

# A Comparative Study on Bilinguals and Monolingual Learner' Reading Comprehension

Bahman Gorjian<sup>1\*</sup>, Mokhtar Sayyadian<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of TEFL, Abadan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Abadan, Iran

<sup>2</sup>Department of TEFL, Ahvaz Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ahvaz, Iran

**Abstract** The aim of this study was to investigate the differences between simultaneous bilingual and Iranian EFL monolingual learners on reading comprehension. To perform this study, 110 third grade three high school bilingual and monolingual participants studying in four different schools of Mahshahr were selected non-randomly. They took Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT) and 60 of them were assigned into four homogeneous male and female (i.e. bilingual and monolingual) groups. Then, the four groups were given a teacher-made pre-test of reading comprehension before the treatment to determine how well the participants know the contents. During an eight session courses, four groups covered eight passages selected from *Select Readings: Intermediate* (Lee & Gunderson, 2011). Finally, at the end of the course which lasted two months, the participants sat for their post-test of reading comprehension which was the modified version of pre-test. One-way ANOVA was used to compare the means of the pre-test and the post-test in four groups and Paired Samples *t*-test was used to compare the pre and post-test of each group. The findings revealed that the reading comprehension of four groups improved and there was a significant difference between the groups concerning reading comprehension post-test. According to the findings of this research, the researcher concluded that monolinguals performed better than the simultaneous bilinguals and also female students were more successful than the male learners. Implications of the study may be useful to teachers and learners who study reading comprehension in bilingual contexts.

**Keywords** Reading comprehension, Simultaneous bilingual, Monolingual

## 1. Introduction

English has gained importance all over the globe due to political, economic and technological reasons. It is generally believed that English as a foreign language (EFL) plays a crucial role in Iranian educational system in which reading comprehension has its own dominance among other teaching skills. Reading comprehension is a very complex process, the importance of which has been mentioned in many of the studies. Kirby (2007) states that a process by which we understand the text we read is called reading comprehension. This process is the purpose of reading and also reinforces meaningful learning from text. According to Richards and Schmidt (2002), "reading comprehension happen when we perceive a written text with a purpose to understand the content" (p. 443). This perceiving can be done silently.

In some parts of great Iran such as Khuzestan province, there are some minority groups of simultaneous bilinguals living with monolinguals and this was a good field for me to make a comparison between them on reading comprehension

(Gorjian & Mahmoudi, 2012). This study investigated whether there are any significant differences between Iranian high school simultaneous bilingual and monolingual students in term of reading comprehension.

Maghsoudi (2008) expressed that knowing two or more languages truly gives kids so many advantages in life. Bilingual kids have the advantage of knowing two cultures, of being able to communicate with a wider variety of people, and of possible economic advantages in their future. According to Gorjian and Mahmoudi (2012), throughout of the world a person can become bilingual and learn the two languages at the same time in two basic situations. One way is each person in the family speaks one language only to the child and the other situation is that when each person speaks two languages to the child. However, in Iran the situation can be somehow different, because here a person can become bilingual so that in his/her family hears and speaks one language and in society such as school, university, street, etc.

One important issue in studying bilingualism is that bilinguals have better meta-linguistic awareness (Fromkin, Rodinan, & Hymes, 2003). According to Wardhaugh (1998), in this world, speaking more than one language is just a normal requirement of the daily life and it's not easy to find pure monolinguals. Following that perspective, it is important to investigate studies exploring the relationship

\* Corresponding author:

b.gorjian@iauabadan.ac.ir (Bahman Gorjian)

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between bilingualism and multilingualism and various factors like intelligence, cognitive development, learning styles and strategies. Having had more experience with language learning through exposure to and acquisition of more than one language, multilinguals or bilinguals may have certain skills, strategies, or beliefs that enable them to approach the process of language learning more efficiently than people with experience in only one language (McLaughlin & Nayak, 1990).

Reading comprehension is a complex process in itself, but it also depends upon other important lower – level processes. It is a critical foundation for later academic learning, many employment skills, and life satisfaction. It is an important skill to target, but we should not forget about the skills on which it depends. To improve the reading skills of poor performers, we need to understand that there is no magic wand, and no secret weapon that will quickly reading comprehension for poor readers. Careful assessment is required to determine individuals' strength and weaknesses, and programs need to be tailored accordingly; most poor readers will need continued support in many areas. The root of many reading comprehension problems lies in the early elementary years (Kirby, 2007).

