The Implementation of Computer-Assisted Language Learning in EFL Classroom: Arab EFL Learner's Attitudes and Perceptions

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Abstract: *The purpose of this study are to identify the Arab EFL students' feedback on using the I-CARe program in terms of its helpfulness in enhancing their reading comprehension and identify the challenges that students might have faced while engaging in I-CARe program. The I-CARe program is designed as a learning package for Arab beginner students in Malaysia. To achieve the goals of the paper, the researcher used mixed method approach represented by questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire divided into two sections, the first section targeted the students attitude towards I-CAR included five items while the second section aimed to get students' evolution of I-CARe which consists of nine items. The questionnaire was distributed to a sample of six male and female EFL students. After the students have completed the eight - weeks training period, they have shown very positive towards I-CARe program. The findings revealed that I-CARe is feasible and convenient experience. Moreover, this study leads to the findings that the design of the I-CARe program provided students with helpful material, instructions and tutorial which will be valuable to spread into the university and schools education system. The researcher recommends that use computer and online reading should be taught to EFL students to be confident readers.*

Keywords: *I-CARe program, web based reading, reading strategies, Arab EFL students, online reading, CALL, feedback*

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading in the foreign language, as one aspect of learning the language, has also become the main interest of the whole world in general and to the Middle Eastern countries in particular. In spite of the importance of reading in the learning process and the advancement of technology in this area of learning, reading English text is still a challenge to the Arab students. One of the solutions set to manage the issue of reading was the use of computerized programs, commonly known as Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). Since its introduction in late 1960, CALL has gained popularity as it proved to be effective tool to enhance the reading process and reading strategies among students, and help to sharpen their reading skills (Anuar 2006; Mohin 2006). Based on studies conducted in this area (Anuar 2006; Dentisak 2010; Mohin 2006; Al-Shawesh &Hussin 2015), it was stressed that using and teaching reading strategies through the web-based CALL programs (reading software and online materials) can positively affect students' language proficiency and reading skills. This is reflected on the students' learning development.

Rhema and Miliszewska (2010: 430) found that most of Arabs students, especially the Arab Libyan, have insufficient computer reading skills, and most of them used the computer just for "entertainment and communication". The researchers added that the educational system in Jordan is not developed technologically as it still relies on the face-to-face interaction between students and their teachers within the classroom boundary. The intent of the present study is to provide an on-line comprehensive reading program, I-CARe (Interactive computer-assisted reading), which purposes to expose and direct Arab EFL students to the best the reading strategies needed for more effective reading. It is a web-based reading program that is designed by the researcher to offer three important aspects of reading support: (a) interactive reading materials that assist students to read better and apply a variety of reading strategies, (b) bi-directional reading exercises that allow students to practice, apply their reading strategies, and obtain proper feedback, and (c) enriching reading materials that encourage students to further enhance their comprehension of reading

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theoretical Aspect of the I-Care

The three learning theories that underlie the I-CARe program are behaviourist, cognitive, and constructivist. Moreover, the related reading strategies bottom-up, top-down and interactive were used in the design of the I-CARe program. The behaviorist theory contributed to the design of the buttons and reading materials of different levels serving as stimuli represented by (i.e., input) for learners to respond to (i.e. process) the information in the reading text. In addition, the cognitive theory provided various contents with different levels of difficulty, which allowed the learners to practice reading and perform the exercises on their own. While, the interactive features of I-CARe served as a feedback on the students' progress through the report on the learner's performance. These features provided immediate guidance for the learners to move from one stage to another according to their ability to read. Through the online forum as a form of constructivist theory, the learners were able to discuss their reading assignments, reading problems and reading experience. Ally (2004: 3), argued that, "the development of effective Web-based learning materials should be based on proven and sound learning theories". According to Ally (2004), technology can play a facilitative role, but the design of the course or instruction determines the learning effectiveness. Thus, each aforementioned theory has its specific contribution to the content, structure, and feedback system of the I-CARe program.

