Factors Affecting the Reading Comprehension of Intermediate Level Learners: Basis for An Intervention Program

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Abstract: The study generally aims to determine the factors affecting the reading comprehension of intermediate-level learners of the City of Malolos Integrated School-Babatnin as a basis for the development of an intervention program. A quantitative type of research using the descriptive-survey method was employed to describe "what is", which was the process of this study, using survey instruments and texts as reading exercises of the learners. From the findings, the study concluded that (1) strategy of the teacher did not affect the reading comprehension of the learners, (2) home-related factors affect the reading comprehension of the learners, (3) learners who did not read reading materials at house or school affect their reading comprehension skills, and (4) learner-related factors such as prior knowledge, understanding, and motivation if low hindered the reading comprehension skills of the students. The study recommends to (1) conduct the same study in different schools and different grade levels, (2) conduct programs to motivate learners in reading and improve their reading skills as well, (3) orient parents that reading materials in the house are important and this will help their children to improve reading skills, (4) think of other strategies wherein learners will be motivated to read.

Keywords — *Reading Comprehension; Teacher-Related Factor, Home-Related Factor, Learner-Related Factor; Intervention Program*

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the most essential skills and starting point of the individual to learn everything around him. This is fundamentally important to attain and achieve learning in school and throughout life. This skill empowers learners to understand text, images, and their message, to deepen their knowledge about beliefs, practices, and to ensure that these will be transferred to the next generation, and to connect his previous experiences with their new learning. Being one of the macro skills in language learning (Cabigao[a], 2012; Cabigao[b], 2012), reading skills must be developed among our learners in preparation for the higher stages of their studies.

As Alexander (2007) said, "Reading is more important today than it ever was as it is crucial to being an informed citizen, to succeed in one's chosen career, and to personal fulfillment. People thought technology would decrease the need to read. On the contrary, today one finds more access to text than ever, more specialized magazines, more books published, more newspapers, and more articles read on the internet". This means that reading has become more important even before the boost of technological advancements. Francis Bacon (1561-1626) stressed the importance of reading to everyone. According to him, "Reading maketh a full man" that is how readers have personal fulfillment.

According to Brynes (1998) in Dala (2008), good or proficient readers read extensively, integrate information in the text with existing knowledge, have a flexible reading style depending on what learners are reading, are motivated, rely on different skills interacting such as perceptual processing, phonemic processing, recall, and read for a purpose.

Furthermore, researchers in education also find out that there is a strong correlation between reading and academic success. In other words, learners who are good readers are more likely to do well in school and pass the examinations than learners who are weak readers. The building of their vocabulary through reading helps expand learners' language resulting in effective oral and non-verbal communication. The two main problems of Filipino learners in reading were presented by Miciano (2007), which states that (1) learners read but show difficulty to comprehend what they have read, Filipino learners are generally good at reading for details but, unless the article explicitly labels it, they often miss the main idea, and (2) learners altogether misunderstand the details and surely get the wrong picture.

But the truth is that there is no non-reader, there are only non-decoders. Non-decoders refer to those who can read but do not understand what they have read. Reading and comprehension are two different things, but inseparable. Reading is comprehension itself. If information is not processed, if comprehension has not taken place, then reading has not occurred (Flood & Lapp, 1992).

According to Bernardez (2009), "reading is the art of knowing and of understanding the meaning of printed words or written symbols hence, reading is plain comprehension". Comprehension is essentially the ability to understand what has been read. According to Melon-Galvez and Dela Cerna (2010), the word comprehension is derived from the Latin word "prehendre" meaning "to seize", which is the art or capacity to understand.

Bernardez (2009) added that there are four levels of comprehension namely: literal level, interpretative level, critical level, and application level.   On the literal level, learners are expected to understand the basic information of what they read, this may include identifying the characters in the story. The second level is the interpretative level, this is where the learners are expected to read between the lines. Readers are expected to see what the writer wants to imply regarding a certain situation in a reading passage. In the critical level, the third level, learners are expected to judge or criticize the work of a writer. For example, a teacher may ask the learners if the ending or the title is appropriate for a piece of written work and they need to justify their answers. And lastly, the highest level which is the application level is where the learners are expected to apply what they have read through different activities. For example, the learners will write a short paragraph about the theme of a certain piece of written work.