Kirby (2007) states that students who cannot read or comprehend are those who might not know how to process the text meaningfully use of appropriate strategies. Linguistically speaking, there are a number of particular textual characteristics influencing the comprehension of texts. In addition to those textual characteristics, metacognitive strategies impact the degree of comprehension and/or understanding of the text. Metacognitive strategies are used in information – processing theory to indicate an executive function of strategies that involve planning for learning, thinking about the learning process as it is taking place, monitoring of one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after an activity is completed (Brown, 1994).

Generally speaking, reading comprehension is always a grand task for the students who want to learn a foreign language. Reading is a process involving the activation of relevant knowledge and related language skills to accomplish an exchange of information from one person to another (Chastain, 1988). With the use of metacognitive strategies in reading comprehension students will be able to monitor their understanding of text and also to evaluate the degree of their understanding. Cohen (1998) states that strategies are different in nature; they can be metacognitive, cognitive, performance and affective. When we plan the organization of our learning, it is called metacognitive strategy. When we apply mnemonic devices for learning vocabulary, it is called cognitive and affective strategy is when we booster self – confidence for a language task by means of self-talk it is performance. It is important to teach students reading techniques to facilitate their reading comprehension. Students might be unaware of reading strategies that can be of help to them. The role of metacognitive strategies in reading comprehension needs to

be clarified until students become independent in reading for meaning.

In Khuzestan province the simultaneous Arab bilinguals are quite capable of communicating in Persian outdoors, while speaking Arabic with their parents at home (Gorjian & Mahmoudi, 2012). Because the present researcher is in contact with a good number of these bilinguals in the educational system, he has decided to investigate whether these bilingual learners whose mother tongue and second language are Arabic and Persian, respectively, can be different in learning a third language (English, in this case) and its reading comprehension. The purpose of Reading comprehension is to contrast meaning from the context. Reading comprehension is a complex cognitive ability providing the ability to integrate text information with the background knowledge of the reader and resulting in the explanation of a mental representation (Meneghetti, Carretti, & De Bene, 2006). So, reading comprehension is an interactive activity between students and contexts; in the period of this interaction between students and contexts, students utilize different experiences and knowledge which involve language skills, cognitive information and world knowledge (Rumelhart, 1994).

One important issue in studying bilingualism is that bilinguals have better meta-linguistic awareness. According to Fromkin (2003), meta-linguistic awareness refers to a speaker's conscious awareness about language and the use of language. This is in contrast with linguistic knowledge, which is knowledge of language and is unconscious. Moreover, bilingual children have an earlier understanding of the arbitrary relationship between an object and its name. Also, they have sufficient metalinguistic awareness to speak the contextually appropriate language. Whether they enjoy some cognitive or educational benefit from being bilingual seems to depend a great deal on extra linguistic factors such as social and economic situation and the relative prestige of the two languages (Fromkin, et al. 2003).

## 2. Background

### 2.1. Bilingualism

It has been estimated that approximately 60% of the world's population is either bilingual or multilingual; that is, more than half the people in the world routinely use two or more languages in their daily communication (Maghsoudi, 2008). Multilingualism and multiculturalism are social facts of this new century, which can be seen in most classrooms and playgrounds. For bilingual students in English as a second language learning context, being able to speak, read and write in the English language is critically important as English is the main language required for school success and interaction with the wider society. However, the role played by bilingual students' first language in such a learning environment is also important (Parvanehnezhad & Clarkson, 2008).

Bilingualism, defined as possessing two languages, has always been a controversial issue in society. During the early 1990s, bilingualism was considered an unwelcome topic among American professional and politicians. Educators rendered bilingualism responsible for immigrant children's failure in school subject matter. Employers believed that immigrants, due to their low competence in English, did not fit the requirements needed to become part of the United States workforce. Psychologists regarded bilingualism as a handicap to cognitive development; it was assumed that bilingualism was a barrier affecting verbal intelligence (Vygotsky, 1978).

Two instructional methods commonly used to educate students in reading development are deductive, involving inferences from general conclusion. One study examined deductive and inductive instructional method for L2 learners in comprehension and production of target structure in second language (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989). Three classes of fourth from (6<sup>th</sup> grade) students were examined and measured on a baseline test of scholastic abilities. The English as a Foreign Language students' level of English was sufficient as they were nearing the end of their second year of foreign language instruction in French. For this study, each class met 5 days a week for three 45 – minute lessons in French in which the instruction was arbitrarily assigned to deductive instruction, inductive instruction, or the control group, which received typical French instruction that consisted of both deductive and inductive methods (Ehrman & Oxford, 1989). All groups received an equal amount of instruction in French.

