



Influence of Language Preference on Vocabulary Proficiency and Reading Comprehension of Selected Grade 10 Bilingual Students at MSU Sulu Laboratory High School

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ARTICLE INFO

Published Online:
06 December 2021

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study is to determine the influence of language preference on bilingual student's vocabulary and reading comprehension among selected Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University- Sulu Laboratory High School.

The respondents were taken from Grade 10 classes with a total of ninety (99) student respondents. The data consisted of the scores of vocabulary proficiency test and reading comprehension test administered to the pupils. Furthermore, this study made use of a standardized test for vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension.

This study made use of the descriptive-quantitative research design to determine the influence of language preference on student's vocabulary and reading comprehension among the bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School.

This study yielded the following findings: (1) Majority of the Grade 10 students of Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School prefer to use their vernacular language or lingua franca (L1), Bahasa Sug and English; (2) The level of vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students of Mindanao State University- Sulu Laboratory High School is proficient to advance levels; (3) No significant relationship exists between language preference and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students of Mindanao State University- Sulu Laboratory High School; (4) The level of reading comprehension of bilingual Grade 10 students of Mindanao State University- Sulu Laboratory High School is proficient to advance levels; (5) There is no significant correlation between language preference and reading comprehension of bilingual Grade 10 students of Mindanao State University- Sulu Laboratory High School; and (6) There is no significant relationship between vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension of bilingual Grade VI pupils.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between language preference and vocabulary proficiency and likewise for language preference and reading comprehension of bilingual Grade 10 students. This only draws one conclusion that language preference of bilingual Grade 10 students does not influence the bilingual children's vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension. This finding invites possible evaluations and further studies of the Grade 10 curriculum, empowering English language, and pupil-related factor to determine the outlook of the pupils.

Based on the said findings, the researcher would like to recommend the following: (1) This study would help future researchers which will comprehensively assist the pupils for a more effective and relevant vocabulary and reading enhancement activity to advance their skills; (2) This study would aid future studies that will explore the factors regarding the influence of language preference on children's vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension; and (3) This study would serve as an appraisal of enhancing to advance the skills of the children on vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension.

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KEYWORDS: Language Preference, Reading Comprehension

INTRODUCTION

English is one of the official languages in the Philippines. In education, it is a key for learning in almost all subject areas. Reading is one of the vital skills to be developed among the pupils. The ability to read is significant to learning. If one is poor in reading, it will be arduous to understand the concepts of what is being read, and it can definitely affect the student’s learning process. Moreover, vocabulary is a special tool for an easy understanding. The ability to recognize unfamiliar words is important to reading comprehension. It would not be hard if one has an extensive vocabulary.

Gardner (2013) further emphasizes that vocabulary is acquired by each learner on a word-by-word basis. In other words, the learner must know the definition of the word itself for further understanding. In addition, vocabulary learning does not take place in some kind of mental vacuum; rather, it is a constant interaction between existing knowledge and new knowledge. To assume otherwise is a logical fallacy. It is therefore crucial to understand what learners already know and what they need to know in order to be effective regarding vocabulary learning.

Reading comprehension must be developed in the early stage of education, that is, in the elementary level. Reading makes us well-informed. Reading is a way of gaining access to distinct areas of knowledge. Along with, vocabulary plays an integral part to understanding. To widen one’s vocabulary, one must be exposed in the world of reading. However, bilingualism can be a barrier in dealing with English vocabulary and English reading comprehension since, broadly, bilingualism can be defined as knowledge of two languages.

Stefenakis (2000) define bilingualism as knowledge of “more than one” language. In their framework, bilingualism is said to be a continuum of proficiencies. If Tausug (language preference) and English are the bilingual languages of a bilingual individual, one may discover bilingual children who are good in reading comprehension and have unlimited knowledge on vocabulary, or children who are not good in reading comprehension and have limited knowledge on vocabulary.

In the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School, it is observed that the bilingual Grade 10 students have low level of vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension because they rarely read books. Along with that, they likewise often use their lingua franca as a tool of communication.

It is in this light that this study is conducted to determine if language preference influences the bilingual student’s vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension.

RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

A. Related Literature Language Preference

According to Webley et al. (2006), children build up a strong conceptual picture of the world and academic concepts through a language they understand first, and later on transfer that a second or third language.

Saneka (2014) stated that the loss of the child’s home language, in particular when that is the only language spoken by the parents, may have serious consequences for the child’s development. He found that a majority of children who received English-only instruction at the expense of the home language were likely to experience language loss. The parents of these children reported a breakdown of parental authority and a lack of their children’s respect for them which in many cases had tragic consequences.