2.2. Previous Research

Reading proficiency has been widely investigated in EFL contexts (Albeckay 2014; Al-Shawesh & Hussin 2015). The advent of technology through the use of internet and computers offered more opportunities for students to enhance their reading strategies (Hsieh & Dwyer 2009; Huang et al. 2009). Previous research in this area emphasized that EFL learners can utilize the online resources as strategies to learn and understand reading more effectively (Al Brashdi 2002; Huang et al. 2009; Karbalaei 2010; Takallou 2011; Zarrabi (2016). It was also found that reading via internet setting would be the most prevalent method used by teachers and students as it makes use of both visual and audio demonstrations (Hsieh & Dwyer 2009). Mourtaga (2004) stated that Arab EFL learners suffer from various reading problems in English due to their misunderstanding of the reading process, insufficient linguistic repertoire, and differences between Arabic and English. Mesgar, Bakar, and Amir (2014), examines the effect of using an interactional strategy, usually conducted through discussion online, on enhancing reading comprehension among 39 Iranian postgraduate students studying in a Malaysian university. The results of the qualitative analysis to the observation, interview, internal locus of control scale, online forum, demonstrated that using such a metacognition strategy can improve the students' reading comprehension level during forum participation. The results of this study shed more light on the importance of using online discussion to activate students' abilities of critical thinking as they are encouraged to "prepare, reflect, think, and search for extra information before participating in the discussion" (p.294).The importance of computer-assisted language learning has been widely studied (Hahnel et al 2016; Parhizgar 2014; Abdi 2013..Potocki, Ecalle, and Magnan (2013), conducted a one-year study to examine the effect of using computer-assisted comprehension training in second grade students. Thirty students were introduced to CAI program. The results of the experimental design (pretest-posttest) provided hard evidence that the use of the Internet-based program was effective in assessing children to comprehend the given text. The experimental group, who received training on using the program, displayed a huge progress in listening and reading comprehension. This effect was considered lasting as the results remained the same after 11 month.

In a recent study, Albeckay (2014) examined the impact of using a critical reading program on the development of Libyan undergraduate EFL Students' critical reading comprehension. For this purpose, the researcher used mixed methods design for data collection and analysis to find out the improvement of the students' scores due to the use of the program. In comparison to the control group, who followed the teacher-centered approach in reading, the results showed that an apparent improvement has taken place by the majority of the students in the research group in the reading sub-skills. The students in the control group were unable to develop their critical reading strategies as they did not make much progress in the use of critical reading skills. The results indicated that using technology can help students improve and use their critical reading strategies. In a similar vein, Melhi

(2014) investigated the effects and predictability of Computer-mediated Glosses in reading comprehension of EFL College Students. For this goal, the researcher used a quasi-experimental design that consisted of pretest-posttest method. 38 EFL students were to two control and experimental groups. The students in the experimental group were asked to practice their reading in a computer lab using e-glosses in the form of as hypertext links to unfamiliar meanings. The results revealed that integrating e-glosses in computer-based instruction was significantly impactful on the improvement of the experimental students' reading comprehension. Omar (2015) conducted a study on Twenty-five male students to explore impact of using a computer-based concept mapping technique on a group of pre-medical Saudi students' reading comprehension. The findings indicated that the five- week training on how to manipulate CMap Tools software have a positive impact on students' reading comprehension level. Marwan (2016) found that all respondents showed their positive attitudes towards CAReY program when they voluntarily engaged in more practices with English reading materials and reading exercises offered in the CAReY program.

