

Investigating kurdish efl students' speed reading and reading comprehension levels at the university of duhok

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ABSTRACT:

The purpose of this study was to identify Kurdish EFL students' speed reading and reading comprehension levels and to show the effect of speed reading on reading comprehension. The study utilized a quantitative method to collect data for a period of six weeks. The participants were 25 second-year students with intermediate level in the Departments of English, College of Languages, and College of Basic Education at the University of Duhok (hereafter: UoD). For assessing speed reading and reading comprehension level, *Well Read 3* was adapted since it is intended for intermediate level. After the pretest, the participants were trained by speed reading techniques in order to improve their speed reading and reading comprehension. The pretest and posttest results demonstrated that the total average students' speed reading and reading comprehension levels were significantly increased. Furthermore, the result obtained from the regression analysis showed a significant influence of speed reading on reading comprehension. Due to the constant change occurring in speed reading, reading comprehension changed interchangeably by 25%. In only a period of six weeks, the findings of this research could confirm the need to integrate speed reading courses in all educational levels.

KEYWORD: reading, speed reading, reading comprehension, speed reading techniques.

1. INTRODUCTION

The essential part of learning English as a Second and Foreign language is to master the four basic language skills: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. These language skills could be productive or receptive (Fauzi, 2018). Speaking and writing are labeled as productive skills. In contrast, listening and reading are regarded as receptive skills. An individual cannot cover all the four skills overnight. It needs time and effort to practice the language.

In the present study, the main focus is on reading skill. It is considered a primary skill in teaching English. Thus, it is a crucial subject for academic studies. Grabe (2009) emphasized the importance of the reading skill in learning a foreign language since it allows learners to recognize words easily, know the grammatical structure and learn new vocabulary. According to Murcia (2001), the reading skill is comprised of the reader's acting towards the interpretation of the text. It involves the reader's own experience in the past and even involves the reader's background, cultural framework, and intention of reading. For a long period of time, researchers have been looking for useful techniques or strategies to enhance the reading process in second language settings. Several studies were conducted on the significance of speed reading in first language contexts but in the second language or foreign language still controversial. Thus, this study attempts to investigate the use of speed reading techniques in the Kurdish context.

Although speed reading has been one of the topics within the Academic debate subject taught to first-year students at almost

all universities in the Kurdistan Region since 2011, it is not paid attention to, based on the feedback from 'the curriculum development principals' who were responsible for curriculum developments in Kurdistan universities. There is no center for training students to apply speed reading techniques in reading classes, thus, Kurdish EFL students encounter the habit of slow reading and reading comprehension deficiency. From reading teachers in both colleges, the researchers were informed that UoD students still read word by word, checking all unknown vocabularies in the dictionary, which is wasteful of time and effort. As a result, they become slow readers and unable to remember or comprehend what they have read.

The present study investigates Kurdish EFL students' speed reading and reading comprehension levels before and after treatment in English departments at the UoD. At the same time, it aims to teach speed reading techniques to increase students' words per minute (hereafter, wpm) and enhance their reading comprehension. Since nothing has been conducted on Kurdish EFL students' speed reading, this study will be the first attempt to investigate levels of speed reading and reading comprehension and also will show the effect of the speed reading techniques on their reading comprehension. For the sake of achieving these aims, the following questions are raised.

1- What are the Kurdish EFL students' scores obtained from pre and posttests at speed reading in English departments, College of Languages and College of Basic Education at University of Duhok?

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2- What are the Kurdish EFL students' scores obtained from pre and posttests at reading comprehension in English departments, College of Languages and College of Basic Education at University of Duhok?

3- Is there any significant effect of the speed reading on students' reading comprehension?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Speed reading

One of the challenging attempts is to define the concept of speed reading since one group of writers defined it as a skill and another as a technique. For instance, Thompson (2015) defined speed reading as "a reading technique where the reader goes through a certain text at an elevated speed" (p. 8). In a different way, Konstant (2000), Surihami (2017) and Wechsler and Bell (2006) confirmed that speed reading is a skill that should be practiced over time. However, Konstant (2000) argued that it is not a matter of reading faster, it is all about reading at an appropriate speed because reading slowly makes the mind wander, reading fast leads to frustration and reduces the chance of remembering information. Surihami (2017) pointed out that speed reading is a skill, and increasing that skill will improve students' reading comprehension.

From the different studies on speed reading, it can be concluded that speed reading is a skill and improving that skill regularly will yield a tremendous result in one's reading habit. Sasmita (2020) listed four positive advantages to determine the benefit of using speed reading. The first advantage is that speed reading can double the speed of reading proficiency over the usual time. It means saving time and doing the task in a short time. The second advantage relates to concentration which leads to better comprehension. The third advantage is that with the increase in speed and comprehension, academic grades also tends to rise. Most importantly, the reader will find pleasure while reading.

