

The Effect of Practical Intelligence Instruction on Iranian EFL Learners' Anxiety in Reading Comprehension

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Abstract

Previous studies done in different target languages have shown that foreign language learners experience anxiety when they are engaged in reading target passages, and the high foreign language reading anxiety level negatively affects reading effectiveness and performance (Breznitz, 1991; Sellers, 2000). On the other hand, nowadays it has been determined that for successful performance of people in every field such as education, in addition to academic intelligence or IQ, practical intelligence is needed. Given the above issue this study has been conducted to examine the effect of practical intelligence instruction on intermediate EFL learners' anxiety in reading comprehension. Hence, after administering a standard language proficiency test, 40 intermediate learners out of a pile of 80 EFL learners were selected and randomly assigned to control and experimental groups. The FLRAS questionnaire was employed as the pretest to the both groups and then merely the experimental group received a series of practical intelligence instructions. At the end of the semester the same questionnaire was administered to the whole participants again. Finally, in order to capture the objectives of the study, paired sample t-test and an independent t-test were used to analyze the data. The results indicated that there was a significant difference between intermediate EFL learners who had passed the practical intelligence instruction course and those who have not in terms of the level of their anxiety in reading comprehension. Pedagogical implications are proposed for English reading instruction, textbook design and book publication.

Keywords: Practical Intelligence, Foreign Language Reading Anxiety, EFL Learners

1. Introduction

Reading both as a source of obtaining information and pleasure and also a means of extending one's knowledge of the language is one of the most important skills in any language program. Shaywitz (2003) has stated that reading comprehension is an important life skill, and one of the most important domains in education, because it is the best predictor of success in higher education and job performance.

There are sets of skills that lead to superior performance in an L2. Reading comprehension is a complex process in itself, but it also depends upon other important lower-level processes. It is a critical foundation for later academic learning, many employment skills, and life satisfaction. It is an important skill to target, but we should not forget about the skills on which it depends. To improve the reading comprehension skill of poor performers, we need to understand that there is no magic wand, and no secret weapon that will quickly improve reading competencies for all poor readers. Careful assessment is required to determine individual learner's strengths and weaknesses, and

programs need to be tailored accordingly; most poor readers will need continued support in many areas. The roots of most reading comprehension problems lie in the early elementary years. Waiting to address them in later elementary or even secondary school is a high-risk strategy. (Sunita&Angadi, 2011)

Anxiety which is another important element in the present study is associated with the feelings of being uneasy, frustrated, apprehensive, or worried. It plays an important affective role in language learning (Brown, 2000). According to Krashen (1980, as cited in Horwitz& Young, 1991), anxiety contributes to an effective filter, which prevents students from receiving input, and then language acquisition fails to progress. Whereas facilitating anxiety produces positive effects on learners' performance, too much anxiety may cause a poor performance (Scovel, 1991). Anxiety, a complicated phenomenon, is a kind of emotion, so the issue of anxiety in second language (L2) learning has concerned language educators and researchers for many years. A substantial amount of research has been conducted in this area and suggests that anxiety is an important factor in second language acquisition (Na, 2007; Wei, 2007). Anxiety, as perceived intuitively by many language learners, negatively influences language learning and has been found to be one of the most highly examined variables in all of psychology and education studies (Horwitz, 2001). Saito, Horwitz, and Garza (1999) first introduced the concept of foreign language reading anxiety. Foreign Language reading anxiety is distinguishable from general foreign language anxiety (Saito et al., 1999; Sellers, 2000). It is regarded as a specific type of anxiety that occurs during the reading processes. Research findings also highlight the importance of minimizing reading anxiety for improving reading performance and stress the learning opportunities offered through the use of group reading activities (Crawford, 1998; Crawford & Fountain, 1995; Graney, 1989 & Powers, 1981).

