

# COGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES OF GRADE 11 LEARNERS

MA. VERDIOSA T. MANALANG

Jaen National High School, Jaen, Nueva Ecija, Philippines

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**Abstract:** This study aimed to find out which cognitive reading strategies were generally employed by learners in the phases of reading and which strategies were needed to be developed to understand the text better and therefore, to continue being academically successful. The respondents of this study were the Grade 11 learners of Jaen National High School. Questionnaire was used to collect data; it has two parts. The first part was used to get the profile of the learners. The second part, a Likert Scale type of questionnaire consisting of 30 items was administered to 90 learners. Cognitive reading strategies were evaluated under three phases: pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading.

**Keywords:** Cognitive Reading, Reading strategies, Pre-reading, While-reading, Post Reading.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Reading means many things to many people. Everyone has to read and understand what he is reading about. It helps an individual in protecting himself, in getting information, in securing enjoyment, and thereby in becoming a more contented and useful member of society. One's ability to read is of great impact to one's success in school and in being. Hazzard (2016) stated that reading makes a significant contribution to the success of the learner in completing their studies. In fact, the ability to read is essential, therefore the process of learning to read well plays an important role in achieving success in study and in life.

Reading is the most important skill to be developed in the school curriculum (Garcia, 2014) because the Department of Education secretary, Brother Armin A. Luistro believed that it is the foundation of all academic learning (Carcamo, 2012). The latter added that if learner fails to master basic reading skills at the outset, it will be a constant struggle for them to get through other disciplines successfully, thus depriving them of the chance to become literate and productive individuals.

However, teaching reading requires its own specialization and it is not an easy task for teachers. It has been emphasized by Fernandez (2016) that teaching reading needs a tremendous amount of time, money, and effort. That is why teachers never stop in creating techniques, strategies and methods to be able to fulfil learners' needs to decode, interpret, or understand the written text.

Undeniably, reality urges educators to consider reading as a significant factor to the success or failure of the learners in school and in life. Hence, the Department of Education, as the responsible department of the government in all educational events in the country, has institutionalized the DepEd Order #18 s. 2017 or implementation of the "Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP)" which aims to produce literate, numerate and skilled learners. In the research conducted by Umali (2016), she said that this program aims to alleviate problems among mediocre graduates of the elementary and secondary levels. In line with ECARP, Quismundo (2011) stated in his article that Education Secretary Armin Luistro ordered school officials to conduct various reading activities in schools and other learning facilities. Among them are a Read-a-Thon, "Drop Everything and Read (DEaR)" and remedial reading classes for learners. Furthermore, he also stated that DepEd has declared November as National Reading Month.

Luistro said in his memo that DepEd is initiating programs that would promote reading and literacy among the students, motivate the youth to learn from the lives and works of eminent Filipinos, uphold one's own heritage and values and make reading a shared physical experience. DepEd is hoping that through the programs, they could bring back the interest of school children in reading because the department truly believes that reading plays an important role in ones' success.

Reading does not mean anything unless there is comprehension. Goldenberg (2011) believed reading comprehension as the main goal for reading and everything else is a means to this end. However, according to Rahmani and Sadeghi (2011) one's comprehension depends on one's ability to understand words fast. If word understanding is hard, learners use too much of their processing in the ability to read individual words which interferes with their ability to comprehend what is read. They continued that learners need to learn to analyze a text for comprehending even before they can read it on their own.

In fact, Sutiono (2009) stated that most high school learners have poor command in reading. This was shown in the results of the test conducted by Alabat (2011) to fourth year high school students. It was revealed that students have difficulty in identifying the main idea, noting details, and vocabulary. Along with these, identifying author's message and arranging sequence are other reading skills where students are poor at.

Given these concerns, to improve reading skills, there is a need for different learning processes. In the learning process of reading, educators should familiarize and train learners to apply appropriate strategies in analyzing the context of reading materials. The main reason for using reading strategies is to ensure that the text is understood correctly and easily. These strategies according to Suyitno (2017) include selecting, predicting, confirming, validating the results of understanding, (De Leon and Tarrayo, 2014) previewing, self-questioning, visualizing, monitoring, making connections summarizing, and evaluating. The use of these set of strategies has an effect on the reader's success in comprehending the content of the text. This means that the use of these sets of strategies has an effect on the reader's success in comprehending the content of the text. This means that the use of the right strategy can optimize the results of comprehension while the use of inappropriate strategies can be a barrier to the success of comprehension. Thus, this research focuses on the cognitive strategies of the learners employed in pre-reading, while-reading and post reading.

