



## The use of reading aloud activity to improve pronunciation by using narrative text

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### Abstract

This study aimed to investigate the implementation of reading aloud activities using narrative texts to improve students' pronunciation at a public elementary school in Semarang. Many elementary students faced challenges in pronouncing English accurately, largely due to a lack of awareness of phonetic elements, a limited vocabulary, and anxiety about making errors. Addressing these issues early was considered essential to avoid long-term communication problems and loss of self-confidence. This study employed a qualitative method to examine how reading aloud activities were implemented and to explore students' perspectives on their role in improving pronunciation. Data were gathered through classroom observations, interviews with both students and the English teacher, and an analysis of reading sessions. The results indicated that incorporating narrative texts into reading aloud activities significantly improved students' pronunciation by enhancing their awareness of phonetic features. Additionally, students expressed that these activities boosted their confidence, motivation to speak English, and active class participation. Nonetheless, obstacles such as limited vocabulary and the fear of making mistakes remained challenges that required further attention. The study concluded that reading aloud using narrative texts was a valuable strategy in teaching pronunciation, and it recommended integrating explicit phonetic instruction and vocabulary teaching to optimize learning outcomes. This research contributed to the improvement of English language teaching practices in elementary schools by emphasizing interactive and contextually relevant oral activities, such as reading aloud narrative texts, which can significantly improve students' pronunciation and foster speaking confidence.

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## INTRODUCTION

English, as a global language, holds a significant place in today's education system, even at the elementary school level (Graddol, 2006). In Indonesia, English is introduced as a local content subject in many primary schools. At this early stage, the goal is to develop students' basic language skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, so that they can gradually build competence in using English for communication. Among these four skills, speaking, particularly pronunciation, is often considered both fundamental and challenging. Pronunciation is not merely the act of articulating sounds but a crucial aspect that influences the clarity, comprehensibility, and effectiveness of oral communication (Gilakjani, 2012). Accurate pronunciation helps learners express their ideas more clearly and allows listeners to understand them better (Derwing & Munro, 2005). On the other hand, poor pronunciation can obstruct communication, cause confusion, and reduce the speaker's self-confidence. This issue is especially crucial for young learners who are still developing their awareness of language. According to Kenworthy (1987), being able to produce comprehensible pronunciation is essential for successful spoken communication, and difficulties in this area may hinder learners from effectively participating in real-life conversations.

There are several reasons for this lack of focus. Teachers may not have received sufficient training in teaching pronunciation (Burgess & Spencer, 2000). Classroom time may be restricted, leaving little room for pronunciation activities. Additionally, teaching materials often do not provide enough support or strategies to help students improve their speaking and pronunciation skills. As a result, students may struggle with common pronunciation issues such as vowel sounds, consonant clusters, intonation patterns, and word stress (Hahn, 2004). Pronunciation is very important for oral communicative competence (Pourhosein Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016). These two expert opinions are interrelated, of course, because without good communication (pronunciation), what we say will not be understood. In teaching, pronunciation has the effect of improving our effective communication in a social environment. For example, Indonesians learn English as a foreign language, so when the sound is produced, we have to understand each other. In Indonesia, learning a second language pronunciation has problems that are not the same as the problems that students face when they learn their first language (Nurani & Rosyada, 2015). Therefore, it can be seen from this theory that is more important to understanding the characteristics of learning accents and their influence on the development of how to pronounce some words are more important than when we acquire them in terms of pronunciation to help teachers identify and address the characteristics of learning Pronunciation. Pronunciation is a core component of language competence. According to Harmer (2007), pronunciation includes the articulation of sounds, stress patterns, intonation, and rhythm all of which contribute to intelligibility. For young learners, pronunciation practice must be engaging, meaningful, and contextualized. Teaching pronunciation should not be limited to the correction of errors, but rather focus on building awareness and providing opportunities for authentic practice (Burns, 2003).

