



Why Reading Out Loud is Vital

You should practice reading out loud to make faster progress in your target language (the language you are trying to learn – English, Spanish, French, or Chinese).

Here are the reasons:

1. You create an oral atmosphere for yourself

Most of you live in a home where the target language (the language you are trying to learn) is not spoken. You must therefore create opportunities to practice speaking the language. One way you can do this is to read the language out loud in your home. I recommend you do this at least 15 minutes a day, five days a week. You will notice that your progress in the language will increase in direct proportion to the time you spend reading out loud.

2. You increase your opportunity for retention by 100%

When you read silently you use just two parts of your body (you guessed it – your brain and your eyes). But when you read out loud you use four parts of your body (brain, eyes, ears, and voice.) This doubles your retention possibility. You not only think about the language and see it written, but you hear it and say it. This will greatly aid you in incorporating the language into your thinking and speech patterns – in developing your ability to remember and communicate in the language.

3. You exercise your facial muscles

The sounds of languages are formed by the passing of air through some of our facial organs. The sounds are shaped by our tongue, teeth, nose, lips, etc. It is usually necessary to develop new sounds in the target language. Certain muscles must be developed in the individual speech apparatus. For example, the trilled “rr” in Spanish is not a sound in English and native English speakers must practice to learn to make this sound. Likewise, the “Z” sound in English is not in Spanish. Native Spanish speakers must learn to make the “Z” sound in English

by using their vocal cords. By reading out loud you develop the muscles and sounds needful in the target language.

4. You learn the art of *self-correction*

Once you have been in language class awhile you learn more and more the correct pronunciation of the sounds of the target language. When you read out loud you will often catch yourself mispronouncing a sound or word. Then you immediately correct yourself. This is good! Sometimes you need an instructor to tell you when you mispronounce something, but you can do a lot of self correction on your own. The more you get familiar with the target language, the greater will be your skills in pronunciation and self-correction.

5. You increase your oral fluency

It is ideal to read out loud in the morning before you leave for school or work. This loosens up your speech organs and gets them accustomed to making the sounds of the target language. You get your mind re-acquainted with the sentence structure of the target language. You will find that your oral fluency will always be better on those days where you have taken the time to read out loud before leaving your home.

*Bonus suggestion #1 – **Read what interests you.***

When you read out loud, read something in the target language that interests you. For example, if you like sports, read in the sports section of the newspaper.

*Bonus suggestion #2 - **Read observantly.*** When you read out loud, use your mind to the maximum. Notice how the sentences are put together, the order of words, etc. Try to remember these things and put them in practice when you speak and write in your target language.

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