

THE EFFECT OF GENDER ON JORDANIAN EFL LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION SCORES IN THE EIGHTH- GRADE

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Abstract

The current study looked into how gender affected on Jordanian EFL Learners' Reading Comprehension Scores in the Eighth Grade. In order to do this, a reading comprehension test was created using a reading passage that was chosen. The reading comprehension exam was given to (n=50) male and female students who had the same level of language competency as eighth-grade EFL students in Northern Jordan after its validity and reliability had been established. The data were analyzed using one-way ANOVA, and the findings showed that there are differences between male and female EFL learners' reading comprehension skills, with females having higher reading comprehension skills. The results are interpreted in a way that directly affects test developers and syllabus designers, in addition to EFL teachers and instructors.

Keywords: Gender, Reading comprehension, Eighth Grade, EFL students

Introduction

Education is guaranteed to be at its best when students are involved in a learning environment that is adaptable enough to meet their specific needs. The process of deciphering written communications is called reading. It entails comprehending the text and taking the pertinent information out of it. Many academics in fields including sociolinguistics, anthropology, and education have shown a special interest in gender, which has led to fresh insights and inquiries into the ways in which gender alone shapes particular behaviors. For example, studies on gender and classroom dynamics in education have shown that various genders exhibit diverse behaviors (Lavy, & Schlosser, 2007). The importance of gender in understanding various genres in

one's own language as well as in a foreign or second language has gained attention in recent years (Sunderland, 2000).

Asadi and Kawar (2023) divide reading comprehension into three levels. At each level, students are able to differentiate between opinions and facts and evaluate the reliability of written material based on personal preferences. Reading proficiency is a prerequisite for both education and social and economic advancement. Additionally, reading can increase linguistic proficiency (Rottenberg, 2023). Comprehending is the ability to understand words beyond their obvious meaning and identify the connections among the ideas presented in a text (Asadi, & Kawar, 2023). One of the fundamental language abilities that helps students succeed academically in the future is reading (Bećirović, Brdarević-Čeljo, & Dubravac, 2018). According to Qrquez and Ab Rashid (2017), reading is the foundation of all economic and social education and can improve language proficiency in general. Understanding is the capacity to decipher words that have meanings beyond their literal meaning and to identify the connections between various ideas in a book (Grabe, 2004). Understanding is predicated on a number of critical abilities. Understanding these components requires stimulation of pertinent prior knowledge (Snow, 2002). Reading appears to be more difficult in an EFL setting because its results depend on a variety of skills. These factors include a lack of exposure to English-language content, limited use of modern technology, a lack of motivation, and learning and teaching abilities (Rottenberg, 2023).

A key component of learning a language and succeeding academically is reading comprehension, especially when learning English as a foreign language (EFL). It takes a variety of linguistic and cognitive skills to comprehend written texts, which makes it a challenging but crucial part of language development. Effective pedagogy and student support in educational contexts depend on an awareness of the elements impacting reading comprehension performance. Education research has been interested in gender because of its possible influence on learning outcomes and academic achievement. Studies on gender differences in reading comprehension and other academic fields have yielded inconsistent and context-dependent results. Understanding the significance of context specificity, this study looks at gender variations in reading comprehension scores among eighth-grade EFL students in Northern Jordan (Sunderland, 2000).

Gender's impact on reading comprehension scores has long been a source of debate and interest in educational research (Bećirović, Brdarević-Čeljo, & Dubravac, 2018). Numerous studies have examined the relationship between gender and reading proficiency, but the findings are usually complex and subtle (Asadi & Kawar, 2023). Though it is simple to attribute differences in reading comprehension scores solely to gender, it is crucial to include additional factors such as biological variances, cultural expectations, and educational experiences (Pikhart, Al-Obaydi, & Tawafak, 2022). One of the most well-known findings in the literature is that girls generally outperform boys on reading comprehension exams, especially in the early grades. This pattern has been observed across numerous countries and educational systems. Researchers have proposed a number of theories to explain this phenomenon (Rottenberg, 2023). The expectations of society and gender roles can have a big impact on reading habits. From a young age, girls are often encouraged to engage in literacy- and language-building activities like storytelling and book reading. Conversely, boys may be encouraged to play sports that emphasize physical prowess and competition (Sunderland, 2000). Accordingly, girls might develop stronger language skills and reading habits than boys (Asadi, & Kawar, 2023).

