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The Relationship between Linguistic Intelligence and Academic Achievement in Reading Comprehension among Students of English Department

Dijla Abbood Shareef Al-Turfi

Department of Islamic Education, College of Basic Education, University of Misan, Misan, Iraq.

dijla.a.sh@uomisan.edu.iq

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5914-4349>

Abstract:

English plays an important role in peoples' lives. Therefore, graduated students proficient in teaching English are required. They have to be capable of understanding and absorbing what they read, enabling them to effectively convey ideas and information to students in schools. Furthermore, linguistic intelligence demonstrates students' ability to understand the meaning of sentences and ideas. Also, it helps them to use language easily and fluently in their daily life. Possessing linguistic intelligence is beneficial for students in their teaching profession. This research aims to determine the relationship between linguistic intelligence and achievement in reading comprehension. To achieve this goal, a

questionnaire for linguistic intelligence was prepared, and final student grades in reading comprehension subject for the first semester were relied. The sample consisted of (52) second-year students in English department at Basic Education in University of Misan, Iraq. The results show that the students have an average level of linguistic intelligence. Moreover, the study reveals no statistically significant correlation between linguistic intelligence and academic achievement. Lastly, some recommendations and suggestions for future studies were presented.

Key words: English department, linguistic intelligence, reading comprehension, achievement.

Introduction:

English is a global language that plays a vital role in the most people lives. It is important because it assists individuals succeed in their professions and personal lives at present time and now and in the future (Mihret & Joshi: 2025). Therefore, English departments in colleges of education and basic education work diligently to graduate teachers capable of teaching English language to meet market needs. These colleges also

strive to make sure that these students possess the ability to understand and comprehend what they read, which enables them to efficiently deliver ideas and information to learners in schools. This helps achieving the education goals.

As is obvious, the multiple intelligences strategy targets to acquaint students with their linguistic intelligence and their capability to understand and analyze content. This leads to increase student motivation for learning, active participation during classes, and improved their scientific and academic level in the academic subjects (Al-Bdour et al.: 2025). Linguistic intelligence assists individuals in understanding sentence meanings, delving into thoughts, and interpreting and clarifying ideas and viewpoints. Moreover, it enables them to use synonyms and antonyms in speech easily and fluently. Furthermore, it empowers them with the ability to involve in debates, wordplay, dialogue, and persuasion, as well as to deconstruct symbols and phrases into smaller and more understandable concepts. These potentials are highly beneficial for those who practice teaching. Al-Shraiqi (2021) believes that linguistic skills are crucial for writers, intellectuals, and those working in various fields of knowledge, since they enable individuals to choose words effectively and arrange sentences in a clear and meaningful manner, leading to success and ingenuity in their work. This is due to this intelligence involves an individual's mastery of language in terms of vocabulary, similes and metaphors, grammar, literature (poetry and stories), word games, etc. Here it is significant to note that this is not synonymous with the concept of "bilingualism." However, it can affect the ease and speed of learning multiple languages by individual (Al-Zoubi: 2024). Furthermore, linguistic intelligence represents a significant and valuable advantage for second language teachers since it is an innate intelligence that teachers should grow up within their learners (Rusu cited in Nurdinsyah & et al.: 2025).

On the other side, linguistic intelligence depends on reading, which is one of the four language skills, in addition to its dependence on comprehending meanings and ideas. Therefore, for its importance, reading comprehension is taught for university students in English language departments. It develops abilities of students to understand, analyze, and give opinions about phrases, and hence generate new ideas. In light of that, Rahmadina and Jufrizal (2021) revealed that reading enables students to obtain more vocabulary and information through what they read. Consequently, it enhances their comprehension abilities, emphasizing the crucial role of reading in language learning. Soriano (2025) asserts that comprehension represents the peak of reading skills and the core of its processes. People who do not understand what they read cannot be considered to have read anything at all. Reading is an essential skill in human life, and individuals should strive to acquire and use it in daily social and professional situations (Bozan: 2024). Since good and strong reading simplifies comprehension, therefore students should work on skilling it to ensure their success in the career market. Moreover, reading

directly impacts the development of relationships among individuals in various societies, making it a crucial factor in improving quality of life (Duran & Caloc: 2025).