Thus, there are many strong reasons supporting bilingual instruction for children with language impairments. In contrast, the English-only approach in language intervention is based on several untenable arguments. For example, it is believed that learning two languages (L1, L2) may take longer, may require more effort than learning only one (L2), and may limit the child’s acquisition of L2. These beliefs are based on the assumption that L1 and L2 are learned as two separate or isolated sets of competencies, which contrasts with the current view that the two languages share common underlying cognitive processes, a single representational system, and the potential for L1/L2 interactions for specific linguistic features. As will be seen later, studies showing evidence of transfer of skills from one language to the other do not support this notion.

On the contrary, an English-only or monolingual approach in intervention would prevent language interference from one language to the other. Many language teachers advise parents who want to raise their children bilingually to “keep their two languages separate” (i.e., one parent, one language) and not to mix the two languages when community with their child in order to prevent language mixing or code switching behaviour (Lemberger, 2013).

Children who appear to be exposed equally to two languages may not exhibit balanced output (Gross, 2014). “Balanced” bilinguals may represent only a small proportion of bilingual children learning two languages as a “first” language.

Pearson and Fernandez (1994) asserted that only 4 children out of a sample of 20 infants and toddlers can demonstrate an equal number of words in each language. Interestingly, these children are not exposed to balanced input.

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Along with, the issue of assessing output in bilingual children is even more complicated. For instance, if the vocabularies of the two languages are assessed separately and each language is compared to available monolingual norms for that language, bilingual children may show a slower rate of growth. This occurs because of the significant individual variability in second language acquisition across children. Thus, the most appropriate way to assess the bilingual competencies of bilingual speakers is to consider their performance in the two languages, rather than in each language in isolation. In effect, children may initially learn certain words in one language and not in the other. Using this procedure, there are no differences in the lexical development of young bilingual and monolingual children.

Historically, the use of L1 has been viewed as a deficit or a disadvantage, not as a strength that can be used to facilitate language learning because bilingualism was blamed for the less successful academic performance of poor immigrant children. The available literature suggests that intervention approaches may be most successful when they are designed to extend, rather than limit, the child's linguistic resources. This claim discussed several assumptions underlying the choice of language in intervention. Understanding the complexities of the processes involved in bilingual learning should help the clinician make clinical decisions that will address the needs of bilingual children and their families.

Reading Comprehension

Reading is said to be one of the most significant and complex cognitive skills, and such importance has resulted into extensive studies over years (Lustig, 2002).

Magnetti et al. (2006) emphasized that “reading comprehension is a complex cognitive ability requiring the capacity to integrate text information with the knowledge of the listener or reader and resulting in the elaboration of a mental representation.” As a component of reading, reading comprehension can be best understood if one is adept with the different cognitive processes as current models suggest that such processes play a significant role in comprehension skills.

Hale et al. (2011) say that reading as one of the greatest areas that assessment is needed as reading skills deficits can interfere with skill development across different academic subject areas, vocational skills and daily living skills.

Reading is defined as a process of interaction involving one's knowledge of print, vocabulary, and comprehension. Its five salient components involve discovery, comprehension, reflection, reasoning, appreciation, analysis, evaluation, synthesis, organization, and application. This would mean that when one is reading, one is thinking about the meaning conveyed and at the same

time integrates his own knowledge to get the meaning of the symbols written by the writer.

There are many factors that could affect reading comprehension. Van den Broek (1994) emphasized two of these factors as he says that short and long term memory is a factor in the reading comprehension skills of an individual as a reader needs to store and manipulate information in his working memory during text procession and at the same time in order to construct a coherent representation of what he has read, the reader would have to refer to his prior knowledge.

Another factor is inference, “inference” which also plays a major role in reading comprehension as understanding of the text read goes beyond literal wherein integrated mental representation of what was read is created and processed (Bowyer-Crane & Snowling, 2005; Yuill & Oakhill, 1991).

Vocabulary

Vocabulary size has been directly linked to reading comprehension (Stahl, 1999). To support the claim, Grabe (1991) demonstrated that vocabulary knowledge is a type of linguistic competence that is known to contribute to text processing and comprehension. It has come to be recognized as a critical feature of reading ability. For instance, one needs to only pick up one newspaper in an unknown language to verify that background knowledge and predicting are severely constrained by the need to know vocabulary and structure.

Among bilingual readers, Jimenez, Garcia, and David Pearson (1995) stated that unknown vocabulary was an obstacle to reading comprehension and that reading expertise and bilingualism visibly affected the reading comprehension of the bilingual students. Arden-Close (1993) demonstrated the kinds of problem in science lectures to non-native speakers that when lecturers talk about language problems, they almost always mean vocabulary problem. In his study, he attempted to see how lecturers viewed the problems of teaching the vocabulary of chemistry, and compared these views with his own, as a participant observer. He identified four major areas of language problem in then science lecturers to non-native speakers: the problem of finding concrete analogies for invisible entities, heightened by the fact of lecturing in a foreign culture, the problem of using “synonyms” in explaining words; and the problem of finding a common range of reference. From the point of view of a language teacher, one is entitled to ask to what extent the kinds of vocabulary teaching that occurred in these lectures enabled the students to “know” the meaning of the words of chemistry. This depends on how we define “know”.

