THE IMPACT OF HAVING SECOND GRADE STUDENTS RECORD A TEXT READ OUT LOUD IN RELATION TO THEIR FLUENCY SKILLS

A Chapter Style Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science in Education - Reading Teacher/Reading Specialist

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THE IMPACT OF HAVING SECOND GRADE STUDENTS RECORD A TEXT READ OUT LOUD IN RELATION TO THEIR FLUENCY SKILLS

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We recommend acceptance of this thesis in partial fulfillment of the candidate’s requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Education – Reading

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ABSTRACT

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A quasi-experimental comparison study took place over the course of six weeks in a general education second grade classroom in an urban Wisconsin school district. The purpose of the study was to determine the impact and results provided after a student was given direct instruction on fluency skills and provided time to record themselves on a 1:1 device and be reflective on their own fluency by listening back to their own reading. Students received reading instructions designed to work on specific fluency strategies. For all six weeks of the study, students were presented with tools and strategies to become for fluent readers. Passages were pulled based on students levels as determined by their Fall benchmark scores, and were fiction and nonfiction texts. Each week, data was collected using progress monitoring measures for words read per minute (WPM), comprehension, and self-reflection charts. Analysis of the final data points suggested that recording and listening back to a self-recorded reading can have positive effects on second grade students’ fluency skills and overall reading engagement and achievement.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

This will be my first year of teaching second grade. As I go into this year of firsts, I wanted to work in an area of comfort that I knew I could adjust to a new grade level. From being a Sixth Grade English Language Arts teacher, I knew where the literacy gaps were as our elementary students came to me in middle school. The students would come to me at the start of the year, and I would have them read out loud and work with me in small groups on reading and working through texts. This is where I noticed that their fluency lacked, which then would lead to students not comprehending the text as well as they should at the sixth grade level. Throughout the school year with my sixth graders trying to “patch” the holes and gaps they had from their elementary learning, I was able to see my students make gains and learn how to enjoy reading for pleasure and not see it as work.

Thinking ahead to this upcoming school year where I will be changing grade levels and now teaching second grade, I had to think in a different mindset about what I could learn and implement to help my students at this age. With never teaching this grade level before and not knowing the curriculum, I had to think back to my sixth grade experiences and what I already knew about literacy and how it could be developed or adapted at the second grade level for better success in the future. This is when I decided to focus on reading aloud in correlation with fluency.
The National Reading Panel highlighted five areas of literacy as the most important aspects of teaching reading: phonics instruction, vocabulary, phonemic awareness, comprehension, and reading fluency. All five of these areas together help to build a successful reader in the classroom. If one area is lacking, it will impact multiple areas of a student’s reading. By focusing on a student’s fluency, I will then be able to help improve and increase a student’s comprehension and overall enjoyment of reading.

Students who are emergent or struggling readers usually have a difficult time with decoding words, understanding a text, and breaking down sentences. For this group of students, the reading process is more challenging because they are spending more time decoding words and the meaning of the text, rather than reading smoothly and expressively.

Second grade students are at their most vulnerable state to develop fluency (Kim & Wagner, 2015). Through their first two years of education they have focused on phonics, phonemes, letters and sound identification. By second grade, a large focus is to now take what they have developed in Kindergarten and first grade and put it together to begin creating meaning for text and fluent readers (Kim & Wagner, 2015). By working and focusing on fluency-based skills at the second grade level, I will be continuing to build up their reading and set them up for success with developing comprehension skills and becoming a stronger reader. If students do not develop fluent reading in the early graders, it can largely impact their reading speed, comprehension, accuracy, and overall enjoyment of reading (Kim & Wagner, 2015). Students may become reluctant to read aloud or read to others as they don’t feel confident in how their reading sounds (Kim & Wagner, 2015). When students cannot read fluently, all other areas of reading lack, which
will continue to spiral and create roadblocks in a student’s education, regardless of the area of content (Kim & Wagner, 2015). By working on having students read aloud to themselves and listen back to identify areas of fluency, I will be helping each student grow to become a fluent reader and become more confident in their overall reading performance. Once I am able to work on all areas of fluency such as, accuracy, expression, pacing, and punctuation with the students, each will be able gain reading success individually.

**Purpose of Study**

The purpose of this study is to help others understand the importance of fluency-based learning in a child’s education. The goal is to demonstrate how reading fluency will improve over time with the usage of listening back to read aloud of a student’s own voice and focusing on subtopics of fluency. This study will prove that repeated practice of reading out loud, with self-checks, will increase a student’s fluency and in return, help build success in other areas of reading.

