

Fostering extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary learning and retention through reading aloud technique

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Abstract

Vocabulary is the most basic section in language learning process. Reading aloud technique is a common technique in teaching reading skill. The present study tried to investigate the effectiveness of teaching English using reading aloud technique towards extrovert/introvert EFL learners. However, 45 intermediate learners were selected as samplings to conduct the research based on reading aloud technique in order to assess the learner's capability of learning and understanding English language focused on vocabulary learning and retention. The Oxford Placement Test (OPT) and extraversion and introversion questionnaire were used to homogenize the EFL learners. In order to carry out the procedure of the present study, the researchers selected six reading passages. The treatment procedure involved that the teacher taught reading text based on reading-aloud strategy. The teacher read the text and new determined words with a loud voice. At the end of this session, the participants should find the meaning of the words with the teacher's assistance and answer the reading comprehension questions. After collecting and analyzing the data through pre- post- and delayed posttests, two results were obtained: a) reading aloud technique does not have any meaningful differential effect on extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary learning. b) there is not any significant difference in extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary retention in delayed post-test.

Keywords: reading skill, reading aloud, extraversion, introversion

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1. Introduction

During the last decade, the process of second or foreign language learning is necessary, because someone can communicate to others. It means that language is a tool to transfer information and messages and expressing attitudes and emotions. Moreover, English as an international language plays an important role in politics, culture, and education. According to these reasons, learning language as a second or foreign language is a complex process (Tilemma, 2000). In order to be a competent learner, it is essential to be capable in four basic skills which are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Also, reading is one of the most central skill in learning a language and is chosen to be studied in the present research. On other words, reading skill can be used for different purposes like entertaining and education.

According to Hume and Snowling (2011), reading skill is one of the main goals of early education. Learning, whether in an academic setting or on one's own tends to be highly relied on the comprehension of information from text sources (McKeown, 1990). In this regard, White (2004) believed that reading truly is basically in every academic area. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), reading skill can be useful for learning other skills and especially can be good models for writing skill, and provide chances to introduce new topics, to motivate discussion, and to study language (e.g. vocabulary, grammar, and idioms). In addition, reading skill like as other skills should be followed various techniques and strategies to be taught. Many of the skills and strategies required for reading comprehension are already present in beginning readers in their ability to comprehend the spoken word. Reading aloud is a simple technique in increasing reading comprehension to beginner children in the EFL/ESL classroom contexts (Dhaif, 1990).

As Amer (1997) mentions that when educators applied reading aloud technique in the classroom context, it assists EFL readers explore unit of meaning that should be read as phrases rather than word by word. In this vein, different studies have been conducted about the effectiveness of reading aloud technique in language teaching and learning (Silverman, Crandell & Carlis, 2013; Saleh Al-Mansour & Al-Shorman, 2011; Pegg & Bartelheim, 2011). Accordingly, Silverman, Crandell and Carlis (2013) performed a study to investigate the effects of reading aloud extension activities on vocabulary in Head Starts classrooms. 246 learners were participated in this study. After analyzing the data, the outcomes revealed as the outcomes of the read aloud plus intervention about target phrase lesson was more suitable because of youth including greater versus decreaseordinary vocabulary knowledge.

Furthermore, Saleh Al-Mansour and Al-Shorman (2011) investigated the effects of teacher's storytelling aloud on the reading comprehension of Saudi elementary stage students. The study consisted about 40 college students randomly selected out of Al-Riyadh Educational District and assigned in imitation of pilot yet monitoring groups. After meeting yet analyzing the data, the effects showed as reading aloud by the teacher may also hold a significant high- quality impact over learners' studying comprehension. These studies established the effective effects on reading aloud. On other word, vocabulary learning is one of the most vital components of second/foreign language learning. Read (2001) mentions that vocabulary learning is considered as an unavoidable scope of language teaching by ELT researchers in which words are the basic building blocks of language, the units of meaning from which larger structures such as sentences, paragraphs, and whole texts are formed.

Moreover, Nation and Meara (2002) stated that vocabulary learning plays a primary role in language learning and for being successful in acquiring a language, a large vocabulary is required for someone to use language in a desired manner. The last variable of the present study is the dictomy of extraversion/introversion.

