A Thesis

Using The Qualitative Reading Inventory to Assess a Saudi Reader’s Reading Ability

by

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Learning is a continuous process and students must be given the right environment so that they can succeed in whatever they are doing. Teaching reading is a process of imparting skills to learners so that they are able to comprehend a given text. Students in Saudi Arabia are facing various challenges when learning and a new method sought to solve the problems. Use of The Qualitative Reading Inventory to assess a Saudi reader’s reading ability in solving reading problems will be a better alternative to ensure that learning takes place smoothly at schools. Educators must be ready to use the method in conjunction with the right environment to offer the students the required skills.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Reading is the process of being able to make meaning out of print. Teaching reading is a process of imparting skills to learners so that they are able to comprehend a given text. Reading is a complement of writing. It is not possible for a student to know how to write but miss the other. As educators, no one is born knowing how to read and write, but these are skills that must be taught to the learners. Saudi students are among those who should learn to read and write. In this thesis, I will discuss better reading strategies that should be taught to students to improve reading skills among the Saudi students. The essay will analyze the major problems that Saudi students face when reading and their solutions.

The common problem that English Language Learner’s (ELL’s) facing is the skill of reading comprehension. Duke and Pearson (2002) summed up comprehension problems as being “when a student is not able to decode and deeply digest a given sentence” as opposed to fluent reading. It is important that students are given the skills that make them strategic, and readers must be systematic to succeed in all areas. When students are better in reading, and they have better comprehension skills, they are capable of breaking the barrier of illiteracy.
The evidenced characteristic of poor reading in ELL’s also is the level of success that they are achieving in various other subjects such as math. Poor performance in class and other educational activities proves that reading is a vital skill that should be embraced across all levels. In the Saudi Arabian society, similar to other countries, reading has always been the major way that people get information and most students lacking this important skill.

1.1 Lack of a Broad Range of Vocabulary in Reading

The extent of research has shown that reading is always successful when the right vocabulary is utilized in a given context. The biggest problem is that when there is a lack of a broad range of vocabulary in a particular language, students do not succeed in the academic sphere. Reading comprehension and excelling in the academic field always will require a deeper understanding of vocabulary by students. The problem highlighted under this section is what students are mostly facing in all their readings. It is logical to point out that if a student can comprehend what they are reading, they must have a passion or understand a wide variety of vocabulary of the language. It also makes sense that if students have the strategies that will enable them to get the meaning of the new words when they encounter them in a passage, then they will be better able to comprehend difficult texts (Lebaure, 1985).

1.2 Hindrances to Learning

The worst experience that some readers have when they are reading in class make them always feel inadequate. Such discouraging experience brings a lot of trouble when trying to read. Lebaure, R. (1985) argues that, as the reading practices
such as using a variety of materials, reading aloud and scanning continues to be used, they realize that they are not gaining new words making them avoid reading and it creates self-fulfilling prophecy in poor readers. This is similar to observation of ELL’s by the educators. The three teachers that I interviewed believed these learners often get frustrated, and sometimes avoid reading in English due to their comprehension difficulties. The cycles of discouragement due to lack of vocabulary and fluency of not being sure of what to read makes many students avoid reading. It is, therefore, a problem that needs to be addressed so that educators have a solution for struggling readers. A learner must be able to understand appropriate vocabularies and know how to apply them fluently. The process if repeated always leads to growing the library of vocabularies and thus reading comprehension becomes easier and faster to achieve.

1.3 Lack of Prior Schemata to Comprehend a Text

Many ELL’s had no prior knowledge that would allow her to understand what they need in the understanding of the text in class or at home. Constructing a meaning or mining a given idea from a particular sentence is always determined by the prior knowledge that is known as schemata (Peregoy, Suzanne & Owen, 2005). For example, Ell’s may not able to use knowledge, attitudes, values, understanding and also the experiences during their first year in class. Whenever a student lacks prior knowledge of a given sentence or text, then it's hard to achieve reading comprehension of the text. For example, a child who has spent his or her whole life living in a desert environment may have difficulty comprehending a passage about people living in the jungle. When such skill is achieved, then the prediction of a meaning of a text is always easier. It has been noted that often times
English language learners may be lacking prior knowledge necessary for adequate comprehension (Peregoy, Suzanne & Owen, 2005).

Prior thinking to get the sense of a text before reading is a critical skill that will always be used by learners who needs to achieve comprehension. As such, predicting what the text is all about always proves to be vital and helpful to students. If learners then have individual experiences that they acquired in the past and with the use of clues, reading comprehension always is easily achieved. Predicting as a way of previewing a given text always gives learners a chance to determine what they want in a text and then focus on the main ideas.

Lack of such a skill then proves the challenges that Saudi Arabia students will undergo when trying to understand and comprehend what they are reading. Reading is a continuous process. The more predictive reading is practices, and prior knowledge is achieved the better, and more prepared a student will be when reading to comprehend (Peregoy, Suzanne & Owen, 2005).
Chapter 2

Literature Review

The following literature review illustrates common problems that Saudi and other English Language Learners students encounter when learning to read. With the proper assessment and support, such learners gain the appropriate skills to read and comprehend eventually equivalent to their same-age peers. However, various issues can interfere with a ELL students learning to read. Knowing what these problems are likely to be makes it is easier to find which teaching methods are best to use with such students. In this study, the Qualitative Reading Inventory (QRI-5) Method will be used to assess a struggling reader in order to assess which particular areas she is having the most difficulty with.

Language learning is a process that involves transferring skills of a given a language through a formal setting. According to Krashen (1981), a learner should be directed and given specific rules regarding both reading and writing a language. On the other hand, language acquisition is informal, and it is acquired naturally in informal settings. The two concepts are vital as far as education is concerned. In order for a student to master a given language efficiently, they must receive supportive context from an instructor. This is referred to as sharing knowledge in the formal settings such
as schools. The right environment should also be utilized for better understanding of the language to be acquired by a student. For example, children who are anxious are less likely to acquire a given language since they tend to develop negative behaviors toward learning.

Informal settings are also places for a student to learn and acquire the required language and most students utilize various techniques such as looking for recurring patterns in speech, by assumed speech that related to what was going or around them and started talking among others. Such techniques are important when learning the first language which should be acquired automatically as the child develops his or her cognitive skills. If the first language is not learned well, it will also be hard to teach or learn the second language efficiently. Children can be affected by the first language and this can end up frustrating the child (Krashen, 1981).

Learning a second language should be encouraged among the learners so as to develop communicative competence. Communicative competence is the mastering of the usage of a language with different persons and in different settings. It is advantageous to learn a new language so as communication can be easy to handle the problems that are caused by language limitations.

According to Klingner, Vaughn, & Boardma, (2015), in reading, there are various challenges that students face such as difficulty in decoding, word recognition, fluency, and comprehension. It is, however, important to understand why reading is essential to any student or learner in the academic field. For an individual to be ready to learn how to teach, the importance of reading should be the motivating factor among
the students. It acts as a way to encourage and enable the teachers or instructors to be aware of what students strengths and weaknesses are as they read, especially when they read the passages aloud and the teacher goes back to do miscue analysis. Miscue is essential in such cases since it describes a word or a response that is not the same as the expected response or word.

2.1 Importance of Reading among Learners

It is important to understand the importance that reading has to most students. Reading is an activity that each and every individual learner is supposed to know. It is primary mode of communication second only to talking and key to learning across and between all cultures. Learning to read enables an individual to be able to comprehend a given article or text in a manner that they can retain the information read.

When students read at least fifteen minutes a day at their independent level, there are a number of positive outcomes including an increase in fluency (their reading rate is improved), as well as an increase in vocabulary. Learners eventually become independent in future reading because this exposure to numerous words increases their sight word bank and thus improves their fluency or, roughly, the rate at which they read.

Students with good fluency achieve what we call automaticity, and, thus, because they do not have to spend so much time decoding print, they have a much great span of attention, or “brain space” left for comprehension. To most assessors not familiar with reading diagnostics, this person just seems to “read better” or be “good at comprehension” but to someone equipped with a tool as powerful as the QRI-5, one
can readily point to specific areas of strength and weakness including but not limited to word recognition, fluency, prior knowledge and comprehension. Furthermore, comprehension strengths and weaknesses might include self-correction, graphophonics, semantics and syntax.

