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The Influence of Loud and Silent Reading of Texts on Reading Comprehension in the Fourth Grade of Primary School

Extended summary

The aim of this paper is to describe theoretically the types of reading (loud and silent) and pupils' understanding of the read text, as well as to indicate empirically their correlation, i.e. to determine whether the type of reading (loud or silent) influences the level of reading comprehension of pupils of early primary grades. This paper analyses the knowledge and use of the basic types of reading - loud and silent. The characteristics of pupils' loud and silent reading are highlighted, including: reading in class; pupils' age (theoretical part of the paper draws back on the methodology literature relevant for the early primary pupils), as well as their understanding of literary texts or literary genres. Pupils' understanding of the read text is a prerequisite for their interpretation of the literary text, while it is also important to balance the type of reading (in terms of genre) because the results of the teaching process will be more effective.

The paper presents the results of a study on the impact of loud and quiet reading on the understanding of texts in the fourth grade of primary school. The subject of the research was to show the connection between the type of reading and pupils' understanding of the read text. The goal of the research was to determine the extent to which the type of reading influenced the understanding of the read text (understanding the content of the text and the ability to draw conclusions). It is important to determine whether students, after reading an unknown text, can answer questions that are related to it and which require both memorising the content and its understanding. The research sample was made up of 50 fourth-graders from primary schools in Belgrade. The testing was conducted individually, with each student separately.

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The starting point of the research was the assumption that the type of reading influences text comprehension and that pupils understand a text better if they read it quietly, as indicated in the previous studies and methodology literature. However, the results of this research were different. Regardless of the type of reading and inclusion of other factors (reading speed, pupils' gender, their school achievement, grades they had in the subject Serbian language), the level of reading comprehension is approximately the same. It can be concluded that, regardless of the selected form of reading, silent or reading aloud, there are no significant differences among the fourth-graders regarding the level of understanding of the read text. The level of understanding of the read text, depending on the productivity of the question, resulted in the fact that most students can answer reproductive questions, while a much smaller number can answer productive questions. The level of understanding of the whole text is average. This research can be a starting point for determining further the impact of the types of reading on reading comprehension, which implies the development of reading literacy of pupils and adds quality to the teaching of the mother tongue. Other literary genres would also be a challenge for further research. Pupils of this age can be offered lyrical poems, epic poems or fairy tales, which would open a wide field for analysis, both in relation to the literary genre, as well as the type of reading and understanding of the read texts. In addition, one of the suggestions for improving this area is to continuously monitor pupils' progress in terms of understanding texts and selecting the type of reading (loud or quiet). It would be functional to test the pupils who participated in this research at the end of the eighth grade and compare the obtained results. In teaching practice it is important for all pupils to master the functional reading technique in order to easily overcome different teaching contents and to make their everyday life easier.

Keywords: reading, types of reading, loud reading, silent reading, reading comprehension.

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