The review of previous studies has revealed that the use of computer in the classroom has positive impact on motivation and confidence level of students. Some of the reviewed studies asserted that students English language learning is greatly enhanced when taught via the computer. Past studies have also shown that computer-based learning method can offer an interactive learning environment that provides autonomous learning, and gives a chance to learners to be independent. In spite of these facts, there is little research has been looked at the use of computer programs that are specified to enhance reading strategies, especially in the classroom. Although there have been studies conducted to investigate the use of computer in the classroom and its effect on reading in general and reading strategies in particular in different countries around the world, however, few research has been carried out on the web-based reading strategies among Arab students in Malaysia. Consequently, this study was an attempt to examine how computer and online based program, such as I-CARe can improve Arab EFL students' reading strategies. It is hoped to achieve this goal by investigating the usefulness of computer program (I-CARe) in teaching reading strategies at the Geomatika College, English Academy.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- **Research Question 1.** What is the Arab EFL students' feedback on I-CARe program that might have contributed to enhancing their reading strategies?
- **Research Question 2.** What is the specific features of the I-CARe program that might have contributed to enhancing their reading strategies?

4. METHODOLOGY

This study used a mixed mode design that employed qualitative and quantitative methods for data collection and analysis to answer the research questions. Using a mixed mode method enabled researchers to "simultaneously collect both quantitative and qualitative data, merge the data, and use the results to understand a research problem" (Creswell 2002: 51). Mixed-mode design was used in the present study to examine and explore the impact of I-CARe program on the Arabian EFL students' learning in general and reading comprehension in particular.

4.1. Instruments

Two instruments were used in this study, questionnaire and interview. The purpose of administering the questionnaire was to investigate the participants' opinions towards the I-CARe program and its usefulness in relation to usefulness of use. The questionnaire consisted of 14 items written in a 4-point Likert Scale format. Four options were given to students to elicit their degree of agreement/disagreement on the given statements means 'strongly disagree', means 'disagree', means 'agree' and means 'strongly agree'. In regard to the interview, it was carried out in the last week of the treatment (was carried out for eight weeks), which was at the end of the experiment period. All the students who participated in this study attended the interview. They were asked 5 basic questions with other follow-up ones.

4.2. Participants

Selecting the sample from a larger population is a "process of selecting a number of participants for a study, in such a way that the individuals properly represent the largest group from which they were

selected" (Zoltan 2007:96). For the purpose of this study, two samples of participants were recruited through purposively sampling technique. The sample had six Arab EFL students. These students speak Arabic as their first language and studied English as the foreign language (EFL). During the data collection, the students were attending the same English language program offered by the Geomatika College English Centre in Malaysia, so they were chosen purposively. As shown in Table 1 four of them are Saudi and two were Libyan, in the age between 20 and 28. The samples were selected based on the results of the English Placement Test (EPT). Students were required to sit for the EPT upon joining the English language centre. Depending on the results of their EPT, the students would be placed accordingly in three different language levels in the academy: two students in Level One, two students in Level Four, and 2 students in Level Five. It must be noted that the participants had completed their high school in their home countries prior coming to Malaysia to pursue their tertiary education. Their admission to the Geomatika College English Language Centre was to fulfil the English language requirements for university enrolments in Malaysia.

Table1. *Students' Characteristics*

Student	Gender	Age	Nationality	Level of Study
S1	Male	28	LIBYA	1
S2	Female	28	SAUDI	5
S3	Male	20	SAUDI	5
S4	Female	20	SAUDI	5
S5	Male	27	LIBYA	4
S6	Female	21	SAUDI	4

4.3. Overview of the I-CARe Design

I-CARe is a computer-based courseware designed to enhance the reading ability in English of the beginners to intermediate level students in general. The design of I-CARe passes into five stages. According to Frey and Sutton (2010) instructional model principles, the five elements were design, develop, implement, and evaluate, which are abbreviated as ADDIE. This model can help researchers and developers to set up learner-centered rather than teacher-centered programs, which can assist the students or learners to study by their own (Peterson 2003). In the analysis stage, which was conducted prior to the design of the program, the aspects of EFL Arab students' needs were identified through a questionnaire administered to the students' teachers. Following Morrison, Ross, and Kemp (2007), the analysis included identifying the instructional problems, specifying the goals for designing the instructional program, examining the learner characteristics, identifying the subject content, and analyzing the task components related to stated instructional goals and purposes.