Additionally, Bishry (2012) argued that speed reading should be taught in all educational settings, from high school to university. Those who work in business, a company, and finance should be trained in speed reading strategy. Consequently, they will catch information more quickly and easily (Bishry, 2012). Furthermore, one of the essential factors that affects speed reading is related to motivation. Buzan (2003) confirmed that someone with a higher level of motivation in reading will have a better speed reading achievement.

Buzan (2003) stated that people do not read by using their eyes only, but the brain plays a crucial role in interpreting the words. Speed reading is effectively related to memory. Therefore, concentration is much needed to remember information fast. Speed reading strongly contributes with the eyes, ears, mouth, and brain. It tends to integrate these senses to work together at the same time. Readers can increase their reading speed by using the following important techniques.

a. Using silent Reading

To be a speed reader, one thing that should be mastered is silent reading since it helps to increase speed reading. Silent reading means reading without vocalizing the words. Vocalization is a distraction factor in reading fast; it decreases reading speed. Therefore, Buzan (2003) regarded vocalization as "a common reading problem" (p. 130). Moreover, Sutz and Weverka (1996)

highlighted that vocalization is not only reading with voice; even murmuring while reading silently can be called vocalization.

b. Resist the regression

Regression refers to the readers' habit of going back to previous words or paragraphs to ensure that they have understood and remembered the words accurately. Speed reading is reading without regression since it requires deeper concentration (Busten, 2011). Sasmita (2012) confirmed that rereading often caused a comprehension deficiency. Busten (2011) suggested that one way to overcome regression is learning to point the sentence while reading which known as Pacer technique.

c. Pacer technique

A pacer is a tool that can be used to focus more and give attention to the words in a sentence by moving it as quickly as possible. This technique specifically can maintain more focus and concentration (Buzan (2003). A Pacer could be a finger, chopstick, card, pen, pencil or anything which aids the reader to point across the line while reading a material (Konstant, 2010). It involves an extra sense in the reading process, keeps the reader alert, and encourages them to read a number of words together in a short time.

d. Pre-reading technique

Pre-reading is an effective technique that makes the readers guess what the text is about before going into details. It often helps readers to set their reading goals and point to get the general idea from a long text (Futra, 2021). The importance of this technique is that it prepares the readers so that they can know the content of the text (Willis, 2008). The author claimed that this pre-reading technique particularly gives the reader an overview of the book, story or topic and it develops the brain how to pattern and get new information.

e. Skimming technique

Skimming is basically reading at the fastest speed a person could achieve. It enables the reader to cover a material in a short time by reading the first sentence and last sentence in a paragraph (Abdelrahman & Bsharah, 2014). Skimming is used when seeking more of a general impression of what the text is about, not reading every word separately (Nurnisa, 2019). According to Fauzi (2018), by skimming the text, the reader can read three times faster than reading before applying this technique. By using Skimming technique, the reader is trying to find the topic of the text, the author's argument, and the main idea.

f. Scanning technique

The counterpart of the previous technique is Scanning technique which is mostly used when reading quickly to search for a single fact or a specific bit of information. It needs more concentration to catch information since the reader is searching for a particular word, quotation, name or number (Nurnisa, 2019). It has a great advantage for students when trying to answer a particular question in the exam because it minimizes the time and helps them to find the correct answer. Moreover, Fuazi (2018) stated that by applying this technique, readers know or select what kind of information they needed. Therefore, it is not necessary to read all written pages.

g. Timed Reading

This technique is related to measure speed reading (how many words can be read in a minute). To measure speed reading, Bell (2001) suggested that there are two tests. The first is the words

per minute test (wpm). This test measures how many words a reader can accomplish in one minute. In this test, the reader usually sets a timer to measure the reading for a period of time, mostly three to five minutes (Nation, 2008). The second test is measuring the reader's comprehension level by answering some questions related to the text the reader had read before. Both tests are applied in this study. According to Armagan and Genc (2017), timing students' reading enhances reading comprehension effectively.

2.2 Reading Comprehension

According to Harris and Hodges (1995), reading comprehension is "the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing the meaning of a written communication through a reciprocal, holistic interchange of ideas between the interpreter and the message" (as cited in Hassan, 2015, p.3). Thus, it emphasizes the importance of a text that the reader engages with and extracts its meaning. It is also a process that enables the reader to make meaning from the text itself. In order to grasp the text more efficiently, it seeks readers to use their critical thinking (Russell, 2013). As a result, the reader will have better comprehension skills to solve reading problems and the capacity to develop reading skills in general.

However, the choice of words, the meaning of words, and the ability to grasp the main idea are important factors of reading comprehension. Najeeb (2013) pointed out that reading comprehension depends on the readers' previous knowledge, cognitive knowledge, vocabulary skills, and, most importantly, language knowledge. Ahmadi et al. (2013) and Najeeb (2013) reported that reading comprehension is essential for academic success because of student's future careers and further education.