Carter (1987) as cited in Arden-Close (1993) writes,

Increasing a vocabulary involves knowing a word in more than its semantic sense. It involves knowledge of its inflections and derivations as well as its

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pragmatic functions . . . and can also involve increasing complexities in mapping its sociolinguistic and associative properties.

Gardner (2013) further emphasized that vocabulary is acquired by each learner on a word-by-word basis. In other words, the learner must know the definition the word itself for further understanding. In addition, vocabulary learning does not take place in some kind of mental vacuum; rather, it is a constant interaction between existing knowledge and new knowledge. To assume otherwise is a logical fallacy. It is therefore crucial to understand what learners already know and what they need to know in order to be effective regarding vocabulary learning.

Laufer (1992) correlated Israeli university students' vocabulary sizes with their reading comprehension scores, and found that the knowledge of 3,000 word families, which provide about 95% lexical coverage in a text, would result in reading scores of 56%. This is the lexical threshold for comprehending academic texts in English. The study showed that the ratio of known words and unknown words in the reading passages strongly affects the readers' comprehension.

Coady (1997) agreed that this 3,000-word family level is the minimum vocabulary knowledge that an L2 learner should have before reading strategies are effective. Also, in 1992, Hirsh & Nation compared the comprehension score to the proportion of words known in three short novels; the results of their study indicates that L2 learners need to have a vocabulary knowledge of around 5,000 word families, which is typically the 98% threshold of vocabulary coverage in a given text, in order to comprehend un-simplified texts and for pleasure reading.

Nation 2001 suggests that “any number of word families needed to cover certain percentage in a text depends on: 1) Type of text – novel, newspaper, academic text, etc., 2) Length of text, and 3) homogeneity of text; is it on the same topic and by the same writer?” (p. 146).

Also, it is worth mentioning here that reading comprehension of given texts also depends on other variables beside the lexical threshold, like the familiarity of the topic, or prior knowledge of subject matters.

Carell & Eisterhold (1983) claim that some L2 readers' reading problems stem from insufficient background knowledge of the topic of the written texts. But L2 readers need to achieve the linguistic threshold before background knowledge can affect L2 reading comprehension (Ridgway, 1997).

B. Related Studies **Language Preference**

Sarroub (2015) stressed that “when students' language, culture and experience are ignored or excluded in classroom interactions, students are immediately starting from a disadvantage.”

Nilsson (2013) based on the findings of his study posited that mother tongue aids can promote more authentic, message-oriented communication. The non-use of the mother tongue, seriously constrains what can be said and read. Mother tongue aids will save pupils from a feeling of frustration which will eventually lead them to avoid all topics of personal interest.

In addition, Cummins (2001) found out that “Children who come to school with a solid foundation in their mother tongue develop stronger literacy abilities in the school language.” Children learn easily the language if they have a good foundation in their language preference. Along with, the mother tongue serves as the way to learning more new knowledge (3-4).

Emilio (2001) asserted that in Bolivia, seeing the mother tongue in print in the official context of schooling elevates its status and usefulness in the eyes of both speakers and non-speakers. In addition, the mother tongue brings cultural values into the classroom, which parents highly appreciate.

In the Philippines, there are two official languages used as a medium of communication, and these are Filipino and English. These two languages are mandated in our 1987 Philippine Constitution under Article XIV, section 6 and 7. The said law was further fortified with the promulgation of the 1987 Bilingual Education Policy which has the goals of enhancing the learning of children through two languages to attain quality education as called for by the 1987 Constitution.

While bilingual system had very admirable objectives, it also had a great cost to such extent as global competitiveness is concerned. Bilingualism had a negative impact on the acquisition skills of the students regarding comprehension specifically in English because understanding the context of the texts' meaning is constrained by the mediacy or integration of the bilingual system based on the study of Malbago (1996).

One of the most logical reasons for the use of a bilingual approach in intervention is that children benefit from input that is comprehensible according to Ipek (2009). Children learn a first or a second language by understanding messages that are comprehensible. If a second language is not understood, input in that language would not allow the learner to attend to specific linguistic features. Further, a bilingual approach in intervention can facilitate both L1 and L2 development (rather than skills in only one language) because

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the processes of learning a first and second language are interrelated or interdependent (Rolstad, 2014).

Mehdi (2008) claimed based on the findings of his study that there is a growing body of research with bilinguals showing that words in L1 and L2 are interconnected via lexical-level links and conceptual links. Current language processing models emphasize patterns of generalization from L1 to L2 and transfer of aspects of language whenever the languages share target features. Based on these ideas, children who acquire a certain level of proficiency in L1 should achieve comparable levels of proficiency in L2. Correlations between L1 and L2 conversational skills or between L1 and L2 academic language would suggest the operation of unitary underlying learning processes applied to both languages. Children who attain high levels of first language competence will be able to show comparable achievements in their acquisition of L2.

