

Reading Comprehension Outcomes Related to Sociolinguistic Profiles and Translation Skills

¹Charry G. Altamia and ²Charito G. Ong

University of Science and Technology of Southern Philippines

Abstract

This research aimed to address the gap in understanding the interplay between translation skills and sociolinguistic profiles, specifically tailored to the needs of Grade 7 students. Employing a descriptive-correlational design, the study described the characteristics and behaviors of the participants and assessed the relationships among them. Participants' translation skills and reading comprehension levels were evaluated, and their sociolinguistic profiles were determined using a sociolinguistic survey. The study analyzed the correlation between translation abilities and performance on reading comprehension tests, providing insights into how sociolinguistic factors influenced language proficiency and comprehension outcomes.

Keywords: Sociolinguistic Profile, Translation Skills, Reading Comprehension

Introduction

Reading comprehension is a critical skill for academic success, yet its attainment is often constrained by numerous global challenges. Socioeconomic disparities, armed conflict, and resource limitations frequently deprived many students of access to quality education. Additionally, language barriers posed significant obstacles for learners who lacked proficiency in the language of instruction, thereby impeding their comprehension abilities. This was particularly pertinent for bilingual students, whose translation abilities played a crucial role in understanding academic texts in a non-native language.

In the Philippines, the education sector and school administrators had implemented numerous initiatives to enhance and improve students' reading comprehension. Despite these efforts, results remained suboptimal, attributed to several factors. Limited availability of reading materials at home and in schools, inadequate reading instruction, and insufficient focus on specific sub-skills of reading comprehension, such as identifying main ideas and making inferences, all contributed to the problem. Furthermore, according to Paz (2018), there was a lack of intervention programs addressing weak areas of reading comprehension, including interpretative, critical, and application skills.

Recognizing translation as a pedagogical tool, Frahm and (2021) suggested its potential to enhance comprehension, critical thinking, and linguistic agility. This study endeavored to

explore the reciprocal relationship between multilingualism, educational outcomes, and reading comprehension. Focused on Grade 7 students at Mindanao State University at Naawan-Integrated Developmental School (MSUN-IDS), the research aimed to elucidate translation's efficacy in strengthening reading comprehension within a sociolinguistically diverse context.

The main instruments utilized in this study included a reading comprehension questionnaire from the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory Manual 2018 (Phil-IRI) and a translation test adapted from Hadiyanti's (2018) study, "The Correlation Between Reading Comprehension and Students' Translation Ability at the Tenth Grade Students of SMK Negeri 5 Pangkep," conducted in Malaysia. This translation test was modified to suit the needs of this research. Additionally, a Sociolinguistic Profile Questionnaire was administered to collect demographic data and gather information regarding participants' language backgrounds. This modified instrument was adapted from the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire in "Regional Nationalism in Spain: Language Use and Ethnic Identity in Galicia" (Santiago de Compostela 1995, 1996, 2001). The assessment of translation skills was conducted using a rubric featuring Likert Scale categorization, where performance levels were graded as follows: Superior = 4, Advanced = 3, Fair = 2, Poor = 1. This instrument was originally used by Samir, A. & Yazdi, M. (2020) in "Translation Quality Assessment Rubric: A Rasch Model-based Validation," published in the International Journal of Language Testing.

Methodology

In this study, a thorough examination was conducted to explore various aspects of language learning and comprehension among Grade 7 students. Initially, an in-depth investigation was carried out to understand the participants' sociolinguistic backgrounds. This involved analyzing factors such as their socioeconomic status, native language usage, language patterns, and communication styles. This comprehensive review provided valuable insights into the diverse linguistic environments in which these students were immersed during their education.

Furthermore, the study carefully assessed the students' ability to translate text accurately and effectively. Key aspects examined included their grasp of language mechanics and structure, their accuracy in translation, the clarity of their translated texts, and the overall quality of their translations. By thoroughly evaluating these aspects, the study aimed to gain a better understanding of the students' proficiency in translating between languages. Additionally, the study investigated the participants' reading comprehension abilities, providing a holistic view of their language skills and cognitive aptitude. Through this thorough analysis, the study aimed to uncover the intricate relationship between translation proficiency and reading comprehension, thereby enhancing our understanding of language learning processes and educational outcomes among Grade 7 students.

Findings

The findings of this research are summarized subsequently.