Reading aloud is often underestimated in modern classrooms, but its benefits are supported by a growing body of research. According to Nation (2009), reading aloud promotes phonological awareness, fluency, and accurate pronunciation. It also helps learners connect spoken and written forms of words, especially when combined with teacher modeling and feedback. In a classroom setting, reading aloud can be an inclusive activity that allows all students to participate and learn from each other. According to (Hong et al., 2024) Reading aloud may be a boring and perhaps anxiety-provoking activity for certain students who dislike speaking English in public. If it depends on the students themselves. But students' easy reading offers numerous benefits that can enhance learning outcomes for students and promote their academic success. One of the fundamental skills that children must master when they enter school is reading, especially reading aloud. Reading aloud as a key pedagogical method for early literacy (Islam & Eltilib, 2020). Support from both parents and teachers is essential in teaching children to read (Mayasari & Fathoni, 2024). When children become proficient readers, parents can feel confident about their children's academic performance in class. As children develop a taste for reading, they are encouraged to explore various books and continue acquiring new knowledge. The more children enjoy reading, the more comfortable and engaged they will become.

Reading aloud is a classroom activity that has gone in and out of favor among teachers over time. One main argument against it is that it can hinder proper pronunciation, as spelling may negatively impact pronunciation performance (Ariyani et al., 2013). According to (BIBYANA & EDI, 2023) reading aloud is one of the good methods to improve students' pronunciation because

students will practice pronouncing English sounds aloud, which helps their tongues become more accustomed to these sounds than if they read silently. Developing a habit of reading aloud can enhance their pronunciation skills and strengthen their memory in foreign language learning. Besides, Basuki (2016) stated that reading texts aloud helps students understand the links between spelling and pronunciation, stress and intonation, and the connecting sounds in speech by using engaging materials. This is because students' pronunciation abilities will influence their learning to understand (Marli'ah & Apriliyana, 2021).

To address these issues, various teaching methods have been proposed. One method that has gained attention for its simplicity and effectiveness is reading aloud. Reading aloud involves learners reading a text audibly in front of their peers or teachers. This technique not only provides practice in decoding words but also reinforces correct pronunciation, rhythm, stress, and intonation. It allows students to hear and produce English sounds repeatedly and accurately, promoting both awareness and confidence. Reading aloud can also create a more interactive and participatory classroom environment, where students are engaged and actively involved in the learning process. Pronunciation refers to how a word or a language is usually spoken, (Pourhosein Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016) When someone utters a word or a language (Nurani & Rosyada, 2015) It means that pronunciation must be carried out. Pronunciation teaching has a positive impact on enhancing our effective communication in social settings. Moreover, Indonesians learn English as a second language, and when sounds are articulated, mutual understanding is crucial. Based on Akyol (2013) Pronunciation is integral and directly affects students' communication as well as their performance.

In teaching English to young learners, selecting appropriate reading material is essential. Students are encouraged to describe with pictures about a certain event (Oueini et al., 2008). Narrative texts play a unique role in language learning, particularly for children. They are emotionally engaging, culturally rich, and often feature repetitive language patterns that support language acquisition. As stated by Cameron (2001), narrative texts help young learners make sense of the world while learning a second language. These texts provide a meaningful context for pronunciation practice, especially when read aloud expressively. Narrative texts, such as folk tales, fables, or short stories, offer familiar storylines, memorable characters, and moral lessons that appeal to students' interests and imagination (Cameron, 2001). These texts often use repetitive structures and vocabulary, making them easier for young learners to follow and internalize. More importantly, narrative texts provide meaningful contexts for practicing pronunciation. When students read these stories aloud, they are not just reading words; they are bringing the story to life, with all the expressive language and emotions that the narrative entails (Ellis & Brewster, 2014).

In the specific case of a public elementary school in Semarang, English is taught to students from grades 4 to 6. Preliminary observations and informal interviews with the English teacher revealed that many students still struggle with proper pronunciation. Issues include mispronouncing basic vocabulary, applying incorrect intonation, and hesitating when reading aloud. These problems hinder their speaking development and lower their confidence when participating in oral activities. The English teacher noted that although reading comprehension activities are often included in the lessons, reading aloud is rarely used as a systematic strategy for improving pronunciation.