Sternberg, Forsythe, Hedlund, Wagner, Williams, Snook, and Grigorenko, (2000) developed the triachic theory of intelligence with three components: analytical, creative and practical intelligence, which they later were summarized as academic and practical intelligence. As a common thread running through the various definitions of practical intelligence, it is generally considered to refer to the ability of an individual to deal with the problems and situations of everyday life (Bowman, Markham, & Roberts, 2001). Somewhere else it has been defined as the ability that individuals possess to find an optimal fit between themselves and the demands of the environment through their adapting to their environment, shaping (or modifying) their environment, or selecting a new environment in the pursuit of personally-valued goals (Sternberg, 1985a, 1997, 1999).

1.1. Practical Intelligence-for-School (PIFS)

Practical intelligence-for-school (PIFS) program is designed by Sternberg, Okagaki, and Jackson (1990) and consists of some factors which are used as main parts of teaching plan and intended instruction in the present study. The organization of the Yale Practical Intelligence-for-School curriculum is based upon the three kinds of tacit knowledge that Wagner and Sternberg (1985) have found critical to adapt to any environment; managing tasks, and working with others. The curriculum is divided into three sections. It begins with an introduction that helps learners consider the purposes of learning, reading and their own strengths and weaknesses in reading comprehension. The introduction is followed by sections on reading, writing, homework, and test-taking. The curriculum has been used and evaluated in urban schools in the Boston area, in a suburban school in Tewksbury, Massachusetts, and in rural schools in Connecticut. Sternberg and his colleagues came to this conclusion that the PIFS instruction was so effective and it had a significant effect on learners' practical intelligence and consequently led to learners' success at school (Sternberg et al., 1990).

2. Review of Literature

This section is organized into some major issues related to the connected nature of practical intelligence, anxiety, and reading comprehension.

2.1 Practical Intelligence

Practical intelligence is a set of skills and dispositions to solve everyday problems by utilizing knowledge gained from experience in order purposefully to adapt to, shape, and select environments. It thus involves changing oneself to suit the environment (adaptation), changing the environment to suit oneself (shaping), or finding a new environment within which to work (selection). One uses these skills to (a) manage oneself, (b) manage others and (c) manage tasks. Sternberg and colleagues introduced the construct of practical intelligence in the mid- to late-1980s (Sternberg, 1988; Wagner & Sternberg, 1985). In lay terms, it can be characterized as "intuition" or "common sense," and it is often referred to as "street smart" to contrast with "book smart," which is used to characterize traditional analytical or academic intelligence.

Practical intelligence is different from daily intelligence which is related to academic achievement (Neisser, 1979). There are lots of ways to see these differences in our everyday life. There are some people who are successful in school but not at work and those who failed in school, but have succeeded in their work. We may face some people with the top scores on intelligence tests but not well at all in social interaction skills and those with lower scores on intelligence tests, but in practical test are so efficient. Ordinary people make difference between academic intelligence or gifted intelligence and practical intelligence or familiarity with the maze of life. This difference has been confirmed in studies around intelligence implicit theories (Sternberg, 1985b; Sternberg, Conway, Ketron, & Bernstein, 1981).

There are some reasons which make the difference between academic intelligence and practical intelligence more possible. It is believed that the main resources for these differences are related to discrepancy of problems that people in a variety of academic and practical situations will face with them. Most things in everyday life have a weak relationship with knowledge or acquired skills through formal training or with used abilities in the classroom activities.

2.2. Anxiety

Anxiety is a psychological construct or entity. We cannot see it with the naked eye or even with the aid of microscopes, because it is an abstract entity without physical properties in its existence. It is a hypothetical construct which has turned out to be useful in the account of an individual's propensity to experience fear of apprehension, based on its manifestations. According to Levitt (1980), it is hardly possible to contest that anxiety or apprehension is a pervasive psychological phenomenon in modern society. In Scovel's (1978) definition, anxiety is apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object (Scovel, 1978). Horwitz et al. (1986) define anxiety as a distinctive complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feeling, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process. MacIntyre (1995a, 1995b, 1999) in the 90s and more recently, Horwitz, (2000, 2001) strongly argue that anxiety is a multifaceted variable that can both a cause and a consequence of poor language learning and remind that "the potential of anxiety to interfere with learning and performance is one of the most accepted phenomena in psychology and education" us (Horwitz, 2000, P. 256). In recent years interest in investigating second/foreign language reading comprehension skills has increased dramatically. Maybe, one of the reasons is its essential role in learning a second/foreign language. Learners can be involved in private reading without the pressure of time and audience. They can adjust their speed of reading as like which is an important psycholinguistic factor in learning. Sources for improving reading skill seem to be more available than other skills in an English as a foreign language context. It provides students with an effective method to learn on their own.