As highlighted above, there are various problems in reading with student we will be discussing both in her reading in English and her reading in Arabic. The principal aim of the study is to offer a diagnosis by using the QRI-5 method.

2.2 Problems in Reading Comprehension

Reading comprehension is defined as a process and the ability to read a text and understand the meaning. A piece of text may have an intended message, it might be argued the better the student knows the ideas, the better it would be for him or her to comprehend this meaning. It is not easy for teachers to be able to teach students to comprehend a given text if they are not ready or if the teacher doesn’t understand why they are struggling or what is causing their lack of comprehension.

2.3 Prior Knowledge

Various reasons make students lack comprehending skills and apply them to a text.

Students have various reasons that make them not to comprehend a given text as expected. Lack of prior knowledge is the primary reason why a particular student may not comprehend a particular text. For example, when the students read a passage about unfamiliar person, place or thing for them. They don’t any prior information about it, such as when students in the elementary school read an advance psychology or chemistry topic.
Reading comprehension problem also arises as a result of lack of a child being able to infer a given text. Inferencing can be defined as the process of bypassing the literal meaning of a passage or text and understanding what the author of the book was communicating. Most students who are struggling to comprehend always suffer from the problem. They are not able to dig deep and understand what the author intended to communicate in a text. There are various reasons to why some students lack cognitive skills and face such problems; some are confronted with the problems of poor background learning, lack of active vocabulary and lack of semantic word knowledge. In other students having incomplete prediction skills and knowledge about a text makes most students feel discouraged to read and comprehend (Goouch, 2008).

Reading comprehension is also caused due to lack of working memory. A working memory must be available in the student's mental workspace so that they can be able to digest and hold information for a longer time. Children who are struggling to read have shorter memory storage ability. When new data is received after reading a given text, it must be held somewhere briefly before being transferred to other places to comprehend the meaning. Most reading comprehension tends to give students difficult moments in their memory. The problem is common among students who have poor language skills. When a student is reading a given passage, working memory offers an opportunity to not only remember the deeper meaning of the words but also how the words are put together to form sentences and passages that have a complete meaning. A child’s working memory should be active and avoid distractions. Most students are always distracted when reading by various elements that they face. For example, a student cannot learn if the environment of the students is noisy or a
television program is on (Cornold & Oakhill, 2013). They are always distracted, and anything that they store in the memory cannot offer them any solution if they are to understand the meaning of a text. Working memory is vital to help students store information that will assist them to use the information that they learn in solving other problems that they are faced with in class.

Most students are also prone to losing focus on what they are reading. It is critical to ensure that as a teacher the students are not losing focus when they are reading. Reading comprehensions will not be achieved if a student loses focus when reading. If the type of text is lower or above their level, they will lose focus, and this means that they will not comprehend. If the book is boring and they also lack skills in language, they will become disinterested, and this will make them lose focus in all that they are doing.

2.4 Problems in Decoding

Decoding in students is critical so that they can understand what that passage or text means. Decoding is, therefore, the skill that is used by students to enable them to make sense of a text from the perspective of printed words. The decoding skills enable students to connect the printed text into a spoken word. Such a skill, if it lacks in an individual, reading becomes a difficult task. There is more to looking at a given the word and the ability to make sense of the spoken text. Such skills are vital when reading and they include the capability of basic sounds used in making up a book. Students should be able to recognize the sound and the phonemes that are composed of a word, understand its meaning and knowing exactly where it should be applied in a given text. If a student lack decoding skills their reading becomes an uphill task for
them. It may lead to a student being uncooperative to read and at the same time have difficulty in learning to read (Kame'enui & Simmons, 2015).

Decoding is a skill that offers essential support to a student and the ability to identify words or phrases that they are already aware of and then sound the new words out. Decoding problems are noticeable for most students. They are not able to sound out a given word, and they end up being frustrated. They feel inadequate, and they may end up giving excuses about being sick to avoid attempting to read the text. Others are so tempted that they may slam the book and close it since they are not able to comprehend and sound out the words as they are expected. Above all, problems in decoding leads to a lack of comprehension, which in the end leads to a child performing poorly in class among other adverse effects (Kame'enui & Simmons, 2015).

Solutions, to solve such problems, should be jointly discussed by the teacher so that better solutions can be sought. Teachers who are learning to teach should offer information and advice to the parents of the students who are struggling to read. Vocabulary deficiency among the students and the lack of exposure to various books often leads to problems in decoding. Language patterns and cultural factors also play a significant role in modifying or enriching a child’s decoding skills. It is vital to know that at different levels of understanding students react differently to decoding. Fluent readers are always able to read the words and sound them faster even before reading aloud. Such words are known as sight words to the fluent readers.
2.5 Problems in Reading Vocabulary

Reading vocabulary is the ability to understand the words that students should read. Most students who lack the right vocabulary are faced with the problems in reading since they do not have enough vocabulary to use. Vocabulary learning is not a one stop activity but words keep on popping up, and they are new each day. Students will be able to read and comprehend a given sentence or text if they have a broad range of vocabulary. Understanding of a vocabulary doesn’t apply only to obtaining the meaning of that word, but it helps a student to understand why and how it should be used in a sentence. Therefore, it is not sufficient to comprehend a word by just looking it up in the dictionary. Its application in a sentence to bring out a meaning plays a major role regarding reading (Klingner, Vaughn, & Boardma, 2015).

The problem in reading vocabulary thus always impairs the capability of a student in a position of understanding and comprehending what they are reading. When students have a wider vocabulary and a deeper meaning of a word, they find it easier and simpler to read and understand a passage or text. Learning to teach should, therefore, identify strategies that will ensure that students are always exposed to more words in their learning process. Methods such as offering the students more materials to read should be encouraged by the teachers. Reading aloud strategies should be applied, and the QRI-5 should be used to assess the word recognition, fluency, reading levels and comprehension ability of the student (Leslie and Caldwell, 2016).

Words form the basic meaning of a sentence or a text. It is not a solution to always to label a given the word as a vocabulary and read it repeatedly. As earlier stated, students should be exposed to a variety of content where the word has been
used instead of using drills in class to emphasize the meaning of the word. Students are able to read well and comprehend a text if they are always exposed to various reading materials that offer them different knowledge. On the other hand, it is important for the teachers to choose the right reading materials to use in teaching the students to avoid boredom in the learners.

2.6 Problems in Fluency

Most students who are struggling to read always encounter the issue during reading. Fluent reading, therefore, can be defined as the process of reading a text with speed, proper expression and with accuracy. For comprehension to occur, students when reading should be fluent in reading whether doing it silently or aloud. Most fluent readers always differentiate between various tones when reading and they can identify various phrases as they read. Students who are not able to read fluently are frustrated, and they do not feel like reading anymore leading to developing a reading problem (Kame'enui & Simmons, 2015).

They are found to sound awkward and not attractive. Decoding skills are lacking in such students who are not reading fluently and their speed and accuracy should also be discussed. Most students in the lower grades are not pressured to develop such a skill since they do not have vast materials to read. It is important to learn, however, and understand how important it is for students to master this concept. As they move toward higher grades, the volume of content to read increases, and fluent reading will always play a significant role in their studies. Students who are not able to read fluently feel bored and they are not motivated to learn. Such attitudes make reading a strenuous activity,
and disinterest grows affecting them in their later years (Goouch, 2008). Various methods can be employed by teachers to teach better ways of improving fluency. Positive attitudes from the students make the students be enthusiastic and learn to read better and master the concept. Fluency, as highlighted, is affected by various factors such as lack of vocabulary, inference problems and also comprehension issues. If a student is not able to comprehend a given text, she cannot be able to read; she lacks vocabulary understanding leading struggling in reading.

Fluency teaching involves various aspect or methods to be improved. Teachers, parents and the students themselves should work hand in hand to find a solution to fluency reading problems. In most cases, decoding skills are the primary cause of lack of fluency. Most students feel afraid when reading aloud a text and if such a signal is noticed it is time for a parent to act and offer necessary support that the students need. Avoid distraction by providing a student a quiet place or room to study or read. Reading aloud should be allowed so that the student’s weaknesses can be identified.