Through reading and by the grasping of information in the text, comprehension developed. Comprehension development requires that learners draw meaning from the processes of analyzing, interpreting, and responding to narrative and expository text. Analyzing is to examine and explore how ideas are organized and how that organization contributes to the meaning of a text. Then   Interpreting follows, as you are trying to find the meaning and the significance of the text as in making adaptation and representation. You are asking yourself both what the text means and why it is important, seeing how they relate to each other to find the meaning and importance of it. While the purpose of an expository text is to explain, discuss, give directions, or inform the readers of what the text is all about and why it exists. Experts get to involve themselves in writing and searching related theories, strategies, methods, reinforcements to encourage the growth and development of the learners' knowledge based on their needs about reading.

Schema Theory

One of the theories of cognitive psychology that influence current thinking about reading is the Schema theory (Anderson and Person, 1984 & Rumelhart, 1980 in Ambruster & Osborn, 2002), this theory explains how individuals acquire, store, and use knowledge in reading a text. According to this theory, readers understand what they read only when it has a connection to what they already know. The readers construct meaning from text by connecting information in the text with their background knowledge (Ambruster & Osborn, 2002). Learners with greater prior knowledge comprehend and remember more what they have read because they can build connections between what they are reading and what they know.

According to Nunan (1999), as cited by Fernandez (2008), schema theory is based on the notion that past experiences lead to the creation of mental frameworks that help us make sense of new experiences. In which the written material and the readers' prior knowledge interact with one another and at the same time, stress out the point that written text does not carry

meaning but the meaning is created by using previously acquired knowledge or schemata. About the present study, Schema theory explains how learners' knowledge is used for making connections for better reading comprehension and how schema (prior knowledge) can be a big factor and plays a vital role in students reading comprehension.

One Second Reading Theory

According to Philp Goughs (1972) in Brown (2000), one second of the reading model suggests that reading is a sequential mental process, and the emphasis is on the smaller speech sounds which are connected to form individual words. Decoding is essential to the reading process. Contrary to the whole language approach which supports the meaning first, the understanding of the author's message comes last. Readers can grasp higher-level text than they can decode. This inability prevents the reader from accessing more difficult text. Concerning the present study, this theory explains when learners emphasize decoding rather than on the meaning of the written text.

Bottom-up Theory

The Bottom-Up is a theory on reading comprehension that responds to the process of decoding and translating words or written symbols into a simple and plain language (Goodman, 1985 in Bernardez, 2009). In this theory, readers recognized first letters and words before phrases, clauses, and sentences could be comprehended. The Bottom-Up theory is based upon the behavioral theory that the brain is likened to a certain sheet of paper or Tabula rasa which absorbs or receives a message for the first time and the interpretation of such message is only based upon the initial symbol that the mind understands without the aid of any form of promptings (Bernardez, 2009). This means that the reading process begins from the bottom, from merely reading the text, and going up to the mind, without taking into consideration the readers' experiences and prior knowledge. This theory emphasizes that the interaction between the reader and the text includes little or no inference from the readers' background knowledge. Concerning the present study, this explains how some learners read the reading text in a way where they plainly understand it without reference to their prior knowledge.