Sellers (2000) in his study explored the relationship between language anxiety and reading in Spanish. The issues were (1) the effect of language anxiety on reading comprehension and recall of university-level language students and (2) the effect of language anxiety on the reading process itself. Foreign language reading anxiety scale and foreign language classroom anxiety scale were used as instruments. The results indicated that the more highly anxious students tended to recall less

passage content than did those participants who claimed to experience minimal anxiety. Furthermore, students with higher levels of overall foreign language learning anxiety reported higher levels of reading anxiety. In a close look at anxiety ratings, findings showed that more students indicated feeling somewhat anxious about L2 reading than any other rating. Sellers asked students to read a magazine article and found a negative relationship between reading anxiety and L2 reading comprehension.

2.3. Reading

Reading is observed as an interaction of the reader's text-based and knowledge-based processes. In processing text, readers use literal comprehension, based on lower-level cognitive processes of reading such as lexical access and syntactic parsing, with inferential comprehension, based on higher-level cognitive processes such as the text-based comprehension (to understand what the text says) and the situation model of interpretation (to understand what it is about). Both lexical access and syntactic parsing are specialized by a higher degree of what text-boundedness in that they are data-driven processes. In the former, words in the text are assigned meaning; in that they are data-driven processed. In the latter, they are connected to form semantic propositions (Alptekin, 2008). Reading is the complex and active process in which readers attempt to make sense of what they read by using their perceptual, psycholinguistic, and cognitive abilities; employing a set of strategies such as skimming adjusting pace, making sense of titles, rereading, predicting, drawing conclusions and using prior knowledge (Adams 1990 cited in Anastasiou&Griva, 2009, Sweet, & Snow, 2002).

Reading comprehension is a complex interactive process influenced by many situational and individual factors. Reading is an involved and complex process and many factors interact to inhibit and prevent reading success. Comprehension, also, depends on decoding and other skills (memory, attention, higher order cognitive and language skills). Successful comprehension requires the building of a mental model and many reading skills such as word recognition, knowledge of grammatical and semantic relationship between words, the integration of text through making inferences and application of implicit information which is necessary to achieve reading comprehension (McCarthy, 1990). Reading impacts all areas of reading. It is perhaps the most thoroughly studied skill in the world and has been recognized as one of the focal points of all teaching/learning activities wherever English is taught as a foreign language.

3. Statement of the Problem

Many learners express their inability and sometimes even acknowledge their failure in learning a second/foreign language. In many cases, student's feeling of stress, anxiety, or nervousness may impede their language learning and performance abilities, and many learners of English claim to have a mental block against learning English (Ellis, 1994). Reading comprehension skill is of great importance for EFL learners, and Persian learners of English as a foreign language like all other foreign language readers encounter many problems while reading English texts. For instance, a text with unfamiliar features may enhance anxiety and so affects the process and product of reading significantly. The anxiety aroused during the process of reading second language texts is known as reading anxiety (Saito et al., 1999). On the other hand, teachers' expectations of students are varied and some of them may not clearly and explicitly be stated. The students who are not aware of the expectations may suffer in years of poor performance in school or during foreign language learning without even knowing its real reason. Teachers expect them to know how to devote their time to do assignments, how to make themselves ready to take the exams, and how to study for a test. If the students do not take mentioned issues into consideration, they may always suffer from it (Sternberg et al., 1990). Most of us have witnessed people with high IQ who have not been necessarily successful in their personal development, academic life, or career. In Iran most of the teachers, parents, or even the students themselves put blame on their IQ which is a stereotypical reason for such a case or for their failures in language learning. It shows that they are not aware of another aspect of intelligence,

the so-called practical intelligence, which is suggested as a powerful ability concept predictor of entrepreneurship performance (Sternberg, 2004). Now with these assumptions in mind, one can easily feel the strong need for an instruction around these issues to help learners to know how to lower their anxiety in learning a foreign language.

