

Reading Comprehension Questions in Fourth Grade Arabic Language Textbooks in Oman: An Analysis From the Perspective of Progress in International Reading Literacy Study

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Abstract—The study aimed to determine the extent to which the reading comprehension questions in the book, *I Love My Language for the Fourth Grade, Part One and Two*, consider the reading comprehension processes. It also measured the level of consideration of the reading comprehension questions for the reading comprehension processes by the international study Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). The descriptive analytical method was used, and its tool was a content analysis card, which included four processes with 237 questions. The results showed that the book *I Love My Language for the fourth grade* included the four reading comprehension processes and carefully analyzed most of its sub-processes. It is recommended to reconsider the balance of processes in the book. This is important in light of the reading comprehension processes and the diversity of reading comprehension questions. It is necessary to take into account the four comprehension processes and their sub-processes in the two parts measured by the international study "PIRLS".

Index Terms—reading comprehension processes, Progress in International Reading Literacy Study, Arabic, Oman, fourth-grade

I. INTRODUCTION

The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) is a comprehensive global assessment and research initiative that primarily aims to evaluate students' reading proficiency and examine the educational environment's impact on their reading abilities. It specifically focuses on the quality of students' reading skills during a critical transitional phase in their cognitive and literary development as they acquire the ability to read. Additionally, PIRLS investigates the influence of both the school environment and family dynamics on students' reading experiences. The test is implemented at the same time for all participating countries. To achieve fairness and objectivity, it is based on a comparison between students' abilities in reading skills in their mother tongue. The test uses a set of tools represented by test booklets in addition to questionnaires.

The PIRLS uses two types of questions in the test booklets: open-ended questions and multiple-choice questions. It addresses four comprehension processes: focusing on the information contained in the text and recalling it clearly, making direct inferences from the reading text, integrating and interpreting ideas and information, and examining and evaluating content and other text elements (Mullis et al., 2015; Al-Shanqeeti, 2020). The process of focusing on the information contained in the text and recalling it does not require inference or interpretation, but the meaning is clear. It is declared in the text, and the focus remains on the sentence or phrase formulation. In the process of forming direct conclusions, readers need to link two or more ideas from the information. Thus, the reader infers ideas and information that are not directly stated, and it requires thinking beyond the existing ideas. Some of these conclusions are direct and based on information found in the real world. For the process of interpreting and integrating ideas and information, the reader needs to understand the text. The reading is available for a set of interpretations according to the reader's perspective, and it needs his experience and cognitive and cultural backgrounds to be more than direct conclusions. As for the process of examining and evaluating the content, language, and textual elements, the student's focus in this type of process shifts to an interest in criticizing the text.

From the content side, the focus is on interpreting and measuring what has been understood. In exchange for understanding the practicality by rejecting, accepting, or remaining neutral, the reader examines the text and evaluates it through his personal opinion. As for the elements of the text, such as structure and language, the student examines how the writer presents the meaning. Also, when evaluating the elements of the text's structure and language, he resorts to his information about the use of language and the general features of the text. The text depends on all of the ideas, feelings, and information (Bruggink et al., 2022).

Educational curricula have an essential influence in fostering students' good attitudes towards reading and developing their reading comprehension and proficiency (Duke et al., 2011). For this reason, it has to use effective instructional practices and strategies. Both Zayer and Hashim (2016) and Al-Suwaifi (2022) have advocated these practices. They have shown that achieving these outcomes in the educational process should be according to visions based on employing active learning forms in the educational curricula and relying on applications of modern educational theories, in addition to integration into international test lists. This gives an accurate picture of the actual level (Al-Suwaifi, 2022; Zayer, 2016).

Based on its policy of making the most of every opportunity for international cooperation and linking its educational system with global experiences, the Sultanate of Oman participated in the study in 2011. The results showed low levels of students compared to the international average achievement. The national report of the international study indicated that the low performance of Omani students is mainly due to their lack of knowledge of the types of questions and their wording. Following the release of the 2011 study's findings, the Ministry of Education (MoE) made a number of recommendations. It included the addition of enrichment activities in the subjects where students' average was low. It also suggested the modification of the first set of curricula in the Arabic language subject to include questions of higher abilities in light of the reading comprehension processes in international studies.

