



Descriptive Analysis of Reading Comprehension Level of Grade 7 Students: Basis for a Reading Program

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ABSTRACT

Published Online: July 17, 2024

This study explored the reading comprehension level of the grade 7 students at the University of La Salette, Incorporated High School. It utilized a quantitative, descriptive research design to analyze the data from the CEM Reading Test Level 3 of three hundred sixty-eight (368) grade 7 students who served as the sample population of this study. The result revealed the students performed better in the content areas of scanning, point of view, and literal compared to the norm group. However, students were rated low average in the following content areas: synonyms, literal, inferential, reorganization, summary cloze, references, labels, and tables. The CEM Reading Test Level 3 revealed that the students' sub-test scores, percent correct scores, and standard score only ranged from low average to average. It also revealed that there are 32.88% of students who were classified in the range of low average to very poor level of reading comprehension. The study recommends that teachers focus on developing skills in vocabulary development and reading study aids and utilize the reading intervention program proposed by the researcher to determine its effectiveness in improving the reading comprehension level of the students.

KEYWORDS:

reading comprehension, grade 7, PISA, reading program, peer-tutoring

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is a very important skill to achieve higher academic performance, it is defined as the capacity to interpret written text to create meaning (Haswani et. al., 2024). Graham and Bellert (2004) describe reading comprehension as a way to gain information from different sources; it serves as a path to activate students' prior knowledge. Therefore, high reading comprehension will allow students to be more active in searching new knowledge, develop critical thinking and enhance problem-solving skills (Espiel & Carretero, 2022)

The Program for International Students Assessment (PISA) published an alarming result for Filipino reading comprehension in 2018. The results showed Filipino students rank the lowest in reading comprehension with 340 compared

to the participating countries worldwide (Philstar, 2019). Manlapig (2020) claims that this problem is due to the overemphasis on rote memorization of concepts, which tends to disregard the development of a deeper understanding of the text. This problem is still rampant in learning, where some students are trained to memorize concepts, definitions, and formulas without the knowledge of the proper application of ideas. The possible cause of this problem is a lack of comprehension. Another factor can be the language barrier; the difference between English and Filipino can cause confusion for students reading comprehension (David, 2008). Some Filipinos do translate the English language in its literal meaning without identifying the context. On a more positive note, the recent PISA result conducted in 2023 revealed a minor increase from 340 to 347. Hence, schools must continue to identify programs that would help students overcome the problem of reading comprehension.

The University of La Salette, Incorporated High School (ULSHS) is one of the many schools that faces problems with students' poor reading comprehension, which highlights the need for intervention. Data from the Center for Educational Measurements (CEM) Reading Test for Grades 7 shows that

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**Cite this Article: Mark Kevin Astrero, Remedios G. Selmo, Jaya Mae V. Dumlao, James V. Domingo, Clarissa Mae D. Nasuli, Jemerson L. Eugenio, Loren Patricia C. Guevarra (2024). Descriptive Analysis of Reading Comprehension Level of Grade 7 Students: Basis for a Reading Program. International Journal of Social Science and Education Research Studies, 4(7), 750-760*

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2.72% fall under the very poor category, 5.98% fall under the poor category for grade 7. Poor reading comprehension can be a challenge to the students to understand complex concepts in a text in various academic areas (Graham & Bellert, 2004). This result proves that there is really a need for a reading intervention program to improve students' reading comprehension.

Furthermore, the test also revealed that students are being challenged in terms of reading comprehension. This is very evident in instances where students need to comprehend and assess the material needed for learning. Some challenges that students experience that affect reading comprehension is vocabulary development, which includes synonyms, antonyms and polysemantic. Teachers observe that some students encounter difficulty in identifying meaning. Cheng & Matthew (2018) revealed in their study that vocabulary knowledge and reading skills must go hand in hand. As a result, in order to combat this problem, teachers must target and include vocabulary development in their lessons. Grabe (2009) argued that reading comprehension includes the ability to recognize words immediately and efficiently. Thus, if students are able to identify and recognize words properly, then comprehension will follow.

Furthermore, non-linear text, also known as table and graphic interpretation, is also identified as one of the challenges encountered by students in reading comprehension as observed by the teacher as well as reflected in the CEM result. Non-linear text as defined by Haguian et al. (2020) refers to the visual representation used to assist learners. If students are not able to interpret visual representation, it might affect the student's reading comprehension. Hence, teachers must develop the students' skills in this matter. Thus, this action research proposes the need to determine ways to effectively improve students' reading comprehension skills, which may help students build a strong foundation for their academic success.