Research Problem:

University education is considered the highest level of education, where students develop their abilities and obtain new academic and professional skills. Gardner indicated that individuals have multiple intelligences with varying levels, in which these intelligences can be developed by training. People have an innate linguistic intelligence that can be developed through the university learning. Furthermore, reading comprehension is an essential subject for English department students, since it emphasizes on learning deep and fluent reading. It works on training them how to extract the main idea from texts and increases their vocabulary by increasing their exposure to English texts. Hence, the research idea arose which is finding out the relationship between linguistic intelligence and achievement in reading comprehension among English department students.

Research Objectives:

The research targets to:

1. Determine the level of linguistic intelligence among second-year students in the English Department.
2. Identify the relationship between linguistic intelligence and the academic achievement for second-year students in the English Department in reading comprehension.
3. Explore the predictive power of linguistic intelligence on the academic achievement level in reading comprehension among second-year students in the English Department.

To attain these objectives, the following questions will be answered:

1. What is the level of linguistic intelligence among second-year students in the English Department?
2. Is there a statistically significant correlation between the level of linguistic intelligence and academic achievement in reading comprehension of second-year students in the English Department?
3. Can the level of academic achievement in reading comprehension be predicted depending on the level of linguistic intelligence among the students of the research sample?

Research Importance:

The importance of this research can be briefed by the subsequent points:

1. It assists teachers identifying students' levels of linguistic intelligence.
2. It aids students in knowing their level of linguistic intelligence.
3. It helps to select the methods that support developing this type of intelligence in students.
4. It can provide vision into the relationship between linguistic intelligence and academic achievement in reading comprehension, composition, essay writing, or drama.
5. It can predict with the cognitive level based on a student's level of linguistic intelligence.
6. It assists identifying students who are uninterested in reading and acquiring knowledge, then developing a program that encourages and motivates them to read.

7. It encourages curriculum developers to include syllabus that help developing this linguistic intelligence, as English departments affirm on language fluency and proficiency.
8. The results of this research can inspire other researchers to fulfill similar studies.

Research Limits:

- Human limits: Second-year students in the English Department.
- Time limits: First semester of the 2025/2026 academic year.
- Subject limits: Linguistic intelligence and reading comprehension.
- Location limits: College of Basic Education, University of Misan, Iraq.

Theoretical Background:

Linguistic Intelligence:

Linguistic intelligence is one of the nine intelligences presented by Gardner in his theory. Howard Gardner clarified it as advanced verbal skills of human and their sensitivity to the sounds, intonations, rhythms, and meanings of words (Setyaningsih & et al.: 2022). It reveals the capability of individuals to learn language, use words and sentences efficiently, and communicate effectively and accurately to attain specific tasks. It is a complex ability that demands the individuals to have language sensitivity, recognize it, and utilize it in both spoken and written forms (Atmojo et al.: 2024). Moreover, linguistic intelligence is defined as the ability of individuals to use language, especially their native language, orally and in writing to fulfill their objectives. In this intelligence, the individuals have the capability to use phonetics, semantics, syntax, and pragmatics (Thomas & Perwez: 2024). People with this type of intelligence surpass at explaining, learning languages, teaching, writing, playing word games, debating, and persuasion. They also tend to extensive reading, watching movies, and inquiring topics that interest them. This type of intelligence is often noticed in writers, teachers, lawyers, talk show hosts, and public speakers (Amaro & et al.: 2022). Linguistic intelligence is not restricted to using language properly; it exceeded to using language in artistic and fascinating manner, along with deep understanding of words and ideas. It also comprises a tendency of learning different languages (Dewi: 2019). Linguistic intelligence demonstrates the ability to recall information and explaining them, which plays an essential role in the learning and teaching processes, then to use language efficiently to present information (Erlina & et al.: 2019). In order to improve language skills (such as speaking, listening, reading, writing, etc.), individuals have to train continuously through the learning and teaching processes, and develop themselves through verbal and non-verbal communication with all people (Handayani & et al.: 2021).