Top-down Theory

Top-down theory for reading comprehension utilizes the process of reconstructing the meaning of sentences rather than decoding or translating them (Goodman, 1985 in Bernardez, 2009). This theory emphasizes meaning rather than analyzing the series of written symbols and it depends on the reader's prior knowledge and experiences the meaning he will get from the written text. This mirrors the principle of Gestalt psychology that says, "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts" (Frando et, al. 2009) in this process, the readers' primary tool is their prior knowledge in synthesizing the meaning of the statements and making it as a whole. Grabe and Stoller (2001) in Fernandez (2008) emphasize that the top-down reading

model assumes the reading is primarily directed by the readers' goals and expectations, that is why top-down models are characterized the readers as someone who has a set of expectations about the text information and samples enough information from the text to confirm or reject these expectations. This theory is relevant to the present study because it gives way to the idea that readers' prior knowledge and experiences play a vital role in their comprehension of the written text. This draws a particular realization of the Schema theory and just the opposite of bottom-up theory.

Automaticity Theory

According to Brown, 2000, this theory was developed by La Berge and Samuels in 1974 wherein the idea is based on the premise that the human mind functions like a computer and has limited capacity for multitasking. Therefore, the process of decoding the written text and understanding what has been read cannot happen simultaneously. In this theory, all readers start in the same position: by knowing nothing, or at least very little about letter words, and sentence structures. One process will undeniably interfere with the other and diminish the process of each. In this manner, the readers tend to repeat reading the text, again and again, to comprehend its meaning and place it in their brain where they will never be forgotten. In relevance to the present study, automaticity theory will provide some ideas why some learners could not comprehend a text in just one reading. This idea may be proven or not at the end of this study.

Mendoza (1987) conducted a study entitled *Mastery Learning in the Teaching of Reading (Grade III Level) in Paombong District, Division of Bulacan: School Year 1985-1986.* Her study found out that there were no significant differences in the reading performance of the learners on word recognition, comprehension, and study skills when they were grouped according to sex and location. This study and her study both have the same topic, which is reading, and it also deals with the students reading abilities. The difference is that this study focuses only on reading comprehension while her study focuses on the mastering of learning of reading which includes word recognition skills and comprehension. Another difference is that the respondents of her study are Grade 3 learners while this study has Grades 4 to 6 learners.

Valencia (2006) conducted a study entitled *Predictors of Reading Level Ability of Grade III Pupils on Selected Public Schools.* This study sought to find factors that could predict the reading level ability of the learners. For the s learners' profile, the following were identified: (a) most of the learners used textbooks in the library. Available magazine and dictionary in the library are often used by them and they rarely used journals and newspaper while they never used encyclopedia; and (b) the common reading materials used by the learners in their home are books compare to the other reading materials that they often or rarely used newspaper, magazines, workbook, and dictionary. For the teachers' profile, the following were identified: (a) the Grade 3 teachers' experience in teaching

reading have more or less than three years of experience, and (b) majority of the teaching methods were always used by teachers in reading instruction. The oral reading instruction was the best used by the teachers. She concluded that the teacher factor has no significant effect on the learners' reading skills. This study and her study both focus on reading ability. Her study focuses on predictors to identify the reading ability of the learners while this study focuses on factors hindering reading comprehension.

De Leon (2009), in her unpublished thesis *Factors Affecting the Reading Skills of Grade 2* found out the easiest for the respondents among the various areas of the reading program were organizing ideas, getting the main idea, and following directions. Her study focuses on the Grade 2 learners while this study focuses on intermediate pupils. This study focuses on comprehension while her study focuses on reading skills. Her study focuses on factors affecting reading comprehension while this study focuses on factors hindering reading comprehension.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Comprehending what has been read is already a skill in reading, and this includes some other skills in reading such as vocabulary skills, noting details, getting the main idea, predicting outcome, and making inferences. Vocabulary skills deal with knowing the words they encounter in a written text. Noting details refer to getting the small elements that collectively constitute a piece of work. It may include the elements of a story such as characters and settings. Next is getting the main idea, a reader/learner can understand and get what the author wants to say. It is also known as the central idea of a written text. Predicting outcome refers to the ability of a reader to predict what will happen next based on what he reads on the earlier content of a written text (Melon-Galvez & Dela Cerna, 2010), and lastly, according to De Leon (2009), inferring refers to the educational guess, it is also known as reading between the lines. Authors may not directly give the message of what they write but readers may understand the idea of the writer through inferring. This study focuses on the reading comprehension of intermediate-level learners and the possible factors affecting their reading comprehension.

