ARABIC AND ENGLISH ORAL READING MISCUES OF JORDANIAN SIXTH ELEMENTARY, THIRD PREPARATORY, AND SECOND SECONDARY STUDENTS IN IREBID DISTRICT

A COMPARATIVE STUDY

SALEEM RABADI

AUGUST 1985
ARABIC AND ENGLISH ORAL READING MISCUES OF JORDANIAN SIXTH ELEMENTARY, THIRD PREPARATORY, AND SECOND SECONDARY STUDENTS IN IRBED DISTRICT

A COMPARATIVE STUDY

BY

SALEEM SULEIMAN RABADI

Licence (English Literature), Damascus University 1956.

Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement of the Degree of Master of Education (TEFL) at Yarmouk University

1985

Thesis Committee

Dr. Oglah Smadi, Chairman
Dr. Khalaf Natour, Member
Dr. Mohammad Freihat, Member

AUGUST 1985
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The researcher is authentically grateful to Drs. Smadi, Natour, and Freihat who were always and instantly prepared to assist. Not only did they contribute in providing me with their invaluable suggestions and practical remarks, but also they cooperated effectively in translating the instrument of this research into Arabic and in selecting the appropriate reading passages.

I am also much grateful to all those who helped in a way or another, and to my family who never failed to provide all the facilities that I needed through the course of my work.

May God bless them all.

Saleem Rabadi
IRBID
1985
identified as being exceptionally good readers were excluded from the population of the study for the purpose of having a sample very much of average readers.

The ( RMI ) was the instrument used to code and analyze the students' miscues with respect to how these miscues relate to their counterparts in the text under the graphophonic, syntactic and semantic categories and the effect of these miscues on the students' comprehension meaning and grammatical acceptability.

The study revealed the following:

1- The subjects across all levels produced the same types of miscues, namely: substitutions, omissions, insertions, and reversals, and these are common miscues to readers in both English and Arabic languages (could be in all languages) as foreign and local studies inform us. Readers in both languages are in a position to benefit from the graphic, syntactic, and semantic information available to them in the text to arrive at meaning. Through their processing the print, they make prediction of the grammatical structure, supply semantic concepts to get to the meaning, check on the meaning, and then confirm or correct.
TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ................................................................................. 111

LIST OF CONTENTS ................................................................................ IV

LIST OF TABLES ........................................................................................ VI

ABSTRACT ................................................................................................ VIII

CHAPTER ONE
:Introduction ................................................. 1

Background of the Study .......................... 1

Statement of the Problem ....................... 7

Significance of the Study ....................... 8

Definitions of Terms ......................... 9

CHAPTER TWO
:Review of Literature ............................... 13

CHAPTER THREE
:Population ............................................... 18

Sample ................................................... 19

Materials ............................................... 20

Design and Procedures ...................... 20

CHAPTER FOUR
:Findings of the Study .............................. 24

CHAPTER FIVE
Discussion and Recommendations ....... 63

REFERENCES ................................................................. 74

APPENDIX I
Reading Passages For the Sixth,
Third Preparatory And Second
Secondary Classes ............................... 76
APPENDIX A  The Coding Sheet ..................... 111
APPENDIX B  Reader's Profile ..................... 112
APPENDIX C  Retelling Format ..................... 113
APPENDIX D  RMI Questions ...................... 114
APPENDIX E  RMI Patterns of Grammatical and
             Comprehension Relationships ..... 119
APPENDIX F  Miscue Inventory ( Miscue Analysis
             Form from Psycholinguistics and
             Reading ) .......................... 120
Abstract in Arabic .................................. 121
Summary of ANOVA Table for the Sound Relationships for the Three Grades .......... 43

Percentage of Graphic and Sound Relationships for Third Preparatory Arabic and English ........................................... 45

Percentage of Grammatical Relationships - Function and Relationship for the Three Grades ............................................. 47

Summary of Analysis of Variance Table for the Three Grade's in the Grammatical Relationships ........................................ 48

Percentage of Grammatical Relationships for the Third Preparatory Readers of Arabic and English ................................. 50

Percentage of Students' Performance in Patterns of Grammar and Comprehension .... 52

Summary of Analysis of Variance for the Three Grades in the Patterns of Grammar and Comprehension ............................... 54

Percentage of Scores of the Three Grades in Retelling ......................................................... 55