4. Research Questions

For the purpose of the present study, the following questions have been posed:

1. Does practical intelligence instruction program have any effect on decreasing intermediate EFL learners' anxiety in reading comprehension?
2. Is there any significant difference between intermediate EFL learners who have passed the practical intelligence instruction course and those who have not in terms of the level of their anxiety in reading comprehension?

5. Research Hypotheses

Both questions are comparative and inferential, therefore, to answer them the following null hypotheses have been formulated;

1. Practical intelligence instruction program does not have any effect on decreasing intermediate EFL learners' anxiety in reading comprehension.
2. There is not any significant difference between intermediate EFL learners who have passed the practical intelligence instruction course and those who have not in terms of the level of their anxiety in reading comprehension.

6. Research methodology

6.1. Participants

The participants of this study comprised of 40 (out of 80) female EFL learners in two English classes of a language institute in Shiraz. All of the participants were native speakers of Persian and their age ranged from 15 to 23, who were at intermediate level of English proficiency based on their performance on the Oxford Placement Test (OPT). The participants attending this study were randomly assigned to control and experimental groups acknowledging that they had not received any practical intelligence instruction so far.

6.2. Instrumentation

In order to collect data, the following instruments were used:

6.2.1. Oxford Placement Test (OPT) adopted from Allen (2004);

In order to homogenize EFL students in terms of their English language proficiency, the OPT (see Appendix A) was used. The test contained recognition type questions and instructions were clearly supported with examples making it feasible for participants to answer the questions.

6.2.2. Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS);

The FLRAS designed by Saito et al. (1999) contained 20 items measuring reading anxiety (RA) related to FL reading. The FLRAS items are rated based on a 5 point Likert scale, ranging from five points (*strongly agree*) to one point (*strongly disagree*), except for the scoring of positive items (i.e., Items 12, 13, 14, and 18), rated from one point (*strongly agree*) to five points (*strongly disagree*). The possible range of scores was 20 to 100 and higher scores indicated a high RA level, and lower scores indicated

lower RA. Saito et al. (1999) reported that the FLRAS had shown an acceptable level of reliability with an internal consistency coefficient of .86. Since the participants of this study were Persian, the questionnaire translated into Persian. The Cronbach alpha was used to test the internal consistency of the Persian revision of FLRAS ($r=.782$, $n=20$) thereby, indicating that the Persian version was reliable. For face and content validity, before implementing the main study, two experts in TEFL and psychology checked the translated items for verification of translation.

6.2.3. Practical Intelligence-for-School (PIFS) Program;

The following program was used in the present study as a treatment for the experimental group. Since 1987, Gardner has been engaged in a joint research effort with Robert Sternberg, a psychologist from Yale University. Together, they have developed a theory based on the curriculum called Practical-Intelligence-for-School (PIFS) classroom curriculum (Blythe & Gardner, 1990; Olson, 1988; Sternberg et al., 1990). The intent of their undertaking is to produce a number of curriculum modules that might help inoculated students against school failure. Their street-smart or meta-curricular curriculum units are designed to teach skills used across content knowledge areas and can be implanted into the curriculum taught in middle school grades. Their objective is to examine the kinds of fundamental smarts needed by school children to succeed. The curriculum consists of both a student text and a comprehensive teacher's manual that describes in detail how the course can be taught effectively. The Yale portion of the curriculum, designed to teach skills used across content areas. This is taught by content teachers for two or three periods per week separately. (Sternberg et al., 1990).

