

# Factors Affecting the Reading Performance of BSEd Students of Bataan Peninsula State University - Balanga Campus

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**Abstract:** *The study made used of descriptive correlation research to describe and correlate the relationship of variables to the reading proficiency of the students so that a reading comprehension program could be done to develop fluency, accuracy and critical thinking among the students. The data involved BSEd freshmen students in Bataan Peninsula State University city of Balanga, Bataan. Stratified random sampling technique was employed to be able to generalize the result of the study. For data gathering, students were asked to answer a standardized reading test and a structured interview was be done to check on the fluency of the students. The study used a standardized test for reading constructed by Kent L. Coperman and Karen A. Ribarchik of the United States. The test is called the Adult Placement Indicator (API) which is designed for adult education. It was revealed in the study that the respondents were: basically dominated by female. This can be attributed to an old norm that teaching was believed to be for women only and harder jobs or those requiring strength were for men; the highest earned experience in classroom teaching was observed between 11- 15 years; traditional teaching strategies was the chief method used; the reading performance of the respondents were observed in the level were in High School Completion classes or General Education Development (GED) level and all of the variables of Student-Related factors pointed that there were significantly relationship in all the given indicators of reading comprehension. The gender, prior knowledge, reading strategy used exposure to reading materials and attitude towards reading were significantly related to their reading performance. Also, Teacher Related factors were significantly related in all the given indicators of reading comprehension. Educational attainment, length in service and teaching strategies were significantly related.*

**Keywords:** reading proficiency, standardized reading test, general education development, experimental reading strategies

## 1. Introduction

Reading is a means of language acquisition, of communication, and of sharing information and ideas. (Thorndike, 1998) Like all language, it is a complex interaction between the text and the reader which is shaped by the reader's prior knowledge, experiences, attitude, and language community which is culturally and socially situated. The reading process requires continuous practices, development, and refinement.

In addition, Elish- Piper, (2010) opined that reading comprehension is "the process of understanding or making meaning when reading". Reading comprehension is a valuable necessary tool in the learning process. It allows the reader to expand his vocabulary, understand the text he is reading, and use various strategies for the reader to improve learning. It is necessary because it shapes the reader's understanding of ideas and words. It assists his ability to make sense of ideas and concepts. It can even affect various parts of public life, such as political arena. If the reader is not satisfied with his own level of reading comprehension, all is not lost. There are means by which to improve it. These include growing one's vocabulary, utilizing multiple senses, and changing one's reading speed. All of these tools serve to advance the learning process. In order for one to understand the value reading comprehension processes, one must first understand what it is.

The reader can use what he knows to get a grasp of the material he is reading. For example, a large vocabulary-understanding the meanings of many words-can help someone understand a wide variety of texts. Elish-Piper (2010) asserts that "when reader is able to connect these three key components," it is much easier for that person to

comprehend what he is reading. If the reader needs to, he can use strategies to help comprehend the text better.

Before the 1980's, little comprehension instruction occurred in the United States (**National Reading Panel, 2000**). **Palinscar and Brown (1986)** developed a technique called reciprocal teaching that taught students to predict, summarize, clarify, and ask questions for sections of a text. The technique had positive outcomes. Since then, the use of strategies like summarizing after each paragraph have come to be seen as effective strategies for building students' comprehension.

Similarly, **Pressley, (2006)** The idea is that students will develop stronger reading comprehension skills on their own if the teacher gives them explicit mental tools for unpacking text.

There are a wide range of reading strategies suggested by programs and educators. The National Reading Panel identified positive effects only for a subset, particularly summarizing, asking questions, answering questions, comprehension monitoring, graphic organizers, and cooperative learning. The Panel also emphasized that a combination of strategies, as used in Reciprocal Teaching, can be effective.

Comprehension through discussion involves lessons that are "instructional conversations" that create higher- level thinking opportunities for students. The purposes of the discussions are to promote critical and aesthetic thinking about text and encourage full classroom involvement.

