

## IMPACT OF LANGUAGE SCHOOL'S EDUCATION ON ENGLISH READING SKILL OF IRANIAN EFL STUDENTS

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### Abstract

This research intends to study the effect of Language School Education on English Reading skill of Students of Junior High Schools in Rasht. The statistical community of this research includes all the Students of Junior High Schools in 90-91 academic year. A sample including 40 students is selected by multistage random sampling method. To evaluate the studied variants, the Informal English Reading Inventory (IRI) examination tool is used. The correlated t test is used in this research. The results of t test show that there is a significant difference between the English Reading speed pre-test and post-test ( $t=3.94$  in 0.001 level.); there is no difference between English Reading comprehension pre-test and post-test ( $t=0.0001$  in 0.05 level); there is no difference between accuracy pre-test and post-test ( $t=-1$  in 0.05 level)

**Keywords:** Language Schools, English Reading skill, Students, Education.

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## Introduction

English Reading is one of the most fundamental tools in learning and also one of the most important skills that Junior High School students obtain is English Reading. Educational failure, for the most part, is due to the inefficiency of English Reading skill. English Reading is nothing more than comprehending the written material, and also identifying the values, meanings, and concepts of words, phrases, sentences, and cognizable materials, in addition to the meaning, intention, and message that the writer has written by means of words. The goal is to understand the hidden thought in the text. If the reader learns the proper way of English Reading from the beginning and get used to skimming through texts, i.e. English Reading skill, through a vaster scope he will see a group of words in a sentence together and can see the whole sentence or a part of it and read it. It should be mentioned that the English Reading speed is variable in relation to the scale, kind and comprehension of that text. English Reading in this account means evaluating the beliefs to find their truth, validity, and importance and we do this by comparing them with our own beliefs, experiences and knowledge (George Miller, trans. By TalebiNejad, 1368.) English Reading is constantly accompanied by understanding meaning, otherwise it has no significance. Some theorists believe that meaning is always in the texts, but others believe that meaning is a result of the interaction between the reader and the text. In other words, the processing of previously saved knowledge and the added materials makes the meaning in the mind (Anderson and Pearson, 1984.) Krashen and Terrel (1983) suggest that “to understand meaning, read. Do not find the meaning of every single word. Guess the meaning and use the text.” Recognizing the word and linking the meaning to the word, is a prerequisite to understanding written passages. As the English Reading skill increases in the reader, recognizing the words become quickly automated and it seems that only unprofessional readers are reliant on English Reading word by word. When the reader has to guess the meaning of individual words, he may use different methods. One of these methods is phoneme analysis method. In this method the reader breaks up the word into letters or letter compounds and accessing the mental signs of the words and their meaning indirectly or changing the written form of the phonemes to the phonemic mental sign and obtaining meaning through these phonemic signs is possible (Brook Shirem, 2003.) recognizing the words is a psychological training that indicates that the reader can pronounce the subsequent sounds of words (Royer, 2007 and Willis, 2004) believe that in teaching English Reading and writing skills, other assignments like discussion, puzzle, and

general knowledge evaluation tests can be used. English Reading could be either visual, in which at the moment the word is seen the meaning comes to the mind; or auditory (Bourquin, 1979.) Proponents of English Reading in class and group activities are Brown (1994) and Doff (1992) who emphasize teaching English Reading correctly to language learners in class and training them to read properly and avoid English Reading ineffectively. The aim of English Reading is to gain self-confidence, proficiency and achieving the general meaning of the text (Khavari, 1383.) According to Vygotsky's theory of neighboring growth area (1962, quoted by Seyf, 1391) while education is prior to growth, provided that the teachings be not above the understanding of the child, anything can be taught to the child. In the theory of neighboring growth area, the adults have a key role in children's learning and by using proper learning methods, help to improve their learning level. One of the institutes which has this duty in Iran is the Learners Mental Training Center. In 1344, exactly after Khordad the 15<sup>th</sup> movement, following the danger felt by the government from the young generation, Mental Training Center was founded concurrently with other organizations. Mental Training Center opened officially in the 23<sup>rd</sup> of Azar, 1344 and the Laila Arjmand was the vice president till 1357 (Taher Ahmadi, 1382.) after the revolution, to develop the young generation's talents and to fill their spare time in a proper way, some of the center's plans and programs were changed.