Espiel & Carretero (2022) suggest that in order to enhance students' reading comprehension, students must undergo the following stages: first, they must be able to decode symbols; second, they must be able to analyze meaning from the text; and third, they must relate meaning to personal experiences. Furthermore, critical thinking is also a vital part of developing reading comprehension; this allows the students to determine and judge factual and authentic information, which will also give them a deeper understanding of the context in which they read (Pascasio et al., 1997). Given these facts, schools must provide programs that enhance students' reading comprehension to address the gap that the students face in terms of reading comprehension. Finally, the problem of students reading comprehension in a Philippine setting has been recognized in the global arena.

Thus, the Communication Arts-English Department proposed a reading intervention program that can be a help to improve students' reading comprehension. YEARS-RP (Young

English Advocate and Readers Society – Reading Program) has been crafted to address the problem in reading comprehension. This program has the potential to significantly improve the reading comprehension among students of the University of La Salette High School. The program directly addresses the issues identified within the Philippine educational system in terms of reading comprehension while offering a practical solution tailored to the school's specific needs. YEARS-RP can empower students to achieve academic success across reading comprehension. Researchers believe that through the implementation of the program, the reading comprehension level of the students will then improve.

Research Questions/Objectives

The study aimed to determine the reading comprehension level among grade 7 students. Specifically, it aims to answer the following:

1. What is the reading comprehension level of grade 7 students?
2. What strategies may be proposed to improve the reading comprehension level of the grade 7 students?
3. What program may be proposed to improve the reading comprehension level of grade 7 students?

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Reading connects people to a variety of life concepts, which has a big impact on one's life. It's an intricate process that involves applying, incorporating, comprehending, reasoning, and applying sensory experience. It is the process of creating and extrapolating meaning from written words and symbols. In order to succeed in their literacy and academic activities, learners need to cultivate this macroskill (Jawili-Decena, 2021).

Reading comprehension is being conceptualized differently now. According to Hiebert and Daniel (2019) and Kotzer et al. (2021), reading comprehension is a language competence that centers on the capacity to decode and comprehend words literally.

Many countries have given much attention and great importance to reading (Ma'youf & Aburezeq, 2022). In the Philippines, the Department of Education has been intensifying its thrust to bridge literacy gaps among learners, and intensifying the advocacy for reading comprehension by reinforcing the "Bawat Bata Bumabasa" (3Bs) Initiative among the schools in the country as stipulated in Department of Education Memorandum No. 173, s. 2019.

Using the summarizing method, for instance, involves helping kids recognize a text's key idea and repeat it in their own words as they read. By separating the important information from the less important aspects and distilling it into a brief synopsis with few words, youngsters can use this technique. It is crucial to remember that children should be

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taught to summarize at various points during the story, rather than only at the very end. According to Brandon (2021), children must be able to understand the text they read in order to grasp its significance.

Reading comprehension is defined as the students' ability to understand and make sense of the text they read. This is a complex process that requires a learner to apply a set of skills such as decoding skills, vocabulary, and comprehension skills. Kucukoglu (2012) defined reading comprehension as the basic foundation of all skills for learning and academic success. This means that to succeed in all his academic endeavors like understanding Science, Mathematics, and other subjects besides English, the learner should be good at reading. Understanding of what was read basically requires being able to follow instructions in directions given in science and problem solving given in math and so forth. This is the reason for the need to employ strategies to make reading lead students towards understanding and meaning making. Learners who learn reading strategies try to recognize the main point of a paragraph, to elaborate on unclear words, phrases, or sentences, and to summarize their reading (Banditvilai, 2020). This can be made possible through a myriad of strategies to improve reading.

Explicit Instruction

Researchers believe that reading comprehension cannot be developed as quickly as one may imagine. It takes a careful and gradual process to achieve a good level of comprehension among the students. This is reason enough to consider one of the most classic strategies which can be used to help learners develop and improve their reading comprehension. One which is explicit instruction. According to Rupley, et al. (2009), students with difficulties in reading learn best when the teacher models directly what needs to be learned. This may include directly teaching them decoding skills, vocabulary development strategies, and specific comprehension strategies like identifying main ideas and summarizing.

