Open Access

AN INVESTIGATION ON PREDICTION OF READING ABILITY BY COMPONENTS OF IDENTITY PROCESSING STYLES

TUQA MOHAMMED HANNOON [1], SEYYED AYATOLLAH RAZMJOO [2], RAHMAN SAHRAGARD [3], MOHAMMED SABER KHAGHANINEJAD [4]

[1] PH.D. STUDENT IN TEFL, SHIRAZ UNIVERSITY, IRAN
[2,3,4] SHIRAZ UNIVERSITY, IRAN
EMAILS: tuqa.mohammed@uomisan.edu.iq; arazmjoo@shirazu.ac.ir; rsahragard@shirazu.ac.ir; mskhaghani@shirazu.ac.ir

Abstract

Although the literature on the relationship between identity processing styles and various language skills including reading, writing, and overall language proficiency in Iranian context is relatively rich, this research area suffers from parsimony with regard to Iraqi EFL learners. This study aimed to fill this gap by investigating the extent to which the identity processing styles' components predict reading ability in the Iraqi context. To this end, a correlational design was employed. The participants included 200 (90 males and 110 females) Iraqi EFL learners who were already passing English course in different universities of Iraq. They were picked up via convenience sampling. The Identity Processing Styles Questionnaire and the Reading Section of Preliminary English Test (RPET) were used to collect the data. To analyze the data, regression analysis was used. According to the results, Problem-Based Thinking, Religious Thinking, and Negative and Positive Thinking could significantly predict reading ability in the Iraqi context. These four variables predicted 86.6 percent of reading ability. The results of the final step indicated that the highest prediction power belonged to Positive Thinking. This was followed by Negative Thinking which negatively contributed to reading ability, Religious Thinking, and Problem-Based Thinking. The results have some implications for Iraqi EFL teachers, learners, curriculum planners and teacher educators.

Key words: Diffuse-Avoidant style, identity processing styles, informational style, normative style, reading ability

INTRODUCTION

Several models of identity processing style have been proposed which provide frameworks for understanding how people deal with identity-related challenges and develop their sense of self. These models are informative on the cognitive, emotional, and motivational elements which build identity processing styles and their implications for identity development and formation. Some dominant models include Berzonsky's identity style model, Luyckx's identity processing styles model, Schwartz's model of identity content and processes and Meeus's identity styles model.

Moreover, research studies (e.g., Berzonsky et al., 2011; Berzonsky & Cieciuch, 2016; Seabi & Payne, 2013) have documented that identity processing styles are significantly associated with outcomes such as academic achievement, value judgment, interpersonal relationships, and emotional regulation. With regard to academic achievement, previous research (e.g., Rahimi & Razmjoo, 2021) has shown that identity processing styles are linked to English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning outcomes, including reading ability. Reading comprehension is a necessity for EFL learners in various fields of study beside different branches of English language major (Akbari, 2014). In the area of language learning/acquisition, reading comprehension simply means "being able to read the text and comprehend its meaning" (Richards, 2006, p. 102). According to Ranjbar (2012), reading comprehension ability is one of the most important and necessary skills for people in second and foreign language contexts because today, individuals face a huge amount

of written input in their daily life. The centrality of reading skill in any language cannot be denied because it acts as an information and pleasure source and a tool for enhancing knowledge of the language (Rashidi & Khosravi, 2010).

In fact, language learning is not just the acquisition of grammar, vocabulary, spelling, and syntax. It is a dynamic process that influences learners' sense of self. One of the most remarkable ways language learning impacts identity and is impacted by it is through learners' investment of different degrees of their feelings, motivations and experiences in the language learning process. A strong investment generates a feeling of becoming in the culture of target language, causing the learner to be identified more dominantly with the target language group (Norton, 2016). In contrary, a weak investment blocks progress the learner's identification with the target language. Further, language learning can serve as a channel to new social spaces and communities. Through language learning, learners can communicate with native speakers, be involved in cultural practices, and participate in new conversations (Mitchell et al., 2019).

However, the relationship between language learning and identity can be more complex. Language can act as a sign of difference and exclusion in some situations. Norton and Pavlenko (2019) mean the same thing by the concept of "imagined communities," referring to speakers' forming a sense of solidarity. Learners in such contexts may show resistance or prejudice based on their perceived "outsider" state. This can cause feelings of alienation and hinder learners' identification with the target language speakers. This confirms the role of learners' identity in forming the language learning trip. With a view to such arguments, exploring EFL learners' identity processing styles seems inevitable in solving various EFL learning problems learners confront in the path of language learning.