For the deductive group, the model of teaching involved from-focused activities that allowed students time to think and apply rules that followed explicit instruction. The inductive group had little explicit knowledge, and received much less feedback than the deductive group receiving explicit information. The control group was unaware that they were receiving instructional treatment at all. A reading comprehension test was given which consist of a short, written text in French. The students were to answer 10 multiple – choice questions about the text. Reading comprehension results revealed greater gains for children in the deductive group than those in inductive group as the effect sizes for those in the deductive group were relatively large (Erlam, 2003). Results also indicated that the deductive group also performed significantly higher on the posttest than the inductive and control groups both. With the deductive group making the greatest gains, this study supports that explicit instruction, along with a deductive method of teaching aids reading comprehension of a second language. This deductive style can be considered as a type of immersion, which is the idea behind in a dual – immersion classroom (Erlam, 2003).

Salem (2006) studied bilingual reading and showed that it may be possible to transfer general language and literacy skills from the first language to reading skills in the second language. They investigated the impact of Urdu as a first language on learning to read in English as L2. The study

involved 60 bilingual Urdu – English speaking students and 60 monolingual English – speaking students. All students were tested individually over a period of eight weeks. They were tested on many skills, but for the purpose of this paper only vocabulary, reading different texts and phrases will be reviewed. The bilingual students were better at reading vocabulary and different texts and phrases compared to their monolingual counterparts (Mutmaz & Humphreys, 2001). Also for the bilingual students, literacy was positively predicted by reading of regular words, irregular words and non-words. The bilinguals also were also found that to have an advantage in phonological awareness at the earliest stage of reading as compared to the monolinguals. This investigation demonstrated a possible transfer of first language literacy skills to development of reading in a second language, and also supports that bilingual reading development may have an increased effect on the acquisition of certain literacy skills such as phonological awareness and memory, and regular – word reading (Mutmaz & Humphreys, 2001).

According to Bagheri and Tavakoli (2001), the use of some strategies and techniques has been considered to be of the success for overall comprehension. These strategies are good as far as they provide the readers with required information to answer the reading questions. Some of the reading strategies that are most appropriate and desirable are skimming and scanning, anticipation and prediction, general and specific statement, irrelevant sentences, references and restatement. Strong reading comprehension strategies, especially for college and graduate students who often have to complete extremely long readings each week could be very important. In experienced students are sometimes overwhelmed by their intimidating reading assignments. Reading proficiency is undoubtedly crucial to academic success, and students definitely need guidance and practice in order to become efficient readers. Reading skills for college students offer some advice and practice which may help these students achieve their goals.

## 2.2. Research Questions

The present thesis will set out to pursue the following research questions:

RQ1. Is there any difference between Iranian monolingual and simultaneous bilingual learners who learn reading comprehension?

RQ2. Is there any difference between Iranian male/female monolingual and simultaneous bilingual learners who learn reading comprehension?

## 3. Method

### 3.1. Participants

The initial research participants of this study totally were 110 simultaneous bilingual (Arabic – Persian) and monolingual students (Persian) of grade three high school learners. From all, 60 participants were simultaneous

bilingual that speak and apply both Arabic and Persian while 50 participants were monolingual that communicate with all just through Persian language. These 110 students were selected from four male and female high schools of Bandar-e Mahshahr city, Khuzestan province, Iran. Since the intended level of students was intermediate, they were given Oxford Quick Placement Test (OQPT, 2001). After conducting the Quick Placement Test, 30 simultaneous bilingual (including 15 male and 15 female) and 30 Monolingual EFL Learners (also including 15 male and 15 female) were selected in four groups.

### 3.2. Instrumentation

Different testing instruments were utilized in the process of the development of the present investigation. Initially, to ensure the homogeneity of the participants and also to determine the students' level of language proficiency which was intended to be intermediate included in the final stage of the study, OQPT was given to the whole population. The purpose of this test was to place students reliably into appropriate levels.

The second instrument was a pre – test which is a 40 items test including true/false, fill in the blank, cloze test, reading comprehension questions and vocabulary parts that will be selected from textbook “Select Readings Intermediate” which is given to assess learners' background. The pre- test is so important to inform the instructor about topics that are/are not needed to cover in the course based on student's previous knowledge. The validity of pre – test was content validity; the test was given to two experts and was confirmed by them. While reliability for pre – test was not necessary, because the QOPT that was taken before pre – test was a standard test and rejected the necessity of reliability.

