

# SIGNIFICANCE OF READING COMPREHENSION ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE STUDENTS

Allan M. Lumagod<sup>1</sup>, Husna T. Lumapenet<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Education, Kidapawan City National High School, Kidapawan City, Philippines

<sup>2</sup> Associate Professor V, Cotabato Foundation College of Science and Technology, Doroluman, Arakan, Cotabato, Philippines

## ABSTRACT

*This research investigates the correlation between reading comprehension and academic performance among Humanities and Social Science students within the 3rd Congressional District of Cotabato, Region XII. The study surveyed the level of reading comprehension and its influence on students' academic proficiency. Employing a descriptive-correlation quantitative design, the research analyzed data from 331 students, selected through simple random sampling. The instruments used, an adopted questionnaire, demonstrated high reliability with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.78 for reading comprehension and 0.76 for student proficiency. Statistical analyses, including mean, Pearson's  $r$ , and multiple linear regression, were conducted to test the hypotheses. Findings indicate that students' vocabulary and prior knowledge significantly contribute to their reading comprehension, which in turn, enhances their ability to understand and summarize texts. This comprehension fosters greater classroom participation and understanding of instructions. The study revealed a significant relationship between students' reading comprehension—specifically vocabulary, prior knowledge, and reading strategies—and their proficiency in language and comprehension skills. Quantitative data suggested a strong correlation between reading comprehension and academic performance. However, qualitative insights from interviews presented contrasting perspectives, underscoring the complexity of the research problem. These findings emphasize the need for a holistic approach, suggesting future research should delve deeper into additional contextual factors affecting reading comprehension's impact on student proficiency.*

**Keyword:** - Reading comprehension, and academic performance.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is crucial to human existence. It provides individuals with fresh knowledge. Creating meaning through reading comprehension involves balancing several intricate processes, including world reality, word and world knowledge, and fluency. The goal is to learn what the author intended to convey through the text and apply this knowledge to embrace student's experiences and intellectual capacity. Comprehension strategies help readers build understanding, overcome difficulties in comprehending a text, and compensate for weak or imperfect knowledge related to the text. Teaching reading strategies is very important, particularly in language teaching contexts, in which reading comprehension is of major focus. Therefore, reading strategy instruction should be primarily focused on language teaching classes (Narjes 2023).

A current study showed that the better the reading skills students have, the better students in achieving knowledge (Akbash, 2016). As a student, the ability to read and understand text is very important to get the information contained in the text. Therefore, improving the quality of students' reading comprehension is needed to help not only in terms of English language learning but also to improve the quality of students' overall knowledge.

In general, students with mild specific language learning difficulties encounter numerous challenges when acquiring the English language, and require a significantly longer period (Sari, 2023).

The gap in the difficulties may be because English teachers are not well-trained in how to teach English and its four skills appropriately. Also, they may not attract the interest of students or motivate them towards learning English. Besides, the curriculum sometimes is not suitable for helping students to enhance their levels of proficiency. Furthermore, some teachers do not use the appropriate learning strategies to improve the four skills of language (Souriyavongsa, 2013).

Generally speaking, this paper discusses the relationship between students' reading comprehension and their academic performance. This problem is really serious reading affects the other skills of language. It is a critical basic skill for later academic learning.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This research utilized descriptive correlation research design to analyze data gathered from the 331 respondents. The instrument used was a survey questionnaire to gather the data needed. The results of the validity and reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha was .78 with 10 samples for reading comprehension and Cronbach's Alpha was 0.76 with 10 samples for students' proficiency, which meant that the items in the instruments were reliable. Data gathering procedure using communication addressed to the Schools Division Superintendents, and the statistical tools utilized mean. To test the hypotheses, it employed Pearson r and multiple linear regression.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Reading Comprehension

#### Vocabulary and Knowledge

Table 1 shows the level of reading comprehension in terms of vocabulary and prior knowledge, obtained a total weighted mean of 3.95 respectively. The result indicates that in reading comprehension on vocabulary and knowledge, students often participate when they understand the topic, trying to understand complicated sentences, by analyzing their structure, they pause and analyze the structure by sentences when reading, can easily read and understand sentences, they skip the words that are new to them. It implies that on the vocabulary and knowledge, the students like to participate when they understand the topic whether by direct instruction or indirect instruction. Further, the students are very active in class and also the instructions are very engaging and interactively observed one's motivation is properly served by the teacher. Thus, the learning objective can be achieved if the teacher uses high motivation in the lesson, especially in different activities.