A. Study Problem

The Sultanate of Oman is similar to other nations. It has difficulties in improving the teaching and development of reading skills, particularly within the context of international assessments that measure reading proficiency among participating countries. This assertion is substantiated by the outcomes of the PIRLS assessment designed to evaluate reading proficiency among fourth-grade students. These findings revealed subpar performance among kids in the Sultanate. The study examines the impact of reading skills and processes on the quality of results in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). It highlights certain deficiencies in the reading level of students in the Sultanate of Oman, as observed across different educational categories (El Shorbagi et al., 2017).

Therefore, Oman paid attention to the results of the 2011 international study and extracted statistical data and indicators from it. Analysis of these data and indicators contributed to identifying the important elements that control the teaching and learning process. It had a direct impact on the school curricula in Oman, as it introduced many improvements to the first set of curricula, especially the Arabic language (MoE, 2019). The amendments made to the Arabic language curricula contributed to improving some reading levels, and the results of PIRLS, 2016 confirmed this. In the third session, the Sultanate of Oman achieved a higher level of achievement than it achieved in 2011, as it obtained 418 points compared to 391 in 2011 (PIRLS, n. d). There was a difference of 27 points, which is statistically significant, but it is still less than the average of 500 points, which means that the student's achievement results are still below what is required. This was confirmed by the study of restructuring the education system conducted as part of the National Education Symposium in the Sultanate of Oman: The Way Forward. The study revealed the aspects related to the quality of education and student performance remain below international performance standards. Among the study's recommendations is a focus on the Arabic language in developing education and curricula (Education, 2014), which requires the continuation of the process of evaluating and developing aspects of the educational process. Therefore, this research problem sheds light on the questions of the book; *I Love My Language*, for the fourth grade to analyze the processes it addresses. Also, it compares them in light of the reading comprehension processes of the PIRLS to reveal the extent to which the presence of these processes is taken into account in the book after the amendments made by the MoE.

B. Study Questions

- To what extent do the reading comprehension questions in *I Love My Language* take into account the reading comprehension processes measured by the PIRLS?
- What is the level of consideration of reading comprehension questions for reading comprehension processes in the PIRLS in the book *I Love My Language* in Parts One and Two?

C. Objectives of the Study

- Revealing the extent to which the reading comprehension questions in *I Love My Language* take into account the reading comprehension processes measured by PIRLS.
- Revealing the level of consideration of reading comprehension questions for reading comprehension processes in the PIRLS in *I Love My Language* in Part One and Two.
- Reaching a number of findings, recommendations and proposals that could benefit the educational field in developing reading processes.

D. Significance of Study

- This study will serve as a foundation for future research in the field. It will explore various aspects of reading comprehension processes and their application in constructing questions. This research aims to measure the level of reading comprehension.
- Designing Arabic language books for the fourth grade and planning them well can help achieve advanced levels in the results of upcoming international study courses. This also applies to improving reading comprehension of reading texts in general.

- This study will provide a tool for reading comprehension processes that can be used in preparing reading comprehension questions.
- For curriculum planners and developers, the results of the analysis are expected to benefit those responsible for developing the I Love My Language books for the fourth grade in the Sultanate of Oman.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Muhammad (2017) aimed to evaluate the level of reading performance in light of the PIRLS (Mohamed, 2017). The study was implemented on 377 male and female students in the fourth grade of primary school, and the study adopted the PIRLS test models 2016 while relying on an average of 60% as a reference indicator for each skill to indicate mastery. The results of the study showed that students in the fourth grade of primary school possess weak reading skills as compared to international study skills. One of the most prominent recommendations of this study was to reconsider the nature of the reading activities provided to fourth-grade students in a way that is consistent with the requirements of the PIRLS. The research suggested conducting another study to demonstrate the effectiveness of reading activities in the books.