While the technique of reading aloud is widely acknowledged for its effectiveness in enhancing pronunciation and reading fluency, much of the existing research has primarily centered on its use at the secondary or adult education levels (Nation & Newton, 2009; Rasinski, 2012). These prior studies often adopt quantitative or experimental designs, focusing mainly on measurable outcomes through testing, and tend to overlook the detailed classroom implementation or young learners' personal experiences during reading activities (Gibson, 2008). Additionally, although narrative texts are commonly utilized in language learning, limited attention has been given to how reading aloud using narrative texts can specifically influence pronunciation development among elementary students, particularly within the context of Indonesian EFL classrooms (Widodo, 2016). This study aims to fill that gap by providing an in-depth analysis of the technique within the context of a local primary school in Indonesia.

This situation sparked the researcher's interest in investigating the potential benefits of using reading aloud with narrative texts to improve students' pronunciation skills. This research aims to find out how the students practice the reading aloud activity to improve pronunciation and to give the students several benefits of the reading aloud activity. The problems to be discussed in this study can be stated as follows: (1) How are reading aloud activities implemented to improve the students'

pronunciation at a public elementary school in Semarang? (2) How are the students' perceptions of the reading aloud activity in improving their pronunciation?"

## METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, aiming to explore in depth how reading aloud activities using narrative texts could enhance students' pronunciation skills. In their latest revision, Miles et al. (2014) described qualitative data as a source of well-grounded, rich descriptions and explanations of human processes. Although qualitative research generally strives to collect, integrate, and present data from a variety of sources of evidence (K Yin, 2018), the researcher employed descriptive qualitative methods by exploring and describing the data collected in the field while also posing questions that enhanced the data. The focus of the study was on the process, observable changes, and the perceptions of both teachers and students during the implementation of the activity. The research was conducted at a public elementary school in Semarang. The participants of this research were a group of fifth-grade students from the same school. The researcher documented videos of fifth-grade students reading aloud in English class, and students' performance in pronunciation when reading narrative texts was analysed.

To obtain comprehensive and meaningful data, this study employed two primary research instruments: interviews and open-ended questionnaires. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the English teacher and selected students to explore the implementation of the reading-aloud activity and to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' experiences. Interviews were a commonly used tool in qualitative research for gaining an in-depth understanding of participants' views (Creswell, 2012). These interviews offered valuable insights into the teachers' instructional strategies, as well as the students' difficulties and progress in pronunciation. Furthermore, open-ended questionnaires were administered to fifth-grade students, enabling them to freely share their thoughts and feelings regarding the reading aloud activities. The responses revealed students' levels of confidence, enjoyment, and perceived improvement in pronunciation.

Data collection was an essential stage in qualitative research, as it was the process through which researchers gained detailed information about the phenomenon under study. In the context of the research "The Use of Reading Aloud Activity to Improve Pronunciation Using Narrative Text", the data collection procedures were carried out in several stages: observation, interviews, and questionnaires. According to Marshall & Rossman, (2016) Observation enabled the researcher to learn about behaviors and the meanings attached to those behaviors in the setting. Creswell (2012) stated that interviews were one of the most frequently used methods in qualitative research and were especially useful for exploring participants' perspectives in depth. The researchers involved grade fifth students at a public elementary school in Semarang by providing them with a narrative text. After that, they were then tested using a reading-aloud test, which evaluated pronunciation, intonation, word stress, and clarity. The first stage was pronunciation. This stage assessed the students' ability to pronounce words in English correctly. On the test sheet, there were several English words selected from the narrative text. Students were asked to pronounce as many words as possible clearly and accurately. The focus was on correct articulation of sounds, including vowels and consonants, as well as overall clarity of speech. The second stage was intonation. This stage evaluated students' use of appropriate rising and falling intonation while reading sentences aloud. Students were asked to read several sentences from the narrative text aloud. The third stage was word stress. This stage examined the students' use of word stress and sentence stress. Students read a short paragraph from the narrative text. Specific multisyllabic words and content words in sentences were analyzed (e.g., She went to the market.). The fourth stage was fluency. This stage measured the students' ability to read smoothly without unnecessary pauses, repetitions, or hesitation. Students were asked to read a short passage (approx. 20–40 words) aloud at a comfortable speed. The last stage was clarity. This stage assessed how clearly students articulated their words so that listeners could understand them easily. Students read the same short narrative passage aloud. Clarity was judged based on voice projection and articulation. To better understand how fifth-grade students felt after participating in the reading aloud activity using narrative texts, the researcher also distributed a questionnaire to gather their responses and perceptions about the activity.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Implementation of Reading Aloud Activities in the Classroom

