

Reading comprehension among fourth-grade students

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Abstract

The aim of the current research is to find out

- The level of reading comprehension of fourth year middle school students
- Statistically significant differences in reading comprehension according to the sex variable (male - female).

In order to achieve the goal of the research, the researcher built a reading comprehension test due to the lack of an appropriate tool that corresponds to the subject of the research, and the test consisted of (five questions), including (15) objective questions and (5) essay questions, and after checking the psychometric properties of the research test and its paragraphs. It was applied to the basic research sample of (363) male and female students representing middle and high schools in the center of Babil Governorate. The sample size of males reached (157) male students from the total community and (206) female students from the total community who were chosen by random stratified method from the research community. After analyzing the data statistically using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), *the following result was obtained*

- ❖ Fifth grade literary students have a level of reading comprehension
- ❖ There are no statistically significant differences between the sample members in reading comprehension.

Chapter one

Introduction to the Research

The phenomenon of weak reading comprehension is one of the general phenomena in all academic levels and this was confirmed by many studies, including the study (Abda, 1978) conducted at the level of students of the Arabic language department in university studies, which showed that students' weakness in reading comprehension is due to the teacher, as well as a study (Abdullah, 1983), in which he concluded that most of the reading comprehension difficulties are due to the fact that the teacher does not develop the comprehension process as a mental ability that can be developed. Traditional in studying reading (Abdullah, 1983: 131).

As for the study (Al-Issawi, 2008), it came to the conclusion that (85%) of the preparatory stage students have a weakness in reading comprehension, and teachers neglect modern methods of teaching and understanding the Arabic language among students (6-1).

Among the studies, the weak reading comprehension is attributed to the nature of the topics included in the academic curricula, as the reading topics do not include content that helps students acquire the necessary knowledge, experiences and skills that help them develop their mental abilities, which leads to their weakness in understanding what they read. He reads and

encounters ambiguity and difficulty in understanding the meaning of a particular text or comprehending its content. Perhaps the reason for this ambiguity and this difficulty is a complication or twisting in the writer's style, and it may be the result of a lack of understanding of the reader because the meanings and ideas around which the read text revolves exceed his cultural or cognitive level in terms of its depth. I believe in the way it is expressed (Al-Maatouq, 1996: 62).

One of the reasons for students' poor comprehension of what they read may be due to the gap between the spoken language and the written language that students deal with in their lessons, as well as the ignorance of many Arabic language teachers of the methods of teaching reading or preparing a plan to teach them, which causes students to lose their longing and desire to read and spoil them the desired benefit from it. The way to understand and represent them in solving the problems they face in school daily life (Al-Hashimi, 2006, 152).

The research problem is summarized by the following question: (Do the fourth-year middle school students have a level of reading comprehension)?

The importance of research

Reading and reading represent an important branch of the Arabic language, which is taught in all academic levels. Reading is one of the most important means that convey to us the fruits of the human mind, and it is the third skill of the main Arabic language skills that help students to acquire the largest possible amount of information and knowledge, thus arousing their desire. In writing and creativity, they used to say: "Read what you want, write what you want, for speech is born from speech" (Walli 1998, 214).

Reading helps the learner to build his idea and form his inclinations and tendencies and helps him to build his personality and its appearance among the members of the community with a distinct appearance intellectually and culturally. (Ismail, 2005, 110).

The importance of reading appears in the capacity of the linguistic inventory, good comprehension, comprehension and understanding of texts of a high level and speed in reading, skill in speaking, strength and completeness of personality, and through it the learner is emptied into himself and corrects its mistakes, corrects it and directs it in the right direction after benefiting from the reading and fused into its cognitive structure. and intellectual (Al-Dulaimi and Souad, 2005, 170).

The ancient Arabs drew attention to the importance of reading as the enemy of their culture, so they wrote valuable books such as Al-Kamil Al-Mubarrad and Al-Amali by Abi Ali Al-Qali. (Al Dahan, 1962, 115-116).

The greater the students' ability to read, the greater their comprehension and understanding of what they read. The study conducted by (Bekars) proved that students with weak reading ability fail to comprehend implicit and critical meanings and are limited to superficial meanings, while students with strong reading ability exceed superficial meanings to the levels Implicit and critical reading of the text (Al-Dulaimi and Souad, 2005, 11-12).