The I-CARe program is divided into nine menus or tabs, namely the introduction, reading strategies, speed reading, reading lessons, reading exercises, answer guide, English grammar, forum, and other related links. Each menu is explained clearly for the students to follow the instructional process in the I-CARe program. The researcher provided the program with visual and verbal information including animations, colours and hyperlinks, which students might find them user-friendly to facilitate their reading comprehension (Mohaida Mohin 2006). The remaining parts of the program are explained in details as follows:
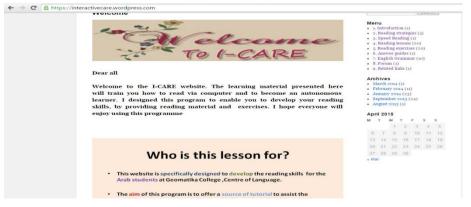

Figure1. *I-CARe Introductory and Welcome Page*

4.4. I-CARe Presentation and Delivery

In presenting the information for guiding practice, the instructional strategies used in I-CARe followed the pedagogical aspect of delivery (Trollip & Alessi 2001). The delivery included guiding the students to acquire reading strategies, presenting the concept/skills to the students, providing the students with adequate practices/ drills to master the reading strategies and assessing students' achievement of the skills. Through the interactive tutorials, for example, the I-CARe program delivered guided practice in the form of tutorials. This type of delivery was in line with Mohaida Mohin (2006), who noted that the guided practice could accelerate students' acquisition of the cognitive strategies. The tutorial section was employed to familiarize the students with the essential reading strategies. It helped the student to deeply comprehend reading strategies such as scanning, skimming, and predicting the meaning beyond the text. In other words, it guided the students to properly use the interactive exercises provided in the I-CARe.

5. DATA ANALYSIS

After obtaining the data from the I-CARe questionnaire the data were analysed using the (SPSS) Version 22 to derive the descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviation. The results were interpreted according to Al-Oun and Al-leheeby (2015: 338). The criteria adopted to interpret the responses into three main criteria: negative, positive, and very positive. The statistical results are illustrated in Tables 2 and 3. Moreover, the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews were transcribed and analysed qualitatively through three types of coding (a) open coding, (b) axial coding, and (c) selective coding following Strauss and Corbin (1990).

6. RESULTS

This paper investigated the use of I-CARe program to teach Arab EFL students online reading, and to assess how students improve their reading strategies.

The result of the analyzed data obtained from the questionnaires and semi-structured interviews are outlined below. The following sections are devoted to answering the research questions raised in section 3.

6.1. Results of Research Question 1

The ultimate purpose of this question is to elicit participants' attitudes towards the usefulness, likeness, and acceptance of the program. Additionally, it helps to establish a clear understanding of the role played by the program in enhancing the participants' learning of English in general and improving their reading strategies in particular. To answer this question, the participants' response to the questionnaire items (1-5), interview questions (1-3)

As exhibited in Table 2, in item 1 of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to express their likeness of the program. In response, the participants expressed positive attitude (M = 3.66) illustrating their likeness of the program. In item 2, the participants were asked to describe the reading practice in the I-CARe program. The findings showed that the participants positively found reading through the I-CARe program interesting (M = 3.66). In item 3, the participants were asked to describe their feeling about using computers to read. In respond to this item, the participants expressed a very positive attitude (M = 3.83) as they found using computer programs such as I-CARe to read English text is enjoyable. The participants also showed positive attitude (M = 3.5) towards item (4) in which they were asked to determine whether I-CARe program was able to change their attitude. Their answers demonstrated that the program was able to change their attitude from being afraid at the beginning of their experience towards more happy feeling after trying out the program. Similar positive attitude (M = 3.66) was communicated in response to item (5). Taken together, these results suggest that, the participant displayed a feeling of comfort towards the program.

