THE EFFECTIVENESS OF USING AN ENRICHMENT PROGRAM BASED ON EXTENSIVE READING IN DEVELOPING READING FLUENCY AMONG PREP STAGE STUDENTS.

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ABSTRACT:

The current study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of an enrichment program based on extensive Reading to develop prep stage students English reading fluency. The study adopted an experimental design which is known as (a two group pretest -post test design) the participants of the study were 60 of third year prep stage students represents two classes of from EL - Shaheed Samah Mobshir Prep School For Girls in EL Kanayat City. They were randomly drawn and assigned into two groups. One class served as the experimental group (N=30) that were taught using the enrichment program whereas the other class served as the control group (N=30) That received regular instruction. The experiment lasted for six weeks. The instrument of the study was a reading fluency test which was used as a pre-post test. It was prepared on the basis of EFL reading proficiency skills that were agreed on by jury, then its validity and reliability were computed.

Keywords: Reading fluency, reading enrichment program.

تهدف الدراسة الحالية إلى دراسة فاعلية برنامج إثرائي قائم على القراءة المكثفة لتنمية الطلاقة القرائية لدى تلاميذ المرحلة الاعدادية. و استخدمت الدراسة المنهج التجريبي القائم على مجموعةين في تصميمه وقد ساهم في الدراسة التجريبة 60 تلميذة من تلاميذ المرحلة الاعدادية. ومثلت المجموعة التجريبية 30 تلميذة من تلاميذ مدرسة الشهيد سامح مابس المبتدأة حيث تم اختبار التلاميذ بطرقية عشوائية ليتملأ مجموعتان بحيث تمثل مجموعة الأولى المجموعة التجريبية وتضمن 30 تلميذة من الفصل الأول وتم التدريس لهم باستخدام البرنامج الإثرائي بينما المجموعة الأخرى وهي المجموعة الضابطة مكونة من 30 تلميذة من الفصل الثاني وتم التدريس لهم بطريقة المعاينة واستمرت الدراسة التجريبة لمدة 6 أسابيع.
I. INTRODUCTION:

Reading literacy is defined as “understanding, using, and reflecting on written texts, in order to achieve one’s goals, to develop one’s knowledge and potential, and to participate in society” (Therrien, 2004). According to Therrien, in order to achieve literacy there are five important skills one must learn: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary instruction, text comprehension strategies, and reading fluency. A review of the literature has shown that literacy is not simply a basic skill but rather a goal and a functional means in education and individual development, both within and outside school, today and later in life, in further education, at work and in leisure activities. Reading literacy is not only a foundation for basic learning, but also a prerequisite for successful participation in most areas of youth or adult life (Linnakyla et al., 2004)

The future success of children lies in the ability to read fluently and understand what is read. Studies show that at least one out of five students has significant difficulty in reading acquisition (Therrien, 2004). Providing an enrichment reading programs is imperative to improve both reading fluency and reading comprehension, particularly to prep stage students because fluency and comprehension are particularly important at this stage of development and early intervention can impact the progression of reading difficulties

In addition to supporting students’ reading skills, it is also important to provide evidence for the efficacy of these programs. Because it is not uncommon for school counselors to be asked to assist with administrative duties, rather than provide counseling programs to promote student success, establishing evidence-based programs will support the continuation of these activities for school counselors. Further, as resources for education decline, it becomes increasingly important for school counselors to be able to demonstrate the impact of their programs on student success by providing evidence from program evaluations to support programs.

Extensive reading:

Many researchers have emphasized the importance of including extensive reading in foreign language curricula (Day & Bamford, 1998; Grabe, 1995b; Krashen, 1982; Paran, 1996) and numerous studies have shown the effectiveness of extensive reading in contexts of English as a second or foreign language (Elley & Mangubhai, 1981a; Hitosugi & Day, 2004; Mason & Krashen, 1997). Although there are variations in the ways in which an extensive reading is administered, extensive reading programs share the basic tenet that learners self-select materials within their “linguistic capabilities” from a collection of graded readers (Day and Bamford, 1998: 126) or learners are exposed to “large quantities of materials within their linguistic competence” (Grabe and Stoller, 2002: 259). According to Nation (2005), during extensive reading, students should be interested in what they are reading and should be reading with their attention on the meaning of the text rather than on learning the language features of the text. Richards and Schmidt (2002) state extensive reading is intended to develop good reading habits, to build up knowledge of vocabulary and structure, and encourage a liking for reading. Alderson and Urquhart (1984: 120) suggest that students might be free to choose their own reading material and even bring it from outside the classroom, and that the teacher might abandon formal questioning on the texts. Day and Bamford (1998) characterize extensive reading as involving a large quantity of varied, self-selected, enjoyable reading at a reasonably fluent speed. There is now plenty of evidence that extensive reading can result in a variety of substantial language proficiency and comprehension. A study by Hayashi (1999) of the effects of extensive reading on Japanese university students’ English proficiency found that students who reported reading more English books experienced significantly greater improvement in reading ability and vocabulary knowledge than those who reported reading less, as measured by pre-test and post-test. The same perception towards extensive reading was held by the students investigated by McQuillan (1994). They reported extensive reading to be not only more pleasurable, but also beneficial for language acquisition than instruction in grammar. Stanovich (2000) and his colleagues have demonstrated in multiple studies that the amount of people’s overall exposure to print has a direct relation to their vocabulary knowledge and comprehension abilities. In examining the research on in-school reading and out-of-school self-reported free voluntary reading conducted in many different countries, Krashen (1993) concludes free voluntary reading or sustained independent reading results in better reading comprehension, writing style, vocabulary, spelling, and grammatical development.
However, the most convincing evidence for the benefits of extensive reading comes from the “book flood” studies (Elly&Mangubhai, 1981b, 1983), which examined the effect of extensive reading on the English language proficiency by giving Fijian school children a large number of high-interest story books in English. These studies provide evidence of the remarkable increase on measures of language use, language knowledge as well as academic performance. In a repeated study conducted in Singapore, Elly (1991) found the students made significantly more gains in vocabulary and other language skills than the control groups. Day, Omura, and Hiramatsu (1991) studied 191 high-school and 397 university Japanese EFL students engaged in sustained silent reading for pleasure. At the end of the treatment, they found that students in the experimental group scored significantly higher than those in the control group in correctly identifying the meaning of target vocabulary items. In an experiment comparing the improvement of reading comprehension by Japanese college freshmen taught by either a skills-based or extensive reading procedure, Bobb and Susser (1989) suggest that extensive reading may be at least as effective as skills-building, with the important advantage that it is more interesting for learners. Positive effects of extensive reading on facilitating growth of learners’ attitudes toward reading and increasing their motivation to read have also been reported (Cho and Krashen, 1994; Mason & Krashen, 1997; Hayashi, 1999; Hedge, 1985; Constantino, 1994; Day & Bamford, 1998). With specific reference to reading fluency development, extensive reading has shown to be effective in increasing reading speed and comprehension (Bell, 2001; Elly and Mangubhai, 1983; Robb and Susser, 1989). Nuttall (1996: 127) posits a “vicious circle” to describe readers who cannot develop good reading skills. Slow readers do not read much, and if they do not read much, they do not understand. If they do not understand, then they cannot enjoy reading. Day and Bamford (1998) note that it is only through the actual reading experience that L2 or FL readers can acquire the complex linguistic, world, and topical knowledge needed to improve their reading skills. Thus, for theoretical and pedagogical reasons and based on implications from research on instructional issues, extensive reading is one of the effective methods to make up for some of the limitations of the reading done in class and to develop EFL students’ reading abilities in university settings.

Extensive reading is a form of learning from meaning-focused input (Nation, 2005). In this program, extensive reading is viewed as an approach to teach reading in which the purpose is Sustained Silent Reading, pleasure reading (Mikuleck, 1990) or free voluntary reading (Krashen, 1993). Therefore, the principal goal is to motivate students to read and enjoy reading in order to develop their reading ability. Because of this, reading is a pleasurable activity for students, promoted as much as possible by the teacher. The features of the extensive reading program correspond with most of Day and Bamford’s (2002) “Top Ten Principles for Teaching Extensive Reading”, which include the fact that reading material should be within the learners’ reading competence, that students are allowed to choose what they want to read, that theyread as much as possible, that teachers orient and guide their students, that reading is individual and silent, that the purpose of reading is for pleasure, information and general understanding, that reading is its own reward, and hence, don’t include the answering of comprehension questions as part of the activity as well as that the teacher is a role model of a reader. Extensive reading can only occur if 95%-98% of the running words in the text are already familiar to the learner or no burden to the learner (Hu and Nation, 2000). Nuttall (1982) recommends 1% unfamiliar words for texts used in extensive reading. Lafer (1989) describes a study which found that below the level of 95% understanding of words in a text, comprehension was unsatisfactory. At any rate, the minimum 95% comprehension figure is the guide which is adopted in the extensive reading program. Clearly, in order to achieve this level of comprehension, students whose language proficiency is below a certain level will need to read simplified texts. Graded readers are an obvious choice with controlled vocabulary and can match students’ proficiency levels. Hirsh and Nation (1992) found learners would need a vocabulary of well over 2,000 words to read the easiest fiction novels written for teenagers. This shows it is only by reading graded readers that learners like the freshman non-English majors who do extensive reading at intermediate stages of proficiency can have the density of known words that is essential for extensive reading. Above all, according to Nation (2005), learning from extensive reading should meet the following conditions: focusing on the meaning of the text, understanding the type of learning that can occur through such reading, having interesting and engaging books, getting learners to do large quantities of reading at an appropriate level, and making sure that learning from reading is supported by other kinds of learning. In order to meet the conditions needed for learning from extensive reading at the student’s proficiency levels, it is essential to make use of simplified texts (Nation, 2005). Obviously, interesting and well-written graded readers are such simplified texts and are likely to represent the most favorable conditions for reading.