The last instrument is post-test that after the completion of eight session instruction of reading comprehension will be carried out to compare the probable differences between four groups of bilingual and EFL monolingual learners and also between male and female in reading comprehension field. The items will be chosen from textbook “Select Readings Intermediate” (Lee & Gundersen, 2011) to determine the effectiveness of four experimental groups. Validity for post – test (i.e., content validity) of the pre and post - tests were confirmed by two experts. Since the items of the post – test was those which applied for the pre – test, but the pre – test was modified for prevention of reminding the items and the validity once again met for the content validity. The pre and post – tests were piloted on a sample of the learners who were at the same level with the participants. The reliability was calculated through Cronbach Alpha for the pre-test as ( $\alpha = .86$ ) and for the post- test as ( $\alpha = .73$ ).

### 3.3. Materials

Select Readings: Intermediate level (Lee & Gunderson, 2011): In this book, high-interest, and authentic reading passages served as springboards for reading skills development, vocabulary building, and thought providing

discussion and writing .

### 3.4. Procedure

Doing this research, regarding to a wide range of the number of student and also while entering to girls' high schools for a man even as a researcher was particularly difficult, the researcher needed a high level of coordination with a number of schools and started different letters writing to university and Bandar-e Mahshahr department of education. After the completion of this process, the researcher identified four different high schools in four different areas of Bandar-e Mahshahr. The reason behind selecting four schools instead of two was the population density and the race of people living in the city. In some parts of Bandar-e Mahshahr, there are people living near each other and they are simultaneous bilingual students. On the other hand, in some other parts of city like industrial areas, the majority of people were bilingual and finding simultaneous bilingual students was difficult. It was so that selecting two high schools (one girl high school and one boy high school) for doing this research was actually impossible. Finally, four high schools (two girl high schools and two boy high schools) were identified and the researcher randomly selected 110 male and female high school students. From all, 55 students were male and also 55 learners were female while 60 students were simultaneous bilingual (Arabic – Persian) and 50 participants were monolingual (Persian). Based on another division, from 55 male students 30 learners were simultaneous bilingual and 25 of them were monolingual while from 55 female students, also 30 learners were simultaneous bilingual and 25 students were monolingual.

To control the students' level of proficiency, all 110 learners were given an OQPT. This test was consist of 60 multiple choice items in four papers and it takes 40 minutes to answer by male student while maximum 35 minutes were sufficient for the last girl to complete her paper. Then after giving the proficiency test to the students, papers' correction was begun by the researcher and 60 out of 110 whose scores were fell between one standard deviation above and one standard deviation below the mean score were selected as the participants of the study. They included 30 simultaneous bilingual (15 female and 15 male) and 30 monolingual (15 female and 15 male) and divided into four groups of 15 students.

One week after conducting of Oxford Quick Placement Test, the instructor for assessing the learners' background to inform about topics that are/are not needed to cover in the course based on student's previous knowledge, the 60 selected participants were given a pre – test. The pre – test was a 40 items test that was selected from textbook “Select Readings Intermediate” and includes five parts of fill in the blank, cloze test, true/false, reading comprehension questions and vocabulary parts. The test has been done by four groups of monolingual male learners, simultaneous bilingual male learners, monolingual female learners, and

simultaneous bilingual female learners and also the papers were corrected scores were cleared and put aside.

Treatment as the third and one of the most important steps of the research procedure after the completion of pre – test was started. The treatment for this investigation was eight sessions and during eight weeks all 60 participants were taught different texts and reading comprehension strategies based on Audio – Lingual Method. The rationale behind eight sessions is that in Iran’ educational system the appropriate and acceptable sessions to identify the effects or differences of a course is eight sessions. In each session, one text of the book *Select Readings Intermediate* was determined and copied for all 60 participants so that during 30 minutes the text were read and it’s specific exercises and related reading comprehension techniques were taught for four groups of learners. During eight sessions, the researcher aimed to make students apply the already learned strategies, they were also required to mention the strategies that they had used to their answers. The chosen texts did not need to be difficult, since the goal is to use strategies and see the results of the given strategies on their reading comprehension. Due to the shortage of the time, these texts were also quite short so that students could finish them in the given time. During the time that the students were practicing their reading strategies while doing their reading comprehension tasks.

