View metadata, citation and similar papers at core.ac.uk

brought to you by CORE

provided by Universiti Putra Malaysia Institutional Repository

UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES AND READING PROFICIENCY OF IRANIAN EFL STUDENTS

KARIM HAJHASHEMI

FBMK 2010 20

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES AND READING PROFICIENCY OF IRANIAN EFL STUDENTS

By

KARIM HAJHASHEMI

Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, University Putra Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts

October 2010

UPM

to my inspiring father,

to my loving mother,

my supporting siblings, and

my cute and handsome nephews Ali & Pouya

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES AND READING PROFICIENCY OF IRANIAN EFL STUDENTS

By

KARIM HAJHASHEMI

October 2010

Chairman: Associate Professor Wong Bee Eng, PhD

Faculty: Modern Languages and Communication

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between multiple intelligences (MI) and reading proficiency of Iranian EFL pre-university students in Tehran, Iran and to see if gender plays a role in this regard. Specifically, the study attempted 1) to verify the intelligences identifiable among high/low achievers in reading, 2) to discover the differences in multiple intelligences of Iranian EFL students based on their reading proficiency and gender, 3) to determine the relationship between the multiple intelligences and reading proficiency of Iranian EFL students, 4) to identify the components of multiple intelligences which are correlated with the score of reading proficiency test of Iranian EFL students, and 5) to find the intelligence type that is the best predictor of learners' performance in reading proficiency test. In order to meet the objectives, four research questions were asked. A descriptive and ex post facto design

was employed to ascertain relationships among the naturally occurring variables. The participants for this study were 128 pre-university students (grade12, 18-19 years old) of both genders studying in Tehran in the academic year 2008-2009. The district was chosen randomly among 19 school districts of Tehran. The students were chosen randomly from two different segregated high schools in that region. Random sampling was used to create homogeneous groups without involving any potential biases or judgments. Three instruments were utilized in this study namely, 1) a demographic questionnaire; 2) the Persian version of McKenzie's MI Inventory; and 3) a standardized reading proficiency test which was selected from retrieved paper-based TOEFL® tests.

Analyzing the data using *t*-test, it was found that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean musical-rhythmic intelligence scores of the low achievers and the high achievers. This means that there were no significant differences between intelligence types of the students and their reading proficiency scores except for their musical-rhythmic intelligence which was positive and stronger among the low achievers. Based on this, it seems that the high achievers have a lower musical intelligence, which also means that better readers are less intelligent 'musically'. A statistically significant difference between the mean bodily-kinesthetic intelligence scores and the two genders was also revealed. In other words, no significant gender difference was found in the intelligence types of the students except their bodily-kinesthetic intelligence which was positive and stronger among the females. No significant difference was found between

the male and female Iranian EFL pre-university students in their reading proficiency scores.

Results obtained from the correlation analysis revealed no significant relationship between the two variables of MI and reading score. Based on Guilford's rule of the thumb, the relationship of MI and reading scores in the present study was found to be negligible. Furthermore, the results of the correlation analysis revealed that there was a low significant, negative relationship between musical-rhythmic intelligence and reading which suggests that when the reading score of a student increases, musical-rhythmic intelligence of the same student decreases and vice versa. This finding indicates that the low proficiency EFL learners' reading comprehension performance is related to the musical-rhythmic intelligence.

Overall, three categories of MI were found to be predictive of reading proficiency. Those significant predictor variables were musical-rhythmic, verbal-linguistic, and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences. The coefficient of determination R^2 of the variables (musical-rhythmic, verbal-linguistic, and bodily-kinesthetic) showed that these variables contributed 13.5% of the variance in reading proficiency collectively.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sastera

HUBUNGAN ANTARA KECERDASAN BERGANDA (*MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES*) DAN KECEKAPAN MEMBACA DI KALANGAN PELAJAR EFL IRAN