Extensive reading should ensure that students have opportunities to read at their level, on topic they select, without tests, homework or other measures of learning (Field, 2002). The students’ experience of reading the text
Fluency is the ability to read “like you speak.” It involves reading with reasonable accuracy, at an appropriate rate and with suitable expression. Fluency has been clearly identified by substantive research as one of the critical building blocks of reading because fluency is directly related to students’ ability to comprehend. The questions that face professional educators include: How can we help our students develop reading fluency? What should fluency instruction look like? And, what can we do to help students whose fluency is far behind their peers? The purpose of this document is to address these questions with some practical suggestions that are both research-based and classroom-tested. Research over the past two decades has identified repeated reading as the key strategy for improving students' fluency skills (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). Repeated reading has two essential elements: 1) giving students the opportunity to read and then re-read the same text, and 2) having students practice their reading orally with an opportunity to receive corrections and guidance (if necessary). Research has also determined that having students read aloud along with a model of well-paced, expressive reading and receiving specific feedback through systematic progress monitoring also helps improve students' fluency skills. So, what are the best methods to use in the classroom to help students become fluent? The answer depends on whether the student is just beginning to read, has learned to read and is making adequate progress, or is struggling. Let's start with beginning readers, those students in kindergarten and grade one.

Day and Bamford (1998) credited Harold Palmer as the first to use the term extensive in referring to a large amount of reading with a focus on the meaning of the text. For Palmer, reading extensively has the advantage of being both informative and pleasurable. In other words, ER has real-world purposes in reading. Day and Bamford (2002, pp. 137–140) posited 10 principles of ER: The reading material is easy; a variety of reading material on a wide range of topics must be available; learners choose what they want to read; learners read as much as possible; the purpose of reading is usually related to pleasure, information, and general understanding; reading is its own reward; reading speed is usually faster rather than slower; reading is individual and silent; teachers orient and guide their students; and the teacher is a role model of a reader.

They suggested that teachers have students avoid using dictionaries and train them to skip unknown words. This is in contrast to the traditional practice in English language teaching pedagogy, which encourages students to try to guess words in context as much as they can. Furthermore, teachers should encourage students to simply stop reading if texts they are reading are not interesting. Following these principles and tips, ER studies have shown that their participants improved in areas such as reading comprehension, expanding vocabulary knowledge, and enhancing writing skills. Moreover, the studies reported that students who engaged in ER gained positive attitudes toward reading and increased their motivation to read. Some of the results of experimental and quasi-experimental ER studies indicated that studies presented in the fourth and fifth rows are the most directly relevant in designing the methodology for the study, because the focus of the present study will be on the relationship between ER and reading rate. These will be discussed in more detail later.

Fluency: Reading

Fluency is the ability to read "like you speak." It involves reading with reasonable accuracy, at an appropriate rate for the task, with suitable expression. Fluency has been clearly identified by substantive research as one of the critical building blocks of reading because fluency is directly related to students' ability to comprehend. The questions that face professional educators include: How can we help our students develop reading fluency? What should fluency instruction look like? And, what can we do to help students whose fluency is far behind their peers? The purpose of this document is to address these questions with some practical suggestions that are both research-based and classroom-tested. Research over the past two decades has identified repeated reading as the key strategy for improving students' fluency skills (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). Repeated reading has two essential elements: 1) giving students the opportunity to read and then re-read the same text, and 2) having students practice their reading orally with an opportunity to receive corrections and guidance (if necessary). Research has also determined that having students read aloud along with a model of well-paced, expressive reading and receiving specific feedback through systematic progress monitoring also helps improve students' fluency skills. So, what are the best methods to use in the classroom to help students become fluent? The answer depends on whether the student is just beginning to read, has learned to read and is making adequate progress, or is struggling. Let's start with beginning readers, those students in kindergarten and grade one.

