Word Decoding Ability In The World Of Language Acquisition Process: A Literature Review

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Article

Word Decoding Ability in the World of Language Acquisition Process: A Literature Review

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Abstract: The ability to decode words accurately at an early age strongly predicts reading competence later on. Decoding-challenged children may find it difficult to understand texts, which might impede their overall academic development. Strong word decoding skills accelerate the process of learning vocabulary and grammar rules in a variety of languages. The paper aimed to collect relevant literature regarding word decoding ability in the world of the language acquisition process. Policymakers and educators will be greatly impacted by realizing how crucial word decoding is to language learning. Providing targeted interventions for struggling readers, encouraging a positive reading culture, and explicitly teaching phonological and orthographic abilities are all essential components of effective reading education. Promoting decoding proficiency also requires making sure that people have access to excellent reading materials and tools. In order to enable learners to become great readers and communicators across linguistic and cultural boundaries, educators and policymakers should prioritize phonemic awareness from an early age and use effective teaching methodologies.

Keywords: education; language acquisition process; phonemic awareness; literature review; word decoding ability

Introduction

Being able to decode words is a crucial skill for successful reading acquisition and is essential to the development of early literacy. Ehri (2005) argues that being able to decode words fluently allows children to access word meanings and expand their vocabulary, which in turn supports comprehension. This foundational skill is crucial because it opens the door to understanding text, which in turn enables further learning and cognitive development.

Phonological, orthographic, and morphological knowledge interact in the cognitive processes that underpin word decoding. Perfetti (1992) asserts that phonological awareness—the capacity to identify and control sounds in speech—and orthographic knowledge—the comprehension of word patterns visually—must be combined for effective decoding. Furthermore, Carlisle (2000) emphasizes how deciphering complicated words requires morphological awareness, or the knowledge of word structure. The correct and fluent decoding of words by readers is facilitated by these interrelated cognitive processes.

A student's ability to decode words can be greatly improved by using effective instructional strategies. The National Reading Panel (2000) highlights the significance of systematic phonics instruction, which teaches the relationship between letters and sounds explicitly and sequentially. Research has shown that this approach improves decoding skills, especially for beginning readers and those who struggle with reading. Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) support the application of decoding skills in context by integrating phonics instruction with rich and meaningful reading experiences.

Reading fluency, or the ability to read text rapidly, precisely, and expressively, is directly related to decoding ability. Automaticity in decoding is crucial for fluent reading because it frees up cognitive resources for comprehension, claim LaBerge and Samuels (1974). Students can concentrate more on comprehending the text's meaning and less on reading mechanics when they can decode words with

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ease. Thus, the development of decoding abilities is essential for the production of proficient, fluent readers.

Genelza's narrative literature study from 2024 looks at the benefits and drawbacks of using ChatGPT systems in educational activities. It investigates the ways in which personalized and interactive learning experiences might support language acquisition with AI technologies such as ChatGPT. The review covers a range of research and use cases where AI technologies improve language acquisition through engagement, scaffolding language skills, and real-time feedback. But it also tackles issues like moral dilemmas, the requirement for strong data protection laws, and guaranteeing equal access to technologically advanced learning materials. In her study, Genelza highlights ChatGPT's ability to aid in language learning while arguing for its appropriate use and ongoing development in educational environments (Genelza, 2024).

Word decoding proficiency is essential for acquiring both first and second languages in the context of language acquisition. According to Cummins (2000), decoding abilities can help second-language learners transfer literacy skills from their first language to their second language. When learners are navigating multiple languages in multilingual environments, this transfer is very crucial. In order to create successful literacy programs that meet the unique requirements of students in a range of language settings, educators must have a thorough understanding of the processes and instructional strategies that enable decoding.

The Benefits of Having Word Decoding Ability

Early literacy development greatly depends on word decoding ability, also known as phonological decoding or phonics skills. Competent word decoding is essential for reading comprehension and fluency, claims Ehri (2005). Youngsters who are proficient in both phonological awareness and decoding are better able to identify and pronounce words correctly, which improves their reading comprehension in general (Ehri, 2005).

Justin Herald's linguistic development is examined in the Genelza (2022) case study, particularly emphasizing his path from early childhood through adolescence. Because of his distinct linguistic profile, Herald, a subject of attention, had extensive evaluations and interventions to monitor the difficulties and advancement of his language skills. The study sheds light on Herald's early difficulties with phonemic awareness and later gains in word decoding skills, offering suggestions for successful teaching methods for people with comparable linguistic characteristics. Genelza's study emphasizes the value of early intervention and focused assistance in promoting kids' and teens' language development.

Also, there is a high correlation between vocabulary acquisition and word decoding proficiency. Children get better at interpreting the meanings of foreign words based on context and morphology as their decoding abilities grow (National Reading Panel, 2000). This capacity for word decoding and comprehension promotes successful language comprehension and academic achievement in a variety of topic areas (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1998).

Research by Torgesen and Burgess (1998) emphasizes the advantages that proficient word decoding has in the long run. They contend that early phonological decoding mastery improves reading comprehension in young readers and increases the likelihood that they will acquire advanced literacy abilities as they go through the school system. This fundamental ability promotes a lifetime love of reading and learning in addition to helping with academic success (Torgesen & Burgess, 1998).

Moreover, word decoding has advantages outside of the classroom. Foorman et al. (2015) found that people who are good at decoding also have a tendency to be more confident in their ability to read. This confidence can have a positive impact on their academic performance as a whole as well as improve social and cognitive development.

In conclusion, proficient reading and language comprehension depend on the capacity to decode words phonologically. It encourages academic success and lifetime learning in addition to vocabulary growth and reading fluency. Scholars like Ehri, Torgesen, and Foorman stress the importance of word decoding in improving reading comprehension and overall literacy results for kids and adults.