The notion of extroversion/introversion stems from trait theories of personality developed in psychology. This dichotomy has an affective influence on language learning. According to Eysenck (1981), an extravert person is motivated to engage in stimulating social activities because of their inherent under arousal. Unlike extroverts, introverts are disinclined to engage in stimulating social activities either because such actions are unnecessary or may cause introverts to quickly become over-stimulated. As was mentioned above, the extraversion/introversion notion is one of the most important psychological trait which has an effective influence on the language learning; but most of language teachers in Iran do not pay attention to this notion as an influential factor in language learning. The primary purpose of the present study was to examine the possible differential effects on the reading aloud technique extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary learning and retention.

2. Review of the Literature

Reading Aloud - Reading aloud means just that-reading aloud. According to Fountas and Pinnell (1996), reading aloud is viewed as a technique in the reading process that allows teacher to read the text in a loud and fluent voice to understand the text by learners. According to Terblanche (2002), this technique gives children a new understanding on different subjects that they face only through books. In the study, some texts were selected and the teacher used this technique (reading aloud) in the classroom.

Extrovert Learner - The trait of extraversion–introversion is a central aspect of human personality theories. Extraversion has emerged as one of the basic aspects of personality. Extraversion is defined "the act, state, or habit of being predominantly concerned with obtaining gratification from what is outside the self". Extraverts tend to enjoy human interactions and to be enthusiastic, talkative, and assertive. Extraverts are energized and thrive off being around other people (Cohen & Schmidt, 1979). Eysenck (1976, cited in Sotoudeh nama & Moini, 2013) defined extroverts as learners being "sociable, lively, impulsive, seeking novelty and change, carefree, and emotionally expressive" (p.7).

Introvert Learner - Introversion is viewed as "the state of or tendency toward being wholly or predominantly concerned with and interested in one's own mental life"(Cohen & Schmidt, 1979). Introverts are typically perceived as more reserved or reflective. Eysenck (1976, as cited by Sotoudeh nama & Moini, 2013) described introverts as learners being "quiet, introspective, intellectual, well-ordered, emotionally unexpressive, value-oriented, as well as preferring small groups of intimate friends and planning well ahead" (p. 7).

Vocabulary Knowledge - Vocabulary skill is considered as the ability to go from the printed form of a word to its meaning. Vocabulary knowledge is integral for language learners so that Wilkins (1972) stated that "while without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed" (pp. 111–112).

Vocabulary Retention - Vocabulary retention has been defined as "the ability to recall or remember things after an interval of time. In language teaching, retention of what has been taught (e.g. grammar rules and vocabulary) may depend on the quality of teaching, the interest of the learners, or the meaningfulness of the materials" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 457). In the present study, retention is referred to the amount of time (three to four weeks) in remembering the vocabularies.

3. Methodology

Participants - For carrying out this study, a number of learners were selected as the subjects. The present research was conducted at a private language institute which was located in Tehran, Iran. The Oxford Placement Test (OPT) and extraversion and introversion questionnaire were applied to homogenize the EFL learners. Generally, sixty Iranian EFL learners took the homogeneity test. This test was designed and prepared to homogenize the language learners as the intermediate level. The Iranian EFL learners varied in age from 13 to 20 years old and they had the same native language which was Persian. The subjects of this research had studied English for 1 to 2 years in the language school. Out of 60 EFL learner, 45 intermediate learners were selected as the members of the current research in three groups (two experimental and a control groups). The participants

were both male and female.

Instrumentation - The following instruments were applied to comply with the objective of the present study. An Oxford Placement Test (OPT), extraversion and introversion questionnaire, reading passages, vocabulary list, and vocabulary pre- and post-tests.

Oxford Placement test - To tap participants' level of English language proficiency level, an Oxford Placement Test (2004, Allen) was utilized to homogenize the participants in the study. The test consisted of reading, vocabulary and grammar sections. The test comprised of 60 questions in two parts. The first part comprised of 40 multiple choice items in 4 sub-parts. Questions 1 to 5, the learners were asked to answer grammatical questions about prepositions. Questions 6 to 10, the learners were asked to read a cloze passage and selected one option out of three ones. Questions 11 to 20, they were also asked to read two cloze passages and select one option from four ones. Questions 21 to 40 checked the learners' grammatical knowledge. In the second part of this examination, there was two sub-sections. For questions 41 to 50, the learners were required read two cloze passages and select the correct option. Questions 51 to 60 tapped learners' vocabulary format. The participants were allotted 30 minutes to answer the questions. The results were classified based on OPT ranking rubric.

