

ENHANCING ENGLISH READING SKILLS: EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGIES FOR LISTENING

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Abstract

English as a second language (ESL) reading proficiency development is a complex process that benefits from a range of teaching approaches. Although reading is usually the main focus of language learning programs, new study shows how important listening skills are for improving reading comprehension. In order to enhance general English language fluency, this article looks at research-backed methods that include listening into reading training. The cognitive relationship between reading and listening is examined through a thorough literature review, with an emphasis on the ways in which listening exercises can improve and assist vocabulary growth, phonological awareness, and reading comprehension. Four essential listening techniques that have been demonstrated to improve reading results are identified and discussed in the article: phonological awareness training, dictation and transcription exercises, listening-integrated reading tasks.

Reading proficiency requires phonological awareness, which is the ability to identify and manipulate spoken language sounds. It has been demonstrated that phonological awareness-boosting listening exercises, like rhyming and sound discrimination, improve students' word decoding skills, which in turn improves reading comprehension and fluency. Activities involving dictation and transcription are especially crucial because they motivate students to pay close attention to spoken texts, write them down, and interact with language's visual and aural components. By assisting students in internalizing the correspondence between letters and sounds, these activities enhance their reading abilities.

By fusing reading comprehension exercises with listening exercises, hearing-integrated reading assignments offer a novel approach. It has been demonstrated that listening to a paragraph before reading it helps children learn new words and place them in the context of a spoken story, both of which improve reading comprehension. Furthermore, by appealing to a variety of senses, multimodal instruction—which combines kinesthetic, visual, and auditory components—reinforces language acquisition and fosters a deeper comprehension and memory of reading content. According to the results, including listening into reading lessons provides a thorough and successful strategy for improving students' English reading abilities. Actively involving students in reading and listening exercises gives them a more comprehensive language learning experience, which enhances vocabulary development, fluency, and understanding in general. The paper ends with suggestions for additional study on the relationship between reading and listening in order to enhance teaching strategies and enhance ESL students' language learning results.

Introduction

The development of reading abilities is frequently a significant obstacle for students studying a second language, especially those learning English as a second language (ESL). Although reading strategies have been the main emphasis of traditional approaches, new research suggests that listening is crucial to the development of reading competency. Snow (2002) asserts that reading comprehension involves incorporating aural information in addition to decoding written material, which aids in vocabulary learning and understanding.

In reading-focused courses, listening is sometimes disregarded, but it provides a powerful tool for improving language skills. Learners can better recognise phonemes, comprehend word stress and intonation, and internalise knowledge by honing their listening abilities. These elements are essential for reading proficiency. Consequently, language learners may benefit greatly from the integration of listening techniques into reading training.

The purpose of this article is to examine research-backed methods for enhancing English reading comprehension through listening. Activities that emphasise vocabulary development, phonological awareness, and multimodal training are among the approaches examined. To give students a well-rounded approach to language acquisition, this paper also aims to address how listening exercises might be successfully included into reading instruction.

Methods

Literature Review

A thorough analysis of the body of research was done in order to investigate the impact of listening techniques on reading development. Studies that examined the relationship between reading and listening were chosen for their applicability to language learning. Using keywords like "phonological awareness and reading," "multimodal language learning," and "listening strategies for reading," the search encompassed resources like Google Scholar, JSTOR, and ERIC. The results of pertinent studies on the impact of listening on ESL learners' reading skills were evaluated.

Pedagogical Approaches

Scholarly literature were reviewed, and instructional strategies that include listening into language learning were examined. Both official classroom settings and unofficial learning contexts were among them. Among the pedagogical strategies studied are:

1. **Phonological Awareness Training:** This involves exercises that help learners connect sounds to letters, an essential component of reading comprehension (Snow, 2002).
2. **Dictation and Transcription:** These activities require students to listen to spoken texts and transcribe them, encouraging both listening comprehension and reading fluency.
3. **Listening-Integrated Reading Tasks:** These tasks involve listening to audio materials (such as podcasts or videos) and completing reading-related exercises (such as answering comprehension questions).
4. **Multimodal Instruction:** Combining visual and auditory inputs to reinforce understanding and provide a holistic approach to reading and listening practice.
- 5.