Readers use a variety of reading strategies to assist with decoding (to translate symbols into sounds or visual

representations of speech) and comprehension. Readers may use morpheme, semantics, syntax and context clues to identify the meaning of unknown words. Readers integrate the words they have read into their existing framework of knowledge or schema (schemata theory).

To this effect, the proposed research aims to strengthen and develop the reading abilities of the students through a reading comprehension program.

With an ultimate concern of improving accuracy, speed and fluency in students' reading ability and comprehension, this paper is designed to:

- 1) Develop a reading comprehension program.
- 2) Establish uniformity in teaching Developmental Reading (Prof Ed 102) within the University.
- 3) To encourage teachers to produce classroom materials that will develop the ability of students to think critically.
- 4) General Problem: How do selected factors affect the reading comprehension of freshmen students in the College of Education of Bataan Peninsula State University, AY 2008-2012?

Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

- 1) How may the student-related factors be described in terms of :
  - 1.1 Gender;
  - 1.2 Prior knowledge;
  - 1.3 Reading strategies used;
  - 1.4 Exposure to reading materials?
- 2) How may the teacher-related factors be described in terms of :
  - 1.5 Educational attainment;
  - 1.6 Length of service;
  - 1.7 Teaching strategies used?
- 3) What is the level of reading comprehension of the students?
- 4) Is there a significant relationship between student and teacher-related factors and the level of reading comprehension of the students?

## 2. Methods of Research

The study will make use of descriptive correlation research to describe and correlate the relationship of variables to the reading comprehension of the students so that a reading comprehension program could be done to develop fluency, accuracy and critical thinking among the students.

The data will involve BSEd freshmen students in Bataan Peninsula State University city of Balanga, Bataan for the AY 2010-2012. Stratified random sampling technique will be employed to be able to generalize the result of the study.

For data gathering, students will be asked to answer a standardized reading test and a structured interview will also be done to check on the fluency of the students. The study used a standardized test for reading constructed by **Kent L. Coperman and Karen A. Ribarchik** of the United States. The test is called the Adult Placement Indicator (API) which is designed for adult education. It measures the adult's general reading ability and serves as placement tool for adult

education programs. The API consists of vocabulary and comprehension section with a total of 100 questions.

The API surveys the student's ability to silently read and make responses indicating an understanding of vocabulary and paragraph comprehension. The range of items is from easy to difficult. The indicator takes 20 minutes to administer, can be given silently to groups or individuals, has adult contents and is used for grade level placement. Raw scores can be converted to grade equivalency scores (GE). To obtain a student's total score, the vocabulary and comprehension scores are totaled and the grade equivalency level is derived from the grade placement chart. The API can be used to place students in the following adult education programs: Adult Basic Education (ABE), General education Development (GED), English as a Second Language (ESL), High School completion, and other Special Needs Programs. This indicator represents a response to the demands of adult educators for a multi-grade level, easy-to-score survey.

To be able to interpret results of the test, the following scales were used:

Scales	Interpretation
0.0 – 2.0	Students at this level should be considered to have majoring learning difficulties.
2.2 – 3.8	Students at this level read very little. Adult Basic Education classes are recommended.
4.0 – 4.8	Students at this level have difficulty reading. Adult Basic Education classes are recommended.
5.0 – 6.8	The students at this level have some reading skills; upper level Adult Basic education classes are recommended.
7.0 – 8.8	High school completion classes or General Education development (GED) classes are recommended for students at this level. For a person who wishes to take GED classes.
9.0 – 10.0	English as A Second Language (ESL), high school completion and other Special Needs Programs.

## 3. Presentation and Analysis of Data

With aims to lay out evidences regarding the significant relationship of the identified factors to the reading comprehension skills of the respondents, the researcher gathered relevant data that would eventually yield to the possible outcome. The following chapter details the different findings that the research had accumulated through tests.