## **II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES**

Cognitive strategies are considered to play an important role in the process of learning new language, including a foreign language (Yunus, 2013). These strategies enable the students to understand and produce new language (Rokhsari, 2012). This has been confirmed by the fact that these strategies, as cited by Williams & Burden in Zare (2012), are defined as "mental processes directly concerned with the processing of information". If the learner masters the internal process well, they will be able to learn independently. They will be able to solve problems and convey ideas well. With this strategy, learners can overcome difficulties and meet success in learning.

Researches into cognitive strategy identified classifications and divisions of cognitive reading. In the research by Dole, Norkes, and Drits (2008), they identified a number of cognitive strategies for various tasks in different domains of knowledge. These are general strategies for analyzing and solving problems; study strategies for memorizing a series of events or a timeline for a test; writing strategies for planning, drafting, reviewing and revising a critical essay; and reading strategies for self-questioning, constructing mental representational images, activating prior knowledge, rereading difficult-to-understand sections of texts, predicting and summarizing a text. On the other hand, Oxford as cited by Yunus (2013) classified cognitive strategies into four sets. These are practicing, receiving and sending messages, analyzing and reasoning, and creating structure for input and output. Furthermore, this study concurred with Ozek and Civelek (2006) who classified cognitive reading strategies in three phases of reading: pre-reading, while reading and post reading. Pre-reading strategies are the crucial stage for building background knowledge (Cekiso, 2012). These include getting the idea quickly by deduction, and inferencing. The second category of reading strategies, while-reading, helps learners to cope with problematic and grayer areas of the text (AD-Heisat, 2009). Some examples of while-reading strategies identified by Ozek and Civelek (2006) are resourcing, elaboration, note-taking, translating and imagery. The third category, post-reading, checks learners' comprehension and then lead learners to a deeper analysis of the text. These include grouping, repetition, and summarizing.

These phases of reading and strategies in each phase were the focus of this current study because many students still struggle with reading due to the lack of efficient reading strategy used. In traditional reading instruction, Klingner et al., (2010) stated that teachers often spend most of the class time explaining the texts by centering on vocabulary teaching and grammar exercises, and seldom teach strategies directly in class. Students did not learn how to use various strategies to actively interact with the text (Deng, 2009). Furthermore, due to their low level of reading strategy knowledge and lacked of cognitive control, they often selected ineffective and inefficient strategies with little strategic intent (Yang, 2010).

The researcher believes that the learners' application of the aforementioned strategies needs to be identified because these strategies are to be more significant in learners' comprehension than others.

Ratna (2011) in his study, identified the frequently used cognitive strategies of first year students in Garut. The result showed that using the title to predict the content of the text, guessing the meaning of a word from context, using dictionary, and considering other sentences in a paragraph to figure out the meaning are the commonly used strategies. Pei-Sui (2012) verified that high proficiency students use more cognitive strategies in understanding the context. This was proven in the study conducted by Kitano and Lewis (2007), where they used questioning, visualizing, and summarizing which were found to improve reading comprehension. Research has showed that regardless of the cognitive reading strategy used, reading comprehension was higher when students often employ strategies. Lim (2009) investigated the effect of reading strategy training on the reading abilities of the English as Second Language high school students. The study also aimed to obtain answers for the differential effect of the strategy training on students' reading proficiency level. Research findings showed that the reading strategy training improved ESL students' reading proficiency. Specifically, intermediate and high proficiency readers benefited more from the training than low readers. The study implied that reading was a high-order skill which could be automatized when the provision of sufficient linguistic input and strategy training was accessible.

Hsiao (2011) studied the effects of reading strategies instruction on Taiwanese junior high school students' reading comprehension in testing situations. It was found that participants became better in their awareness of reading as well as their reading ability, and the effective strategy use improved significantly after the reading strategy instruction. Also, participants held positive views toward the reading strategy instruction. The study suggested that instructors incorporate reading strategy instruction in normal English curriculum. Moreover, the effectiveness of reading strategy instruction was also reported for EFL low proficient learners. Luo (2009) investigated the effects of reading strategy instruction, implemented with inferring and story grammar strategies, to help improve low-achievers' reading performance and reading strategies usage. It was found that the low-achievers had positive attitudes toward the reading strategies instruction concerning vocabulary knowledge, reading strategies usage, self-confidence, English test scores, and reading behavior. The results of this study also indicated the effectiveness of the reading strategies instruction in enhancing the low achievers' reading performance, reading strategies usage, as well as learning motives.