Moreover, reading comprehension is a challenging and difficult skill for EFL learners (Ranjbar, 2012). Some part of this difficulty can be attributed to the role of learners' identity in EFL reading comprehension (Steinlen, 2017). More particularly, some studies (e.g., Moje et al., 2020) have documented the role of identity factors in improving reading ability. Identity, in its general sense, is closely tied to reading comprehension, via influencing learners' motivation, engagement, and interpretation of texts. For example, personal identity or one's self-concept and personal interests plays a pivotal role in determining learner engagement with reading materials. When learners perceive the text as reflecting their self-concept, their motivation and reading comprehension improve (Teng, 2020).

What is more, the interpretive strategies used by learners during comprehension is impacted by identity (Hall, 2014). Learners call for their identities to understand texts, make meaning, and communicate with characters and events. These interpretive strategies are affected by learners' social and cultural identities, which provide a channel to view and understand texts. More specifically, learners with different cultural identities may comprehend the same text differently, indicating the importance of identity processing styles in reading comprehension (Kasim & Raisha, 2017). The interplay between identity and reading comprehension can also be extrapolated to critical literacy, referring to analyzing and questioning texts to unpack power dynamics and social justice hidden behind words. Critical literacy empowers learners to explore how different identities are represented by texts and to challenge prominent patterns that may marginalize specific groups. This approach triggers comprehension and encourages learners to think critically and actively participate in their communities (Vasquez, 2017). These show that a key for learners' reading problems can be their identity processing styles.

Although the literature on the identity processing styles as tied to various language skills including reading, writing, and overall language proficiency in Iranian context is relatively rich (Malmir & Derakhshan, 2020; Rahimi & Razmjoo, 2021; Razmjoo, 2010; Razmjoo & Neissi, 2010), this research area suffers from parsimony with regard to Iraqi EFL learners, a population with distinct sociocultural and educational backgrounds. With a view to the fact that identity processing styles have been identified as an important factor influencing the success of language learners (Razmjoo, 2010), this scarcity should be dealt with. Moreover, while much of the research on identity processing styles has been conducted in the context of first language (L1) learning, there is a paucity of studies that have examined their role in second language (L2) and foreign language learning, especially in the Iraqi EFL context.

This study aimed to fill this gap by investigating the extent to which the identity processing styles' components predict reading ability in the Iraqi context. Iraqi learners often face unique challenges, such as limited exposure to English outside the classroom and a different educational context. Understanding how identity processing styles predict their reading ability could provide valuable insights for teachers and curriculum developers. To this end, the following research question was formulated:

RQ. To what extent do components of identity processing styles predict reading ability in the Iraqi context?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework
This research draws on two primary theories: Social Identity Theory (SIT) by Tajfel and Turner (1979) and Berzonsky's Identity Styles Theory (1988).

Theory of Social Identity

Theory of social identity, proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1979), has been instrumental in understanding how group affiliations shape behavior, attitudes and perceptions. According to this theory, individuals' sense of identity originates from the groups to which they belong that in turn influences their actions as well as attitudes (Trepte, 2013). An important concept in SIT is considered to be social categorization where people classify themselves and others into groups to simplify social interactions. This can also lead to biases such as in-group favoritism and out-group discrimination (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). This process of grouping can result in a preference for one's own group, AKA in-group, while developing negative attitudes toward others, AKA out-group, due to the fact that individuals seek to enhance self-esteem through positive group identity (Abrams & Hogg, 2004).

The next aspect of this theory is social comparison where groups are compared to one another which often leads to intergroup competition. This comparison helps to solidify a group's identity by highlighting positive aspects of the in-group while demeaning out-group qualities (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Such comparisons can escalate into conflicts particularly when groups attempt to show superiority (Dovidio & Hebl, 2004). Moreover, the pursuit of positive distinctiveness drives in-group bias where preferential treatment is given to one's group members which might lead to the denigration of out-groups when in-group identity is threatened (MacDonald & Leary, 2012). This might explain the broader social phenomena such as nationalism, ethnic conflicts and rivalry in organizational settings.

Berzonsky's Identity Styles Theory

Berzonsky's Identity Styles Theory (1988) provides a context for understanding how individuals approach identity formation. The theory has three main identity styles: informational, normative, and diffuse-avoidant. Each of these styles represent different ways people process and integrate identity-related information.

- The informational identity style is characterized by searching and evaluating identity-laden information. People using this style engage in introspection and explore diverse perspectives to build a coherent sense of self (Berzonsky, 1988; Crocetti et al., 2013). This approach has been linked to greater psychological well-being and stronger identity formation (Berzonsky, 2011).