Vocabulary knowledge affects the reading speed of students depending on their grade levels. Vocabulary teaching should not be thought of as one-dimensional, just like teaching the meaning of a word with the use of a dictionary. The word to be taught becomes more permanent and concretized in the student's mind when taught in a sentence, through its antonym, synonym and near synonyms etc. (Akyol and Gedik, 2022). Making students learn and improve their vocabulary through explicit instruction may also be helpful.

Independent Reading

Researchers claim that students improve their reading when they are allowed to choose their own reading materials which may be provided to them through a rich literacy environment. In this way, they will be more engaged and invested in the reading process, thus improving their comprehension. Compton (2024), asserts that students will not only improve

their reading comprehension but will also develop deep and true preference for reading when they are allowed to do a routine independent reading. She says that this gives students a great chance to explore various texts, learn to connect with their daily experiences and have the habit of reading a part of everyday living. With this instance it is safe to consider adapting an effective model to guide students in their independent reading. Deluao, et al. (2022) discovered that students improve their reading comprehension when required to follow the 4Rs reading strategy. 4Rs stand for Reading, Retelling, Reacting, and Reflecting in which independently, students are asked to choose any reading text from any reading material of their choice and retell what was read, react on it, then make a reflection of the meaning and implications of the reading text in real life.

Peer Tutoring

Peer-tutoring is a learning strategy in which students collaborate with their peers as their coach and mentor; this learning technique is a practical tool to improve students' reading comprehension (Cohen et.al., 2014). Fuchs et.al., (2006), mentioned that peer-tutoring promotes a supportive and collaborative learning environment which makes learning more engaging and enjoyable. Furthermore, it would allow the students to identify the learning strategies that are suited to them and tutors can provide customized comments which increase reading comprehension ability (Topping, 2005). Consequently, peer-tutoring might be a worthwhile method for improving reading comprehension among the challenged readers

Peer tutoring can effectively improve academic achievements, but only under specific conditions, according to a literature review by Topping and Lindsay (2020). These specifications include appropriate supervision and training for peer tutors, a thorough understanding of the goals and objectives of the tutoring program, and a focus on developing healthy relationships between tutors and their tutees. Nonetheless, they also pointed out that when certain requirements are not met, peer tutoring may be harmful or ineffectual. Peer tutors could unintentionally encourage misconceptions or give false information, for instance, if they are not properly taught or supervised.

Both peer tutoring and cooperative learning, according to Topping (2020), are forms of peer assisted learning in which members of comparable social groups who are not qualified teachers support one another in learning while also learning by teaching. In peer tutoring, students work in pairs, one as the tutee and the other as the tutor. The more capable or seasoned student assists the tutee in learning material that is new to the tutor but not to the tutee. Cooperative learning, on the other hand, is typically carried out in small groups with three or four students, frequently of varying aptitude levels. The team strives to reach an understanding on an issue. Roles

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are frequently allocated to each group since it is simpler to hide or rule in a group.

Technology-Assisted Strategy in Improving Reading Comprehension

Educationalists often doubt technology's role in enhancing literacy skills, leading to a higher risk of students not achieving educational goals (Weikle and Hadadian 2003). However, according to Stanberry and Raskind 2007, assistive technology helps learners reach their full potential by utilizing their strengths and bypassing difficulties.

According to Zou, 2023, technology-assisted strategy Reading Instruction techniques, such as digital reading platforms, annotation systems, and multimedia presentations, have been used to support English Language Learners (ELLs) in reading instruction. These technologies can enhance motivation, engagement, self-efficacy, and learning satisfaction, promote collaborative learning, and scaffold reading competencies.

System of Implementing a Reading Program

Reading intervention program is an intensive or targeted instruction on reading to improve the reading comprehension of the students (Endo, 2022). Thus, various researchers are focusing on coming up with a program to alleviate or even to combat the problem in reading comprehension. The Restructured Approach in Developing Reading Early (READERS) is one among the many programs that enhance student's reading comprehension. The main purpose READERS is to assist learners who are struggling with reading on their own or in small groups. Its goal is to increase the students' ability in six areas: writing, phonemic awareness, book and print awareness, understanding, and textual read-aloud. Creating a model reading intervention program for readers-at-risk in Grade I was the main objective. The CTE of Santos and the Reading Recovery program of Marie Clay served as the program's guiding concepts throughout its design. The goal of READERS is to help Grade I students who are classified as readers-at-risk become more proficient readers. It was intended to accomplish the target in ten weeks with two 1.5-hour sessions. In the study conducted by Fernandez (2015) which aims to help readers-at-risk in reading comprehension using, the program brought a positive result. Wherein it was found that READERS increase the performance of the students in reading comprehension across areas.

