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## READING DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES AND LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION IN SUMILAO, DIVISION OF BUKIDNON

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### ABSTRACT

Many learners struggle with reading comprehension, and it has become a significant concern worldwide. This study aimed to examine the level of usage of reading development strategies and reading comprehension level of Grade VI learners' in Sumilao, Division of Bukidnon. Specifically, it sought to determine the respondents' 1) level of usage of reading development strategies, 2) level of reading comprehension, and 3) the significant relationship between the respondents' reading development strategies and their reading comprehension level. A descriptive survey method of research was used in the study, which involved one hundred fifty - two (152) Grade VI learners. The instrument by Bogaert et al. (2023) was patterned and modified. Descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to describe the variables in this study. Spearman Correlation was employed to determine the significant relationship between the respondents' reading development strategies and their comprehension level.

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The findings showed that the respondents' level of usage of reading development strategies on overt cognitive was low while high on covert cognitive, monitoring, evaluating, and using home language. However, the majority of the respondents have a frustration level of reading comprehension. There is no significant relationship between the respondents' level of reading development strategies and their reading comprehension. This implies that the mere utilization of reading strategies does not guarantee improved reading comprehension. It is recommended that teachers should consider the role of metacognitive strategies in conjunction with cognitive reading strategies.

**Keywords:** *Reading Development Strategies, Reading Comprehension*

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## INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is an essential skill that allows individuals to interpret, understand, and critically analyze written texts. It is considered one of the most important skills that learners should develop to succeed academically and professionally. However, as observed, many learners struggle with reading comprehension, and it has become a significant concern worldwide. These situations highlight the significant challenges that young learners face in developing their reading comprehension skills and strategies. Hence, the crucial reason for selecting this problem. Alongside this observation are the poor reading comprehension habits and strategies seen among young learners. This holds true in the district of Sumilao, as elementary teachers have noticed that a lot of young learners lack reading comprehension.

In recent years, international researchers such as in the United States, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reports that only 35% of fourth-grade students and 36% of eighth-grade students are proficient in reading comprehension (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021). In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) reported that only 64.6% of Grade 4 learners in public schools achieved the target Mean Percentage Score (MPS) in the National Achievement Test (NAT) for Reading in 2019 (DepEd, 2019). The result of the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) reflected that Philippine students have low reading comprehension, which resulted in the reading comprehension skills of Filipino 15-year-olds being below average (OECD, 2019). In Sumilao District, the result of the

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2023-2024 Phil-IRI (pretest) revealed 364 identified learners at frustration level based on the consolidated district level results from 584 Grade VI students. This basically means that 62.33% or more than half of the population of Grade VI learners are at frustration level in terms of reading comprehension.

DepEd Memorandum No. 173 s. 2019, entitled "Bawat Bata Bumabasa," states that DepEd shall strengthen the Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP) with the aim of equipping learners with reading skills to make them proficient and independent readers in their grade level. The problem of young learners' reading development strategies has been extensively studied, and ample evidence supports its existence. For example, one study found that students who actively employ their reading comprehension strategies are able to comprehend and remember more information from their readings and achieve greater proficiency in higher-level language skills (Habók & Magyar, 2019). Similarly, another study conducted in the Philippines found that many Grade 4 learners struggle with reading comprehension, particularly in understanding texts with more complex vocabulary and sentence structures (Cruz & Regala, 2018).

Furthermore, the problem of improving reading development strategies among young learners has significant implications for their academic performance, career success, socioeconomic status, and national development. Poor reading comprehension skills due to poor levels of strategies can negatively impact learners' academic performance, as reading is a fundamental skill required in most subjects. As noticed, young learners in public elementary

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schools located in Sumilao, Bukidnon, struggle to understand textbooks, worksheets, modules, and other reading materials and perform poorly in tests and assignments. These learners have no patience in understanding the text. They will not re-read and will choose answers right away.

Research has shown that poor reading comprehension skills significantly impact academic performance. A study by Madrazo and Francisco (2019) found that the students' reading comprehension was highly correlated with their academic performance. Moreover, providing students with ample opportunities for practice and feedback can further enhance their reading comprehension skills (Graham et al., 2018).

As such, every school needs to address the issue. Hence, this study is conducted to determine the level of usage of reading development strategies and learners' reading comprehension in Sumilao, Division of Bukidnon.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Design

This study made use of a descriptive-correlation research design. It involves measuring and analyzing variables to determine if there is a relationship between them. This research design is useful for exploring the relationships between variables and identifying patterns in data (Thomas & Zubkov, 2023).

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Descriptive research involves observing and describing phenomena without manipulating them. In a descriptive-correlational research design, researchers collect data on two or more variables and analyze the data to determine if there is a relationship between them. Correlation analysis is used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables. This research design is useful for generating hypotheses and identifying potential causal relationships between variables.