Extraversion-Introversion Questionnaire - Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ) was used in this study. This questionnaire which was constructed by Eysenck in 1975 consists of 90 items. Three personality factors can be measured by the questionnaire: extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism. According to the scoring key, 21 items which were related to extraversion were isolated and given to the participants. This questionnaire includes 2 choices; yes, or no. Those learners who received 12 or higher scores, they were called as the extrovert learner, and those learners who received 11 or lower scores, they were called as the introvert learner. The reliability coefficient of the Iranian sample questionnaire is 0/92 that indicates high and acceptable reliability coefficient. Those items were translated to Persian as the participants' first language.

Reading Passage and Vocabulary Lists - Six reading passages will be selected for treatment. The reading texts were selected from *Facts and Figures* (2013) by Ackert and Lee. The level of reading texts was intermediate. The participants provided a list of new words from the passages.

Vocabulary pre and post - Five words from each determined reading text were selected for pre- and posttests. The format of the vocabulary tests was multiple choice and the number of the items was thirty. The difficulty level of pre- and post- and delayed post-tests was the same.

Data Collection Procedure - The main purpose of this study was to examine the differential effects on the reading aloud technique extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary learning. According to the purpose of this study, the subjects were informed the key aims orally thoroughly. The participants were homogenized through two instruments: Oxford Placement Test (OPT) and Eysenck personality questionnaire. After homogenizing, the subjects were divided into three groups: two experimental groups (extroverts N = 15 and introverts N = 15) and a control group (N = 15). The whole procedures of this study were carried out in eight sessions. In the first session, the participants in three groups were given the vocabulary pre-test. In the second session, the teacher taught reading text based on reading-aloud strategy. The teacher read the text and new determined words with a loud voice.

At the end of this session, the participants should find the meaning of the words with the teacher's assistance and answer the reading comprehension questions. This strategy was administered for five sessions and it was applied for two experimental groups. For the control group, the same texts were taught through a traditional instruction as reading silently by learners. It means that, the teacher gave 20 minutes to the control group to read the text silently and after that answer to some teacher's questions. At last, they find the meaning of the words and answer the reading comprehension questions. In the last session, each participant took the vocabulary post-test. After three weeks, all participants took the vocabulary delayed-posttest.

4. Results

4.1 Analysis of the first question

In order to answer the first null-hypothesis stating that “reading aloud technique does not have any meaningful differential effect on extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary learning, a one-way ANOVA was run. Table 2 presents the means and standard deviation for the three groups in the pre-test. As indicated in the table, three groups had similar mean in the pretest.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for the Three Groups in the Pre-test

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1stgroup	15	15.53	1.24	.321	14.84	16.22	13.00	18.00
2nd group	15	15.40	1.54	.400	14.54	16.25	12.00	18.00
3rd group	15	15.93	1.57	.407	15.05	16.80	13.00	18.00
Total	45	15.62	1.45	.216	15.18	16.05	12.00	18.00

To see if the differences were significant or not a one-way ANOVA was conducted for each group. The results are presented in the following tables. In order to check whether the variances in the scores are the same for each of the three groups, Leven's test for homogeneity of the variances was run. The results are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 2

Test of Homogeneity of Variances for pretest in three group

Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.451	2	42	.640

Table 3

ANOVA for pre-test scores

Pretest score					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.31	2	1.1	.538	.588
Within Groups	90.26	42	2.1		
Total	92.57	44			

Table 2, as indicated in table 3, the sig. value is greater than .05 (Sig.>.05), then it can have stated there is not statistically significant difference among the means score of the learners in the pre-test. In order to see the effects of instruction, one-way ANOVA was conducted. The results are presented the table below.

Table 4

ANOVA for the post test in the three groups

Post test score					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.933	2	.467	.233	.793
Within Groups	84.26	42	2.0		
Total	85.20	44			

As indicted in Table 4, the sig. value greater than .05. This reveals that despite the differences in the mean score in the posttest this differences in not significant. Thus the first null hypothesis stating the reading aloud technique have no meaningful differential effect on extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary learning is confirmed.

4.2 Analysis of the second question

In order to examine the second null hypothesis stating that “there is not any significant difference in extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary retention in delayed post- test”, one-way ANOVA was conducted for the error correction posttest scores in the three groups. Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics of the groups.