Linguistic Intelligence Domains:

Rusu (2024) showed that David Lazear defined the following four essential domains of linguistic intelligence:

1. Semantics: This indicates the meanings of words (homonymy and polysemy) through which people recognize the fine differences in the meanings of them.

2. **Phonetics:** This includes the sounds of letters, rhythm, inflection, and word count. Moreover, phonetics contributes in speech improving, as it is an essential factor in oral communication between humans.
3. **Syntax:** This indicates the arrangement of words and contains the rules that govern word order in writing or speech, along with the meaning of those words in a specific context.
4. **Pragmatics:** This represents the various uses of words, such as sentence structure, understanding the fine cultural differences of words, or aspects related to the emotional expressions of the speaker.

Reading:

One of the four major skills in the English language is reading. It is a method by which the reader explores new horizons in books, magazines, newspapers, or any various texts (Abd Al-Khadhim & Abd Al-Hamza: 2023). It is an activity that assists in developing an idea about a subject. It is an important skill that individuals need to enhance their life by keeping them informed about updates of life matters. On the other side, reading is considered an enjoyment source for the reader (Li and Wilhelm: 2008, cited in Mckee: 2012). It is a fundamental skill for people who strive to benefit from the experiences of others, and try to find solutions for problems by reading about human experiences (Rashid & et al.: 2021).

Reading Comprehension:

There are various definitions for reading comprehension. It could be defined as the capacity to understand and analyze texts and then appropriately interpret what the author has written (Mckee: 2012). Also, it can be defined as the procedure by which the reader extracts information from written or printed materials and then merging it with the prior self-knowledge to achieve a deep understanding of those texts (Dewi: 2019).

The reading comprehension procedure includes three levels of the linguistic system (Al-Shraiqi: 2021):

1. **Phonological level:** The capability to identify letters and their sounds, and to pronounce letters properly.
2. **Syntactic level:** Ability of understanding the sentence structure, grammar, and word order in the sentences to realize their meaning. It emphasizes on how words are joined to form entire thought, rather than just the definitions of individual words.
3. **Semantic level:** In this level, readers recall the written and literal levels of the texts. Here, reading represents an interactive process between the reader and the written texts.

Types of Reading Comprehension:

1. **Intensive Reading:** This includes deeply text reading and understanding the details of the used expressions. This type of reading needs the attention of readers on the characteristics of the language to assist them understanding the intended meaning of the texts (Dewi: 2019). Here, the non-specialized language reader requires paying close attention to the context of the texts and trying to recognize their meaning

semantically. This is because it aims to extract the existing facts. This is attained by identifying words, understanding their semantic meanings, and thus realizing the actual intent of the texts (Rashid & et al.: 2021). This shows that this type of reading is unconcerned itself with capability of individuals to differentiate words in a simple and primitive way, nor with their ability for superficial reading for texts. The readers have to be able to decode thoughts and understand the implications that the writer has buried within phrases, sentences, and events.

2. **Extensive Reading:** This type of reading is considered a major method and essential tool for language learning. It depends on reading many simple and easy texts in the new language to attain a wide and complete understanding of those texts. Here, the readers can stop if they face difficulties with the texts, and they can expand their reading if the texts are easy and suitable. This reading is characterized by the fact that the learner does not require a teacher rather than they read for enjoying and gaining information (Bamford & Day: 2004). At this one, the readers focus on the major ideas of the texts, and do not pay large attention for details. They do not emphasize on the language characterizations, but rather on the general meaning of the texts (Dewi: 2019). At this type of reading, the vocabulary for individuals is increased. Therefore, it is a good and appropriate way to start learning different languages. It decreases stress and boredom since the reader finds excitement and enjoyment in reading. The reader does not drain their mind while trying to find out what the author meant or did not mean, but rather looks at the texts from a Gestalt perspective.

Previous Studies:

In 2023, a study by Abdelkader targeted identifying the linguistic intelligence level and its relationship to motivation towards learning among third-grade intermediate school students in Abha, Saudi Arabia. The researcher utilized two scales, one for linguistic intelligence and the other for motivation towards learning. The researcher concluded that there was a decrease in the level of linguistic intelligence and a decrease in the level of motivation towards learning Arabic among the students. It also showed a positive correlation between the linguistic intelligence levels and motivation among third-grade intermediate school students.