Filling the children's and teenagers' leisure time is one of the concerns of families. Usually filling the leisure time of Learners is not programmed. Lack of leisure time causes the waste and improper use of time. Planning for the children's and teenagers' leisure time helps the shaping of character and the multi-sided growth. For the children's and teenagers' better use of leisure time not only families, but also social and educational institutes should try and it is necessary that they program. Learners Mental Training Center is an institute which is founded to plan out the children's and teenagers' leisure time. This center, through facilities like fixed and mobile libraries, posting books, training classes, skill learning, and various programs, helps to enrich planning out the children's and teenagers' leisure time (Ahmadi, 1379.) No research is done on the function of this center. The sole research done, is by Mazrooee (1376) which studies the rate of goals achieved in Isfahan's Cultural-Educational Center. The goals of this center are the following:

1. Filling the students' leisure time with appropriate activities and plans
2. Providing appropriate conditions for developing the talents of students

3. Teaching Islamic costumes and ethics and the ways of living
4. Improving relationship and cooperation among the students

In recent years, Education and Training Organization and Mental Training Center have cooperated in different areas like writing and English Reading skills, etc. according to this, students (mostly public schools' students) would attend the Center one day a week, according to the determined program, and are taught by Center's instructors in areas like English Reading, handiwork, etc. The importance and necessity of this subject is a motivation for this research to study whether the Center is influential in developing English Reading skill (speed, accuracy, and comprehension) or not?

### Hypotheses

1. The teachings of LearnersMental Training Center affect the English Reading speed of StudentsofJunior High School schools in Rasht.
2. The teachings of LearnersMental Training Center affect the comprehension of StudentsofJunior High School schools in Rasht.
3. The teachings of LearnersMental Training Center affect the English Reading accuracy of StudentsofJunior High School schools in Rasht.

### Methodology

Research scheme, statistical community, sample, and sampling method

In this research, semi-experimental research method and pre-test and post-test schemes with control group are used. The statistical community of this research consists of all StudentsofJunior High School schools in Rasht. Statistical samples of this research are selected using multistage sampling method. The volume of statistical samples was determined according to the fact that in experimental schemes, 20 people in each group is enough. The sampling method is random multistage method in which two schools are selected randomly among Rasht's schools. The students of one of these schools attended the Mental Training Center and used its teachings but the other didn't. two classes were selected randomly from these schools. Then 20 people were selected randomly from each class and were studied in the research.

### Measuring tools

Informal English Reading Inventory; this test includes a passage of 100 to 200 words the content of which includes all the words with letters of which the students are familiar and are used in the official teachings of schools. This passage evaluates three skills of English Reading speed, correct English Reading and comprehension and the reliability of its form and content is confirmed by university experts. This device is previously confirmed and used by Shahi (1389). The passage which is used in tests is the following:

“God’s Blessings”

Man should always be thankful for the blessings bestowed by God and show that he is grateful for those gifts and is thankful for them. And through this he can gain the ability and merit to receive more blessings. But one who is not grateful for the blessings God has given to him, would waste them and dissipate them and shows that he has not the ability and merit to use God’s blessings. This way he not only does not gain more blessings but also lose what he has. Imam Hosayn (peace be upon him) says “know that people’s need is of God’s blessing for us. No one gets tired of God’s blessing and if he does the blessing turns to a misfortune.”

In order to do this research, after selecting the samples randomly from the Students of Junior High Schools in Rasht, firstly the pre-test, using ascertainable diagnostic test, was given to both of the groups. Then, to know the effectuality or ineffectuality of the Center, a month after the pre-test, the post-test was done.

### Results

In this research descriptive statistics methods like average, standard deviance, standard deviation, and average deviation error are used. Furthermore, correlated t test is used to test the hypotheses. The data is analyzed using spss statistical software.

### The results of hypotheses

This part is concerned with the research’s hypotheses and their results, meaning that each hypothesis is discussed and then using correlated t test, the hypothesis is examined. To examine the hypothesis, the scores of each of the examined materials in different groups (experiment group, which was covered by the Mental Center, and control group, which was not covered by

the Mental Center) are compared in the research's variants so that we can examine the significance of each hypothesis. The results of each hypothesis are as the following:

Hypothesis 1. Learners Mental Training Center affects the English Reading speed of Students of Junior High Schools in Rasht.

To study this hypothesis the correlated t test is used. The results of this study is shown in table 1.

Level of significance	t	Freedom degree	Average deviation error	Standard deviation	average number	statistics English Reading speed	
						English Reading speed pre-test	Couple 1
0/001	3/94	19	0/15	0/69	2/20	20	English Reading speed pre-test
			0/17	0/78	1/75	20	English Reading speed post-test

Table 1. a comparison of English Reading speed pre-test and post-test in the students of Mental Training Center

According to the results of the above table the t value is 3.94 which is significant in 0.001. therefore there is a significant different between the English Reading speed pre-test and post-test scores in the students of Mental Training Center.

To ensure the results which confirm the first hypothesis, the above test is done on the scores obtained from the students of usual schools the results of which are reported in table 2.

Standard average deviation error	Standard deviation	average	number	statistics English Reading speed	
				English Reading speed pre-test	Couple 1
0/191	0/858	3	20	English Reading speed pre-test	Couple 1
0/191	0/858	3	20	English Reading speed post-test	

Table 2. descriptive indicators of English Reading speed pre-test and post-test in usual school's students



Since there is no difference between the scores of pre-test and post-test in none of the descriptive indicators (average, standard deviation, standard average deviation error) the correlated t test could not be done.

