# READING COMPREHENSION PERFORMANCE OF ESL PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS AS INFLUENCED BY THEIR METACOGNITIVE AWARENESS READING STRATEGIES

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*Abstract:* The study determined the reading comprehension performance of the ESL pre-service teachers as influenced by their metacognitive awareness reading strategies. It used the descriptive correlational design. Data were collected through a questionnaire and a Reading Comprehension Test from the 426 purposively sampled ESL pre-service teachers. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

The pre-service ESL teachers performed high in the reading comprehension test. They used contextual clues in answering the test items. The different metacognitive reading strategies aid the ESL pre-service teachers in getting the correct answer to the given questions. Finally, the reading comprehension performance of the ESL pre-service teachers was significantly related to their exposure to media, and average time spent in reading a text.

*Keywords***:** metacognitive awareness reading strategies, English as second language

## INTRODUCTION

### Study Background

It is observed that many students do not know how to look inward to examine how they learn and to judge what is effective. To enable them to succeed in reading, awareness of metacognitive reading strategies is very important. Metacognitive reading strategies are techniques that help students become more successful learners. Since reading problems are common among elementary, secondary and even in the tertiary levels, then the situation should be a crucial goal of instructional design. Hence, improved metacognition can facilitate both formal and informal learning. It can improve the performance of new tasks on the job and help teams problem solve more effectively. This was the intent of the study.

As applied in reading, metacognitive strategies are those activities that make students aware of their thinking as they do reading tasks. In the process, it adopted the concepts of Mokhtari and Reichard, 2002 that metacognitive awareness in reading strategies involve, global, problem solving, and support strategies. As conceptualized, global reading strategies are generalized, intentional reading strategies aimed at setting the stage for the reading act (e.g., setting purpose for reading, making predictions); support reading strategies primarily involve use of outside reference materials, taking notes, and other practical strategies that might be described

as functional or support strategies; while problem-solving strategies are oriented around strategies for solving problems when text becomes difficult to read.

Moreover, the study argues that having good metacognitive awareness towards reading strategies would result to better reading comprehension of the students. This connection can be evidenced by the results of the reading comprehension test. The operation of the use of metacognitive strategies is revealed through the thoughts and actions of the students during and after reading the text.

## Objectives of the Study

Generally, the study aimed to determine the reading comprehension performance of ESL pre-service teachers as influenced by their metacognitive awareness of reading strategies. Specifically, it determined the profile of the ESL pre-service teachers as to age, sex, ethnicity, type of high school graduated from, grade point average in English, media exposure and parent's educational attainment, occupation and monthly income. It also looked into how the ESL pre-service teachers' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies are translated into practice as reflected in the reading comprehension test performance and use of metacognitive strategies during and after reading. Finally, it looked into the relationship between reading comprehension performance and select profile variables of the students.

## METHODOLOGY
### Study Design

The study used the descriptive correlational design to identify the ESL pre-service teachers' reading comprehension performance. Described in the study were the students' profile, and the application of students' metacognitive awareness of reading strategies in reading comprehension. This study also determined whether the factors like students' profile correlate with the reading comprehension performance.

### Respondents

All the 426 second and third year English major students of the College of Teacher Education at Cagayan State University currently enrolled for the school year 2016-2017 were utilized as the respondents of the study.

### Instruments

The main instruments used in gathering data were a questionnaire and a reading comprehension test. The questionnaires were personally administered by the author to elicit reliable data and additional information. Students answered the form to obtain basic demographic information about them along with the instruments used. The comprehension test was scored using objective scoring. The students' answers in each item were counted.

**Analysis of Data**

For the descriptive part of the study, frequency counts, means, standard deviations, ranks, weighted means and 3-point, Likert scale were used.

For the relationships between the profile of the students and their reading comprehension performance, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation (Pearson r) was used. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**
**Personal Profile of the Students**

The profile of the ESL pre-service teachers is presented in Table 1.

For their ages, 158 or 37.1 percent were aged 19 followed by the 147 or 34.5 percent aged 18. This finding implies that the ESL pre-service teachers are on the right ages for their year level.