Statement of the Problem

A lot of Jordanian EFL students have trouble figuring out which tactics work best and how to use them effectively for reading comprehension. Jordanian EFL students struggle with reading comprehension, which causes them to read slowly. The purpose of the study is to look into how gender affects reading comprehension scores in people of different ages and educational backgrounds. Even though a great deal of study has shown that boys and girls differ in their reading ability, more research is still needed to determine the precise mechanisms causing these differences and how they may affect educational procedures and results. Examining whether gender is a major determinant of reading comprehension performance is the main goal of the study. The study aims to determine the extent and consistency of gender disparities in reading comprehension scores across various eighth-grade EFL students in Northern Jordan by analyzing large-scale datasets and conducting empirical experiments.

Purpose of the Study

The study investigates The Impact of Gender on the Reading Comprehension Scores of Eighth Grade EFL Students in Northern Jordan.

Questions of the study

The following research question are addressed in this study: " Do male and female eighth-grade students show differences in reading comprehension scores?"

Significance of the Study

This research has the potential to be significant since it investigates the impact of gender on the reading comprehension scores of eighth grade EFL students in Northern Jordan. Hopefully, in creating and assessing curriculum and selecting English language reading comprehension materials, this study may help curriculum designers, decision-makers, and teachers understand the genuine necessity of including. Furthermore, the findings of the study may improve advising services provided to reading comprehension learners. Besides, the findings of this study may open up new opportunities for interested scholars, since they are expected to contribute to appropriate academic research.

Definition of Terms

Reading comprehension: Extracting concepts and creating meaning from written language is the process of reading comprehension (Snow, 2002). The ability of eighth grade EFL students in Northern Jordan to understand a message at the literal, inferential, and critical levels is known as reading comprehension in this study. The reading comprehension test will be used to measure it. The test will consist of multiple-choice and true/false items, depending on the readability levels of the candidates. The capacity of eighth-grade students to comprehend texts is defined as reading comprehension in the current study. A reading comprehension test using the intended text is used to gauge it.

Limitations of the Study:

The generalizability of the findings may be limited by the following:

- 1- The participants of the study are Eighth Grade EFL Students in Northern Jordan in a public school during the second semester of the academic year 2023/2024.
- 2- The duration of the study is three weeks. An extended period of time may have produced different outcomes.

Review of Related Literature

Understanding Reading Comprehension: From Theory to Practice in ESL/EFL Contexts

There is a wealth of information available to support instructors in confidently teaching reading. Put another way, understanding is a necessary component of successful schooling. Understanding what you are reading is the ultimate goal of reading. It is a process where meaning is produced by utilizing learners' prior knowledge, experiences, reasoning, and instruction. Theoretically, reading comprehension is broad, varied, and complex. Reading scientists have put out a number of ideas at the ESL and EFL levels to explain the fundamentals and nature of reading. Hadley and Reiken (1993) assert that reading is a complex activity that involves interaction between the reader and the text. They continued by saying that it necessitates both a psychological understanding of the reader and linguistic comprehension of the text's language. In other words, in order to understand the text, the viewer must make use of their language and prior knowledge. The "top-down" method involves the learner relying on prior knowledge to understand the text, whereas the "bottom-up" approach uses the learner's linguistic skill to understand the text's meaning. To fully understand the content, both processes are necessary. This strategy supports the Zone of Increasing Integration concept and gives students the freedom to select the reading materials they enjoy or find motivating. Computer-assisted guided reading can be helpful since in a technology learning environment, the emotional filter is always down and open.