**Table 1:** Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents

Freshmen Students	Frequency	Percentage
2010	30	30.00
2011	35	35.00
2012	35	35.00
Total	100	100.00

Table I presents the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents. It could be gleaned from the table that thirty students (30) or 30.00 percent of the colleges' freshmen student were considered in 2010. Thirty five (35) or 35 percent in 2011, and thirty five (35) or 35 percent in 2012. The respondents were selected using random sampling.

**Table 2:** Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Students in terms of Sex

Grade Level	Frequency	Percentage
Male	25	25.00
Female	75	75.00
Total	100	100.00

It can be deduced from the table that twenty five (25) or 25 percent of the students are males and seventy five (75) or 75 percent are female. The sex distribution is obviously dominated by female. This can be attributed to an old norm that teaching was believed to be for women only and harder jobs or those requiring strength were for men.

**Table 2:** Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Student's Reading Performance in terms of Prior Knowledge

Grade Level	Frequency	Percentage
0.0 – 2.0	0	0.00
2.2 – 3.8	0	0.00
4.0 – 4.8	3	3.00
5.0 – 6.8	27	27.00
7.0 – 8.8	58	58.00
9.0 – 10.0	12	12.00
TOTAL	100	100.00

It can be seen from the table that 58 percent of the students are in the level were in High School Completion classes or General Education Development (GED) classes are recommended for the student. 27 percent are in the level were the students having some reading skills; upper level Adult Basic Education classes are recommended. 12 percent were in the level were in the student don't have any difficulties in learning. And lastly 3 percent of the students have difficulties in reading and Adult Basic Education Classes are recommended.

**Table 3:** Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Student's Reading Performance in terms of Reading Strategy Used

Reading Strategies Used	Frequency	Percentage
Traditional	0	0.00
Cooperative	0	0.00
Discovery Approach	3	3.00
Inquiry Approach	27	27.00
Experimental	58	58.00
Reflective Teaching	12	12.00
TOTAL	100	100.00

It can be deduced from the table that 58 percent of the students are using Experimental reading strategy; 27 percent are using Inquiry Approach; 12 percent were using Reflective Teaching method and lastly, only 3 percent of the students used Discovery approach as their strategy in reading.

**Table 4:** Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Student's Reading Performance in terms of Exposure to Reading Materials

Reading Materials	Frequency	Percentage
Encyclopedia	0	0.00
Travel Brochures	0	0.00
Newspapers	3	3.00
Magazines	27	27.00
Books/ Internet	58	58.00
Pamphlets	12	12.00

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100.00</b>
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It can be seen from the table that fifty eight (58) or 58 percent of the students are exposed to reading books, twenty seven (27) or 27 percent are reading magazines, twelve (12) or 12 percent are reading pamphlets and three (3) or 3 percent are reading newspaper.

**Table 6:** Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Teachers in terms of Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
Ed. D./ Ph. D./DPA	3	15.00
MA/MS Graduates	10	50.00
Bachelor's Degree	7	35.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.00</b>

It can be seen from the table that the teachers who are Master of Arts graduates is the highest frequency of ten (10) or 50%, it was followed by those with Bachelor's degree showing seven or 35 %, while there are those who earned their doctorate degree as shown by three or 15 %. These faculty members who are full – pledged doctoral are graduates of education and philosophy.

According to Mata (2003), teachers who are engaged in cycles of effective professional learning take greater responsibility for the learning of all students; they do not dismiss learning difficulties as an inevitable consequence of the home or community environment. Moreover, heightened responsibility is developed most effectively when teachers observe that their new teaching practices are having positive impacts on their students.

**Table 7:** Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Teachers in terms of Length of Service

Length of Service	Frequency	Percentage
21 and above	4	20.00
16 – 20 years	4	20.00
11- 15 years	6	30.00
6 – 10 years	4	20.00
1 – 5 years	2	10.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Four (4) or 20% of the teachers – respondents already spend 41 years and above in teaching, three (3) or 15% of them spend 31 – 40 years in the service and six (6) or 30% with the highest frequency spend 21 – 30 years in teaching while five (5) or 25% of them spend 11 – 10 years in the service and only two (2) or 10% of them spend 1 – 10 years in the service.

