

**“What Feels Good in the Mouth and Sounds Right to the Ear”:  
An Examination of the Practice of Reading Aloud during Revision**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

Experienced writers often have many techniques that make up their revision practice. Reading their writing aloud to themselves is one such technique, even if the end product is not intended for oral expression. While this method is recommended in various writing arenas, little writing research has actually been conducted to document and support that recommendation. Of the existing studies, none focus on how experienced writers successfully integrate this specific technique into their own revision practice.

Today, software manufacturers are promoting a form of speech synthesis technology, text-to-speech, as a proofreading tool that can perform the reading aloud for writers. In order to develop a response to this technologization, it is critical to document how reading aloud works within revision, and to see how experienced writers effectively apply it to their processes. This dissertation provides that documentation by synthesizing the research on what happens cognitively during solitary reading aloud, then presenting the findings of a study of five experienced writers who normally use reading aloud as they work.

The multiple case study approach generated some similarities across writers, but also some distinct differences in how and why they apply reading aloud—from a means to slow down to a means of shutting out the world. To heighten their awareness of what they needed to produce through the reading aloud of their work, text-to-speech software was brought in to replace what these writers normally do for themselves. This technology insertion helped to shed an even clearer light on what they found invaluable about this revision technique.