Reading Comprehension

Hourton (2014) postulated that one of the goals of the teacher for the pupils is to develop a love for reading. Reading is an essential activity because it can sharpen the minds of individuals to intellectually gain information, acquire useful knowledge, achieve more enjoyable life, and appreciate the world.

Furthermore, Tubongbanua (2000) in her study found out that that, “There is no substitute to reading if one is to sharpen the comprehension skills of the reader that a picture cannot do.” Reading is the principal means by which information and knowledge are acquired. Indeed, reading has permanent uses for any person—one who has left school, a person who is pursuing his education or a man who is growing in his profession.

Hilton (2014) claimed that pupils may read the texts fluently without really understanding the paragraph. In addition, reading is a procedure involving a weighing of each of the many elements in a sentence, their organization in proper correlation to another, the selection of certain connotations and the rejection of others and the cooperation of many forces to determine final responses.

In addition, reading comprehension is considered the real core regarding the reading process, and it is a process around which all other processes are concerned. It is also emphasized that, “He who does not comprehend what he reads is considered as if he has not read.” Comprehension is said to be the basis for all reading processes according to the study conducted by Al-Khateeb (2010, p. 5).

On the contrary, Steven (2001) argued that readers must interact with the text in meaning way. It is, moreover, the bridge from passive reading to active reading, from letters and words to character and context. Reading is a firm factor

in our educational and professional lives. Reading unlocks the door to a lifetime reading recreation and enjoyment.

Mechanical reading without understanding the meaning is indeed dull and dreary. In this connection, teachers must exert effort to help the child deal with comprehending the texts. If reading serves any purpose, the child must learn how to interpret well what he reads. The interpretations can be the core of reading of mainly developing reading readiness. Thus, the child must be exposed to reading to greatly widen with regards to the interpretation process out of what he has read (Durrel, 2001).

Tubongbanua (2000) showed that level of comprehension and reading vocabulary is highly correlated with academic achievement. To understand one’s text, he must have unlimited knowledge on English vocabulary. In this way, the said relationship must be significantly and positively correlated.

Meaningful and purposeful reading is a major factor to children’s comprehension skills. The true success of the academic performance of the pupils is generally dependent on the level of comprehension by means of understanding the texts. Reading, therefore, bears special comprehension.

Tizon (2013) in her study entitled “Reading Comprehension Ability of Grade V Pupils of Kinganay Sur Elementary School” divulged that reading is the mother of all study skills. It is one of the most valuable skills a person can acquire. Reading is a complex process. Thus, it cannot be taught in isolation. In addition, reading is not merely an ability to recognize written or printed words, but it also refers to putting definition to what you read and drawing a unified thought of what is read. In addition, she says that reading as a field of teaching is considered one important area of teaching if not actually the most important ever.

Cayubit (2012) in his study about the “Vocabulary and Reading Comprehension as a Measure of Reading Skills of Filipino Children,” suggested that “a Filipino child needs to develop higher order skills and functional literacy. It is given that any Filipino child with sufficient reading skills would have greater chances of success in school compared to a child whose reading skills are poor and more often than not, those with poor reading skills when assessed properly are diagnosed with reading disability. Poor reading skill is manifested with poor reading comprehension, wrong pronunciations, among others. If no proper intervention is administered early, it could affect the academic, social and psychological development of the child.” In this statement, he emphasizes the importance of reading comprehension and the reading process itself and how it contributes to the total success of the learner in his/her academic performance.

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Vocabulary

Heilman, Blair & Rupley (2002) concluded that vocabulary is partly a product of a reader's comprehension skills; on the other hand, reading comprehension is partly a product of a reader's vocabulary knowledge. The more the student's vocabulary grows, the easier they comprehend the meaning of the text.

Moreover, O'Malley & Chamot (1990) in Fan (2003) stated that the importance of vocabulary knowledge in second language (L2) learning is supported by the schema-based approach to language learning. The learning theory based on information processing and the role of cognitive processes suggests that “the information from long-term memory can be used to enrich the learners' understanding or retention of the new ideas by providing related information or schemata into which the new idea can be organized.

Alternatively, explicit vocabulary instruction is found to be more effective in vocabulary acquisition than incidental learning since it can result in greater and faster gains and better retention. The teacher must be able to introduce one unusual word to children because it can effectively bear the word on their minds. Also, it can help children recall easily the unfamiliar words (Schmitt, 2008). Moreover, intentional vocabulary instruction is proven especially beneficial for older and more advanced learners. With the intention of the teacher to impart English vocabulary to the children, it is said to be effective because the teacher's purpose can influence the children's purpose and help children realize that vocabulary must be stored in memory (Morillas, 2012).

Vocabulary growth is shown to be higher when reading is supported by vocabulary-focused activities. The activities can shape children's vocabulary because the mental aspect is not the only one who plays a salient role on the children's part, but the physical aspect plays too (Laufer, 2003).