Al-Zaabiya and Al-Mahrazi (2019) also conducted a study that aimed to identify the data of the Sultanate of Oman in the booklets for PIRLS (Al-zaabi et al., 2019). Using the graded response model, treating it with international standardization, and examining its psychometric properties, the study used the PIRLS 2011 test as its tool. The test consisted of 146 test items, 74 items with binary responses, and 72 items representing multiple responses. It was applied to 13 groups of fourth-grade students in the Sultanate of Oman, with a total sample of 10,394 male and female students. The results of the study revealed that all test items fit the expectations of the graded response model, with the exception of 8 items, representing 5% of the test items. This indicates that the test has good psychometric properties. One of the most prominent recommendations of this study is developing the vocabulary of the fourth-grade textbook in line with the requirements of the PIRLS.

Hawass (2020) conducted a study through which she aimed to evaluate reading comprehension skills in the reading program for Arabic language textbooks in the classroom (Youssef Youssef Hawas, 2020). The study came up with a list that included the skills necessary for reading comprehension among first-year secondary school students, which are retrieving information, integrating ideas, interpreting information, evaluating content, language, and elements, and forming inferences. 25 sub-skills emerged from these main skills. One of the most prominent results of the study is that reading comprehension skills came in varying proportions. The skill of retrieving information attained the highest level.

In contrast, the skill of integrating ideas, interpreting information, and the skill of evaluating content, language and elements came in at a weak rate. As for the skill of forming inferences, the book was devoid of them. In light of this, the study recommended the necessity of paying attention to special activities and training with reading comprehension included in the Arabic language book for the first year of secondary school.

Mustafa (2021) conducted a study that aimed to identify the reading skills necessary for fourth-grade female students to achieve reading in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Mustafa, 2021). The study employed a questionnaire to determine reading skills necessary for fourth-grade female students, in addition to a proposed experimental program. The study came up with a list of reading skills necessary for fourth-grade female students, including focusing on and retrieving information contained in the text, building direct inferences from the text, interpreting and integrating ideas and information, and evaluating and criticizing the text's elements and content. The study recommended re-planning the fourth-grade curricula in light of the reading skills needed for the PIRLS tests.

Foy et al. (2011) showed that the Sultanate of Oman is among the countries in which test vocabulary items, whether binary or multiple, are characterized by high difficulty factors compared to the global average (Pierre Foy, 2011). This was determined by comparing the results of students' responses to binary and multiple vocabulary items. The binary vocabulary obtained an average using the Arch model equal to 0.37 compared to the global average of 0.17. In contrast, the multi-response vocabulary received an average of 1.14 compared to the global average of 0.90. The study also showed that the results of the discrimination coefficients were good and positive and less than the global average. For binary vocabulary, they were 0.48 and for multi-response vocabulary, they were 0.61. Therefore, the study recommended conducting further modifications in the curricula and teaching methods in order to address the averages of difficulty and discrimination to be within the limits of acceptable international levels.

Tunmer et al. (2013) conducted a study in New Zealand that aimed to find out the reasons for the low level of students' reading comprehension skills and determine appropriate strategies to raise it by comparing students' results in the PIRLS cycles (conducted in 2001, 2006, and 2011) (Tunmer et al., 2013). The study employed the descriptive analytical approach and revealed in its results that students' reading knowledge is affected by many factors, the most prominent of which is the economic and cultural environment in which the student lives, which affects the level of acquiring reading comprehension skills. Therefore, the study recommended replacing the curricula used in teaching reading with other curricula with higher efficiency in their educational contents.

In the same context, Zimumerman (2014) conducted a study that aimed to compare the performances of high and low-achieving schools according to the PIRLS scale in South Africa (Zimmerman, 2014). The study relied on a case study approach, where six cases were studied. The results revealed a discrepancy in methods that are used in teaching to develop reading comprehension skills. The study recommended improving the interactive teaching strategies that teachers employ

in their teaching methods in a way that helps to develop good reading comprehension skills.