The final phase of present research was conducting a post-test based on what 60 simultaneous bilingual and monolingual participants have been taught during eight sessions. The post – test was exactly similar to pre – test that was a 40 items test that was selected from textbook “*Select Readings Intermediate*” and includes five parts of fill in the blank, cloze test, true/false, reading comprehension questions and vocabulary parts. Finally, the papers were corrected and the scores were put in the side of pre-test scores for analyzing and identifying the probable differences between male and female or between simultaneous bilingual and monolingual learners.

### 3.5. Data Analysis

To achieve the goal, the collected data were analyzed using different statistical procedures. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviations were estimated to describe and summarize the data. The obtained scores of four groups were processed through the application of the statistical software SPSS. The researcher used One-way ANOVA method in order to analyze whether four groups of learners are different and to identify if there is any difference between the groups.

## 4. Results

The data were gathered after the treatment were analyzed to find out if in learning reading comprehension is there any specific differences between simultaneous bilingual and monolingual Iranian EFL learners. It should be noted that the data were analyzed through SPSS, version 17. Descriptive

statistics is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics of Four Groups (Pre-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Pre-test Female Mono	15	19.6	6.0	1.5
Pre-test Female Bio	15	20.8	5.9	1.5
Pre-test Male Mono	15	19.5	6.2	1.6
Pre-test Male Bio	15	18.5	4.6	1.2
Total	60	19.6	5.6	.7

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics of pre-test of four groups of male and females’ monolingual and simultaneous bilingual learners. This table shows that the mean for pre-test of female monolingual is 19.6333 and the mean for pre-test of female simultaneous bilingual learners is 20.8333. While the mean for the pre-test of male monolingual and male simultaneous bilingual students are 19.5000 and 18.5000 respectively.

Table 2 shows that Observed F for pre – test is .415 which is less than Critical F which is 4.160. Based on this calculation of One-way ANOVA, Observed F is less than the Critical F with  $df=3/56$ , there is no significant difference between all the four groups. This means that all 60 students of four groups of female monolinguals, female simultaneous bilinguals, male monolinguals, and male simultaneous bilinguals were homogeneous from the beginning. The data were obtained from the performance of the students on the post-test after eight sessions on reading comprehension. They were analyzed descriptively in terms of the mean and standard deviation of the four groups in the post-test which are presented in Table 3.

**Table 2.** One-way ANOVA (Pre-test of Male and Female Mono and Simultaneous Bilinguals)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	41.1	3	13.70	.415	.743
Within Groups	1851.5	56	33.06		
Total	1892.6	59			

**Table 3.** Descriptive statistics of Four Groups (Post-test)

Groups	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Post-test Female Mono	15	25.2	2.8	.7
Post-test Female Bio	15	24.3	2.9	.7
Post-test Male Mono	15	22.9	2.6	.6
Post-test Male Bio	15	19.8	3.1	.8
Total	60	23.0	3.4	.4

Table 3 shows descriptive statistics of post - test of four groups of monolingual and simultaneous bilingual male and females’ learners. In this table, the mean for female monolingual learners in post – test is 25.2333 while the mean for female simultaneous bilingual students is 24.3000. Also respectively the mean of post – test for monolingual male

and simultaneous bilingual high school students is 22.9333 and 19.8333.

**Table 4.** One-way .ANOVA (Post-test of Male and Female Mono and Bilinguals)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	250.3	3	83.43	9.929	.000
Within Groups	470.6	56	8.40		
Total	720.9	59			

Table 4 indicates that the Observed F (9.929) is greater than the Critical F (4.160) with  $df=3$ , thus the difference between the groups is significant in the post-test. Post-hoc Scheffe test shows the actual differences between the four groups in the Table 5.

**Table 5.** Post-hoc Scheffe Test (Post-test)

(I) VAR00001	(J) VAR00001	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
Female Mon	Female Bi	.9	.854
	Male Mon	2.3	.206
	Male Bi	5.4*	.000
Female Bi	Female Mon	-.9	.854
	Male Mon	1.3	.647
	Male Bi	4.4*	.001
Male Mon	Female Mon	-2.3	.206
	Female Bi	-1.3	.647
	Male Bi	3.1*	.045
Male Bi	Female Mon	-5.4*	.000
	Female Bi	-4.4*	.001
	Male Mon	-3.1*	.045