In first language reading, researchers have estimated recognition vocabularies of fluent readers to range from 1,000 words to 10, 000 words. Vocabulary discussions in L2 reading argue for far lower total number of words often possibly 2,000 to 7,000 words (Nation, 1990). The need to read fluently, in a manner similar to a good L1 reader, would require a knowledge vocabulary more in line with the larger estimates for first language readers. The consequence of these arguments is that fluent readers need a sound knowledge of language structure and a large recognition of vocabulary.

Teachers have always known that a very important part of learning a subject is learning its vocabulary. In research into L2 classrooms, the study of vocabulary has been comparatively neglected. Whatever the reasons may be, the absence of studies of vocabulary in L2 classrooms is

surprising, given the extent to which vocabulary looms as the problem in the minds of those using and decoding foreign talk.

In summary, the foregoing review of literature supports the main points being discussed in this study. From several aspects where bilingualism, vocabulary, and reading comprehension, could come into play, the review is therefore focused on bilingual children, more importantly, the effect of the bilingualism on their vocabulary and reading comprehension. However, in the content area of bilingualism, ideas and concepts in bilingualism are often explained by its effect regarding the L2 acquisition.

Research Questions

This study sought to determine the influence of language preference on bilingual student's vocabulary and reading comprehension among selected Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University- Sulu Laboratory High School.

Specifically, the study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the language preference of the Bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School?
2. What is the vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School
3. Is there a significant relationship between language preference and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School?
4. What is the level of reading comprehension of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School?
5. Is there a significant relationship between language preference and reading comprehension of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School?
6. Is there a significant relationship between reading comprehension and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual among Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School?

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the discussion on the research design, population sampling, research instrument, the data gathering procedure, data analysis procedure and research locale.

This study made use of the descriptive-quantitative research design to determine the influence of language preference on student's vocabulary and reading

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comprehension among the bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School.

This study had undergone the following stages: Conceptualization of the problem and Formulation of Hypothesis, Identification of standardized survey-checklist Questionnaire and its validation, Administration of Survey-Checklist Questionnaire and Analyzing and Interpreting the Data. Figure 1 illustrates the work flowchart of the study.

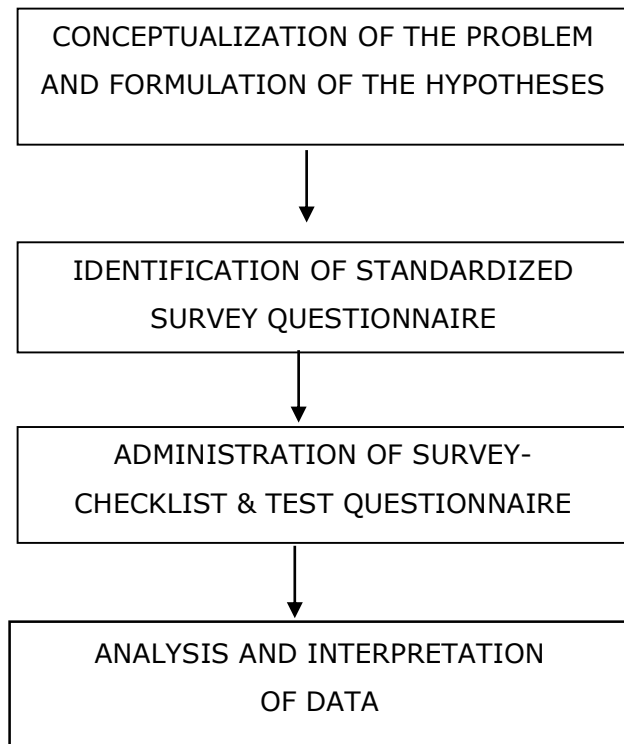


Figure 1. A Work Flowchart for the Study

This study was conducted at the campus of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School. The respondents of this study were the bilingual Grade 10 students. The researcher would like to determine if language preference influences their vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension.

The target population of this study were the bilingual Grade 10 students officially enrolled in the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School for School Year 2017-2018.

Ninety-nine (99) Grade 10 students participated in this study and Slovin’s formula was utilized

The study made use of a standardized test from the National Assessment Test (NAT) booklet in English subject utilized by the Department of Education (DepEd).

Both the reading comprehension and the vocabulary test were be validated since these are standardized questionnaire used by the Department of Education (DepEd).

The respondents answered the set of questions for the reading comprehension and vocabulary test. Then, the answers of the respondents were checked by an independent rater/evaluator with the use of the answer key.

The result of the tests was computed using SPSS based on the scale below, specifically in the interpretation of the means of the respondents’ vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension.