- The normative identity style is characterized by adherence to social expectations. People with this style often rely on societal standards and external validation in developing their identity. While this style offers a sense of belonging, it may limit personal autonomy (Berzonsky & Kuk, 2022; Berzonsky & Neimeyer, 1988).

- The diffuse-avoidant identity style represents a more disengaged approach to identity, where individuals avoid identity-related decisions. This style is often linked to confusion and dissatisfaction, as individuals struggle to find a clear sense of self (Berzonsky, 1988; Tsang et al., 2012).

Identity and Reading Comprehension

A review of literature shows that the connection between identity and reading comprehension is an emerging area of research that explores how individuals' self-concepts and cultural backgrounds construct their understanding and engagement with texts. This relationship is especially relevant in educational settings where learners' identities can significantly influence their reading experiences and outcomes (Hall, 2014; Sugita McEown et al., 2017). Some studies suggest that recognizing identity factors is crucial for creating more inclusive and effective reading instruction (Moje et al., 2020).

Identity, broadly speaking, includes personal, social and cultural dimensions that form the ways people perceive themselves and are perceived by others. These dimensions closely interact with reading comprehension and affect a reader's motivation and interpretation of texts. For instance, personal identity which involves self-concept and personal interests plays a key role in determining engagement with reading materials. When learners see aspects of themselves reflected in texts or relate to the content, their motivation and comprehension tend to improve (Teng, 2020).

Moreover, social identity which refers to the roles and group affiliations individuals identify with affects reading comprehension. Those learners who feel connected to their peer groups or cultural communities are expected to engage more with texts that resonate with their social identities (Getie, 2020). This connection enhances understanding and retention of information because the texts become more relevant to the readers' lives and experiences (Khonamri & Karimabadi, 2015). On the flip side, when there is a disconnect between a reader's social identity and the text, comprehension can suffer. For instance, when texts fail to reflect the cultural diversity of learners, it can lead to disengagement and misunderstanding (Chipchase, 2017).

Cltural identity further influences how individuals comprehend texts (Yousef et al., 2014). Cultural schemata meaning knowledge derived from cultural experiences can affect text interpretation. Readers rely on these schemata to make sense of new information, fill in knowledge gaps and draw inferences. When texts align with a reader's cultural background, comprehension is easier (Lee, 2020). Nevertheless, when there is a cultural mismatch, readers

may struggle to connect with the content (Hilaski, 2018). This conclusion shows the need for culturally responsive teaching that incorporates diverse texts and perspectives to support all learners (Gay, 2010).

The concept of identity extends to reader identity which refers to one's self-perception as a reader. Reader identity is formed and developed by past reading experiences, perceived reading abilities and the value placed on reading within a community (Abodeeb-Gentile & Zawilinski, 2013). Positive reader identities are associated with greater motivation and better comprehension outcomes. Conversely, negative reader identities which is often the result of repeated reading struggles or lack of encouragement correlate with lower motivation and poorer comprehension (Kendeou et al., 2016). Building positive reader identities requires supportive environments that recognize learners' diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds (Richardson & Eccles, 2007). Encouraging self-efficacy and confidence in reading can counteract negative reader identities and enhances better comprehension outcomes (Unrau et al., 2018).

Additionally, as noted by Hall (2014), identity impacts the interpretive strategies readers use during comprehension. Readers draw on their personal, social and cultural identities to make sense of texts, interpret meanings and connect with characters and events. These strategies are informed by the readers' social and cultural contexts which shape how they view and understand texts. For instance, readers from different cultural backgrounds may interpret the same text in varying ways. This highlights the importance of considering diverse perspectives in reading instruction (Kasim & Raisha, 2017). Moreover, the relationship between identity and reading comprehension relates to critical literacy which involves analyzing and questioning texts to understand deeper power structures and social justice issues. Critical literacy encourages readers to consider how texts represent various identities and to challenge dominant narratives that might marginalize certain groups. This approach can both enhances comprehension and empowers learners to think critically and become active participants in their communities (Vasquez, 2017).

Empirical Studies

Alquraishy et al. (2020) conducted an experimental study to evaluate the effect of using the cubing strategy on the reading comprehension of Iraqi EFL intermediate learners and to assess its impact on their attitude toward reading. The study involved 60 learners, divided into experimental and control groups. The control group followed the traditional classroom method, while the experimental group was taught using the cubing strategy which involves exploring a topic from multiple perspectives. The hypothesis suggested there would be no significant difference in the mean scores of the reading comprehension post-test and reading attitude questionnaire between the two groups. However, the results showed that the experimental group significantly improved in both reading comprehension and attitude toward reading, demonstrating the cubing strategy's effectiveness in enhancing learners' engagement and comprehension.

