

# COMPREHENSION LEVEL IN READING SHORT STORY AMONG JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN EASTERN VISAYAS REGION

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## ABSTRACT

There is a diverse learning environment in a public secondary school. Uplifting its belief to produce globally competitive and good communicators, teachers relentlessly pursuit innovation and develop their instruction to better address the issues and concerns about the comprehension level of the students specifically in reading short story.

This study examined whether silent reading, reading aloud while holding a copy of short story, or reading aloud together is an excellent form of reading that improves the comprehension level of the selected Grade-10 students. This also identified the performance in Filipino subject of the respondent-students. "Ang Kanyang Ama ay Hindi Dyos," was the title of the story adopted from the Panitikang Filipino by Benigno R. Juan used to diagnose the reading competence and the result was the basis of identifying the baseline of study. Seventy- one point Seventy- seven percent of the students were identified as participants through random sampling technique. A standardized questionnaire was used with twenty items adopted from the National Achievement Test parallel questions, and the level of performance of the students in Filipino subject measured through DepEd Order No. 8 s. 2015. Mean and standard deviation were used to describe the comprehension level of the students in reading short story. Pearson Moment of Correlation was used to analyze the relationship of the variables.

The results showed that majority of the respondents were found Very Satisfactory on reading aloud while holding a copy of short story. The respondents were able to concentrate better on meaning when reading aloud with the text at hand. Students had very satisfactory performance in Filipino subjects. Student Learning Action Cell (SLAC) and other intervention plans were recommended to improve the comprehension level of the students especially in reading short stories and their academic performance in Filipino subjects.

**Keywords:** comprehension level, performance in Filipino subject, reading, short story

## INTRODUCTION

Reading is the construction of meaning. Comprehending is not a product of reading; it is the process (Fountas and Pinnel, 1996). Comprehension is a vital component to reading. It is the underlying goal in all areas of reading development. Comprehension is achieved when a student is able to read a text fluently at their independent level. Studies have also shown that children who struggle with comprehension also read slower and have less automaticity (Seago-Tufaro, 2002). The ability to comprehend comes more easily when a reader is fluent and automatic with the text. Research has proven that there is a correlation between fluency and

comprehension (Seago-Tufaro, 2002). These studies showed that children that had a difficult time with comprehension were also those that read slowly and dysfluently. It is questionable if fluency is a result of good comprehension, or if fluency leads to good comprehension, but many studies have proved that there is a strong, positive connection between the two.

Fountas and Pinnell (1996) discussed comprehension as reading for meaning. "It is the goal of every reading episode as well as of our teaching." As teachers we strive to have our students make meaning from print. If there is no comprehension, there is no reading. Reading is a process that revolves around meaning. Creating meaning is the reason for reading. Also, according to Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell (1996), "Reading is the construction of meaning. Comprehending is not: a product of reading; it is the process" (p. 156). Comprehension is a vital component to reading. It is the underlying goal in all areas of reading development. Because comprehension is such a fundamental element of reading, it is important that we know how to maximize the ability for comprehension to occur. Fountas and Pinnell believe that comprehension is crucial when reading, therefore it is equally important for teachers to understand how this process forms best in the mind. Strategies that Workby~stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis (2000) discussed comprehension as a form of strategic thinking. They believe that "constructing meaning is the goal of comprehension". As teachers instructing for comprehension, we want our students to enhance their understanding, acquire and use their knowledge, monitor their understanding, and develop insight. They added that comprehension means readers are thinking about what they are learning, and that readers think deeply about what they are taking from the text. When reading, and comprehending, people are building their schema. Harvey and Goudvis believe that teachers need to assist our students' comprehension to enhance understanding. This study will help to determine how reading can be used in the classroom to promote this belief.

Comprehension is the major focal point of this research, in determining which style of reading is more effective. The Effects of Independent Reading on Oral Reading Fluency and Comprehension, by Cynthia Seago-Tufaro (2002), is an article which talks a great deal about fluency and how to build fluency in children; however it also discusses how fluency affects comprehension. The effect of fluency on comprehension is vital information to include and consider in this study because it may affect research participants' comprehension if they are not fluent readers. Evidence suggests that students who read fluently, with expression and decode words automatically, have better comprehension when they read (Seago-Tufaro, 2002).