The comprehension of the read text is the main goal of all reading operations, and it is the purpose of reading, because the development of the reader's levels of comprehension enables him to obtain an accurate understanding of the writer's message and enables him to collect and organize information and the ability to recall, analyze, interpret and evaluate it. The Reader (Shehata 1993, 128).

Comprehension is the essence and focus of the reading process, and the good reader is the one who reaches the meaning of the text and comprehends it, whether the meaning is apparent or implied, close or far. Knowledge is interconnected and therefore requires a number of mental processes such as recognition, understanding, assimilation, retention, recall, and application (Harhasheh, 2007, 75).

The importance of analyzing literary texts can be summarized through the following points:

1. The importance of language as the tool with which peoples get acquainted and is closely linked to thought because language is the product of a specific culture, which is the culture of society and the culture of the individual, and the transfer of knowledge and experiences.
2. The importance of the Arabic language that God Almighty chose for his immortal book to be eternally immortal.
3. The importance of reading as a tool for making sense.
4. The importance of reading comprehension as the core of the reading process, and the main purpose of reading any text, and with it, reading becomes an intellectual process aimed at diving into the text to explore the hidden meanings between the lines and beyond the lines, not just the apparent meanings in the text.
5. The importance of the preparatory stage as it is an important stage that students wish mentally and physically and is the stage of preparing students for university studies.

Research Objectives

The current research aims to identify:

- ❖ The level of reading comprehension of the fourth preparatory students.
- ❖ Statistically significant differences in reading comprehension according to the gender variable (males - females).

Research limits:

The current research is limited to students of the fourth year of middle school for the academic year (2021-2022).

Define terms:

Reading comprehension: Define it

Al-Waqfi 2008 defined it as: “The final goal of the reading process, which is the process of creating meanings that arise from the integration between the information provided by the author and the information contained in the reader’s knowledge background” (Al-Waqfi, 2008, 28).

Abdel Bari (2010) defined it as: “An interactive constructivist mental process that the reader practices through the content of my reading, in order to extract the general meaning of the subject” (Abdul Bari, 2010, 30).

Fourth preparatory grade: It is the first grade within the preparatory stage, in which students are rehabilitated to study humanities and languages, and prepare them for practical life, and university studies that go in this direction” (Iraqi Ministry of Education, 2005).

Chapter Two

Theoretical Framework

Reading comprehension

an introduction

The reading process consists of a set of skills that the reader uses while dealing with

the text, such as recognizing written symbols, the meanings of vocabulary and sentences, understanding different linguistic structures, identifying the way the text is organized and using its general information, among others. In order for the student to understand the information and ideas that are explicitly or implicitly present in the read text, he must be able to apply those skills in the reading process.

The goal of reading is to understand the meaning, and reading comprehension includes the correct association between the symbol and the meaning, finding meaning from the context, and organizing the read ideas. Previously stored in memory, and models of understanding in this way are closely related to theoretical representations of memory forms and content (Ammar, 2002: 109-110)

The skill of understanding is one of the important mental cognitive aspects, as it is represented in the ability to receive information from the external environment, and deliver it to the brain for processing, and this skill includes important mental aspects such as the ability to store information and use it in accordance with situations that require it. and others, 2003: 214)

Therefore, understanding the meaning is the link that exists between the effects left by linguistic knowledge in the brain thanks to which the semantics are known, and the non-linguistic effects of short knowledge.; The use of language is equivalent to the use of numbers that cannot be coordinated among themselves; (Ammar, 111: 2002).

Reading Comprehension Skills

Reading comprehension has multiple skills

1- Determining the main ideas: the main ideas and related supporting details are the most important content and contents of the written material and obtaining them is the most important goal of teaching reading in the preparatory stage. It is necessary to train students during their reading to identify the main idea in the subject, and the teacher has the greatest role in developing this skill when asked by him, by proving that they are able to accurately search within the written material and use what is in it from Evidence to identify the main ideas and important details.

2- Arranging ideas according to their logical sequence: Each topic contains specific ideas, and these ideas come from the sequential sequence of sentences and meanings, and the teacher's duty is to develop students' knowledge of this organized sequence of ideas by reading in a focused manner for the topic.