Mohamadi and Mokhtari (2016) examined the relationship between identity styles and the reading/writing skills of 120 Iranian intermediate female EFL learners. The study utilized Berzonsky's Identity Style Inventory (ISI-3) alongside the reading and writing sections of the Preliminary English Test to gather data. The results revealed that both informational and normative identity styles positively correlated with reading and writing abilities, while the diffuse-avoidant style had a negative correlation with these skills. No significant relationship was found between commitment identity and reading/writing skills. Moreover, the informational style emerged as the best predictor of learners' reading and writing performance.

Razmjoo and Neissi (2010) examined the identity processing styles as associated with language proficiency among 226 EFL students. The results revealed that the normative style and informational style were positively interplayed with language proficiency. In contrast, the diffuse-avoidant style was inversely related to overall language proficiency and its components.

METHOD

Design

To achieve the objective of this study, a correlational design was employed, incorporating regression analysis (Ary et al., 2019).

Participants

The group who participated in the study included 200 (90 males and 110 females) Iraqi EFL learners who were already passing English course in different universities of Iraq. They were picked up via convenience sampling. To observe research ethics, the researcher informed the participants of the study's objectives and obtained consent before their participation. Furthermore, they were assured that the data would be kept confidentially and their responses to the questionnaires and the interviews would not affect their current education state at all. Table 1 displays the demographic features of the participants.

Table 1

Demographic Background of the Participants

No.	200
Gender	110 Females &90 Males
Native Language	Arabic
Location	Different universities of Iraq
Academic Year	2023-2024

Instruments
Identity Processing Styles Questionnaire

The researcher developed Identity Processing Styles Questionnaire in the following categories and sub-categories: The informational style, which included both problem-based and reason-based thinking; the normative style, covering religious thinking, social norm thinking and personal norm thinking; and the diffuse-avoidant style, including both negative and positive thinking. The questionnaire featured forty Likert five-point items. During the pilot phase, five TEFL experts were consulted to assess the items for accuracy, clarity, and overall validity. Additionally, 70 EFL learners (25 males and 45 females) from the study were invited to complete the questionnaire to further refine the tool. The collected data underwent Cronbach's Alpha testing and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to examine the questionnaire's reliability and validity. The reliability index of the questionnaire was calculated 81. Its construct validity was also confirmed.

The Reading Section of Preliminary English Test (RPET)

To measure the participants' reading ability, the Reading Section of Preliminary English Test (RPET) was used. It comprises 35 questions in five parts. Part one consists of five multiple-test choice items, part two, five matching items, part three, ten true/false items, part four, five multiple-choice items, and part five, ten multiple-choice items. This test is recognized as a standard assessment tool, with its reliability and validity already established.

Data Collection Procedure

At the beginning of this investigation, sampling was done to select the participants, taking research ethics into account. In this process, participants were thoroughly briefed on the study's objectives. Moreover, they were ensured that their personal information would remain confidential and anonymous. Additionally, they were ensured that their current education status would not change under the effect of their cooperation with this study. Next, data collection started wherein the Identity Processing Styles Questionnaire was filled by the participants. For practicality considerations, the Google form of this scale was distributed among the respondents. In addition, a Google form version of the Reading Section of Preliminary English Test (RPET) was distributed to assess the participants' reading proficiency.

Data Analysis

To investigate how different identity processing styles' components might predict reading ability within the context of Iraqi, SPSS was used to perform the statistical analysis. In so doing, linear regression analysis was run.

RESULTS

To probe the research question, linear regression was run. The regression model converged on four steps. The final step included Problem-Based Thinking, Religious Thinking, and Negative and Positive Thinking. These four variables predicted 86.6 percent of reading ability (R = .931, R squared = .866) (See Table 4.2). In other words, Person-Based Thinking, and all three components of Normative Style were excluded because of their weak contributions to the model. This is explained in details in Table 4.

Table 2

Model Summary[e]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.931[a]	.867	.862	2.243
2	.931[b]	.867	.863	2.238
3	.931[c]	.866	.863	2.234
4	.931[d]	.866	.863	2.231

Table 3 shows the ANOVA Test results of the regression model significance on the four steps. The regression model enjoyed statistical significance on four steps.