2.7 Problems in Reading Letters Phonics

Phonics is the relationship between graphemes and the letter sounds. The students who have difficulties in learning the alphabetic principle are not able to comprehend a text. Learning the alphabet and the sounds letters make one of the core blocks of reading. Without understanding the alphabetic relationship with various sounds, learning cannot occur. Students, therefore, must be aware of the alphabetic principles which dictate that letters and letter patterns are similar to the sounds that are spoken. When students master the differences between the sounds, comprehension
reading and vocabulary identification is achievable. Students, for example, are taught that letter \( n \) sounds /n/, and it is used when writing such words such as the nose, and news among other words.

Phonics learning establishes the relationship between fluency and the rest of the above factors that have been discussed above (Cornold & Oakhill, 2013). Fluency is the first aspect that is achieved when a student understands the sound patterns of given letters. The relationship between the sound and the letters offers the learners a basic grasp of the meaning of that word. Alphabetic words and sounds understanding form a basis for reading phonics. Phonic will, therefore, be faced with problems if the student hasn’t captured the essential ideas of the alphabet letters. Students who have difficulties in reading alphabetical numbers and sound face difficult time when reading. Reading is a process of understanding the various dimensions as they should be understood. Students who are starting to read must be taken through the alphabet sounds for improved language learning.

2.8 Arab Region Literacy

The literacy level among the entire Arab region is wanting. Simple but helpful reading habits will be a solution to the students in the area. There must be solutions initiated towards improving literacy level among the Arab students. More books and more literacy materials must be applied with the right teaching methods to solve such this issue. The above problems have been identified as the primary causes of reading problems among the Saudi Arabia students. If there is a method of solving the issues that have been highlighted above, it is important that the effects of Saudi Arabia language and curriculum are also understood and permanent solutions are found.
There is an increasing concern regarding literacy levels of children in Saudi Arabia. Various issues such as lack of reading habits and lack of priority to reading make the students lack the necessary support that they need. The Arabic writing system is also different as compared to writing in English. It can be difficult to translate the concepts that are applied when teaching or learning English in Saudi Arabia, but with the right resources, students will be encouraged to read. Teachers should also change the curriculum and exclude the use of Arabic language when teaching a foreign language. Availability of reading materials among the students will also have a positive impact toward improving the reading culture and thus comprehension will be achieved among the students in easily (Leslie and Caldwell, 2016)

There is a wide gap in similarities when it comes to Arabic language and English language. The issues of phonics, fluency and speed are significantly affected by the different alphabetical arrangement that exists among the two languages. The Arab writing systems are an alphabetic arrangement that is written from right to left. It has 25 consonants, and with three long vowels, there are also 12 diacritical marks that make up of three vowels that are smaller (Goouch, 2008). English alphabets have a given number of consonants and vowels but don't have diacritical marks. When students are being taught in a different order, they end up being confused. If accurate measures are not taken to improve the situation, all the above-discussed problems are prevalent among the students.

Reading, therefore, is a systematic process that should follow a given pattern: if the students are not taught various elements in sequence, they may find it hard to learn reading. The reading problem in Saudi Arabia can be solved using the QRI-5
method as will be discussed in the following chapters. Various problems can, however, be resolved to reduce the impact it has on the reading activities of the students. Students should be given the right materials that are wide in content to help them improve in vocabulary learning. Students should not feel bored when reading the texts by using the right materials that are meant to improve their fluency and comprehension skills.
Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Single Subject Case Study

Single subject case study is a quantitative case study that entails outlining innermost information of each individual in a significant number of participants using descriptive way. I choose the single subject case study because the research methodology is most common in various fields of education and psychology in singling out the personal details of an individual from a group of participants. The case study will be instrumental in this subject since it involves a bounded system that has four requirements; particularistic, descriptive, heuristic and inductive characteristics (Duke & Mallete, 2004).

In this case, this study is a single subject case study of an Arabic student, Asma (pseudonym), who moved with her parents from Saudi Arabia to the United States when she finished her first grade in a school in Saudi Arabia. Her parents thought it would be better to let Asma start again from the first grade in the American school because of the variation of the two languages. The subject case study was used to assess her reading ability of the second language. The teacher adopted the particularistic characteristic where he centered his attention on the reading ability of
Asma repeatedly. For the few days that Asma had joined the school, the teacher also used descriptive characteristics by gathering information through recording how Asma was reading statements in English in order to take note of her behavioral trends. The teacher would also observe the reading patterns of Asma through adopting heuristic strategies in order to understand the consistency of Asma in reading English language. Finally, the teacher would take time to analyze the variability of the data collected on the reading abilities of Asma using inductive characteristics. Mastering a second language for Asma therefore, was not a hard task since she was learning the language at an early age. Currently, she is in the 4th grade, and she started learning English since first grade in the US and she also started learning Arabic again when she moved to the 2nd grade in the American school because her parents brought an Arabic teacher from Saudi Arabia to teach her the Arabic language. It became clear, however, as assessments would show, that there was a relative decline in her learning of the Arabic language in comparison to her learning of English. Learning is a continuous process, and the individual case study of Asma as an English Language Learner who is learning English as a second language in the United States while also studying Arabic is a relatively common situation, and as such it may, therefore, be vital in understanding why her learning of both languages seems to progress as it does.

The teacher, therefore, observed that Asma had issues in reading a full sentence, especially when differentiating between the phonetics, and when distinguishing the patterns. She also lacked fluency when reading. These were the two factors mentioned by the educator as the biggest barriers that Asma was facing when reading. Reading
skills in English as a foreign language requires various elements to make it a success. Duke and Pearson (2002), noted that there are various important strategies including skimming and sentence comprehension which require a broad range of vocabulary of approximately fifty words at her age and having prior knowledge of the topic. The student may also need to have good speed when reading, or fluency, and their ability to comprehend must also be high.

Asma was faced with difficulties in reading and had a good choice of reading materials. She was observed in class choosing books that were within her level when trying to read. She was always optimistic about trying to know how to read even though she was not perfect. Asma always read aloud whenever she had an idea about what she was reading. She would take a book or a sentence and start reading aloud, and she would stop at any point at which she had difficulty in her reading.

In addition to this, she showed that she was able to understand a picture. She could take a book, and when flipping through it, she would stop at a page that contained pictures. If asked what the pictures were illustrating, she would mumble, but she would try to communicate to the teacher what was included in the book or text. This was a good sign because it indicated that the reader was interested. Furthermore, she demonstrated the features of being inquisitive and thirsty to learn new things. She would ask several questions concerning what she was learning or what was contained in the book.

3.2 What is the QRI-5?

QRI-5 is an acronym for Qualitative Reading Inventory-5 that is used to diagnose students the specific areas of reading strengths and difficulties (Leslie &
Caldwell, 2011). These specific areas of reading can then be strengthened to improve student’s comprehension skills. It is a type of informal reading inventory that is to be administered by a trained reading specialist. The main aim of the QRI-5 as illustrated earlier is to provide information regarding the words or strategies under which the students are not able to identify and comprehend text quickly. It also highlights the circumstances that are easier for the student to read words or to understand a text successfully. When the various skills or strategies with which the student either has success or struggles have been identified, the student may then be worked with by an individual tutor or perhaps even in a small group setting and the best steps toward helping the student are then sought. QRI-5-5 which has been in use for over 40 year and it can be used to distinguish the levels of different of a student reading levels namely independent, instructional and frustration reading levels (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011). It is also vital in determining the areas at which the student is having difficulty in reading. Essentially the QRI-5 is a tool that is used to document the success or failure of a given intervention or evaluation of an instructional program of a student.

QRI-5 is a diagnostic assessment tool that is used to offer information and insight regarding the circumstances under which the students can attain the independent level of reading and comprehending conditions that lead to prohibiting the student to identify words and comprehend a text successfully. QRI-5 therefore like any other informal reading inventory uses various word lists and passages at different levels that are applied to offer the teacher information on what can be improved to ensure that the student attains the required efficiency levels when reading. The varied assessment components within the QRI-5 can be used not only to understand the
reading level of a student, to aid in choosing the right books for reading and materials that students can read independently or as a group. The QRI-5 is also a diagnostic tool which can help to pinpoint both the strengths and/or weaknesses of a particular reader including:

1. prior knowledge,
2. word recognition,
3. fluency (wpm and cwpm),
4. self-correcting miscues,
5. grapho-phonic miscues,
6. semantic miscues,
7. syntactic miscues,
8. answering explicit comprehension questions,
9. making inferences, and,
10. retelling and/or summarizing.