3- The ability to read instructions and directions: Students are trained to acquire the teachers' experience and their way of life, and to benefit from them in following the instructions and directions within the readable text. It requires a great deal of precision and focus.

4- Inference and deduction from what he reads: The teacher's task is to train students to focus and accurate reading of the subject, and to train them to link ideas, and realize the relationships between different incidents, so that they can make conclusions that lead to new and meaningful knowledge.

5- The ability to analyze and criticize while reading: Each reading material has a main idea, and the teacher's duty is to benefit from the students' previous knowledge and the information they possess in analyzing those ideas, and passing judgment on them from the students, i.e. expressing their opinion on them to obtain the largest possible amount of

understanding and comprehension. This would develop students' critical reading ability and distinguish between what is useful and what is not.

6- Knowing the writer's style: it is the students' knowledge of the writer's presentation of his subject, the way he presents his ideas, his method in presenting arguments, evidence and proofs that support his views, and the students' knowledge of the propaganda methods that the writer uses to convince the reader of his point of view.

7- Determining the characteristics of the readable text: Each text has characteristics and characteristics that characterize it, and distinguish it from other readable texts, and the students' knowledge of these features leads them to a deeper understanding of the text.

8- The ability to determine the writer's purpose: each readable text has a goal and a purpose, and the students' knowledge of the writer's purpose and goal from the readable text means that the students have absorbed the readable text (Shehata, 1993, 120-121).

Reading comprehension levels

He classified reading comprehension into multiple levels, as Strain classified it into three levels:

1. Literal level: It includes remembering the detailed incidents in the reading and linking them to the main ideas, and here the reader is able to determine the appropriate meanings of the vocabulary, understand the meanings of sentences and paragraphs, and can answer direct questions about the main ideas, and determine the logical sequence of events.

2. The explanatory level: it includes understanding the relationships between causes and effects, the ability to form logical conclusions and inferences, describing the relationships and proposing a new title for the text.

3. Applied level: It includes the ability to pass judgment on the read material and balance the ideas contained in the text with those derived from it, and the ability to employ the reader in solving problems (132,1973, Strain).

As for Barrett, he classified reading comprehension into four levels

1. Literal level: It includes extracting the main ideas in the text, mentioning the events and their sequence, determining the details, stating the causes and consequences, and the information contained in the text.

2. The inferential level: It includes deducing the idea of the text, the purpose intended by the writer, knowing the reasons and linking them to the results, the ability to predict certain results from the context of the text, and the ability to analyze characters and know their characteristics.

3. Evaluative level: It includes the ability to evaluate ideas in the text, make judgments about the content and characters, and the ability to summarize the text and balance its ideas with the ideas of the reader.

4. Appreciative or integrative level: It includes the ability to perceive the aesthetics of the text and its rhetorical images, know the writer's style, draw lessons and lessons, generate new ideas in the light of what has happened and absorb it, and benefit from what is read. (Barrett, 1976, 218-220)

Methods of developing reading comprehension:

Reading comprehension has received great attention from educators and researchers in ways to develop it among learners. Among the methods that contribute to the development of reading comprehension are the following:

1. Develop learners' motivation towards reading, improve their desires for reading, and train them to use dictionaries to develop their abilities to understand the meanings of vocabulary, as well as train them to extract and summarize the ideas contained in what is read, and train them to identify what is important in what is read. Developing and developing reading comprehension ability.

2. Training learners on reading comprehension skills and developing them.

3. Helping the learners teacher to reduce the difference between their abilities and the requirements of the goal of reading, so that the learners reach a level where they can rely on themselves in reading comprehension.

4. Training learners on new strategies for reading comprehension and comprehension, which have proven effective in increasing comprehension and comprehension. (Atiya, 2010: 50).

Factors affecting reading comprehension

1. ***Factors that always affect:*** (such as growth, intelligence, family atmosphere, gender, language development, and determining the purpose of reading).