Percentages of Comprehension Patterns and Retelling for the Third Preparatory Readers of Arabic and English ............................... 56
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Total and Percentage of Miscues by Category for the Sixth Elementary, Third Preparatory and Second Secondary Classes</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Percentage and Number of Miscues by Category for Third Preparatory: Arabic and English</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Percentage of Miscues by Category for the Three Grades</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Total of Miscues and their Proportion to the Words of the Passage for the Three Grades</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Summary of Analysis of Variance Table for the Three Grades in the Total Number of Miscues and their Types</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Difference Between the Means of the Categories (Types) of Miscues</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Number and Percentage of Correction Attempts Across the Three Grades</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Correction Behaviour for Third Preparatory Readers of Arabic and English</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Percentage of Graphic and Sound Relationship for the Three Grades</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Summary of ANOVA Table for the Graphic Relationship for the Three Grades</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

Arabic and English Oral Reading Miscues of Jordanian Sixth Elementary, Third Preparatory and Second Secondary Students in Irbid District

A Comparative Study

This study in Arabic oral reading miscues aimed at:
1-finding out what types of miscues Jordanian students produce, and what reading strategies they make use of as they interact with the Arabic print,
2-comparing the findings of this study with the findings of current research in English miscues of Jordanian students and other foreign related studies,
3-finding out the applicability and utility of using 'The Reading Miscue Inventory' of C. Burke and Y. Goodman (1972) in dealing with Arabic oral reading miscues.

(For this purpose, the researcher, in cooperation with the supervisory committee, endeavored to translate this tool (RMI) into Arabic for those who may wish to benefit from it.)

The subjects of this study consisted of (15) students chosen randomly from sixth elementary, third preparatory, and second secondary classes from Irbid District. Those students who were identified by their teachers as being remedial readers and those who were
2 - Substitution type of miscue featured higher than the other types (80-90%), and here grade level was significant. The high-graders produced significantly fewer miscues in substitutions than low-graders, but there was no significant difference among grades regarding the other types.

3 - High graders produced less unreal words, made more attempts at correction benefitting from the semantic and the syntactic elements of the text than the low-graders who revealed less command and sensitivity to meaning and structure; therefore less proficient in the language.

4 - The subjects from the second secondary didn't show any significant improvement over the third preparatory in the areas of grammar and comprehension patterns of relationships.

It is recommended that teachers of both Arabic and English languages be acquainted with a variety of practical and systematic procedures for coding, analysing, and categorizing students' miscues. The researcher feels that such a tool as the (RMI), or a modification of it, may well serve such a purpose specially in determining students' weaknesses and strengths.

Other related studies in Arabic oral reading miscues
on both sexes might be valuable in providing teachers and/or text-book makers with suggestions and implications for classroom practice.

Assuming that students' miscues and reading behaviour are the same in both Arabic and English languages, a selective exchange of experience in related literature and methodology might be relevant.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I : I BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

There has lately been a general consensus among educators in Jordan that the level of achievement of students in Jordanian schools has been deteriorating. This dissatisfaction is revealed in a variety of manners: parents complain that their children are not doing well at school and that something urgent should be done, teachers, supervisors and other responsible authorities have been concerned about this alarming situation and have been discussing plans and reviewing procedures bearing on the problem.

Students are considered to be lagging behind expectation not only in some subjects of the curriculum but also in learning their native language. Evidence of this can be traced in students' low scores in the Arabic language school examinations and in the state official examination of the "Tawjihi" where proctors and assessors report of unsatisfactory results. (The weighted mean of the Arabic language score in the "Tawjihi" examination of the year 1984 was 53% for students in Irbid District.)
The Ministry of Education in Jordan has lately undertaken intensive courses for teachers in the first three elementary classes for the purpose of improving the quality of teaching in these classes. This was followed by a serious follow-up program to investigate the effect of this on students' achievement.

Evidently enough, competence in the native language is of prime utility in coping with the other school subjects, especially when teaching and learning are carried out through the medium of that language. Hence the verified notion that high proficiency in the language leads to a better involvement on the part of the students in school subjects and other educational accomplishments. And again, it is probably safe to say that reading has become a social imperative and that reading facility is the accomplishment on which other accomplishments are based.