Table 1. Scale and Interpretation on the Mean of Vocabulary Proficiency

Score	Interpretation
21-25	Advance
16-20	Proficient
11-15	Approaching Proficiency
6-10	Developing
1-5	Beginning

Table 2. Scale and Interpretation on the Mean of Reading Comprehension

Score	Interpretation
17-20	Advance
13-16	Proficient
9-12	Approaching Proficiency
5-8	Developing
1-4	Beginning

Table 3. Scale and Interpretation on the Mean of average grade in English

Score	Interpretation
90% and above	Outstanding
85% –89%	Very Satisfactory
80% –84%	Satisfactory
75% –79%	Basic
74% and below	Below Basic

To give meaning to the data gathered and tabulated the following statistical tools were employed.

Frequency count and percentages. These were used to determine the degree of agreement among the respondents in the different statements provided in the questionnaire checklist.

Weighted Mean. This was utilized to determine the level of reading comprehension of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School.

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Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. This was used to determine the relationship of language preference to vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the data gathered through DepEd standardized vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension tests. The data were tabulated and interpreted with the use of frequency count, percentages, and Pearson r.

This study was conducted at Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School. There were 99 Grade 10 students who participated in this study. They were chosen through random sampling using Slovin’s formula. This study sought to hypothesize that: (1) There is no significant relationship between language preference and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School; (2) There is no significant relationship between language preference and reading comprehension of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School; and (3) There is no significant relationship between reading comprehension and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School.

Problem 1: What is the language preference of the Bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School?

Table 4 shows the language preference of the Bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University- Sulu Laboratory High School Department.

Table 4. Language Preference of the Bilingual Grade 10 Students

Language	f	%
Bahasa Sug-English	73	73.7
Bahasa Sug-Tagalog	7	7.1
Tagalog-English	6	6.1
English-Arabic	7	7.1
Bahasa Sug-English-Arabic	5	5.1
Bahasa Sug-Samal-English	1	1.0
Total	99	100.0

Seventy-three out of the 99 respondents prefer to speak Bahasa Sug and English, 7 or 7.1 % of them prefer

Bahasa Sug and Tagalog and English and Arabic respectively. This is followed by 6 or 6.1 % who prefer to use Tagalog and English, while 5 or 5.1 % of them prefer to use Bahasa Sug, English, and Arabic and only 1 or 1 % prefer to use Bahasa Sug with Samal and English.

The language of preference of the Bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University- Sulu Laboratory High School Department has a link with the cultural background of the respondents. The Tausugs prefer to use their Lingua Franca “Bahasa Sug” even with the introduction of other languages which they use at home.

What is interesting in the data is that majority of them still use their mother tongue which is Bahasa Sug as their first language which is also the native tongue of their parents.

Research has established that language preference for bilingual children varies across environments. In a study of Mexican-American middle school students, Marsiglia and Waller (2002) found that although bilingual students’ language preferences differed across environments (e.g., home, friends, and media), they spoke Spanish most at home. Similarly, Filipino- and English-speaking bilingual elementary students in the Philippines preferred English for media, school-related communication, and religion but preferred Filipino for communication with friends and family (Ledesma & Morris, 2005).

Problem 2: What is the vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School?

Table 5 presents the vocabulary proficiency of the bilingual Grade 10 students.

There were 25 items under vocabulary proficiency test in English where the instructions as to write the letter of the answers on the blank.

The rating bracket shows the number of correct answers the Grade 10 students obtained in the vocabulary proficiency test.

It could be gleaned from the table above that majority (37 or 37.4 %) of the pupils respondents belonged to proficient level, 33 or 33.3 % of them are in the advance proficiency while 29 or 29.3% have the approaching proficient level.

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Table 5. Vocabulary Proficiency of Bilingual Grade 10 students

Rating Bracket	No. of Respondents		Adjectival Ratings
	f	%	
	Evaluative		
21-25	33	33.3	Advance
16-20	37	37.4	Proficient
11-15	29	29.3	Approaching Proficiency
6-10	0	0	Developing
1-5	0	0	Beginning
Total	99	100.0	

This means that since majority of them prefer to speak in their 1st language or L1, this could be one of the many factors that influence the vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 pupils. However, since they not only speak their L1 but also other languages such as Tagalog, English, Arabic, Samal among other has made the influence positive on the vocabulary proficiency of the students.

Initially, the child’s linguistic background is the fountainhead of his cognitive ability. Usually, as the child magnifies his years in his academic phases, the pedagogical transition of learning toward the second language comes in. The mother tongue based education usually takes place in the language or dialect by which the learners earned from their parents and at home. Hence, the learners enter into the cocoon of bilingualism or multilingualism.

Bilingualism or multilingualism as part of the child’s education comes as the core of some pedagogical issues. In a more profound perspective, MTBE pertains to the bilingual education across multiple language societies—each community using its own vernacular aside from the prescribed language of instruction in the learning institutions.