Rubin and Opitz (2007), differentiate educational and non-educational factors that may affect the learners' performance in reading. Educational factors refer to those factors that come under the control of the educational system and influence learning; this may include the teaching method, instructional time, and school environment. Non-educational factors refer to factors that do not come under the control of the educational system and cannot influence by it, this includes home environment, understanding, motivation, and prior knowledge.

The researcher believes that these factors will be helpful in this study. These will be used as the basis for identifying the factors affecting the reading comprehension of the Grades 4 to 6 learners.

Figure 1 presents the conceptual model of the study. The horizontal line connects the independent variables to the dependent variables to suggest its relationship. The first frame consisted of two parts: the first part is the level of reading comprehension and the second part is the educational and non-educational factors namely, home-related factors, teacher-related factors, and learner-related factors, as the independent variable. The second frame contains the dependent variable which is the learners' reading comprehension. After identifying the relationship between the two sets of variables, the study attempted to recommend a reading intervention program.
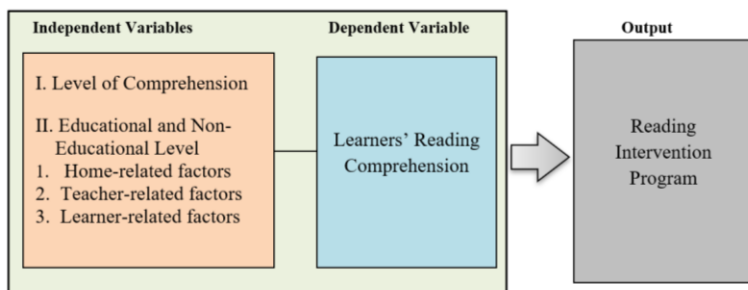

Fig. 1. *The Conceptual Model of the Study*

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The general problem of the study is: What are the factors affecting the reading comprehension of intermediate level learners of the City of Malolos Integrated School-Babatnin as a basis for the development of an intervention program?

Specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of comprehension of intermediate-level learners?
2. How may the following educational and non-educational factors affect the reading comprehension of the learners in terms of:
   2.1   home-related factor;
       2.1.1   parents' educational attainment;
       2.1.2   parents' occupation;
       2.1.3   number of siblings;
   2.2   teacher-related factor;
       2.2.1   teachers' educational attainment;
       2.2.2   teachers' relevant training and seminar;
       2.2.3   teaching strategy;
   2.3   learner-related factor;
       2.3.1   prior knowledge;
       2.3.2   understanding;
       2.3.3   motivation;
   2.4   number of learners;
   2.5   textbooks-learner ratio; and
   2.6   reading selections give every week?

3. Are there significant relationships between the educational and non-educational factors and the reading comprehension of the learners?
4. Based on the research, what intervention program may be formulated to further compose the reading comprehension of the learners?

4. HYPOTHESIS

This study was guided by this hypothesis: *There is no significant relationship between the educational and non-educational factors and the reading comprehension of the learners.*

5. METHOD

Type of Research

The researcher used a quantitative type of research using the descriptive survey method. Descriptive research describes current events and that the research questions or problems raised are based on the appreciation of present phenomena, events, or situations (Ariola, 2006), or simply it is designed to provide a snapshot of the current state of affairs (Cabigao, 2019). The purpose of this method is to describe "what is", which was the process of this study. They identified the factors hindering reading comprehension and attempted to analyze, interpret, and report the present status of the intermediate pupils in their reading comprehension.

Respondents and Sampling Method

The researcher used random sampling. Unrestricted random sampling is where all the members of a population have a chance to be included in the sample. There is no restriction being imposed in this kind of sampling. Under random sampling, the lottery technique is being used in this study. Here, each member of the population is assigned a certain number and these numbers will be written on pieces of paper and be drawn one at a time (Calmorin & Calmorin, 2007).