Teaching Beginning Readers to Become Fluent

Because accuracy is a fundamental component of fluency, teachers who work with beginning readers must focus significant amounts of instructional time on basic word recognition and word analysis skills (Pikulski & Chard, 2005). To do this effectively, teachers
should provide instruction that systematically presents daily opportunities for students to learn to read words accurately (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998), which is the important first step in becoming a skillful, proficient, and motivated reader. Pushing students to "read faster" too soon could cause some students to begin guessing or otherwise undermine their focus on reading carefully. There is no guidance from empirical research about precisely when teachers should formally begin encouraging beginning readers to increase their speed, but teachers usually wait until about the middle of first grade. Fluency researchers Stahl and Kuhn (2002) recommend that students be given opportunities to re-read sentences and encouraged to make their reading "sound like talking" as soon as they are making good progress with basic decoding demonstrating an understanding of the act of reading, and showing some degree of confidence—whether that happens in kindergarten or in first grade. Teachers and parents should also frequently model fluent reading, demonstrating (and sometimes explicitly pointing out) how accurate reading can be done at a reasonable rate and with good phrasing, intonation, and expression. In the classroom, the teacher can read aloud from large-format books so the students can follow along.

Fluency is an important reading skill that is crucial in the understanding of text. If children are not fluent in their reading, they are unable to make connections and fully comprehend the reading. Reading fluency is an important skill to master as it creates a bridge to reading comprehension. Implementing fluency strategies into the balanced literacy framework can help improve overall reading comprehension for children. Fluency is the ability to read with speed, accuracy, and proper expression (Rasinski, 2006). Being a fluent reader allows one to focus on the content in the reading, rather than focusing on the decoding of each individual word. As children become fluent readers, they are able to interact with text on a higher level. However, if children are not fluent in their reading, their overall success with reading is hindered. Non fluent readers are often children who struggle with decoding as well. These students spend a great amount of time decoding and trying to break apart words, which then leads to a loss of meaning and an unclear understanding of the text. It is important to master decoding skills before becoming a fluent reader.

The true meaning of fluency is often misunderstood which affects both the teaching and learning of reading. Fluency has evolved to be known has speed reading by many teachers and students, which is not the true intent of fluency (Marcell, 2011). It is very important for educators to understand that reading fluency is a vehicle for reading comprehension. The focus of speed during reading should not be emphasized. The ultimate goal of reading is to make meaning and comprehend what was read, not how fast it was read. It is very important for children to receive fluency instruction through a variety of strategies. When students are able to practice fluent reading, they become better readers. Fluency is crucial to the reading development of children.

Struggling readers require a great amount of support in order to avoid a large discrepancy in their learning. When students are falling behind in their reading and do not understand basic skills and concepts, their overall reading achievement is affected. Struggling readers often spend much more time working skills from a bottom up approach, meaning that they work on phonics skills, decoding, and then reading in the text. When they are struggling with these basic skills, they are not fluent readers, and therefore, they do not attain reading comprehension skills. The implementation of fluency strategies for struggling readers allows them to focus on reading with ease which will ultimately lead to the understanding of what was read. Reading comprehension is very much dependent on the ability to read fluently, and struggling readers require interventions to allow them to be successful readers. Determining the relationship between reading fluency and reading comprehension.

According to the National Reading Panel (2000), fluency is defined as the ability to read text quickly, accurately, and with proper expression. Rasinski (2006) expands upon the definition by the National Reading Panel and in terms of oral reading fluency, “it deals with reading words accurately and with appropriate speed, and it deals with embedding in one’s voice elements of expression and phrasing while reading” (p. 18). A third definition of fluency developed by Kuhn, Schwanenflugel, and Meisinger (2010) states: Fluency combines accuracy, automaticity, and oral reading prosody, which, taken together, facilitate the reader’s construction of meaning. It is demonstrated during oral reading through ease of word recognition, appropriate pacing, phrasing and intonation. It is a factor in both oral and silent reading that can limit or support comprehension. (p. 240). With these definitions of fluency, it is evident that fluency is multidimensional. Accuracy refers to the reader’s ability to read words accurately. Automaticity refers to the ability of the reader to read words correctly and effortlessly. Prosody refers to the ability to read with appropriate expression and phrasing (Young & Rasinski, 2009). Accuracy, rate, and prosody are relative to each other, and to overall reading comprehension. Fluency is a critical literacy component that is necessary for successful reading. The National Reading Panel (2000) identified phonics and fluency as two key factors in the success of early reading. Children who do not develop reading
fluen\textsc{cy} continue to struggle in reading (Allington, 1983). Therefore, fluency is indeed crucial in determining reading success for children. The ability to read fluently is dependent on the ability of the reader to quickly recognize words that have been learned automatically (Paige, 2011). The ability to decode words directly impacts reading fluency and comprehension. LaBerge and Samuels (1974) claim that reading fluency problems are the result of poor decoding skills. Poor readers spend too much time decoding words rather than focusing on the content of the reading. Automaticity of reading words allows the reader to spend less effort decoding and allows for comprehension processes to occur (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). According to the automaticity theory (LaBerge & Samuels, 1974): Readers who have not yet achieved automaticity in word recognition (fluency) must apply a significant amount of their finite cognitive energies to consciously decode the words they encounter while reading. Cognitive attention or energy that must be applied to the low-level decoding task of reading is cognitive energy that is taken away from the more important task of comprehending the text. Hence, comprehension is negatively affected by a reader's lack of fluency. (p. 22). Practice is essential for the acquisition of fluency and providing students with varied opportunities to practice and acquire fluency will enhance their participation and engagement (Nichols, Rupley, & Rasinski, 2009).