Broadly speaking, a good number of language teachers still look at reading as a careful exact process. Teachers seem very keen at having their students learn such skills/sounding out, reading carefully without committing mistakes, and attaching words in isolation (Goodman, 1972). In their pursuit of this, they ignore what is important and
essential in reading, which is comprehension and active interaction with the print. A Pakistani or an Iranian, for an example, can enunciate (sound out) the "Kor'an" correctly because Urdu and Persian use Arabic script. However, we do not consider them readers of Arabic unless they understand what they read in Arabic. Proficiency in reading is more than sounding out words and sentences correctly; it is an active ongoing process of the systems of language available to the reader, namely: graphophonics, semantic, syntactic systems (K. Goodman, 1976).

Reading instruction as maintained in most classes is mainly word-oriented, and learning to use contextual clues within the reading setting and integrating meaning as one reads—all are strategies which have generally been neglected by teachers and have been left for readers to develop on their own (Goodman, 1981). Readers who are rather poor lean more on the graphic print and less on the semantic and syntactic cues (Bean, 1978), and in their attempt to produce words correctly, they lose track of the information supplied to them by the semantic and syntactic elements; the thing which makes them shift focus away from comprehension. Students who focus more on the graphophonics relationships in their reading than on the
semantic relationships are poor readers because they are poor comprehenders. Alarmingly enough, teachers as well as parents evaluate their children's oral reading proficiency by the number of misreadings the children commit in sounding out words. Teachers' correction, too, is mainly geared towards perfection in voicing out words and less attention is directed towards other demanding objectives.

The uses we make of the oral and the written forms of a language vary, but the purpose—communication—is the same. In reading as in writing, the goal is always the same: comprehension of meaning (Goodman, 1976). The reader is a user of the language, he is trying to get sense from what he reads. When we want to understand how reading works we must look beyond the superficial behaviour of readers; we must try to see what is happening that is causing the behaviour. When we teach reading we are trying to build the competence which underlies this superficial behaviour (Goodman, 1976).
A new view of reading approached psycholinguistically has recently come into vogue. Proponents of this approach (Brown, Goodman, Smith, Burke, and others) maintain that reading, even for the most proficient reader, is not a perfect process or a true rendition of the print. The operations of the thought process, as well as those of the language process, ensure the occurrence of some variations referred to by Goodman and his colleagues as miscues. Three kinds of information are available to the reader as he interacts with the print. One kind, the graphic information, reaches the reader visually. The other two, syntactic and semantic information are supplied by the reader as he begins to process the visual input. Since the reader's goal is meaning, he uses as much, or as little, of each information as is necessary to get to the meaning. He makes predictions of the grammatical structure, using the control over language structure he learned when he learned oral language. He supplies semantic concepts to get to the meaning from the structure. In turn, his sense of syntactic structures and meaning makes it possible for him to predict the graphic print, so he is highly selective, sampling the print to confirm to prediction (Potter, 1982; Burke, 1976; Allen, 1976).
Readers test the predictions they make by asking themselves if what they are reading makes sense and sounds like language. To sum up, readers develop sampling strategies to pick only the most useful and necessary graphic cues. They develop prediction strategies to get to the underlying grammatical structure and to anticipate what they are likely to find in print. They develop confirmation strategies to check on the validity of their predictions, and they have correction strategies to use when their predictions do not work out (Goodman, 1976).

In making use of the three kinds of information available, the reader is either cued or miscued. Goodman's research strategy is to look at these miscues in oral reading. Miscues are occurrences of mismatches between the text and the reader's response (Burke, 1976:31). They are not errors because some very good reading involves miscues where meaning need not be disturbed (Burke, 1976). This analysis of the miscues will lead to an understanding of the reading strategies a reader uses. When things do not go as planned, i.e., when there is something wrong and readers are miscued, we are provided with a window into the functioning of the reading process. We can ask which cues were actually available for the reader to use. If we collect and categorize these miscues in reading, we will be able to outline the reading process and to evaluate the effectiveness of individual readers.
1:2 Statement of the Problem

In their attempt to process the Arabic print and get to meaning, Jordanian students have been making miscues, and school people have been concerned with eradicating these miscues. So, it is the intent of this research to:

1- Identify these miscues, categorize them into their types, i.e., graphophonic, syntactic, semantic, and code them using the three categories—graphic similarity, syntactic and semantic acceptability—of Y. Goodman and C. Burke.

2- Consider these miscues in conjunction with the reading strategies used by the readers, and find out how these miscues relate to the expected responses of the readers.

3- Test the usefulness of applying the Goodman Taxonomy in dealing with the Arabic oral reading miscues of Jordanian students.