Research Instrument

This research used a questionnaire for gathering data to identify the factors affecting the reading comprehension of the learners. This study used three (3) sets of questionnaires: one is for the teacher-respondents that consists of the school factors and the other two are for the learner-respondents that indicates the reading materials in the school library and at home, and other factors such as teacher factor, motivation, prior knowledge, and understanding.   The other factors are not directly implied in the questions and they are randomly arranged. Same with the test questions in reading comprehension, the test items consist of the level of comprehension which is a literal, interpretative, and critical level, and the questions are also randomly arranged. The questionnaire for the teacher and learner-respondents were adapted and modified by the researcher from a previous study conducted by De Leon (2009) moreover the test questions in

reading comprehension are adapted in reading a passage from the internet which were validated by the experts.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher is fortunate to be one of the teachers at the intermediate level of City of Malolos Integrated School-Babatnin under study. With the endorsement of the School Head, together with the school English Coordinator the researcher personally distributed questionnaires to the respondents by the second week of October 2016. The data gathered will be tabulated manually. The researcher used formulas and dummy tables to organize, summarize, analyze, and interpret the data to describe and determine the factors affecting the reading comprehension of the learners.

Data Analysis

The statistical techniques used in the interpretation of data and in testing the null hypotheses will include the mean, standard deviation, and weighted mean. The Mean is used to locate where an individual belongs within a group and to determine the level of comprehension of the learners. The Standard Deviation (SD) is used in comparing groups. The higher the SD, the more heterogenous is the group in each level of comprehension. The smaller the SD, the more homogenous is the group in each level of comprehension. the Weighted Mean (WM) is used to know the average answers of the learner-respondents in the reading materials they used to read in the school library and at home and in other factors. The answers regarding the reading materials in the school library and at home used by the learners and in other factors were counted using a five-point scale:

Scale	Range	Description/Interpretation
5	4.50 – 5.00	Always
4	3.50 – 4.49	Often
3	2.50 – 3.49	Sometimes
2	1.50 – 2.49	Rarely
1	1.00 – 1.49	Never

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the mean score and the standard deviation of the learners in each level. The level of comprehension includes literal level, interpretative level, critical level, and application level. This study did not cover the application level because it is more on the psychomotor skills of the learners.

Table 1: *The Mean Score and the Standard Deviation of the Levels of the Reading Comprehension of the Learners*

Levels of Comprehension	Mean	SD
Literal	2.89	1.39
Interpretative	2	.94
Critical	1.03	.85

The learners got a weighted mean of 2.89 in the literal level with a standard deviation of 1.39. This means that the level of comprehension of the respondents at the literal level is

homogenous. Moreover, at the interpretative level, they got a weighted mean of 2 and 0.94 as their standard deviation and this shows that the level of reading comprehension of the respondents at the interpretative level is heterogeneous. Likewise, in the critical level of reading comprehension, the respondents got a weighted mean of 1.03 and a standard deviation of 0.85, wherein it shows that the respondents are heterogeneous when it comes to this level. This means that most of the learners do not see what the writer wants to imply in a reading passage and cannot justify their answers in criticizing the work of a writer.

The researchers divided the respondents into half, based on what they got on the questionnaire given by the researchers. The first will be those who got 8 and above which will be the high scores and the second group will be those who got 7 and below. A record of 18 students got high scores and 12 learners who got low scores.

Table 2 presents the weighted mean for learners who got high scores and low scores in terms of how often they read the reading materials available in their school and home. This determined if the reading materials are one of the factors that hinder the respondents' reading comprehension.