Reading aloud was one of the widely used strategies in English language teaching, particularly in elementary schools, where students were still developing basic pronunciation, intonation, and fluency. At a public elementary school in Semarang, reading aloud activities were implemented as a regular part of English learning, especially to improve students' pronunciation. Based on observations and interviews, the implementation of reading aloud was structured through several stages, including preparation, modeling, guided practice, feedback, and integration with other skills. These stages were in line with established theories on reading aloud in second language acquisition.

### ***Preparation and Planning***

Before implementing reading aloud activities using narrative texts, English teachers carefully planned their lessons by selecting appropriate narrative materials. These narratives were sourced from English textbooks, graded readers, or teacher-made stories. The selection was based on students' language proficiency, the relevance of the story theme, and the presence of pronunciation features such as specific sounds, intonation patterns, or word stress.

Teachers selected short and engaging narrative texts to help students maintain focus and allow them to concentrate on pronunciation rather than complex comprehension. For instance, when they planned a lesson on past tense pronunciation, they chose a simple story written in the past tense, and they prepared a list of words ending in -ed to emphasize three pronunciation patterns: /t/, /d/, and /ɪd/. According to the teacher, "*jadi, saya pilih teks yang bahasa nya sederhana dan banyak pengulangan katanya biar anak anak lebih fokus ke cara pengucapannya, dan bukan bingung sama artinya*" (T3). (Translation: "I selected a text containing simple language and frequent repetition so that the students could concentrate on pronunciation instead of struggling with the meaning") (T3). The use of short, engaging narrative texts with controlled vocabulary and repeated sentence patterns enabled students to focus on pronunciation rather than dealing with comprehension difficulties. This approach was consistent with Nation and Newton's (2009) argument that reducing linguistic complexity allowed learners to devote more attention to phonological features. The teacher's intentional emphasis on specific vowel and consonant sounds also reflected Celce-Murcia et al.'s (2010) recommendation to target particular pronunciation features in planned reading activities. Interview data indicated that this preparation stage had improved students' readiness for oral reading, contributing to their engagement from the outset of the lesson.

### ***Modelling Phase***

In the implementation stage, the activity began with teacher modeling. The teacher read a short narrative text aloud while students followed the printed text. During this process, the teacher demonstrated correct pronunciation, rhythm, stress, and intonation. During reading aloud sessions, the teacher regularly stopped when coming across important or difficult words and encouraged the students to echo the pronunciation. This approach was repeated multiple times within a session, particularly when new or hard-to-pronounce words appeared in the text. The teacher explained, "*Saya bacanya pelan pelan dulu sambil nekanin kata kata yang sulit, terus saya minta siswa nya mengulang lagi*" (T5). (Translation: "I began by reading at a slow pace, emphasizing the challenging words, and then asked the students to repeat them,") (T5). The findings indicated that the teacher's modeling had played an important role in supporting students' pronunciation development. By reading at a measured pace and stressing challenging words, the teacher had provided a clear model of correct articulation, intonation, and stress. This practice was consistent with Harmer's (2007) view that teacher modeling gave learners a reliable auditory reference, enabling them to replicate accurate pronunciation in meaningful contexts. The teacher's explanation, which emphasized deliberately slowing the pace and repeating target words, was aligned with Rasinski's (2014) observation that demonstrating fluent reading, while focusing on key sounds, strengthened learners' ability to internalize and reproduce accurate pronunciation patterns.