Unlocking Potential Reading Instruction

Proficiency in reading is essential for students to succeed. This implies that reading comprehension helps readers form mental images; these skills help readers understand the text and choose the appropriate word meaning given the context. With access to a variety of reading resources that they can use from anywhere at any time, technology-assisted reading teaching gives students a whole new set of opportunities. Reading involves more than just learning and remembering word meanings; it also involves interacting with others and utilizing perceptions and feelings. For primary school kids to succeed in the future, they must enhance and strengthen their reading abilities. A proficient reader can infer a book's meaning by drawing connections between what they already know and what they are reading. In most reading classes, students do not have access to actual reading resources. For a long time, reading has been a challenging chore for English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers since it requires a lot of time and helps students become familiar with the laws of the language, which can be challenging without the use of technology.

Factors Affecting Reading Comprehension. Increased vocabulary helps students read more fluently and perform better. When students read, they may create words quickly and get meaning. Due to their small word repertoires, learners find it challenging to process or apply the knowledge they have read (Mezynski, 1983). Here is a summary of some of the most significant problems that students face while they are trying to read comprehension.

1. **Vocabulary skills:** According to Sesma, Mahone, Levine, Eason, and Cutting (2009), reading comprehension significantly depends on vocabulary skills like definitions and actions. The growth of one's vocabulary affects reading. If students can't read fluently, it could negatively impact their vocabulary (Ouellette, 2006). Vocabulary knowledge hence enhances students' reading comprehension and performance. When students read, they may create words quickly and get meaning. The element that has been linked to reading difficulties

enables students to momentarily retain information while completing challenging assignments, reflecting, and evaluating processes. Therefore, when reading, students should apply prior knowledge of the subject to understand words as they recall what they have read (Cain, Oakhill, & Bryant, 2004).

2 Among these elements is phonemic awareness, which has to do with students' ability to identify and combine the many sounds that make up letters to produce words. After hearing a word, students should combine sounds to construct words. The learners' problems with reading comprehension can be attributed to their deficiencies in phonics and phonemic awareness (Lundberg, Olofsson, & Wall, 1980).

3. Lack of prior knowledge is another factor that affects students' reading comprehension. According to Pearson and Gallagher (1983), prior knowledge is the reader's general comprehension of the reading material. It's a category of subject knowledge meant to assist students in becoming more proficient readers. Previous knowledge is considered significant and aids in comprehension by providing students with an outline of the material they will study (Klingner & Vaughn, 1999). According to Carrell, Pharis, and Liberto (1989), background knowledge has been essential in increasing understanding. Due to their lack of prior knowledge, students are hesitant to contribute to and advance in their studies

Reading Comprehension Skills

A range of reading comprehension skills are required for accurate material comprehension. These skills are necessary for extensive reading (Graham & Bellert, 2004). Children can formulate questions and make predictions by utilizing these skills to engage with the topic (Collins, Brown & Newman, 2018). Therefore, in order to make teaching these abilities easier, teachers should adhere to a set of guidelines. In addition, authentic and varied resources that meet the needs and interests of the students should be used (Alvermann & Earle, 2003).

The following are a some of the most well-known reading comprehension abilities:

Recognizing Reference Words. References substitute specific words or phrases for previously uttered words or phrases in order to maintain consistency and reduce redundancy. As it reduces repetition in a sentence or paragraph, knowing the replacement word reference is crucial for reading (Nunan, 1991).

Guessing Meaning from Context. Guessing is one of the most crucial reading comprehension skills since the ultimate goal of reading is to comprehend the content (Alyousef, 2006). According to Grabe (1991), deducing a word's meaning from its context is essential. Understanding the message from context, according to Carrell (1983), is an effective technique for reading comprehension in both mother tongue and second language.

Scanning. The ability of a learner to extract certain information from a text is called scanning. Information is found and questions that need to be supported by facts are addressed through scanning (Pardede, 2019). While reading the content, readers utilize organizational cues and keywords to locate what they're looking for. Reading for technical instructions is the process of scanning, not skimming. The researcher defines scanning ability as the process by which readers skim a book quickly to gather information to address specific questions.

