

## **Developing Expressive Reading Skills in Primary School Pupils**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This article examines the pedagogical and methodological foundations for developing expressive reading skills in primary school pupils, emphasizing the importance of expressive reading as a key component of early literacy and overall language development. Expressive reading is understood not only as accurate and fluent decoding of text, but also as the ability to convey meaning, emotions, intonation, rhythm, and logical stress, which together contribute to deeper text comprehension and effective communication.*

*The study analyzes theoretical approaches and practical methods used in primary education to foster expressive reading skills. Special attention is given to age-related psychological characteristics of primary school pupils, including their cognitive development, emotional sensitivity, imagination, and speech activity. These factors are considered essential in selecting appropriate teaching strategies and instructional materials. The article highlights the role of teacher guidance, modeling of expressive reading, and systematic practice in creating favorable conditions for pupils' reading development.*

*Various instructional techniques are discussed, such as reading aloud, choral reading, role-based reading, dramatization, and the use of literary texts rich in imagery and emotional content. The integration of phonetic exercises, intonation training, and vocabulary enrichment is shown to enhance pupils' ability to perceive and express the semantic and emotional nuances of texts. In addition, the use of interactive and learner-centered approaches is emphasized as a means of increasing motivation and engagement in the reading process.*

*The article also addresses the importance of assessment and feedback in the development of expressive reading skills. Continuous monitoring of pupils' progress allows teachers to identify difficulties in pronunciation, intonation, and comprehension, and to provide targeted support. The findings suggest that a systematic and integrated approach to teaching expressive reading contributes to the development of pupils' speech culture, critical thinking, and aesthetic appreciation of literary works.*

*In conclusion, the article substantiates that the development of expressive reading skills in primary school pupils is a multifaceted process that requires methodological consistency, consideration of psychological factors, and the use of diverse pedagogical tools. The proposed approaches can be effectively applied in primary education to improve reading competence and support the holistic linguistic and personal development of young learners.*

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## **INTRODUCTION.**

Reading is one of the fundamental skills formed in the early stages of schooling and serves as the basis for pupils' academic success, cognitive development, and personal growth. In primary education, reading is not limited to the mechanical decoding of written symbols; rather, it involves comprehension, interpretation, and expressive delivery of texts. Expressive reading, which includes appropriate intonation, rhythm, stress, pauses, and emotional coloring, plays a crucial role in developing pupils' understanding of meaning and their ability to communicate ideas effectively. Therefore, developing expressive reading skills in primary school pupils is a key pedagogical task in modern education.

In recent years, educational reforms and competency-based approaches have emphasized the importance of forming not only technical literacy but also communicative and expressive abilities in young learners. Expressive reading helps pupils grasp the semantic and emotional content of a text, enhances their vocabulary, and supports the development of oral speech. Through expressive reading, children learn to perceive the author's intent, identify characters' emotions, and reflect these elements in their own reading performance. This process contributes to the development of imagination, emotional intelligence, and aesthetic taste, which are essential components of holistic child development.

Despite its significance, the formation of expressive reading skills among primary school pupils remains a challenging task for teachers. Many pupils experience difficulties related to insufficient reading fluency, limited vocabulary, lack of confidence, or inadequate understanding of textual structure. These challenges often lead to monotonous, mechanical reading that hinders comprehension and reduces interest in reading activities. As a result, there is a growing need for effective pedagogical methods and strategies that support the gradual and systematic development of expressive reading skills from the earliest stages of schooling.

Theoretical and methodological studies in pedagogy and psychology indicate that expressive reading skills are closely linked to cognitive processes such as attention, memory, thinking, and imagination. Moreover, they are influenced by pupils' emotional state, motivation, and speech development level. This highlights the importance of creating a supportive and engaging learning environment where pupils are encouraged to read aloud, interpret texts, and express their thoughts freely. The use of interactive methods, role-playing, dramatization, and multimedia resources can significantly enhance pupils' interest and participation in expressive reading activities.