Table 2: *Weighted Mean for High Scores Group and Low Scores Group in terms of Reading Materials*

HIGH SCORES	Responses					Mean	Verbal Interpretation
	5	4	3	2	1		
1. Reading Materials at Home							
a. Textbooks	9	5	2	2	0	6.25	Always
b. Journals	2	5	4	4	3	4.42	Often
c. Magazines	1	2	2	6	6	3.08	Sometimes
d. Newspaper	1	1	4	5	7	3.17	Sometimes
e. Dictionary	9	7	1	1	0	6.50	Always
f. Encyclopedia	0	0	0	5	13	1.92	Rarely
General Average						4.06	Often
2. Reading Materials at School							
a. Textbooks	5	8	2	3	0	5.25	Always
b. Journals	3	3	3	4	5	4.08	Often
c. Magazines	1	2	3	5	7	3.25	Sometimes
d. Newspaper	1	2	3	6	6	3.33	Sometimes
e. Dictionary	4	10	2	2	0	5.83	Always
f. Encyclopedia	1	1	0	5	11	2.25	Rarely
General Average						4.29	Often
3. Reading Materials at Home							
a. Textbooks	4	3	3	1	1	3.67	Often
b. Journals	2	1	4	2	3	2.75	Sometimes
c. Magazines	1	0	7	4	0	2.83	Sometimes
d. Newspaper	1	3	2	3	3	2.67	Sometimes
e. Dictionary	4	2	3	1	2	3.42	Sometimes
f. Encyclopedia	1	1	1	1	8	1.83	Rarely
General Average						2.87	Sometimes
4. Reading Materials at School							
a. Textbooks	3	5	4	0	0	3.92	Often
b. Journals	1	1	5	4	1	2.75	Sometimes
c. Magazines	3	3	2	3	1	3.33	Sometimes
d. Newspaper	0	1	2	5	4	2	Rarely
e. Dictionary	7	1	4	0	0	4.25	Often
f. Encyclopedia	0	0	2	2	8	1.5	Rarely
General Average						2.96	Sometimes

The weighted mean of respondents who got high scores in terms of how often they read reading materials at home is 4.06 (often) while those who are under the low scores only got a weighted mean of 2.87 (sometimes). This shows the relationship between reading materials available in the respondents' home and their level of comprehension. The support of parents at home by providing a conducive learning environment is vital for the learning journey of schoolchildren (Cabigao, 2014). On the other hand, the weighted mean got by the respondents in high score in terms of how often they read reading materials at school library is 4.29 (often) compared to the weighted mean of the respondents in a low score which is only 2.96 (sometimes) that means, learners who got high score in the questionnaire given by the researchers maximize the use of the library but those who got low scores to lack initiative to read as interpreted by the researchers.

Table 3 presents the weighted mean for the high and low scores group in terms of teacher and learner-related factors.

Table 3: *Weighted Mean for the High and Low Scores Group in Terms of Teacher and Learner-Related Factors*

	Weighted Mean High Scores	Verbal Interpretation	Weighted Mean Low Scores	Verbal Interpret-ation
Teacher factor	**3.33**	**Sometimes**	**2.50**	**Sometimes**
Learner Factors				
Prior knowledge	4.0	Often	4.0	Often
Understanding of the learner	1.11	Never	1.0	Never
Motivation to read	2.67	Sometimes	2.0	Sometimes
General Average	2.59	**Sometimes**	2.33	**Rarely**

The weighted mean of the teacher factor is 3.33 for the high score and 2.50 for the low score. From scale this means that all the learners sometimes understand their teacher, this means that the strategy or method of the teacher do not hinder reading comprehension skills because there are a lot of learners who got high score.

The weighted mean of the learner factors in terms of prior knowledge is that 4.0 for the high scores and 4.0 for the low scores. This means that learners in the high scores and low scores often understand the selection when they have background knowledge about it. This has something to do with schema theory wherein it states that readers construct meaning from text by connecting information in the text with their background knowledge (Ambruster & Osborn, 2002). This means that insufficient prior knowledge hinders the reading comprehension of the learners. The researchers notice that the high score group got the higher weighted mean for reading the reading materials in school and at home, they concluded that students who read more, know more and they used what they

learn from previous reading to understand what they are reading in a present time.