Table2. *Participants' Attitude towards Using I-CARe Program*

#	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Attitude
1	I like I-CARe program	3.667	.816	Positive
2	I find the reading practice in I-CARe program interesting	3.500	.548	Positive
3	I do not enjoy using computers to read (R)	3.833	.408	Very Positive
4	I was afraid to use I-CARe, but now I am happy with it	3.500	.548	Positive
5	I am tired of I-CARe program (R)	3.667	.516	Positive

In addition to the I-CARe questionnaire findings, the results obtained from the semi-structured interview were analyzed. The first question in the interview targeted three main themes: participants' evaluation of the program, the program easiness and helpfulness in learning English in classroom, and the reasons that motivated the participants' answers. The analysis of the participants' answers to this question showed that there was an overall satisfaction that the program was useful, easy to use, and helped in learning English in general and reading in particular. The participants supported their evaluation by giving a number of varied reasons, such as easiness of the program, very useful, simplicity in the presentation of the information, simplicity provided great clarity and helped the participant to overcome their reading anxiety and valuable as it boost thier knowledge and understanding. All these reasons have a great effect on participants' reading capability as they show a remarkable improvement after a short period of time using I-CARe. For instance, one of the participants stated that

> "*When I start reading through I-CARe program I face some difficulties as I have weakness in reading, but after short time specifically when I reached exercise 10 I feel I can read confidently and easily better than before. Also, I can answer the questions of the reading exercise without read the text many times like before*" another student excerpt "*It's very helpful program I have learnt a lot during the 8 weeks I have learn for the first time how to do exercise online and search for an important materials that help me in my reading. Also the language that used in the program not very difficult which assist me to understand the reading passages and everything in the program*".

In the interview question two the participants were asked to describe how valuable the I-CARe was and whether they are willing to recommend it to other learners. In response to this question, the participants strongly agreed that I-CARe is valuable and helpful and it is worth to be recommended to other learners. The participants highlighted a number of reasons that made them quite enthusiastic to recommend the program for their friends. Based on the participants experience with I-CARe, they acknowledged that this program can be helpful to other learners who are facing difficulties in learning and reading English. Moreover, they confidently admitted that I-CARe is a beneficial tool as it can be used to overcome reading difficulties and they can improve their reading strategies. This can be illustrated by sample response given by one of the participants

> "*I strongly agree that the program is useful and valuable it is totally different from reading print texts. Of course I told many of my friends about the program, because I want others to develop their reading skills like what I did.*" Another example "*Yes of course, because we do not have like this program in our schools and universities which is provided with all these good materials. We just have the reading book without ant other materials which may improve our reading. I already informed all my friends in my country to try out* ".

In interview question three, the participants were asked to indicate how they found I-CARe in general. The overall response to this question was positive. The participants felt that I-CARe is a useful learning tool as they positively describe their experience. They considered it useful, beautiful, and helpful especially for beginners who are facing difficulties in English reading. They commonly agreed that the program is a new source of learning that is motivational and provides a rich source of information. Other participants described I-CARe program as simple, but great and fast; thus, it encourages learner's autonomy. This can be seen in the following responses:

> "*The program is very beautiful and useful and I have benefited a lot from it. I am sure that beginner students can learn easily*".

 Another example

"*The program is new for me and taught me useful things that I did not know. I did not feel that I'm boring while going through it. I hope the program continue and can reach many Arab students to enable them to learn how to read with ease.*"

6.2. Results of Research Question 2

The researcher intended to extract some useful information regarding the main features in I-CARe which make the participant appreciated the English learning process. Features such as, the design, content, and other options provided by the program, which played an important part in encouraging the participants to use, enjoy, and accept the program as a tool for their learning.