Ratri (2015) aimed to study the influence of factors surrounding the student, namely at home, parental practices, student attitudes towards reading, reading practices outside school, and the use of modern technology in developing reading comprehension skills in light of test skills (Ratri, 2015). The PIRLS 2011 tests were used as a tool for the study, and the study sample was 4779 students. The study used a quantitative approach for students from 158 primary schools. The results showed that there was a statistical significance for the influence of the factors surrounding the students in the study sample. As recommended, the study seeks to conduct further research that reveals other variables related to the development of reading comprehension skills, such as analyzing school curricula.

III. METHODOLOGY

The current study employed the descriptive approach (content analysis), as it is an approach that studies the phenomenon and describes it accurately in terms of quantity and quality. This approach is characterized by a method that aims to issue objective judgments regarding the extent to which curricula are consistent with some general and specific standards. It also determines the degree of availability of these standards in those curricula (Mayring, 2021).

A. Study Population and Sample

The study population included the book *I Love My Language* for the fourth grade - Part One, Second Edition 2017, and Part Two, Second Edition 2014 in Oman. The sample included all the reading comprehension questions that followed the reading text that appeared in the book under the title *I develop my language, answer, delve deeper, and express my opinion*, and numbered 237 questions in the two books: 117 in the first and 120 in the second part.

B. Study Variables

- Reading comprehension processes in the PIRLS International Study Test (the independent variable).
- Reading comprehension questions for the reading topics in the book *I Love My Language* for the fourth grade (dependent variable).

C. Study Tool

A content analysis card represented the study tool, and the analysis categories and units were determined in light of the study variables. The categories of analysis in the study tool are the reading comprehension processes in international studies, which are divided into four categories. These are focusing on clearly stated information, retrieving it and composing direct conclusions, integrating and interpreting information and ideas, and examining and evaluating language content and text elements. The units of analysis are questions that follow the reading text, which is mentioned under the title: *I develop my language, answer, delve deeper, and express my opinion*. The reliability of the arbitrators determined the validity of the tool, while the reliability of correlation was used to determine the accuracy of the tool. The copper equation calculated the percentage between two examples of analysis, which is a reliable percentage of 89.6%.

D. Accreditation of Analysis

The analysis controls were represented in the following points:

- Exclude the questions contained in the text navigation card because they are related to the goal of the first reading, which is to prepare the student for the reading text.
- Excluding questions related to review and free reading lessons because the study is related to reading comprehension questions in reading texts.
- Coding the questions and arranging them sequentially without separating them. This is for ease of reference and counting.
- Accurately defining the reading comprehension process so the question is classified into the sub-processes of the four reading comprehension processes.
- Tabulating the results in such a way that repetitions can be easily obtained for each reading comprehension process.

E. Statistical Methods in the Study

- The “Copper” equation was employed to detect the stability of the tool analysis (stability of analysts).
- Quantitative statistics of the answer to the first question through measures of central tendency to measure frequencies and percentages of reading comprehension questions in book *I Love My Language* in light of the reading comprehension processes in the PIRLS.
- To answer the second question, measures of central tendency were used to measure frequencies and percentages to reveal the level of consideration of comprehension questions reading comprehension processes in the PIRLS in book *I Love My Language* in its first and second parts.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To answer the first question, the author used the content analysis card prepared for this purpose to determine the processes measured by the reading comprehension questions contained in *I Love My Language*, which are shown in **Table**

1.

TABLE 1
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF PROCESSES MEASURED BY READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Reading comprehension questions in PIRLS	Processes measured by reading comprehension questions	I Love My Language	
		Repetition	Ratio (%)
	Focus on clearly stated information and retrieving	65	27.4
	Forming direct inferences	43	18.1
	Interpreting and integrating ideas and information	88	37.1
	Examining and evaluating content, language, and textual elements	28	11.8
	Other operations	13	5.4
	Total	237	94.5

It is clear from Table 1 that the percentage of reading comprehension processes measured by the international study that appeared in *I Love My Language* for the fourth grade is 94.5%, which is a very high percentage. It shows the attention and consideration of the curriculum authors to the four reading comprehension processes measured by the PIRLS and the extent of the MoE's interest in building the Arabic language curriculum for the fourth grade in accordance with international standards. This is reflected in the results of the development processes which the book *I Love My Language* for the fourth grade underwent. This is especially true since the book was written after the authors took two international study courses that changed the way the school's curriculum was organised and what it covered. The writing experts also used what they learned from the PIRLS tests in 2011 and 2016 to improve their knowledge of the four processes of reading comprehension and identify texts that improve them.