The Peer-Assisted Reading Model or PARM Technique proposed by Esposa (2021) is a classroom-based reading intervention that takes into account each student's unique reading requirements is called the Peer-Assisted Reading Model (PARM). Obtaining a baseline of the students' reading skills and weaknesses is the first step in implementing PARM as an intervention in the classroom. This cooperative reading approach puts students together and assigns them the roles of a "Coach" and a "Player." They are then arranged in order of

comprehension in reading. A student with a higher achievement/skill rating is matched with a student who has a lower or average score using the information provided. The purpose of partnering is to facilitate peer-to-peer learning among students via practice and instruction. Data on the reading comprehension of the children will be taken from the 2019–2020 school year Phil-IRI Pretest. The aforementioned intervention will be put into action for a maximum of two months. As per the Reciprocal Teaching concept, every student alternates between the roles of Coach and Player. Coaches are given parameters to follow along with instructions to watch, help, and offer the player (reader) constructive criticism. To enable learning and social interaction, the pairings are swapped on a regular basis for the students. The PARM approach takes place at least 2-4 times a week and lasts for 25–35 minutes. Students may engage in a variety of activities. A posttest reading inventory will be administered one week after program implementation, and the results will be compared with the pretest results in order to evaluate the efficacy of the intervention. The Flynt Cooter Reading Inventory for the Classroom (RIC), Flynt and Cooter, 2004, was used to gather oral reading measures for the pretest and posttest. Words per minute (wpm) was computed as the reading rate based on the pre- and posttest passages. The student was timed for one minute while reading the paragraph aloud, and mistakes were recorded to determine pm. To calculate a "net" wpm, errors were deducted from the "gross" wpm. Every day of the repeated reading intervention included the use of the same approach for wpm computation. The Project BRITE (Beginning Reading Intervention for Teachers in Early grades proposed by Obaob (2023) revealed that there was a notable difference in the literacy levels of Grade 3 students before and after the introduction of Project Beginning Reading Intervention for Teachers and Students in Early Grades (BRITE). This was achieved through the use of the teachers' own teaching materials and activities combined with a variety of differentiated and varied teaching strategies, techniques, and approaches. Additionally, the students' eagerness to learn to read and their positive attitude toward reading helped to raise their literacy levels. The initiative is being implemented via a number of activities. The project's initial task is to profile Key Stage 1. The training they received in beginning reading and their comprehension in teaching it make up the content of the teacher profile. Once the teacher profiles are known, the training design is developed to help instructors develop their capabilities based on the results of the training needs assessment. Following the training, educators were able to start teaching beginning reading to students who had been classified as non-readers and frustrated students. The technology created for this project must be used by school heads to carry out monitoring. One method of tracking the students' development will be an oral reading assessment given right away.

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These articles are about some reading intervention programs, which have been proposed to educate students who are having difficulties in reading. The Restructured Approach in Developing Early Reading Skills (READERS) program offers personalized or small-group teaching aimed at improving certain weak areas of reading. Peer-Assisted Reading Model (PARM) uses peer tutoring in which students assume the roles of coach and player to enhance their reading as a team. Project BRITE offers professional development for teachers on differentiated instruction for diverse learners. All the three programs have demonstrated an effect when it comes to improving reading, hence emphasizing the need for targeted assistance for those students requiring additional support.

Increasing Students' Motivation to Read Within and Beyond Classroom

According to Guthrie and Wigfield (2000), reading motivation is the sum of a person's own objectives, values, and beliefs about the subjects, methods, and results of reading. For example, a young child might read books about different dog breeds to gain in-depth knowledge that will be helpful when their family decides to adopt a puppy. Alternatively, if a teenager wants to get good grades, they could meticulously read every novel that is assigned for class, even if they don't enjoy it.