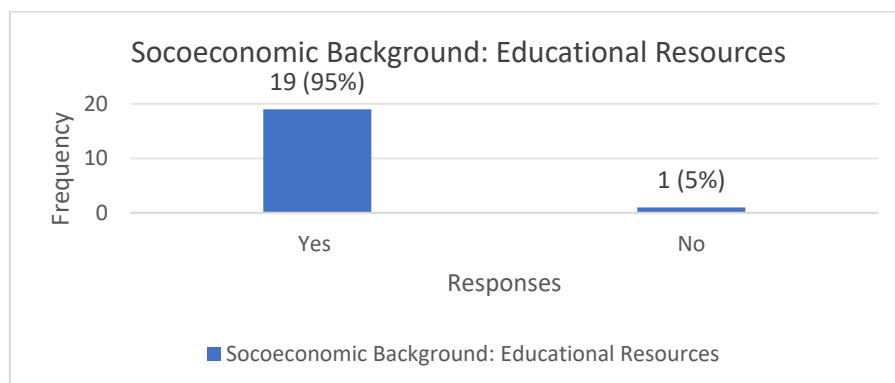


Figure 1. Socioeconomic Background

The data presented in Figure 1 indicates that 95% of the participants reported having educational resources available at home. Conversely, 5% of the participants indicated a lack of educational resources such as books, magazines, and computers in their households. This suggests that even before formal schooling, these learners had already been exposed to reading materials, potentially influencing their existing levels of reading exposure.

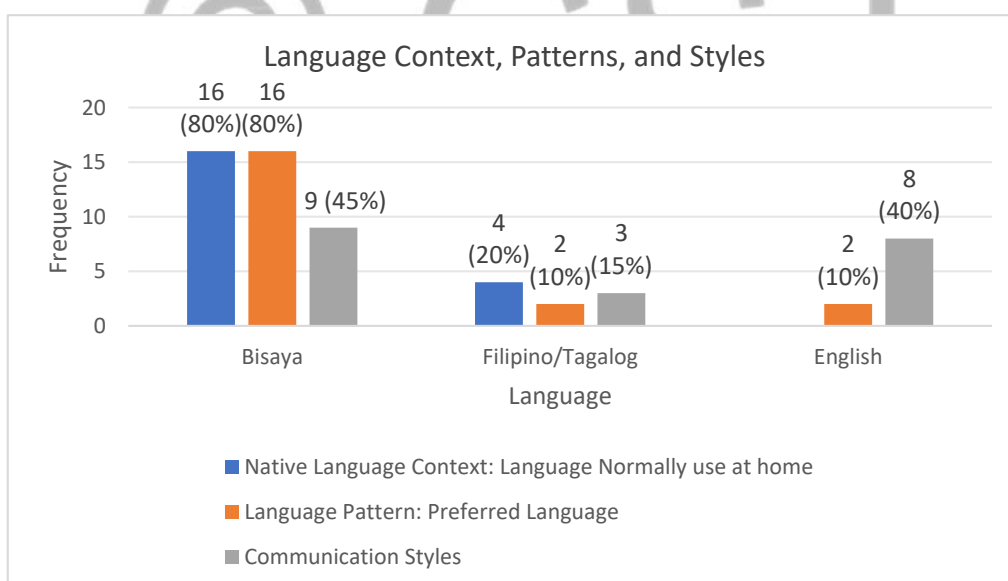


Figure 2. Language Context, Patterns and Styles

Figure 2 displays the responses of the participants regarding their Native Language Context, Language Pattern, and Communication Style. In terms of native language context, it is evident that 80% of the participants reported using Bisaya at home, while 20% indicated using Filipino or Tagalog, with none reporting English as their spoken language at home. Regarding language patterns, 80% of respondents stated using Bisaya, 10% Filipino or Tagalog,

and 10% English. Lastly, concerning communication styles, 45% of participants reported using Bisaya, 15% Filipino or Tagalog, and 40% English.