4- Compare the findings of current research in the area of reading miscues committed by Jordanian learners of EFL and in the area of reading miscues committed by Jordanian learners/Arabic—with the purpose of finding common reading strategies, and, perhaps, universals in this area.

5- Recommend and suggest ideas accordingly.
Significance of the Study

Since no miscue analysis proper has been conducted on Jordanian students interacting orally with the Arabic print, the researcher sees that the presence of such a study would be of some avail in the following respects:

Directing the attention of the teachers of the Arabic language towards the importance of the miscues their students produce in their oral reading, and that these miscues reveal the strengths and weaknesses of their students.

Providing teachers of Arabic with a scientific procedure for identifying and analysing their students' miscues and finding out the reasons that cause them so as to be more effective and purposeful in approaching them.

Acquainting the teachers of Arabic with a systematic way of considering the oral reading miscues of their students based on Goodman's Taxonomy; the thing that might contribute to the improvement of the teachers' practices and their general understanding of the language and how its cueing systems are interrelated.

By observing the reading behaviour of their students from the perspective of how their miscues are related, teachers of the Arabic language would develop the skill of designing remedial instructional lessons to tackle students' weaknesses and build on their strengths.
1.4 Definitions of Terms

The following terms will have the associated meaning whenever they are encountered in this study.

A Miscue: "an actual observed response (OR) in oral reading which does not match the expected response (ER)" (Goodman, 1976). The deviation in oral reading is called a miscue to suggest that it is not a random error, but, in fact, is cued by the thought and language of the reader as he encounters the print. A miscue can be a substitution: 

 omission: 

 insertion: 

 reversal: 

Miscue analysis: a diagnostic and evaluative instrument specially designed by Y. Goodman and C. Burke (1972) and is used in oral reading miscue studies for examining each miscue with respect to nine questions. It also contains procedures for describing and evaluating the reader's behaviour on psycholinguistic basis (App. D).

The Goodman Taxonomy: The emergence and expansion of reading miscues research has been accompanied by the development of the instrument used in categorising the miscues. The Goodman Taxonomy of reading miscues provides the researcher with a means of investigating
miscues in light of the language systems—graphophonic, syntactic, and semantic. And within each of the three substructures, the Taxonomy investigates various dimensions of that individual structure. The questions in the Taxonomy are designed to describe each miscue in linguistic detail and finally determine to what degree it affects the reading process.

As cited in Hatamleh (1982:7), it is "a reading research instrument designed by K. Goodman to be used in classifying, coding, and analysing in depth the reader's miscues on the basis of an 18-category taxonomy" (App. D).

The work-sheet: a specially prepared copy of the reading text used for recording all the reader's miscues (App. I).

The RMI Coding Sheet: a sheet prepared specially for entering the selected miscues from the reader's work-sheet and their text counterparts (OR and ER) (App. A).

The RMI READER Profile: a chart which indicates the reader's use of various reading strategies and his patterns of strengths and weaknesses. It also includes the readers' repeated miscues and his corrections. It is interpreted on the basis of the RMI results (App. B).

Retelling Outline: a format for outlining the reading material used for estimating the reader's retelling score, totalling (100) points, and must be prepared by the researcher and/or the teacher (App. C).
Retelling Score: a measure of the comprehension that the student gains from reading.

Comprehension Patterns: these refer to the interrelationships demonstrated by the RMI questions 6, 8, 9 which determine semantic acceptability and meaning change in conjunction with miscue correction (App.E).

Grammatical Relationships Patterns: these refer to the interrelationships demonstrated by the RMI questions 6, 7, 8 which determine grammatical acceptability and semantic acceptability in conjunction with correction (App.E).

Graphic Miscueing: the substitution of a word graphically similar to the text word regardless of grammatical structure and meaning.

Semantic Miscueing: this refers to producing miscues that either do not make sense in light of the meaning in the text, or preserve the semantic features of the text.

Syntactic Miscueing: producing miscues which create structures that mismatch grammatical features.

The Language Cueing Systems: these refer to the three language systems that operate within the reading process: the graphophonic (letter-sound relationship), the syntactic (the grammatical relationship), and the semantic (the meaning relationship). One or more of these three systems are involved whenever a miscue is produced.
Reading Strategies: these refer to the interactions with the print which are available to the unaided reader, and they involve the strategies of predicting, correcting, hypothesizing, and integrating the meaning of the print.