**Table 1. Personal profile of the ESL pre-service teachers.**

| Category | Frequency (n=426) | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| **Sex** | | |
| Male | 106 | 24.9 |
| Female | 320 | 75.1 |
| **Age** | | |
| 17 | 23 | 5.4 |
| 18 | 147 | 34.5 |
| 19 | 158 | 37.1 |
| 20 | 86 | 20.2 |
| 21 & older | 12 | 2.8 |
| Mean: 18.83          SD: 1.17 | | |
| **Type of Secondary School Graduated From** | | |
| Private | 87 | 20.4 |
| Public | 339 | 79.6 |
| **Ethnicity** | | |
| Ilokano | 331 | 77.7 |
| Itawes | 55 | 12.9 |
| Ibanag | 8 | 1.9 |
| Tagalog | 17 | 4.0 |
| Others (Kalinga, Kapampamngan, Malaweg, Waray, Isnag) | 15 | 3.5 |
| **Grade Point Average** | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 80 – 85 | | 82 | 19.2 |
| 86 – 90 | | 288 | 67.6 |
| 91 – 95 | | 51 | 12.0 |
| 96 – 100 | | 5 | 1.2 |
| Mean = 88.06 | SD = 2.86 | | |

The female students (320 or 75.1 percent) outnumbered the male students (106 or 24.9 percent). This finding implies that the ESL pre-service teachers are female-dominated.

For ethnicity, 331 or 77.7 percent students were Ilocanos, followed by the 55 or 12.9 percent Itawes and the least were the eight or 1.9 percent who were Ibanags. Findings show that the ESL pre-service teachers are dominated by Ilocanos.

The majority (339 or 79.6 percent) of the students graduated from a public high school; 87 or 20.4 graduated from a private high school. This finding implies that the free education offered in public high schools attract parents to enroll their children in public high schools.

More than half (288 or 67.6 percent) of the ESL pre-service teachers garnered an average grade from 86 to 90 in their basic English subjects (grammar and composition 1 and 2, speech and oral communication, Philippine and world literatures. This finding implies that the ESL pre-service teachers performed satisfactorily in the basic English subjects.

**Home-Related Profile**

The home-related profile of the ESL pre-service teachers is presented in Table 3. Out of the 426 respondents, 102 or 23.9 percent of the students' mothers finished high school, 84 or 19.7 percent did not finish high school and only few (57 or 13.4 percent) finished college.

On the other hand, 100 or 23.5 of the students' fathers finished high school, 76 or 17.8 percent did not finish elementary and only few (60 or 14.1 percent) finished college. These results imply that the ESL pre-service teachers' parents are non-degree holders.

This finding jibed with the earlier information that the ESL pre-service teachers studied in public high schools during their secondary education. Their parents enrolled them in public secondary schools because of free tuition fee.

For the occupation of the ESL pre-service teachers' parents, 223 or 52.3 percent of their mothers were unemployed. This finding means that their mothers were plain housewives who never got paid of their services.

**Table 2.  Home-related profile of the students.**

| Category | Frequency (n=426) | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| **Mother's Educational Attainment** | | |
| Elementary Level | 65 | 15.3 |
| Elementary Graduate | 49 | 11.5 |
| High School Level | 84 | 19.7 |
| High School Graduate | 102 | 23.9 |
| College Level | 63 | 14.8 |
| College Graduate | 57 | 13.4 |
| Vocational Graduate | 3 | .7 |
| MA Graduate | 2 | .5 |
| PhD Graduate | 1 | .2 |
| **Father's Educational Attainment** | | |
| Elementary Level | 76 | 17.8 |
| Elementary Graduate | 46 | 10.8 |
| High School Level | 64 | 15.0 |
| High School Graduate | 100 | 23.5 |
| College Level | 70 | 16.4 |
| College Graduate | 60 | 14.1 |
| Vocational Graduate | 10 | 2.3 |
| **Mother's Occupation** | | |
| Farming | 59 | 13.8 |
| Teaching | 20 | 4.7 |
| BHW | 8 | 1.9 |
| OFW | 41 | 9.6 |
| Entrepreneurship | 48 | 11.3 |
| Unemployed | 223 | 52.3 |
| House Helper | 9 | 2.1 |
| Others (self-employed, utility, fishing, engineering, deceased) | 18 | 4.2 |