Linguists and language researchers have the emergent awareness that mother tongue (MT) education is

more effective than bilingual or second language medium of instruction (Heugh, 2002; Rademeyer, 2005). Hence, as one of the reforms of the new curriculum of the Philippines, the vernaculars of the different regions of the country take the important role specifically in the educational system of the elementary level. To brace this role, the Department of Education (DepEd) has implemented the use of mother tongue as a channel of instruction (DepEd order No. 74, series of 2009).

Problem 3: Is there a significant relationship between language preference and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School?

Table 6 presents the relationship between language Preference and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students.

Table 6 shows relationship between Language Preference and Vocabulary Proficiency of Bilingual Grade 10 students. A Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to assess the relationship between language preference and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students. The Pearson’s r for the correlation between language preference and vocabulary proficiency is -.088.

Table 6. Relationship between Language Preference and Vocabulary Proficiency of Bilingual Grade 10 Students

		Language Preference	Vocabulary Proficiency
Language Preference	Pearson Correlation	1	-.088
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.388
	N	99	99
Vocabulary Proficiency	Pearson Correlation	-.088	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.388	
	N	99	99

There is no correlation between the two variables ($r=-0.088$, $n=99$, $p=.388$). This implies that there is no statistically significant correlation between language preference and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students since the sig (2-tailed) is 0.388 and greater that alpha set at 0.05.

That means, increases or decreases in one variable do not significantly relate to increases or decreases in the second variable.

As a result of these findings, the hypothesis statement that “There is no significant relationship between language preference and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual

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Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School,” is therefore accepted.

Umbel et al. (1992) examined the relationship between receptive vocabulary and language preference in first grade students. They found no differences in Spanish receptive vocabulary between students categorized as speaking only Spanish at home, and those categorized as speaking both English and Spanish at home. However, students speaking both Spanish and English at home performed more than one standard deviation higher on a measure of English receptive vocabulary than the students speaking only Spanish at home.

This suggests that bilingual students’ home language preference has little impact on Spanish receptive vocabulary, but home language use of English and Spanish is positively associated with English receptive vocabulary. Because students were only classified as Spanish-only or Spanish- and English-speaking in the context of the home setting, the researchers only examined a small portion of

language use for bilingual students. As a result, the relationship between language preference outside of the home with both receptive and expressive vocabulary still remains unclear.

Problem 4: What is the level of reading comprehension of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School?

Table 7 presents the reading comprehension test of the bilingual Grade 10 students.

There were 20 items under the reading comprehension test in English where the instructions as to write the letter of the answer on the blank.

A look at table 7 shows that in terms of reading comprehension test of bilingual Grade 10 students, 37 each out of the 99 students obtained “proficient” and “advance” level respectively while 25 or 25.3% of them are in the “approaching proficiency” phase.

Table 7. Reading Comprehension Test of bilingual Grade 10 Students

Comprehension Rating Bracket	No. of Respondents		Adjectival Ratings
	Evaluative		
	f	%	
17-20	37	37.4	Advance
13-16	37	37.4	Proficient
9-12	25	25.3	Approaching Proficiency
5-8	0	0	Developing
1-4	0	0	Beginning
Total	99	100.0	

The result shows that indeed majority of the 99 Grade 10 bilingual students have above average reading comprehension skills.

Looking at the language preferences of the 99 Grade 10 students, one will know that indeed language is a great tool not only in speaking and writing but as well as in understanding what you are reading.

Reading comprehension is a dynamic and interactive process. To comprehend a written text, readers need to be familiar with each word, to know the meaning of each word and to get the whole meaning of the text by discovering the meaning of all sentences separately and in relation to each other. While children try to “learn how to read” in the early years of school, they start “to read to learn” in the fourth grade. In order to learn through reading, reading comprehension skill must develop.

Reading comprehension skill is a key factor that affects the academic success of students significantly. It can be regarded as a cognitive input behavior for all courses. It is unlikely to expect a student who is unable to comprehend what he/she reads to be successful in other school subjects as well as the Turkish language course. It can be said that reading comprehension skill may be affected by several factors such as correct reading, fluent reading, word repertoire, and motivation. One of these factors may be bilingualism, as well.

In a study carried out by Proctor et al. (2005), the results showed that the success of reading comprehension of Spanish-speaking students is related to English word repertoire, word-level reading skills, and listening comprehension skill. In another study performed by O’Donnell et al. (2003) as cited by Bayat (2016) the results demonstrated that immigrant students improved their skills of

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correct reading and reading comprehension after practice of pre-reading and discussion on keywords. Therefore, it can be said that children who are educated through a second language need different teaching methods and techniques and more support when compared to their monolingual peers.

Problem 5: Is there a significant relationship between language preference and reading comprehension of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School?

Table 8 presents the relationship between language preference and reading comprehension of bilingual grade 10 students.

The table shows the relationship between language preference and reading comprehension of bilingual Grade 10 students. Since the sig value is .260 which is greater than alpha set at 0.05; then there is no significant correlation between language preference and reading comprehension of Bilingual Grade 10 students.