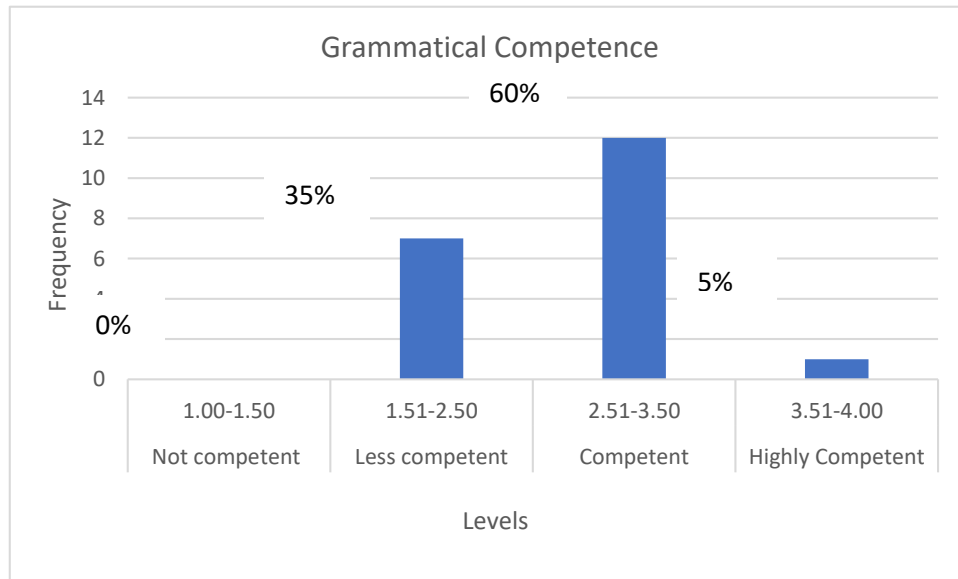


Figure 3. Language Mechanics and Structure

Illustrated in figure 3 are the responses regarding Language Mechanics and Structure, reflecting participants' grammatical competence in translation. Notably, in the translation test, none of the participants fell into the "Not Competent" category. Instead, 35% were classified as "Less Competent," 60% as "Competent," and 5% as "Highly Competent." This distribution underscores varying degrees of proficiency among the participants in terms of grammatical accuracy and structure in translation tasks.

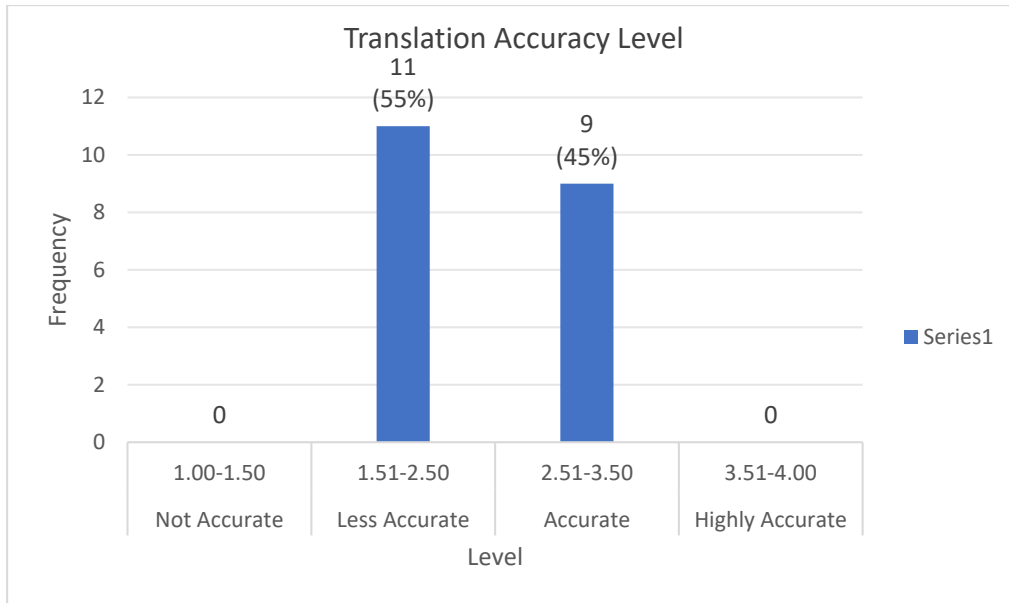


Figure 4. Accuracy

Regarding accuracy, none of the participants were categorized under the "Not Accurate" level. The distribution indicates that 55% were classified as "Less Accurate," 45% as "Accurate," and none as "Highly Accurate." This breakdown suggests varying levels of precision among the participants in their translation accuracy, with the majority falling within the "Less Accurate" or "Accurate" categories.