**Table 3 (Continued).**

| Category | Frequency (n=426) | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| **Father's Occupation** | | |
| Farming | 200 | 46.9 |
| Driving | 52 | 12.2 |
| OFW | 10 | 2.3 |
| Entrepreneurship | 22 | 5.2 |
| Technician | 7 | 1.6 |
| Utility Work | 9 | 2.1 |
| Unemployed | 55 | 12.9 |
| Carpentry | 37 | 8.7 |
| Others (teaching, self-employed, fishing, bank employee, politician, baker, office work) | 34 | 8.0 |
| **Monthly Income** | | |
| 10,000 and Below | 317 | 74.4 |
| 10,001 – 20,000 | 59 | 13.8 |
| 20,001 – 30,000 | 35 | 8.2 |
| 30,001 – 40,000 | 5 | 1.2 |
| 40,001 – 50,000 | 5 | 1.2 |
| 50,001 and Above | 5 | 1.2 |

On the other hand, the occupation of the fathers of the ESL pre-service teachers were farming (200 or 46.9 percent), and driving (52 or 12.2 percent).  This finding implies that the prospective ESL teachers' parents have seasonal jobs.

For monthly income, the majority (317 or 74.4 percent) earned 10,000 and below followed by those whose income ranged 10,001 to 20,000 and 20,001 to 30,000 with frequencies of  59 or 13.8, and 35 or 8.2 percent, respectively.

These findings imply that the ESL pre-service teachers' parents live within the poverty line.  This finding affirms that parents of the students have no stable jobs because they are non-degree holders.

**Students' Exposure to Media**

Table 3 shows that students sometimes read their textbooks, reference materials, dictionaries and watt pads with weighted means of 2.05, 1.94, 2.13, and 2.00, respectively.  They never read e-books, journals, pocketbooks, magazines, dictionaries and bibles. The grand mean of 1.77 reveals that the ESL pre-service teachers sometimes read printed materials and other sources of information.

This finding implies that the ESL pre-service teachers' reading skill is not yet    fully developed and they have not developed the habit and love for reading. As such, they have less exposure to the English language, resulting to their inability to acquire passive and active vocabulary.

On second language learning, Krashen (2004) claims that foreign language learners can also acquire vocabulary through reading and that exposing learners to comprehensible input that is slightly beyond their current level can result in successful language acquisition. In addition, Nation (2001: 232) remarks that learning vocabulary from context may be the most important way of learning vocabulary and probably the only option for improving the language outside the classroom in foreign language contexts.

**Table 3.   Students' exposure to English printed materials and other sources of information.**

| English Materials | Weighted Mean | Description |
|---|---|---|
| E-Book | 1.57 | Never |
| Journal | 1.59 | Never |
| Textbooks | 2.05 | Sometimes |
| Reference Books | 1.94 | Sometimes |
| Pocketbooks | 1.45 | Never |
| Magazines | 1.57 | Never |
| Newspapers | 1.55 | Never |
| Bible | 1.85 | Never |
| Dictionary | 2.13 | Sometimes |
| Watt Pad | 2.00 | Sometimes |
| Overall Weighted Mean | 1.77 | Sometimes |

Legend:

   1.0  – 1.66      Never
   1.67 – 2.33      Sometimes
   1.34 – 3.00      Always

**Reading Comprehension Performance of the ESL Students**

The metacognitive awareness of reading strategies of the students was translated into practice by undergoing a reading comprehension test.  The test used a content-based reading text about the ecosystem. Five comprehension questions were asked to test students' understanding after reading the text.  The two comprehension levels (literal, and inferential) were represented in the five questions given.

Results reveal that the majority (404 or 94.8) of the ESL pre-service teachers got the first question correctly (Table 9).  The question was about vocabulary development showing the

meaning of ecosystem. "What is the meaning of the underlined word in the sentence? "When one big tree is cut down in a primary forest, the <u>ecosystem</u> around it suffers such an imbalance that it takes a long time for nature to recover it." It was easy for the students to get the correct answer because the question was literal and clues were found in the text leading to the correct answer to the question.