2. ***Internal factors, including:*** (Linguistic sufficiency, interest in what he reads, motivation, reading ability)

3. ***External factors, including:*** (characteristics of the readable text, difficulty of the text, word length, organization of meaning)

4. ***Reading environment:*** We mean what the teacher does before reading to help the reader understand the text being read. These factors can be summed up as (factors about the nature of the learner, factors related to the reading material, factors related to the purpose of reading, and factors related to the means used in the reading measurement process). (Al-Dulaimi and Souad, 2005: 22-23).

Chapter Three

Research Methodology and Procedures

First, the research methodology

The method is one of the important and basic matters in the implementation of scientific research, because it represents the most honest approach to solving many problems in a scientific and theoretical manner, as well as its contribution to the progress of scientific research. On access to reliable knowledge (Mahjoub 1990: 83).

Second, the research community

The current research community is represented by the students of the fourth preparatory grade in the middle and secondary day schools in the center of Babil Governorate for the academic year (2021-2022), and their number is (6290) 1 male and female students distributed among (48) schools and by (2672) students distributed over (23) middle schools And a secondary school for males from the total research community and (3618) female students distributed over (25) middle schools and secondary schools for females from the total research community.

Third / research sample

It is part of the population in which the study is being conducted, chosen by the researcher to be studied (Daoud and Abdel Rahman, 1990: 67). The secondary school is in the center of Babil Governorate. The male sample size reached 157 male students from the total community and (206) female students from the total community. Table (1) shows this:

Table (1) shows the number of students in the research sample according to school and gender

| total summation | Female | School | Male | School | T |
|-----------------|--------|--------------------------------|------|------------------------|---|
| 60 | 35 | p. Al Taliyah for girls | 25 | p. Imam Ali for boys | 1 |
| 67 | 35 | p. Madiha Al Bermani for girls | 32 | Th. Dhi Qar for boys | 2 |
| 60 | 35 | Th. Heritage for girls | 25 | p. university for boys | 3 |
| 60 | 35 | p. revolution for girls | 25 | p. Al Fayhaa for boys | 4 |
| 56 | 31 | p. Umm boys for girls | 25 | Th. Al-Baqer for boys | 5 |
| 60 | 35 | p. Al Khansa for girls | 25 | p. Al Hilla for boys | 6 |
| 363 | 206 | Total | 157 | Total | |

Third: the search tool

In order to achieve the objectives of the research, the researcher built a reading comprehension test:

A description of the scale:

After reviewing the literature and a number of theories, tests, standards and previous studies that examined the subject of reading comprehension, the researcher built a reading comprehension test to match it with the research topic. (5) Essay questions.

B- Steps for preparing reading comprehension paragraphs

1. Logical analysis of paragraphs for the test

Ebel indicated that the test is truthful if its paragraphs measure what they were designed to measure. It is made up of (21) arbitrators and specialists in educational and psychological sciences, teaching methods, Arabic language, measurement and evaluation,

and I asked them to express their opinion on the validity of the test paragraphs in terms of their suitability to the research sample and whether their formulation is good or needs modification, as well as their approval of the approved alternatives for each paragraph, and in light of Notes of the arbitrators The researcher made some simple modifications, and the researcher adopted the chi-square test to determine the validity of the paragraphs and the following table illustrates this:

Table (2) *Chi-square to find out the percentage of arbitrators' approval of the validity of reading comprehension paragraphs.*

| Significance level 0.05 | ca2. value | | disapproves | Agrees | number of experts | Paragraphs |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|-------------|--------|-------------------|------------|
| | Tabular | Calculated | | | | |
| Significant | 3,84 | 21 | Zero | 21 | 21 | 24-1 |

The value of the chi-square is a function of all the paragraphs, as the calculated value of Ka2 reached (21) which is greater than the tabular value of Ka2 of (3,84) at a degree of freedom (1) and a level of significance (0.05) and based on the opinions of arbitrators and specialists and their observations, the test items remained To accommodate the reading (24) paragraphs, with the exception of some minor modifications that the researcher took into consideration, and after completing these procedures, the test is ready to be applied to the sample of statistical analysis, and these paragraphs were considered superficially honest.

Statistical analysis of test items

In order to conduct the statistical analysis of the test items, the researcher chose a sample of the statistical analysis of the test items (250) male and female students, other than the basic research sample and the exploratory application sample, they were chosen by random method, and the following is an explanation of the steps of the statistical analysis procedures:

A. Discrimination coefficient to test

It is necessary to calculate the discriminatory power of the test items for the purpose of excluding items that do not distinguish between individuals and to keep the items that distinguish them, because there is a strong relationship between the accuracy of the test and the discriminatory power of its items (Awda, 1988: 293).