Rasinski, Homan, and Biggs (2009) identified important instructional roles a teacher can take in developing reading fluency among students. These roles include modeling fluent reading, acting as a fluency coach, engaging in assisted reading, collecting fluency materials, and providing for performance and celebration (Raskinski et al., 2009). Rasinski (2003) claims that oral reading should be implemented in reading programs with the following principles: the teacher must act as a model for oral reading, students receive support from teachers and peers, students receive multiple opportunities to practice reading, and phrasing is a focus. Likewise, Nichols et al. (2009) state that, “it is the teacher’s responsibility to model expressive readings that demonstrate both automaticity and prosody as well as provide a scaffold for students who continue to need additional support in developing fluency” (p. 4). One strategy that has been utilized for decades in increasing reading fluency among students is repeated reading. Reading fluency is developed when given the opportunity to practice oral reading repeatedly. Repeated reading is an evidenced based strategy that increases reading fluency and comprehension among readers (Therrien, 2004). Repeated Readings are effective because rather than encountering new text, readers are given the opportunity to repeatedly read a given text until they can read it fluently with mastery (Kuhn, 2005). Repeated practice of reading will improve accuracy and automaticity in word recognition. In 2000, the National Reading Panel suggested that repeated oral readings with feedback are effective in improving reading skills. Repeated reading also increases reading comprehension because with each reading, students are working on decoding, and eventually the decoding barrier to comprehension is overcome (Samuels, 1979). This method of repeated reading allows students to focus on the main components of reading fluency including accuracy, automaticity, and prosody. When given the opportunity to read text multiple times, children can focus on the aspect of fluency rather than decoding, which ultimately leads to increased reading comprehension.

In an analysis of repeated readings to improve reading fluency and comprehension for struggling high-school students, Hawkins, Hale, Sheeley, and Ling (2010) discovered that repeated reading led to increases in reading fluency and comprehension among the six students utilizing the repeated reading strategy. All of the participants in this study showed an increase in reading fluency when completing the repeated readings as compared to the control condition. This research is consistent with that of Therrien (2004) in that repeated reading can be used effectively as an intervention to increase overall fluency and comprehension ability. This research also aligns to the work of O’Connor, White, and Swanson (2007) which focused on repeated reading versus continuous reading and their influences on reading fluency and comprehension. As a result, O’Connor et al. (2007) indicated that the 37 students in the experimental group improved in overall levels of performance. Repeated reading is an effective strategy to use that increases reading achievement among students. However, despite the improvements made, this research also indicated that there were no significant differences between the repeated reading and the continuous reading strategy (O’Connor, 2007). Continuous reading differs from repeated reading in that continuous reading simply is reading a greater amount of text across a given time. This conclusion is similar to the work of Allington (2001), in that increased reading across the curriculum exhibits the most gains in overall reading improvement. Continuous reading is a strategy that allows students to read more text and to become exposed to much more text, therefore allowing them ample time to read and interact with a given text. Allington (1977) argues that to develop reading fluency, having the opportunity to read is necessary. Without the opportunity to read, increasing reading fluency is not attainable. The work of Allington is reflected in the work of Kuhn (2005) in that wide reading across text resulted in more gains in reading comprehension than repeated reading.
The fluency-oriented reading instruction (FORI) program is based on oral reading fluency. The lessons in FORI were designed for whole class instruction that incorporated repetition of text, partner reading, as well as a comprehension focus (Kuhn et al., 2006). Twenty four second grade classrooms participated in the study in which FORI and the wide reading approach were studied. This study reflects the work of Allington (1977, 2011) Kuhn (2005), and Hawkins, Hale, Sheeley, and Ling (2010). FORI was utilized with texts that were at grade level for students. This fluency approach is based on a scaffolded design, and children were gradually given less support as the week went on. The wide reading component of the study utilized three texts over the course of a week, rather than reading a single text repeatedly. Both FORI and wide-reading approaches are useful for reading instruction (Kuhn et. Al, 2006). In comparison to Samuels (1979) fluency theory of repeated reading as an underlying factor to improving fluency, wide-reading based on this study did just as well as the FORI approach in terms of comprehension and word recognition (Kuhn et. al, 2006).