Table 1 reveals that the reading comprehension process with the highest percentage is the interpretation and integration of ideas and information, accounting for 37.10%. This percentage is notably high. Following closely in second place is the process of focusing on clearly stated information and retrieving it, with a rate of 27.40%, which is also a considerably high percentage. Lastly, forming direct inferences ranks third with a rate of 18.10%, representing an average rate. The fourth position was allocated to the task of examining and assessing the content, language, and textual components, with a rate of 11.8%, representing an average rate. Maybe the reason for the complex process of interpreting ideas and information is that authors prioritise understanding the external world through the text. They delve into questions about synonyms, antonyms, and other verbal aspects, all falling under this process. As for students, the process of examining and evaluating content, language, and textual elements received a lower percentage among the four processes. The lower percentage of the process of determining the reader's point of view in the curriculum may be attributed to the author's perspective that this particular process necessitates advanced cognitive abilities.

Additionally, the exclusion of questions pertaining to the reader's point of view, as mentioned in the book, may have contributed to this lower percentage. This process is categorised as a sub-process within the broader framework of analysing and evaluating content, language, and textual elements. It primarily focuses on the student's perspective rather than the writer's viewpoint. Table 1 also shows that despite the MoE's efforts in developing the book, there is still a need for more development inputs to take into account to reach the percentages set by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). This includes taking into account the percentage of forming direct conclusions so that it is greater than the percentage of focusing on clearly stated information and retrieval. Also, the content, language, and textual elements must be examined and assessed more carefully than usual in both books. Comparing this result with the results of previous studies, it is noted that it is consistent with the results of the study (Hawass, 2020; Al-Azaabia & Al-Mahrzi, 2019). These showed the percentage of mental skills in assessment activities with variance. At the same time, it differs from the results of Muhammad's (2017) that fourth-grade students possess reading skills at a weak level compared to the PIRLS (Al-zaabi et al., 2019; Mohamed, 2017; Youssef Youssef Hawas, 2020).

The comparison of percentages of reading comprehension processes in *I Love My Language* and reading comprehension processes determined by IEA is shown in **Table 2**.

TABLE 2
COMPARISON OF THE PERCENTAGES OF READING COMPREHENSION PROCESSES IN *I LOVE MY LANGUAGE* WITH THE READING COMPREHENSION PROCESSES IDENTIFIED BY THE IEA

Reading comprehension processes	% as determined by the IEA	% as described in book
Focus on clearly stated information and retrieving	20	27.4
Forming direct inferences	30	18.1
Interpreting and integrating ideas and information	30	37.1
Examining and evaluating content, language, and textual elements	20	11.8

It is noted that the percentage of focusing on and retrieving clearly stated information in the book is higher than what was determined by the IEA. It is also the second most common activity, with 27.4%. The third most common activity was forming inferences, with 18.1%. This is inconsistent with the four processes in the PIRLS. The process of forming inferences is less than what is specified by the IEA. This is perhaps due to the fact that one of the aspects needs to be amended in the written preparation of the book. The process of interpreting and integrating ideas and information had the highest percentage of 37.1%, which is slightly higher than what was determined by the IEA. This aspect of the book is

often recognised as it challenges students to engage in the complex task of interpreting and integrating ideas and information. This process demands twice the mental effort compared to simply focusing on straightforward information and drawing direct conclusions. However, it requires mastery in forming direct conclusions, which confirms the lack of the methodology for building the book.

To answer the second question, the author used the content analysis card prepared for this purpose, and **Table 3** shows the details.