The objective of this study is to determine if reading silently, reading aloud while holding a copy of short story, or reading aloud together where the short story is written on the board is more beneficial in terms of aiding comprehension. The purpose of this research project is to examine how students comprehend reading best. There are advocates for both reading aloud and reading silently (Opitz & Rasinski, 1998), therefore this study is purposeful to find out which seems to be the most effective for comprehension alone. In classrooms now, teachers incorporate three styles of reading, however with the results of this research; teachers may be able to format their teaching to instruct their students for a higher comprehension level. The present study will add to the general knowledge in the area of comprehension. It will provide

information for educators in the area of comprehension, and how they can incorporate reading styles into their classrooms. This project will also be purposeful for the researcher in providing him with a general knowledge on this specific topic. As an educator, this study will give him an understanding of how students' reading styles impact their comprehension. As educators, if we do not know which style is more effective for comprehension, we will not know how to incorporate them into our teaching.

Thus, the researcher is eager to find ways and means in order to determine how comprehension is gained more effectively. It sought to determine whether reading silently, reading aloud or reading together while the story is written on the board has greatly contributed to the furtherance of their comprehension ability or not and as such this study is pursued. In this study, the researcher has not found research that identifies which has a higher advantage when referring to comprehension. The goal of this study is to reveal which reading style is more helpful in terms of creating meaning for the junior high school students. This will provide educators with research that supports the more beneficial form of reading with their students.

Specifically, the study sought to shed light on the following concerns:

1. Determine the demographic profile of the student- respondents in terms of:
  - 1.1 age
  - 1.2 gender
  - 1.3 parents' highest educational attainment
  - 1.4 number of siblings
  - 1.5 parents' occupation
  - 1.6 parents' monthly salary, and
  - 1.7 reading materials available at home
2. Ascertain the student's level of comprehension in reading short story in terms of the following:
  - 2.1 silent reading
  - 2.2 reading aloud while holding a copy of short story
  - 2.3 reading aloud together
3. Find out the student's academic performance in Filipino subject.
4. Find out whether significant relationship exist between:
  - 4.1 demographic profile of the student- respondents and grade in Filipino subject
  - 4.2 level of comprehension in reading short story and students' grade in Filipino subject.

Extent literature shows that according to Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell (1996), "Reading is the construction of meaning. Comprehending is not: a product of reading; it is the process". Comprehension is a vital component to reading. It is the underlying goal in all areas of reading development. Because comprehension is such a fundamental element of reading, it is important that we know how to maximize the ability for comprehension to occur. Fountas and Pinnell believe that comprehension is crucial when reading, therefore it is equally important for teachers to understand how this process forms best in the mind .. Strategies that Workby~stephanie Harvey and Anne Goudvis (2000) discusses comprehension as a form of

strategic thinking. They believe that "constructing meaning is the goal of comprehension" . As teachers instructing for comprehension, we want our students to enhance their understanding, acquire and use their knowledge, monitor their understanding, and develop insight. According to Harvey and Goudvis, comprehension means that readers are thinking about what they are learning, and that readers think deeply about what they are taking from the text. When reading, and comprehending, people are building their schema. Harvey and Goudvis believe that teachers need to assist our students' comprehension to enhance understanding.

This study will help to determine how reading can be used in the 7 classroom to promote this belief. McCallum, Sharp, Bell, and Thomas (2004) compared the two forms of reading that I intend on examining for both comprehension and time. It stated that this topic has been the focus of numerous investigations, many with inconclusive results. In the 1970's, it was believed that oral reading created better comprehension, as found by many researchers. In this time period, oral reading was also used more by educators. More recently, the same outcome was found through additional research with seven and eight year olds. However, silent reading has been shown to be more effective in creating better comprehension in other studies that have been conducted in the past. These results showed that lower ability readers comprehended text with a higher score, while others with higher abilities produced equal scores when reading silently. This specific research showed no significant differences in comprehension between the two reading styles, but it did show that silent reading is more efficient, in that the silent readings took less time. It is interesting to me that there has not been a clear, significant answer to this question over many years. Although the question has not yet been answered, I hope to find significant differences between the two styles in my own research. Nation and Norbury (2005) look into the problems that occur in the reading process that effects comprehension. Nation and Norbury (2005) discuss comprehension as a complex process that requires numerous cognitive processes, which range from letter recognition to interpreting meaning and connecting it to world knowledge. They discuss the idea that if a child cannot decode, or read with sufficient fluency, it has been found that comprehension is compromised. However, there are other factors in comprehension, as shown by the authors. Some children, as found through their research, can decode accurately but still are unsuccessful in making meaning of text. They found that some children read "superficially", meaning that they do not think constructively during the reading process. Also, failure to comprehend may be a whole language difficulty. If readers have difficulty in oral and written language, reading comprehension will suffer. The article discusses the aspects of language which effect comprehension, in that it is important to consider both phonological skills and nonphonological language such as semantics, morphology, pragmatics, and syntax in reference to comprehension. When any of these characteristics are a difficulty for a reader, comprehension may be affected.

