.g. stress 'rhythm' and intonation.

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly agree	21	42%
Agree	22	44%
Neutral	5	10%
Disagree	2	4%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table (8) confirms that the high percentage represents the importance of reading aloud method which enables pupils to expose to the supra Segmental features of pronunciation like, stress, rhythms and intonation through which they can read correctly and clearly.

Table 9. Improving pupils pronunciation through reading aloud 'communication competence

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly agree	24	48%
Agree	21	42%
Neutral	4	8%
Disagree	1	2%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table (9) shows the high degree of responding to the statement above which confirms the role of reading aloud in improving pronunciation that gives pupils chance to improve their communicative competence.

Table 10. Improving pronunciation through reading aloud enables pupils to practice and learn the language correctly

Valid	Frequency	Percent (%)
Strongly agree	35	70%
Agree	13	26%
Neutral	0	0%
Disagree	2	4%
Strongly disagree	0	0%
Total	50	100%

Table (10) illustrates the high percentage of respondents who agree with statement that reading aloud enables pupils to improve English language pronunciation that encourages them to learn and practice English correctly and naturally.

From data analysis and discussion, and according to the researcher questions and hypotheses, the researcher has come up with results of the research in hypotheses as follow:

The first hypothesis which is "reading aloud is important to improve and promote pupils' reading fluency" has positive respondents; the percentage shows that (88%) of sample answers have positive attitudes towards this hypothesis.

The second hypothesis "reading aloud improves pupils' pronunciation" has positive respondents and percentage which shows that there are about (91%) of sample answers are positive too. That means the two hypotheses have successfully achieved.

Conclusion

From data analysis and discussion, and according to the research questions and hypotheses, the researcher has come up with the results of the research in hypotheses which is "reading aloud is important to improve and promote pupils reading fluency" has positive respondents; the percentage show that (88%) of sample answers have positive attitudes.

The second hypotheses "reading aloud improves pupils' pronunciation" has also positive respondents and percentage which shows that there are about (91%) of sample answers are positive too. That means two hypotheses have successfully achieved.

According to the two questions used in this study by the researcher and due to the main findings resulted from analysis of the ten questionnaire statements with regard to the two hypotheses, and the results of the previous studies mentioned in chapter two, the researcher has come up with some conclusions that pupils of basic level schools can improve their performance better in English language through reading aloud.

The study has observed that reading aloud is beneficial to develop and promote pupils reading fluency achievement. Finally, it has observed that reading aloud can improve pupils' pronunciation performance.

According to the conclusions mentioned, the study suggests that teachers should exert great efforts to apply reading aloud inside classroom. Also; teachers should be aware of reading fluency features when they read aloud. To develop pupils' pronunciation, teachers should carefully follow pupils' reading to check their pronunciation and correct their mistakes.

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