Prediction. The capacity of a student to predict the text's content based on a range of cues is known as prediction. To achieve the purpose of prediction, readers should take a quick look at the titles and images before starting to read the text. Additionally, they make use of their schemata to determine the genre of the work and the author's intention (Duffy, 2009). Prediction, according to the study, is the process by which readers become acquainted with text by glancing at headlines and visuals.

Skimming. The capacity to understand a text without giving much thought to its complexity is known as skimming. It involves skimming a text to quickly grasp its main ideas (Fountas, Pinnell, & Le Verrier, 2001; Harmer, 2001; Williams, 1984). Moreover, it is thought that skimming is essential for finding specific information inside a text (Moyle, 1968). According to Konstant (2003), there are three types of skimming: figuring out a reading text's topic, extracting information from it, and comprehending its main ideas. According to this study, skimming is the quick way to find information in a reading text without delving too far into it.

A Multifaceted Look at the Gender Gap in Reading Comprehension

Male and female biological differences have been connected to the gender gap in reading comprehension scores (Koç, 2016). According to some study, differences in the structure and function of the brain may have an impact on gender differences in language processing abilities. For example, research has shown that the rates at which boys and girls develop in particular language processing-related brain regions may differ, and this could affect how well they read comprehension skills. Differences in learning styles and preferences may also have an impact on gender disparities in reading comprehension scores (Bećirović, Brdarević-Čeljo, & Dubravac, 2018). While girls are often stronger at verbal tasks and prefer group learning environments, boys may be more drawn to experiential and hands-on learning activities (Koç, 2016). The differences in learning styles between boys and girls may influence how they approach reading comprehension assignments and may contribute to performance gaps (Asadi & Kavar, 2023). Educational experiences and instructional practices may also influence gender differences in reading comprehension scores. Unintentional prejudice against one gender by teachers' expectations and teaching practices may lead to inequalities in academic attainment (Sunderland, 2000). For example, research has shown that boys are less likely than girls to receive positive reinforcement and encouraging comments in language arts classrooms. This could potentially impact boys' excitement and engagement in reading activities (Pikhart, Al-Obaydi, & Tawafak, 2022).

A comprehensive approach that considers the interplay of biological, educational, and social factors is necessary to close the gender gap in reading comprehension scores (Asadi, & Kavar, 2023). To create inclusive learning settings that satisfy the diverse needs and preferences of every student, legislators and educators must work together, regardless of gender (Bećirović, Brdarević-Čeljo, & Dubravac, 2018). This can mean using strategies like tailored instruction, targeted interventions for struggling readers, and challenging gender stereotypes in the classroom (Koç, 2016). Asadi and Kavar (2023) add that parents and educators should place a high priority on assisting kids in acquiring literacy skills and a love of reading. Encouragement to study a variety of literary genres and opportunities for autonomous reading can help boys and girls develop a lifelong love of reading and reading comprehension skills (Rottenberg, 2023).

Empirical studies

Using a DIF methodology, Pae (2004) conducted a study to look into how gender affects English reading comprehension for Korean EFL learners. 14,000 Korean examinees—7,000 men and 7,000 women—who took the English subtest of the Korean National Entrance Exam for Colleges and Universities in 1998 participated in the study. The findings indicated that while items classed as Logical Inference were more likely to favour males, ones classified as Mood/Impression/Tone were simpler for females. Future research should take item type and content into consideration, as the study also discovered that passage content is not a reliable factor predicting gender-related reading comprehension performance. Osman, Al Khamisi, Barwani, and Al Mekhlafi (2016). investigated the variations in these beliefs according to gender, grade level, and the relationship between the two in their study. 636 pupils from Sultanate of Oman basic education schools—260 in grade four and 376 in grade ten—made up the sample as a whole. The Ministry of Education's national reading achievement tests and the researchers' own reading self-efficacy beliefs scale were the two research tools employed in this study. Results showed that there were gender differences in EFL reading achievement, with females performing better than males in both grades four and ten. Furthermore, the results demonstrated that compared to males, girls in both grades had higher reading self-efficacy attitudes for their EFL reading accomplishment.