**Research Question**

To determine the effectiveness of reading out loud and utilizing self-checks to improve fluency at the second grade level, I chose to conduct a study which allows me to explore the impact and effect fluency has on a student’s reading performance and overall enjoyment of reading. When thinking about how to specifically look at the effects of fluency, I chose to focus on student’s reading out loud to themselves so that they can be the explorers and reflectors in the process. Reading aloud brings many benefits to the classrooms, and usually is demonstrated in the routine of class read aloud done by the teacher to exemplify fluency. I then questioned, what would be the result if the students
were the “teacher” and read aloud to themselves, so that they could listen to themselves read and learn about fluency from their own voice rather than just only from a teacher’s voice? From there, my research question was developed.

Research Question: *How does having second-grade students self-evaluate their own recorded reading impact their fluency skills?*
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading texts multiple times orally is often suggested as a strategy to increase fluency and improve a student’s overall reading. It is essential that educators work with students to develop their reading skills and help them become proficient readers (Snyder, 2017). This chapter will review the current research and importance of fluent reading and its relation to overall reading success. The components of fluency development, methods of assessing reading accuracy, rate, and prosody, and recommended fluency procedures will be discussed.

Components of Fluency

Fluency is an important component to successful reading. The National Reading Panel (2000) states that our education system tends to overlook reading fluency instruction, but stresses decoding and comprehension. However, many children are not fluent readers, and a national concern has emerged over fluency growth. Students who read fluently sound as if they are talking and having a casual conversation. While past studies, interventions, and educational norms have focused on reading speed as the main goal to attain, now more emphasis is being placed on exploring the roles of prosody, and how listening to audio recording of texts can act as a form of scaffolding to reading comprehension and overall fluency (Taguchi et al., 2016).

Fluency is defined as a combination of accuracy, automaticity, rate, and oral reading prosody, which help facilitate a reader’s construction of meaning. “Reading
fluency should be hot, but now in the way that I have come to practice in classrooms across the nation, wherein tracking students’ number of correct words per minute reigns supreme. Speed should never be stressed, rather focus on reading for enjoyment and overall success.” (Son, 2018, p. 234) According to Yildiz (2017), attention in good readers is significantly associated with reading rate, prosody, reading comprehension, and word recognition because good readers pay closer attention to the details of a text and utilize their skills more adequately. Fluency is demonstrated during oral reading through word recognition, phrasing, and pacing (Lai, 2014). Rate is measuring the speed of a reader, Prosody is when a reader reads with expression, phrasing, and pacing. Accuracy is when a reader is able to read by decoding or sight with limited mistakes (Rasinski, 2014). Models of primary-grade literacy emphasize decoding, letter-sound correspondence and other formal phonological analysis tasks, production of oral equivalents of printed words, and proficiency in the production, fluency and comprehension of connected text (McConnell & Wackerle-Hollman, 2016).

In Kaman’s study in 2018, a significant difference was seen between the group reading digital text and the group reading printed text in fourth grade students. It was determined that the reading activities with digital texts developed fluent reading skills as students’ reading attitude increased, therefore, making the activity more engaging and positive. The experimental group reported that they liked to read digital texts on tablets, it was found entertaining and contributed to their comprehension of the texts. The interactive idea of being able to read on the tablet helped increase the fluency and comprehension skill application.
Fluency’s Correlation to Comprehension

The fundamental reason for reading is to make sense of text, to learn, and to engage in the ideas that are articulated. Because of this, fluent reading is the critical building block that helps readers have the capability to comprehend a text for meaning (Lai, 2014). Once students are able to master decoding words, it is important for them to integrate this skill with reading fluency so that they are able to make meaning of a text. Usually when a student lacks fluency, their instructor will be concerned with their decoding and word recognition as the students are now less likely to be able to construct meaning (Lai, 2014). Struggling readers tend to spend less time on reading than strong, fluent readers because struggling readers try to avoid reading due to their self-confidence. When readers stop reading, they tend to lose the skills they’ve learned and it causes them to fall further behind than their peers. Fluency is a large factor that can limit or support comprehension of a text (Lai, 2014).

Comprehension represents one of the most important conditions of the reading process. As students transition from viewing reading as word decoding to meaning construction, they are increasingly required to utilize their developing comprehension skills to gain knowledge from the text (Price et al., 2016). Reading fluency has been shown to be essential for effective comprehension. Reading fluency and comprehension have been found to have strong positive correlations (Price et al., 2016). Good comprehension during reading is reflected by reading rate and stable pacing (Wallot et al., 2014). The relationship between oral fluency and comprehension are most vital and most supportive at a younger age, specifically first through third grade. As children reach
fourth grade, they are expected to read effectively and fluently at an increased rate with equivalent comprehension, no longer needing added support (Price et al., 2016).