3.3 Overview Of The QRI-5 Techniques

The above problems will be solved if the use of QRI-5 will be applied at various levels of learning. The following technique if well utilized and applied, will improve the students’ performance. QRI-5 is a diagnostic tool that enables educators to gauge the level of a student’s proficiency in reading, writing and passage
comprehension. QRI-5 tests for automaticity are aimed at accuracy tests. It tests the speed and accuracy in word recognition that will enable educators to offer the right support to the student learning a second language. Most teachers who are able to understand the automaticity of a learner are in a better position to offer the learner the right reading materials for proficiency. Both the WPM (word per minute) and the CWPM (correct word per minute) are tools that can be used to gauge how much better a student is performing in word recognition and comprehension. Educators are able to determine the level of a student in comprehension and classify them on the independent, instructional or frustrated level.

In addition to that QRI-5 also utilizes methods such as questioning, retelling and look backs to understand how a student can be assisted to better his or her understanding of the second language. Miscue analysis is an analysis that is done to enable a teacher understand the strategies that a student uses to comprehend a given text. Teachers therefore should focus on what the student is doing right using a given strategy and utilize their strengths to maximize learning.

3.4 Qualitative reading inventory in comprehension

Comprehension is the process of being able to read a given text and understand its meaning. Knowledge in passages, therefore, is also vital in the QRI-5-5 literal and inferential method since it assesses the level of understanding of the students through retelling and questions. After the students have read the books or passages, they are requested to retell loudly the texts without use of the passage (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011). Questions are also asked, and the student is tested whether he or she comprehended about the text when they were reading it. The use of look-backs and
think-aloud method to assess their comprehension levels further may be used but was not relevant to this study.

Awareness measures are supposed to determine the quality of a reader without being aided by looking at the text; to determine whether the students understood the content of the passage when asked various questions and to gauge whether the student understood when he or she was reading.

3.5 Word Lists

The pre-primer 1-word list consists of 17 words, but the rest of the word lists for Primer through the upper levels contain 20 words. The words are taken from the most commonly words in print each grade level. The word lists are meant to gauge the accuracy of the student in identifying words. Therefore, the speed at which the student identifies the phrases determines a point of starting the reading of a passage phase for comprehension testing in the Qualitative Reading Inventory or QRI-5 (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011).

The word list as applied by the teacher is administered mostly in class at an individual capacity or level of that student. The student is offered the 20 words, and he or she is expected to read them aloud as the teacher listens. The words must be read one by one so that the teacher can gauge the student’s capability in reading, speed and how automatic they can identify particular words. As the student reads the words, the teacher notes down the words he or she can automatically identify and those that he or she hesitates when reading. The teacher will, therefore, be able to determine whether the materials or words that are being read are at the desired level of reading as
illustrated earlier. In general, the use of a word list when applying QRI-5 is used to achieve three primary objectives. It is used to determine the starting point of the passage, speed of the reader and the accuracy in identification of the words.

3.6 Prior Knowledge

Activating prior knowledge of the vocabulary or words learns acts as a booster to encourage the students to learn better and upgrade their language learning. It is important that the teachers instruct their students to list down what they learned earlier so that more knowledge can be better added to the students. Such a technique gives the student the confident to learn better and triggers their memories to learn new concepts that will beneficial in the process of learning (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011).

Constructing a meaning or mining a given idea from a particular sentence is always determined by the prior knowledge that is known as schemata (Peregoy, Suzanne & Owen, 2005). Students who are not able to use knowledge, attitudes, values, understanding and also the experiences in class when reading words, they lack prior knowledge of a given sentence or text, then it is hard to achieve reading comprehension of the text (Krashen, 1981).

Thinking about one’s prior-knowledge to get the sense of a text before reading is a critical skill that will always influence how well learners who needs to achieve comprehension. When scanning is not easy to use due to lack of enough vocabulary as the student learns to comprehend a text, predicting what the text is all about always proves to be difficult for any struggling learner’s including ELL’s. If learners then have individual experiences that they acquired in the past and with the
use of clues, reading comprehension always is easily achieved. Predicting as a way of previewing a given text always gives learners a chance to determine what they want in a text and then focus on the main ideas but she lacked this skill.

Lack of prior knowledge then proves the challenges that Saudi Arabia students will undergo when trying to understand and comprehend what they are reading. Reading is a continuous process. The more predictive reading is practiced, and prior knowledge is achieved the better, and more prepared a student will be when reading to comprehend (Peregoy, Suzanne & Owen, 2005).

3.7 The Passages

Passages are administered in schools mainly by reading specialist working one-on-one with students. The student is given a passage to read aloud as the teacher assesses her or his ability in word recognition, and how many words he or she can read per-minute in the passage. The same passages can also be used to determine the level of listening skills of that student. The comprehension passage phase of the QRI-5 assists teachers in evaluating the three tiers of a student where she or he can read independently, instructional or with frustration in learning.

Students who have prior knowledge of given material are likely to read with more fluency and to comprehend better than those students who are exposed to the new and familiar material (Caldwell, 2014).

Passages must be selected according to the learning level of that student. At the Pre- primer level, a student is presented with six passages of increasing difficulty. Out of the six passages, five of them must be narratives, and one of them must be an expository narrative.
Expository material is generally to inform a student about a given concept, and they include materials such as magazines, textbooks among others which aim at enlightening the student. The rest are narratives such as storybooks whose primary aim is to entertain and juggle their memories. In addition to that, the three of the narratives are presented with pictures including the expository narrative. Pictures make students to quickly comprehend through visualizing what the material or a given passage is about easier as compared to plain text (Vacca & Vacca, 2013).

As the education level moves to the primer, first, second and third grades, the materials that are used as passages contains two expository and four narratives texts which total to six. As noted there has been one story dropped, and a descriptive text has been added to the list. On the same note, the use of pictures is also evident at these levels. At the primer and first grade academic levels, three narratives and one expository text are presented with pictures. Students have been reported to identify words faster when there is the use of pictures. For word identification and passage comprehension, most beginners are prone to respond and comprehend faster when there are visual texts. It is however not the case with the right readers; they do not rely on pictures to understand a given text. At this level, the teacher should also determine whether the students can understand more when there are pictures or not.

It is a good move that QRI-5 included expository texts at these levels since the children will have a smooth transition from narratives to expository. On the same note, there are beginners in these grades who may be bored with the fictional material, and thus informational text will offer them the replacement. Examiners at these stages often test oral and silent reading in both texts. A comparison between the descriptive and the
historical analysis should be made, and this will open the door to understanding the readers’ level of recalling and comprehending these texts. At this level, tests involving prediction and also concept understanding are offered to the learners. Most narratives that are offered at these levels are familiar and thus the use of the concept questions to provide the teacher a platform through which he or she can understand the level of the student.

For the third, fourth, and fifth grade, there are an equal number of texts of expository passages and narratives offered. Most of the narratives at these levels are of prominent people’s biographies whom they know. Biographies are used in these passages so that a test can be applied in determining the prior knowledge of the student. At this stage, the examiner can be able to determine the main reason for problems in reading among the students since they are familiar with the biographies in real life. It is easier to test students about live people who existed than when using fictional texts. On the other hand, the descriptive texts are of science nature and social studies books which present them with what is happening around them and why they happen.

In the sixth-grade passages, there is the use of two social studies passages and two science passages. In addition to that, there are three narratives that students are supposed to cover. The descriptive passages that are offered are closely related and the second one is often used when conducting a think aloud assessment in class. It offers ideas on the level of comprehension of the passage and the ease at which the student can read (Vacca & Vacca, 2013). Note taking ability is also tested, and the examiners must benefit since the second passage acts as a pre-post test used to compare the prior
knowledge acquisition and comprehension of the passage.