### ***Guided Reading Practice***

Following the modeling stage, in which the teacher provided an example of proper pronunciation and intonation, the lesson continued with Guided Reading Practice. This stage was conducted over a period of approximately 30 minutes. At this stage, the students read a narrative text aloud under the teacher's guidance, applying several techniques. The first was Choral Reading, in which the entire class read the same passage aloud in unison, following the teacher's lead. This strategy fostered students' self-confidence, enhanced their reading fluency, and reduced anxiety, as reading

collectively lessened their fear of making mistakes. The second technique was Pair Reading, where students worked in pairs and alternated reading the text aloud. While one student read, the other listened attentively and offered gentle corrections when needed. This approach promoted peer collaboration, strengthened listening skills, and encouraged mutual respect and positive support. It also increased students' awareness of pronunciation in a calm and supportive atmosphere. The final technique was Individual Reading, in which selected students read specific portions of the story aloud while their classmates listened and followed the text in their books. This method aimed to increase students' confidence in reading independently in front of others and enabled the teacher to give immediate feedback and corrections related to pronunciation and expression. As the teacher noted, "*Saya bimbing mereka di berbagai kegiatan membaca si, biar mereka juga bisa berlatih bersama, bisa saling bantu, dan juga berani membaca sendiri teks nya*" (T8). (Translation: "I guided the students through various reading activities so they could practice together, support one another, and build the confidence to read independently") (T8).

Collectively, these three techniques, choral reading, pair reading, and individual reading, created an interactive and encouraging learning environment that prioritised the improvement of reading fluency and pronunciation. The integration of these activities during guided practice reflected Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which highlights the significance of scaffolding within the zone of proximal development. Through choral and pair reading, students were able to rehearse pronunciation in a low-pressure context, consistent with Harmer's (2007) assertion that collective activities can lower anxiety and encourage active participation. Individual reading, on the other hand, allowed the teacher to monitor each student closely and provide immediate corrective feedback, as supported by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), who argued that timely correction is vital for preventing pronunciation errors from becoming ingrained. By integrating these varied techniques within one guided practice session, the teacher ensured that students benefited from the strengths of each approach — the security of group support, the peer interaction of pair work, and the personal accountability of individual reading. This comprehensive strategy not only improved pronunciation accuracy but also fostered greater confidence and willingness to participate in future oral activities.

#### ***Teacher Feedback and Correction***

Throughout the implementation of the reading aloud activities, teachers consistently provided prompt and focused feedback to address students' pronunciation errors. The feedback was conveyed in a positive and supportive manner, with the dual purpose of correcting inaccuracies and guiding learners toward developing self-awareness in their speech production. As the teacher commented, "*Kalo anak anak ada salah ngucapin, saya ya betulin. Saya kasi contoh yang bener, terus minta mereka ngulang lagi biar terbiasa*" (T7) (Translation: "Whenever the children made a mispronunciation, I would correct it by providing the right example and then asking them to repeat it until it became familiar to them") (T7). For example, when a student articulated the word "laughed" incorrectly as /la:fed/, the teacher gently corrected it to the appropriate form /læft/ and provided a brief explanation regarding the typical /t/ sound found in regular past tense verbs ending in *-ed*.

To reinforce accurate pronunciation, teachers frequently applied modeling techniques accompanied by repetition. After modeling the correct pronunciation, students were encouraged to repeat the target word several times and occasionally to construct a sentence using the word, thus promoting both contextual understanding and pronunciation practice. This method not only enhanced auditory perception but also facilitated active verbal engagement. Positive reinforcement was consistently used to maintain students' motivation and strengthen their confidence. As the teacher explained, "*Saya sering kasih pujian atau kata kata penyemangat kayak 'Nice try,' 'That's better,' atau 'Very good' buat mereka biar lebih percaya diri meskipun lagi belajar memperbaiki kesalahan*" (T6) (Translation: "I frequently offered supportive comments like 'Nice try,' 'That's better,' or 'Very good' to boost their confidence, even when they were still in the process of correcting their mistakes," (T6). The teacher consistently gave timely, constructive, and non-threatening feedback, which was in agreement with the suggestion of Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) that effective pronunciation correction should be explicit while maintaining a supportive tone to achieve optimal learning results. Addressing frequent mistakes collectively, rather than pointing out individual students, also reflected Brown's (2001) view that a positive and encouraging classroom is essential for young learners.

#### **Students' Perceptions on the Use of Reading Aloud Activities in the Classroom**

Students' perceptions played an important role in determining the effectiveness of teaching strategies in language learning. In this study, students' perceptions of the reading aloud activity were explored through qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires. The results of this study showed that most students had a positive attitude toward reading aloud activities, although some challenges were also identified. This section presented an in-depth analysis of how students perceived reading aloud in terms of pronunciation improvement, increasing confidence, engagement, and its overall impact on their English learning process.