In order to distinguish reading from reading comprehension, reading is associated with word recognition, basically focusing on the form of the language, while reading comprehension deals with the hidden meaning and the content of the language. That is why it is defined as "a complex cognitive ability," integrating the obtained information from the text with what the reader has experienced before (Ahmadi et al., 2013, p. 238).

One of the subjects that researchers emphasized on is the three models of reading comprehension, namely, bottom-up, top-down, and interactive models (Aebersold & Field, 1997; Grabe & Stoller, 2002; Smith, 2004; Ahmadi et al., 2013; Grabe, 2009; Mohamad, 2016). These three models facilitate reading and help readers figure out their difficulties and solve the problems encountered while reading. The first model, bottom-up, deals with the individual word in isolation and decoding the word to understand the meaning from the context. Here, the main focus is on letters and words and then gradually toward a larger linguistic form to construct a sentence. The second model, a top-down model, is related to the reader's previous information and prediction to construct the meaning from the context. It is not necessary to read word-by-word; only some keywords are needed to get the core of the text.

However, these two models have been criticized because the first model and the top-down model are limited to word recognition which causes slow reading and not remembering what has been read before because the concentration is limited to word-by-word separately (Grabe, & Stoller, 2002). The criticism behind the top-down model is due to the high effort on the background knowledge, ignoring the importance of the text. Therefore, the inadequacy of these two models led to the emergence of the third interactive model (Ahmadi et al., 2013). This model resulted from the combination of the two prior models. Stanovich (1980)

defined the interactive model as a combination of the characteristics of bottom-up and top-down models. Reading comprehension is constructed through interaction between the reader and the text to describe the reading process (Grabe, 2009). Precisely, this model provides reading more meaning and makes the reader to be involved interactively.

2.3 Previous studies

Several studies have been conducted on the increase of speed reading and reading comprehension levels in second and language teaching. One of the comprehensive empirical studies was done by Chung and Nation (2006). In nine weeks, they explored the effect of speed reading on 49 EFL Korean first-year college students at Jokiwan University. Among five different patterns, the gradual pattern was the most frequent one because the participants' speed reading levels increased gradually from the first test to the twenty-third test, not increasing suddenly. In three scoring methods, the result showed a great improvement: the first method, "average scoring method," was 73 wpm, the second method, "the highest minus lowest scoring method," was 97 wpm, and the third method which is "20th minus first scoring method, was 132 wpm. Although reading comprehension was assessed, nothing was reported in their study about reading comprehension results. Also, some reading tests were done at home and outside the classroom, which is against the reliability of the study.

The result of Abdelrahman and Bsharah (2014)'s study showed a great improvement in reading comprehension due to the influence of speed reading strategies. Before the treatment, 42 participants were divided into the experimental and control groups performed almost similarly. However, the result of the posttest exam indicated statistically significant differences between the experimental and control groups. Furthermore, Abdelrahman and Bsharah (2014) figured out that the students who participated in experimental group showed a sense of attraction and motivation toward reading. In another experimental study by Futra (2021), the influence of speed reading techniques was investigated on two different groups (experimental group and control group). The participants in the experimental group were taught speed reading techniques, while the participants in the control group were taught a conventional reading technique. The author confirmed that students in the experimental group outperformed the students in the control group. Exploring the influence of speed reading training on EFL learners has been conducted in the Turkish context (Durukan, 2020). Forty-six participants from eight-grade in secondary school were taken as the study sample in one experimental group. The pre and posttest results showed that the participants' speed reading and reading comprehension levels increased significantly. According to the gender variable, the girls outperformed the boys in the posttest. This is not statistically a big issue since girls have more tendency toward reading habits than boys (Durukan, 2020).

It can be seen from the above mentioned previous studies, speed reading and reading comprehension levels are widely researched in different contexts. The similarity between these studies and the current study is that they aimed to improve EFL students' speed reading and reading comprehension. The difference in this study, different techniques and methods has used for the purpose of the study. For instance, in Durukan (2020) and Abdelrahman and Bsharah (2014) studies, they used t-test to show the effect of speed reading on reading comprehension while this study has utilized ANOVA to show the influence. Compared to the previous studies, purposive sampling technique will be used to

select participants. In a quite different way, this study will collect data from two colleges, College of Languages and College of Basic Education, at UoD. Furthermore, it will adapt a book *Well Read3* to test Kurdish EFL students' speed reading and reading comprehension levels. Most importantly, this study will be a first attempt in a Kurdish context.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

To reach the aims of this study, a quantitative approach was utilized. As it is known as a scientific method, Dornyei (2007) stated that "it is closely associated with numerical values and statistics" (p. 31). The researchers utilized an experimental pattern as the model of the study. By utilizing experimental pattern, Durukan (2020) claims that the researchers tend to show the impact of independent variable on dependent variable. The purpose of choosing this design is to find out the levels of Kurdish EFL students' speed reading and reading comprehension before and after applying speed reading techniques. Added to that, it aimed to show the effect of speed reading on reading comprehension at University of Duhok, Colleges of languages and Basic Education, English Departments.