In 2015, Akbar et al. conducted a study in which they investigated the effect of digital texts on fluent reading skills. They found that the effect of reading digital text on reading comprehension was negative while it increased students’ reading fluency. In 2013, Schneps et al. compared reading on printed materials with reading on electronic devices in relation to the levels of reading fluency and comprehension of students. The results showed that reading on devices significantly influenced reading fluency and comprehension (Kaman, 2018).

It is also important to take into consideration the types of texts that are being used to model and practice fluency, as the varied text levels and genres can have an impact and correlation towards the student’s comprehension. As children age and develop their fluency, their comprehension will become more equivalent across reading modes and text types (Price et al., 2016). There are certain texts that lend themselves to be strong oral reading texts. The most appropriate types of materials for fluency practice are those that come from genres where expression and voice are most heard. This could include poetry, song lyrics, plays, or reader’s theatre. Instructors also need to take into consideration the level of the texts being chosen. For fluency work, the reading texts should be at or a little above the student’s instructional level (Rasinski, 2014). Many believe that fluency passages should be below a student’s level, but research has shown that it isn’t always beneficial and isn’t providing students the opportunity to challenge themselves with the classroom support they may receive (Allington, 2014).
**Reading Rate**

Reading rate is the speed in which someone reads a text at their level in a provided time. Reading rate is an important component to fluency, but should not be the main goal of reading fluently. While reading rate has been noted as a measure of automaticity, a problem occurs when fluency becomes instruction focused on the development of reading as fast as possible (Rasinski, 2014). Reading rate does not provide a complete image of fluency, and when students focus on that rate or speed more so than the text, their reading expression and comprehension drops.

However, reading rate does become important when a student is a slow, disfluent reader as a result from lack of word recognition automaticity and efficient processing of a text. This is when many teachers provide phonics instruction to students who struggle to learn to read to compensate. Often these students may become accurate decoders, but fail to reach a level of automaticity to read at a sufficient reading rate (Rasinski, 2016).

Reading rate of reading text has been considered one of the many components of effective reading. Reading skills have been grouped into two categories, unconstrained or constrained. Unconstrained readings skills are skills that continue to grow over time with text exposure and experience. Constrained skills are mastered as a complete set in one to two years of instruction. Oral reading fluency falls between the two categories because reading rate grows quickly over the first several years, then improves gradually through the middle grades and takes several years to achieve optimal rates (O’Connor, 2017).

Price et al. (2016) did a study on oral reading fluency compared to silent reading fluency. A component of their study was looking at the reading rate of the students. Price discussed how oral reading can lead to longer time on-task, because children usually read
more slowly when they read aloud. The relation between reading rate or reading automaticity and oral reading fluency displays the children's ability to produce oral language fluently in response to visual stimuli, underlying their ability to read connected text aloud with appropriate fluency. On the other hand, silent reading fluency does not require verbal output, therefore, skills in reading automaticity may not be as central to its development (Price et al., 2016). Readers who lack sufficient practice in reading are unlikely to develop automaticity in their word recognition, which inhibits their rate of reading (Rasinski, 2016).

**Reading and Decoding Accuracy**

Reading accuracy is reading and decoding words accurately. Reading rate and accuracy go together and complement one another in the success of a student’s reading. When students become more accurate in word identification and reading words correctly, they will read quicker and their rate will increase. Reading accuracy is important because students who cannot read words accurately and need to take a long time to decode words, may begin to lose focus and meaning of the text. Students who have mastered memory or sight words usually will demonstrate strong accuracy in their reading. Students also need to know reading strategies for decoding words independently so that they can improve their accuracy on their own (Rasinski, 2016).

According to Rasinski (2016), as student’s skills in decoding words increases, the expectation becomes that they will develop the ability to read words quickly or automatically. They cannot take as much time to analyze each word they encounter as they read; therefore, word recognition becomes automatic. Rasinski (2016) conducted research on their implementation of “sight word” practice. With practice, it was found
that beginning readers become more fluent readers by learning more “sight words,” or familiar words that they can recognize at a glance without utilizing decoding strategies. As the students’ words recognized grew larger, it provided continued growth of fluency and comprehension. If a student is unable to automatically recognize an impactful amount of words in their texts, their reading becomes laborious and slow, restricting comprehension and potentially diminishing motivation to read (National Reading Panel, 2000).