### ***Students' Perceptions of Pronunciation Improvement***

The findings revealed that most students perceived reading aloud had a positive impact on their ability to pronounce English words more correctly. Through this activity, they became more aware of the differences between the written and spoken forms of English, especially when guided by their teacher. One student reflected, "*Waktu baca cerita The Lion and the Mouse, aku jadi tahu cara ngucapin 'lion' sama 'mouse' yang benar. Dulu aku bacanya 'li-on' sama 'moos', tapi habis baca nyaring dan dikasih tahu Bu Guru, sekarang aku udah bisa ngomonginnya dengan benar.*" (R1) (Translation: "When we read The Lion and the Mouse, I learned how to pronounce 'lion' and 'mouse' correctly. Before, I used to say 'li-on' and 'moos', but after reading aloud and being corrected by the teacher, I could say them properly.") (R1). This statement indicated that immediate feedback from the teacher during reading activities helped students recognize and correct pronunciation errors that they were previously unaware of. Another student stated, "*Awalnya aku susah ngomongin kata 'caught' sama bunyi 'th' di 'thank you'. Tapi habis baca bareng-bareng dan dijelasin Bu Guru, aku jadi bisa ngucapinnya lebih bagus. Ceritanya diulang-ulang juga bikin aku makin hafal bacanya.*" (R2) (Translation: "At first, I had trouble saying the word 'caught' and the 'th' sound in 'thank you'. But after reading together and getting an explanation from the teacher, I could pronounce them better. Repeating the story also helped me remember how to read it.") (R2). This reflection showed not only the significance of teacher explanation but also the effectiveness of repeated exposure, which helped reinforce precise pronunciation patterns.

These findings were supported by Harmer (2007), who highlighted that reading aloud provided learners with opportunities to match written forms with their corresponding spoken sounds, thereby enhancing phonological awareness. The students' ability to adjust their pronunciation, particularly for difficult or unfamiliar sounds such as /θ/ in "thank" or the irregular verb "caught," highlighted the cognitive shift that occurred when learners received consistent auditory input combined with visual cues and teacher modeling. In addition, Celce-Murcia et al., (2010) pointed out that repeated oral practice and corrective feedback were crucial in developing pronunciation skills, especially when the target sounds do not present in the learners' first language. The experiences of the learners in this study aligned with this perspective, as they demonstrated improvement in production. The repeated use of the same texts also contributed to pronunciation development by creating familiarity and enabling learners to internalize sound patterns in meaningful contexts. Moreover, the findings of this study supported the statements made by Nation and Newton's (2009) that fluency and pronunciation could be developed through meaningful and repeated input. The students' ability to memorize how to pronounce words correctly over time indicated that reading aloud sessions not only provided corrective points but also facilitated long-term retention through consistent, contextual practice.

### ***Students' Perceptions of Building Self-Confidence***

In addition to improving pronunciation, many students also considered reading aloud to be an important factor in increasing their confidence in English. The combination of a supportive classroom environment, teacher guidance, and collaborative reading formats provided students with a space where they felt secure to try, make mistakes, and grow. As one student shared, "*Kalau Bu Guru baca duluan, aku jadi lebih berani bacanya. Terus kalau aku salah, Bu Guru bantuin dengan baik, nggak marah.*" (R3) (Translation: "When the teacher read first, I felt more confident to read too. If I made a mistake, she helped nicely and didn't get angry.") (R3). This response showed that the examples by the teacher modeling played an important role in reducing students' initial anxiety. By indicating correct pronunciation, intonation, and pacing, the teacher provided a clear example that students could imitate. Additionally, the teacher's patient and non-judgmental correction style prompted students to participate without fear of ridicule or punishment. Another student commented, "*Saya suka membaca berpasangan atau berkelompok, tapi saya merasa gugup kalau baca sendiri*

*di depan kelas.*” (R4) (Translation: “I enjoyed reading in pairs or groups, but I still got nervous when I had to read alone in front of the class.”) (R4). This showed that although reading aloud remained intimidating when done individually, pair and group reading activities provided a more relaxed and less stressful environment. These formats allowed students to share the responsibility and gain support from peers, which helped them progressively build confidence.