These studies demonstrate that the students employed different reading strategies in comprehending the text. The high proficiency readers tend to employ more strategies rather than low proficiency readers. In other words, students who use various kinds of reading strategies have better reading comprehension (Santiana, 2009). Hence, it can be said that cognitive reading strategies have a great contribution to develop students' reading comprehension.

The present study was conducted in relation to the above-mentioned information and that cognitive reading strategies play an important role in understanding reading texts. This research aimed to identify the cognitive reading strategies employed by the Grade 11 learners in the different phases of reading.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

The study utilized the descriptive method using the questionnaire to determine the present condition of the respondents. According to Aggarwal (2008), descriptive research is devoted to the gathering of information about prevailing conditions or situations for the purpose of description and interpretation. This type of research method is not simply amassing and tabulating facts but includes proper analyses, interpretation, comparisons, identification of trends and relationships.

This study was conducted in Jaen National High School (JNHS) formerly known as Putlod - San Jose National High School-ANNEX. The school was established due to the persistence of the late Mayor Santy R. Austria. The established school was headed by Mr. Enrique A. Parungao who served as the principal of JNHS. The school provides educational access to 73,184 residents of Barangay Dampulan, Jaen, Nueva Ecija and the adjoining communities. For the school year 2017-2018, JNHS had reached 1,183 learners. For Junior High School, there were 262 Grade 7 learners, 282 from Grade 8, 228 from Grade 9, and 224 from Grade 10. For Senior High school, there are 90 Grade 11 learners and 97 from Grade 12, with 34 teaching personnel and 12 non-teaching staff. The school continues its goal in producing globally competitive learners.

### Respondents

The respondents of this research were Grade 11 learners of Jaen National High School. The number of respondents was determined using the total enumeration of Grade 11 learners who were officially enrolled in Jaen National High School for the school year 2017-2018.

Grade 11 has two strands: General Academic Strand (two sections) and Technical Vocational and Livelihood (one section) with the total population of 90 learners.

### Sample and Sampling Procedures

**Table 1: The Sample**

Section	Males	Females	TOTAL
ARGON (GAS)	13	17	30
NEON (GAS)	16	16	32
SOFITE (TVL)	14	14	28
Total	43	47	90

The present study was conducted among Grade 11 learners of Jaen National High School. A complete enumeration commonly known as census technique was adopted because the population of Grade 11 learners was very small.

### Construction and Validation of Instrument

The researcher used simple researcher-made questionnaire in gathering the data. This was validated by the researcher's adviser and other experts. Their inputs and suggestions were incorporated in the final draft of the instrument.

After validation of the instrument by the experts, the researcher piloted a dry-run to see if there were problems that may be encountered by the learners in answering the instrument. The dry-run was administered to Grade 12 Senior High School learners of Jaen National High School who were not the main respondents of this research. There were no problems encountered during the dry run, thus the researcher sought approval from her adviser to proceed to conduct with the administration of the tool.

### Data Gathering Procedures

In gathering data, the researcher wrote a letter requesting for approval and permission to conduct the study among the target respondents from the Schools Division Superintendent of Nueva Ecija and the Principal of Jaen National High School. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires to the students using two instruments: (1) Socio-Demographic Questionnaire to gather the profile of the respondents and (2) a Likert-Type questionnaire from the concept of Ozek & Civelek (2006) consisting of 30 items and given to the respondents to answer. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents in order to get their cooperation. First, the researcher directed the respondents to fill out the profile questionnaire. Second, the researcher explained the content of the survey questionnaire. The questionnaires were written in English and categorized in three phases of reading activity: pre-reading (10 items), while-reading (10 items) and post-reading (10 items). This was used to reveal the students' cognitive reading strategies. The frequency was categorized into range from 1-4, indicating the frequency of reading strategies into "Never" (1), "Seldom" (2), "Usually" (3) and "Always" (4). The frequency of occurrences of each reading strategy was analyzed and categorized. This was done by counting the frequency level of each reading strategy.

### Statistical Treatment of Data

The collected data were treated statistically for easy analysis and interpretation. The statistical tools used in the treatment of data were frequency and percentage distribution, mean and standard deviation.

Frequency count was used to describe the learners' demographic profile such as, age, sex, language, and preferred reading texts. Mean was used to find its average. Furthermore, standard deviation and percentages were used in the analysis of the data gathered. Pearson r was used to determine significant relationship between employed Cognitive reading strategies and respondents' profile variates. The researcher used the level of significance set to 0.05 and the analysis determined with the use of statistical tools.

The following scale was used to show the frequency use of cognitive reading strategies of Grade 11 learners.