In 2018, Arens et al. conducted research in a second grade classroom with 17 students to determine the relationship between using technology (iPods) to increase oral reading rate and accuracy. The students practiced a passage for two days to help with decoding words and confidence in repeated reading, then they read it aloud to be recorded on the iPod, finally they worked with a partner to peer-review the accuracy of the reading and improvements to make for next week. This routine was followed for eight weeks to determine if the iPods assisted in improving reading accuracy by allowing the students to hear their reading. At the end of the study it was found that 13 out of the 17 students had increased their oral reading fluency. The teacher observed students more engaged and taking more time with their reading as the routine became instilled in their daily reading rotations. They were becoming more attentive to their reading and wanted to be peer-reviewed with the eager intention of increasing their fluency rate and accuracy.

**Reading Prosody**

According to Rasinski, prosody refers to reading smoothly, effortlessly, and with proper expression and phrasing. Prosody is also sometimes referred to as expression in reading. The best way to identify and assess prosody is through listening to students read
orally (Rasinski, 2014). Assessing prosody can be a very subjective measure, thus making it a component of fluency that is sometimes overlooked or not seen as valid or as important to teach (Rasinski, 2014). As a result, it is minimized as a fluency instruction skill set. Reading expressively can be an important and helpful skill in fluency as it helps to build connections and make meaning of the text.

Modeling reading can be a great way to display how to read expressively. To become fluent in any task, having the task modeled first can be beneficial, along with provided time to practice and gain experience. Rasinski (2014) compares learning how to read fluently to learning to drive a car. Just like a teenager watches their parents drive, a student watches their teacher read, observing all their actions in both scenarios. Students need to see strong and successful fluent reading to help make themselves fluent readers. Students need to observe adults’ expression, decodable skills, volume read, and rate as to which they read. According to Rasinski (2014), reading to children increases children’s motivation for reading, enlarges their vocabulary, and also improves their comprehension. Modeling fluent reading can provide great opportunities for rich discussion with students about fluency and what the students were observing and thinking as the modeling was being done. The modeling could be done to show successful and appropriate oral reading or to show unsuccessful and poor oral reading.

Foorman et al. (2006) conducted an observational study and reported that a key factor of reading instruction and improvement in first and second grade classrooms was the time allocated to text reading. It was observed that the volume of reading during reading instruction that was modeled by the teacher and demonstrated in front of the students, along with providing time to students to read, explained a variety of
observations from the outcome measures including word recognition, decoding, and reading comprehension. These findings suggested to them that teachers should design reading lessons with expanded reading volume by the teacher and for the students (Allington, 2014).

Researchers have often added in listening passage previews (LLP) to repeated readings (RR), providing students with an accurate and fluent model of a passage to aid in potentially fewer reading errors when students read a passage aloud on their own because all words would have been modeled for them during the listening passage preview (Rogers, 2018). In 2006, Begeny and Silber conducted an experiment that suggested that LLP and RR can produce greater gains in reading fluency when implemented together than either strategy used separately. They investigated the effects of different combinations of LLP, RR, and word lists focusing on the number of words read correctly in one minute for four third-grade students. The results suggested that combining LLP and RR produced greater gains in fluency rather than LLP with word lists or RR with word lists (Rogers, 2018).

**Assessing Reading Fluency**

Instructors can use multiple ways to assess reading fluency. One form of fluency assessment is to have students self-evaluate their reading. Once students have observed model reading and have begun the process of practicing fluent reading, they will then be able to start evaluating their own fluency skills and progress. By having the students be their own critics and evaluators, they are taking ownership of their learning. Students are able to assess themselves of their prosody, rate, and accuracy. Students can also begin to
evaluate their peers' fluent reading and begin to build collaborative conversations on each other’s fluency (Allington, 2014).

When assessing fluency, it is also important to look at the types of texts being utilized. There are certain texts that lend themselves to be strong oral reading texts. The most appropriate types of materials for fluency practice are those that come from genres where expression and voice are most heard. Nonfiction texts are also an appropriate type of material as they provide direct information for comprehension purposes. For fluency work, the reading texts should be at or a little above the student’s instructional level (Rasinski, 2014).