## Research Setting

The research was conducted in the five (5) public elementary schools in Sumilao District for the School Year 2023-2024. Sumilao is a municipality in the landlocked province of Bukidnon. The municipality has a land area of 196.95 square kilometers. In the data given by PhilAtlas (2022), its population determined by the 2020 Census was 29,531. Sumilao District is comprised of fifteen (15) schools, of which twelve (12) are elementary, and the other three (3) are secondary schools.

The said district also has competent teachers who always take part in attaining the mission and vision of the Department of Education. However, despite the toil and hard work, as reported upon assessment, there are still struggling readers in Sumilao District. Due to the problem of reading, the District of Sumilao implemented an intervention in line with the "The 3Bs Initiative or the Bawat Bata Bumabasa" which was the DGL-DSL/ Distance Guided Learning-Developing

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Sumilao Learners. The schools that, upon evaluation, made a significant impact on this reading initiative are the schools of Kisolon Central Elementary School, Sumilao Elementary School, San Vicente Elementary School, Kilabong Elementary School, and Vista Villa Elementary Schools. Despite the implementation of the said reading initiative, these schools still have the number of struggling readers.

### Respondents and Sampling Procedure

The respondents of the study were the one hundred fifty-two (152) Grade VI learners in Sumilao District, Bukidnon, for the School Year 2023-2024. The respondents were determined using Slovincs' Formula with a population of five hundred eighty-four (584) learners and a margin of error of 7%. Further, a stratified random sampling procedure was used to get the percentage and the appropriate number of respondents in every school. This was done by dividing the computed sample size by its population. The distribution of respondents by school is shown in Table A.

### Distribution of Respondents

District/School	Population	Respondents
Kisolon Central Elementary School	316	82
Sumilao Elementary School	84	22
San Vicente Elementary School	110	29

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Kilabong Elementary School	43	11
Vista Villa Elementary School	31	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>152</b>

## Research Instrument

The instrument used in gathering the necessary data was a questionnaire composed of two parts. Part 1 dealt with the respondents' reading development strategies, such as overt cognitive, covert cognitive, monitoring, evaluating and using home language. This is patterned and modified from the original research of Bogaert et al. (2023) titled, "Development of Reading Comprehension Strategies Questionnaire on the late elementary school students". Three (3) items about overt cognitive reading strategies were added by the researcher, as well as the three (3) items in covert cognitive reading strategies, seven (7) items in monitoring, four (4) items in evaluating, and seven (7) items in using home language in view of comprehending texts. This was done to suit the characteristics of the respondents. Each variable has ten indicators with the following options: 4- always, 3- very often , 2- rarely and 1- never.

Part 2 elicited on learners reading comprehension level: Independent, Instructional and Frustration. It involves the six passages taken from PHIL-IRI. These are (1) Yawning, (2)

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Laughter, (3) Effects of Anger, (4) Dreams, (5) Rocks from Outer Space and (6) Beetles. It has eight (8) comprehension questions, each with four options in every passage : A, B, C, and D.

## Validation of Instrument

The instrument was tried out on thirty (30) Grade VI learners in Kilabong Elementary School who have the same characteristics as those of the actual respondents, but they did not participate in the actual study. This was done to ensure that the test was valid in collecting the data of the study. The validity test garnered 0.79 Cronbach's Alpha value. After the tryout, suggestions and recommendations from the respondents were used to enhance the questionnaire before the actual investigation.

The validity test took place on September 8, 2023, after the Department of Education-Bukidnon approved the permit to conduct research. There were some items in the survey questionnaire wherein the learners suggested making the words simpler. The researcher rephrased those items and used simpler terms to enable the learners to understand the items in the survey questionnaire.

## Data Gathering Procedure

To follow the ethical procedure of conducting the research and gathering of data, a recommendation letter from the dean of the Graduate School of Cagayan de Oro College was brought to the office of the Schools Division Superintendent of Bukidnon for approval. When

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permission to conduct the study was granted, it was handed down to the School Principal of the concerned schools in the district of Sumilao Bukidnon to ensure that the respondents would answer the questionnaire. A brief orientation was given to the respondents in each school who would participate and answer the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was personally distributed and administered by the researcher. The respondents were given three hours to answer the questionnaire, thus producing a more accurate information period. The researcher personally collected the questionnaires after the respondents were done answering. Papers were checked properly and data were tallied for statistical analysis.

### System of Scoring

For the analysis and interpretation of data, the system of scoring is presented below.