Moreover, more than half of the ESL pre-service teachers got the correct answer for questions 2, 3 and 4. These questions tested their reading skills in the inferential level. Questions like "what is the purpose of the author in writing the essay?" "According to the essay, what is the main use of a tree?", and "If cutting down of trees continues, what effect would it bring to life in the forest?" need understanding of the text before coming up with an answer. The students had to use their global reading, support, as well as their problem solving reading strategies to aid in understanding the text.

On the other hand, question number 5 was quite difficult for them because only 129 students out of 426 got the answer correctly. This handicap could be due to the difficulty of the question, "What is the main idea of the essay?". This question requires the students to read and understand the whole text.

For their total reading comprehension scores, the mean score was 3.04. Out of the 426 students, 162 got 3 out of 5 questions, followed by 106 students who got 4 out of 5, 90 students got 2 out of 5, 35 got 5 out of five, 28 got 1 out of five and 5 got 0 out of five.

Generally, the students performed well in the comprehension test since the majority (303) of the students got scores equal or more than the mean score. Hence, their awareness of the metacognitive reading strategies aided them during the reading of the essay.

**Table 4.  Reading comprehension performance of the students.**

| Skill | Frequency of those Getting the Item Correctly | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Literal | 404 | 94.8 |
| Inferential | 241 | 56.6 |
| Inferential | 298 | 70.0 |
| Inferential | 221 | 51.9 |
| Inferential | 129 | 30.3 |
| **Total Reading Comprehension Scores** | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | 5 | 1.2 |
| 1 | 28 | 6.6 |
| 2 | 90 | 21.1 |
| 3 | 162 | 38.0 |
| 4 | 106 | 24.9 |
| 5 | 35 | 8.2 |

Mean Score = 3.04

Standard Deviation = 1.07

**Time Spent in Reading the Text**

The lowest and longest time spent in reading before coming up with an answer is presented in Table 5. For Question number 1 (literal question), the students spent a minimum of .17 minutes and a maximum of 6 minutes to answer the question. For question numbers 2 and 3, it took them a minimum of .05 minutes and a maximum of 8 minutes for the second question and 2 minutes for the third question to have an answer. For questions 4 and 5, they spent 6 to 8 minutes reading before they arrived at an answer.

This necessity is due to the nature of the question. Since the question asked was about the main idea of the selection where they need to read the whole text, it required them to consume more time reading to understand the meaning of the entire text.

For the average time spent in reading, the majority spent 0.16-0.20 minutes reading the text before arriving at the correct answer and the least (4 students) spent 0.05 minutes reading the text. This finding implies that the awareness of the students in using the different metacognitive reading strategies aided them not to spend much time reading. They knew when to scan (reading to look for details) or skim (reading to summarize) the text.

They are aware that they do not need to read the whole text to look for answers because there are questions that could be answered in the first paragraph, second or third and there are also those which could be answered by reading the whole text.

**Table 5. Number of minutes to answer each of the reading comprehension questions.**

| Question | Lowest Time | Longest Time | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| TimeQ1 | .17 | 6.00 | .8169 | .36461 |
| TimeQ2 | .05 | 8.00 | .8450 | .58333 |
| TimeQ3 | .05 | 2.00 | .7698 | .26548 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| TimeQ4 | 0 | 6 | .81 | .387 |
| TimeQ5 | 0 | 8 | .84 | .521 |

| Average Time to Answer an Item (minutes) | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| .05&less | 4 | 0.9 |
| .06-0.10 | 36 | 8.5 |
| 0.11-0.15 | 63 | 14.8 |
| 0.16-0.20 | 304 | 71.4 |
| 0.21-0.30 | 11 | 2.6 |
| 0.31-0.60 | 8 | 1.9 |
| Mean = 0.16    SD = 0.05 | | |

**Metacognitive Use of Prior Knowledge in Answering the Test Items**

When asked whether the students' prior knowledge aided in answering the test items, results reveal that prior knowledge aided in answering all the five items in the test as shown in the frequencies of 401, 381, 377, 381, and 375 for items 1-5, respectively (Table 6).