3.2 Selecting the participants

Only 25 participants out of 215 students were selected as a sample for the purpose of this study. They represented a total number of population from second-year in five morning-classes. They selected for some feasible reasons. Firstly, it is in this stage that particularly students are taught reading skills. Secondly, students are considered intermediate level based on the university's policy. Since they are in intact classes and it is not possible to move students from one class to another, non-random sample selection was adopted.

According to Sugiyono (2017), samples can be taken either by probability technique or by non-probability technique (as cited in Nurnisa, 2018). The technique that is used in this study is non-probability technique precisely purposive sampling. Basically, purposive sampling has a particular aim and deliberation (Dornyei, 2007). The main characteristic of this technique is not selecting participants randomly. Thus, the researchers selected second-year students based on their final average marks in the first course of academic year 2021-2022, their teachers' feedback and an oral reading quiz. This is done to enable the researchers to select the most qualified students in order to teach them speed reading techniques.

3.3 Research instruments

There are various types of techniques or instruments for gathering data. It is the varieties of different techniques that turn the data more valid and substantial (Zohrabi, 2012). The instruments used for collecting data in the present study are speed reading test and reading comprehension test. For speed reading test, five texts were given to the participants in five sessions. For reading comprehension test, participants received ten multiple choice questions about the texts they had read before without looking back to the texts again.

Additionally, *Well Read 3* is chosen from Pasternak, and Wrangell (2007)'s book since it is intended for intermediate level students. The same book was adapted by Faruk and Karim (2015) who investigated the impact of the use of time pressure on EFL Saudi students. The selected texts were modified in order to make them suitable particularly in terms of word length and readability. Regarding the average time given to EFL learners (Armagan &

Gene, 2017; Bell, 2001; Carver, 2000; Nation, 2008), three minutes were given to participants to read a text.

3.4 Readability of texts

Yetti (2019) stated that readability should be considered to select a good text for assessing students. Hence, readability can be defined as "interest, legibility, and ease of understanding that are related to one another" (Maryansyah, 2016, p. 74). However, it is important to focus on these three elements; other elements can be taken into account, especially in measuring the readability of a text. Readability may also depend on the average number of words, the sentences' length, and the text's grammatical complexity (Richard & Schmidt, 2002). Accordingly, the researchers selected five texts to measure students' speed reading and reading comprehension levels.

Although the texts are intended for intermediate-level students, they are also submitted to an online application named Text Analyzer (via roadtogrammar.com) to get more accurate results. Text Analyzer is a tool used to estimate the level of a text based on CEFR level "(Common European Framework)." Words of a submitted text are compared to the 10,000 most frequent words used in English to measure the text's complexity or difficulty. Thus, this indicates that the higher the score means, the more difficult text could be and vice versa. However, each text's average number of words comprises 537 to 581 words. For more detail, the following table interprets each item adequately.

Table 1 readability statistics of

Texts	CEFR Level	Number of words	Length of sentence	Length of word	Word complexity
Swimming with the Fishes	intermediate	537	13	4.7	1515
The Only way out	intermediate	553	13	4.4	1421
Food faux pas	intermediate	560	18	4.5	1303
From Graffiti to Gallery	intermediate	573	14	4.6	1421
Ghanaian helps Disabled Countrymen	intermediate	581	17	5	1450

The length of each text is longer than the previous one (1st test 537, 2nd test 553, 3rd test 560, 4th test 573 and 5th test 581). The reason behind this is to reveal the reader's improvement in the speed reading test gradually, and to get more efficient and effective result of speed reading and reading strategies as suggested by Hidayati (2019) who increased the length of word number in five texts starting from 500 words to 996 words.

3.5 Data collection.

The data were collected after students had completed one academic semester in 2021-2022 because the researchers believed that students had undergone a large number of intermediate level texts and this will make the process of research's strategy much easier. Firstly, the participants were asked to read the text normally as if they were reading in their free time, and they had been informed that they had only three minutes to cover reading. Then, they were required to underline the last word they had reached whenever the time was up. This was done for the pretest to show their speed reading and reading comprehension levels before being introduced to speed reading techniques. Afterwards, they were required to answer 10 multiple questions about the text they had read before without looking back at it (the same is repeated in all tests; three minutes followed by ten multiple choice questions).