### Part I. Reading Development Strategies

Scale	Range	Description	Interpretation
4	3.51 – 4.00	Always	Very High
3	2.51 – 3.50	Very Often	High
2	1.51 – 2.50	Rarely	Low
1	1.00 – 1.50	Never	Very Low

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## Part II. Reading Comprehension (PHIL-IRI)

Score/Range	Reading Level/Description
80-100%	Independent
59-79%	Instructional
58% and below	Frustration

### Statistical Treatment

After collecting and recording the data gathered in the study, a test of normality was performed to determine whether or not the data were normally distributed. This was done to ensure that the data were treated with correct statistical tools. The following statistical tools were used:

Descriptive statistics such as percentage, frequency, mean, and standard deviation were used to describe the variables in the study. The Spearman Correlation was used since the data was not normally distributed. Spearman correlation determined if there was a negative, positive, or zero significant relationship between the respondents' reading development strategies and their reading comprehension level.

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result of the Test on Relationship between the Learners' Reading Development Strategies and their Reading Comprehension

Reading Development Strategies	Level of Reading Comprehension			Overall rho-value	Interpretation
	Independent	Instructional	Frustration		
Overt Cognitive	---	0.044	0.935	-0.019	NS
		0.028	0.606	0.819	
Covert Cognitive	---	0.210	-0.054	0.199	S
		0.013	0.874	0.014	
Monitoring	---	0.212	-0.089	0.242	S
		0.011	0.795	0.003	
Evaluating	---	0.106	-0.066	0.091	NS
		0.211	0.848	0.265	
Using Home Language	---	0.149	-0.187	0.108	NS
		0.078	0.581	0.185	
Overall	---	0.162	-0.115	0.137	NS
		0.055	0.737	0.092	

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Table presents the result of the test on relationship between the learners' reading development strategies (Overt Cognitive, Covert Cognitive, Monitoring, Evaluating, and Using Home Language) and their level of reading comprehension. The overall rho-value is 0.137 ( $p=0.092$ ) interpreted as Not Significant. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. This result means that there is no significant relationship between learners' reading development strategies (specifically Overt Cognitive, Evaluating, and Using Home Language) and their level of reading comprehension. Even when the result of this study has presented that the learners have high levels of reading development strategies, the majority of them are still at frustration level in terms of reading comprehension. While learners demonstrate a high level of usage of reading development strategies, it is possible that the strategies they employ may not be effectively suited to address the specific comprehension demands of the texts they encounter. The strategies they use might not align with the complexity or type of texts they are expected to comprehend, resulting in a limited impact on their reading comprehension outcomes.

Importantly, there is a significant relationship between the covert cognitive reading development strategy and the reading comprehension level with the rho value 0.199 ( $p=0.014$ ). Covert reading development strategies involve metacognitive processes, such as self-monitoring, self-questioning, and self-regulation. These strategies reflect learners' ability to reflect on their own thinking processes while reading, monitor their understanding, and make adjustments as needed. Metacognitive awareness is crucial for effective reading comprehension, as it allows

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learners to actively engage with the text, identify areas of difficulty, and employ appropriate strategies to enhance comprehension. The significant relationship between covert cognitive reading development strategies and reading comprehension suggests that learners who are more adept at using metacognitive strategies tend to have stronger comprehension skills.

Additionally, there is also a significant relationship between Monitoring as a reading development strategy and the reading comprehension level among learners at the rho value of 0.242 ( $p=0.003$ ). When learners engage in monitoring, they make real-time adjustments to their reading strategies based on their understanding of the text. They slow down, re-read, paraphrase, or use other strategies to enhance comprehension. By actively monitoring and adjusting their reading process, the learners can improve their understanding and make sense of the text's content and structure. The ability to make these real-time adjustments contributes to the significant relationship between monitoring and reading comprehension.

On the other hand, there is no significant relationship between overt reading development strategy and the learners' reading comprehension at the rho value of -0.019 ( $p=0.819$ ). This suggests that there is no strong or meaningful association between these variables. Overt reading strategies, which typically involve visible or explicit behaviors such as highlighting, underlining, or note-taking, don't have a direct impact on reading comprehension for learners. While these strategies can be helpful for some individuals, their effectiveness varies depending on learners' preferences, reading styles, or the nature of the texts. It is possible that overt strategies are not

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universally effective for learners, leading to a lack of significant relationship with reading comprehension.

Furthermore, there is also no significant relationship between Evaluating as a reading development strategy and the reading comprehension among learners at the rho value of 0.091 ( $p=0.265$ ). This indicates that there is no strong or meaningful association between these variables. This is because even if learners are aware of and able to use evaluating reading strategies, they don't consistently apply them or use them in a strategic and effective manner. The frequency, quality, or depth of strategy application can influence its impact on reading comprehension. If learners do not engage in evaluative thinking consistently or if they lack the necessary skills to evaluate the text effectively, the strategies may not significantly contribute to their comprehension outcomes.