Consistent with self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000), relatedness to others is one of the three basic psychological demands that drives people to take action. Thus, having supportive social relationships at school is essential for students' success and academic dispositions (Eccles & Wang, 2012; Wentzel, 2010). In addition to fulfilling this need for social connection, teachers who consistently foster student collaboration for reading activities may also encourage deeper reading in addition to shared reading. Students are inspired to read more carefully and reflect more deeply on the text's meaning when they have a genuine reading purpose of sharing information and opinions about a text with others (Rozendaal et al., 2005). This indicates that students are more driven to devote cognitive effort to critical reading comprehension-related tasks like (a) identifying new vocabulary; (b) drawing local inferences that link information within the text; and (c) drawing global inferences that relate the text to prior knowledge and experience (Cain & Oakhill, 2014). When students collaborate in reading, they may not only learn content from each other, but also how their peers feel about reading.

III. METHODS

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative, descriptive research design to analyze the data of the CEM Reading Test Level 3 of grade 7 of the University of La Salette, Incorporated High School. This design is most suited for this study, for the researchers

describes a secondary data from the CEM Reading Test Result (Glass & Hopkins, 1984). This is appropriate in the study as it aims to identify the reading comprehension level of the respondents. Additionally, the researcher also used document analysis which is defined as a systematic procedure for reviewing and evaluating printed and electronic material (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), this method is used to identify possible solutions to the existing problem.

Study Site and Participants

The study was conducted at the University of La Salette Incorporated High School also known as ULSHS. ULSHS is the La Salette School System's biggest school among others; besides it is part of the Division of Santiago City located in Malvar, Santiago City Philippines (3311) so that its outcomes can be easily applied within the local educational system. University of La Salette Incorporated High School has a junior high school for grades 7-10 and a Senior High School for grades 11-12; also, the junior high school program has its PAASCU Level II Accreditation Status. ULSHS is administered by the university president Rev. Fr. Franklin G. Picio, MS., Ph.D., who is assisted by Priscila O. Ilagan, Ph.D., the principal.

The research's target group was the grade 7 students enrolled at University of La Salette, Incorporated High School in the academic year 2023-2024. This study used a total population sampling technique, where the whole population of grade 7 are treated as a sample (Sugiyono, 2014).

Instrument

This study utilized the CEM Reading Test Level 3 for Grade 7 test items which is designed to measure the reading comprehension level of grade 7 students. The CEM Reading Test for Grade 7 consist of 140 items and must be taken within 1 hour and 30 minutes. The test is divided into 5 subtests which was defined and describe by the CEM as follows:

Scanning is a test on reading for specific facts and locating data from a given text without necessarily understanding the material read.

Vocabulary - A test on the range of word knowledge as well as mastery and control of rules that govern the language. It measures the ability to recognize the meaning of words that are familiar and unfamiliar by identifying affixes and roots. It also measures knowledge of synonyms of words in isolation as well as recognition of the exact meaning of new and unfamiliar words or phrases as used in a particular context.

Synonyms - Identifies the meaning of a word as used in context.

Polysemantic- Recognizes among the many meanings of a word its correct meaning as it is used in a sentence.

Points of View - A test on recognition of ideas that belong together and the ability to connect or put them together and perceive consistency of different opinions or ideas expressed.

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Comprehension - A test on the degree or extent of understanding of a written text. It measures the ability to extract direct or explicit meaning, make inferences, evaluate and make judgments from a written text.

Literal - Comprehends given text by identifying significant details, getting the main idea, understanding meaning through contextual clues, and recognizing relationships that are explicitly stated.

Inferential - Comprehends given text by making conclusions and predicting outcomes; inferring supporting details, main idea, theme, or moral that is not explicitly stated; and making comparisons and contrasts.

Reorganization - Comprehends given text by organizing ideas or events, classifying things to categories, and summarizing passages read.

Summary Cloze - Demonstrates comprehension of a given passage by supplying the missing words in a presented summary of the passage.

Study Aids - A test on the extent of knowledge and use of reference materials to gather and interpret information.

References- Demonstrates knowledge of the parts and correct use of sources of information and reference materials.

Labels - Demonstrates ability to follow indicated on labels

Tables - Demonstrates ability to apply skills in reading and interpreting tables, charts and graphs.