As the reading levels increase, more descriptive passages are introduced that explores the understanding of the text as compared to fiction stories. The readings are employed in the QRI-5 mostly because they help in determining where the student lies among the three levels of comprehension. Moreover, the test is diagnostic in that it evaluates and determines the student’s specific level of prior knowledge, words recognition and fluency.

3.7.1 Use of the Passages

Passages in any level of the learning level perform various functions, but above all, they are used to assess whether the student is improving in comprehension. The students’ independent, instructional or frustration levels are easily gauged using the passages tests and word recognition tests. Comprehension skills are also tested using the readings and students can be classified into independent, instructional and frustration levels. The assessment that is done on the students explicitly explores how a student is performing in those selected areas illustrates (Vacca & Vacca, 2013).

Passages in QRI-5-5 are of critical more so at the levels where pictures are used. Students are tested on whether they can comprehend narrative and expository texts with or without pictures. Students tend to learn faster when pictures are used in a text, but it should not be generalized. Therefore, testing a student using the QRI-5-5 score cards will differentiate whether pictures play a role when it comes to comprehension and word recognition activities. Passages also employ an oral and silent type of readings, and this plays an important part to understand whether oral and
silent reading improves the comprehension of a student. Passages are also vital to enable the assessor to figure out whether they can use to look-backs to understand a given concept (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011).

The student’s word recognition should be improved through new words acquisition. Passages under the QRI-5 are composed of the same level of reading of a student. If different otherwise choice is made, it will lead to the various problems identified in previous chapters that make students avoid reading (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011). The passages are supposed to be read orally and in some case silently so the student can be assessed in both modes of reading. In both modes of reading elements that are tested include the student’s ability to read faster and also the level of comprehension of a text. In addition to that, passages are also used to verify whether the student can listen to words and books correctly.

At the pre-primer levels, there are a whole six passages that increase in difficulty from the first passage. Once a student finishes reading the first passage, he or she is offered the next passage that is the difficulty as compared to the first passage (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011). Out of the six passages, five are narratives and one is an expository type of reading. Descriptions are offered to students since they are stories and the expository is an informative text such as a textbook, newspaper and a magazine. Pictures also play a useful role when it comes to assisting students to comprehend a text. The primer, first, second and third-grade levels of reading have six passages that consist of four narratives and two expository. Readers are more conversant, and they easily read words and comprehend text through pictures as compared to when plain texts are used. The teacher can gauge the effectiveness of the
pictures on students by using images to teach, also the texts that do not have pictures (Vacca, Jo Ann & Maryann, 2013). The two tests will reveal whether a student understands better when images are included with a text or without texts.

Expository materials have been introduced at all levels since it was found that students often face difficulties when transiting from narratives passages to the descriptive type of documents. The inclusion of the descriptive materials is vital when dealing with students who are adults but learning to read. They typically tend to face challenges since the children’s narratives tend to discourage them.

3.8 Retelling

Retelling is a process that is used by teachers to assess whether the student understood the content of the passage. After a student finishes reading the selected text, he or she is asked to retell the whole passage. The teacher doesn’t necessarily expect the student to retell the passage word by word, but the scores are based on the main idea of the passage. The outcome of the student and what he or she scores is a clear an indicator of whether they understood the passage thus determining their level of comprehension (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011). The teacher is also capable of understanding the ability of the student to recall what they read and above all the essential ideas in a passage. Being able to retell a given story shows how well a reader understood a passage.

3.9 Miscues Analysis

This method of analysis was created in order to make the reading process more understandable. “Miscue” analysis describes a word or a response that is not the same
as that which was expected. In the miscues worksheet, there are two categories to get
the students result one of the number of total miscues “Total Accuracy” and the other
one is the number of meaning-change miscues “Total Acceptability”. If the students
scored from 0 to 6 miscues on each Total Accuracy or Total Acceptability, he or she
would be considered as the independent level, while he or she would be considered as
the instructional level if he or she scored from 7 to 15 miscues and as the frustration
level if he or she scored above 16 miscues. For example, miscue was evident when
Asma used other words in place of the words in the text but they had similar letter-
sound pattern. This indicates that she can be easily confused with words that have
the same pattern in terms of sound and this can cause her to use them interchangeably
which will definitely alter the meaning in a certain text.

3.9.1. Self-correction

Teachers have a mandate to correct students who have reading problems. However,
students can take the initiative to motivate oneself to perfect reading skills by repairing
their own incorrect language production (Loewen & Reinders, 2011). Error correction
in the second language is an essential step towards perfecting the art of reading since
making errors is a normal occurrence in the process of learning a new language. It is
always advisable that one identifies the causes of errors such as L1 interference and
development errors. After identifying the causes of errors, one can adopt positive
attitude towards making mistakes in the process of learning. When a student such as
Asma adopts these strategies, he will automatically improve her reading skills.

3.9.2 Graphophonics

Developing voice through the language arts is an essential part of reading. In this
case, graph phonics comes in handy to save students in word recognition. Graph phonics stands for written sound and determine how print and sound interacts. The system provides students with relevant details concerning word recognition and meaning. According to Hein-Reinke (2006), graph phonics are essential cueing systems that puts emphasis on instructions and enhance usage of reading materials by reinforcing word and sound. In the current education systems, students use the cuing system in taking maximum meaning from print.

3.9.3 Semantics

The cuing system involves recognizing the meaning of materials being read and identifying and confirming the words. Semantics play a vital role in guiding students to understand what they are reading and guide their expectations for the word they see on a given page (Westwood, 2001). The system stands out as one of the best in text supports for word recognition across the globe.

3.9.4 Syntax

Syntactic cues is ranked as one of the best method that can be used by students learning second words and have the desire to improve their reading abilities. This is because syntactic clues enable them to come up with sentence structures and grammar that recognizes a word.

According to (Westwood, 2001), syntax enables an individual to focus on a word and perceive the next word to the right.

3.9.5 Questioning

Asking question is the commonly used mode of testing the student regarding reading and comprehending. Using the QRI-5 strategy, after a student has read a
certain passage, they are followed by questions that check the level of understanding of the students. There are two types of questions that are employed using this assessing technique (Caldwell, 2014). There are questions whose answers can be obtained from the passage directly which are known as text – explicit. The teacher also asks questions whereby the answers are obtained through inferring about the content of the text which is referred to text-implicit. It is important however for the teacher to strictly ensure that the answers to text-implicit questions are strictly tied to the passage but not from prior knowledge. When scores are recorded, the teacher quickly can determine the independent, instructional and frustration levels of a student. Further advice or use of a different technique may be applied if the results are not according to the desired level score.

3.10 Interpreting results of the QRI-5 (Qualitative Reading Inventory)

From the previous sections, it is clear that reading is vital in helping students comprehend and be able to understand what they are reading. Reading and comprehension skills are the primary roles that should be focused on students. Students should be able to master the concepts that are taught to apply them in their day-to-day activities. Reading is a continuous process that should be impacted in students so that they can be able to contextualize a text and come up with the best method of studying. Referring to the case study of Asma, a student in fourth grade, reading problems were identified.

A level of a child’s understanding should be understood by analyzing word recognition and fluency. The ability of Asma to comprehend and read a given text quickly can be analyzed using the QRI-5 (Qualitative Reading Inventory) word
recognition process. For a student to be assisted, teachers should understand the student’s problem. A solution can only be sought out for if the problems of the student have been figured out. This chapter will, therefore, offer insight about the use of QRI-5.

3.10 Identifying Reading Levels

When the QRI-5 method is used to determine and gauge the levels of students, it offers the necessary methods that can be utilized on that student to bring out the best in their learning experiences. Learning is a continuous process, and the tutors and educators should be in a position of understanding where the real problem lies with the student. In the process of determining and classifying the reading efficiency and level of a student, QRI-5 categorizes the ability of the various students into three primary levels. They are independent, instructional and frustration levels of reading and comprehension. All students cannot be perfect therefore each one must fall into the above categories. On the same note, the method can only be used to determine whether the chronological study levels and the reading standards of a particular student match. It is not obvious that if a student is at a reading level that is higher than his or her chronological level he or she must struggle (Caldwell, 2014). Some students have proven that they can still be able to read material that is above their grades comfortably.