The goal of the Janfeshan and Pourarian (2017) study was to find out how gender affected Iranian EFL learners' use of reading subskills and reading comprehension abilities. In order to do this, four subskills related to reading comprehension were chosen. Then, a few reading passages were selected whose comprehension questions were thought to gauge the desired subskill. In the current study, eighty-eight adult upper-intermediate EFL learners participated, divided into two groups of forty-four males and forty-four females. They were initially put through the Nelson test to ensure homogeneity, and after that, they had to take a reading comprehension exam. The means of the two groups in the subskills were compared, and it was evident that there were significant differences between the male and female groups in two of the subskills: understanding the mood, tone, or impression of a reading passage and drawing a logical inference. The male group outperformed the female group in the first subskill, while the female group outperformed the male group in the second. In contrast, no appreciable variations were observed in the other two subskills—identifying a reading passage's primary concept and inferring meaning from context. Hijazi (2018) conducted a study with the goal of determining how Yarmouk University students' reading comprehension skills relate to their English proficiency. There were 150 male and female students in the sample. Yarmouk University's English101 students were randomly selected for it during the second semester of the 2016–2017 school year. The researcher employed an achievement test with forty multiple-choice items and a reading comprehension test with twenty multiple-choice items to address the study's questions. The results showed that both the pupils' reading comprehension and their English achievement were at a medium level. Furthermore, there were no statistically significant gender-based variations in the reading comprehension or accomplishment of the students. However, there were statistically significant differences that favored the science college in terms of students' achievement and reading comprehension after attending college. Furthermore, as reading comprehension has a favorable impact on students' accomplishment, there was a statistically significant relationship between students' reading comprehension and their English achievement. Lastly, because there

hasn't been much research done in this area, the researcher suggested doing more to look at the relationship between students' reading comprehension and their English achievement.

Participants of the Study

Fifty students (males and females) from eighth -grade were drawn from a purposefully-selected school in Northern Jordan, (n=50) male and female students who had the same level of language competency.

Instruments of the Study

To answer the study question, one instrument was used: a reading comprehension test.

Test

Based on the General Guidelines and *General and Specific Outcomes for the English Language: Basic and Secondary Stages* (Ministry of Education) and the learning outcomes for the eighth -grade English textbook, a reading comprehension test was designed.

The test comprised several tasks to assess the students' literal, inferential, and critical levels of reading comprehension. These tasks were *drawn conclusions from simple reading materials, distinguish fact from opinion in simple reading materials, scan texts for specific information, skim texts for the main ideas, and deduce the meaning of unfamiliar words*. The reading comprehension test were used to find out if there were any significant differences among the participants that can be attributed to gender.

Reliability of the Reading Test

The Cronbach Alpha method was used to assess the reading comprehension test's reliability. Furthermore, the test's test-retest reliability was established by doing it twice with a pilot participant, with one week between each time to ensure consistency. Thus, the Pearson Correlation Coefficient between the two applications was extracted. Table 3 illustrates the results.

Table 2: Cronbach Alpha Coefficients and Test-retest Values for Each Reading Comprehension Sub-skill

Sub-skill	Alpha	Test-retest
Literal	0.75	0.99
Critical	0.71	0.98
Inferential	0.71	0.98
Overall	0.86	0.99

In Table 3, the Cronbach Alpha Coefficients for the literal, critical, inferential were .75, .71, and .71, respectively. It was calculated to be .86 for the entire scale, and all above the cut-off value .70 (Cronbach, 1951). Furthermore, the test-retest coefficients for the literal, critical, and inferential were .99, .98, and .98, respectively. It was calculated to be .99 for the entire scale, and all above the cut-off value .70 (Cronbach, 1951). Eighth -grade students (20 male and female), from outside the sample of the study, were used to pilot the reading comprehension test, with one week between the administrations. Pearson Correlation Coefficient was calculated for both the three levels of and reading comprehension overall, as shown. The findings were shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary Results of Construct Reliability Indices for Reading Test.

