Department of Curriculum & Instruction

Treatment of Primary Graders' English Reading Difficulties Using a Computerized Program

MA Thesis in Education

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to treat primary graders' English reading difficulties using a computerized program. The study adopted the pre-experimental design. The purpose of this study is to treat primary graders' English reading difficulties using a computerized program. The instruments of the study were a checklist of some of reading skills and a pre-post reading test. A pre-test has been administered to examine primary graders' English reading difficulties. Data deriven from the pre-test have confirmed pupils' weakness in reading. Thus the researcher made a checklist of reading skills that are appropriate to the 5^{th} year of the primary stage to be taught. The results of the post-test have confirmed the hypotheses that there is a statistically difference between the participants' mean scores of the pre- and post- reading skills test in favor of the post test. Based on the findings, a set of recommendations and suggestions for further research are highlighted.

Key words: reading skill, the program.

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Chapter One
Background of the Problem

1.1 Introduction

Teaching children to read is undoubtedly one of the most important tasks assigned to elementary schools. The ultimate goal of reading instruction is to enable children to derive meaning from print. From this skill, children learn about the world around them, about people, about cultures, about science, about math and how to grow as an individual. Reading is one of the most difficult skills they will have to master throughout their school career. Primary stage pupils face certain difficulties in reading and writing. These difficulties hinder their learning in this and the following educational stages. This shows that there is a great need to find ways to treat these difficulties. Reading difficulties may creat writing difficulties that affect pupils' attitudes and feelings towards learning and towards school in general (El-Sadek, 2010, pp.1-2).

Pupils in primary stage make several mistakes in reading, such as omitting words, adding letters or words, switching letters or words. Most pupils are considered poor readers, as they cannot read correctly and fluently, and as a result of this they cannot understand what they read and achieve success in English (Huang, 2005, p.23). Pupils in the primary stage deal with reading as a means for answering questions in quizzes not for good pronunciation and correcting or improving their reading difficulties. Besides, teachers are not interested in pupils' difficulties and mistakes in reading and they neglect correcting these mistakes. As a result, most primary stage pupils have difficulties and weakness in reading skills. Therefore, the teacher should use the appropriate type of instruction that helps pupils develop their

reading difficulties and avoid, or at least, delimit the traditional methods, procedures and techniques that hinder this development.

Good reader can notice, read, understand and interpret what he is reading. On the other hand, poor reader does not understand the text because he cannot read it, so he faces a mass problem when he has a written quiz. During reading, poor readers may have difficulty decoding, and so have difficulty reading the words of their texts accurately. In addition, some poor readers read too slowly, or lack fluency. As a result of their slow, they often do not comprehend much of what they read, and the attention they have to give to figuring out the words keeps them from understanding the text's message.

Reading is very important in life of an individual and for society as a whole. It is the most available source of input enriches communicative skills which enrich peoples' knowledge of the world by sharing information and ideas. Besides, it is a very important skill as it leads to better writing and better understanding. Reading is one of the most important English language skills a pupil learns, it depends on the language of the reader and the writing system that encodes that language. Pupils should be involved in actual reading in an enjoyable way, in English as a second language (ESL) programs they must learn to read, write, speak, and understand a new language (Cummins, 2000, p. 16).

The major aim of teaching EFL reading skills to primary stage pupils is to enable them to read correctly. When they are reading, they use two things to help them understand the text: what they can see on the page-print, punctuation and pictures, what they know- their background knowledge about the language and the world. In primary stage, focus should be given to alphabetic knowledge, spelling of the target words because children need to acquire alphabetic knowledge before they can develop other skills related to reading and writing, and