Constructivism theory is important to consider in this study because it shows how individual students will comprehend and create meaning differently. Each individual child constructs knowledge and meaning differently and creates their own interpretation of that knowledge. There are many aspects that influence each student's comprehension that go beyond reading styles, such as prior knowledge and motivation to read. Constructivism is how

each child makes meaning and constructs information in their minds. Tools of the Mind: A Case Study of Implementing the Vygotskian Approach in American Early Childhood and Primary Classrooms, by Elena Badrova and Deborah Leong, discusses this idea. It states that "developmental outcomes and processes that were typically thought of as occurring ~naturally' or 'spontaneously' were, in fact, substantially influenced by children's own learning or 'constructed' (Badrova and Leong, 2001). This will be helpful in determining other factors that will affect the process of making meaning that occurs in the participants in this study. Assessment of the Qualitative Reading Inventory-4 (QRI-4) is an assessment which is used to determine the reading comprehension level of a student. This assessment consists of word lists, reading passages used in conjunction with running records and miscue analysis, a retelling, and comprehension questions which are all leveled according to grades. The comprehension questions are separated into literal and inferential questions. Reliability of the QRI-4 is quite high, especially across similar genres. Creators of the QRI-4 have made scoring very consistent, as to not result in bias scores by the administrators. When measured against norm-referenced achievement tests, the QRI-4 correlations were statistically significant and all positive. Because the QRI-4 is a qualitative assessment but still has a reliable scoring system. The writer determined that this would be the appropriate assessment to use for this research.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design and Respondents**

This study applied descriptive- correlational method of research which focused on determining whether reading silently or reading aloud with a copy of short story and reading aloud together was more beneficial in terms of comprehension of the Grade- 10 senior high school students of Tucdao National High School.

The subject of this study involved 150 students from five (5) sections and was chosen through random sampling. The researcher personally conducted the reading activities in three different ways and assessed students' comprehension after each reading. The data for comprehension while reading silently was then compared to that of reading aloud while holding a copy of short story and reading aloud together. The students were assessed independently at an appropriate time determined by the classroom teacher. Procedures for this study involved administering the multiple type of examinations with 20 items. In order to measure comprehension and would allow to assess the students' abilities without the students reaching frustration during the assessments. This included having the student read a text, aloud then silently in three separate testing situations. After each reading, the student was asked to retell the story and then answer comprehension questions. This assesses retellings by providing the researcher with all the events from the text. When the student includes events from the story, these are then checked off. The researcher can then retrieved data of how many events were remembered from the text. The next component of the assessment includes comprehension

questions, both implicit (inferences from the text) and explicit (directly from the text). This allowed the researcher to gain three different insights into the students' comprehension.

The retrieval of the data was done immediately after the activity administered. The data were collated, tallied, analyzed, interpreted and presented in tables based on the variables of the study.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Demographic Profile of the Senior High School Students**

The respondents considered in this study were the Grade 10 senior high school students.

Among the 150 respondents, sixty-five (65) or 43.3 percent belonged to the age of 16 years old, meanwhile, few respondents with a frequency of 4 or 2.7 percent belonged to the age bracket of 19 to 21 years old.

It shows that most of the respondents, as shown by a frequency of ninety-one or 60.7 percent, were female while fifty-nine or 39.3 percent were male. This indicates that Among the 150 respondents, sixty-five (65) or 43.3 percent belonged to the age of 16 years old,

Moreover, A great proportion or 28.7 percent of the Among the 150 respondents, sixty-five (65) or 43.3 percent belonged to the age of 16 years old, and thirty-four (34) or 22.7 percent of them were high school graduates; and forty-six (46) or 30.7 percent of the mother were high school graduates while twenty-eight (28) or 18.7 percent were non-elementary graduates.

Of the 150 respondents, seventy-three (73) or 48.6 percent belonged to the number of sibling bracket of 6-8; while eight (8) or 5.3 percent belonged to 12-13 number of sibling bracket.

Majority of the student-respondents' Parents' Occupation, for the head of the family were fishermen with thirty-eight (38) or 25.3 percent while the mothers fifty-nine (59) or 39.3 percent were mostly jobless.

Meanwhile, out of 150 student-respondents parents' monthly income eighty-nine (89) or 59.3 percent belonged to the income bracket of 4,000 below while four (4) or 2.7 percent belonged to the income bracket of 40,000 and above.