Table 8. Relationship between Language Preference and Reading Comprehension of Bilingual Grade 10 Students

		Language Preference	Reading Comprehension
Language Preference	Pearson Correlation	1	.114
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.260
	N	99	99
Reading Comprehension	Pearson Correlation	.114	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.260	
	N	99	99

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

There is no correlation between language preference and reading comprehension, $r = .114$, $n = 99$, $p = .260$ since p value is greater than alpha set at 0.05.

As a result of these findings, the hypothesis statement that “There is no significant relationship between language preference and reading comprehension of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School,” is therefore accepted.

Not only do bilingual students vary in language preference across context, they also vary in development of reading skills in each language (Brenneman et al., 2007; Gorostiaga & Balluerka, 2002; Ledesma & Morris, 2005). According to the psycholinguistic grain size theory, phonological awareness is a central component to reading development across languages (Ziegler & Goswami, 2005). However, languages vary in the consistency of phonology, the mapping of symbols and sounds, and orthography, the representation of symbols. Spanish, for example, is orthographically and phonologically consistent, whereas English is orthographically and phonologically inconsistent. These orthographic and phonologic differences influence the reading strategies that children develop. Because of the consistency of grapheme-phoneme relationships in Spanish, children learning to read Spanish can rely on this system.

Yet, because of the irregularity of grapheme-phoneme relationships in English, children cannot rely primarily on this strategy and must develop other strategies for reading. Not only does the consistency of orthography and phonology in a language influence the reading strategies children develop, but for bilingual children there are also

important relationships between each of the languages they speak.

Ledesma and Morris (2005) established that bilingual students’ decreased use of one language promoted increased reading comprehension of the other language. More specifically, English language preference in both family and media/school situations was related to better English reading comprehension. In general, language preference predicted levels of English reading comprehension, whereas phonological awareness and rapid naming skills predicted reading decoding skills in both languages (Ledesma & Morris, 2005).

Similarly, Gorostiaga and Balluerka (2002) found that social and long-term language use of either Euskera or Castilian predicted reading comprehension in that language for high school and college students.

Problem 6: Is there a significant relationship between reading comprehension and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual among Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School?

Table 9 presents the relationship between reading comprehension and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students.

The table shows that there is no relationship reading comprehension and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students. The Pearson correlation coefficient (.008) indicating no correlation between reading comprehension and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students, $r =$

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.008, $n = 99$, $p = .934$ since p value is greater than alpha set at 0.05.

Table 9. Relationship between Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary Proficiency of Bilingual Grade 10 Students

		Reading Comprehension	Vocabulary Proficiency
Reading Comprehension	Pearson Correlation	1	.008
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.934
	N	99	99
Vocabulary Proficiency	Pearson Correlation	.008	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.934	
	N	99	99

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

As a result of these findings, the hypothesis statement that “There is no significant relationship between reading comprehension and vocabulary proficiency of bilingual Grade 10 students of the Mindanao State University-Sulu Laboratory High School,” is therefore rejected.

Reading components are text-based (vocabulary, syntax, rhetorical structure and cultural content) and reader-based (prior knowledge, cognitive development, interest and purpose in reading, and reading strategies) (Barnett, 1989).

Researchers have suggested that among the text-based components, vocabulary is the most important factor in reading comprehension (Laufer, 1989; Laufer & Sim, 1985; Nation, 1990).

Some researchers advocate that vocabulary is the most crucial factor in reading comprehension. Cooper (1984) described vocabulary as being the key ingredient to successful reading while other researchers argue that “no text comprehension is possible, either in one’s native language or in a foreign language, without understanding the text’s vocabulary” (Laufer 1997, p. 20). They maintain that when the percentage of unknown vocabulary in a given text increases, the possibility of comprehending the text decreases (Hirsh & Nation, 1992; Hu & Nation, 2000; Laufer, 1997).

According to her research, Laufer (1989) was more specific when she revealed the importance of having sufficient vocabulary for reading comprehension, claiming that a reader whose vocabulary is insufficient to cover at least 95% of the words in a passage will not be guaranteed comprehension. Readers themselves consider vocabulary knowledge to be the main obstacle to second language reading comprehension. Yorio (2001) surveyed second

language students, who reported that vocabulary was their main problem in reading comprehension.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the said findings, the researcher would like to recommend the following:

1. This study would help future researchers which will comprehensively assist the pupils for a more effective and relevant vocabulary and reading enhancement activity to advance their skills.
2. This study would aid future studies that will explore the factors regarding the influence of language preference on children’s vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension.
3. This study would serve as an appraisal of enhancing to advance the skills of the children on vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between language preference and vocabulary proficiency and likewise for language preference and reading comprehension of bilingual Grade 10 students.

This only draws one conclusion that language preference of bilingual Grade 10 students does not influence the bilingual children’s vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension.

This finding invites possible evaluations and further studies of the Grade 10 curriculum, empowering English language, and pupil-related factor to determine the outlook of the pupils.

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