The weighted mean for the understanding of the learners is that 1.11 for high scores and 1.0. This means never in the scale. The learners believe that they use their intelligence to understand and decode the meaning of the text. This has something to do with bottom-up, one-second theory, and automaticity theory, which explains if one perceives the words in the text, they decode its meaning and in decoding, he uses his intelligence to understand the meaning of the reading text. This has something to do also with top-down theory for reading comprehension utilize the process of reconstructing the meaning of sentences rather than decoding or translating them (Goodman, 1985 in Bernardez, 2009). Intelligence is needed for the students to understand the text. Low understanding affects the reading comprehension skills of the students.

The weighted mean for motivation of the learners to read is 2.67 for the high scores and 2.0 for the low scores. On the scale, this means that the high score is sometimes motivated to read while rarely for the low score group. If they are motivated to read, they will read more reading materials, they will learn more and they will acquire sufficient prior knowledge. According to Miller (2003) as cited by Umali (2013) teachers promote motivation if they encourage the students to develop their higher levels of responsibility for their learning. Likewise, a challenging task often requires learners to use prior knowledge and construct an understanding of a topic. Low motivation hinders the reading comprehension of the students, for example in the low scores group they are least motivated, and they do not read reading materials that much, as a result, they do not have sufficient prior knowledge to understand a reading text. The general average of the weighted mean for the learner factor is 2.59 for the high scores and 2.33 for the low scores.

Table 4 presents the data gathered about other school factors.

Table 4: *Data of Other School Factors*

Other School Factors	Figure
Number of learners per class	10-16
Textbook-learner ratio	1:1
Selections were given per week	2

These school factors have no significant relationship to the factors hindering the reading comprehension skills of the learners because even though they have this data in the school still there are a lot of learners who got high scores.

7. CONCLUSIONS

1. The strategy of the teacher did not affect the reading comprehension of the learners. In the study of Valencia (2006), she got the same result that the teacher factor has no significant effect on the learners' reading skills.

2. Home-related factors have a very significant effect that affects the reading comprehension of the learners. This is tested by the respondents whose parents' educational level had only attained elementary education. If parents have a good educational background, it would be easier for them to lead and help their children in their academic difficulties, especially in reading. Same as in parent's occupation and several siblings, where nutritious food intake is possible if family income is suitable for family's need.

3. Learners who did not read reading materials at house or school affect their reading comprehension skills. Camosa (1987) in De Leon (2009) states that if the child is exposed to reading materials it would have a great impact on the reading habit and interest of the learners.

4. Learner-related factors such as prior knowledge, understanding, and motivation if low hindered the reading comprehension skills of the students. Furthermore, prior knowledge plays a vital role in learners' comprehension by the schema theory.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. For future researchers, may know-how and in what way these factors affect the reading comprehension skills of the learners. They may also conduct the same study in different schools and different grade levels.

2. For administrators of the school, they may conduct programs to motivate learners in reading and improve their reading skills as well.

3. Parents may be aware that reading materials in the house are important and this will help their children to improve their reading skills. Different types of books are a big help for gaining sufficient prior knowledge.

4. Teachers may think of other strategies wherein learners will be motivated to read. There are three suggested reading interventions according to Breiseth (2016) that proposed and modified by the researcher. First, build background knowledge (Pre-reading activity). This may mean providing a brief, simple outline of a reading assignment or an oral discussion in advance of a new lesson, to help the learner pick out the important information as they listen or read. This may lead the learners to recall and obtain existing knowledge and at the same time, build learners' background knowledge. Second, teach vocabulary explicitly (Vocabulary development). Focus on key vocabulary. Ensure that learners can define a word, recognize when to use that word, understand multiple meanings, and decode and spell that word. Then incorporate new words into discussions and activities. Third and last,

check comprehension frequently (Comprehension check-up). Test comprehension with student-friendly questions using the four-level of comprehension. Provide learners with many ways to show what they know, use graphic organizers, and then summarize. It may be challenging to improve learners' comprehension skills, but it is well worth the extra effort to put them on the path to becoming successful readers.

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