TABLE 3
FREQUENCIES AND PERCENTAGES OF READING COMPREHENSION PROCESSES IN GENERAL IN *I LOVE MY LANGUAGE*

Processes measured by reading comprehension questions		Part one		Part two	
		Repetition	Ratio (%)	Repetition	Ratio (%)
Reading comprehension	Focus on clearly stated information and retrieving	24	20.5	41	34.1
	Form direct conclusions	26	22.5	17	14.1
	Interpreting and integrating ideas and information	45	38.4	43	35.8
	Examine and evaluate content and language and textual elements	15	12.8	13	10.8
	Other processes	7	5.9	6	5
Total		110	94	114	95

Table 3 showed that the percentage of consideration of reading comprehension questions was higher in the second part (95%) as compared to the first part (94%). Despite this, the percentage between them is close. This may be due to the authors carefully taking into account reading comprehension processes in the second part. The reason for this may be due to the higher number of questions in the second part compared to the first part. Regarding the order of reading comprehension processes in the first part, interpreting and integrating ideas and information came first, followed by forming direct conclusions, then focusing on and retrieving clearly stated information, and finally examining and evaluating content language and textual elements. As for the second part, interpreting and integrating ideas and information came in the first place, then focusing on clearly stated information and retrieving, followed by forming direct conclusions, and in the fourth place, examining and evaluating the content, language, and textual elements. It can be concluded from this that the first part was better at taking into account the proportions and order of the four processes of reading comprehension. Perhaps the reason is that the authors of the curriculum realized the importance of distributing the operations in the two parts as a result of the development processes that the first part underwent. The version that was analyzed is from the first part of the 2017 edition, while the second part is from the 2014 edition, which makes it necessary to reconsider it.

The skills of each process were reviewed and discussed as follows:

A. The Process of Focusing on and Retrieving Clearly Stated Information

TABLE 4
THE EXTENT OF FOCUSING ON CLEARLY STATED INFORMATION AND RETRIEVING IT

Sub processes of focusing on and retrieving clearly stated information	Part one		Part two	
	Repetition	Ratio (%)	Repetition	Ratio (%)
Know the information relevant to the specific purpose of reading	17	70.8	24	58.5
Find specific ideas in the text	5	20.8	14	34.1
Finding definitions for words and phrases	0	0	1	2.4
Knowing the elements of the story (time, place, characters)	1	4.1	2	4.8
Find the main idea stated in the text	1	4.1	0	0
Total	24	20.5	41	34.1

From **Table 4**, it became clear that the percentage of focusing on clearly stated information and retrieving it in the second part is greater than its percentage in the first part. Its percentage in the first part reached 20.5%, which is a high percentage and is consistent with what was determined by the IEA. As for the second part, the percentage is much higher than what the association specified (34.1%). Thus, the second part was better in taking into account the process of focusing on clearly stated information and retrieving it. Perhaps this is due to the accuracy of tracking the translation of this process and its sub-processes in the second part. It included a greater number of questions that represent this process and its sub-processes. It may be attributed to the presence of two scientific texts that are considered rich with facts, knowledge and information. Therefore, the percentage of questions increased in this process. As for the first part, all the texts contained in it are literary, and thus, the percentage of questions about interpreting ideas and information and integrating them increased at the level of focusing on clearly stated information and retrieving it. The highest percentage of sub-processes in the first part was the process of knowing relevant information definitions of words relevant to the specific goal of reading, with a frequency of 17 and a percentage of 70.8%. The first part did not pay attention to the process of searching for words and phrases; this is due to the authors' view of its weak importance compared to other processes. Any questions related to this process are presented in the first part according to the researchers' analysis. Perhaps it is due to other reading comprehension because it relies on explicit retrieval from the text. As for the second part, the highest percentage in the sub processes was in identifying information related to the specific goal of reading, with a frequency of 24 and a percentage of 58.5%. The second part should have addressed the process of identifying the main idea in the text. It failed

to establish relevant questions, possibly indicating the authors' need for more emphasis on the importance of balance in the sub-processes of the focusing process.