Starting from the second test to the fifth test, the selected participants were trained by speed reading techniques. The first researcher explained all speed reading techniques to students one by one with practice. For example, when the first researcher taught pacer technique, the participants were asked to move their finger across the line as quickly as possible. When students were trained by clustering technique, they had been told try to read two three words together. The same procedure was done for the other tests. It is worth mentioning that the first researcher kept giving students the instructions in all sessions, starting from the second one till the posttest. These instructions were derived from speed reading techniques to make them easier for students as shown below.

1. Try to read a text silently as much possibly as you could.
2. Concentrate on reading by using eyes alone without moving head or lips.
3. Read two three words together at the same time and stop reading each word separately.
4. Before reading, fix a timer in order to check your speed reading.
5. While reading a text at a fast speed, remember to comprehend what you have read.
6. As a first step, try to read headlines, looking at the pictures, graphs or tables to get an idea of what the text is about.
7. In order to read faster, try to use a card, pen or even your finger along the sentence as fast as possible.
8. Skim the passage or the text to figure out the main idea behind it.
9. Use scanning technique to look for specific information more easily.
10. Remember not to reread a sentence or what you have read before.

Additionally, the first researcher taught all five classes individually for a period of six weeks. Unfortunately, due to the limited time, students did not have enough time to practice all the techniques during classes. It took approximately 20 to 30 minutes for each session to cover all the tasks. Therefore, the researchers asked students to practice speed reading techniques at home by using an online test "Speed Reading Test Online" which is available on this site (www.readingsoft.com). It is worth mentioning that there are online speed reading applications like ReadMe! REaD EyE, Reading Trainer and many others.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of the tools of the study

Confirming the validity of the data collection tools, the tests of both speed reading and reading comprehension, the structure, and the procedure were viewed by a number of experts in the field of linguistics and applied linguistics. Then, they were modified according to the jury members' feedbacks as well as the outcome of the pilot study. Thus, face validity was confirmed for the present study.

Before the main study, a pilot study was conducted to investigate the value and strength of overall methodology and to see how effective this could be for answering the research questions and to reveal the complicated or inappropriate instruments at the early stage of the study. Thus, the data obtained from the pilot study reveals advantages, disadvantages and difficulties in the procedure. The entire pilot study procedure took about two weeks in five classes. It started from February 2 till February 13, 2022.

After the researchers got the result of the pilot study, they got an idea of Kurdish EFL students' current level of speed reading, and reading comprehension. They found that it was necessary to modify the texts to suit the students' level and to minimize the number of participants in order to help the researchers to do the

procedure of speed reading and reading comprehension tests more adequately.

For the Reliability of measuring the instruments, the data were imported into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26 to find out the value of the Reliability by using Cronbach's Alpha. The reliability value in both colleges for testing the pilot study was 0.605, which equals 61% of the average reliability value, as shown in the table 2). This measurement indicates that there is a good consistency in the result. At the same time, the score of Reliability of the main study measured 0.755, which equals 76%. The value of consistency here is higher than the average value in the pilot study.

Table 2 / the Reliability of pilot study and main study

Reliability Statistics			
Pilot study		Main study	
Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
0.605	2	0.755	2

4. The results of the study

4.1 Speed reading level

Five texts were given to students in five individual sessions to discover the level of speed reading and reading comprehension of Kurdish EFL students at UoD. Then the participants were asked to read a text for three minutes. After that, they were instructed to underline the last word they had reached. Following that, they handed in their papers, and immediately they were asked to answer ten multiple choice questions about the text they had read.

After collecting the data, the researchers analyzed it to explore Kurdish EFL students' speed reading and reading comprehension levels. In doing so, the researchers applied Buzan (2003)'s formula in measuring speed reading level and reading comprehension level, which are presented below.

Testing Speed-reading

$$\frac{\text{The number of words read}}{\text{The number of reading time in minutes}} = \text{Words per Minute (WPM)}$$

Testing Reading Comprehension

$$\frac{\text{Right Answers}}{\text{Maximum Score}} \times 100\% = \text{percentage of Reading Comprehension}$$

The findings obtained from the result of students' wpm in the first test revealed that the minimum scores achieved by the participants was 91 wpm and the maximum score was 180 wpm among all five groups. Whereas for the reading comprehension in the first test, the lowest score was 30%, and the highest one was 80%. The posttest result was eventually better; the highest score was 194 wpm and the lowest score was 126 wpm. Simultaneously, reading comprehension rose dramatically from 50% as the lowest point to 90% as the highest point.

As it can be seen clearly in Table 3, the average speed reading level in each group in the Colleges of Languages and Basic Education was constantly increasing from test to test. Based on the result of the first test, group C in the College of Languages had the lowest average of 120.6 wpm, which was increased to 152.2 wpm. The same development occurred in group B, College of Basic Education. This group achieved better than others, from 147.4 wpm to 167.6 wpm.