6.3. Data Collection Procedure

Forty homogenized Participants by OPT, were randomly assigned to the control and experimental groups. Then as a pretest both groups were asked to fill in Persian translated version of FIRAS developed by Saito et al. (1999) with great honesty and sincerity to identify whether the experimental group would be changed after the instruction course or not. For each statement of the questionnaires, the labels on the choices referred to the degree to which a statement was perceived as a typical of the respondent with 5 representing the highest "strongly disagree" to the lowest "strongly agree" degree of agreement. The study was conducted during a semester and the practical intelligence instructional program as the treatment for the experimental group lasted for 10 hours during 20 sessions. In the present study PIFS program has been used as a treatment for the experimental group with a short pamphlet.

The course opens with instruction on how learners can manage themselves. The first units, on self-management, provide an overview of students' multiple intelligences. The teacher and the students discuss styles of thinking (Sternberg, 1988, 1990) and how students can best exploit their own individual styles. This unit on self-management also deals with crucial aspects of adaptation to the place who are learning, such as taking in new information. Showing what you have learned, using what you know, and implementing what you have learned. The second part of the course, managing tasks, deals with topics such as getting organized, getting up strategies for problem solving, breaking bad habits, seeking help with problems, and thinking about time management. This part of the course also deals with understanding questions, following directions, and taking tests. The third part of the course, cooperating with others, presents such topics as how to handle yourself in class discussions, knowing what to say in different situations, and solving communication problems. It also involves learning how to take a long-term perspective in dealing with other people.

The researcher was going to help EFL learners to quit the habits which were obstacles to the reading comprehension, whereas the learners in the control group have received no extra instruction other than the regular classroom program. It means the control group was instructed in the same semester as the experimental group in reading comprehension classes in the absence of PIFS program, and the learners just have been asked to have silent reading in the class and then answer

some teacher’s related questions. Having finished the semester, the same questionnaire was administered to both control and experimental groups.

Data collection of the present study was based on descriptive and inferential statistics, which was dealt with using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 15.

7. Findings

7.1 The Results Regarding the First Research Question.

In order to answer the first research question, FLRAS was administered to both control and experimental groups and two separate paired sample *t*-tests were used to show whether or not practical intelligence instruction has any effect on decreasing intermediate EFL learners' anxiety in reading comprehension.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Anxiety Questionnaire for Control Group

Paired Samples Statistics^a

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	total pretest AQ	70.9500	20	5.53910	1.23858
	total posttest AQ	71.4500	20	6.04784	1.35234

a. group = control

In this table the mean scores of Anxiety Questionnaire pretest (AQ-pretest) for the control group is 70.9500 and of AQ-posttest is 71.4500. There is a slight improvement in AQ-posttest scores in comparison with the scores on the AQ-pretest. In order to see whether the difference and improvement was statistically significant or not, a *t*-test was used, whose results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Paired Samples *t*-test of Control Group Pretest and Posttest in Terms of Anxiety

Paired Samples Test^a

		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	total pretest AQ - total posttest AQ	-.50000	2.96470	.66293	-1.88752	.88752	-.754	19	.460

a. group = control

As Table 2, illustrates, there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the control group on the pretest and posttest, $t(19) = .754, p = .46$.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Anxiety Questionnaire for Experimental Group

Paired Samples Statistics^a

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	total pretest AQ	72.0500	20	5.96017	1.33274
	total posttest AQ	63.2000	20	4.04709	.90496

a. group = experimental

According to Table 3, the mean scores of AQ-pretest for experimental group is 72.0500 and of AQ-posttest is 63.2000. In order to see whether the difference was statistically significant, a *t*-test was used, whose results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Paired Samples *t*-test of Experimental Group Pretest and Posttest in Terms of Anxiety

Paired Samples Test^a

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 total pretest AQ - total posttest AQ	8.85000	5.59393	1.25084	6.23196	11.46804	7.075	19	.000

a. group = experimental

Table 4, indicates that there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the experimental group on the pretest and posttest, $t(19)=7.075, p = .000$. So the first null hypothesis “Practical intelligence instructions do not have any effect on decreasing intermediate EFL learners' anxiety in reading comprehension” was safely rejected.