Oleh

KARIM HAJHASHEMI

Oktober 2010

Pengerusi: Prof. Madya Wong Bee Eng, PhD

Fakulti: Bahasa Moden dan Komunikasi

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mempelajari hubungan antara *multiple intelligences* (MI) dan kemahiran membaca dikalangan mahasiswa pra-universiti EFL di Teheran, Iran serta mengetahui hubungkait faktor jantina dalam kajian ini. Secara khususnya, kajian ini cuba 1) mengesahkan kecerdasan yang boleh dikenalpasti antara pelajar yang cemerlang dengan pelajar yang lemah 2) membezakan kecerdasan penggandaan di kalangan pelajar EFL Iran berdasarkan kecekapan membaca dan jantina, 3) menentukan hubungan antara kecerdasan majmuk dengan keupayaan membaca pelajar EFL Iran, 4) mengenalpasti komponen kecerdasan majmuk yang berkorelasi dengan skor pembacaan ujian kemahiran daripada pelajar EFL Iran, dan 5) mencari faktor MI sebagai prediktor terbaik untuk prestasi pelajar dalam ujian kemahiran membaca. Empat soalan kajian telah dikemukakan

untuk mencapai objektif kajian ini. Satu rekabentuk yang deskriptif dan "ex post facto" telah dibentuk untuk memastikan hubungan di antara pembolehubah yang terhasil secara sendirinya. Peserta untuk kajian ini terdiri daripada 128 pelajar pra-universiti (gred 12, 18-19 tahun) dari kedua-dua jantina yang menuntut di Teheran pada tahun akademik 2008-2009. Daerah untuk melaksanakan kajian ini dipilih secara rawak di antara 19 jenis daerah persekolahan di Teheran. Pelajar-pelajar juga dipilih secara rawak dari dua sekolah menengah yang berasingan yang berada didalam daerah yang terpilih. Persampelan rawak digunakan bagi memperolehi kumpulan-kumpulan yang homogeny serta tanpa sebarang prasangka atau penilaian. Tiga jenis instrument telah digunakan dalam kajian ini iaitu 1) soal-selidik demografi, 2) "McKenzie's MI Inventory" versi Parsi, dan 3) satu ujian kecekapan kemahiran membaca yang dipilih daripada kertas ujian TOEFL® yang telah dipiawaikan. Semasa penganalisaan data, perbezaan statistik yang signifikan telah dijumpai dalam skor min pelajar yang berprestasi rendah dan tinggi. Berdasarkan maklumat ini, penuntut yang berprestasi tinggi nampaknya memiliki kecerdasan muzikal yang lebih rendah, hal ini turut bermakna bahawa pembaca yang lebih baik juga kurang cerdas secara muzikal. Satu perbezaan statistik yang signifikan antara skor rata Perisikan Kinestetik dengan kedua-dua jantina itu juga diperlihatkan. Tidak ada hubungan yang signifikan dijumpai antara kedua-dua pembolehubah MI dengan skor membaca. Seterusnya, keputusan regresi 'stepwise' menunjukkan bahawa terdapatnya signifikasi yang rendah, hubungan negatif antara kecerdasan muzik dan membaca yang menunjukkan bahawa ketika skor pembacaan meningkat, kecerdasan muzikal pelajar yang sama menyusut dan sebaliknya. Penemuan ini menunjukkan bahawa

prestasi kemahiran membaca pemahaman di kalangan penuntut EFL yang berprestasi rendah adalah berkaitan dengan kecerdasan muzikal. Selain itu, 3 kategori MI tersah berkaitan dengan kemahiran membaca. Prediktor pemboleh ubah yang signifikan itu ialah "muzikal", "lisan" dan "kecerdasan kinestetik". Koefisien determinasi R^2 daripada pembolehubah (muzikal, lisan, dan kinestetik) menunjukkan bahawa pembolehubah-pembolehubah ini menyumbang 13.5% daripada varians dalam kemahiran membaca.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My first and foremost debt of gratitude is to Allah, the most compassionate, the merciful. There is just too much of His blessing in this life to count. I thank Him for giving me the strength, inspiration and perseverance to complete this thesis. I extend my gratitude to those who have contributed directly and indirectly to the completion of this thesis. The completion of this would not have materialized without their contributions and unfailing support.

I owe special thanks and appreciation to my supervisor, mentor, and the coordinator of the Department, Associate Professor Dr. Wong Bee Eng for her awe-inspiring contributions, insightful input, intellectual support, comments and cheerful disposition which made this research possible. Without her help, encouragement, and patience, this research would still be in the evolutionary stage. Thank you Dr. Wong.

I would also like to express my special gratitude and appreciation to my committee member, Associate Professor Dr. Shameem Rafik Gala for her professional guidance, constructive ideas and suggestions in the preparation and completion of this thesis. Thank you Dr. Shameem.

My eternal gratitude goes to Gary A. Payne, Lorraine Carmosino and the Educational Testing Service for helping me by supplying reading materials and granting me the permission to use them.

My deep appreciation also goes to my dearest friends Seyed Hossein Sadat Hashemi, Omid Zaker, Dr. Malayeri, Dr. Bijandi and Dr. Akef for sharing their ideas and thoughts with me and obviously, without whom, I would never have come this far.