Moreover, there is also no significant relationship between Using Home Language as a reading development strategy and the reading comprehension of learners at the rho value of 0.108 ( $p=185$ ). This denotes that there is no strong or meaningful association between these variables. This is because the relationship between using the home language as a reading development strategy and reading comprehension may be influenced by learners' language proficiency in both their home language and the language of instruction. If learners have limited usage in their home language or if they are more masters in the language of instruction, the impact of using the home language on reading comprehension may be minimal. The lack of a

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significant relationship indicates that using the home language is not a significant contributor to reading comprehension for learners.

Among the reading development strategies, monitoring has the highest positive relationship with the rho-value of 0.242 ( $p=0.003$ ) interpreted as Significant. This result denotes that learners who engage in monitoring their own comprehension while reading have higher levels of usage of the reading development strategy compared to those who do not emphasize this strategy as much. Monitoring involves the active process of self-assessing comprehension, checking for understanding, and making adjustments during reading to enhance understanding. The findings indicate that teaching and encouraging learners to be more aware of their comprehension and to actively monitor their understanding while reading can potentially contribute to improved reading comprehension. Monitoring refers to the process of actively keeping track of one's understanding while reading and making adjustments as needed. This can include self-checking comprehension, identifying confusing parts, and using strategies to clarify meaning. The fact that Monitoring has a positive relationship with reading comprehension suggests that learners who engage in active monitoring while reading are more likely to have better comprehension of the text (Keener & Hacker, 2019).

Among the reading development strategies, overt cognitive has the lowest rho-value of -0.019 ( $p=0.819$ ), interpreted as Not Significant. This means that the use of overt cognitive strategies is low and does not appear to have a noticeable impact on improving reading

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comprehension for the learners in this study. This result denotes that there is no significant relationship or correlation between the overt cognitive reading development strategy and the reading comprehension level of learners.

Additionally, the lack of a significant relationship between overt cognitive strategies and reading comprehension may have several possible explanations. One possibility is that learners may not be effectively implementing these strategies, despite being aware of them. It is possible that students may not fully understand how to apply these strategies in a way that enhances their comprehension.

Moreover, it is important to consider individual differences among learners. Some students may naturally employ overt cognitive strategies more effectively, while others may struggle to apply them consistently or find them helpful for comprehension. The effectiveness of these strategies may also depend on factors such as reading ability, prior knowledge, and the complexity of the text being read (Banditvilai, 2020).

While overt cognitive strategies may not show a significant relationship with reading comprehension on average, they could still be highly effective for certain learners. Some learners may find these strategies helpful in organizing their thoughts, making connections, or engaging with the text in a more active manner. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that different

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learners may benefit from different approaches, and overt cognitive strategies could be valuable for these learners.

## CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATION /FINDINGS/SUMMARY

### Summary

This study intends to determine the level of usage of reading development strategies and learners' reading comprehension in Sumilao, Division of Bukidnon. Specifically, this study endeavors to 1) find the level of usage of reading development strategies in terms of Overt Cognitive, Covert Cognitive, Monitoring, Evaluating, and Using of Home Language, 2) find the learners' level of reading comprehension when categorized into Independent, Instructional, and Frustration level, and 3) determine the significant relationship between the learners' reading development strategies and their reading comprehension. The participants were the one hundred fifty-two (152) Grade VI learners in Sumilao District, Division of Bukidnon, during the School Year 2023-2024. The descriptive correlation method of research was utilized in this study. The researcher patterned and modified the research instrument from the original research by Bogaert et al. (2023) titled "Development of Reading Comprehension Strategies Questionnaire on the late elementary school students." The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation to describe the variables in the study.

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The Spearman Correlation was used to determine the significant relationship between the reading development strategies and learners' reading comprehension.

## Findings

The analyses showed the following findings:

1. The respondents' level of usage of Reading Development strategies on overt cognitive was low while high on covert cognitive, monitoring, evaluating, and using home language.
2. The majority of the respondents have a frustration level of reading comprehension.
3. There is a significant relationship between the respondents' level of reading development strategies on covert cognitive and monitoring while not significant on overt cognitive, evaluating and using home language and their level of reading comprehension.

## Conclusion

In light of the findings found by the researcher, the reading development strategies are high. Meanwhile, the reading comprehension of the learners' are at the frustration level. Hence, there is no significant relationship between the respondents' level of reading development strategies and their reading comprehension; thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that the mere utilization of reading strategies does not guarantee improved reading comprehension.

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## Recommendation

Based on the results of the study, the following are recommended:

1. School administrators should provide professional development opportunities for teachers to enhance their knowledge and skills in teaching reading development strategies, with a particular focus on overt cognitive strategy. This will enable teachers to effectively support learners in utilizing explicit and observable strategies during reading.
2. Teachers should consider metacognitive strategies in conjunction with cognitive reading strategies. Asking the learners questions to help them self-monitor and self-correct can enhance their reading comprehension.
3. Future research on the application and transfer of covert cognitive and monitoring as reading development strategies in different contexts should be conducted in other places, considering other variables.

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