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Findings and Discussion

Word decoding, which allows students to convert written information into spoken words and understand their meaning, is a crucial language learning ability. The basis for both general literacy and reading proficiency is this capacity. Decoding is the process of identifying letters, comprehending phonemes, and combining them to create words. Ehri (2005) highlighted that word decoding involves integrating phonological, orthographic, and semantic information in addition to phonetic accuracy.

The capacity to identify and work with sounds in spoken language, or phonological awareness, is a key component in successful decoding. According to research by Goswami and Bryant (1990) and Adams (1990), kids who have strong phonological awareness are better at decoding words because they can mix and break down sounds more efficiently. In the early phases of reading development, this ability is essential.

Understanding the visual representation of words, or orthographic knowledge, is also crucial to decoding. Perfetti and Hart (2001) claim that readers create orthographic mappings that facilitate speedy word and spelling recognition. Better comprehension is made possible by this automatic recognition, which also helps with fluency and lowers cognitive strain.

Having a large vocabulary is necessary for efficient decoding. According to Nagy and Anderson (1984), a vast vocabulary gives readers a framework of reference to help them understand words they are unfamiliar with. Readers can improve their decoding skills by using morphological knowledge and context clues to infer meanings when they come across new words.

The research conducted by Genelza (2022) examines the relationship between Phonemic Awareness (PA) and word decoding proficiency in students pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Information Technology. Early reading skills depend heavily on phonemic awareness or the capacity to identify and manipulate particular sounds in spoken words. This study aims to ascertain how PA especially affects information technology students' word decoding skills. Through the evaluation of PA levels and their correlation with decoding competence, the research offers a valuable understanding of the fundamental literacy abilities required for success in this field of study. Knowing these connections can help develop instructional plans that are specifically designed to help undergraduates studying information technology become more proficient readers.

Instructional strategies have a big influence on decoding abilities. The National Reading Panel (2000) emphasized the value of systematic phonics education, which clearly explains the correspondence between letters and sounds. This method enhances learners' decoding skills and aids in their understanding of language structure.

Complex cognitive functions like memory, attention, and processing speed are involved in decoding. Working memory is essential for storing and modifying phonological information during decoding, according to Swanson and Jerman's 2007 research. Readers that possess efficient cognitive processing are able to decode words accurately and quickly.

Various languages with various orthographies may require different decoding techniques. When comparing decoding in transparent orthographies (like Finnish) versus opaque orthographies (like English), Ziegler and Goswami (2005) discovered that learners in transparent orthographies pick up decoding abilities more quickly because of constant letter-sound correspondences. On the other hand, learners in opaque orthographies require more practice in order to become proficient in irregular patterns.

Decoding problems are a common feature of dyslexia, a reading impairment marked by difficulty with accurate and fluent word recognition. According to Shaywitz (2003), dyslexics have trouble with phonological processing, making it difficult to decipher words effectively. To support these learners, early identification and intervention are essential.

Gaining motivation and involvement is essential for improving decoding abilities. Motivated readers are more likely to participate in reading activities, which gives them more chances to practice and get better at decoding, according to Guthrie and Wigfield (2000). Decoding skills are improved, and motivation is fostered by good reading experiences and encouraging learning environments. Also, Genelza (2021) investigates the pandemic-era speech anxiety that first-year engineering students encounter and suggests creating an intervention program. The study looks into how

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students' confidence and performance in oral presentations have been impacted by the move to virtual learning and their increased reliance on digital communication platforms. The research aims to create focused interventions that can lessen these difficulties by identifying the elements that lead to speech apprehension and examining how it affects learning outcomes. The study's findings are invaluable for educators and administrators looking to help students adjust to new learning environments and improve their oral communication skills in engineering education.

Policymakers and educators will be greatly impacted by realizing how crucial word decoding is to language learning. Providing targeted interventions for struggling readers, encouraging a positive reading culture, and explicitly teaching phonological and orthographic abilities are all essential components of effective reading education. Promoting decoding proficiency also requires making sure that people have access to excellent reading materials and tools.

Recommendations

The ability to decode words accurately at an early age strongly predicts reading competence later on. Decoding-challenged children may find it difficult to understand texts, which might impede their overall academic development. Strong word decoding skills accelerate the process of learning vocabulary and grammar rules in a variety of languages. This ability helps people read more fluently and improves their speaking language abilities as they learn to express and identify phonetic patterns.

Curriculum frameworks should prioritize early phonics instruction, as stated in educational policies. By giving phonemic awareness top priority in teacher preparation and instructional strategies, schools can better assist children in building strong word decoding skills. It is crucial to comprehend phonetic patterns and decoding techniques in several languages, particularly in contexts with multiple languages. To maximize learning results, researchers and educators should investigate how transferable these talents are between languages.

Decoding abilities can be strengthened at home by promoting parental involvement through literacy programs and workshops. A conducive learning environment can be created by working with communities to foster reading habits and phonics-based activities. Additionally, proficient word decoding develops analytical and critical thinking abilities in addition to improving reading comprehension. Strong decoding skills make a person more capable of overcoming workplace and school obstacles that call for effective information processing.

Longitudinal investigations to look at the long-term effects of early phonics instruction on overall literacy skills should be the main focus of future research. We can also learn more about the best ways to improve word decoding skills by investigating creative teaching strategies and their efficacy in a variety of linguistic contexts.

In summary, the development of word decoding skills through methodical teaching and encouraging surroundings is essential for the successful acquisition of language and the growth of literacy. In order to enable people to become great readers and communicators across linguistic and cultural boundaries, educators and policymakers should prioritize phonemic awareness from an early age and use effective teaching methodologies.

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