As illustrated in Table 2, the participant showed a very positive attitude towards the simplicity of the materials. This is represented by the mean average given for item 10, and 12. In item 10, the participants positively appreciated the effectiveness and relativeness of the hyperlinks to the English exercises provided in the program. Likewise, in response to item 12, the participants reported very positive attitude to the consistency of the reading exercises, which gradually moved from easy to difficult levels across all the exercises. On the other hand, the participants showed positive attitude towards items no. 6, 7, 8, 9, and 11 with varied attitudinal means. In items 6, 9, and 11, the participants positively responded with (M = 3.667) each. In item 6, the participants looked positively at the interactive features, such as questions and immediate feedback in I-CARe program as helpful in grasping the reading material. While, in item 9, the participants found the level of reading texts provided in the I-CARe program is suitable and appropriately designed to suite the participants' level. Furthermore, in item 11, the participants noted that the click of the Hypertexts or linked-words was available and functioning very well. In items 7 and 8, the participants also showed similar positive attitude however, the mean value reported was less than the previous items (M = 3.5). In item 8, they found the exercises given in the program challenging.

Table3. *Feedback on I-CARe Design*

#	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Attitude
6	The interactive features (question, immediate feedback) in I-CARe program that help me understand what I read.	3.667	.516	Positive
7	The tutorials in I-CARe program on how to read is useful.	3.500	.548	Positive
8	The exercises given in the program are challenging.	3.500	.548	Positive
9	The level of reading texts in I-CARe is suitable for me	3.667	.516	Positive
10	The links to more English exercises on the websites provided by I-CARE is relevant and useful.	3.833	.408	Very Positive
11	When I click the Hypertexts or linked-words whenever the links are available	3.667	.516	Positive
12	The I-CARe content is consistent (from easy ones to difficult ones)	3.833	.408	Very Positive

During the interview session, the participants highlighted several features in I-CARe that assisted them to develop their reading comprehension and strategies. The participants found the reading exercises provided in I-CARe were the most important feature as these exercise helped them develop their reading comprehension. The participants emphasised that, the simple language used in these exercises and the variety of exercises were also effective factors to increase the benefit of the participants to better understand and develop English reading strategies. Moreover, it was found that variety of questions provided with each exercise were motivational as it encouraged them to repeat the exercises more than once. By doing many exercises on the same reading material, the participants felt that they became more independent learners and better readers. In addition, the tutorials were good assistant for the participant to manage the given texts and the various exercises and links to external material. All of these features facilitated the participants reading to become better readers. These features mentioned earlier can be seen in some of the interviewees responses, for instance, one of the participants stated that

> "*Reading exercise was very useful and develop my reading, because the language easy to read. Moreover, each reading exercise has many different of question which make me read the reading more than once",* another participant "*Frankly speaking, before I go through I-CARe I have many problems in English especially in reading. I spend many hours in order to understand very short text. After short time when I start reading via I-CARe I noticed that I have gained good skills and became better and fast reader*".

Other participants believed the contents of I-CARe program contributed to their improvement of reading comprehension. The content of I-CARe was planned to be rich, detailed, and easy to understand. This was hoped to help participants to better understand the ideas in the passages and motivate them to increase their reading capability. When participants were asked evaluate their experience of the content, they commonly agreed that the content was introduced in a way that provides interesting and clear ideas, and easy to understand and motivating material. All participants believed that the contents of the I-CARe is clear, useful, and helpful as it enable them to access the information they wants easily. In addition, they added that these features made them feel that the reading passages and exercises are easy to perceive. Moreover, the language of content is helpful and effortless to understand. A sample response is given below:

> "*The contents very helpful and I not get bored when I read. I-CARe contents make me love the program specially the reading exercises. In addition, I get excited to read the next exercise without feel bored*" another example "*Everything is fabulous and helpful, especially the introduction because it is comprehensive and all information about the I-CARe program provided. This helped me a lot by giving me a clear idea about the program*".

7. DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that Arab EFL participants had positive perceptions about the use of computers in English reading courses. The participants reflected their positive perceptions about I-CARe both in questionnaires and interviews.