3.11.1 The Independent level

At this level, the QRI-5 defines such a student as one who can read without any assistance. The students can read fluently, and there are no signs of struggling being identified at this level. In this level, signs such as finger pointing and evidence of
tension are not recognized at this level. The student reads fluently and portrays confidence at what he or she is reading. At this level, student enjoys materials that are aimed at improving their fluency and speed at reading. During silent reading, they do it perfectly, and they can comprehend the text or passage with ease. The questions at this level will give highlights of the progress of the student who is learning. The students should at least be able to answer over 90% of the questions in regards to comprehension of the text (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011).

The instructor at this level should select learning materials that are meant for pleasure reading and which the student can read independently without seeking the understanding of a tutor. At this level fluency, reading should be emphasized when selecting the right materials for the learners. Students should be given easy texts to use in practice before they are introduced to complex and detailed texts. Such a strategy will offer the student the right motivation to keep on reading and be able to achieve his or her best in content where a learner is comfortable.

3.11.2 The Instructional level

At this level, QRI-5 defines such a student as one who must be assisted in reading by an instructor. The student is not able to read independently, but they should not portray various negative signs such as finger-pointing and tension when reading and mastering a given concept. Regarding fluency, at this level, the student is expected to be less fluent, and more effort should be made to help the student to improve their fluency standards. As compared to the independent level regarding comprehension, the student who is at this level should at least answer 70% of the questions right.
Teachers should also choose the materials aimed at improving the student’s reading capabilities, but that are instructional oriented in nature. At the instructional level, the teacher introduces words and concepts that the students are not familiar with to help them in coping with the meaning of such words. After the words have been read to the students, they are offered the background of the phrase and meaning of the words is also taught to the student. If a teacher exempts this step, the student end up being confused and they won’t comprehend or read without the assistance of the teacher entirely.

The chronological grade placement of a student must be determined often problem areas have been identified. Most students are placed in instructional levels if they are reading materials that is above their instructional levels. A serious reading problem, however, may also be the main reasons for the lack of fluency at this level. If a student is below his chronological learning level and he or she can't read fluently, that indicates a reading difficult. At higher levels of learning such as grade 7, a student who is behind two grades in the chronological level and is not able to read fluently, indicates a significant learning disability.

3.11.3 The Frustration level

At this level, a learner is not able to read and comprehend fluently the reading material given. The student exhibits the signs of tension and finger pointing when trying to read a given text. Comprehension in this level is minimal, and oral reading is characterized with hesitation, and such student often utilizes word-for-word system of reading. Fluency reading among the students is not expressed, and neither is expression from the student portrayed in their reading aloud. When asked to recognize
words they usually score less than 90% and questions when answering questions after reading a given material is less than 70 % accurate. As compared to the rest of the levels, this is the level where there needs to wide and varied reading and more reading at the independent level, also they need more words recognition practice and tactics to be intensely deployed. At this level, it is important that the teacher avoids using learning materials since the student will further be discouraged and lack the confidence to read.

According to Leslie and Caldwell, (2011), the QRI-5 is designed with graded word lists and graded reading passages which are intended to offer insight into a student’s ability to decode and comprehend from the pre-primer to lower-and upper-middle school grade levels of learning. Using QRI-5 method to analyze a student’s ability to read has various options for assessments. The results that are obtained from the QRI-5 can be used to gauge the student’s reading levels, and place students in different groups for specific guidance or to assist teachers in choosing the particular books that a student may need for reading independently and also in a workshop. The approach can be used to offer a guideline on the best evaluation and intervention instruction that might be applied. It can then be used to document a student’s growth.
Chapter 4

Results

After being referred for testing, Asma was given a series of assessments for the QR1 tests that passages. The result lead to a discussion of the positive aspects as well and reading problems that Asma faced when reading. The most notable areas that were affected included the lack of good reading include vocabulary, prediction, summarizing, and comprehension when reading in her case and this translated to the rest of the students.

The following section will be analyzing on how Asma fared on with her reading and comprehension skills in both languages. Asma who was transferred to the United States at grade 1 and by the time of the study she was in grade 4. It is, therefore, clear as per tests that were conducted on her, will show that there was a relative decline on learning the Arabic language.

Learning language as earlier described is a continuous process throughout one’s life and the situation may, therefore, be vital in understanding why the results of the reading inventory and passage comprehension skills were as reported. A slight change in the environment or in the method of teaching a student completely alters how quickly and easier it is to speak, understand oral, read and write a given
Asma mastering the English language with a lot of ease. As per the results of the Arabic tests, as compared to the English language, she had a challenge in the 2nd grade in Arabic, but she performed better in the English language. The central analysis is the composition of how both the languages are written and read. The two languages are different in both structures and also the way they are read; as for Arabic, words are read from right to left and, in the English language, they are read from left to right. Concerning their composition, they also differ; English has 26 letters whereas Arabic has got 28 letters. The Arabic language, therefore, gives a student a harder time to master all the sounds.

4.1 Asma’s QRI-5 in passage comprehension and fluency results in English

Prior knowledge students who have access to knowledge of a given material in advance more easily read and comprehend them than those students who are exposed to the new familiar material (Caldwell, 2014). As can be observed from the below results of Asma, she performed differently at different levels as per the technique of understanding of the passage. In level 4, she scored 100% on prior knowledge questions meaning she had an excellent prior-knowledge about the first passage “Plant Structures for Survival.” At level 5, she scored 83% meaning her prior-knowledge about “Plant Structures for Survival” is good. Finally, in level 6 she scored 50%. It means that she is less familiar with the topic “Temperature and Humidity.” It is clear that Asma had no prior knowledge that would allow her to understand what she needed in the understanding at grade 6.

Asma can be described as a fluent English reader, as it can be observed from
her results, in fourth-grade, she can read 115 per minute (WPM), in the fifth-grade. She can read 110 word per minute (WPM), and in the sixth-grade she read 108 words per minute (WPM). Her result in reading the correct word per minute (CWPM) are 114 for the fourth-grade, 109 for the fifth-grade, and 106 for the sixth-grade passages respectively. In terms her prior knowledge of passage at grade 4, she scored in her concept familiar/unfamiliar.

In the miscue analysis test on the “Plant Structures for Survival”, 4th level’s passage, it can be observed that Asma had two miscues. An example of a word that was wrongly used was “way” in place of the word “waxy” which was contained in the text. It was noted that the use of the miscue changed the meaning that was intended in the text. The passage on “Temperature and Humidity” carried the most with 4 miscues. Asma’s result of total accuracy and acceptability is remarkable for all the three passages as she scored 99%. She is an independent leader having scored between 0-6 miscues on all passages.

Also, from her result she comprehended the passages at level four and five differently than level six. At level four she scored 8/8 that translated 100% in answering comprehension questions about “Plant Structures for Survival.” She also scored a 71% while recalling a given passage at level four which is impressive. It means that she can comprehend a given passage and answer given questions. In level 5 when reading about “Octopus,” she scored 6/8 in answering comprehension question which translated to 75%. She also recalled 39 out of 57 which translates to a 62%. She can be summarized as a good independent reader with high skills of comprehending in English in this level. In the level six, she scored 4/8 which translated 50% in answering
comprehension questions about “Temperature and humidity” and she recalled 33 out of 62 ideas of 53%. Asma is at differing levels of reading in the three passages. In the fourth level, she indicated her ability to read through the passage independently. She, however was at instruction level at the fifth level and in the sixth she was at frustration level.

She is comfortable in comprehension and fluency reading in level four as per the student profile list below.
Table 4.1 Asma’s QRI-5 comprehension and fluency results in English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic of the passage</th>
<th>Plant Structures for Survival</th>
<th>Octopus</th>
<th>Temperature and humidity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Readability level</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>6th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts Familiar/Unfamiliar</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total accuracy</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total acceptability</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate (WPM) Words per Minute</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct (CWPM) Correct per minute</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retelling</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comprehension:

| Explicit: | 4 | 4 | 3 |
| Implicit: | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| Total:    | 6 (out of 6) = 100% | 6 (out of 8) = 75% | 5 (out of 8) = 50% |

Total Passage Level: Independent | Instruction | Frustration

4.2 Asma’s Word recognition in English

The analysis was done to assess Asma’s performance regarding reading in English. It also determines how fluently she can read and comprehend what she has
read and whether the right spellings have been read and written. The methods assist teachers to understand how student where she can read independently, with instructions or where she can have difficulties in reading also known as a frustration level. The three-level are found as a result of a student reading words.