**Table 8:** Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Teachers in terms of Teaching Strategies

Strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Traditional	9	45.00
Cooperative	3	15.00
Discovery Approach	2	10.00
Inquiry Approach	2	10.00
Experimental	0	0.00
Reflective Teaching	4	20.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.00</b>

It can be deduced in the table that nine (9) or 45 percent with the highest frequency of the teacher used traditional



approach in dealing with their lesson while three (3) or 15 percent of them used cooperative in dealing with their lessons. Only two (2) or 10 percent of them used discovery and inquiry approach while none of them used experimental and lastly four (4) or 20 percent of them used reflective teaching.

To support this, Billingsley (2005) argued that the use of varied teaching strategies is important to assure the growth of the students. As noted by the OCDE (2007), the lack of activities oriented at improving reading comprehension in the classroom is a problem of teaching strategies. Poor comprehension skills are a consequence of the lack of activities for improving text comprehension in the classroom, as the main purpose of reading at school is that the pupils are skilled to read words, rather than to understand the texts.

**Table 9:** Significant Relationship between the Student – Related Factor and Reading Comprehension of Freshmen Students

Student – Related Factor		Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
Sex	0.60	Moderate Correlation	Significant
Prior Knowledge	1.00	Perfect Correlation	Significant
Reading Strategies Used	1.00	Perfect Correlation	Significant
Exposure to Reading Materials	1.00	Perfect Correlation	Significant
Attitude towards Reading	0.70	Moderate Correlation	Significant

The above table reveals the significant relationship between the person – related factors and the reading comprehension of freshmen students.

Based on the critical  $r$  value of 0.195, all of the variables of person related factors were significantly related in all the given indicator of reading comprehension. The gender has relationship with the indicator of role behavior as the descriptive rating was ‘moderate correlation’ (MC). Also, prior knowledge, reading strategy used, exposure to reading materials and attitude towards reading were significantly related because the descriptive rating of these three indicator was ‘marked correlation’ (MC).

**Table 10:** Significant Relationship between the Teacher – Related Factor and Reading Comprehension of Freshmen Students

Teacher – Related Factors		Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
Educational Attainment	.97	Very High Relationship	Significant
Length in Service	.96	Very High Relationship	Significant
Teaching Strategies	.89	High Relationship	Significant

Based on the computed critical  $r$  of 0.423, all three variables of teacher related factors were significantly related in all the given indicators of reading comprehension. Educational attainment, length in service and teaching strategies were significantly related because the descriptive rating of these three indicators was ‘marked correlation’ (MC)

Valentine (2009) noted that the most effective reading programs in the school are those that emphasized professional development and changed classroom practices,

such as cooperative learning and comprehensive school reform. Recognizing that reading is not the same as math and that secondary reading is not the same as reading at the elementary level and that reading programs focused on reforming daily instruction would have stronger impacts on student achievement which are conducted by professionally qualified teachers.

## 4. Research Findings

### 1) On Student- Related Factors

- It can be deduced from the table that twenty five (25) or 25percent of the students are males and seventy five (75) or 75 percent are females.
- Fifty eight (58) percent of the students are in the level were in High School Completion classes or General Education Development (GED) classes are recommended for the student. Twenty seven (27) percent are in the level were the students have some reading skills; upper level Adult Basic Education classes are recommended. Twelve (12) percent were in the level were in the student don't have any difficulties in learning. While only three (3) percent of the students have difficulties in reading and Adult Basic Education Classes.
- It can be deduced from the study that 58 percent of the students are using Experimental Reading strategy; 27 percent are using Inquiry Approach; 12 percent were using Reflective Teaching method and lastly, only 3 percent of the students used Discovery approach as their strategy in reading.
- It was observed that fifty eight (58) or 58 percent of the students are exposed to reading books, twenty seven (27) or 27 percent are reading magazines, twelve (12) or 12 percent are reading pamphlets and three (3) or 3 percent are reading newspaper.