These findings aligned with Krashen’s (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which stated that learners acquired language more effectively when their anxiety was lowered. A warm and supportive learning ambience, as described by R3, helped minimize emotional barriers, making students more welcoming to feedback and more willing to take risks in language use. In this study, the role of the teacher as a facilitator who modeled, guided, and motivated students was crucial in creating such an ambience. Furthermore, Vygotsky (1978) underscores the importance of social interaction in the learning process. Through collaborative activities such as pair or group reading, students received scaffolding not only from the teacher but also from their peers. These social learning opportunities allowed students to practice speaking and listening in a meaningful context, where they could observe, imitate, and enhance their language use in real time.

Some students, such as R4, still experienced nervousness when required to read aloud individually. However, their participation and willingness to engage improved significantly when reading was carried out as a group activity. The gradual and repeated exposure to oral performance in a non-threatening environment helped them become more relaxed using English aloud over time. This outcome highlighted the value of using reading aloud not only as a language practice method but also as an effective confidence-building strategy for learners who might otherwise have been hesitant to speak.

#### ***Students’ Perception of Engagement and Enjoyment***

The results of this study showed that reading aloud fostered students’ engagement and made English learning more enjoyable. Several students expressed that the activity helped them feel more involved in the lesson. One student stated, “*Baca dialog seru banget, kayak acting, makanya aku lebih ngerasa seru aja kalau belajar bahasa Inggris.*” (Translation: “Reading dialogues was enjoyable, it felt like acting. That’s why I enjoyed English class more.”) (R5). This response indicated that the performative element of reading aloud stimulated students’ enthusiasm and made learning English more entertaining. Another student remarked, “*Aku suka baca bareng temen-temen atau berdua, tapi aku deg-degan kalau disuruh baca sendiri.*” (Translation: “I liked reading with my friends, especially in pairs. But I still felt nervous when reading alone.”) (R6). This highlighted that peer collaboration during reading helped reduce anxiety, although some students still felt uneasy when required to perform individually.

These findings were consistent with Harmer (2007), who noted that reading aloud, particularly when done in expressive or dramatic forms, could increase student motivation by allowing them to bring the text to life. The enjoyment expressed by R5 reflected this sense of dramatization, where students felt as if they were performing, which contributed to their engagement. Moreover, the social aspect highlighted by R6 aligned with Nation & Newton (2009) assertion that paired and group reading tasks provided emotional support and lowered students’ affective filters. These authors emphasized that students were more willing to take risks and participate actively when they felt safe and encouraged by peers. Furthermore, Rasinski (2012) argued that reading aloud could be a powerful instrument to connect students emotionally with the content, particularly when combined with repetition and group interaction. The enjoyment expressed by the students in this study echoed this view, as they showed greater enthusiasm when reading collaboratively. The preference for reading with friends rather than individually also pointed to the importance of designing activities that build confidence gradually while maintaining engagement. Students’ responses in this study confirmed that reading aloud was not only useful for developing pronunciation but also served as a meaningful and enjoyable learning strategy. By integrating interactive elements such as dialogue reading and peer collaboration, reading aloud helped foster a more engaging and emotionally supportive learning environment, consistent with findings from previous research.

#### ***Students’ Perception of Challenges and Student Suggestions***

Although many students described their experiences with reading aloud activities positively, the data also showed that some faced particular challenges that affected how effectively they participated.

One of the difficulties most frequently mentioned was their struggle to articulate unfamiliar or difficult English words. This issue often interrupted their fluency and reduced their confidence. As one student noted, “*Kadang aku bingung baca kata-kata yang susah, terus takut diketawain temen kalau salah.*” (Translation: “Sometimes I didn’t know how to read difficult words, and I was afraid my friends would laugh if I pronounced them incorrectly.”) (R7). This comment illustrated not only challenges related to cognitive processing, limited vocabulary, and phonological awareness but also an emotional barrier, especially the fear of embarrassment and peer judgment. These affective aspects may have played a role in the students’ hesitation to read aloud in front of their classmates.