In the context of primary education, the teacher's role is crucial in modeling expressive reading and guiding pupils toward mastering this skill. Teachers must select age-appropriate texts, demonstrate expressive reading techniques, and provide constructive feedback to help pupils improve. Additionally, integrating expressive reading activities with other subjects, such as language arts, music, and drama, allows for a more comprehensive approach to skill development and supports interdisciplinary learning.

This article aims to explore the pedagogical foundations and effective methods for developing expressive reading skills in primary school pupils. By analyzing theoretical perspectives and practical approaches, the study seeks to identify strategies that enhance pupils' reading fluency, comprehension, and emotional expressiveness. The findings of this research may contribute to improving teaching practices in primary education and fostering a lifelong interest in reading among young learners.

## **METHODOLOGY.**

The methodology of this study was designed to investigate effective approaches to developing expressive reading skills in primary school pupils through a systematic and child-centered pedagogical framework. The research was conducted using a mixed-methods approach that combined qualitative and quantitative methods to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the instructional processes and learning outcomes associated with expressive reading development.

The study employed a quasi-experimental research design consisting of experimental and control groups. The experimental group received instruction based on specially developed methods aimed at enhancing expressive reading skills, while the control group followed traditional reading instruction methods outlined in the standard primary education curriculum. The intervention period lasted one academic term, allowing sufficient time to observe measurable changes in pupils' reading performance.

The participants of the study were primary school pupils from grades 2 and 3, selected from general education schools. The sample included pupils with similar age characteristics, reading levels, and socio-educational backgrounds to ensure the validity of the comparison. Teachers involved in the experiment were briefed on the research objectives and trained to apply the expressive reading strategies consistently throughout the study.

The instructional methodology focused on the gradual formation of expressive reading skills through structured and interactive learning activities. Key instructional strategies included modeling expressive reading by the teacher, guided reading, choral reading, and individual oral reading sessions. Special attention was given to intonation, stress, pauses, tempo, and emotional coloring of speech. Literary texts suitable for the pupils' age and cognitive level—such as short stories, poems, and dialogues—were selected to stimulate emotional engagement and comprehension.

Role-playing, dramatization, and reading with character voices were incorporated to strengthen pupils' emotional responsiveness and imagination. Visual and auditory aids, including illustrations, audio recordings, and multimedia resources, were used to support pupils' understanding of textual meaning and expressive elements. Continuous feedback and positive reinforcement were provided to encourage self-confidence and motivation.

Data were collected using a variety of instruments, including pre-test and post-test assessments, observation checklists, reading performance rubrics, and teacher evaluation forms. The expressive reading assessment criteria focused on accuracy, fluency, intonation, emotional expression, and comprehension. Classroom observations were conducted regularly to monitor pupil engagement, interaction, and progress throughout the instructional process.

Quantitative data obtained from pre- and post-tests were analyzed using descriptive statistics to compare the performance of pupils in the experimental and control groups. Qualitative data from observations and teacher feedback were analyzed thematically to identify patterns related to pupil motivation, engagement, and expressive reading development. The combination of these data sources ensured triangulation and enhanced the reliability of the research findings.

Ethical principles were strictly observed throughout the study. Parental consent was obtained for all participating pupils, and confidentiality of personal data was maintained. The research activities were designed to support the educational development of pupils without causing psychological or academic pressure.

In summary, the methodological framework of this study provided a structured and effective approach to examining the development of expressive reading skills in primary school pupils. The integration of interactive teaching strategies, continuous assessment, and reflective analysis ensured the validity and practical relevance of the research outcomes for primary education practice.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION.**

The results of this study demonstrate that the systematic and purposeful development of expressive reading skills in primary school pupils has a significant positive impact on their overall literacy, comprehension, and communicative competence. The implementation of targeted instructional strategies—such as intonation modeling, rhythmic reading, role-based reading, and repeated guided practice—led to noticeable improvements in pupils' reading fluency, accuracy, and emotional expressiveness. Pupils who participated in structured expressive reading activities showed greater confidence in oral reading tasks and were more willing to engage in classroom discussions.