Data Collection Procedure

The Human Development Center of the University of La Salette, Incorporated High School facilitated a Reading Test Level 3 from the Center of Educational Measurement to all grade 7 students of ULSHS. The researchers sought permission and copy of the CEM Reading Test Result from the Human Development Center, and the School Principal of the University of La Salette, Incorporated High School as a

basis for this study. The researchers explained to the HDC Coordinator, staff and principal that the CEM Reading Test Results will serve as the basis in crafting a reading intervention program to cater the needs and to improve the reading comprehension of the students. The researchers provided a written request as a document in requesting and obtaining data.

Data Analysis Procedure

The CEM Reading Test for Grade 7 treated the students' scores using the following mathematical statistical treatment to provide quantitative data for easier interpretation. The students are scored in the content area and subtest of the reading test. Scores in the content areas and subtests are reported in percent correct, while scores on the whole test, called the overall score, are expressed in percent correct and standard score. The percent correct (PC) is the percentage of items correctly answered in a part of the test (a content area or a subtest) or in the whole test. The PC scores may be used to determine his or her strengths and weaknesses among the different parts of the test. Content areas and subtests where he or she obtained lower scores are suggested areas for improvement. The standard score (SS) reports how many standard deviations are above or below the mean of an examinee. It has a range of 200-800, with a mean of 500 and a standard deviation of 100. A SS within the range of 400 to 600 indicates average performance. A SS below 400 is described as low, while a SS above 600 is considered high. An average difficulty level (ADL) for each content area and subtest is reported, and the overall score is reported. The ADL is the average score of the norm group on a specific content area, subtest, or the whole test. The ADL is expressed in percent correct (PC). The different ADLs imply that some content areas are easier or more difficult than others for the norm group.

Table 1: Equivalent Scale Value and Ranges in the Four Norm-Referenced Score Scales

Standard Score (SS)	Percent Correct (PC)	Stanine (SN)	Quality Index (QI)
200-330	Below 5	1	Very Poor (VP)
331-379	5-10	2	Poor (P)
380-427	11-22	3	Below Average (BA)
428-475	23-39	5	Low Average (LA)
476-523	40-59	5	Average (A)
524-571	60-76	6	High Average (HA)
572-619	77-88	7	Above Average (AA)
620-668	89-95	8	Superior (S)
669-800	Above 95	9	Excellent (E)

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Institutional Performance Profile of Grade 7 Reading Test Level 3

Test Specification	Percent Correct Mean Score	SD	Norm Group's ADL	Qualitative Interpretation
CONTENT AREA				
Scanning	51	18	50	Average
Synonym	29	13	30	Low Average
Polysemantics	42	18	43	Average
Point of view	52	24	49	Average
Literal	31	15	29	Low Average
Inferential	31	14	34	Low Average
Reorganization	31	23	32	Low Average
Summary cloze	25	13	26	Low Average
References	28	16	32	Low Average
Labels	30	25	32	Low Average
Tables	30	25	34	Low Average
SUB-TESTS				
Scanning	51	18	50	Average
Vocabulary	35	13	36	Low Average
Points of View	52	24	49	Average
Comprehension	30	10	30	Low Average
Study aids	29	14	32	Low Average
OVERALL SCORE				
PERCENT CORRECT	35	10	36	Low Average
STANDARD SCORE	501	85		Average

The Masterlist of Test Results (MTR) shows the test results of the Grade 7 students at the University of La Salette, Incorporated High School. It shows the mean percent correct (PC) scores of the examinees in the whole school and the corresponding average difficulty levels (ADL) of the norm group in the eleven content areas and five subtests measured by the test. The last two cells of the mean and standard deviation (SD) rows contain the overall mean PC and SS and their respective standard deviations. This information is shown in the table of statistics for the IPP above.

Like every other assessment, the reading comprehension test results are a mix of student performance as per the specific skills assessed and the content areas covered. Students are described as average in the content areas of scanning, polysemantics, and point of view. However, the remaining content areas are marked as low-average. In addition, the average percent correct score of 35 and a standard score of 501 imply that students were in the low-average performance range.

Students are also marked as having a having a low average with a percent correct score of 35, which may affect their

comprehension of the text being read. Oakhill et.al. (2019) claims that recognizing words is one factor that affects reading comprehension. It is very crucial that students understand the meaning of words first before understanding the whole context. In addition, students are also recorded as having a having a low average in the use of study aids, with a percent correct of 29. Study aids are used as supplements to texts with visuals that provide information when reading Hibbing & Rankin-Erickson (2003). This material for reading can be very useful in understanding the text better.