Various individuals believe that a text’s complexity should be at or below a student’s benchmark level. This belief hasn’t always been proven beneficial, nor always provides the challenge a student needs (Allington, 2014). Amendum (2018) conducted a study in an attempt to determine if text complexity really did matter when it came to fluency. He and many researchers conducted research on a variety of elementary-aged students with a variety of leveled texts to determine what differences they found among accuracy, rate, expression, and comprehension. The researchers found that there was a negative relationship between text difficulty level and the students’ reading accuracy. Students were more likely to make errors when texts increased in difficulty and this problem was particularly acute for poorer readers. In 10 of the 11 studies a negative relationship utilized untimed measures of accuracy, rather than one-minute time samples. One researcher that was a part of the study found that the number of high-frequency words that the students encountered did relate to accuracy positively. Another researcher in the study found that the pre-teaching done by the teacher with modeling decoding
skills, vocabulary pre-teaching, redirected support, and the students prior knowledge to the topic of the text all played a factor in the student’s reading accuracy positively, especially if the text was at a higher complexity level than the student’s tested level (Amendum, 2018). Within Amendum’s study, it was also found that the role of the teacher also affected students’ reading rates. Results from some of the tests conducted found positive effects of repeated reading on students’ reading rates. The study also demonstrated improved reading rates when reading aloud to an adult who provided support and motivation, regardless of text difficulty or when reading a text previously read aloud by the teacher.

**Reading Motivation’s Correlation to Fluency**

Another component of measuring and assessing fluency can be reading motivation and self-confidence as a reader. A longitudinal study conducted by Quirk et al. in 2009 examined the relationship between self-confidence as readers, goals for reading and fluency skills in second grader students throughout the school year. The students’ reading motivation and reading fluency were measured at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. Students’ goals for reading were related to self-confidence, fluency components, and self-motivation. It was found that self-confidence was significantly related to fluency at each measuring point. Students who started the year with a higher score in fluency skills also show higher self-confidence as readers. Students who showed higher self-confidence as readers at the beginning of the school year actually developed their reading fluency skills more rapidly during the year than peers who started the school year with low self-confidence as readers. Students who started the year with low reading fluency skills also exhibited lower levels of self-confidence as readers at the
middle of the school year. Reading motivation and reading skills are not fully formed at the primary level of education, especially in second grade, and are subject to change that may determine reading behaviors and achievement in the future of their learning. It is a critical point in the development of children’s’ attitudes to and skills in reading (Vaknin-Nusbaum et al., 2018).

**Summary**

It cannot be stated entirely that having students recording themselves reading out loud and self-reflecting alone will directly result in increased reading fluency and reading achievement. The studies presented in this review suggest one implementation strategy that can aid in the development of reading fluency in the classroom and may be able to influence long-term improvements for student success. It is important to note that this fluency strategy is not to take away from overall curriculum instruction, but rather to be looked at as an enrichment to daily literacy routines and another support tool for students. By continuing to foster and explicitly teach fluency skills and self-reflection strategies, students may become more self-aware and self-reflective in other areas of learning, along with becoming more confident in their reading to understand their reading growth and engagement.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

Struggling readers often lack fluency. As students work to decode words in texts, their reading begins to sound choppy, and their comprehension usually suffers from it. These struggling readers may begin to fall further behind their peers in reading and often will lack motivation to read for pleasure. Teacher modeled reading, auditory self-reflection, and practicing fluency skills have been shown to be successful strategies to help improve fluency. The intent of this research is to demonstrate how reading out loud to yourself, paired with self-reflections based on the implemented fluency skills, will help improve second-grade readers fluency.

Context of the Study

The study was conducted during the first semester of the 2019-2020 school year in my second-grade classroom at John Marshall Elementary School in Wausau, Wisconsin. Wausau is located in the Central Wisconsin area and has a population of about 40,000. John Marshall has a population of 291 students. John Marshall is considered a neighborhood school, and is one of the smaller schools in the Wausau School District (WSD). In total, the WSD has 13 elementary schools, which feed into two middle schools, and then into two high schools (East Side and West Side of Wausau). The participants of the study were five second-graders who received small-group reading instruction and practice for 45 minutes, five days per week.
Fluency instruction and practice took place as a part of the 45 minute reading instruction block. This took place in the afternoon and was the first instruction they were provided to start their afternoon. We had the whole group time to go over the day’s goals, warm up skills such as decoding, then a mini-lesson or book club reading. Fluency testing and lessons happened once a week for the students on Fridays. These were called their “Fluency Friday.” The students would get a mini-lesson on a fluency strategy and then were given time to examine, reflect, and practice their fluency skills they had taught. By providing students an interactive and engaging activity and routine, they were able to develop their literacy skills and become stronger readers.

**Researcher**

At the time of the study, I was a twenty-five year old teacher in my fourth year of full-time teaching. I was in my first year of teaching second-grade after teaching sixth-grade reading for the past three years. I have held my bachelor’s degree in Middle Childhood-Early Adolescence Education and English Education through the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and have been working toward my Master’s degree in Reading with Reading Specialist certification, also through the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse.