Oral reading fluency is also supported in the classroom through the use of Readers Theater. Readers Theater is an approach to fluency instruction that incorporates repeated reading and assisted reading (Young &Rasinski, 2009). Readers Theater is a component in the balanced literacy framework that supports literacy learning for students. In addition to repeated reading, Readers Theater also incorporates teacher modeling, an important aspect in the development of fluency (Keehn, Harmon, &Shoho, 2008). Readers Theater is a performance of a written script that demands repeated and assisted reading (Young &Rasinski, 2009). Readers Theater can be implemented across the curriculum and can be easily implemented in the classroom. When given a script, students practice a given set of lines multiple times, often in the same structure as repeated reading. The repeated reading and practicing of the reading allows the reader to become successful in the script and to practice specific reading skills. The work of Young and Rasinski (2009) indicate that word recognition accuracy, words per minute, and prosody increased for all twenty nine participants based on growth between Fall and Spring testing. This research corroborates with the work of Keehn et al. (2008) which studied the impact of Readers Theater on eighth grade students and found that reading fluency, comprehension, and vocabulary learning were all improved over the six week intervention.

Components of Reading Fluency: Accuracy and SpeedAs explained above, the most widely accepted understanding of reading fluency is the automaticity theory. Samuels (2006) argued that the essence of reading fluency is the ability to decode and comprehend a text simultaneously. In dealing with components of reading fluency, Martinez, Roser, and Strecker (1999) suggested that fluency depends on “appropriate rate, accuracy, phrasing, and expression” (p. 327). Reutzel (2006) claimed that major elements of fluency are speed of reading, accuracy, and proper expressions (p. 63). Blevins (2005) noted that a fluent reader is one who can read rapidly, recognize words automatically, and interpret phrases correctly (p. 13). He stated that recognizing words automatically represents accuracy or smoothness of word decoding. Rasinski (2004) argued that there are three dimensions in reading fluency: accuracy in word decoding, automatic processing and prosodic reading (p. 46). He claimed that learners’ automatic processing in decoding can be assessed by looking at their reading speed. Although some researchers mentioned the components of oral reading fluency or prosodic reading, such as appropriate or correct phrasing and expression, most researchers and practitioners seem to agree on the following two components of silent reading fluency: (a) accuracy of word recognition, and (b) speed of reading.

Relationship Between Extensive Reading (ER) and Reading Fluency:Decoding words automatically is essential for fluency in reading. Words that learners can recognize rapidly, accurately, and automatically have been called sight vocabulary. When learners encounter the same words a number of times, these words may enter their sight vocabulary (Day &Bamford, 1998; Ehri, 1995; Grabe, 1988; LaBerge & Samuels, 1974). Sight vocabulary is elemental for improving reading fluency. When learners have a large sight vocabulary, they decode more words automatically. As a result, they can save their finite cognitive resources to comprehend a text. It is crucial that learners have opportunities to keep seeing the words that they have seen before. Thus, a number of researchers recommend ER to increase sight vocabulary (Renandya & Jacobs, 2002; Samuels, 2006).

According to Samuels (1994), “automatic word- decoding skills and prior knowledge of a text’s content may interact and strongly affect success incomprehension” (p. 831). Due to the fact that learners read a number of different kinds of texts in ER programs, it can be an effective approach to increase the learners’ variety of topical knowledge (Renandya & Jacobs, 2002). That knowledge can facilitate learners’ reading comprehension (Bernhardt, 1991; Harris &Sipay, 1985; Taylor, 2006). Several ER studies indicate the effectiveness of the treatment for syntactic knowledge (e.g., Elley&Mangubhai, 1983; Nassaji, 2003). Nation (2001) claimed that when learners read, they not only learn new words and enrich known ones, but they can improve their syntactic
A number of ER studies show participants’ improvement in the number of vocabulary items. Learners can develop their knowledge of the world, syntactic knowledge, and general vocabulary by reading extensively. Some studies on ER rate in EFL contexts are presented such as Bell (2001) conducted his study over two semesters to determine if young adult students’ reading rate could be increased through ER in Yemen. He used an intensive reading (IR) class as a control group. The participants’ English proficiency was at a beginning level. The mean rate in the posttests of the treatment group improved from 68.10 to 127.53 words per minute (wpm) and the control group showed gains from 78.45 to 92.54 wpm. He used t tests on pretests and posttests to compare means between groups and found that the differences were statistically significant. To measure rate, participants first read two different texts for 3 minutes. Next, their rates were calculated by looking at the number of words they were able to read per minute. To measure texts’ readability, the researcher used Fry’s readability evaluations. The number of the books that participants in the ER group read was not mentioned.