The results conform to the statement of Thavy (2024) that by cultivating a genuine passion for reading and providing the necessary support and encouragement, educators can not only improve reading proficiency but also instill a lifelong love for literature.

**Table 1.** Level of reading comprehension in terms of vocabulary and prior knowledge.

| A.                   | Vocabulary and Prior Knowledge  | Mean        | Description  |
|----------------------|---|-------------|--------------|
| 1.                   | I pause and analyze the structure of sentences when reading.            | 4.17        | Often        |
| 2.                   | I try to understand complicated sentences by analyzing their structure. | 4.17        | Often        |
| 3.                   | I like to participate when I understand the topic.                      | 4.40        | Always       |
| 4.                   | When I read text/sentences, I skip the words that are new to me.        | 3.10        | Sometime     |
| 5.                   | I can easily read and understand sentences.                             | 3.91        | Often        |
| <b>Weighted Mean</b> |   | <b>3.95</b> | <b>Often</b> |

#### Reading Strategies

Table 2 shows the level of reading comprehension in terms of reading strategies, obtained a total weighted mean of 4.11 respectively. The result indicates that in reading comprehension on reading strategies, students often sum helps to comprehend a story, reading the notes enabled them to learn the lessons at school, discovering and learning new unfamiliar words through reading beyond the lines and applying them to any written works in school, taking notes of important details on a passage that they are reading, and able to understand when I read in a quiet setting through skimming and scanning.

It revealed that on the reading strategies the students through summarizing helps them to comprehend a story. It is therefore the students must be guided explicitly by the teachers in formulating or organizing their thoughts about the story.

Further, teachers practicing strategies in vocabulary and knowledge can motivate students to participate in class discussions and it has a direct impact on enhancing their skills. The result would demand teachers to engage in training and workshops to level up their skills.

In addition, Soria (2024) addressed a reading gap by exploring the experiences and strategies of trained public school teachers. As part of motivation, teachers employed a range of strategies, including games, collaboration, peer tutoring, back-to-basics approaches, lectures, and module utilization.

**Table 2.** Level of reading comprehension in terms of reading strategies

| B.                   | Reading Strategies   | Mean        | Description  |
|----------------------|--|-------------|--------------|
| 1.                   | Summarizing helps me to comprehend a story.  | 4.25        | Always       |
| 2.                   | Reading my notes enables me to learn my lessons at school.   | 4.14        | Often        |
| 3.                   | I discover and learn new unfamiliar words through reading beyond the lines and applying them to any written works in school. | 4.10        | Often        |
| 4.                   | I can understand what I read when I am in a quiet setting through skimming and scanning.                                     | 4.02        | Often        |
| 5.                   | I take notes of important details in a passage that I am reading.  | 4.04        | Often        |
| <b>Weighted Mean</b> |  | <b>4.11</b> | <b>Often</b> |

### Overall Mean of Reading Comprehension

Table 3 presents the mean level of reading comprehension observed in terms of vocabulary prior knowledge and reading strategies with a grand mean of 4.03, described as **often**. It shows that reading strategies have the highest weighted mean of 4.11, and it is followed by vocabulary and prior knowledge with 3.95 respectively.

The findings imply that applying vocabulary prior knowledge and reading strategies in reading motivates students and feel confident. Hence, it encourages students to engage in lessons, especially in reading. Imparting these indicators into our curriculum or lessons daily would lead our students to enjoy reading and develop their skills and Metacognition itself.

The results conform to the statement of Rezvani (2024) found that CSR was significantly effective in improving EFL learners' reading motivation and metacognitive awareness. The findings of the study can be utilized by language practitioners, materials, and curriculum developers to consider EFL students' needs and goals in second-language reading.