7.2. The Results Regarding the Second Research Question.

The second research question was formed to determine whether there is any significant difference between intermediate EFL learners who have passed the practical intelligence instruction course and those who have not in terms of their anxiety in reading comprehension. The following independent sample *t*-test was used to answer the second research question.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of Posttest Anxiety Questionnaire for Control and Experimental Group

Group Statistics

group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
total posttest AQ control	20	71.4500	6.04784	1.35234
experimental	20	63.2000	4.04709	.90496

As indicated in Table 5, the mean scores of posttest anxiety questionnaire for the control group was 71.4500 and of the posttest anxiety questionnaire for the experimental group is 63.2000. The mean scores of AQ-posttest for experimental group is lower than the control group's mean scores. The next table shows the results.

Table 6. Independent Samples *t*-test of Posttest Anxiety Questionnaire for Control and Experimental Group

Independent Samples Test

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower	Upper
total posttest AQ	4.294	.045	5.070	38	.000	8.25000	1.62719	4.95592	11.54408
Equal variances assumed			5.070	33.174	.000	8.25000	1.62719	4.94011	11.55989
Equal variances not assumed									

As shown in Table 4.12, the mean scores of the two groups were compared. As the table indicates, the observed value was less than the critical value. In other words, there are some significant differences between the two groups of learners (control group vs. experimental group) in terms of their anxiety in reading comprehension, so the second null hypothesis as related to anxiety was rejected. The investigation of the second null hypothesis was done, in fact, to provide more statistical support for the rejection of the first null hypotheses.

8. Discussion

The results for the first research question point to this fact that, there is not any significant difference between pretest and posttest anxiety questionnaire for the control group. Based on this statement the control group's anxiety level has remained constant in the posttest. It can be concluded that in the absence of practical intelligence instruction, the learners' anxiety level may be increased or remained at the previous level. The experimental group who benefited from the practical intelligence instruction showed better performance on the posttest anxiety questionnaire in comparison with that of the pretest. However, the values of higher anxiety denoting low comprehension and lower anxiety denoting high comprehension are a proof of the anxiety aspect of this study.

In some studies done by Lall, (1984); Gupta, (1987); Thilagavathi, (1990); Namrata, (1992); and Trivdei, (1995) it was revealed that academic achievement and performance were negatively and significantly related to anxiety. Somewhere else, Sellers (2000) investigated anxiety and reading comprehension in Spanish learners. The results indicated that highly anxious students tended to recall less passage content than did those participants who claimed to experience minimal anxiety. In addition, results from the analysis of data from the cognitive interference questionnaire showed that highly anxious students tended to experience more off-task, interfering thoughts than their less anxious counterparts did. As Saito et al. (1999) state, "... anxiety might appear at some point after the reading was actually accomplished or when the student encountered the teacher's or other students' interpretations of the text". (p.215), thus according to the obtained results and some congruent previous studies the first null hypothesis is rejected.

With respect to the second research question, the results of the study demonstrated that intermediate EFL learners in the experimental group who had received practical intelligence instruction significantly performed differently in their anxiety questionnaire posttest.

According to Table 6, there is a significant difference between intermediate EFL learners who have passed the practical intelligence instruction course and those who have not in terms of their level of anxiety in reading comprehension. Although both groups were at the same proficiency level at the outset of the study; they behaved differently on the final questionnaire. As the results showed, the level of anxiety for the experimental group in posttest was lower than level of anxiety for the control group. This point indicates a decreasing level of anxiety after passing practical intelligence instruction. Thus, the effects of practical intelligence instruction would be useful in decreasing reading anxiety which is in line with the studies conducted by Dass, (1984); Dhanger, (1985); and Yadav, (1989) who found that low anxiety level would lead to better reading comprehension or somehow with Brahmhatt, (1983) who found that anxiety has high negative correlation with achievement in English.