This finding aligned with Browns (2001) assertion that psychological factors, such as fear of negative evaluation and lack of confidence, often hinder second language learners from speaking or reading in public. Similarly, Horwitz et al. (1986) discussed language anxiety as a common barrier to oral performance, especially among young learners. The case of R7 illustrated that anxiety about making pronunciation errors in front of classmates could overshadow students’ willingness to participate, even when they were otherwise motivated. In light of these challenges, students offered practical and thoughtful suggestions for improvement. Several expressed the belief that more frequent vocabulary practice would have helped them become more familiar with difficult words, thus easing the reading process. They also recommended increasing the regularity of reading aloud activities, as repeated exposure could strengthen their pronunciation skills and boost their confidence over time. These insights revealed that students were not passive participants but reflective learners capable of evaluating their difficulties and suggesting actionable strategies.

This finding corresponded with Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory (1978), which emphasized the importance of learner agency and scaffolded support in overcoming challenges. When students were involved in identifying their learning needs and solutions, they were more likely to engage meaningfully in the learning process. The feedback provided by the students also reinforced the importance of creating a safe and supportive classroom environment. As suggested by Krashen (1982) in his Affective Filter Hypothesis, lowering learners’ anxiety levels was crucial for effective language acquisition.

## CONCLUSION

This research concluded that implementing reading aloud activities with narrative texts played a significant role in enhancing students’ pronunciation skills at a public elementary school in Semarang. The structured stages of implementation, including preparation, teacher modeling, guided practice, feedback, and integration with other language skills, proved to be effective in helping students improve their articulation, word stress, intonation, fluency, and clarity. Narrative texts offered students an engaging and purposeful way to practice pronunciation. Their repetitive plots and familiar themes made it easier for learners to internalize correct pronunciation patterns. When the teacher modeled words clearly and provided gentle corrections, it nurtured a classroom atmosphere where students felt comfortable and confident to join in. Most students responded enthusiastically to reading aloud, reporting better pronunciation, increased speaking confidence, and a stronger interest in learning English. Even so, difficulties such as handling unfamiliar words, having a limited vocabulary, and feeling nervous when speaking before the class persisted. These observations underscored the importance of giving extra phonetic guidance and introducing challenges gradually. Overall, reading aloud with narrative texts proved to be an effective and enjoyable method for pronunciation practice in elementary classrooms, strengthening students’ phonological awareness while also boosting their motivation, self-assurance, and willingness to participate.

Nevertheless, this study faced several limitations in its implementation. The reading aloud activities took place within a relatively brief instructional timeframe and were restricted to only a few classroom meetings. Consequently, the study was not able to examine the long-term effects of reading aloud on students’ pronunciation development. Moreover, the research was focused on the use of narrative texts, without considering whether other genres, such as dialogues or informational passages, might have produced different outcomes. For this reason, it was suggested that future research be carried out over a longer duration and incorporate a wider range of text types and activities in order to obtain a more thorough understanding of the effectiveness of reading aloud for pronunciation teaching.

In light of these conclusions, several suggestions can be offered. First, teachers are encouraged to incorporate reading aloud activities regularly in English lessons, especially with narrative texts

that are age-appropriate and culturally engaging. Second, it is important to provide structured and positive feedback during these activities to build students' confidence and correct their pronunciation without discouraging participation. Third, pair and group reading formats should be prioritized, particularly for young learners, as they reduce anxiety and foster collaboration. Lastly, further research is suggested to explore the long-term impact of reading aloud on students' fluency, listening skills, and vocabulary development, potentially with a larger sample or comparative design. In addition, suggestions were also drawn from the limitations identified in this study. Future research was suggested to be conducted over a longer period to examine the sustained impact of reading aloud activities on students' pronunciation development. Extending the duration of implementation would have allowed for a deeper understanding of long-term learning outcomes. Furthermore, future studies were encouraged to explore a wider variety of text types, such as dialogues, poems, or informational texts, to determine whether different genres offered distinct advantages in improving pronunciation. Employing a mixed-methods approach that combined both qualitative and quantitative data would also have provided a more comprehensive evaluation of students' progress and allowed for stronger validation of the results.

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