The positive responses in the I-CARe questionnaire implied that they were enthusiastic about this program to improve their reading comprehension. The acceptance of the program by the students was important for the technology manipulation in learning process. The participants also found the program a valuable learning tool, to develop them as efficient readers. The finding was in line with the research by Omer (2015), and Al-Shawesh and Hussin (2015) which reported that using computer could enhance reading comprehension. In addition, Hahnel et al. (2016) suggested that providing appropriate learning opportunities through ICT could further support learners in mastering reading. The participants in this study confirmed that the I-CARe program could be helpful tool for other learners to overcome their difficulties in learning and reading. Besides, it is a good chance to other learners to learn reading on their own. All these reasons mentioned by the participants contributed to recommend the program to other learners. The finding was consistent with Parhizgar (2014) who studied a group of Iranian EFL learners in order to gauge their attitude towards the use of computers in their reading classes. Although it was easy for these students to use computers, the low computer literacy among both students and teachers had hindered the implementation of this technology in classrooms. These characteristics of the program helped students to practice their reading better, and thus increased their reading comprehension frequency.

Regarding the I-CARe contents, the participants highlighted that the contents was interesting in terms of animations, exercises, graphics, tutorials, colors and font size. These key features played a crucial role in increasing the participants reading speed. This finding was in line with the past studies by Al-Shawesh and Hussin (2015), and Abdi (2013). Dentisak (2010) reported that TSRS CALL was an effective program in developing English reading strategies among university students in Thailand. The students of I-CARe program hold positive attitude towards its usefulness in terms of reading strategies and comprehension, and the selection of these strategies in particular. The present finding was in line with Zarrabi (2016) who revealed that employing strategies had positive impact on students' reading. Moreover, the use of I-CARe program could motivate the students to become independent readers. This was in agreement with the constructivism theory as the guidance of the expert at the beginning of learning produced more self-dependent learners, who were able to construct their own learning and knowledge at later stage.

7.1. Implications

The findings in the present study carries the following can be taken as implications: First, the use of computers and internet is yet to be incorporated into the Arab learners' classrooms. The presence of

these technological gadgets should be seen as a reinforcement which will facilitate the learning process of students. Second, evidence from the findings suggests that the Arab students are motivated and in favor of the use of technology in the classroom environment once it is made available to them. Essentially, this is an encouraging factor to highlight the urgency of incorporating the use of computers and internet in the classroom context. In this perspective, this initiative will help create an effective learning environment to improve reading comprehension. Third, the students are also attracted to the content and design of the I-CARe program. As a matter of fact, the simplicity in handling and the clarity of program have been found to be the main factors of such response. This discovery underlines the importance of such features which should be taken into consideration when designing similar online-based programs. Once the students find the program to be easy and clear, they will be encouraged to use it in their learning of English and reading comprehension. Fourth, the findings of the study reveal that the I-CARe program is influential in helping students with their reading and learning of English. This is important for Arab learners as they still practice the conventional methods of learning and teaching. Therefore, it is crucial that the use of such online programs is allowed in the classroom environment to encourage students to learn English. Finally, although the students faced difficulties in dealing with certain parts in the program, these difficulties motivated them to be more self-reliant and determined to challenge these difficulties and become independent learners. Based on the findings in this study, further modifications can be applied to the existing program to produce a fully-functioning I-CARe program.

8. CONCLUSION

In this paper the use of the I-CARe by Arab EFL students is explored so as to find out how it is utilized in facilitating English language reading and comprehension. The analysis showed that the students found the program to be effective in influencing their learning behaviour. After undergoing the program, they started to feel that they enjoy and like the program. In fact, they also discovered it to be less tiring and more interesting. From the students' point of view, the design of the program is suitable for the current reading exercises, as it can help them improve on their reading comprehension. Besides, the program is fundamental n helping students to realise that reading can be enhanced and made enjoyable using suitable strategies and tools, such as the ones provided by this program. With the aid of the I-CARe program, students will be able to become more independent learners of English. This can be achieved through displaying positive attitudes towards the use of this online package in the learning process. To sum up, the I-CARe program is an efficient tool in developing students to become autonomous learners that do not rely too much on their teachers.

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