**Participants**

The participants for this study are second-grade students at John Marshall Elementary School in Wausau, Wisconsin. The students in the study were five second-grade students. Of the five second-grade students, two of them were male, and three were female. The five second-grade students were all identified as “average” readers by their Fall benchmark testing. Since the participants are minors, parents or guardians were
asked to complete and sign an informed consent form for their child to participate in the research study. Each student also had the study explained to them by me and were given the opportunity to agree or disagree to participate in the research in the classroom. The students were provided an assent form to sign. At John Marshall, 70% of the students identify as Caucasian, 11% identify as Southeast Asian, and 10% identify as two or more races. Within my small group of five second-grade students, I had one African-American student, one Southeast Asian student, and three Caucasian students.

**Procedures and Data Collection Plan**

All procedures and data collection took place in my own classroom during our literacy intervention block. Routines and procedures were established at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year so that students understood the expectations and accurate data was collected right away.

Each day, students followed their assigned schedule and attended their small group. Each student completed their fluency once a week on Fridays. The students were provided leveled passages based on their reading levels, which were determined at the start of the school year with their initial benchmark reading scores. The students read through the passage a few times quietly and independently, then they used their iPad to read the passage out loud as they recorded themselves on Seesaw (an application design to help with communication and collaboration in the classroom and with families). Once the students recorded themselves and posted their video on Seesaw, they then went back and listened to themselves reading their passage. As they listened, or after they listened, the students filled out a fluency self-reflection sheet attached to their recorded passaged. This sheet had four components that the students reflected on; accuracy, pace, expression,
and punctuation. Once the students had completed the self-reflection sheet, then they submitted the reading and sheet to me on Seesaw. This routine continued each week for six weeks. I changed the leveled passages each week, and each time I focused on a fluency skill during our whole group time so that students were able to continually reflect and improve on their reading out loud.

To analyze and assess the outcomes of this research, I looked at a few different types of data. First, I had the students fill out a pre and post reading aloud reflection to gain their perspective on how they felt about reading out loud and their confidence in their own reading. I analyzed these to see if the fluency practice helped to improve students fluency and overall reading confidence. Next, I assessed and analyzed the fluency self-reflection sheets that the students filled out after each reading out loud. I was able to use these reflection sheets to create my own data collection charts. Finally, I collected data on the student’s word per minute (WPM) from their fluency readings. Once the students read out loud, record themselves, and posted it to Seesaw, I was then able to watch their reading and record their WPM onto their individual fluency progress chart. This data piece allowed me to see the correlation in the repeated fluency practice and the explicit fluency instruction, also aligned with their reading confidence and comprehension skills.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine if having students record their own reading of a text and using it as a self-reflection tool, would improve their overall fluency skills. For six weeks, five students in second grade received small group reading instruction focused on reading strategies and building reading fluency. Progress was monitored weekly using Words Per Minute (WPM), comprehension and self-reflection measures. Each week, students were provided a text to read after being taught fluency strategies. The students read the text for fluency and comprehension by recording themselves on their 1:1 device. Students used a self-reflection sheet to guide them as they listened back to their reading to find areas of success and improvement. This routine was followed for the entire six-week time period.

This chapter will examine the data collected from these measures in order to attempt to answer the original research question:

*How does having second-grade students self-evaluate their own recorded reading impact their fluency skills?*

Description of Student Needs

All five students involved in this study receive daily whole-class literacy instruction, in addition to a daily small-group literacy instruction. All five students are in the general education classroom setting for the entirety of the day. The students are all in the same reading range based on their benchmark reading scores. The students are all
considered “average” second grade readers. The students are the “mid-high” small-group for reading. All five students have a strong base of decoding strategies, phonics, and word patterns. The students are in the stage of reading for comprehension and enjoyment, rather than “learning how to read.” Since all the students are in the “reading to learn” stage, they were great participants as they could focus on the fluency strategies to make their reading stronger rather than consciously focusing on decoding strategies.

**Findings**

Data collected from weekly fluency monitoring measures were entered into line plots to show rate of growth over the six weeks of this study. Table 4.1 shows the progress monitoring scores in Words Per Minute (WPM) and comprehension accuracy for each student on passages at their group reading level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student A</th>
<th>Student B</th>
<th>Student C</th>
<th>Student D</th>
<th>Student E</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week</strong></td>
<td><strong>WPM</strong></td>
<td><strong>Comp Acc</strong></td>
<td><strong>WPM</strong></td>
<td><strong>Comp Acc</strong></td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<td>80</td>
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<td>100%</td>
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Table 4.1 *Student Scores on WCPM and Comprehension Progress Monitoring Measures*
Words Per Minute (WPM)

Figures 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 graph the data points and trendline for each student each week on WPM measures.