Table 3 / the total average of speed reading level in each group

Tests	College of Languages			College of Basic Education	
	A	B	C	A	B
T1.	123.8	126.4	120.6	145.6	147.4
T2.	126.8	133.8	126.8	154.4	151.2
T3.	136.4	146	130.4	160.4	163.2
T4.	151.4	146	141.4	163	167.6
T5.	157.4	147.8	152.2	170.8	177

4.2 Reading comprehension level

Table 4 displays the average result of reading comprehension, which differs from one group to another in both colleges. Comparing groups in pretest results, the College of Basic Education, comprising both groups (A and B), had the highest value in reading comprehension, 62%. The level gradually rose in all groups' second and third tests. However, the result did not remain steady in the fourth and fifth tests because there were fluctuations in the results of groups B and C in the College of Languages and group B in the College of Basic Education. The reason behind that the students were busy studying for their mid-term exams, which affected the results of some students.

Although the results somehow fluctuated in a few tests during the process, the improvements were significant. Overall, the students outperformed in the posttest, particularly after they were trained on speed reading techniques. In the posttest result in all five groups, the average of reading comprehension level was almost the same. Group A in the College of Languages got the highest reading comprehension level, which is 76%.

Table 4 / the total average of reading comprehension Level in each group

Tests	College of Languages			College of Basic Education	
	A	B	C	A	B
T1.	56%	56%	52%	62%	62%
T2.	66%	64%	60%	64%	74%
T3.	70%	72%	62%	70%	74%
T4.	70%	66%	76%	74%	74%
T5.	76%	70%	72%	74%	70%

Additionally, students increased up to 50 wpm starting from the early beginning of implementing speed reading techniques until

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.498	.036		13.894	.000
1 Speed Reading	.250	.057	.639	4.399	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Reading Comprehension the last test. Thus, it can be concluded that the research aims of exploring Kurdish EFL students' speed reading and reading comprehension levels are fulfilled through the above result.

4.3 The impact of speed reading on reading comprehension

In this step, the researchers will explore the influence of speed reading on reading comprehension. In the table below, the model summary shows a statistical measure known as R² (the determination coefficient). The determination coefficient usually predicts the extent of the effect of the independent variable or predictor on the dependent variable.

Table 5 / the model summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.639 ^a	.409	.388	.10587

a. Predictors: (Constant), Speed Reading

However, the R² in Table 5 is equal to .409. This implies that speed reading has an impact of 41% on reading comprehension, and the rest is related to other variables which are not a concern in the present study. Thus, the R² shows that 41% of the variance in reading comprehension can be perfectly explained by speed reading (the independent variable). It also concludes that the research aim has been achieved and that speed reading has positively affected reading comprehension.

Table 6 / the result of the effect of speed reading on reading comprehension

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.217	1	.217	19.352	.000 ^b
	Residual	.314	28	.011		
	Total	.531	29			

a. Dependent Variable: Reading Comprehension

b. Predictors: (Constant), Speed Reading

The regression analysis results in Table 6 reveal the significant relationship between speed reading and reading comprehension. It is reported that the calculated F, which represents the model of the study, is logic 19.352 and the tabulated F is 3.402. This result means that the value of the calculated F is greater than the tabulated F and is acceptable. Reading comprehension is improved through independent variable speed reading. The results of posttests reveal positive influence of speed reading on reading comprehension.

4.4 The average change in reading comprehension

Table 7 demonstrates the significant change between the two variables. Since speed reading techniques were implemented, reading comprehension has changed constantly. With the development of the speed reading level of Kurdish EFL students', reading comprehension is improved as well. The unstandardized coefficient, which represents the level of change in reading comprehension, is 25% due to the change of the independent variable. Therefore, change in speed reading can change and improve reading comprehension by 25%.

Table 7 / the result of the average change in reading comprehension

4.5 Discussion

The result obtained from the first research question, which addresses the participants' speed reading level in all five groups in both mentioned colleges at UoD, Kurdish EFL students in the pretest, have an average of 138.16 wpm. However, after the participants were trained by speed reading techniques, they

obtained a better result which was 161.04 wpm. Furthermore, the total average increased from the pretest to the posttest, and students could gain an average of 23 wpm in only five sessions. In fact, some students reached up to a 50 wpm increase, but there were other groups of students who did not get a sufficient gain, barely 11 wpm.

Nevertheless, the result of this study is consistent with the result of other researchers, particularly in this field (Arab, 2009; Armagan & Genc, 2017; Chang, 2010; Chung & Nation, 2006; Hidayati, 2019; Yunus, 2016; Rasinski & Young, 2015; Ur, 2012). In almost a similar trace, Armagan and Genc (2017) 's study found that Turkish EFL students in the experimental group improved their reading rate from an average of 136.38 wpm in the pretest to 196.73 wpm in the posttest. In five weeks of implementation, the participants were able to gain 60.35 wpm. After applying pacing reading activity which is one of the speed reading techniques, the experimental group got an average of 131 wpm and gained 28 wpm faster than the control group in the posttest (Arab, 2009).