The data revealed that reading materials available at home of the respondents were books while encyclopedia belonged to the last rank or limited reading material available at home of the respondents.

### Level of Comprehension in Reading Short Story

It was found out that of the 150 respondents, sixty- six (66) or 44.0 percent were mostly favorable for reading aloud while holding a copy of short story which obtained a score of 13-16 or interpreted as Very Satisfactory. In the study of Fush (2011) the findings disclosed that reading aloud while holding a copy of short story has greatly contributed to the furtherance of their comprehension ability. While 4 or 2.7 percent belonged to the 0-4 score level of comprehension and interpreted as “Did not Meet Expectations”. Fountas and Pinnell (2001) pointed out that the reasons for having students read aloud with a copy of the text include: to share texts, to develop listening skills and vocabulary, to build confidence, develop strategy use, and to assess students.

Level of Comprehension	Silent Reading		Reading aloud while holding a copy		Reading aloud together	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
17 – 20 (Outstanding)	18	12.0	21	14.0	20	13.3
13 – 16 (Very Satisfactory)	55	36.7	66	44.0	60	40.0
9 – 12 (Satisfactory)	54	36.0	44	29.3	46	30.7
5 – 8 (Fairly Satisfactory)	19	12.7	18	12.0	21	14.0
0-4 (Did Not Meet Expectations)	4	2.7	1	.7	3	2.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

### Academic Performance of Students in Filipino Subject

It was found out that less than half belonged to the bracket of 80-84. This finding indicates that majority of these students were more or less satisfactory in his/her performance in Filipino classes. The result implies that the students with grades in the satisfactory range of the distribution had possibly neutral or negative attitudes toward Filipino subject.

Grades	First Quarter		Second Quarter	
	f	%	f	%
90 – 100 (Outstanding)	8	5.3	28	.7
85 – 89 (Very Satisfactory)	35	23.3	50	33.3
80 – 84 (Satisfactory)	49	32.7	44	29.3
75 – 79 (Fairly Satisfactory)	38	25.3	25	16.7
Below 75 (Did Not Met Expectations)	20	13.3	3	2.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100</b>

### Relationship of Variables

The demographic profile of the student- respondents and academic performance in Filipino subject had no significant correlation indicating that the profile of the students do not have bearing on their performance in Filipino subjects.

### Significant relationship between the Students' Demographic Profile and Academic Performance in Filipino

Variables	X <sup>2</sup>	df	p-value	Decision
Gender	34.632	38	.626	Accepted
Father's education	200.120	193	.293	Accepted
Mother's education	221.674	190	.057	Not accepted
Father's work	638.408	646	.577	Accepted
Mother's work	474.058	532	.966	Accepted
Variables	r-value	Sig.(2-tailed)		Decision
Age	-.043	.600		Accepted
Number of siblings	-.075	.362		Accepted
Parents' income	.094	.253		Accepted
Reading materials	.238	.649		Accepted

Moreover, the level of comprehension in reading short story and the academic performance of the students towards Filipino subjects have no significant correlation. Thus, the comprehension level in reading short story in this case was not affected by their performance towards the subject.

**Significant Relationship Between the Level of Comprehension in Reading Short Story and Students' Grades in Filipino Subject**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>r-value</b>	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Silent reading and Grades in Filipino	.434	.000**	Not Accepted
Reading aloud and Grades in Filipino	.757	.000**	Not Accepted
Reading aloud together and Grades in Filipino	.726	.000**	Not Accepted

*\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*

**Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations**

In classrooms now, teachers shall incorporate these styles of reading, however with the results of this study; teachers may be able to format their teaching to instruct their students for a higher comprehension level. This study will add to the general knowledge in the area of comprehension. This will provide information as well for the educators in the area of comprehension, and how they can incorporate reading styles into their classrooms. There is a need for an educators or a future researcher to give an understanding of how students' reading styles impact their comprehension. As educators, if we do not know which style is more effective for comprehension, we will not know how to incorporate them into our teaching. Thus, classroom teachers are encouraged or will adopt these reasons for having students read aloud include: to share texts, to develop listening skills and vocabulary, to build confidence, develop strategy use, and to assess students. Also teachers should use oral reading to develop comprehension. If students read aloud, they can better understand the author's purpose and the meaning of the text. Although this text gives reasoning for teachers to use the different styles of reading, it only creates questions for me. The researchers believed that though silent reading for some is the source of successful reading, and yet reading aloud holding with a copy in this recent study conducted helps students to create meaning.

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