Along with that, students' scores from Grade 7 were concentrated around the mean in the following content areas: scanning, points of view, and literary. The mean PC score of the examinees demonstrates that the mean score is greater than the ADL of the norm group. On the other hand, there is a wide dispersion of scores from the mean in the following content areas: polysemantics, reorganization, summary cloze, references, labels, tables, vocabulary, and study aids. The mean PC score of the examinees demonstrates that the mean score is less than the ADL of the norm group.

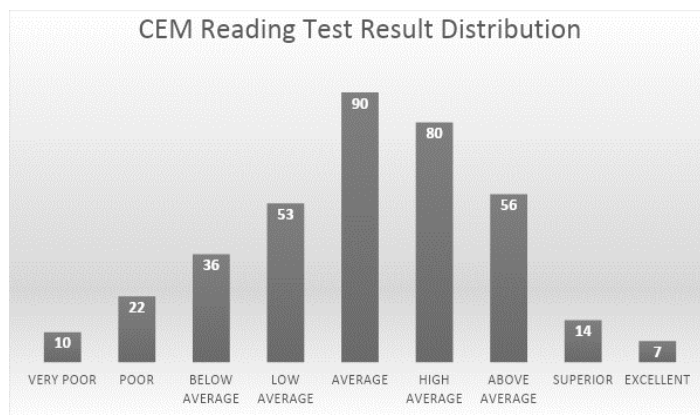


Figure 1. CEM Reading Test Result Distribution

The figure shows that under each of the performance levels of the 368 examinees from Grade 7, 90 examinees, or 24.46%, positively fall within the average level; followed by 80 examinees, or 21.74%, fall into the high average category; 56 examinees, or 15.22%, fall into the above average category, followed by 53 (or 14.40%) in the below average category; then 36 (or 9.78%), followed by 22 (or 5.98%), followed by 14 examinees, or 3.80%, fall into the superior category; ten, or 2.72% of the examinees, belong to the very poor category, and 7 examinees, or 1.90%, were able to

receive an excellent performance category. Furthermore, according to the results, only 68, or 18.48%, of the examinees lack prior learning experiences in reading and perform very poorly to below average. In contrast, 300, or 81.52%, of the examinees possess the reading knowledge and abilities required for Grade 7 at Level 3. According to the findings, in order for 68 of the children who completed the CEM Reading Test exam to become competent readers in the various topic areas and subtests, they would need a reading intervention.

Proposed Intervention, Innovation and Strategy

Table 3. YEARS-RP Phases of Implementation

Phases of Institutionalization	Goals and Objectives	Activities or Strategies	Persons Involve	Resources Needed	Time Frame
Phase 1: Pre-Implementation <i>Selection of the target Tutors and Tutees.</i>	1. To identify the challenged readers in terms of reading comprehension.	1. The English teachers will conduct a Diagnostic Reading Test to identify the reading comprehension level of grade 7 and grade 8 students. Then the teachers will interpret the result and identify the challenged readers as the target client of this program.	- Grade 7 & 8 Advisers - English Teachers	PHIL-IRI Reading Test for Grade 7 and 8	July 26, 2024
Phase 2: Orientation <i>Orient the Target Tutors and Tutees, introduce the YEARS: RP and</i>	2. To give orientation on the objectives, scope, rationale, and process in conducting Peer Reading	2. The program implementer will orient the tutors and tutees on the process, rationale, scope and objectives of the	- YEARS Moderator - English teacher - Speaker - Tutors - Tutees	Powerpoint Presentation Microphone Projector PHIL-IRI Assessment Questionnaire	July 31, 2024