It is argued that practicing speed reading regularly is a helpful way to increase reading per minutes and to become a fast and efficient reader (Rasinski & Young, 2015; Ur, 2012). In line with these two studies, Kurdish EFL learners were assumed to practice speed reading constantly during the research meetings and asked to practice it at home. Thus, they found an improvement and were able to reach an average of 161 wpm. Similarly, in Yunus (2016)'s study, 26 first-year students at improved their reading ability through the speed reading technique in two cycles. According to the instruction of the study, participants should reach a value greater than or equal to 72 wpm, which was regarded as a criterion of success. In the first cycle, the improvement of students' reading ability was 58.77; only 8 students out of 26 improved their reading ability. While in the second cycle, it was 87.42 better than the first cycle, and 24 students out of 26 students improved their reading ability.

Assessing Kurdish EFL five intermediate texts were in harmony with students' current level. Therefore, these five texts that were taken from the book *Read Well 3* were helpful for determining speed reading level. The result of the current study is in line with Hidayati (2019) who assessed his participants in five sessions of a speed reading program. In the last test, composed of 996 words, a maximum of 174.04 wpm was scored.

The finding of the second research question reveals Kurdish EFL students' reading comprehension level before and after treatment. Participants got better results when they were introduced to speed reading techniques, especially skimming, scanning, pre-reading, and silent reading. It has also been noted that the participants used their peripheral vision and cognitive strategies unconsciously to get the text's main idea. It was found that when collecting and analyzing the data. Although all the participants were not able to read the whole text in a limited time, they were able to answer the last multiple questions, which were extracted from the last paragraphs of the text.

The participants scored an average of 57.6% on the first test but changed to a better result on the posttest, 72.4%. This improvement is in line with Hidayati's (2019) study, in which participants scored 58.33% in speed reading test in the first and 84.52% in the last. Hidayati (2019) stated that this improvement made 21 participants more motivated and they could evaluate their own weak points in reading.

The finding of the present study reported that comprehension was very closely associated with speed reading. The increase in the

level of speed reading leads to progress in reading comprehension level. Debbabi, et al. (2019), in a Saudi Arabian context, highlighted the significance of reading comprehension. After three minutes of speed reading intervention, Saudi EFL learners scored a mean of 18.22 in the posttest while they had got a mean of 16.11 in the pretest. Thus, the writers concluded that the intervention caused significant differences in reading comprehension levels.

Additionally, it was stated earlier that there was a remarkable increase in speed reading level in Chang (2010)'s study, but the case is not similar in reading comprehension level. There was a minimal change in the average reading comprehension, only (4%) increase. However, the result of Nurnisa (2019)'s study showed a fair average of 62.33% in reading comprehension level. Reading comprehension is improved in parallel with speed reading with the help of "timed reading intervention" (Armagan & Genc, 2017, p. 212). In consistence with Nurnisa' study, the present study found a significant relationship between speed reading and reading comprehension. The analysis of the model summary in this study showed that the R^2 is 409. This implies that speed reading has an impact of 41% on reading comprehension, and the rest is related to other variables which are not concerned in the present study. Additionally, reading comprehension was changed by 25% because of what happened with speed reading. It has been reported that normally any change in speed reading resulted in change in reading comprehension.

In a study that investigated the effect of motivation on speed reading, the result of the determinant coefficient was 155 (Choiriningtyas, 2018). Compared with the result of the present study, the effect appeared to be 401, which is greater than Choiriningtyas (2018)'s study. Furthermore, the result approved what Abdelrahman and Bsharah (2014) clarified: speed reading techniques improved the comprehension level when the participants in the experimental class showed great motivation and attraction due to the speed reading techniques.

The regression analysis showed that calculated f was greater than tabulated f . Therefore, the model of the study was acceptable, and most importantly, the relationship between the two variables was significant. Thus, this study supported that speed reading positively affects reading comprehension. The studies of Amir (2019) and Tran and Nation (2014) confirm that speed reading techniques are important factors in comprehension skills. In line with these studies, there is a positive and significant impact of speed reading on reading comprehension.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that Kurdish EFL learners' speed reading and reading comprehension levels have increased. The participants were improving gradually almost in all five speed reading and reading comprehension tests. However, the results of some students somehow fluctuated during the five sessions, but undoubtedly, there was a remarkable improvement in the final tests. The participants achieved 23 wpm increase from the first test till the last one.

Additionally, the students' level varied from one group to another. The comparison between groups appeared that group A in the College of Basic Education at UoD scored the highest average in speed reading posttest, which was the average of 177 wpm. While, group B in the same college achieved the highest average mark, 74%, in reading comprehension.