In order to verify the discriminatory power of the test items, the researcher applied the test to a sample of statistical analysis consisting of (250) male and female students, and their answers were unloaded and the total score was calculated. The research sample forms were arranged in descending order according to the total score of the test and the two end groups were identified, the upper group (27%) and the number of its members (68) and the lower group (27%) and the number of its members (68) students, so that the total of students in the two higher groups And the minimum is (136) male and female students, and after using the discrimination coefficient equation for the objective and essay questions to find out the significance of the discrimination between the two extreme groups in the scores for each of the test items, and it appeared that all the items are distinct, as the values of the discrimination coefficient ranged between (0.31-0.43) Table (3) shows this:

Table (3) shows the discrimination coefficients for the objective and essay test items

| Discrimination coefficient | The number of students in the lower group who answered correctly | The number of students in the upper group who answered correctly | Paragraph | question number |
|----------------------------|--|--|-----------|-----------------|
| 0.31 | 33 | 54 | 1 | |
| 0.41 | 21 | 49 | 2 | |
| 0.35 | 35 | 59 | 3 | |
| 0.37 | 25 | 50 | 4 | |
| 0.34 | 23 | 46 | 5 | First |
| 0.41 | 24 | 52 | 6 | |
| 0.31 | 27 | 48 | 7 | |
| 0.44 | 23 | 53 | 8 | |
| 0.35 | 36 | 60 | 9 | |
| 0.43 | 22 | 51 | 10 | |
| 0.34 | 19 | 42 | 1 | Second |
| 0.40 | 26 | 53 | 2 | |
| 0.41 | 20 | 48 | 3 | |
| 0.41 | 30 | 58 | 1 | |
| 0.40 | 19 | 46 | 2 | |
| 0.32 | 29 | 51 | 3 | Third |
| 0.35 | 22 | 46 | 4 | |
| 0.37 | 25 | 50 | 5 | |
| 0.34 | 20 | 43 | 1 | Forth |
| 0.38 | 24 | 50 | 1 | |
| 0.37 | 18 | 43 | 21 | |
| 0.31 | 31 | 52 | 22 | Fifth |
| 0.35 | 21 | 45 | 23 | |
| 0.43 | 24 | 53 | 24 | |

B. Difficulty coefficient of objective paragraphs

The difficulty of the paragraph means the percentage of students who give a correct answer to the paragraph, and the test can distinguish as much as possible among the tested students, if the average difficulty of the paragraphs it includes is approximately (50%) (Allam, 2000: 286).

When calculating the difficulty coefficient for each of the test items by calculating the percentage of the number of those who answered correctly for the items in relation to the total of the tested students, using the equation of the difficulty coefficient, it was found that it is limited to (0,51-0.71) and thus there were no items The test is neither difficult nor easy to a large extent, the test is good if the coefficients of the difficulty of its paragraphs are between (0.20- 0.80). The following table shows the coefficients of difficulty for objective tests:

Table (4) shows the coefficients of difficulty for objective tests

| Difficulty factor | The number of students in the lower group who answered correctly | The number of students in the upper group who answered correctly | Paragraph | question number |
|-------------------|--|--|-----------|-----------------|
| 0.64 | 33 | 54 | 1 | First |
| 0.51 | 21 | 49 | 2 | |
| 0.69 | 35 | 59 | 3 | |
| 0.55 | 25 | 50 | 4 | |
| 0.51 | 23 | 46 | 5 | |
| 0.56 | 24 | 52 | 6 | |
| 0.55 | 27 | 48 | 7 | |
| 0.56 | 23 | 53 | 8 | |
| 0.71 | 36 | 60 | 9 | |
| 0.54 | 22 | 51 | 10 | |

The effectiveness of the wrong alternatives

The objective of extracting the effectiveness of incorrect alternatives in multiple-choice questions is to know the extent to which camouflages are able to attract students' attention and choose them as correct answer alternatives.