Sub-skill	Item Number	R1	R2
Inferential	1	0.351*	0.372
	2	0.561*	0.439
	3	0.489*	0.382
	4	0.664**	0.621
	5	0.464*	0.408
	6	0.541*	0.471
	7	0.573**	0.452
	8	0.586**	0.476
Critical	1	0.442	0.364
	2	0.734**	0.600
	3	0.553*	0.378
	4	0.631**	0.450
	5	0.466*	0.343
	6	0.651**	0.481
	7	0.663**	0.529
	8	0.417	0.336
Literal	1	0.520*	0.340
	2	0.545*	0.374
	3	0.673**	0.530
	4	0.551*	0.377
	5	0.657**	0.523
	6	0.623**	0.469
	7	0.636**	0.482
	8	0.594**	0.429

Table 3 shows that the correlation values are statistically significant, indicating that the reading comprehension test is internally consistent.

Discrimination and Difficulty Indices of the Reading Comprehension Test Items

For each item on the reading comprehension test, the different degrees of item difficulty and item discrimination were calculated as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Item Discrimination and Difficulty Indices

Sub-skill	Item No.	Item Discrimination	Item Difficulty
Inferential	1	0.20	0.60
	2	0.60	0.55
	3	0.20	0.60
	4	0.50	0.55
	5	0.45	0.45

Sub-skill	Item No.	Item Discrimination	Item Difficulty
Critical	6	0.40	0.60
	7	0.30	0.70
	8	0.50	0.50
	1	0.20	0.80
	2	0.40	0.30
	3	0.45	0.25
	4	0.60	0.40
	5	0.45	0.55
Literal	6	0.40	0.35
	7	0.35	0.20
	8	0.40	0.20
	1	0.50	0.55
	2	0.50	0.40
	3	0.40	0.45
	4	0.50	0.50
	5	0.35	0.30
6	0.30	0.60	
7	0.40	0.50	
8	0.50	0.50	

Table 4 shows that the item discrimination indices of the reading comprehension test items ranged between 0.20 and 0.60, indicating strong discrimination (Brown, 1984). Similarly, the difficulty levels items ranged between 0.20 and 0.80, indicating an acceptable level of difficulty (Doran, 1980). therefore the reading comprehension test clauses had an acceptable degree of difficulty and discrimination indices.

Data Analysis : To answer the questions of the study, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 23) was used for data analysis: To answer the main question, a one-way Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (one -way MANCOVA) was conducted to study the impact of gender on the reading comprehension scores of eighth grade EFL students in northern Jordan.

Procedures of the Study: To achieve the purpose of the study; namely, the impact of gender on the reading comprehension scores of eighth grade EFL students in northern Jordan, the study was conducted per the following procedures: 1.Relevant related literature was reviewed to frame the research and establish its theoretical and empirical grounding. 2.The reading comprehension test was designed based on the General Guidelines and General and Specific Outcomes for the English Language: Basic and Secondary Stages in Jordan (Ministry of Education) and the learning outcomes. 3.The reading comprehension test was administered to eighth grade EFL students in northern Jordan. 4. The results were analyzed using the appropriate statistics. 5. The results were discussed and conclusions, and recommendations were elated and put forth.

Results of the Study: The study investigates the impact of gender on the reading comprehension scores of eighth grade EFL students in northern Jordan. The results germane to question of the study are tabulated below.

Findings Pertinent to the Research Question

To answer the first question of the study " **Do male and female eighth-grade students show differences in reading comprehension scores?**" The means of males' and females' scores on reading comprehension test shown in Table 1. As illustrated in Table 1 shows, females did better on reading comprehension test and in general proved to be better reading comprehension.

Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations of the Participants' Reading Comprehension test

Comprehension level	Gender	test	
		Mean	Standard Deviation
Literal	Male	7.250	1.251
	Female	4.000	.649
Critical	Male	4.050	.394
	Female	6.050	1.191
Inferential	Female	6.850	1.348
	Male	3.750	.444
Overall	Female	21.200	3.412
	Male	11.800	.894

The maximum score for each reading levels is 8 and 24 overall.

Table 1 shows that there are observed differences between the mean scores of the performance of the participants (male and female), the mean scores of female higher than the mean scores of male in the three levels of and reading comprehension overall scores on the test. In order to compare the reading comprehension of the male and female subjects on the three different level, a one-way ANOVA was conducted, the results of which are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2: ANOVA for males and female' comprehension of three on the three levels of reading comprehension overall scores on the test.

Male	Source of variance	ss	DF	MS	F
	Between groups	30.1	2	15.06	7.1
	Within groups	171.57	81	2.12	
Female	Between groups	33.79	2	16.89	10.9
	Within groups	153.55	99	1.55	

As illustrated in Table 2, the F ratio for males' comprehension of the selected text type at .05 level of significance and 2 and 81 degrees of freedom was 7.1. Thus, the F ratio was much greater than the critical value of F. Therefore, the first null hypothesis stating that there is no difference in males' comprehension of text can be safely rejected. As Table 2 depicts, the F ratio at .05 level of significance and 2 and 99 degrees of freedom is much greater than the critical value of F, i.e., 3.09. Therefore, the second null hypothesis is also rejected. This means that there is a difference in females' comprehension of the selected text type.

Table 3: ANCOVA of the Effect of gender across the Three levels of Reading Comprehension

Source	Dependent Variable	Sum Squares	of df	Mean Square	f	Sig.	Partial Squared	Eta
Pre-Literal	Literal	0.332	1	0.332	0.426	0.516	0.006	
	Critical	0.508	1	0.508	0.782	0.379	0.011	
	Inferential	0.019	1	0.019	0.029	0.865	0.000	
Pre-Critical	Literal	0.001	1	0.001	0.001	0.972	0.000	
	Critical	0.012	1	0.012	0.018	0.893	0.000	
	Inferential	0.178	1	0.178	0.269	0.606	0.004	
Pre-Inferential	Literal	0.018	1	0.018	0.023	0.879	0.000	
	Critical	0.370	1	0.370	0.569	0.453	0.008	
	Inferential	0.801	1	0.801	1.209	0.275	0.016	
Gender	Literal	130.712	3	43.571	55.916	0.000	0.697	
	Critical	104.019	3	34.673	53.365	0.000	0.687	
	Inferential	132.242	3	44.081	66.513	0.000	0.732	
Error	Literal	56.883	73	0.779				
	Critical	47.430	73	0.650				
	Inferential	48.380	73	0.663				
Total	Literal	2906.000	80					
	Critical	2626.000	80					
	Inferential	2665.000	80					
Corrected Total	Literal	191.550	79					
	Critical	161.800	79					
	Inferential	189.687	79					

Table 3 shows that the participants show statistically significant differences in the literal, critical, and inferential levels of reading comprehension. Thus, it can be concluded that the impact of gender on the reading comprehension scores of eighth grade EFL students in northern Jordan is clear from the results of the reading comprehension test (male and female) in the participants' performance in literal, critical and inferential level favor of the female. The partial eta squared values of literal, critical, and inferential level were .697, .687, and .732, which suggests that the impact of gender on the reading comprehension scores of eighth grade EFL students in northern Jordan explained 50%, 41.8%, and 42.9% of the variance

in literal, critical, and inferential level, respectively.

Discussion of the Results Related to the Question of the Study

The question of the study, "Do male and female eighth-grade students show differences in reading comprehension scores?"