Data Analysis

To determine patterns and outcomes pertaining to the efficacy of combining listening and reading training, the findings from multiple research were combined. Improvements in vocabulary, reading fluency, and comprehension as well as learner motivation and engagement were given special attention.

Results

Phonological Awareness and Reading

The beneficial effects of phonological awareness on reading proficiency have been shown in numerous research. According to Snow (2002), phonological awareness—the capacity to identify and work with sounds—is essential to learning to read. It has been demonstrated that listening-based activities, including rhyming or sound discrimination exercises, enhance students' reading comprehension. Sénéchal and LeFevre (2002), for instance, discovered that children who participated in listening-based phonological activities improved their reading skills more than those who did not.

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Dictation and Transcription

Numerous studies have demonstrated the positive impact of phonological awareness on reading proficiency. Snow (2002) asserts that learning to read requires phonological awareness, or the ability to recognise and manipulate sounds. Rhyming or sound discrimination exercises are examples of listening-based activities that have been shown to improve pupils' reading comprehension. For example, Sénéchal and LeFevre (2002) found that children who engaged in listening-based phonological exercises had greater improvements in their reading abilities than those who did not.

This is corroborated by research by Juffs and Harrington (2003), which shows that dictation exercises help students become more adept at mapping sounds to letters, which enhances reading comprehension. Additionally, transcription exercises force students to concentrate on specific words and word structures, which improves reading fluency and vocabulary retention.

Listening-Integrated Reading Tasks

Reading assignments that incorporate listening are a creative way to combine the two abilities. These assignments usually entail reading comprehension-testing readings after listening to audio content, such as lectures, discussions, or short stories. For example, a study conducted by Vandergrift (2004) found that ESL students who participated in listening-first reading activities showed a higher level of text comprehension than those who read just without hearing beforehand.

Reading assignments that incorporate listening are helpful because they give students a variety of contexts in which to comprehend words and ideas. Students can improve their

reading and listening skills by becoming more accustomed to new words in context by listening to a text before reading it. Additionally, these assignments frequently promote active interaction with the content, which improves comprehension and retention.

Multimodal Instruction

It has been found that multimodal instruction—which blends visual, aural, and kinaesthetic input—is a successful strategy for improving reading and listening comprehension. Because they receive information through numerous channels, students who participate in multimodal learning environments typically have superior retention and understanding (Mayer, 2005). For example, learners can make the connection between spoken and written language by integrating an audio recording of a piece with text or visual representations on the screen.

According to a study by Sadoski and Paivio (2001), ESL students' understanding and memory of written materials were enhanced when visual aids and audio recordings were combined. By enabling students to concurrently integrate sounds, meanings, and visual signals, this approach improves reading comprehension and promotes a deeper grasp of the subject matter.

Discussion

According to the findings of the pedagogical analysis and literature research, students' reading abilities are much enhanced when listening exercises are incorporated into reading lessons. Students can improve their understanding of the correspondences between letters and sounds—a crucial ability for reading proficiency—by cultivating phonological awareness through listening. Additionally, tasks involving transcription and dictation improve students' word decoding skills, which are essential for reading fluency.

By allowing students to interact with material in a variety of formats, listening-integrated reading assignments provide a comprehensive approach to language learning. This enhances vocabulary retention and comprehension by enabling students to make links between written and spoken language. By utilising several sensory inputs to produce a more thorough learning experience, multimodal teaching offers a strong foundation for language skill reinforcement.

Even if there is evidence that listening improves reading, it is crucial to remember that these activities should be carried out in a deliberate and balanced way. Since reading practice is still an essential part of language learning, teachers must make sure that listening exercises enhance rather than replace it. In order to ensure that pupils are suitably challenged, the complexity of listening materials should also be progressively increased to correspond with learners' skill levels.

Conclusion

For language learners, there are several advantages to integrating evidence-based listening techniques into English reading education. Students can enhance their hearing and reading abilities by participating in phonological awareness exercises, dictation and transcription assignments, listening-integrated reading exercises, and multimodal education. These methods offer a thorough method of language learning that takes into account the mental processes involved in vocabulary acquisition and reading comprehension. To improve language learning results and hone pedagogical strategies, future studies should

keep examining the relationship between reading and listening.

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