Table 3

ANOVA Test Results of the Regression Model Significance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	6285.698	7	897.957	178.421	.000
1	Residual	966.297	192	5.033		
	Total	7251.995	199			
	Regression	6285.338	6	1047.556	209.152	.000
2	Residual	966.657	193	5.009		
	Total	7251.995	199			
	Regression	6283.630	5	1256.726	251.769	.000
3	Residual	968.365	194	4.992		
	Total	7251.995	199			
	Regression	6281.282	4	1570.321	315.451	.000
4	Residual	970.713	195	4.978		
	Total	7251.995	199			

Finally, Table 4 shows the unstandardized and standardized regression weights. The results indicated that Reason-Based Thinking, Personal Norms Thinking, and Social Norms Thinking were excluded on the first, second and third steps because of their weak contributions.

Table 4

Unstandardized and Standardized Regression Weights

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	11.554	1.139		10.140	.001		
	Positive thinking	.412	.023	.588	18.080	.001	.656	1.524
	Negative thinking	-.300	.036	-.251	-8.229	.001	.748	1.337
	Problem-based thinking	.140	.026	.165	5.428	.001	.749	1.335
	Reason-based thinking	**-.008**	**.030**	**-.008**	**-.268**	**.789**	**.720**	**1.390**
	Religious thinking	.233	.034	.210	6.848	.001	.740	1.352
	Social norms thinking	.021	.034	.019	.620	.536	.727	1.375
	Personal norms thinking	.020	.033	.020	.614	.540	.685	1.461
2	(Constant)	11.500	1.118		10.283	.001		
	Positive thinking	.411	.022	.587	18.346	.001	.676	1.480
	Negative thinking	-.299	.036	-.250	-8.265	.001	.756	1.323
	Problem-based thinking	.139	.025	.164	5.449	.001	.760	1.315
	Religious thinking	.232	.034	.209	6.899	.001	.756	1.323
	Social norms thinking	.021	.034	.018	.602	.548	.732	1.366
	Personal norms thinking	**.019**	**.033**	**.018**	**.584**	**.560**	**.698**	**1.432**
3	(Constant)	11.682	1.072		10.895	.001		
	Positive thinking	.414	.022	.590	18.851	.001	.702	1.424
	Negative thinking	-.302	.036	-.253	-8.503	.001	.778	1.285

Problem-based thinking	.141	.025	.167	5.617	.001	.779	1.284
Religious thinking	.235	.033	.211	7.089	.001	.775	1.290
Social norms thinking	**.023**	**.034**	**.021**	**.686**	**.494**	**.745**	**1.342**
(Constant)	11.851	1.042		11.372	.001		
Positive thinking	.417	.021	.595	19.573	.001	.742	1.347
Negative thinking	-.305	.035	-.255	-8.672	.001	.791	1.264
Problem-based thinking	.144	.025	.170	5.795	.001	.797	1.254
Religious thinking	.239	.032	.215	7.363	.001	.804	1.244

(Note: the "4" appears in the leftmost column spanning the rows from (Constant) through Religious thinking.)

The results of the final step indicated that Positive Thinking (b = .417, beta = .595, t = 19.57, p = .001) had the highest predicting power in predicting reading ability. This was followed by Negative Thinking (b = -.305, beta = -.255, t = -8.67, p = .001) which had a negative contribution to reading ability, Religious Thinking (b = .239, beta = .215, t = 7.36, p = .001), and Problem-Based Thinking (b = .144, beta = .170, t = 5.79, p = .001).

Table 4 also shows the tests of severity of multicollinearity indices of Tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). The Tolerance indices are the ratios of one over the VIF (Tolerance = 1/VIF). As an example, the Tolerance for the VIF index of 1.347 was .742 (1 / 1.347 = .742). If values of VIF are less than ten, and values of Tolerance are less than one, as is the case in the Table 4, it can be concluded that the regression model did not suffer from multi-collinearity (i.e., too high correlations among all variables).

In addition to the assumption of multicollinearity, linear regression has two more assumptions including linearity and homoscedasticity, both of which were met according to Scatter Plot 1.