This finding implies that the schemata of the students are useful in understanding reading texts.   Reading experts (e.g., (Baldwin et al., 1985) claim that prior knowledge is important in creating a kind of interest, or may be sometimes such interest creates a kind of prior knowledge; anyhow such a kind of prior knowledge increases students' ability of comprehension. For them, students perform better when they read about something they have prior knowledge and interest, both of prior knowledge and interest have additive effects on reading comprehension, although they notice it is not that high. Prior knowledge increases reading comprehension by giving an immediate and effortless access to some information which is not clear or even missed out, and to relate ideas together.

**Table 6.  Metacognitive use of prior knowledge in answering the test items.**

| Item Number | Frequency of those Using Prior Knowledge to Process Item | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| What is the meaning of the underlined word in the sentence? | 401 | 94.1 |
| After reading the text, what do you think is the author's purpose in writing the essay? | 381 | 89.4 |
| According to the essay, which is the main use of a tree? | 377 | 88.5 |
| If cutting down of trees continue, what effects would it | 381 | 89.4 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| bring to life in the forest? | | |
| What is the main idea of the essay? | 375 | 88.0 |

**Number of Times the Selection Was Read To Answer an Item**

The number of times the selection was read to answer an item is presented in Table 7. The students read the text once as their lowest time spent and a maximum of three times for all the items before they came out with their answers. However, more than half (70.19 percent) of the students read the items from 1 to 1.5 times to arrive at an answer. The others (26.29 percent) reread 1.5 to 2 times before they arrived at an answer and the rest read from 2 to 3 times.

This result implies that students used rereading, a metacognitive action, as a strategy to arrive at the correct answer. Rereading is the most effective type of reading, especially of foreign language texts because it offers learners the opportunity to re-think messages and see features they have not noticed in initial reading (Reichard, 2002).

**Table 7. Number of times the selection was read to answer an item.**

| Question | Lowest Time | Longest Time | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| What is the meaning of the underlined word in the sentence? | 1.0 | 3.0 | 1.310 | .5204 |
| After reading the text, what do you think is the author's purpose in writing the essay? | 1.0 | 3.0 | 1.383 | .5415 |
| According to the essay, which is the main use of a tree? | 1.0 | 3.0 | 1.347 | .5457 |
| If cutting down of trees continue, what effects would it bring to life in the forest? | 1.0 | 3.0 | 1.340 | .5437 |
| What is the main idea of the essay? | 1.0 | 3.0 | 1.343 | .5401 |

| Average Times to Reread the Selection | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 1.0 – 1.5 | 299 | 70.19 |
| 1.6 – 2.0 | 112 | 26.29 |
| 2.1 – 2.5 | 7 | 1.64 |
| 2.6 & more | 8 | 1.88 |

Mean = 1.345    SD = 0.429

**Clues Used to Answer an Item**

In vocabulary building, clues are very essential to arrive at the correct answer. In the study, the meaning of the word ecosystem was the first clue used with 152 out of the 426 students who chose it, followed by forest/trees with 106, nature with 90 and environment with 58 (Table 8). These words are the common things found in the forest. Hence, to help arrive at an answer to an unknown word, it is very essential to look for clues in the context of the reading text/essay.

For the second question about the purpose of the author in writing the essay, the essay itself was their clue with 152. This figure was followed by the phrase effects of cutting down of trees with 99. Close to it was the purpose of the author in writing with 93 and the least was the tone of the essay or the feelings of the author about cutting of trees.

For the third question about the main use of a tree, first in the list was the use of the tree found in the text with a frequency of 193, followed by the text itself (169), and the least was the question asked (25).

The fourth question was "If cutting down of trees continues, what effects would it bring to life in the forest?" The first clue was the essay itself followed by the effects of cutting down trees with 186 and 151 frequencies, respectively.

Finally, "What is the main idea of the essay?" was the question asked. The first clue was the essay itself followed by the effects of cutting trees and the least was the message of the essay with frequencies of 176, 122, 56, respectively.