Table 5

Descriptive statistics for extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary retention in delayed posttest

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1stgroup	15	16.40	1.12	.28	15.77	17.02	15.00	18.00
2nd group	15	16.53	1.50	.38	15.69	17.36	14.00	19.00
3rd group	15	15.06	1.90	.49	14.01	16.12	12.00	19.00
Total	45	16.00	1.65	.24	15.50	16.49	12.00	19.00

The above table indicated, the mean and standard deviation for the three groups are as what follow: the first group ($x=16.40$; $SD= 1.21$), second group ($x=16.53$; $SD=1.50$), and the third group ($x=15.06$; $SD=1.90$). To see if the differences were significant or not a one-way ANOVA was conducted for each group. The results are presented in the following tables. In order to check whether the variances in the scores are the same for each of the three groups, Levene's test for homogeneity of the variances was run. The results are illustrated in Table 7.

Table 6

Test of Homogeneity of Variances

score			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
1.96	2	42	.153

As we observed in the table 7, the sig. value is greater than .05 ($\text{Sig}.>.05$). Therefore, there is not any significant difference among the mean score on dependent variable for the three groups. In order to see to probe the effects of instruction, the researcher conducted one-way ANOVA. The results are listed the table below.

Table 7

One-way ANOVA for extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary retention in delayed posttest

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	19.73	2	9.8	4.1	.023
Within Groups	100.26	42	2.3		
Total	120.00	44			

As indicted in table the sig. value is less than .05, then there is significant differences among the mean scores on the dependent variables for the three groups at delayed posttest. Therefore, the second null hypothesis stating there is not any significant difference in extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary retention in delayed post- test is rejected. To locate the exact differences a post hoc, sheffe test was conducted and the results are presented in table 8 below:

Table 8

Post hoc Sheffe test for three groups at delayed posttest

(I) Delayed posttest	(J) Delayed posttest	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1stgroup	2nd group	-.13	.56	.972	-1.5	1.29
	3rd group	1.33	.56	.073	-.09	2.76
2nd group	1stgroup	.133	.56	.972	-1.29	1.56
	3rd group	1.46*	.56	.044	.034	2.8984
3rd group	1stgroup	-1.33	.56	.073	-2.76	.0984
	2nd group	-1.46*	.56	.044	-2.89	-.0349

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

As we observed in the table, there is significant difference between the 3rd and 2nd groups of the study as the

p value in the sig is lower than .05 ($p < .05$). Figure 4.2 also shows the schematic representation of the means plot for the three groups.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the possible differential effects on the reading aloud techniques extrovert/introvert EFL learners' vocabulary learning and retention. In order to do this study, forty-five intermediate learners were selected as the members of the present research. They were divided into two experimental groups and one control group. Reading aloud technique was used as an instruction for the experimental groups. Two questions were formulated in this study: a) Does the reading aloud technique have any significant differential effect on extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary learning? And b) Does the reading aloud technique have any significant differential effect on extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary retention? After collecting and analyzing the data, for the first research question, the results showed that reading aloud technique does not have any significant differential effect on extrovert-introvert EFL learners' vocabulary learning. The result of the second question showed that there is not any significant difference in extrovert/introvert EFL learners' vocabulary retention in delayed post- test. In both questions, it is clear that there was not significant effect of using reading aloud techniques among three groups in vocabulary learning and retention, but it can be stated that both extrovert and introvert groups outperformed than the control group.

Based on the above mentioned results, it can be pointed out that reading aloud may be popularly believed to consist of old-fashioned, dull reading around the class and that it is part of outdated methodologies, but this does not mean that it is no longer useful in language learning. If reading aloud is used inappropriately, the objections are still valid. However, given the approval of reading aloud by the researchers, it is not reading aloud in itself that is bad practice, but its misuse, and perhaps this is an area for teacher training courses to address. It would be a pity if an activity that has some value in language learning, as this article has put forward, continues to be shunned by general ELT methodologists because of its careless use. As with all techniques, it is up to teachers and students to decide if and how best to use it, so that they can balance the objections and the benefits to emerge with an effective learning activity. If reading aloud is to be used successfully, it needs to be used sparingly, sensitively and appropriately, with clear learning objectives, and should be regarded as only one of the many tools in a teacher's kit.

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