In order to verify the effectiveness of the wrong alternatives, the researcher calculated them and found that all their extracted values were good and acceptable, and the following table (5) shows that.

Table (5): Effectiveness of Incorrect Substitutions for Multiple Choice Paragraphs

| The effectiveness of the third error alternative | The effectiveness of the second error alternative | The effectiveness of the alternative is the first mistake | T |
|--|---|---|-----|
| 0.24- | 0.19- | 0.26- | 1. |
| 0.15- | 0.9- | 0.28- | 2. |
| 0.28- | 0.16- | 0.9- | 3. |
| 0.18- | 0.14- | 0.28- | 4. |
| 0.9- | 0.33- | 0.23- | 5. |
| 10.0- | 0.6- | 0.28- | 6. |
| 0.19- | 0.19- | 0.15- | 7. |
| 0.14- | 0.14- | 0.23- | 8. |
| 0.9- | 0.16- | 0.19- | 9. |
| 0.12- | 0.9- | 0.12- | 10. |

Psychometric properties of the test

The test should have some psychometric properties, the most important of which are its validity and stability, because the measurement process requires the availability of many conditions in building the tool. For this reason, measurement scientists stress the need to verify the validity and stability of the scale (Allam, 2000: 184), and the researcher verified the validity and stability of the test on As follows.

A. Validity Indicators

The degree of confidence in the test depends if the test bears an indication of honesty,
Res Militaris, vol.12, n°2, Summer-Autumn 2022

because honesty gives quality to the test and depends on measuring the trait to be measured. The researcher verified the validity of the test in two ways:

1- Face Validity: Virtual honesty is a type of honesty required in the construction of tests and standards. 1960: 112).

It is mentioned (Ebel, 1972) that the preferred way to ascertain the apparent validity of the measuring tool is for a number of specialized experts to determine the validity of the paragraphs to measure the quality for which they were developed (Ebel, 1972, p.392).

According to the procedure for verifying this type of honesty, the test items were presented to a number of arbitrators with specialization in education, psychology and methods of teaching Arabic, and the percentage of verifying the apparent honesty of the test was extracted and amounted to (90%).

2- Construction validity: It is the ability of the test to verify theoretical assumptions, including individual differences, internal homogeneity, and to verify construct validity (Faraj, 1980: 312).

The researcher extracted the construct validity of the reading comprehension test by calculating the discriminatory power of the paragraphs and by calculating the difficulty coefficient and the effectiveness of the wrong alternatives, and no paragraph was deleted from the test.

B- Stability: Stability is one of the important psychometric characteristics of the test. Therefore, its stability coefficient should be calculated as well as its validity. Stability has been verified by conducting a re-test method. It was found that the stability has reached (0.88), which is a good and acceptable stability coefficient.

Statistical indicators for the reading comprehension test

The researcher calculated the statistical indicators of the reading comprehension test to identify the extent to which the discrimination sample scores are close to the moderate type. Table (6) illustrates this:

Table (6) Statistical Indicators for Test

| Degree | Statistical indicators | T | Degree | Statistical indicators | T |
|--------|------------------------------|----|--------|------------------------|---|
| 0,227- | skewness | 8 | 250 | the sample | 1 |
| 0,154 | Standard error of torsion | 9 | 31,04 | Arithmetic mean | 2 |
| 0,506- | kurtosis | 10 | 25 | hypothetical mean | 3 |
| 0,307 | Standard error of flattening | 11 | 0,503 | standard error | 4 |
| 12 | lowest degree | 12 | 32 | Mediator standard | 5 |
| 48 | highest score | 13 | 7,950 | deviation | 6 |
| | | | 63,199 | Contrast | 7 |

Chapter Four

Presenting and Interpreting the Result of the Research Objective

The first goal: (to identify the level of reading comprehension of fourth-grade students of middle school)

To achieve this goal, the researcher applied the reading comprehension test that was built by the researcher, and which was applied to the fourth year middle school students, who represent the basic research sample, and its paragraphs were answered by the students. The college obtained by the students, as shown in Table (7).