B. The Process of Forming Direct Inferences

TABLE 5
THE EXTENT OF FORMING DIRECT INFERENCE

Subprocesses of forming inferences	Part one		Part two	
	Repetition	Ratio (%)	Repetition	Ratio (%)
Explaining the cause and effect relationship in events	2	7.6	4	23.5
Inferring the main idea in the text through a series of evidence	19	73	13	76.4
Infer generalizations made in the text	3	11.5	0	0
Describe the relationship between two characters in the text	2	7.6	0	0
Total	26	22.2	17	14.1

It was clear from **Table 5** that the total number of forming direct inferences was 22.2% in the first part, while in the second part, the percentage of the process was 14.1%. Thus, it is concluded that the first part was better at the level of taking into account the process of forming direct inferences than the second part; this may be due to taking into account the sub-processes. There were questions in reading comprehension that measured it at a higher rate in the first part than what was stated in the second part. In part one, the highest percentage was of inferring the main idea in the text through a series of evidence, with a frequency of 19 and a percentage of 73%. Most of the book's lessons included this sub process in the form of reading comprehension questions. The lowest percentage for the two processes was of explaining the cause and effect relationship in events and describing the relationship between two characters in the text, with two repetitions, at a rate of 7.6% for each. As for the second part, the highest subprocess was inferring the main idea from the text through a series of evidence with a frequency of 13. Its percentage is 76.4%. The second part did not care about the process of inferring the generalizations contained in the text and describing the relationship between two characters at the level of forming direct inferences. Perhaps this is because the authors of the method focus on the process of deducing the main idea more than other processes. They seem to strongly believe in the importance of this process above all others and that reaching it guarantees access to the rest of the sub-processes in the deduction process. It provides room for thinking and solving problems, thus enabling the student to adapt to the difficulties he faces.

C. The Process of Interpreting and Integrating Ideas and Information

TABLE 6
THE EXTENT OF INTERPRETING AND INTEGRATING IDEAS AND INFORMATION

Subprocesses of interpreting, integrating and retrieving ideas and information	Part one		Part two	
	Repetition	Ratio (%)	Repetition	Ratio (%)
Distinguish the general meaning or significance of the text	4	3.4	2	1.6
Find alternatives to characters' actions	1	0.85	0	-
Compare and contrast information contained in the text	5	4.2	13	10.8
Deducing the type (scientific/literary) of the story/style	0	-	2	1.6
Interpreting the phenomena of the external world based on the information contained in the text	35	29.9	26	21.6
Total	45	38.4	43	35.8

Table 6 shows that the level of consideration of interpreting and integrating ideas and information in the first part is higher than in the second part. Its frequency reached 45 in the first part with 38.4%, while in the second part, its frequency reached 43 and its percentage is 35.8%. The percentage between them is close, and it is higher than what was determined by the IEA in the PIRLS. This may be due to the accuracy of tracking the translation of this process and its sub processes in both parts of the book or the interest of the authors in including a larger percentage of this process in proportion to its importance. In the first part, the process of interpreting the phenomena of the external world based on the information contained in the text was highest (29.9%). The first part neglected the process of inferring the type of story/style (scientific-literary). As for the second part, the same subprocess remained higher at 21.6% but is less as compared to the first part. This may be due to the authors focusing their greater attention at this age on training the student to link between the external world and its phenomena, the facts, ideas and events mentioned in the text and a vision based on connecting the student to his environment and community.

D. Examination and Evaluation of Content, Language and Textual Elements

TABLE 7
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PROCESS OF EXAMINING AND EVALUATING CONTENT, LANGUAGE, AND TEXTUAL ELEMENTS

Subprocesses of interpreting, integrating and retrieving ideas and information	Part one		Part two	
	Repetition	Ratio (%)	Repetition	Ratio (%)
Making a judgment about the completeness and clarity of information in the text	7	5.9	9	7.5
Evaluating the possibility of the events mentioned in the text occurring on the ground	0	-	1	0.83
Evaluate the extent to which the writer's evidence is likely to change what people think and do	3	2.5	0	-
Making a judgment about the reflection of the title of the text on its main meaning	1	0.85	0	-
Appreciate the impact that aesthetics of language and style have on text	4	3.4	3	2.5
Determine the writer's point of view in the text	0	-	0	-
Total	15	12.8	13	10.8