Lai (1993) conducted a study over 4 weeks on lower secondary students aged 11 to 15 in Hong Kong. There were three treatment groups, no control group, and the students’ English proficiency was heterogeneous. Participants took pretests and posttests, and the researcher used a t test to compare means within groups. The mean rate in the posttests in Treatment 1 improved from 165 to 226 wpm, in Treatment 2 from 85 to 181 wpm, and in Treatment 3 from 106 to 121 wpm. The differences between the pretests and posttests of the two treatment groups were statistically significant, but not in the third treatment group. The participants in the treatment groups read an average of 16.2 books every 4 weeks. To measure the rate, the participants first read a text, and when they finished reading they recorded the time they spent. Their rates were then calculated by wpm. In the rate test, the participants knew there were eight true or false questions after reading. The readability of the rate texts was not mentioned.

Sheu (2003) conducted a study on junior high school students in Taiwan. The participants’ English proficiency was at a beginning level. There were two treatment groups and one control group in this study. The participants in the first treatment group read graded readers, and the participants in the second treatment group read books for native English-speaking children. There was no mention of the duration of the study. The participants in the treatment groups read books during classes, but not outside of school. Sheu used t tests to compare mean differences between the pretests and posttests within groups. The mean rate in the posttests improved from 59.7 to 95.8 wpm in the first treatment group, from 98.6 to 136.0 wpm in the second treatment group, and from 85.2 to 118.6 wpm in the control group. The mean differences of all three groups were statistically significant. For measuring rate, he adopted Nuttall’s assessment. In this assessment, calculating wpm was done by dividing the number of words in the text by the number of 10-second intervals the participants spent in reading the text. Following this, the number from the formula was multiplied by six. To check the readability of the texts, the researcher used the Flesch-Kincaid readability formula.

Pilot study
The researcher designed a pre-reading fluency test as a pilot study to determine the level of the students and to know if the research is important and fundamental to the students or not. The researcher found that 70% of third year prep stage students having some difficulties in reading fluency skills.

The statement of the problem
In the light of the previous presentation and the pilot study. Students in the third year prep stage have some difficulties in the reading fluency. The present study tries to develop reading fluency skill through the use of reading enrichment program based on extensive reading. The problem can be formulated in the following main question:

The problem can be formulated in the following main question
- What is the effectiveness of the reading enrichment program based on extensive reading in developing third year prep stage students’ reading fluency?

main question can be subdivided into the following questions: the
What are the appropriate enrichment reading activities that can develop third year prep stage students reading fluency skill?

How can an enrichment program be designed to develop students’ reading fluency skills?

What is the effect of the designed program on developing student's reading fluency kills?

**Procedures of the study:**
1. Identifying the needs of the third year prep stag students through designing pilot study.
2. Reviewing the literature to identify reading fluency skills To design and build on reading enrichment program.
3. Designing the framework of reading enrichment program.
4. Establishing the appropriateness and validity of the framework of the program by a jury of qualified and experienced TEFL specialists.
5. Designing and building the whole program
6. Constructing the reading fluency test and having its validated by TEFL experts and establishing its reliability coefficient.
7. Administering pre-tests to ensure the differences before and after training the program.
8. Conducting the statistical analysis of the data.
9. Discussing and interpreting results.
10. Giving recommendations and suggestions for further studies.

**Hypotheses:**

The following hypotheses were tested.

1- there would be a statistical significant difference between mean scores of the control and experimental group of the reading fluency test in favor of the post performance.

2- there would be a statistical significant difference between the mean scores of the control group in the pre and post performance of the reading proficiency test.

3- there is an effectiveness of the enrichment reading program based on extensive reading in developing third year prep stage students reading fluency.

**The Aims of the study:**

- Indicating the effectiveness of the enrichment reading program in developing reading fluency skills among prep stage students.

- Helping the students to develop their reading fluency through extensive reading.

**The significance of the study:**

- Providing students with a list of enrichment reading activities appropriate to prep stage students.

- Providing the teachers and researchers with appropriate techniques for teaching reading skills.

- Helping students to develop their reading fluency and comprehension.
Delimitation of the study:
The participants were 60 students from third year prep stage students were selected to participate in the program.