Using the samples from her word lists. She is a performer as per the results; she performed differently however at different levels, and they can be classified into three tiers as indicated above. At the second-grade level, she scored 100% and at the third level she scored 95% which shows she can quickly and directly identify the words as per the list in the levels. This indicates an independent level student; in the fourth and fifth levels, she scored 85% and 75% respectively that suggests she can easily read words at the fourth level than at the fifth level, and she was frustrated at the fourth level, but she was classified under the instructional levels. At the sixth she scored 70% being listed as a student with difficulty in reading the words. It is correct to conclude that she has problems at fifth grade level and level sixth in the word list. It is a clear indicator that she has difficulties in reading in the two level of study.

Table 4.2 Asma’s Word Recognition in English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Instructional</th>
<th>Instructional</th>
<th>Frustration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Automatic</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade level</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Fifth</td>
<td>Sixth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.3 Asma’s QRI-5 in passage comprehension and fluency results in Arabic

The results of the tests in passages comprehension indicates that Asma performed better in the English language as compared to the Arabic language. At the third grade through fifth grade and this where Asma lies in English, the use of passages mostly reading three narratives and three expository passages at each level. When I was administering the test in Arabic, I noticed that Asma was finding it hard to comprehend many Arabic words. When I instructed her to read a sentence in Arabic as her face expressed frustration. She was not capable of fluently reading a full sentence in Arabic and was challenged by mastering the consonants and the vowels in the Arabic language. The main reason as to why there was such an occurrence is because of the time period she has spent learning English as compared to the amount of time she spent reading and reciting the Quran. She used almost took 10 second in reading one difficult word in Arabic as compared to the English language that took her a few seconds to read one word. There was also an alteration in the pronunciation since there was the lack of coordination in identifying the Arabic language as compared to the English language.

From the below table, it is clear that Asma is a good reader when it comes to comprehending some passage, but she is clearly struggling in some levels. She was able to read all three passages that she was presented with, but she had significant challenges in reading it. She read passages “Air,” “Whale and Fish,” “Wool from Sheep to You” where her scores varied quite a bit. The 1st level she read the passage “Air,” she was able to answer all the comprehension questions where she scored six out of six translated to 100%. At the 2nd level, she read the passage “Whale and Fish”
where she scored 6 out of 8 that translate to 75% and lastly at the 3\textsuperscript{rd} level, she read the passage “Wool From Sheep to You” which she scored 5 out of 8 which translated into 50%.

Asma answered all the concept question in the first passage “Air” that means she was familiar with this topic and had an excellent background about the air. That is why she scored 12 out of 12 that translate to 100%. In the second passage “Whale and Fish,” she answered all the concept question with short answer on each question. This shows that her prior knowledge in this topic is very good. In the third passage, she scored 11 out of 12 that translate to 91%. In the third passage “Wool From Sheep to You” she answered her concept questions without confident answers. For example, she was not sure if she got the wool from the sheep or from the plants. In this level, she scored 6 out of 12 that translated 50% and that means she is unfamiliar with the topic.

Asma’s miscues results are different from lowest level to the highest level. She scored the following marks in the order of their grades for total accuracy and total acceptability: 100% at the first grade, 98% at the 2\textsuperscript{nd} grade and 95% at the 3\textsuperscript{rd} grade. Asma has 2 miscues in the first passage and 4 in the second passage which means she is considered as an independent student in the 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} levels. In the third passage, she has 8 miscues which means she needs some help at the 3\textsuperscript{rd} level and she is at the instructional level.

Asma is at an acceptable level in fluency and her rate of reading fluency is an average of 36.5 words per minute (WPM) and correct words per minute 35 (CWPM), across the first three grade level passages respectively. Although her reading speed with some vocabulary was very slow but she ultimately pronounced the words correctly.
Table 4.3 Asma’s QRI-5 comprehension and fluency results in Arabic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic of the passage</th>
<th>Air</th>
<th>Whale and Fish</th>
<th>Wool From Sheep to You</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Readability level</td>
<td>1st</td>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concepts Familiar/Unfamiliar</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total accuracy</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total acceptability</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rate (WPM)</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct Rate (CWPM)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retelling</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicit:</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implicit:</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>6 (out of 6) = 100%</td>
<td>6 (out of 8) = 75%</td>
<td>5 (out of 8) = 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total passage level</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>Instruction</td>
<td>Frustration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4 Asma’s Word recognition in Arabic

Prior knowledge recognition was administered to Asma since she was always reminded to read the Quran and the words were mostly drawn what was read. As per the result of the word recognition under QRI-5, she can be placed on
the instructional level in the 1st grade and was described as frustration in the 3nd
grade of study. It was evident after scoring almost 100% in the primer and first
category. She, however, started to struggle when I administered a test that had
words from the 2nd and 3rd grades in the Arabic language. On the other hand,
however, she was eager and ready to learn all the required and necessary tricks to
acquire the language better.

Word identification goes hand in hand with how easily she was able to write
the words. As per the results of the Arabic tests that she was administered with, it is
apparent that she is still struggling to master the right way of reading and writing.
Reading must enhance comprehension for better memorization and understanding
what is required in a given setting. In future attempts, the students will be necessary to
form a sentence using one or more words to make a complete meaning. If the single
word, therefore, is challenging to the student, forming a complete sentence becomes
an uphill task to complete.

Table 3.4 Asma’s word recognition in Arabic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Instructional</th>
<th>Frustration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Automatic</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correct</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>First</td>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Third</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the above table, Asma’s word recognition scored in the primary and first
level 100% suggesting that she can easily read at those two levels, but were without
any difficulties. In the second level, she scored 80%, so she strains at this level and she can be classified at this level as the instructional level for her. At the third test, she scored 65% or at the frustration level as a student with difficulty in reading the words. It is therefore, correct to assume that she has problems at the second level in the word recognition. It is a clear indicator that she has difficulties in reading at this level. As the third grade being the most difficult one and she needs more help in this stage, it puts her in the frustration stage.

However, she seems to have a difficulty in writing complex words with the addition of the consonants in the Arabic texts that leaves most of the not meaningful as compared to the words that she is issued out to write. She needs help in the writing of the various complex words in the first and especially in the second grade.

In comparing the ability to learn English and Arabic, it is clear that Asma found reading and writing in Arabic more difficult when compared to English. The lack of fluency evident in her reading skills is enough to prove that she needs more assistance in mastering the Arabic language. Asma results in the English language are clearly better than in her Arabic language results.
Chapter 5

Discussion

From the results presented in the previous chapter, it emerged that Asma’s comprehension in English language was better than expected with this student especially as compared to her mastery of the Arabic language. The Arabic language is a bit complex because of the difference in phonetics and the number of consonants and so on. Language limitations are abundant and most learners must be explicitly taught skills to help them navigate around the problems they face. Second language learners more so than native English speakers need explicit instruction. It is evident that there was no or slow progress regarding Asma’s learning Arabic as per the results in the previous chapter. After moving to America there was lack of communicative competence in Arabic since there were not other students to speak and interact within this country (Krashen, 1981). This is the main reason for the slow progress in learning Arabic. Also, when a student like Asma believes that if she uses her Arabic language among the American society, she will be considered a strange person. In this stage, she will have a negative attitude toward learning Arabic language. On the other hand, she will have a positive beliefs and attitude toward learning English language as it helps her to fit in with her new peers.
Teachers play a great role in ensuring that a student performance is improved, and academic excellence is achieved. Students should be offered the best learning materials and environment so that they can enhance their competence with in any language. They need a rich input in print in English to enable them become faster readers and learners in the second language. Studies have shown that most English learners are able to read and write better even before they learn the rules guiding the language as compared to Arabic learners (add citation). It should, however, be noted that a student such as Asma who had to transition between two very different environments would be highly affected by the change of the environment. Reading and writing tests are the fundamental criterion used to determine how strong or weak a student is regarding mastering a particular language. There are differences between English and Arabic in terms of grammar, alphabet, directionality, diacritical marks and more, and the way the words are written. There was less progress in learning Arabic as compared to English due to the environment a learner is subjected to. Teachers, can, with the help of the QRI-5, devise a better method of administering such a test so as to discover how to assist students in need (Vacca, & Maryann, 2013).