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<i>inform the parents through Letter.</i>	Enhancement Program to the tutors and tutees.	Peer Reading Enhancement Program			
Phase 3: To equip the subject teachers and tutors on skills and strategies in facilitating reading activities.	3. To conduct a seminar/training for the subject teachers and tutors.	3. Training	- Subject teachers and qualified tutors	Powerpoint Presentation Microphone Projector Assessment Questionnaire	August 7, 2024
Phase 4: Implementation Proper <i>Actual Implementation of YEARS-RP</i>	4. To increase reading comprehension of students through peer tutoring.	4. The program implementer, with the help of peer tutors, will conduct a series of Peer Reading Enhancement Program (Tutoring) every ICL Period using the PHIL-IRI Reading Materials and SRA Reading Laboratory.	- PEER Tutors - Tutees - English Teachers - Library Staff - YEARS Officers	Phil-IRI Reading Material and Reading Checklist SRA Reading Laboratory	August 14, 2024 – November 20, 2024
Mock Reading Test	5. To prepare tutees in the actual CEM Reading test taking like filling out name grids and answer sheets. 6. To encourage students' sense of responsibility for one's own progress.	5. The tutees will familiarize on filling out the name grids and answer sheets. 6. The tutees will embrace reading even at home with the guidance of their parents, siblings, etc.	- Tutees - Tutors - HDC - Teachers - Parents/ Siblings	Sample name grids and answer sheets. Take Home Reading Materials or assigned stories online.	November 27, 2024
Phase 5: Post Implementation <i>Post Test & CEM Reading Test</i>	7. To evaluate the improvement of students reading comprehension.	7. The program implementer, with the help of the Peer Tutors will conduct a final evaluation to assess the students reading level.	- PEER Tutors - Tutees - English Teachers - YEARS Officers	Phil-IRI Reading Material and Reading Checklist	November 28, 2024 & December __, 2024
Phase 6: Program Evaluation	9. To evaluate the effectiveness of YEARS-RP	9. Conduct evaluation through survey and focus group.	- PEER Tutors - Tutees - English Teachers - YEARS Officers	Questionnaires and Interview Questions	December 2024

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Table 3 shows the phases of the proposed YEARS-Reading program. There are six phases to the program's implementation. Phase 1 is the selection of the target tutees and tutors. In this stage, English teachers will conduct a reading diagnostic test to identify the reading comprehension of the students in the different content areas. Phase 2 will be the program orientation, whose goal is to inform the tutors and tutees about the objectives of the program. Phase 3 is the training for the tutors. This will be a seminar workshop for the tutors to equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills that they can use in teaching their tutees. Phase 4 will be the actual implementation of the program. The goal of this phase is to improve the reading comprehension of the students, train them to fill out name grids, and shade their answers in preparation for the CEM reading test and other standards tests. Phase 5, the post-test and CEM reading test phase, this stage will determine whether the students improve their reading comprehension through the program. Lastly, in phase 6, the people involved in the program will evaluate the effectiveness, strengths, and weaknesses of the program.

V. CONCLUSION

The study's findings lead to the conclusion of the following statements:

In the content areas of scanning, point of view, and literal, the student performed better than the norm group. Which implies that the students from the ULSHS are better than the norm group in answering tests through the scanning strategies, better at identifying pronoun points of view, and better at identifying the literal meaning of unfamiliar words.

The students were rated low average in the following content areas: synonyms, literal, inferential, reorganization, summary cloze, references, labels, and tables. It means that students are being challenged in these areas, which suggests that teachers must focus on developing these skills.

The CEM Reading Test Level 3 revealed that the students' sub-test scores, percent correct scores, and standard score only ranged from low average to average, which indicates that there is a need for a reading intervention program to accommodate students' challenges in reading comprehension and also suggests that teachers should focus on developing skills in vocabulary development and the use of study aids such as references, labels, and tables.

The study also revealed that there are 32.88% of students who were classified in the range of low average to very poor level of reading comprehension, which infers that these students have difficulty comprehending the reading test for grade 7 level. This suggests that the reading program should focus on catering to these students' needs in developing their reading comprehension level.

Overall, these findings call for an intervention program to address these problems. The proposed intervention from the body of literature presented, as well as the recommended

intervention, innovation, and strategy, will be applied to solve the identified problem of reading comprehension.

VI. RECOMMENDATION

Based from the findings, the researchers recommend:

1. Teachers must focus on developing skills in vocabulary development and the use of reading study aids.
2. Utilize the YEARS-RP to determine the effectiveness in improving the reading comprehension level of the students.
3. That the Communication Arts-English Department, together with the YEARS, work closely with the HDC for the process of the program.
4. The other department heads must also include reading programs or activities in their instructions.
5. There must be a continuation of this study in identifying the impact of the proposed program.
6. Encourage family members, relatives, and peers at home or in school to motivate the students beyond the classroom.

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