Al-Bdour & et al. (2025) conducted a study to explore the effect of using multiple intelligences strategies on improving English reading comprehension skills among students with learning disabilities. The researchers selected 62 random students from schools of Ma'an, Jordan, and randomly assigned them to two groups: a control group and an experimental group. The results showed that the experimental group exceeded the control group, indicating the effectiveness of using multiple intelligences strategies for students with learning disabilities.

Al-Shraiqi (2021) examined the relationship between reading comprehension and linguistic intelligence among preparatory school students. The study sample consisted of 106 fifth-grade preparatory students in Babylon Governorate, Iraq. The researcher prepared a reading comprehension skills testing tool and adopted Gardner's translated linguistic intelligence test. The

results revealed a significant correlation between reading comprehension skills and linguistic intelligence among the students of the studied sample.

In 2025, Apriani & et al. studied the correlation between linguistic intelligence and reading habits among students at the University of Riau, Indonesia. The study sample consisted of 34 students selected using a cluster random sampling method. The researchers used a correlational research approach, where the independent variable was reading habits and the dependent variable was linguistic intelligence. They found that there was no statistically significant correlation between reading habits and linguistic intelligence among the students.

Dewi & et al. (2025) investigated whether students with high Intelligence Quotients (IQs) in both linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligence can learn faster and better than students with lower IQs in both intelligences. The researchers selected 49 upper secondary school students as their sample. The results showed that all students improved their ability to comprehend texts after practicing and training. No significant differences were observed between the different levels of either intelligence. Moreover, the study concluded that students with high IQs did not learn faster or better than students with lower IQs.

Gebremeskel & et al. (2024) studied effectiveness of tasks based on multiple intelligences in improving the reading skills and academic achievement of students at Hawassa University, Ethiopia. A semi-experimental design was implemented. Sixty students were purposively selected and divided into two groups: a control group and an experimental group. The results revealed a significant change in students' reading achievement levels after using the tasks based on multiple intelligences. The effect size ranged from moderate to strong.

In 2024, Kritsotakis & Morfidi investigated the reading comprehension abilities among a group of children with specific learning disabilities compared to another group of normally-developed children. The sample consisted of 90 children, equally divided between the two groups. The results revealed that the children with learning disabilities performed worse in reading comprehension and across all language measures compared to the other group. On the other side, scores on figurative language comprehension predicted the reading comprehension level of normally-developed children. Moreover, morphological and syntactic ability arose as a predictor of reading comprehension ability in children with learning disabilities.

Surya & et al. (2024) inspected the relationship between linguistic intelligence and speaking proficiency among English Department students at PGRI Nusantara University Kediri, Indonesia. A correlational and quantitative methodology was utilized. The study sample consisted of 38 students. The results showed a significant relationship between linguistic intelligence and the students' level of English speaking proficiency.

Research Methodology:

The descriptive correlational method was utilized. This statistical analysis approach depends on collecting quantitative data (or converting qualitative data into quantitative data) to verify the relationship between two quantitative variables. Moreover, this method assists in prediction through the value of one variable to predict the value of the other by using regression analysis

(Putri et al.: 2025). The predictive method forecasts the future by analyzing data and information collected presently or in the past. A higher score specifies a greater probability of an event occurring, while a lower score specifies a lower one (Kumar & Garg: 2018).

Study Population

The current research population involves students from the English Department at the College of Basic Education, University of Misan, at the first semester of the academic year 2025-2026.

Research Sample:

The research sample using purposive (or judgment) sampling was utilized. Second-year students – morning studies were chosen. The sample consisted of (53) students.

Research Tool:

After reviewing the theoretical literature related to linguistic intelligence, its characteristics and components, a questionnaire for linguistic intelligence was prepared. It consisted of (12) items. The students responded to each item by using a check-mark (✓) next to the statement that reflected their personal opinion. To measure academic achievement in reading comprehension, the final student grades in reading comprehension subject for the first semester were relied.