Quantitative analysis revealed that pupils exposed to expressive reading methodologies achieved higher scores in reading comprehension assessments compared to those taught using traditional mechanical reading approaches. Improvements were particularly evident in areas such as correct stress placement, appropriate pausing, voice modulation, and emotional interpretation of texts. These findings suggest that expressive reading not only enhances technical reading skills but also deepens pupils' understanding of textual meaning and narrative structure.

From a qualitative perspective, classroom observations and teacher feedback highlighted increased

learner motivation and engagement. Pupils demonstrated heightened interest in literary texts, especially when expressive reading activities were combined with storytelling, dramatization, and collaborative group reading. Such interactive approaches encouraged pupils to empathize with characters, interpret emotional cues, and convey meaning through voice and facial expressions. As a result, reading became a dynamic and meaningful process rather than a routine mechanical task.

The discussion of the findings indicates that expressive reading plays a crucial role in the development of cognitive and emotional competencies in early education. Through expressive reading, pupils develop listening skills, imagination, and critical thinking, which contribute to broader academic success. Furthermore, expressive reading fosters language awareness by helping pupils recognize the relationship between punctuation, intonation, and meaning. This awareness supports the development of both oral and written communication skills.

The study also revealed that teacher competence and instructional design significantly influence the effectiveness of expressive reading instruction. Teachers who employed varied pedagogical techniques, such as modeling expressive reading and providing constructive feedback, achieved better outcomes. Additionally, the integration of visual aids, audio recordings, and age-appropriate literary texts enhanced the learning environment and supported differentiated instruction to meet diverse learner needs.

In conclusion, the results and discussion confirm that developing expressive reading skills in primary school pupils is a multifaceted process that requires methodological consistency, creative instructional practices, and a supportive learning environment. Expressive reading should be viewed as a foundational component of literacy education, as it strengthens reading comprehension, emotional intelligence, and communicative competence. The findings of this study support the inclusion of expressive reading strategies in primary education curricula and highlight the need for continued professional development for teachers to effectively implement these approaches.

## **CONCLUSION.**

The development of expressive reading skills in primary school pupils is a fundamental component of early literacy education and plays a vital role in the overall intellectual, emotional, and communicative development of children. This study has shown that expressive reading is not limited to correct pronunciation and fluency; rather, it encompasses the ability to understand the text deeply, convey meaning through intonation, stress, pauses, and rhythm, and respond emotionally to the content being read. When pupils are taught to read expressively, they become more engaged with texts, which significantly enhances their motivation to read and learn.

The findings of the study indicate that systematic and methodologically sound instruction is essential for the successful formation of expressive reading skills. The use of age-appropriate literary texts, especially narrative and poetic works, combined with interactive teaching methods such as role-playing, choral reading, dramatization, and guided reading, contributes to the development of pupils' oral speech, listening comprehension, and interpretive abilities. These methods encourage active participation and help pupils internalize the emotional and semantic aspects of reading.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of the teacher's role in modeling expressive reading. When teachers demonstrate correct intonation, emotional coloring, and meaningful pauses, pupils are more likely to imitate these patterns and gradually develop their own expressive reading style. Continuous feedback, encouragement, and differentiated instruction are also crucial, as they allow teachers to address individual learning needs and support pupils at different levels of reading proficiency.

The research also highlights the close connection between expressive reading and the development of thinking, imagination, and emotional intelligence in primary school pupils. Through expressive reading, children learn to empathize with characters, understand cause-and-effect relationships within texts, and articulate their thoughts and feelings more clearly. This, in turn, contributes to the formation of communicative competence and supports success in other academic subjects.

In conclusion, developing expressive reading skills in primary school pupils requires a comprehensive and purposeful pedagogical approach that integrates linguistic, psychological, and methodological aspects. The effective formation of these skills not only improves reading literacy but also fosters a

lifelong interest in books, language, and learning. Future research should focus on exploring innovative teaching technologies, digital resources, and assessment tools that can further enhance expressive reading instruction and adapt it to the evolving educational environment.

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