Table (7) *T-test results for one sample for reading comprehension test*

| Indication Level | T test value Tabular | Calculated | Freedom Degree | Standard deviation | hypothetical mean | MA | Sample volume |
|------------------|----------------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------|---------------|
| 0,05 | 1,96 | 12,214 | 362 | 9,132 | 25 | 30,85 | 36 |

It is clear from the above table that the arithmetic mean of the sample members on the reading comprehension test was (30,85) and the standard deviation was (9,132), while the hypothetical mean was (25), and after using the t-test for one sample, it was found that the calculated value extracted was (12,214). It is greater than the tabular value of (1,96) at the significance level (0.05) and the degree of freedom (362), which means that there is a statistically significant level of reading comprehension among the fourth-grade students in middle school.

This result is consistent with what was indicated by (Al-Abdullah, 2007) that students in general have previous experiences that helped them to show a level of reading comprehension, as students of the fourth preparatory grade had basic principles and skills from previous years of study, as well as a sufficient degree of reading comprehension. Reading comprehension enabled them to process reading comprehension (Al-Abdullah, 2007: 57).

Based on the foregoing, the existence of a relationship between reading and comprehension effectively helps students' reading comprehension and can be explained by the following:

The process of reading without understanding is not a meaningful linguistic skill, but rather a mechanical process that does not lead to cognitive communication, and the best example is when one of us reads a text in the Persian language and does not have knowledge of this language, he does not understand anything from it.

- 1) The comprehension process comes in the first stage of learning to read, represented by learning pronunciation systems, linking letters with syllables, and meaningful vocabulary.
- 2) The process of linking, analyzing and interpreting is one of the basics of advanced cognitive understanding, and this process does not take place until after passing through the first stage of understanding (Abdul-Hadi et al., 2003: 219-220).

The researcher attributes the reason why the fourth preparatory grade students have a level of reading comprehension to that the students use thinking processes and construct meaning before, during and after reading by unifying the information from the reading, and this is what enabled them to possess that level of reading comprehension.

The second goal: (Statistically significant differences in reading comprehension according to the gender variable “male-female”):

To achieve this goal, the arithmetic means for the grades of the fourth-year middle school students on the reading comprehension test were calculated, and the results were as shown in Table (8).

Table (8) results of the t-test for two independent samples of reading comprehension

| Significance level | T test value | | Freedom Degree | Standard deviation | Sample MA | Sample volume | Gender |
|--------------------|--------------|------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------|---------------|--------|
| | Tabular | Calculated | | | | | |
| 0,05 | 1,96 | 0.406- | 361 | 9,241 | 3 | 157 | Male |
| | | | | 9,066 | 3 | 206 | Female |
| | | | | | 1.02 | | |

It is clear from the above table that the arithmetic mean of the students reached (30,63) and standard deviation (9,066), while the arithmetic mean of the female students reached (31,02) and the standard deviation reached (9,066) at the degree of freedom (361). It is also clear that the calculated value has reached (0.406), which is smaller than the tabular value, which amounted to (1.96) at the significance level (0.05), and this indicates that there are no statistically significant differences between the sample members in reading comprehension.

This result is consistent with what was referred to (Atiya, 2010) and referred to in the theoretical framework, methods of developing reading comprehension - the third and fourth paragraphs, which referred to:

- 1) The teacher's assistance to the educated students helped reduce the difference between their abilities and the requirements of the goal of reading, so that the learners reach a single level that enables them to rely on themselves in reading comprehension.
- 2) Training of educated students by teachers on new strategies for reading comprehension and comprehension has proven to be effective in increasing students' comprehension and comprehension. (Atiya, 2010: 50).

The researcher believes that this result was consistent with the reading comprehension skills possessed by the students of the fourth year of middle school, and for both male and female students alike, in terms of reading comprehension skills, given that the school stage they reached is an advanced stage in the study, namely the preparatory stage, which is the last stage for students before they enter the university, which It enables them to have equal reading comprehension skills for both of them.

Recommendations

1. Introducing modern strategies and effective teaching methods by teachers in order to increase their reading comprehension level.
2. Opening training courses for students during the summer vacation to train them on the use of reading comprehension skills.

Suggestions

1. Conducting a study under the title (Reading Comprehension and its Relationship to Critical Thinking among University Students)
2. Conducting a comparative study under the title (Reading comprehension according to the remembering and recall skills of distinguished students and their ordinary peers.

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