Tool Validity:

The face validity was utilized to ensure the questionnaire's validity. The questionnaire was offered to a group of experts specializing in education, teaching methods, and English language to confirm the appropriateness of the items, their suitability for measuring linguistic intelligence, and their linguistic precision. The agreement percentage among the experts was 89%. On the other side, the students' grades in the academic achievement of the reading comprehension are considered reliable since they are official data.

Tool Reliability:

To verify the reliability of the questionnaire, the split-half method was used. The questionnaire was administered to a pilot group of students outside the main research sample. Then the items were divided into two sections (even-numbered items and odd-numbered items). Reliability was calculated by using SPSS software. The reliability coefficient is 0.83, which is considered good. The reliability of the students' grades in the academic achievement of the reading comprehension is also considered good since it is based on official data.

Results:

Results regarding the answer for the first question:

What is the level of linguistic intelligence among second-year students in the English Department?

To answer this question, the weighted means and standard deviations (SDs) were calculated for each item, as presented in table (1). Note that the theoretical weighted mean is (2).

Table (1): Weighted means and standard deviations for each item of the linguistic intelligence questionnaire for the sample group.

No. Items		Rating Scales			Weighted Mean	SD	Rank	
		Freq.	Always	Sometimes				Never
1	I love reading novels, stories, and magazines.	Freq.	14	31	8	2.11	0.64	9
		%	26.4	58.5	15.1			
2	I prefer languages and history lessons more than math and science.	Freq.	36	12	5	2.58	0.66	1
		%	67.9	22.6	9.4			
3	I'm attracted to reading street signs.	Freq.	30	22	1	2.54	0.53	2
		%	56.6	41.5	1.9			
4	I play word puzzles on my mobile phone.	Freq.	8	28	17	1.83	0.67	10
		%	15.1	52.8	32.1			
5	I make sure using punctuation marks when writing.	Freq.	19	30	4	2.28	0.60	7
		%	35.8	56.6	7.5			
6	I enjoy phonetics and linguistics lessons.	Freq.	23	17	13	2.18	0.80	8
		%	43.4	32.1	24.5			
7	I find the teacher's phrases easy and understandable.	Freq.	18	33	2	2.30	0.54	4
		%	34	62.3	3.8			
8	I love listening to the radio.	Freq.	8	15	30	1.58	0.74	12
		%	15.1	28.3	56.6			
9	I can manipulate with words in my speech.	Freq.	18	30	5	2.24	0.61	5
		%	34	56.6	9.4			
10	I love reading about language development and new terms.	Freq.	18	35	0	2.33	0.47	3
		%	34	66	0			
11	I enjoy writing short stories, essays, or prose.	Freq.	7	27	19	1.77	0.66	11
		%	13.2	50.9	35.8			
12	I enjoy dialogues, discussions, and seminars.	Freq.	17	32	4	2.24	0.58	6
		%	32.1	60.4	7.5			
Total					2.17	0.213		

From table (1), the overall weighted mean for all items is (2.17), which is higher than the theoretical weighted mean (2), with a standard deviation (SD) of (0.213). In all the items, except (4, 8, and 11), the weighted means were higher than the theoretical weighted mean (2). The second item (I prefer languages and history lessons more than math and science) ranked first with a weighted mean of (2.58) and a standard deviation of (0.66). The third item (I'm attracted to reading street signs) ranked second with a weighted mean of (2.54) and a standard deviation of (0.53). On the other side, the weighted means for the items (4, 11, and 8) were (1.83, 1.77, and 1.58), respectively, which are below the theoretical weighted mean. Their standard deviations were (0.67, 0.66, and 0.74), respectively. These results were justified as language-based Electronic puzzles are not group activities, hence they do not encourage students to engage with them. Moreover, the low writing tendency of the sample students can be attributed to the fact that they live in a fast-paced era in which they prefer dialogue and discussion over writing. As for radio listening, it ranked last, which can be explained by the fact that internet services, especially social media, attract students more than radio nowadays.