Scatter Plot 1
Testing Assumptions of Linearity and Homoscedasticity

Scatterplot
Dependent Variable: Reading Comprehension
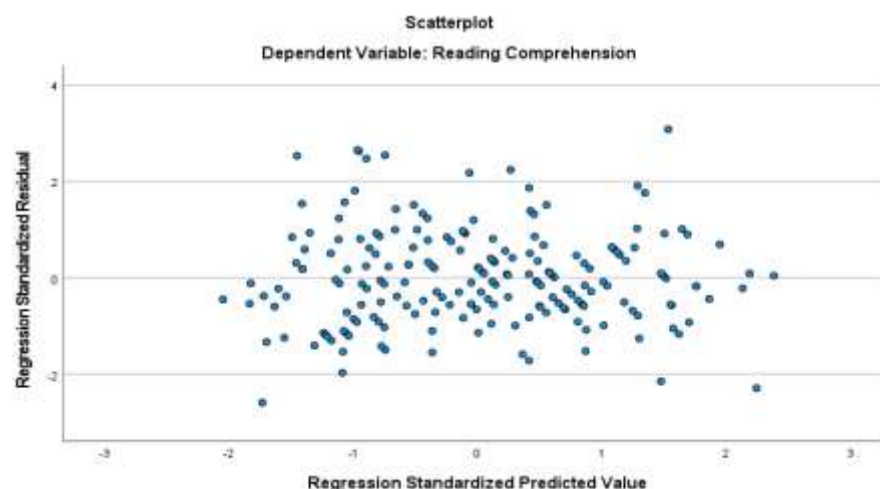
DISCUSSION

According to the results, Problem-Based Thinking, Religious Thinking, and Negative and Positive Thinking could significantly predict reading ability in the Iraqi context. These four variables predicted 86.6 percent of reading ability. The results of the final step indicated that the highest prediction power belonged to Positive Thinking. This was followed by Negative Thinking which negatively contributed to reading ability, Religious Thinking, and Problem-Based Thinking.

Consistent with this finding, Giles and Johnson (1987) argued that language identity may be viewed as an important gauge of language learning in all communities. Also, this result supports the finding of Newton (1997), according to which there is interdependence between reading and identity constructs.

These findings support the identity-based and consequently self-based nature of reading ability. That is, it can be said that reading ability is not built in vacuum and is closely interrelated with learners' identity, self and personality. One may refer to the dialectic view toward the relation between identity and self, and the sense of self as a social construct (Alvermann, 2001). More explicitly, this result can be interpreted with Schmitt's (2010) argument that although linguistic patterns signal social and personal identity, learners' conscious use of language (in this case, reading ability) is closely related with personal aspect identity including thinking orientations, both positive and negative ones.

These results may confirm that reading is more personal than socially oriented and learners' self may play a significant role in it. According to Razmjoo (2010), EFL learners' language achievement is influenced by personal identity aspects because higher levels of personal identity help learners engage more in learning materials. This engagement may be associated with higher problem-solving ability that eventually contributes to reading ability. As justified by Sluss and Ashforth (2007), personal identity is powerful enough to integrate interpersonal and collective levels of self which help learners in learning process. In other words, personal self enhances interpersonal and collective self and this may contribute to more successful relations between learner and text and finally to enhanced reading ability.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

According to the results, it is concluded that those Iraqi learners who enjoy higher problem-based thinking ability have higher reading ability. What is more, higher religious thinking contributes to higher reading ability. Additionally, those Iraqi learners who think negatively have low reading ability. This is while positive thinkers perform well in reading comprehension.

In sum, it is concluded that working more on some identity processing styles including problem-based thinking, religious thinking, positive thinking and negative thinking help Iraqi EFL learners enhance their own reading ability. Therefore, it is recommended that Iraqi learners enhance their problem-based thinking, religious thinking, positive thinking and negative thinking so that their reading ability is enhanced.

An implication of the results for Iraqi EFL teachers is that they can work on their students' identity in general, and their problem-based thinking, religious thinking, positive thinking and negative thinking in particular to enhance their students' reading ability. That is, they can train their students to enhance their own problem-based thinking, religious thinking, and positive thinking and try to reduce their negative thinking so that their reading ability is improved. The implication of the study for Iraqi EFL learners is that they learn that enhancement of positive thinking, religious thinking and problem-based thinking and avoidance of negative thinking are helpful strategies for improvement of their reading ability. The implication of the findings for Iraqi EFL teacher educators is that they can train teachers to use different strategies in their class to help construction of their students' identity processing styles. They can also train teachers to invest more on some identity processing styles in an attempt to help their students cope with their reading comprehension problems.

REFERENCES

1. Abodeeb-Gentile, T., & Zawilinski, L. (2013). Reader identity and the common core: Agency and identity in leveled reading. *Language and Literacy Spectrum*, *23*, 34-45.
2. Abrams, D., & Hogg, M. A. (2004). Metatheory: Lessons from social identity research. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 8*(2), 98–106. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15327957pspr0802_2
3. Akbari, Z. (2014). The role of grammar in second language reading comprehension: Iranian ESP context. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 98*, 122-126.
4. Alquraishy, S. W., Sagban, A. A., & AlMumar, H. A. (2020). The role of cubing strategy in improving Iraqi EFL intermediate learners' reading comprehension and attitude. *International Journal of Innovation, Creativity and Change, 11*(6), 339-352. https://www.ijicc.net/images/Vol11iss6/11631_Alquraishy_2020_E1_R.pdf
5. Alvermann, D. (2001). Reading adolescents' reading identities: Looking back to see ahead. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy, 44*, 676-690.
6. Ary, D., Jacobs, L.C., Sorensen, C.K., & Walker, D. (2019). *Introduction to research in education* (9th ed.). Cengage Learning.
7. Berzonsky, M. D. (1988). Identity style: Conceptualization and measurement. *Journal of adolescent research*, *4*(3), 268-282. https://doi.org/10.1177/074355488943002