Rate	Weighted Mean	Description	Interpretation
4	3.25-4.00	This means that you perform the given strategy all the time.	Always
3	2.50-3.24	This means that you perform the given strategy most of the time.	Usually
2	1.75-2.49	This means that you perform the given strategy a little of the time.	Seldom
1	1.00-1.74	This means that you perform the given strategy none of the time.	Never

#### IV. PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Based on the data gathered from the respondents, the following analyses and interpretations are drawn:

**Table 2: Cognitive Reading Strategies of the Learners**

COGNITIVE READING STRATEGIES OF THE LEARNERS	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description
Pre-reading	2.70	Usually
While-reading	2.67	Usually
Post-reading	2.64	Usually
<b>Grand Weighted Mean</b>	<b>2.67</b>	<b>Usually</b>

The table shows the summary of cognitive reading strategies of the learners in terms of pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading. It shows the grand weighted mean of 2.67 and described as usually. Finding shows that Grade 11 learners usually perform cognitive reading strategies in pre-reading, while-reading and post reading. Moreover, performing these strategies can help them better understand the reading materials. Law (2009) concluded that learners knowing when and how to use appropriate strategies before, during and after reading will help learners solve problems and comprehend the text well.

**Table 3: Correlational Analysis Between the Profile of the Learners and their Cognitive Reading Strategies**

PROFILE VARIABLES		Pre-Reading	While Reading	Post Reading
Sex	Pearson Correlation	.143	.238*	.331**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.180	.024	.001
	N	90	90	90
Age	Pearson Correlation	-.071	-.009	.133
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.507	.930	.213
	N	90	90	90
Birth Order	Pearson Correlation	-.114	-.034	-.211*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.284	.750	.046
	N	90	90	90
Number of Siblings	Pearson Correlation	.081	.070	-.077
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.449	.511	.468
	N	90	90	90
Dialect	Pearson Correlation	. <sup>b</sup>	. <sup>b</sup>	. <sup>b</sup>
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	90	90	90
Average Grade in English 10	Pearson Correlation	.118	.079	.045
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.266	.462	.675
	N	90	90	90
Reading Materials at Home	Pearson Correlation	-.143	-.115	-.044
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.179	.281	.679
	N	90	90	90

Father's Educational Attainment	Pearson Correlation	.204	.211*	.128
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.054	.046	.231
	N	90	90	90
Father's Occupation	Pearson Correlation	-.104	-.156	-.124
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.330	.141	.244
	N	90	90	90
Mother's Educational Attainment	Pearson Correlation	.125	.219*	.056
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.239	.039	.602
	N	90	90	90
Mother's Occupation	Pearson Correlation	.037	-.030	.039
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.731	.781	.713
	N	90	90	90

It shows the correlation analysis between the profile of the learners and their cognitive reading strategies. Relationship between profile variables and cognitive reading strategies is determined if the significance value or p-value is less than 0.05. As seen in the table, sex is correlated to while reading and post reading strategies by having significance values of 0.238 and 0.331 respectively while birth order has relationship to post-reading strategies by having a significance value of 0.211. Further, fathers' and mothers' educational attainments are correlated to while reading strategies by having significance values of 0.211 and 0.219 respectively. However, majority of the profile variables do not have any relationship to cognitive reading strategies. Thus, the hypothesis "There is no significant relationship between the profile of the learners and their cognitive reading strategies" is not rejected.

The respondents' demographic profiles found to have no significant relationship with respondents' cognitive reading strategies are: First is age. According to Chavez study as cited by Fernandez (2016), age does not influence the reading ability of the respondents. He said that though experience matters in reading, still, other factors do not have significant relationship between age and reading skills. Second is number of siblings, which was found not significantly related to respondents' cognitive reading strategies. This result is supported by Harkonen (2014), said that number of siblings has negative effect on reading strategies employed by the learners. However, this did not agree with the statement of Karwath (2014), that one has to expect poor utilization of reading strategies for children with higher number of siblings. Third is average grade in English 10, also found to be not significantly related to respondents' cognitive reading strategies. This disagrees with that of Dimzon, as cited by Fernandez (2016). According to him, there is significant relationship between the respondents' previous grade and their reading strategy and comprehension skill. The better the student is as a reader, the better he is in performing in other subjects, making him more advanced than those who are not skillful in reading. Lastly, Respondents' exposure to Reading Materials at Home has no significant relationship with their cognitive reading strategies. On the other hand, this result contradicts the statement of Leipzig (2018), that keeping reading materials throughout the house, including newspapers, magazines, brochures, etc. will stimulate reading. This will increase learners' access to books and printed materials, and will give them more opportunities to practice reading.