Results regarding the answer for the second question:

Is there a statistically significant correlation between the level of linguistic intelligence and academic achievement in reading comprehension of second-year students in the English Department?

Before answering this question, necessary statistical tests were conducted to verify the statistical parameters of the data. The Shapiro-Wilk test revealed that one of the two study variables did not follow a normal distribution, as presented in table (2).

Table 2: Shapiro-Wilk Test for Verifying the Normality of Achievement and Linguistic Intelligence Scores

Variables	Statistic	df.	Sig.	Result
Achievement	0.893	53	0.000	Non-Normal Distribution
Intelligence	0.973	53	0.271	Normal Distribution

As can be noticed from table (2), the significance value (Sig.) for the linguistic intelligence variable was (0.271), i.e. greater than (0.05), which indicates that it follows a normal distribution. On the other side, the achievement variable got a significance value of (0.000), i.e. less than (0.05), which means that it does not follow a normal distribution. Therefore, the parametric test (Pearson's correlation coefficient) was replaced with a non-parametric test (Spearman's correlation coefficient) since the latter is more appropriate for dealing with non-normal data, as shown in table (3).

Table (3): Spearman's correlation coefficient for the relationship between achievement, and linguistic intelligence.

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r_s)	Sig.	N.	Statistical Significant
Achievement & Intelligence	0.141	0.315	53	Non- significant

The results from the table (3) reveal that Spearman's correlation coefficient was (0.141) at a significance value of (0.315), i.e. greater than (0.05), which means that the relationship between linguistic intelligence and achievement is very weak or almost non-existent, and give no statistically significant. It is not a real relationship and could be accredited to chance. Hence, it cannot be generalized.

Results regarding the answer for the third question:

Can the level of academic achievement in reading comprehension be predicted depending on the level of linguistic intelligence among the students of the research sample?

Since the results presented no statistically significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables, the section on simple linear regression analysis was excluded from the study findings because of the absence of the essential statistical condition for constructing a prediction model.

Conclusions

The study findings show that second-year students in the English Department have an average level of linguistic intelligence. Moreover, the study reveals no statistically significant correlation between linguistic intelligence and academic achievement. This can be accredited to the fact that intelligence is innate and develops from childhood. In addition, it is important to note that the students of the study sample were not native English speakers. Furthermore, students' academic achievement in any language subject depends on their accumulated knowledge of vocabulary, information, and concepts learned during their studies. This requires student's efforts to attain a threshold of proficiency in the subject.

It is possible that students have linguistic intelligence in their native language (Arabic) but lack proficiency in English with its vocabulary, and grammar. This lack of foreign language acquisition acts as a barrier that prevents them from demonstrating their intellectual abilities and linguistic intelligence in academic tests. Moreover, it is likely that students have linguistic intelligence but do not make sufficient effort to studying English in their academic lives. Sometimes, achievement tests for non-native English speakers may not emphasis on measuring higher-order language skills. There could be other factors that may affect this relationship, such as some students' dislike of their chosen field of study at university, or the traditional teaching methods followed by some teachers in pre-university stages. In these cases, students possibly prefer rote memorization of vocabulary rather than understanding meaning and broadening comprehension, only for the purpose of passing tests.

Therefore, the lack of correlation between the two variables reveals that linguistic intelligence for students studying English as a Foreign Language cannot be considered a sufficient statistical indicator for prediction in the students' reading comprehension achievement.

Recommendations

1. Provide students with various enrichment activities in English that related to linguistic intelligence and reading comprehension.
2. Conduct English language competitions among students to manipulate them to read a diverse of English books
3. Enhance reading comprehension skills for students in the pre-university stages.
4. Assure the connection between theoretical and practical aspects of academic study, such as writing a story in English or analyzing non-academic literary texts.
5. Utilize various teaching methods and aids that beloved students' interest in their academic specialization.

Suggestions

1. Conduct a similar study on students in Arabic language departments at universities.
2. Study the impact of linguistic intelligence for university students on writing the graduation research.
3. Study the relationship between linguistic intelligence and improved social communication skills among university students.

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The research declares that she has no known competing financial interest or personal relationship that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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