8. Berzonsky, M. D. (2011). A social-cognitive perspective on identity construction. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx, & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 55-76). Springer.

9. Berzonsky, M. D., & Cieciuch, J. (2016). Mediational role of identity commitment in relationships between identity processing style and psychological well-being. *Journal of happiness studies*, *17*(1), 145-162. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10902-014-9588-2

10. Berzonsky, M. D., Cieciuch, J., Duriez, B., & Soenens, B. (2011). The how and what of identity formation: Associations between identity styles and value orientations. *Personality and Individual differences*, *50*(2), 295-299. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.paid.2010.10.007

11. Berzonsky, M. D., & Kuk, L. (2022). Identity styles and college adaptation: the mediational roles of commitment, self-agency and self-regulation. *Identity*, *22*(4), 310-325. https://doi.org/10.1080/15283488.2021.1979552

12. Berzonsky, M. D., & Neimeyer, G. J. (1988). Identity status and personal construct systems. *Journal of Adolescence, 11*(3), 195–204. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-1971(88)80003-4

13. Chipchase, L., Davidson, M., Blackstock, F., Bye, R., Colthier, P., Krupp, N., Dickson, W., Turner, D., & Williams, M. (2017). Conceptualising and measuring student disengagement in higher education: A synthesis of the literature. *International Journal of Higher Education, 6*(2), 31. https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v6n2p31

14. Crocetti, E., Sica, L. S., Schwartz, S. J., Serafini, T., & Meeus, W. (2013). Identity styles, dimensions, statuses, and functions: Making connections among identity conceptualizations. *European Review of Applied Psychology*, *63*(1), 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erap.2012.09.001 .

15. Dovidio, J. F., & Hebl, M. R. (2004). Discrimination at the level of the individual: Cognitive and affective factors. In R. L. Dipboye, & A. Colella. (Ed), *Discrimination at work* (pp. 39-64). Psychology Press. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410611567-9

16. Gay, G., & Banks, J. A. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. Teachers College Press.

17. Getie, A. S. (2020). Factors affecting the attitudes of students towards learning English as a foreign language. *Cogent Education*, *7*(1), Article 1738184. https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186x.2020.1738184

18. Giles, H., & Johnson, P. (1987). Ethnolinguistic identity theory: a social psychological approach to language maintenance. *International Journal of the Sociology of language, 68*, 69-99.

19. Hall, L. A. (2014). The role of identity in reading comprehension development. *Reading & Writing Quarterly*, *32*(1), 56-80. https://doi.org/10.1080/10573569.2013.861332

20. Hilaski, D. (2018). Addressing the mismatch through culturally responsive literacy instruction. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, *20*(2), 356-384. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468798418765304

21. Kasim, U., & Raisha, S. (2017). EFL students' reading comprehension problems: Linguistic and non-linguistic complexities. *English Education Journal*, *8*(3), 308-321.

22. Kendeou, P., McMaster, K. L., & Christ, T. J. (2016). Reading comprehension: Core components and processes. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *3*(1), 62-69. https://doi.org/10.1177/2372732215624707

23. Khonamri, F., & Karimabadi, M. (2015). Collaborative strategic reading and critical reading ability of intermediate Iranian learners. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, *5*(7), 1375. https://doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0507.09

24. Lee, C. D. (2020). Social and cultural diversity as lens for understanding student learning and the development of reading comprehension. In E. B. Moje, P. P. Afflerbach, P. Enciso, & N. K Lesaux (Eds.), *Handbook of Reading Research, Volume V* (pp. 37-56). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315676302-3

25. MacDonald, G., & Leary, M. R. (2012). Individual differences in self-esteem. In M. R. Leary, & J. P. Tangney (Eds.), *Handbook of self and identity*, *2ⁿᵈ Ed* (pp. 354-377). Guilford Press.