My deepest gratitude also goes to my father, my mother, my siblings, and my handsome nephews, Ali and Pouya, for their unconditional love, prayers, endless support and encouragement. My thanks to them who believed in me, expressed their patience and provided me with moral support.

Finally, I am endlessly thankful to my brother, Majid, who is also my best friend. He supported and encouraged me through these years of my study and research. My degree and this thesis would not have been accomplished without him. Thank you Majid.

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on (October 2010) to conduct the final examination of Karim Hajhashemi on his thesis entitled "Relationship between Multiple Intelligences and Reading Proficiency of Iranian EFL Students" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master of Arts.

Members of the Thesis Examination Committee were as follows:

Mohd Faiz Sathi. Bin Abdullah, PhD
Associate Professor
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

Washima Che Dan, PhD
Associate Professor
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Internal Examiner)

Shamala Paramasivam, PhD
Lecturer
Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Internal Examiner)

Pramela Krish N. Krishnasamy, PhD
Associate Professor
Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
(External Examiner)

BUJANG KIM HUAT, PhD
Professor and Deputy Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date: 23 December 2010

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

Wong Bee Eng, PhD
Associate Professor
Modern Languages and Communication
University Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

Shameem Rafik Gala, PhD
Associate Professor
Modern Languages and Communication
University Putra Malaysia
(Member)

HASANAH MOHD GHAZALI, PhD
Professor and Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date:

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institutions.

KARIM HAJHASHEMI

Date: 19 October 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
ABSTRACT		iii
ABSTRAK		vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS		ix
APPROVAL		xi
DECLARATION		xiii
LIST OF TABLES		xvii
LIST OF FIGURES		xix
LIST OF APPENDICES		xx
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS		xxi
CHAPTER		
1	**INTRODUCTION**	1
	1.1 Background to the Study	1
	1.2 The Education System of Iran	5
	1.3 Statement of the Problem	9
	1.4 Purpose of the Study	14
	1.5 Objectives of the Study	14
	1.6 Research Questions	15
	1.7 Theoretical Perspective of the Study	15
	1.8 Significance of the Study	17
	1.9 Definition of Key Terms	19
	1.9.1 MI Inventory	19
	1.9.2 Multiple Intelligences	20
	1.9.3 Reading Proficiency	20
	1.9.4 High and Low achievers	20
	1.10 Organization of the Thesis	21
2	**LITERATURE REVIEW**	22
	2.1 The Relationship between Reading and Multiple Intelligences	22
	2.2 Theory of Multiple Intelligences	25
	2.2.1 Verbal-linguistic intelligence	28

2.2.2 Logical-mathematical intelligence 30
2.2.3 Visual- spatial intelligence 31
2.2.4 Musical-rhythmic intelligence 32
2.2.5 Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence 33
2.2.6 Interpersonal intelligence 34
2.2.7 Intrapersonal intelligence 36
2.2.8 Naturalist intelligence 37
2.2.9 Existential intelligence 38
2.3 The Reading Process 39
2.3.1 Schema theory and Reading 43
2.3.2 Types of schema 45
2.3.3 Different theoretical models of reading 50
2.4 Studies on Multiple Intelligences in different countries 53
2.5 Studies on MI in Iran 64
2.6 Summary of the Chapter 75

3 **METHODOLOGY** 76
3.1 Design of the Study 76
3.2 Research Questions 77
3.3 Participants 78
3.4 Instruments 80
3.4.1 Demographic Questionnaire 80
3.4.2 Multiple Intelligences Inventory 80
3.4.3 Reading Proficiency Test 83
3.5 Data Collection Procedure 84
3.6 Data Analysis 85

4 **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION** 87
4.1 Demographic Background 87
4.2 MI Inventory 90
4.3 Reading proficiency test 91
4.4 Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) 93
4.4.1 Normality Test 94
4.4.2 Test of Homogeneity of Variance 96

4.5 Findings by Research Questions 98
4.5.1 Research Question No. 1 98
4.5.2 Research Question No. 2 103
4.5.3 Research Question No. 3 106
4.5.4 Research Question No. 4 110
4.6 Summary of the Chapter 113

5 **CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS** 115
5.1 Introduction 115
5.2 Summary of the Study 115
5.3 Limitations of the Study 118
5.4 Implications of the Study 119
5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies 122

REFERENCES 125
APPENDICES 136
BIODATA OF STUDENT 173
LIST OF PUBLICATIONS 174