Moreover, it is concluded that the impact of speed reading on reading comprehension was significant. The result of R^2 in model

summary showed 41% the impact of speed reading on reading comprehension and the changed that happened in reading comprehension was 25%. It is worth mentioning, in only five sessions, second-year students were able to increase their reading speed and reading comprehension improved simultaneously.

This conclusion indicates the benefit of using speed reading techniques in foreign language contexts. The treatment should be implemented for a longer time, it could be for one academic year because many participants in this study gained word per minute slowly. Furthermore, the study is limited to two variables, speed reading and reading comprehension. For further researchers, they could add more variables to see better results. For instance, integrating motivation or interest with speed reading to improve readers' reading rate and their comprehension. This study is also limited to second-year intermediate level students, speed reading should be taught to all educational level.

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التحقيق في مستويات سرعة القراءة وفهم القراءة عند طلاب EFL الكرد في جامعة دهوك

الملخص:

الغرض من الدراسة هو تحديد مستويات سرعة القراءة وفهم القراءة عند الطلاب الكرد وإظهار تأثير سرعة القراءة على فهم القراءة. استعملت الدراسة الطريقة النوعية لجمع المعلومات خلال فترة سنة أسابيع. عدد المشاركين في الدراسة كان (٢٥) طالب في المرحلة الثانية في قسم اللغة الانكليزية بمستوى متوسط في كلية اللغات وكلية التربية الاساسية في جامعة دهوك. لتقييم سرعة وفهم القراءة تم استخدام كتاب Well Read 3 لأنه مخصص للمستوى المتوسط. بعد الاختبار الاولي (القبلي) تم تدريب المشاركين على تقنيات سرعة القراءة من أجل تحسين سرعة وفهم القراءة. أظهرت نتائج الاختبار القبلي والنهائي (البعدي) زيادة كبيرة على معدل مستويات سرعة وفهم القراءة عند الطلاب. وإضافة الى ذلك، أظهرت نتيجة (Regression Analysis) تأثيرًا كبيرًا (مهمًا) لسرعة القراءة على فهم القراءة. نظرًا للتغير المستمر الذي يحدث في سرعة القراءة، فقد تغير فهم القراءة بالتبادل بنسبة (٢٥٪). في فترة ستة أسابيع فقط، يمكن لنتائج هذا البحث أن تؤكد الحاجة إلى دمج دورات القراءة السريعة في جميع المستويات التعليمية.

الكلمات الدالة: القراءة، سرعة القراءة، فهم القراءة، تقنيات سرعة القراءة.

بؤخته:

مههست ژرفی فهکولینی دیارکرنا ئاستی قوتابیین کورده دلهزاتیبا خواندنی وتیگههشتنا خواندنی دا، ههروهسا دیارکرنا کارتیکرنا لهزا خواندنی لسهر تیگههشتنا خواندنی. فهکولینی پههروموی چهندیهتی بکارنیایه بو کومکرنا داتایان دماوی شهس ههفتیان دا. هژمارا بهژداربویان (٢٥) قوتابیین قوناغا دووی نه کو ئاستی وان بی زمانی ئینگلیزی ناقنجیه لپشکا ئینگلیزی، کولیزا زمانان وکولیزا پهرومردا بنیات ل زانکویا دهوک. ژبو ناقیکرنا ئاستی لهزاتی وتیگههشتنا خواندنی، پهرتوکا Well Read 3 هاتییه تهرخانکرن چونکی ئەف پهرتوکه بو ئاستی ناقنجی هاتییه دانان. پشتی ناقیکرنا پش وخت، بهشداربوی هاتییه راهینانکرن بریکا تهکنیکن لهزاتیبا خواندنی ژبو بهیزکرنا ئاستی وان بی لهزاتی وتیگههشتنا خواندنی. نهجامین پش وپاش وخت دیارکره تیکرایا ئاستی لهزاتیبا خواندنی وتیگههشتنا خواندنا قوتابیین بشیوهیهکی بهرچاف بلنوبوه. ههروهسا نهجامی (Regression Analysis) دیارکره کو لهزاتیبا خواندنی کارتیکرنهکا گرنهگ ههیه لسهر تیگههشتنا خواندنی. ژئهگههستی گوهورینا بههروهام دلهزاتیبا خواندنی دا، تیگههشتنا خواندنی ب ریژا (٢٥٪) هاتییه گوهورین. بنتی دماوی شهس ههفتیان دا نهجامین فن فهکولینی دوویات دکهت کو پینتییه کورسین لهزاتیبا خواندنی دههمی ئاستین خواندنی دا بهینه گوتن.

پهقیین سهههکی: خواندن، لهزاتیبا خواندنی، تیگههشتنا خواندنی، تهکنیکن لهزاتیبا خواندنی.