Table 5 shows the differences between of four groups of female monolinguals, female simultaneous bilinguals, male monolinguals, and male simultaneous bilinguals in detailed. The difference between female monolingual students and male simultaneous bilingual learners is significant because mean difference between this two groups is 5.40000 while there is no significant difference between female monolingual students with female simultaneous bilingual and male monolingual learners. Regarding the mean difference between female simultaneous bilinguals' post-test and male simultaneous bilinguals' post-test which is 4.46667, the difference between these two groups is significant, but the difference between female simultaneous bilinguals' post-test and female monolingual and also male monolingual students is not significant. The mean difference between male monolinguals and male simultaneous bilinguals' post-test is 3.10000 which means the difference between them is significant while between male monolinguals with female monolinguals and female simultaneous bilinguals' learners is not significant.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusions

### 5.1. Discussion

The first question asks: Is there any difference between Iranian monolingual and simultaneous bilingual learners who learn reading comprehension? The meaningful difference between the two groups performance could be due to a number of reasons. Firstly, it could be due to the fact that Arab – bilingualism may not have any direct effect on better comprehending of English texts. Since these two languages (Arabic and English) seem to have different structures and vocabularies, they are unlikely to have any direct mutual effect on one another. Another important point about our bilingual subjects is that they have only control over their spoken language and they may know only a little about the written form of their language. Thus, the comparison which is performed in this study is not comparing the effect of a completely acquired language on reading comprehension on reading comprehension of English. In fact, it somehow shows the influence of the spoken form of one language on reading comprehension of another language. Besides, the type of Arabic enquired by our bilingual group is not considered a standard Arabic and it's full of Persian expressions, vocabularies, and even, some idioms and structures are mingled with their spoken language. Therefore, these simultaneous bilinguals cannot be defined as real bilinguals who know two separate languages simultaneously.

The second research question was concerned with if there any difference between Iranian male/female monolingual and simultaneous bilingual learners who learn reading comprehension. The findings gave the researcher enough support to reject the second null hypothesis which indicated that there is no difference between Iranian male/female monolingual and simultaneous bilingual learners who learn reading comprehension. Meanwhile, the Paired Samples *t*-test was also used to compare the means of the pre-test and the post-test of four different groups, that is, the researcher compared the means of the test scores before and after the experiment to see if the eight sessions of treatment was effective in what groups in general. The results of the Paired Samples *t*-test showed that the means of the scores on the post-test in the female monolingual learner were greater than the female simultaneous bilingual students and also greater than monolingual and simultaneous bilingual male learners. Respectively, the means of the scores on the post-test of female bilingual learners is greater than monolingual male learners and also monolingual male students' scores' mean is greater than simultaneous bilingual learners mean of scores. The result of *t*-test of the post-test for the four groups showed the difference and also confirmed the answers of first research question that Iranian monolingual learners are better than simultaneous bilingual students who studying reading comprehension. This result may be due to the fact that the women are more interested in learning a foreign language. So, in the process of learning, they go through more details through different strategies for understanding the texts.

Moreover, they are more curious than men in different matters and their curiosity make them go through more details to comprehend the texts more than men do.

## 5.2. Conclusions

This study tried to investigate the differences between simultaneous bilingual and Iranian monolingual EFL learners on reading comprehension. As it said earlier, reading comprehension and how to read and how to understand is crucial to second language acquisition. The results of the study also indicated the superiority of monolingual learners over simultaneous bilingual students and also the superiority of female over male learners in terms of finding the differences of learning reading comprehension. One of the assumptions of this study was that teaching reading strategies could enhance the intermediate language learners' reading comprehension ability. The instruction lasted more than two months. In the course of this time, the researcher employed the reading strategies and instructed the participants how to use them in their reading comprehension. After the post – test, the results indicated that the use of some particular reading strategies like metacognition skill, answering questions, recognizing story structure, summarizing, note – taking, prediction and re – reading affect the male and female language learners' reading comprehension skill, with this difference that female receive more influence than male and also monolingual were affected through the 8 session treatments more than simultaneous bilingual learners. Namely, the reading comprehension ability of the students who had made use of the above - mentioned reading strategies among male and female and also among monolingual and bilingual learners surpassed that of the less successful readers.

Similar studies can be done on other proficiency levels, namely pre- intermediate, upper-intermediate and advanced. As mentioned earlier one different situational and learner factors are said to influence the learners' use of language learning strategies among which sex (gender) and bilingualism were investigated in the present research. There are other important variables like subjects' proficiency level, major, motivation, psychological type, sensory preference, attitude and so on not yet investigated among Iranian EFL learners which can serve as interesting areas for future research.

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