The Reading Strategies used by University of Bahrain Third and Fourth Year English Major Students to Comprehend Academic Texts

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the reading strategies (Global Strategies, Problem Solving Strategies and Support Strategies) used by University of Bahrain English major students when reading assigned expository texts in English. This study also explored the relationship between those reading strategies used by University of Bahrain English major students and their level of reading comprehension when reading assigned expository texts in English. The sample of the study is comprised of twenty eight English major students registered in two language development courses at the University of Bahrain’s Department of English Language and Literature, ENGL 305 Language Development (4) and ENGL 405 Language Development (5).

The Survey of Reading Strategy (SORS), developed by Mokhtari & Sheorey (2002), and the modified Survey of Reading Strategies (Modified SORS), developed by Park (2010), were used to identify the students’ general reading strategy use and text-specific reading strategy use respectively. In addition, the reading comprehension section of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) was administered to measure the students’ reading comprehension. Finally, a Personal Information Questionnaire (PIQ) and Survey of Teaching Reading Strategies, developed by the researcher, were used to determine the backgrounds of the students and the opinions of the instructors at the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Bahrain to the teaching of reading strategies respectively. The data collected from these instruments was analyzed by means of descriptive statistics and a Pearson’s Correlation test.

The results showed that the students reported high usage of the three kinds of reading strategies, with a higher usage of Problem-Solving Strategies followed by Global and Support Strategies. In addition, no statistically significant relationship was found between the students’ use of the reading strategies and their level of reading comprehension. Based on the results, the current study recommends the provision of a dedicated reading strategies course in the program of the Department of English Language and Literature at the University of Bahrain as well as allocating time for in-class and home assignment reading activities and instruction in all language development courses offered to students of the University of Bahrain.