Table 7 shows that the percentage of examining and evaluating content, language, and textual elements in the first part was higher than its percentage in the second part. Its frequency reached 15 with 12.8%, while its frequency was 13, and the percentage was 10.8% in the second part. The two percentages are considered less than what the IEA has set (20% in the PIRLS tests). This means paying attention to this matter when developing the curriculum is required. This entails more reading comprehension questions that measure the process of evaluating the possibility of the events mentioned in the text occurring in reality, determining the writer's point of view in the text, and evaluating the extent to which the writer's evidence might change what people think and do. The highest percentage in the sub processes in the first part was making a judgment about the completeness and clarity of information in the text, with a frequency of 7 and a percentage of 5.9%. The book did not pay attention to the processes of evaluating the possibility of the events mentioned in the text and determining the writer's point of view in the text. As for the second part, the highest percentage was for the same sub process as in part one, with a frequency of 9 and a percentage of 7.5%. The second part was not concerned with evaluating the extent to which the writer's evidence might change what people think and do and making a judgment about the reflection of the title of the text on its meaning. It is noted that there is little interest in examining and evaluating content, language, and textual elements in general and most of the sub-processes. The reason may be due to the weak reliance on a reference such as assessment and assessment skills in the Arabic language standards document for the fourth grade. Perhaps the authors' view is that it is not important to achieve a balance in the sub-processes and that focusing on a group of students is sufficient to enable them to achieve their goals, which are drawn up by education policy. This might be due to the overlapping of these processes and the difficulty of separating them, as they are mental processes that cannot be separated. Therefore, their appearance in this way is not intended because students see the difficulty of developing examination and evaluation skills at this stage. However, it is considered a higher thinking process, which is a basic requirement. Especially in the era of the knowledge explosion and the information revolution, this requires an avid reader.

V. CONCLUSION

Studying and analysing levels of reading comprehension on a large scale are gaining interest due to its importance in empowering students with various reading comprehension skills. These skills include direct comprehension, gustatory comprehension, deductive comprehension, applied comprehension, critical comprehension, and creative understanding. Previous research supported the current study in developing a study tool to analyse the reading comprehension questions in an Arabic language book for fourth-grade students in the Sultanate of Oman in light of the reading comprehension processes in the international study PIRLS.

This study concluded by examining the correspondence between "I Love My Language" reading comprehension questions and PIRLS reading comprehension processes. An in-depth analysis of Parts One and Two of the curriculum indicates the degree to which the reading comprehension questions in "I Love My Language" account for the subtleties of the PIRLS. The outcomes shed light on the extent to which curricula adhere to international reading comprehension standards.

Our objective in investigating reading comprehension processes is to offer valuable insights that could potentially improve reading education, curriculum, and pedagogical approaches. Educators and curriculum developers should be able to utilise these findings to improve literacy processes and education.

VI. LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

A. Objective Boundaries

The current study was limited to analyzing the levels of questions related to reading comprehension only, which were mentioned in the book, and deals with treating the reading text from its various aspects under the title: *I develop my language, answer, delve deeper, and express my opinion.*

B. Spatial Boundaries

Sultanate of Oman.

C. Time Limits

Academic year 2022-2023.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Taking into account the relative balance in the distribution of reading comprehension processes in the Arabic language book, parts one and two.
- Reconsidering the diversity of reading comprehension questions to take into account the four comprehension processes and their sub processes in the book *I Love My Language*, its first and second parts.
- Directing the process of building the Arabic language curriculum for the fourth grade in light of the list of reading comprehension processes identified by the international study.
- Reconsidering the degree of consideration given to the process of forming direct inferences in the book *I Love My Language*, both parts it is higher than the process of focusing on and retrieving clearly stated information.
- Taking into account the process of examining and evaluating the content, language, and textual elements to a greater extent than in the book *I Love My Language* in its first and second parts.

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