**Table 3.** Overall Mean of Reading Comprehension

| Reading Comprehension          | Weighted Mean | Description  |
|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Vocabulary and prior knowledge | 3.95          | Often        |
| Reading strategies             | 4.11          | Often        |
| <b>Grand Mean</b>              | <b>4.03</b>   | <b>Often</b> |

### Proficiency

The second research problem focused on the level of proficiency in terms of language skills, comprehension, and general point average.

### Language skills

Table 4 indicates that the level of proficiency in terms of language skills obtained a total weighted mean of 4.19 respectively. Results emphasized that level of proficiency in language skills, students are **very satisfactory** responding easily when they understand the directions and instructions, able to improve their vocabulary and comprehension in English by reading, reading helps them to excel in class, reading books helps them to develop skills, and likely comprehend and understand the lessons in school through the reading of books.

It indicates that in language skills students can easily respond when they understand the directions and instructions. It means that the teachers should always incorporate skills in teaching language so that the students can absorb the direction or instruction easily and confidently in answering their given activity or test.

Further, that the students have knowledge or mastery of language skills can impact their performance in reading comprehension and their level of proficiency in understanding each sentence comprising terms even if it is not familiar.

In addition, Ero (2017) concluded that there is a direct influence of vocabulary on students' mastery of language styles and a direct influence of reading habits on students' language styles.

Furthermore, in support of the statement Rachmat (2022) showed that verbal interaction and language style in a classroom are functioning effectively because the instructor can manage the situation and make the situation function properly by asking largely students for feedback.

**Table 4.** Level proficiency of the students in terms of language skills

| A.                   | Language Skills  | Mean        | Description              |
|----------------------|--|-------------|--------------------------|
| 1.                   | I can easily respond when I understand the directions and instructions.      | 4.37        | Outstanding              |
| 2.                   | Reading helps me to excel in class.  | 4.26        | Outstanding              |
| 3.                   | I can comprehend and understand our lessons in school through reading books. | 3.85        | Very Satisfactory        |
| 4.                   | Reading books helps me to develop skills.                                    | 4.18        | Very Satisfactory        |
| 5.                   | I can improve my vocabulary and comprehension in English by reading.         | 4.28        | Outstanding              |
| <b>Weighted Mean</b> |  | <b>4.19</b> | <b>Very Satisfactory</b> |

### Comprehension

Table 5 shows that the level of proficiency in terms of comprehension was suggested with a total weighted mean of 3.83 respectively. Results reveal that level of proficiency in language skills, students are **very satisfactory** love to participate in class when they understand their lessons, always participate in their class discussion when they understand the instructions and directions, struggle to do school work when they don't have clear instructions and lazy in studying when they don't understand what they are reading.

It implies that on comprehension students love to participate in class when they understand their lessons. That is why it is so important to prepare the lesson very well and organize it, incorporating their strategies and skills in delivering the instruction.

Furthermore, when reading (the writer, the text, and the reader) the code maker and the decoder meet successfully, it easily processed the comprehension level of the students. And understand the lesson so quickly the students love to participate and engage in their lesson with interaction making the instruction spontaneous.

In support, Berlie (2024) concluded that explicit reading strategy training promotes the students' reading comprehension skills; hence, EFL students should be adequately supported and encouraged to use reading strategies to circumvent their reading comprehension difficulties.

In addition, Phillips (2023) identified explicit teaching strategies for teaching higher-order comprehension skills and improving the learner's comprehension skills and the teacher education curricula should include the

explicit teaching of higher-order comprehension skills to equip pre-service teachers with the expertise necessary to develop critical thinking processes.