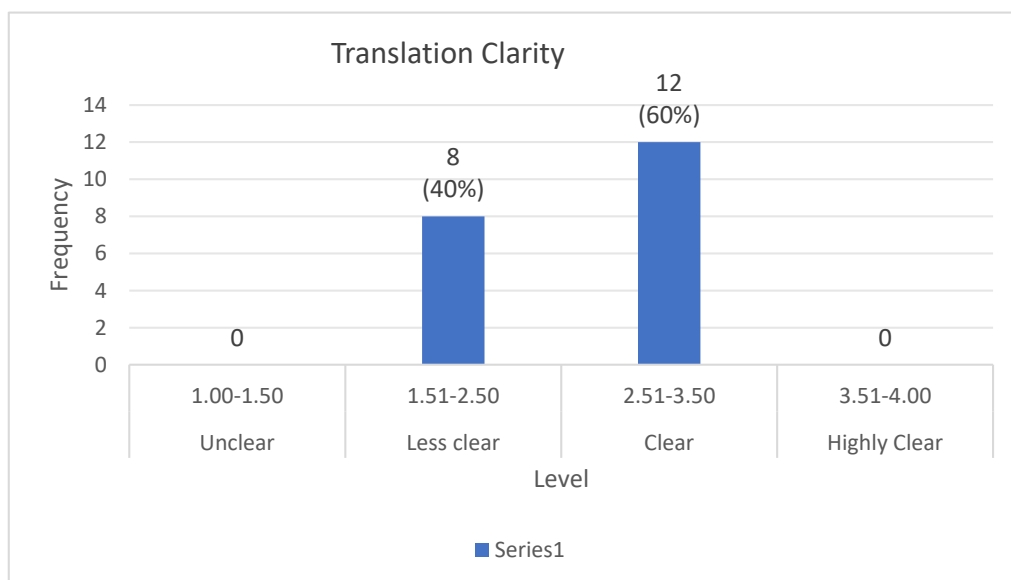


Figure 5. Clarity

In the translation clarity, 0% of the participants fall under the Unclear level. 40% is on the Less Clear, 60% fall under the Clear level, while none is on the Highly Clear level.

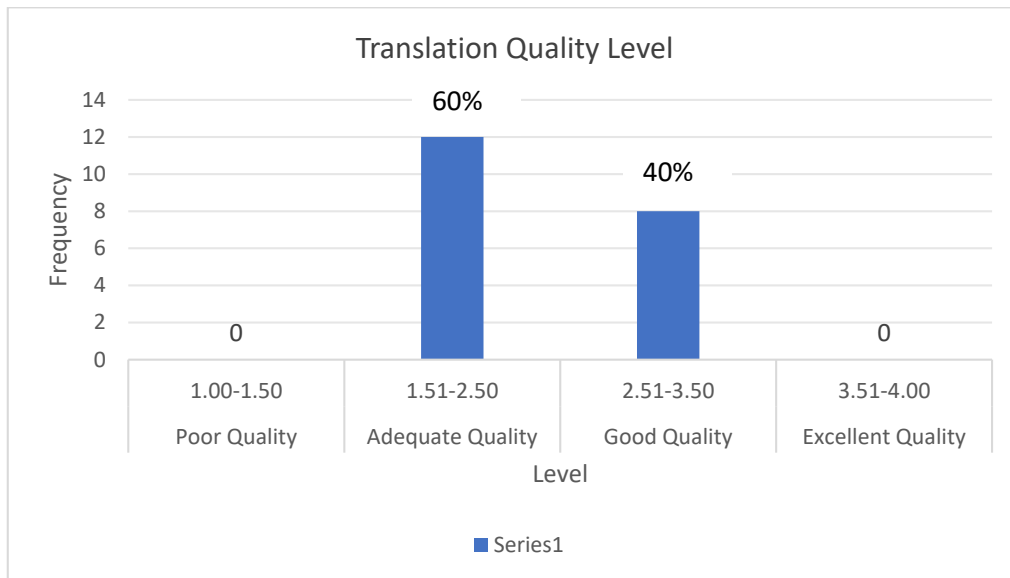


Figure 6. Quality

In the aspect of Quality, none of the participants fall under Poor Quality and Excellent Quality. While 60% and 40% fall under the Adequate Quality and Good Quality, respectively.