Figure 4.1 Student A WPM Data Points and Trendline for 6-Week Period

Figure 4.2 Student B WPM Data Points and Trendline for 6-Week Period
Figure 4.3 Student C WPM Data Points and Trendline for 6-Week Period

Figure 4.4 Student D WPM Data Points and Trendline for 6-Week Period
These WPM data points indicate that all five students demonstrated a positive rate of growth throughout the 6-week period, as evidenced by the trendlines in each graph. Also, all five students were able to achieve higher WPM scores in the sixth week compared to their first week. All students were able to stay consistent in their growth and none digressed. Student A and Student E made the largest gains in overall WPM from beginning to end. Although Student D ended with a high WPM, they had the smallest gain in WPM.

**Comprehension**

Data was collected weekly on a five-question comprehension quiz that was connected to the same passage that students read to measure Words Per Minute. Figures
4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9, and 4.10 show the data points and trendlines for each student per week.

**Figure 4.6 Student A Comprehension Accuracy and Trendline for 6-Week Period**

**Figure 4.7 Student B Comprehension Accuracy and Trendline for 6-Week Period**
Figure 4.8 Student C Comprehension Accuracy and Trendline for 6-Week Period

Figure 4.9 Student D Comprehension Accuracy and Trendline for 6-Week Period
Results for all five students on the comprehension data points demonstrates a positive growth rate, as shown by each student’s trendlines. Each student was able to make progressive gains in the comprehension questions each week, with all five students ending the six-week progress monitoring achieving one hundred percent accuracy.

**Self-Reflection**

To record and gather data on the reflective aspect of students listening to their own reading, a self-reflection chart was completed. The self-reflection chart had students reflect in four areas of fluency: accuracy, rate, expression, and punctuation. The self-reflection was done weekly after students had completed reading aloud. Data was taken from each category and compiled into color-coded tables to demonstrate how the students reflected each week. Figures 4.11, 4.12, 4.13, and 4.14 show the data points for each student per category over the six weeks.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Week 2</th>
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I did an excellent job

I’m showing improvement

I need to keep working

**Figure 4.11** *Self-Reflection Accuracy Data Points for 6-Week Period*

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I did an excellent job

I’m showing improvement

I need to keep working

**Figure 4.12** *Self-Reflection Rate Data Points for 6-Week Period*
### Expression

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- I did an excellent job
- I’m showing improvement
- I need to keep working

Figure 4.13 *Self-Reflection Expression Data Points for 6-Week Period*

### Punctuation

<table>
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<th>Week</th>
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- I did an excellent job
- I’m showing improvement
- I need to keep working

Figure 4.14 *Self-Reflection Punctuation Data Points for 6-Week Period*
All five students were able to make progress in each area over the six-week period. In the area of accuracy, Student D was able to make the most progress with Student C and Student D also making some larger progress towards “I did an excellent job.” In the area of rate, Student C and Student D made the same progress and Students A, B, and E made the same growth. In the area of expression, Student D made the most growth. Most students marked “I’m showing improvement” in this area longer and more often than the other areas. In the area of punctuation, Student D stayed in “I’m showing improvement” the longest, with most students moving in the “I did an excellent job” by week 5.

**Summary**

This chapter presented data on progress monitoring related to reading fluency and the ability to self-reflect on recorded reading. Data were collected for a total of six weeks during the students’ small group reading intervention time. The six weeks of data for Words Per Minute and Comprehension Accuracy were presented on separate graphs for each student to demonstrate the overall trendline rate of growth. The six weeks of data for the Self-Reflection was presented in categorical tables identifying the students and weeks data were collected.

The results collected on each progress monitoring measure demonstrates positive trends in WPM, comprehension accuracy, and ability to reflect on self-recorded readings. Each student presented positive changes on all areas of progress monitoring measures at their own paces, each achieving success by the end of the six-weeks either by increasing their WPM, comprehension accuracy, or marking “I did an excellent job” in their
reflection. Overall, this data implies that a positive impact on fluency can be achieved by self-recording and listening back to reflect.
Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of having second-grade students record a text read out loud in relation to their fluency skills. As an elementary second-grade teacher, and former sixth-grade literacy teacher, I see students struggle each day with literacy, specifically fluency. Second grade is the last grade where the focus is more on learning to read rather than reading to learn so the importance of phonics, decoding, and fluency skills are vital as they all get put together in reading a text for understanding. I find that many students are stronger in one area, such as decoding, but their rate or expression may be weak. By taking all the areas of fluency and breaking them down to be recognized and worked on through reading out loud and reflecting, the student is able to find success in hearing themselves and identifying strengths and weaknesses. Students are required to utilize all areas of fluency on a daily basis in all subjects of learning to meet academic benchmarks that teachers aim for. When students do not have the proper fluency skills to obtain comprehension of a text, finding success in learning can be difficult.

