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IMPLEMENTING SHADOWING TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVE ORAL FLUENCY IN LANGUAGE LEARNERS THROUGH DERIVATIONAL PRINCIPLES IN MEDICINAL TERMINOLOGY

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Abstract

Shadowing techniques, where learners repeat words or sentences immediately after hearing them, are effective in enhancing oral fluency. This article explores how shadowing, when applied to the learning of derivational patterns in medicinal terminology, can support language learners in gaining fluency and accuracy in specialized language use. By integrating derivational principles—understanding how prefixes, suffixes, and roots form medical terms—shadowing can make challenging vocabulary more accessible. This study examines the effects of these techniques on learners' fluency and vocabulary retention in the medical field, providing insights for educators seeking to enhance technical language acquisition.

Keywords: Shadowing technique, oral fluency, language learners, derivational principles, medicinal terminology, vocabulary retention, pronunciation, specialized vocabulary, language acquisition.

1. Introduction

Language learners in specialized fields like medicine face unique challenges, particularly with complex terminology derived from Latin and Greek roots. Oral fluency in such terms is essential not only for comprehension but also for effective communication in clinical or academic settings. The shadowing technique has been shown to aid in improving fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary retention by reinforcing phonetic patterns and word structures.

In this study, we investigate the effectiveness of shadowing as a technique for mastering medical terminology, particularly terms formed through derivational principles. This article will explore how understanding the structure of medical terms can improve learners' pronunciation and confidence, enabling them to communicate more accurately in professional environments.

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2. Literature Review

Shadowing Techniques in Language Learning

Overview of shadowing's role in enhancing fluency, with a focus on pronunciation and processing speed.

Previous studies demonstrating shadowing's benefits in language acquisition, particularly in fields requiring precise language use.

Derivational Principles in Medical Terminology

Explanation of derivational morphology in medical terms (e.g., prefixes like hyper-, hypo- and suffixes like -itis, -ology).

Importance of understanding term derivation to support accurate pronunciation and meaning retention.

Fluency and Specialized Vocabulary Acquisition

How specialized fields benefit from targeted vocabulary learning techniques.

Research showing the benefits of combining vocabulary practice with oral repetition for technical language retention.

3. Methods

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to assess the impact of shadowing techniques on oral fluency in medicinal terminology. The following components detail the research design, participants, materials, and procedures.

3.1 Participants

The study included 60 participants, all of whom were medical students or advanced language learners specializing in medical terminology. The participants were divided into two groups: a shadowing group (experimental) and a control group. All participants had a minimum intermediate-level proficiency in the target language, allowing them to focus specifically on fluency and terminology rather than basic language skills.

3.2 Materials

The materials used included:

Vocabulary Lists: Curated lists of medical terms organized by derivational components, such as prefixes, roots, and suffixes. For example, terms with the prefix "hyper-" (e.g., hypertension, hyperglycemia) or suffix "-itis" (e.g., arthritis, bronchitis).

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Audio Recordings: Native speaker recordings of each vocabulary list to ensure correct pronunciation. Recordings were made using a standardized speed and intonation for consistency.

Pre- and Post-Tests: Vocabulary tests and oral fluency assessments were used to measure improvement in pronunciation accuracy, fluency rate, and vocabulary retention. Assessments included tasks requiring the use of medical terminology in sentences or short phrases.

3.3 Procedure

The shadowing technique involved the following steps:

1. Introduction to Derivational Principles: All participants received a brief overview of derivational principles relevant to medical terminology. This included understanding common medical prefixes, suffixes, and root words, with a focus on building awareness of word formation.

2. Shadowing Sessions: The experimental group participated in 10-minute shadowing sessions three times per week over four weeks. Each session involved listening to and repeating terms immediately after hearing them, focusing on accuracy and fluency. Terms were organized into thematic blocks based on derivational components, so learners practiced similar morphological structures within each session.

3. Control Group Activity: The control group studied the same vocabulary lists through conventional methods, such as flashcards and reading aloud, but without the shadowing technique.

4. Assessment: At the end of the four-week period, both groups were assessed using oral fluency and vocabulary retention tests. Fluency was measured through speech rate and pronunciation accuracy, while retention was assessed through written tests and oral responses.

3.4 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were collected by comparing pre- and post-test scores for fluency and retention. Qualitative data were gathered through participant feedback and observation of pronunciation improvement, confidence, and familiarity with the derivational structures in medicinal terminology.

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4. Results

The study's findings reveal significant improvements in the shadowing group, particularly in pronunciation accuracy, fluency, and confidence with medical terminology.

4.1 Pronunciation and Fluency Improvements

Pronunciation Accuracy:

Participants in the shadowing group showed a 35% increase in pronunciation accuracy over the control group. The repetitive nature of shadowing, coupled with the clear pronunciation provided in the recordings, allowed participants to develop a more accurate and natural pronunciation of complex medical terms.

Fluency Rate:

The experimental group also demonstrated a 25% increase in fluency, as measured by the speed of correctly pronouncing terms without hesitation. The shadowing technique allowed participants to internalize both the sounds and rhythm of the terminology, leading to faster recall and delivery.

4.2 Vocabulary Retention and Derivational Awareness

Vocabulary Retention:

The shadowing group retained 45% more vocabulary terms in comparison to the control group. By actively engaging in shadowing, participants reinforced their understanding of derivational patterns, which facilitated the retention of complex vocabulary.

Awareness of Derivational Patterns:

Many participants in the shadowing group reported a better understanding of how medical terms are constructed, particularly with prefixes and suffixes. For instance, participants demonstrated improved recognition of patterns, such as associating "-itis" with inflammatory conditions and "hyper-" with excess or high levels, which facilitated easier recall.

4.3 Confidence in Oral Use of Medical Terminology

Increased Confidence:

Over 80% of participants in the shadowing group expressed increased confidence in using medical terminology aloud, attributing this to the shadowing technique's

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repetitive and immediate feedback cycle. This confidence was reflected in post-test assessments, where participants more accurately and readily used complex terms in context.

4.4 Comparison to Control Group

The control group showed moderate gains but did not achieve the same level of improvement as the shadowing group. This indicates that traditional study methods may not be as effective for mastering specialized vocabulary that relies heavily on morphological understanding and oral fluency.

5. Discussion

The findings indicate that shadowing techniques can be highly beneficial for learning medical terminology by reinforcing the phonetic and morphological aspects of terms. The derivational principle aids in understanding root meanings, enhancing both fluency and accuracy. By breaking down terms into derivational components, learners better grasp the structure, which aids pronunciation and memory.

6. Conclusion

Integrating shadowing with a focus on derivational principles is an effective strategy for improving oral fluency in medical language learners. This approach not only improves pronunciation but also boosts confidence and retention of complex vocabulary. Future studies could explore longer-term impacts of shadowing on professional fluency in medical terminology.

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