**Table 8. Clues used to answer an item.**

| Clues | Frequency | Rank |
|---|---|---|
| *What is the meaning of the underlined word?* | | |
| Ecosystem | **152** | **1** |
| Forest/Trees | 106 | 2 |
| Nature | 90 | 3 |
| Environment | 58 | 4 |
| Inhabitants | 16 | 5 |
| Habitat | 4 | 6 |
| *After reading the text, what do you think is the purpose of the author in writing the essay?* | | |
| The Essay Itself | **112** | **1** |
| Effects of Cutting Trees | 99 | 2 |
| Purpose of the Author | 93 | 3 |
| Title | 66 | 4 |
| Question Asked | 33 | 5 |
| Tone of the Essay | 23 | 6 |
| *According to the essay, which is the main use of a tree?* | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Uses of Tree | **193** | **1** |
| The Essay Itself | 169 | 2 |
| Effects of Cutting Trees | 39 | 3 |
| Question | 25 | 4 |
| *If cutting down of trees continue, what effects would it bring to life in the forest?* | | |
| The Essay Itself | **186** | **1** |
| Effects of Cutting Trees | 151 | 2 |
| Question | 70 | 3 |
| Habitat | 19 | 4 |
| *What is the main idea of the essay?* | | |
| The Essay Itself | **176** | **1** |
| Effects of Cutting of Trees | 122 | 2 |
| Question | 72 | 3 |
| Message of the Essay | 56 | 4 |

These findings imply that in reading, comprehension questions are answered by looking for some contextual clues from the essay. These clues help a lot in finding for the answers of questions asked. If students monitor their thinking and if they perceive the relationships of the clues present, they would be able to arrive at the answer to a problem.

**Strategies Used to Answer an Item**

The ESL pre-service teachers used their metacognitive awareness reading strategies to answer the comprehension questions asked based on the essay read. The most evident strategy used to answer the first question was the use of context clues with a frequency of 114 out of the 426 students (rank 1). This was evident because the item was about vocabulary development. Here, they used their metacognitive global reading strategy, which coincides with the result in Table 5 where the students usually used their global reading strategies when analyzing a reading text. Moreover, the prior knowledge or experiences of the students also helped in arriving at the correct answer (103, rank 2). Since the word (ecosystem) is very common, they must have encountered it from their previous readings/lessons in class. Similarly, this is an application of the global reading strategy of students. Recalling past experiences and associating them to present experiences would help process information to arrive at the correct answer to a question.

**Table 9. Strategies used to answer an item.**

| Strategies | Frequency (n=426) | Rank |
|---|---|---|
| *What is the meaning of the underlined word?* | | |
| Context Clues | **114** | **1** |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Prior Knowledge | 103 | 2 |
| Understanding Text/Skimming | 65 | 3 |
| Critically analyzing the Text | 58 | 4 |
| Rereading | 31 | 5 |
| *After reading the text, what do you think is the purpose of the author in writing the essay?* | | |
| Critically Analyzing the Text | **160** | **1** |
| Understanding/Skimming the Text | 124 | 2 |
| Rereading the Text | 76 | 3 |
| Using Prior Knowledge/Past Experiences | 46 | 4 |
| Having a Purpose in Reading | 10 | 5 |
| *According to the essay, which is the main use of a tree?* | | |
| Critically Analyzing the Text | **140** | **1** |
| Understanding/Skimming the Text | 125 | 2 |
| Rereading the Text | 96 | 3 |
| Using Prior Knowledge/Past Experiences | 46 | 4 |
| Having a Purpose in Reading | 10 | 5 |
| *If cutting down of trees continue, what effects would it bring to life in the forest?* | | |
| Understanding/Skimming the Text | **143** | **1** |
| Critically Analyzing the Text | 97 | 2 |
| Rereading the Text | 55 | 3 |
| Reading the Text Slowly and Carefully | 46 | 4 |
| Using Prior Knowledge/Past Experiences | 36 | 5 |
| *What is the main idea of the essay?* | | |
| Understanding/Skimming the Text | **129** | **1** |
| Critically Analyzing the Text | 94 | 2 |
| Using Prior Knowledge/Past Experiences | 56 | 3 |
| Reading the Text Slowly and Carefully | 50 | 4 |
| Summarizing the Text | 36 | 5 |

Next was understanding the text or skimming the text first by noting characteristics like length and organization (65, rank 3). Critically analyzing and evaluating information presented in the text (58, rank 4) was the next strategy students used, which was also a global reading strategy. The students set the stage for the reading act. They set the purpose of the reading act and make predictions to come up with the answer to the question. In so doing, they are aided to come up with the correct answer to the question.