English course aims to enable students to read fluently. The main purpose is to develop their reading skill so that they can ultimately read texts they have not seen before without the teacher help. (Ministry of Education, OP. Cit 6) the main reading skill in that stage is reading aloud as it is the mean by which pupils learn how to read.

- The reading material of pre& post oral reading through which the miscues can be identified and analyzed.

- Some reading activities that may help students to develop reading skills and become fluent readers. The reading texts are varied in the length and slightly above the level of the students but at a level they are able to understand.

- The Components of Fluency: Accuracy: Refers to the person's ability to read words in a text automatically.
Rate: The speed a person reads.
Prosody: Refers to stress, intonation, and pauses. Commonly known as "reading with feeling.

the duration of the study was 6 weeks. -

Definition of Terms:

Reading enrichment program:
The enrichment reading program Renzulli’s (1976) emphasizes that students should be provided with a range of learning strategies and environments complying with their interests and skills so that they can acquire valuable experiences. Enrichment reading programs and applications can be used for gifted children or children having learning difficulties. Through such programs, students are provided with comprehensive reading education, taking their areas of interest and motivation into consideration.

Reading enrichment program:
It is a program that depends on learning opportunities and activities that encourage students to develop their essential knowledge, and reading skills as a vehicle for inspiring learning and encouraging academic and Life success.

Fluency:
A third definition of fluency developed by Kuhn, Schwanenflugel, and Meisinger (2010) states: Fluency combines accuracy, automaticity, and oral reading prosody, which, taken together, facilitate the reader’s construction of meaning. It is demonstrated during oral reading through ease of word recognition, appropriate pacing, phrasing and intonation. It is a factor in both oral and silent reading that can limit or support comprehension. (p. 240)

- Fluency: the ability to read orally with speed, accuracy, and vocal expression. The ability to read fluently is one of several critical factors necessary for reading comprehension. If a reader is not fluent, it may be difficult to remember what has been read and to relate the ideas expressed in the text to his or her background knowledge. This accuracy and automaticity of reading serves as a bridge between decoding and comprehension.
**Reading comprehension:** the NRP describes comprehension as a complex cognitive process in which a reader intentionally and interactively engages with the text. Reading comprehension is heavily dependent on skilled word recognition and decoding. Oral reading fluency, a well developed vocabulary and active engagement with the text.

**Research Design:** The present study utilized a pre-post control group design. Both the experimental and the control groups were exposed to pre-post means of getting data. The subjects were matched, according to; an English Language fluency Exam For third year prep stage students the test was administered before and after introducing the suggested enrichment program.

**Variables of the study:** The independent variable is: The use of an enrichment reading-based program. The dependent variables are: Students' performance in English reading fluency

**Tools Of The Study:** (Available with the researcher) The program: In addition to the set of short stories available at the target school, the researcher has also offered the school library a rich selection of short stories to expand the opportunities for pupils to choose freely. The researcher's selection of these stories was subject to some criteria stated by the jury members. Seven jury members were in-service teachers working in secondary schools, and two jury members were faculty of education staff members who were interested in the area of reading. These criteria were:A. The selected short stories are supposed to be interesting enjoyable, clear and include some sense of humor for the subjects. B. They must meet the needs of the target subjects. C. They should be directly or indirectly relevant to their scholastic reading syllabus. D. The material of the program should be within the students' general language.

Readability of the reading materials: A cloze test included two short stories was administered to ten subjects of a pilot study to decide the readability of the short stories. The students' consistent responses were 82%, while the inconsistent responses were 18%.

**Validity of the test:** The test was submitted to a jury of eight TEFL specialists. They judged the statement of items, appropriateness of the items to the subjects, and how far the items measure the English reading fluency and comprehension of third year prep stage students. The jury confirmed the suitability and applicability of the test.

**Reliability of the test:** The test was administered to a randomly chosen sample of 30 third year prep stage students. The pilot study was conducted four weeks prior to the administration of the program. The reliability coefficient of the test was (0.75).

**II. RESULTS**

Results of the present study show that third year prep stage students did benefit from the reading-based enrichment program. The majority of the experimental group subjects could improve both their reading fluency skills. Moreover, they could develop better social, interactive learning skills. **Recommendations:** Based on the obtained results, it is recommended that:

- a) In-service-teachers of English should be trained on how to develop enrichment programs for prep stage students.
- b) Faculties of education and teacher preparation institutes should stress the importance of using enrichment programs.

**Suggested future research:**

1. Further research should be conducted to identify the effects of using enrichment programs on developing students' teacher classroom interactions.
2. Further research should be conducted to identify the effects of using enrichment programs on improving learners’ writing skills.

**REFERENCES:**