**Table 5.** Level proficiency of the students in terms of comprehension

| B.                   | Comprehension  | Mean        | Description              |
|----------------------|--|-------------|--------------------------|
| 1.                   | I always participate in class discussions when I understand the instructions and directions. | 4.23        | Outstanding              |
| 2.                   | I'm lazy at studying when I don't understand what I'm reading.                               | 3.39        | Very Satisfactory        |
| 3.                   | I get low scores on quizzes, tests, and exams when I don't understand the question.          | 3.51        | Very Satisfactory        |
| 4.                   | I struggle doing schoolwork works, which I don't have clear instructions.                    | 3.58        | Very Satisfactory        |
| 5.                   | I love to participate in class when I understand the lessons.                                | 4.44        | Outstanding              |
| <b>Weighted Mean</b> |  | <b>3.83</b> | <b>Very Satisfactory</b> |

### General Point Average

Table 6 reveals the level of proficiency in terms of general point average obtained a weighted mean of 89.65 exactly.

It implies that on the general overegged the students got that overall mean.

Additionally, having that mean of 89.65 shows that the grade 12 HUMSS students congruent to the reading comprehension to the level of proficiency by revealing the mean description of outstanding.

In support of the statement Muhammad (2023) agrees that the grade point average (GPA) is the value obtained by students cumulatively from the beginning to the end of the semester. To get a high GPA, students must study hard.

**Table 6.** Level proficiency of the students in terms of GPA.

|            | Mean         | Description        |
|------------|--------------|--------------------|
| <b>GPA</b> | <b>89.65</b> | <b>Outstanding</b> |

Scale:

|          |                           |
|----------|---------------------------|
| 90-100   | Outstanding               |
| 85-89    | Very Satisfactory         |
| 80-84    | Satisfactory              |
| 75-79    | Fairly Satisfactory       |
| Below 75 | Did Not Meet Expectations |

### Overall Mean Level of Proficiency

Table 7 presents the mean level of proficiency observed in terms of language skills and comprehension with a grand mean of 4.01, described as **often**. It shows that language skills have the highest weighted mean of 4.19, and it is followed by comprehension with 3.83 respectively.

The results imply that having skills in language and comprehension in reading fosters an environment for the students to love reading and learn a lot, engaging unfamiliar so easily. Furthermore, students at the end of the lesson would result participate actively without so many barriers and even get high scores in any evaluation and assessment.

**Table 7.** Overall Mean of Level Students Proficiency

| Proficiency       | Weighted Mean | Description  |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Language skills   | 4.19          | Often        |
| Comprehension     | 3.83          | Often        |
| <b>Grand Mean</b> | <b>4.01</b>   | <b>Often</b> |

### Relationship between Reading Comprehension and Students' Proficiency

#### Reading Comprehension and Student's Proficiency

Table 8 presents the relationship between reading comprehension and students' proficiency. The correlation matrix shows that vocabulary and prior knowledge have significant responses on language skills ( $p=0.52^{**}$ , probability value= 0.00), and comprehension ( $p=0.34^{**}$ , probability value= 0.00).

The result means that the reading comprehension and students' proficiency in vocabulary and prior knowledge of language skills and comprehension. The presented probability values which are less than the set 1% level of significance means that the stated hypothesis is rejected.

The findings imply that a school that focuses on reading comprehension and students' proficiency often participated when they understood the topic as well. Therefore, every student must learn the technique of how to comprehend statements or words using their vocabulary and prior knowledge, reading strategies, and the level of proficiency in language and comprehension skills. Thus, students' performance is justified when they are exposed and learn the fundamentals of reading and they are not pressured in terms of understanding the reading instruction given by their teachers.

Yovanoff (2005) revealed that comprehension depends not only on the characteristics of the reader, such as prior knowledge and working memory, but also on language processes, such as basic were, decoding, vocabulary, sensitivity to text structure, inference, and motivation. Comprehension also requires effective use of strategic processes, such as metacognition and comprehension monitoring. As readers mature, they can progress efficiently from the stage of learning to read to the ultimate goal of reading to learn.

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

Reading comprehension alone does not suffice to predict academic success. It becomes evident that a student's performance is a tapestry woven from various threads of influence, each contributing to the overall picture. In light of these insights, it is imperative that future inquiries delve deeper into these supplementary elements. A holistic investigative lens is paramount to unravel the interplay of factors affecting learning outcomes. From a practical standpoint, this research advocates for multi-faceted educational interventions. Tailoring strategies to address the myriads of elements influencing learning will likely yield more substantial improvements in academic achievement.