"Do male and female eighth-grade students show differences in reading comprehension scores?" is the research topic. The results of this study show that reading comprehension scores of eighth grade EFL students in Northern Jordan differ for males and female. The mean results for female and males show that female understand written materials in English better than male do. This confirms the findings of Maccoby and Jacklin (1974), who claimed that female have remarkably better reading abilities than males. It is also well known that remedial reading classes have a noticeably greater male student population.

Better understanding of English passages by females could be attributed to a number of variables. Disparities in gender, The research discovered that eighth-grade EFL students in northern Jordan who are males and females had different reading comprehension ratings. The results indicate that, generally speaking, women outperform males in understanding sections written in English. The means of the two genders' scores clearly demonstrate this superiority. In addition, socialisation and cultural influences mean that in many societies, girls are pushed from an early age to succeed in language-related pursuits. Gender disparities in language development and comprehension abilities may result from this.

Additionally, females may be more motivated or interested in learning languages, which may help them understand English sections better. Additional elements that might have contributed to this phenomena include learning styles; the study's teaching strategies and materials were more tailored to the learning preferences of female participants, which improved their understanding results. Furthermore Biological and cognitive differences: There may be neurological or cognitive variations between males and females that affect how well they process language and comprehend it.

This finding is also in line with Osman, Al Khamisi, Barwani, and Al Mekhlafi (2016) investigated the variations in these beliefs according to gender, grade level, and the relationship between the two in their study. Results showed that there were gender differences in EFL reading achievement, with females performing better than males in both grades four and ten. Furthermore, the results demonstrated that compared to males, girls in both grades had higher reading self-efficacy attitudes for their EFL reading accomplishment. Even still, the results of this study did not agree with those of Pae's (2004) inquiry into the role gender plays in English reading comprehension for Korean EFL learners. Results also showed that while items classified as Mood/Impression/Tone were easier for females to complete, those classified as Logical Inference were more likely to favour males. Although the findings of this investigation did not align with the findings of Hijazi (2018) study, which determining how Yarmouk University students' reading comprehension skills relate to their English proficiency, the results showed that both the pupils' reading comprehension and their English achievement were at a medium level, furthermore, there were no statistically significant gender-based variations in the reading comprehension or accomplishment of the students

Conclusions

In conclusion, this research sheds light on the impact of gender on reading comprehension scores among eighth-grade EFL students in northern Jordan. The study found compelling evidence supporting the notion that gender plays a significant role in the reading comprehension scores of eighth-grade EFL students

in Northern Jordan. Female students consistently outperformed their male counterparts in comprehending English passages. These results underscore the importance of considering gender differences in language learning environments and highlight the necessity for tailored teaching methods and materials that cater to the diverse needs of both male and female learners. Test developers and syllabus designers should take into account these gender-related disparities when designing assessments and curricula to ensure equitable educational outcomes for all students. EFL teachers and instructors should also be mindful of gender dynamics in the classroom and implement strategies that promote equal opportunities for learning and development among their students. Future research may explore additional factors contributing to gender-based differences in reading comprehension and evaluate the effectiveness of intervention programs aimed at addressing these disparities.

Recommendations : Based on the findings of the study, Several suggestions are made in light of the research's findings to enhance eighth-grade EFL students' reading comprehension performance:

- **Customized Instruction:** Teachers must to think about putting in place teaching methods that address the various learning requirements and inclinations of both male and female pupils. This could entail using a range of reading materials and exercises that suit various learning styles and interests.
- **Gender-Inclusive Curriculum:** Curriculum designers and legislators ought to make an effort to produce learning resources and evaluations that are inclusive of all genders and that provide fair opportunities for every student to advance their reading comprehension abilities.
- **Professional Development:** Teachers should have access to chances for continuous professional development that are centered on efficient teaching strategies for improving reading comprehension in EFL classes. Training on methods for encouraging critical thinking, structuring comprehension, and encouraging active engagement with texts may fall under this category.
- **Individualized Support:** Teachers should offer more resources and support to pupils who might need it to improve their reading comprehension abilities. This could entail access to literacy support programmes, small group instruction, or focused interventions.

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