According to the reported results, it could be said that the hypothesis 1 about the effect of LearnersMental Training Center on students' English Reading speed is confirmed.

Hypothesis 2.LearnersMental Training Center affects the English Reading comprehension of StudentsofJunior High Schoolschool in Rasht.

To study this hypothesis the correlated t test is used. The results are shown in table 3. Using the correlated t test, the scores of comprehension pre-test and post-test are compared, the results of which are shown in table 3.

Level of significance	t	Freedom degree	Standard average deviation error	Standard deviation	average	number	Statistics English Readingspeed	
0/05	/00010	19	0/29	1/31	2/45	20	Comprehension pre-test	Couple 1
			0/32	1/43	2/45	20	Comprehension post-test	

Table 3.a comparison of comprehension pre-test and post-test in Mental Training Center's students.

According to the results of the above table the t value is 0.0001 which is not significant in the level of 0.05. therefore there is not a significant difference between the scores of comprehension pre-test and post-test in the students of Mental Training Center.

To ensure the obtained results in disconfirming the second hypothesis, the above tests are done on the grades of usual school's students, the results of which are shown in table 4.

Level of significance	t	Freedom degree	Standard average deviation error	Standard deviation	average	number	statistics English Reading speed	
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			n error					
0/201	1/324	19	0/23	1/03	1/65	20	Comprehensi on pre-test	couple 1
	-		0/27	1/21	2	20	Comprehensi on post-test	

Table 4.a comparison of comprehension pre-test and post-test in the students of the usual school

According to the results shown in the above table the t value is 1.324 which is not significant in the level of 0.05. therefore, there is not a significant difference between the scores of English Reading speed pre-test and comprehension post-test in the usual school's students.

Hypothesis 3.LearnersMental Training Center affects the English Reading accuracy of the StudentsofJunior High Schoolschool in Rasht.

To study this hypothesis the correlated t test is used, the results of which is shown in table 5.

Using the correlated t test, a comparison is made between the English Reading accuracy pre-test and post test scores, the results of which are reported in table 5.

Level of significance	t	Freedom degree	Standard average deviation error	Standard deviation	average	number	statistics English Reading speed	
0/330	-1	19	0/05	0/22	1/05	20	English Reading accuracy pre-test	Couple 1
			0/10	0/44	1/10	20	English Reading accuracy post-test	

Table 5.a comparison of English Reading accuracy pre-test and post-test in the Mental Training Center students.



According to the results, the t value is -1 which is not significant in 0.05 level. Therefore there is not a significant difference between the scores of English Reading accuracy pre-test and post-test in students attending the Mental Training Center.

To ensure the results in disconfirmation of the third hypothesis, the above tests are done on the scores obtained from the usual school's students, the results of which are reported in table 6.

Using the correlated t test a comparison is made between the English Reading accuracy pre-test and post-test scores , the results of which are shown in table 6.

Significance level	t	Freedom degree	Standard average deviation error	Standard deviation	average	number	statistics	
							English Reading accuracy pre-test	English Reading accuracy post-test
0/042	2/179	19	0/21	0/96	1/90	20	English Reading accuracy pre-test	Couple 1
			0/17	0/80	1/70	20	English Reading accuracy post-test	

Table 6.a comparison of the English Reading accuracy pre-test and post-test scores in the usual school's students.

According to the results of the above table, the t value is 2.179 which is significant in 0.05 level. Therefore there is a significant difference between the English Reading accuracy pre-test and post-test scores in the usual school's students.

According to the results, it can be said that the third hypothesis about the effect of LearnersMental Training Center on the English Reading accuracy of the students is not confirmed.

## conclusion

Nowadays English Reading skill is one of the most important needs in students' learning. Comprehending, interpreting and understanding school texts and non-school texts, makes them familiar with new thoughts and knowledge. In other words, "English Reading ability" in its general scientific meaning, is a means to achieve the infinite sources of human experience (Karimi, 1383.) Recognizing the influential factors in learning to read and write may have a key role in educational programming and curing the children with learning disabilities. When teaching alphabet is not done with the correct method and technique, the further stages would be difficult. In teaching alphabet, psychological rules and principals in general and learning psychology in particular is helpful and also using educational instruments should not be forgotten (KoolaeNejad, 1380.)

The results of the current research shows that there is a significant relationship between attending the Mental Training Center and English Reading speed, meaning that attending the Mental Training Center causes an increase in English Reading speed. According to this, it is likely that the students whose English Reading speed in English Reading skill is high, have more time to study and thus would get higher grades in school. Since the aim of English Reading is to gain self-confidence, understand the mistakes and temporary errors, and also to overcome them. English Reading process is to achieve the aims of English Reading easily, proficiently and also to get the general meaning of the text, and as the Mental Training Center ascertains this goal, the Junior High Schoolschool teachers and parents should pay further attention to the importance of the Mental Training Center and should also know the role different institutes like that play in educating the children.

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