There are various methods that have been discussed in previous chapters which can be well-utilized to obtain accurate results regarding a child’s performance. By using the right results from the assessment technique, more and more students can be assisted by employing various teaching methods. Teaching techniques that are applied should also conform to the required standards so that students can master the language more easily and with greater efficiency. A curriculum should be established that is
aligned with all the techniques that can best improve the quality of the students concerning reading and writing. There are methods of teaching and testing that have proven to be of importance including: reading aloud, look backs, retelling, and questioning among others which should be instilled in the various learning institutions to improve the level of language understanding. Thorough diagnostic tests such as the QRI-5-5, teachers can use effective assessments to evaluate where the student belongs in the reading materials being used (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011). Tutors should be efficiently trained to enable them to handle the teaching challenges in a friendly manner.

Students working at a frustration level will not be able to make much, if any, progress when attempting to learn a new language. It is because of such a reason that a student is placed in the right grade to avoid repeating the teaching already given. When a student is eager to be taught and given the right environment, she or he will perform at a higher level. In addition to that, the best learning environment must always be provided for a learning child. The student in this study, was unable to master the Arabic language because her environment was altered quickly. Having been born in Saudi Arabia and then transferring to the United States in the first grade brought new challenges to her. The ability to learn a new language must be evident in and supported by the learner’s surroundings in order for optimal learning to occur. Thus, a child who is surrounded by Arabic speakers, trying to teach her English will not bear fruit. A student’s problem must be understood so that any assistance can be easily provided.

A student’s performance might also be improved when both parents and teachers can learn what the student lacks. In addition to applying the various methods
when teaching, the student’s attitude must also be keenly studied. If a student likes to be taught using pictures or art such as Asma did, it is critical that the educator employs the same. A positive attitude from a student will often help to overturn some of the obstacles faced when trying to learn a given language. Recognition of new words and their Acquisition and by students is enabled through the introduction and studying of new vocabularies (Butler et al, 2010).

5.1 Lessons from the study

Students learn through reading, and various methods are in used to achieve these reading comprehension goals by the educators. Learning a second language is vital in various ways, and the primary concern is the need to communicate accurately with others in a given situation. Globalization also plays an important role when it comes to learning, and most students will want to learn a second language so that they can communicate proficiently when they travel or work in an English or other English-speaking setting.

While it may not always be necessary to speak and write perfectly, one must communicate effectively through reading and writing to do work in the world and to achieve specific tasks. Saudi students, like other foreign nationals, face challenges in reading when it comes to comprehending a text. Teachers of such students need an effective way or method that will assist them to grasp the concepts that they should use for deeper language understanding and thus enhance learning. Educators have come up with various methods that help students to assess their reading abilities and overcome most difficulties, and one of them is the use of Qualitative Reading Inventory - 5 (QRI-
QRI-5 is a method to determine whether the necessary knowledge among students has been acquired, and what skills might help them to understand what they are reading (Leslie & Caldwell, 2011). The method has been extensively researched, and the outcome has been encouraging since most students have been assisted, and as a result, they have improved their comprehension of the intended language.

The major problems that are associated with poor reading skills are a lack of prior knowledge, the presence of differences in various languages such sentence structures among others, poor word recognition, and a low level of comprehension with may be caused by any other the three (3) previously mentioned problems. It has been noted that more students who love reading will more quickly learn and master a second language (Caldwell, 2014). Teachers and parents should be aware of the possible problem or multiple problems a child may be facing so that the right solutions can be arrived at quickly and painlessly. Many parents may not able to detect such problems since they are not aware of what should be taught to the respective students, and they may be just learning the new language themselves. The detection of the learning challenge that is facing a child is the first step toward finding the right solution.

Educators are constantly searching for the right method to offer Saudi Arabian students who are learning a second language. Literacy levels in Saudi Arabia will only be improved if students learn how to read. Fluency in reading is a practice that should be promoted among the students. If a student lacks the right vocabulary words, they will not be fluent in reading. The latter statement is the reason that makes learning a continuous process.
As the students continue learning various techniques in reading, a test such as running record might be administered to them continuously. This sort of diagnostic test is a way of understanding a student's weakness(es) and devising a way forward to improve better performance. QRI-5 utilizes the various components of language when testing to find the right solution to a critical need, and it is best done with individuals about whom one has concerns. The method employs tactics such assessments including: prior knowledge, word recognition, fluency (wpm and cwpm), self-correcting miscues, graph-phonetic miscues, semantic miscues, syntactic miscues, answering explicit comprehension questions, making inferences, and, retelling and/or summarizing.

The results of the test will provide important information about the reader and how she reads. It should be understood that students have different levels of understanding and no single method offers a solution to teach different students. In most cases, teachers combine the methods which result into acquiring the right results that assist the students in learning the necessary skills (Kame'enui & Simmons, 2015).

The quality of competence achieved by students when learning a second language is determined by the proficiency of the teachers. A student is most likely to repeat what they hear from the faculty and apply them since the teacher provides the guidelines to learning that are acquired by the students. Educators should also use the right methods and apply them as required to achieve proficiency (Cornold & Oakhill, 2013). In addition to that, the schools where learning is taking place should provide the necessary materials and resources that are most helpful the students to learn better. Lack of books and specialized teachers in a school can also hinder the
proficiency of learning a second language among the students.

5.2 Recommendations

Given the above, this paper gives the following recommendations as to how reading achievement might be improved among Saudi students. The teacher should first of all focus on motivating the students to read in English. Reading in any language is a continuous and progressive activity. When the students have mastered the various skills and strategies they are encouraged to communicate in English. Notable mistakes in their language use will be noticed but need not always be corrected. English-speaking students have a competitive edge in communication, and such skills assist them in communication and the job market. The Saudi economy is expanding at a higher rate, and English speakers will be given priority more so in foreign affairs and associations. If the second language students master the English language, then they will potentially be offered opportunities not offered to English-only students.

Secondly, the teachers, institutions, and parents should provide a conducive environment for the students to practice English. In addition to that, the students should be offered the chance to read and utilize the books that they like reading for maximum results. The parents have the role of promoting the utilization of the language at home. If the child can clearly communicate with the parents, then it is easier for them to talk in class. It is also in the best interests of both the schools and students to create an environment conducive to student learning, beginning with the hiring speech therapists and teachers capable of first speaking the second language, and ideally establishing English laboratories. Such an environment has the potential to create a vibrant place
where the students will continuously improve their language (Klingner, Vaughn & Boardma, 2015). A variety of bilingual and multi-lingual reading materials that ranging from narrative to expository sources could also be stocked at the libraries, and students would then be encouraged to choose the books they love reading.

From the present study, reading and comprehension problems that were identified in Asma needs to be offered a long-lasting solution. More effort needs to be implemented so that the students can be in a position of better understanding how they should improve their reading strategies. It is evident that the use of an efficient method of teaching, and after that diagnostic testing, the student will offer a clear picture of the status of the students.

Limitations of this study include:

1. Using one child in the study to analyze how the application of the method of acquiring a second language is useful. Sample size needs expanding.

2. Generalizability may not currently be concluded out of this study, but the study provided some insights.

3. One gender was used in the study, and this may contain biases so studies should also be done on males to confirm the same. It may be true that gender plays a role when teaching reading and writing skills to the students, so this factor needs to be accounted for in future studies.

4. Reliability and validity of the instruments should be reported in future studies.
The study has brought to light the need for teaching English in Saudi Arabia and improving English literacy levels in this Arabic country.
References


Kame'enui, E. J., & Simmons, D. (2015).*The Role of Fluency in Reading Competence, Assessment, and Instruction: Fluency at the Intersection of Accuracy and Speed:* A Special Issue of Scientific Studies of Reading. London: Routledge,