9. Conclusion

Over the past few decades, research on a good number of factors that affect foreign language learning and teaching has been the focus of attention for many researchers. As most of previous studies on anxiety have shown, the data achieved in the present study indicate a significant difference between intermediate EFL learners who have passed the practical intelligence instruction course and those who have not in terms of the level of their anxiety in reading comprehension. One reasonable explanation of these results could be that the teacher needs feedback on the part of the students in order to assess their comprehension and most of the time this feedback is provided orally by the

students. Therefore, when students try to speak in reading classrooms they are prone to the anxiety about speaking and accordingly fear of negative evaluation, communication apprehension, and test anxiety as the three components of foreign language anxiety may occur. Having recognized the possible problem by the teacher; s/he would be able to decide more successfully about the intended instructions to be done.

The found significant effects of anxiety on reading comprehension recommend teachers to try to reduce the anxious learners' anxiety in class through such a practical intelligence instruction. They should try to avoid all behaviors and strategies that create anxiety in learners. The more gently a teacher behaves in class, the more efficiently students will learn materials in a reading class. So, it is suggested that teachers should try to do their best to give such instructions to EFL learners. This is because becoming anxious is normally predicted depending on the nature of FL learning. As Saito et al. (1999) reported two reasons why reading can be anxiety-provoking for foreign language learners: the unfamiliar writing scripts and unfamiliar cultural background, thus the other influential factor concerning the result of the present study is the background knowledge. Unfamiliarity with what is going to happen, the context to which the individual is going to present, and what the individual is going to be dealing with is generally apprehensive. Reading a text in a foreign language is not an exception. As evidence, about 50% of the control group in posttest reported anxiety over item 5, "I am nervous when I am reading a passage in English when I am not familiar with the topic" while just 10% of the experimental group who have passed the instructional course reported anxiety over that item. As a general technique, it is recommended that, in dealing with a passage, teachers start with the activation of students' previous knowledge about the text and arm them with the necessary knowledge in case they are not familiar with the topic. In this way, students will be prepared for reading activities and feel less anxious.

In the present study for the learners who didn't pass the practical intelligence instructions and whose anxiety hadn't improved, several possible mechanisms were suggested. This might be through attention processes.

Another point by taking the result of the present study into account is teaching reading strategies through practical intelligence instructions. Reading comprehension is a skill that is highly dependent on the knowledge of Lexis and syntax. In other words, those readers who have good knowledge of vocabulary and structures of a language are more successful than those who are less proficient in these aspects. Some students believe that they have to know every word and structure in the passage in order to comprehend it. They become anxious when their expectations are not warranted by the passage. Therefore, one solution to this problem is to get familiar with strategies of different types in reading comprehension. Anderson (2003) believes that, "Perceptive second/foreign language (L2) readers are those who are aware of and use appropriate strategies for learning and communicating in an L2." (p.3)

High-anxious learners might set more rigorous criterion for response selection, fearing the embarrassment of giving a wrong answer. The anxiety, in fact, produces hesitation or reluctance to respond. The anxious learners are reluctant to talk, unwilling to take initiative to act and unable to concentrate to understand. They do not take the risk of volunteering. So, when they cannot understand a concept or what is presented to the whole class, they do not ask for further explanation. Following the results of the present study in dealing with such learners, instructing the practical intelligence can be suggested for teachers. They can assist learners to learn how to cope with anxiety provoking situation and make the learning context without stress or at least less stressful. This study clearly supports the notion that high reading anxiety effects on intermediate EFL learners' reading comprehension and the treatment program has a positive effect on the level of anxiety for the EFL learners, so in order to have a useful and successful reading comprehension, teachers and learners have to take this point into consideration. This study goes further to suggest that practical intelligence is another factor that affects EFL learners' learning difficulties. It may be concluded that the treatment of reading-related anxiety seems urgent for EFL learners.

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