Interpretation of Results

The study examined the impact of having second-grade students record a text read out loud in relation to their fluency skills. In particular, this study looked at the growth in words per minute, comprehension accuracy, and improvement in four categories of
fluency: accuracy, rate, expression, and punctuation. Five second-grade students who received small group reading intervention on a daily basis took part in this study. All five children were tested as average readers on their fall benchmark reading tests. In an effort to identify if reading a text out loud and self-reflecting on it would provide growth to second-grade students, weekly fluency lessons and fluency checks were implemented. After routines were set and students began to gain confidence in the process, growth was shown and engagement had built in the process. The students’ reading began to evolve and they started to become more reflective and build stronger conversations around their fluency reading.

The progress monitoring data that I collected provides representation of the growth I observed. All five students grew in each component of fluency: accuracy, rate, expression, comprehension. All five students also made significant growth in their words per minute and comprehension accuracy. The increase in scores indicates the improved fluency and positive impact of recording out loud, self-reflecting and explicit fluency lessons.

The five students all showed an increase in the components of fluency, which I believe correlate to the increase in words per minute and comprehension accuracy. By focusing on the components of fluency and being more reflective on their reading, the students were able to have more connections and began to build more confidence in themselves and their reading abilities. The repeated routine supported the students in knowing what to expect and their confidence spiked each week, which showed in their fluency readings. They became less concerned with being speedy and became more focused on character’s voices, having fun with reading the text, and making sure they
were reading clearly for their peers to hear and understand. The students wanted to read and wanted to share their reading, which I believe played a large role in the positive growth that was displayed because most people want to do better when they know someone else is listening and they want to represent themselves confidently and well. Though this was a short study with a limited population of hand-selected students, the impact of having students record texts out loud and self-reflect was positive.

**Limitations of the Study**

There were a few limitations regarding my research. First, this study was limited to one group of five second-grade students. Because of this, there is a limitation that the results were selective and may not show the most accurate outcome for all second-grade students.

Second, the group of students that I conducted the research with were predominantly white students, creating a limitation of diversity and cultural differences among the students.

Third, there were also various ways to measure fluency. The method that I used to measure fluency may have provided different outcomes and results than if I would have used a different method, such as running records or repeated reading.

Finally, I was presented with the limitation of COVID-19 being an active situation among our country and our community. Our school was mandated to close for a period of time. This caused my students and I to part ways early and I had to conduct my last week of fluency reading virtually, along with being unable to collect a post-assessment successfully to utilize in this study.
Implications for Future Research

As the educational community continues to move into the digital era of technology in the classroom, devices are utilized to assist in learning and reflecting to help improve reading fluency. With so many students continuing to not get the reading time and repetition needed to show growth, I hope that tools like self-recording readings can be implemented more to aid in further reading developmental skills and as something that can be done in the classroom or at home. Future researchers could implement this study in various grade levels in elementary or middle school and for a longer time period. It would also be interesting to conduct this study with future research with two groups of students, a control group and an experimental group to identify the changes and differences between those that record and self-reflect and those that do not. Future research could also be done with a variety of leveled readers to see the effect among them all. I wonder if the same success would be found in lower-leveled readers or how the data would fluctuate. I believe that doing further research on the overall impact of recording readings and self-reflections on students would be beneficial and impactful in classroom instruction.

Implications for Teachers and Students

The benefits of this study have begun to positively affect my students with their reading throughout the day and at home. I see more confidence, engagement, and mindfulness when the students are reading. The students look forward to the weekly recordings and hearing themselves or their classmates read. The students enjoy hearing their improvements in their voices as they read, recognizing their gains from the week
prior. The students even started to notice more how I read and would share with me feedback on my fluency, using the vocabulary that was taught to them. I have started to share this process with my second-grade co-partner to use with her students, along with some other colleagues. It is exciting to watch the students' engagement increase as they get more confident in their reading and the joy they get from taking on characters’ voices or being able to explain an idea because their understanding has increased. With further research and exploration on fluency strategies and routines, teachers could start to understand the importance of explicit fluency teaching and how to better meet the needs of learners in their classroom during their literacy block.

**Conclusion**

This study has recognized the importance of practicing weekly fluency skills and giving ownership to the student through the practice of recording and self-reflecting on their reading. It has encouraged a change of mindset in my students when it comes to fluency practice and becoming stronger readers. I look forward to continuing to use this fluency process in my classroom and continuing to explore more ideas and strategies to help improve fluency in primary learners.
REFERENCES