On the other hand, there are demographic profiles which were found to have significant relationship with respondents' cognitive reading strategies such as sex, birth order, and parents' educational attainment. The respondents' sex, with 0.024 and 0.001 correlation coefficients is significantly related to their while reading and post reading strategies respectively. The findings concur with that of Zare (2012) which revealed significant differences exist between male and female language learners in the use of reading strategies. They found that females use more reading strategies than males. Lee (2013) reached the same conclusion that girls use reading strategies more frequently than boys. It implies that females are somehow superior in using reading strategies compared to male subjects (Keshavarz. &Ashtarian, 2008) and females are more global and prefer to guess meaning from context while males are more analytic and attend more to words (Brudice, 2009).

Respondents' birth order was also found to be significantly relevant to their use of post-reading strategies with 0.046 correlation coefficient. Most of the respondents were the third born child. According to Richardson (2010), third born children, regardless of their gender, seem to be better in creative content areas in academic career. Reading and writing are coherent areas that third born children excel in since they can use their imagination to the fullest extent. This did not agree with the statement of Patel (2017) that the first born children perform reading significantly better than other

siblings. However, these results are different from the study conducted by Napone (2008). It was revealed in his study that birth order has no significant relationship with students' reading strategies.

Further, mothers' and fathers' educational attainments are correlated to while reading strategies by having significance values of 0.039 and 0.046 respectively. The mothers' educational attainment had a significant relationship with the students' cognitive reading strategies with 0.039 correlation coefficient. Majority or 76.7% of the respondents' mothers have reached or finished high school. This implies that almost all of the respondents' mothers have reached or completed the basic education than those who have just reached or finished elementary or those who have had no education at all. According to White as cited by Gooding (2011), mothers' education shows a strong correlation to the while-reading strategies employed by the learners. Their being educated would affect positively their children's application of while-reading strategies. In addition, Marquez (2008) said that parents, particularly the mothers who have gone to college, would possibly share lots of insights to their children rather than those who are less educated.

Educational attainment of the respondents' fathers is also significantly related to their cognitive reading strategies with 0.046 correlation coefficient. Majority or 65.5 % of the respondents' fathers have reached or finished high school. Specifically, this means that the respondents' fathers are equipped with basic education. However, the level of educational attainment of father in this study did not indicate their inclination to teach their children towards academic excellence. Clark (2009) showed that children and young people indicate that fathers are the second most important persons to inspire students' reading activities, second only to mothers. It has also been said by Clark (2009) that the lack of male role models involved in reading and other literacy-related activities during children's early years is one of the possible causes of the declining rates of school achievement for boys.

## **V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusions**

1. Majority of the respondents were third born child, with two to three siblings, whose age fell within 16-17 years old; female respondents dominated the male respondents; most of the respondents preferred to read electronic reading materials and used Tagalog as the spoken dialect at home; many of the respondents had general average grades of 75-79; many of their parents were high school undergraduates; and most of their mothers were plain housewives and their fathers were drivers.
2. The respondents usually performed cognitive reading strategies in pre-reading, while-reading and post reading. The result of the survey questionnaire revealed that the most frequently used strategy was "looking at tables, figures, and pictures and trying to guess how they are related to the text content" in the pre-reading phase. As for while-reading phase, the most used strategy was "visualizing events presented on the text in mind". In post-reading phase, the frequently used was "reading the passage more than once to understand it more completely and rereading the text to remember the important points."
3. The respondents' profile did not affect their cognitive reading strategies.
4. Cognitive reading intervention may be created and used based on the results of the study.

### **Recommendations**

1. Parents may monitor their children's readings at home to ensure that their child is protected from unnecessary reading materials available electronically. They may untiringly inculcate in their children's mind the value of reading in their daily lives. Through this, children may further develop reading habits that will help them improve their reading skills.
2. Teachers may a) continuously teach the learners in applying cognitive reading strategies in group discussions to make learners get used to it. b) Teachers may strongly advise to administer the reading strategy questionnaires to their learners to identify the problem areas that might need attention.
3. School administrators may send English teachers to different seminars and workshops for them to be equipped with knowledge and skills in producing effective electronic cognitive reading intervention for the learners.
4. Learners may be more engaged in cognitive reading intervention provided by the teachers in order to improve their use of cognitive reading strategies.
5. For future researchers, it is recommended that reading comprehension tests, think aloud protocols or interviews are to be included to further examine learners' actual strategy use.

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