For the remaining four questions answered, a similar trend was observed in terms of the strategies they used to arrive at their answers. The first three evident strategies they used were critical analysis of the text, and understanding/skimming the text, which were both categorized as metacognitive global reading strategies.

Support strategies were also used like rereading the text for understanding, using prior knowledge and experiences, using the dictionary, paraphrasing and summarizing the text to aid in getting the correct answer.

Finally, the problem solving strategies like reading the text slowly, visualizing information to help remember what was read and guessing the correct were also used when the text seem difficult to understand.

These results imply that students' metacognitive reading strategies are very essential in understanding a reading text. Hence, students' awareness and familiarity with the different metacognitive reading strategies enhanced their thinking to succeed in their reading tasks. It implies that success in reading is the confluence of using global strategies, problem solving strategies, and support strategies.

### Relationship between Reading Comprehension Performance of the ESL Pre-service Teachers and Select Profile Variables

The relationship of the reading comprehension performance of the ESL pre-service teachers and select variables reveals that exposure to media was significantly related to their reading comprehension performance as reflected in the correlation coefficient of .113 and the probability values of .020 which is lower than the .05 level of significance. Moreover, the average time spent to read the text was also significantly related to their reading comprehension performance as shown in the correlation value of -.0145 higher than the probability value of .003 at .01 level of significance (Table 10). Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

The findings point out that average time spent in reading and exposure to media significantly affect the reading comprehension performance of the ESL pre-service teachers. As earlier explained, the students who spend more time to process a reading text try their best to do the reading comprehend task. As they have greater exposure to mass media, they have the declarative and procedural knowledge to undertake the reading task. Such awareness makes them more confident to read.

On the contrary, the metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, use of prior knowledge in reading and number of times reading the selection were not significantly related to the students reading comprehension performance. These results imply that whether they use

they prior knowledge in reading or not, and whether they read the text once or more than one, their reading comprehension performance remains the same.

This finding is contrary to the findings of Batang (2015) in his study on metacognitive study awareness and reading comprehension of prospective pre-service secondary teachers when he said that students who apply effective strategies in reading had higher comprehension level in reading.

However, this result is similar to the findings of the study conducted on investigating metacognitive awareness of reading strategies to strengthen students' performance in reading comprehension. It was found out that a weak positive relationship between metacognitive awareness of reading strategy (MARS) and scores in reading comprehension. No significant difference was found in the students' level of MARS between good and poor readers. It was also found that the level of MARS for problem solving reading strategy was higher than for global and support reading strategies (Fitrisia et al., 2015).

Table 10. Relationship between reading comprehension performance of the students and select profile variables.

| Variables | Correlation Coefficient | Prob. | Statistical Decision |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Reading Comprehension Performance** | | | |
| Average Time To Read the Selection | -.0145 | .003 | Significant at 0.01 |
| Use of Prior Knowledge | 0.005 | .913 | Not significant |
| Number of Times Reading the Selection | -0.057 | .239 | Not significant |
| Exposure to Media | 0.112 | 0.021 | Significant at 0.05 |

**Conclusions**

The ESL pre-service teachers use their metacognitive awareness reading strategies in reading a text evidenced by relying on their prior knowledge, looking for contextual clues and other words appearing in the text, and rereading the text, which resulted to a moderately good performance

Finally, the more the ESL pre-service teacher is exposed to media, and the more time and more frequent he/she reads a text, the better and higher is his/her reading comprehension performance.

**Recommendations**

In the light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. English instruction for ESL pre-service teachers should emphasize on metacognitive strategies to process a reading text. Metacognitive approaches in reading content-based texts should also be integrated in other subject areas to complement whatever English instruction is trying to achieve.

2. Students must be made aware of the different metacognitive awareness reading strategies to aid them in their reading activities.

3. Reading assessment should jibe with the metacognitive approaches of teaching to arrive at congruency with how reading is taught and assessed.

4. Teachers must encourage students to use both printed and on line reading activities to develop their reading and other macro communication skills.

5. Students should be given more exposure to tests requiring the use of the inferential and higher levels of comprehension to develop their critical thinking skills.

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