Figure 6 presents the overall results on the quality of the translation of the participants.

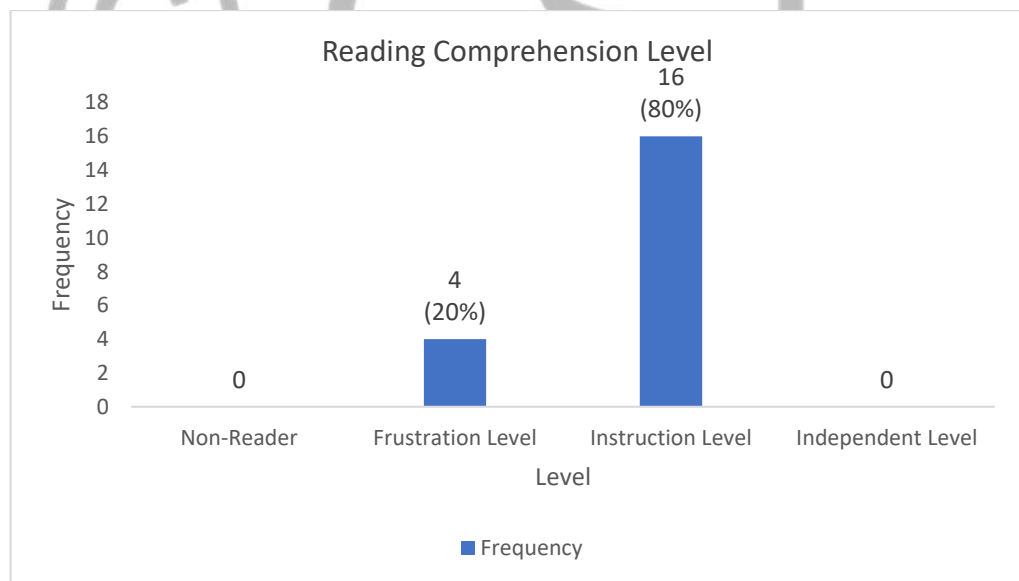


Figure 7. Reading Comprehension Level

Figure 7 depicts the reading comprehension levels of the participants. None of the participants fell under the "Non-Reader" level, while 20% were categorized under the "Frustration" level. The majority, comprising 80% of the participants, were classified under the "Instruction" level, with none falling into the "Independent" level category.

To ascertain whether there exists a significant relationship between the Translation level and Reading Comprehension, the Pearson-correlation statistical treatment was employed, given that the data adheres to a normal distribution. The calculated R value for the data was -0.438, with a corresponding P-value of 0.053386. Consequently, within this cohort of participants, no significant relationship was observed between the translation level and reading comprehension.

Conclusions

This study examined language skills and reading comprehension among Grade 7 students. Most students spoke Bisaya at home and used it in their daily communication. The study found that while many students were competent in translation mechanics and structure, their accuracy varied. Most students were at the "Instruction" level for reading comprehension, which denote that they had a moderate understanding of texts.

The study also looked at whether there was a link between translation skills and reading comprehension. The results showed no significant relationship between the two. This entails that even if students were good at translating, it did not necessarily improve their reading comprehension. These findings highlight the complexity of language learning and suggest that improving one skill does not automatically enhance another. Therefore, educational programs may consider multiple approaches to help students improve both their translation and reading comprehension skills.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be made to improve language skills and reading comprehension among Grade 7 students. Firstly, schools may provide targeted interventions that address both translation skills and reading comprehension separately. Since no significant relationship was found between the two, it is important to develop specific programs focused on enhancing each skill independently. For translation, activities that emphasize accuracy, clarity, and quality could be implemented. For reading comprehension, strategies such as guided reading sessions, interactive reading materials, and exercises that focus on critical sub-skills like identifying main ideas and making inferences could be prioritized.

Additionally, educators may leverage the sociolinguistic backgrounds of students by incorporating their native languages into the learning process. Bilingual education programs that respect and utilize students' native languages can enhance their overall language proficiency and comprehension. Providing a variety of reading materials in both the students' native languages and the language of instruction can also bridge gaps in understanding and make learning more inclusive. Furthermore, regular assessments and feedback can help track progress and adapt teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of students, ensuring that both translation and reading comprehension skills are effectively developed.

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