26. Malmir, A., & Derakhshan, A. (2020). Identity processing styles as predictors of L2 pragmatic knowledge and performance: A case of common English speech acts. *Journal of Language Horizons*, *4*(2), 187-209. https://doi.org/10.22051/lghor.2020.31583.1315

27. Mitchell, R., Myles, F., & Marsden, E. (2019). *Second language learning theories*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315617046

28. Mohamadi, Z., & Mokhtari, F. H. (2016). Identity styles: Predictors of reading and writing abilities. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics and English Literature*, *5*(5), 102-108. https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.5n.5p.102

29. Moje, E. B., Afflerbach, P. P., Enciso, P., Lesaux, N. K., & Kwok, M. (2020). *Handbook of reading research, volume V*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315676302

30. Newton, K.M. (1997). Norman N. Holland: 'Reading and Identity: A Psychoanalytic Revolution'. In: Newton, K.M. (eds) *Twentieth-century literary theory*. Palgrave. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-25934-2_29

31. Norton, B. (2016). Identity and language learning: Back to the future. *TESOL quarterly*, *50*(2), 475-479. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.293

32. Norton, B., & Pavlenko, A. (2019). Imagined communities, identity, and English language learning in a multilingual world. In X. Gao (Ed.), *Second handbook of English language teaching* (pp.703-718). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-02899-2_34

33. Rahimi, S. A., & Razmjoo, S. A. (2021). Developing and validating identity processing styles scale for Iranian high school EFL teachers: A mixed methods approach. *Applied Research on English Language*, *10*(4), 99-138. https://doi.org/10.22108/are.2021.129092.1734

34. Ranjbar, M. (2012). The relationship between grammatical knowledge and the ability to guess word meaning: The case of Iranian EFL learners with upper intermediate level of proficiency. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 2*(6), 1305-1315.

35. Rashidi, N., & Khosravi, N. (2010). Assessing the role of depth and breadth of vocabulary knowledge in reading comprehension of Iranian EFL learners. *Journal of pan-pacific association of applied linguistics, 14*(1), 81-108.

36. Razmjoo, S. A. (2010). Language and identity in the Iranian context: The impact of identity aspects on EFL learners' achievement. *The Journal of Teaching Language Skills*, 99-121.

37. Razmjoo, S. A., & Neissi, S. (2010). Identity processing styles and language proficiency among Persian learners of English as a foreign language. *Psychological reports*, *107*(3), 822–832. https://doi.org/10.2466/08.11.28.PR0.107.6.822-832

38. Richards, J. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today*. Cambridge University Press.

39. Richardson, P. W., & Eccles, J. S. (2007). Rewards of reading: Toward the development of possible selves and identities. *International journal of educational research*, *46*(6), 341-356. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2007.06.002

40. Schmitt, N. (2010). *An introduction to applied linguistics*. Hodder & Stoughton Ltd.

41. Seabi, J., & Payne, J. (2013). Effects of identity processing styles on academic achievement of first year university students. *International Journal of Educational Management*, *27*(3), 311-322. https://doi.org/10.1108/09513541311306503

42. Sluss, D. M., & Ashforth, B. E. (2007). Relational Identity and Identification: Defining Ourselves through Work Relationships. *Academy of Management Review, 32*, 9-32. https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2007.23463672

43. Steinlen, A.K. (2017). The development of English grammar and reading comprehension by majority and minority language children in a bilingual primary school. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching, 7* (2), 419-44.

44. Sugita McEown, M., Sawaki, Y., & Harada, T. (2017). Foreign language learning motivation in the Japanese context: Social and political influences on self. *The Modern Language Journal*, *101*(3), 533-547. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12411

45. Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin, & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33-37). Cole. https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780199269464.003.0005

46. Teng, F. (2020). The benefits of metacognitive reading strategy awareness instruction for young learners of English as a second language. *Literacy*, *54*(1), 29-39. https://doi.org/10.1111/lit.12181

47. Trepte, S. (2013). Social identity theory. In J. Bryant, & P. Vorderer (Eds.), *Psychology of entertainment* (pp. 255-271). Routledge.

48. Tsang, S. K., Hui, E. K., & Law, B. C. (2012). Positive identity as a positive youth development construct: A conceptual review. *The Scientific World Journal*, *2012*, Article 52969. https://doi.org/10.1100/2012/529691

49. Unrau, N. J., Rueda, R., Son, E., Polanin, J. R., Lundeen, R. J., & Muraszewski, A. K. (2018). Can reading self-efficacy be modified? A meta-analysis of the impact of interventions on reading self-efficacy. *Review of Educational Research*, *88*(2), 167-204. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654317743199

50. Vasquez, V. M. (2017). Critical literacy. *Oxford research encyclopedia of education*.