### 2) On Teacher- Related factors

- Majority of BPSU- CoEd teachers are graduates of Master of Arts graduates is the highest frequency of ten (10) or 50%, it was followed by those with Bachelor's degree showing seven or 35 %, while there are those who earned their doctorate degree as shown by three or 15 %. These faculty members who are full – pledged doctoral are graduates of education and philosophy.
- Four (4) or 20% of the teachers – respondents already spend 41 years and above in teaching, three (3) or 15% of them spend 31 – 40 years in the service and six (6) or 30% with the highest frequency spend 21 – 30 years in teaching while five (5) or 25% of them spend 11 – 10 years in the service and only two (2) or 10% of them spend 1 – 10 years in the service,
- It can be deduced in the table that nine (9) or 45 percent with the highest frequency of the teacher used traditional approach in dealing with their lesson while three (3) or 15 percent of them used cooperative in dealing with their lessons. Only two (2) or 10 percent of them used discovery and inquiry approach while none of them used experimental and lastly four (4) or 20 percent of them used reflective teaching.
- Students are in the level were in High School Completion classes or General Education Development (GED) classes are recommended for the student. 27 percent are in the

level were the students have some reading skills; upper level Adult Basic Education classes are recommended. 12 percent were in the level were in the student don't have any difficulties in learning. And lastly 3 percent of the students have difficulties in reading and Adult Basic Education Classes.

- 4) Based on the critical r value of 0.195, all of the variables of person related factors were significantly related in all the given indicator of reading comprehension. The gender has relationship with the indicator of role behavior as the descriptive rating was 'moderate correlation' (MC). Also, prior knowledge, reading strategy used, exposure to reading materials and attitude towards reading were significantly related because the descriptive rating of these three indicator was 'marked correlation' (MC). However, Based on the computed critical r of 0.423, all three variables of teacher related factors were significantly related in all the given indicators of reading comprehension. Educational attainment, length in service and teaching strategies were significantly related because the descriptive rating of these three indicators was 'marked correlation' (MC)

## 5. Conclusions

Based on the foregoing, it can be deduced that:

- 1) The BPSU- College of Education students were: (1.1) basically dominated by female. This can be attributed to an old norm that teaching was believed to be for women only and harder jobs or those requiring strength were for men; (1.2) most of the students are in the level were in High School Completion classes or General Education Development (GED) classes; (1.3) used Experimental Reading strategy in dealing with their lessons; (1.4) majority of the students are exposed to reading books.
- 2) The language teachers of the university/ college are: (2.1) mostly graduates of Master of Arts and earned their doctorate degrees; (2.2) the highest earned experience in classroom teaching was observed between 11- 15 years; (2.3) traditional teaching strategies was the chief method used.
- 3) The reading performance of the freshmen students of the BPSU College of Education students were observed in the level were in *High School Completion classes or General Education Development (GED)* level.
- 4) All of the variables of Student-Related factors pointed that there were significantly relationship in all the given indicators of reading comprehension. The gender, prior knowledge, reading strategy used, exposure to reading materials and attitude towards reading were significantly related to their reading performance. Also, Teacher Related factors were significantly related in all the given indicators of reading comprehension. Educational attainment, length in service and teaching strategies were significantly related.

## 6. Recommendations

- 1) The BPSU College of Education freshmen students must strive harder to increase their level of reading comprehension and used other strategies and be more exposed to reading books.

- 2) The faculty members of the Language department must upgrade their educational qualification so as to improve their professional development. Vertical articulation must be considered in their post graduate studies.
- 3) Faculty members must provide more reading activities to improve student's performance in reading.
- 4) Since all the above cited variables are found to be significantly related to students reading performance, faculty members and students must collaborate much in order to upgrade their performances.
- 5) Other researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies to further tests the instrument considering other possible variables.

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