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Developing reading fluency using a device or paper: is there a difference?

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Fluency development is an important aspect of second language vocabulary acquisition. Spending time developing fluency helps to increase the speed that words can be accessed. In the context of reading, it is important to develop this fast access to vocabulary to avoid the vicious cycle of reading discussed in Nuttall (1982) and Coady (1997). One way to develop reading fluency is through speed reading. In this type of reading, learners read simplified material, ideally without the presences of new language features. Previous research has found that learners can increase their reading speed in as few as 20 speed-reading sessions, with each session lasting no more than 10 minutes (Chang, 2010; Chung & Nation, 2006; Tran 2012). Traditionally, speed reading has been implemented using printed copies of readings. However, it is now possible to supplement, or even replace, paper readings with stories that can be read on electronic devices. Nonetheless, little research has been conducted which compares these two different modes of reading in terms of their facilitative effects on L2 reading fluency development. This presentation presents the results from a study which examined the extent that medium of speed reading (paper versus mobile device) facilitates L2 reading speed development. Sixty-eight university students enrolled in a private university in Japan volunteered for the study. Half of the students read short stories using ESL Speed Readings, a free mobile app, while the other half practiced speed reading using paper copies. After six weeks, the two groups switched mediums and read for six more weeks. The presenter will discuss the results and implications of the study.

Is this a sponsored session?

Keywords

Fluency, Reading, Mobile Assisted Language Learning, Free Software

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