

Millennials' Reading Predicaments: How Are They Treated?

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Received: April 28, 2019

Accepted: June 12, 2019

Available online: June 24, 2019

doi:10.11114/ijsss.v7i4.4236

URL: <https://doi.org/10.11114/ijsss.v7i4.4236>

Abstract

The deteriorating performance of Filipino students in the national and international English proficiency tests for the last decades has become a major challenge to Philippine education. One major cause attributed to this problem was the students' poor reading comprehension that even at tertiary level they cannot read effectively and understand fully the reading materials assigned to them. Millennials being depicted as interested in games and social networking apps more than reading, as entirely digitally focused call much attention to educators and policy makers to explore on such issues and upgrade reading as the groundwork for all study skills and avenue for good study habits.

A total of 699 freshman students who belonged to general education courses were randomly taken as sample. A qualitative-quantitative research design was utilized in the study that involved reading comprehension test, survey questionnaire on the reading problems and difficulties met by students and teachers and crosschecking interviews with school administrators and program heads regarding the other factors in reading comprehension.

The great majority of the respondents' reading comprehension was found at the instructional level in literal taxonomy while the others' were categorically described at frustration level in interpretive and applied taxonomies. They were considered limited users according to the IELTS Band Score. Drawn upon interviews with college reading teachers and a combination of individual and focused-group discussion, this study shed light on the significant influence of reading instruction, classroom-based interventions and students' participation in reading instruction.

Keywords: reading comprehension, millennial college readers, reading instruction, reading levels

1. Introduction

Reading is the area in literacy in which the greatest gains are made while comprehension is the ultimate outcome of having read. It is the foundation of all study skills and a solid course to all forms of knowledge. Reading has always been viewed as critical to academic success. According to Wallace (1992), the ability to read and write is a medium for social interaction, a tool for survival, and a means to access general knowledge of the world. This is why most learning in secondary and tertiary education emphasizes skills on comprehension of the written word, analysis on academic texts and mastery of communicative skills. Even outside of the educational arena, skills on comprehension and communication are important and powerful tools that allow individuals to participate effectively in society. Without these skills, individuals are unable to grasp the complexities of current affairs in the newspaper and other printed texts or make sense of the barrage of information in the cyberspace. Reading comprehension is one of the most critical academic skills to be acquired in school; therefore, the quality of instruction provided by teachers is of utmost importance. Ono (2004) as cited by Tizon (2011) emphasized that effective reading instruction has the potential to help English language learners become better readers and make improvements in other aspects of their English skills.

Millennials, or Generation Y, are those people who are born between the early 1980s to the early 2000s. At the moment, Millennials are either in high school, college, graduate school or are in the workforce. These Millennials are facing big challenges both in school and in life. Today's type of students are inundated with overwhelming distractions, which prevent them from deep study, creativity, targeted reading, and thinking. These distractions are impacting their school performance, attitude towards learning, and increasing the number of graduates who are not prepared for the real world. Millennial students are faced with many more distractions than the previous generations had been faced with. Transitioning from high school learning to college or university learning is a major jump adjustment not only in their environment but also in their academic undertaking. Having been perceived as entirely digitally focused, the Millennials

rely on the Internet to get information fast, do not write letters, but emails instead and do not take notes but use cellphones to capture lectures instead. The evidence is that they are reading far less. A National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) survey, titled "Reading at Risk," reported an overall decline of 10 percent in literary reading since 2002. Millennials are not reading literature as much, and this has already caused a decline in English proficiency.

One of the major problems met by college instructors can be stated simply: Many students cannot read effectively and understand fully the materials assigned to them. As a result, they get little from their courses. The fault frequently lies with some of their teachers who fail to recognize the problems, who may use the same old teaching tools and methodologies, lecture notes and outdated syllabi adapting them in no way to different classes and to the variations in abilities within each class. The endemic reading predicament can be said to have been grounded on the foundational stages of literacy. An article by Luz (2007), *A Nation of Nonreaders*, stated that the problem of non-reading lies at the heart of why the Philippines is so uncompetitive in the world economy and why so many students do not make progress in their academic undertaking. The Department of Education 2012, 2013 and 2014 National Achievement Test results singled out the low reading competence as a primary factor for such dismaying results. The problem on reading comprehension also posed a global issue as the United States Educational Assessment Report (2015) showed that the average U.S. college freshman reads at a seventh grade level. Moreover, the International Adult Literacy Survey Institute (2011) found that about 23% of young adults in the United States read prose at the lowest level scored, indicating difficulty with comprehending even the most basic textual information. These problems are therefore extremely valuable issues and are worthy topics of research (Goff, 2011).

A summary of scientifically-based findings was found in *Adult Education Literacy Instruction: A Review of the Research* (Kruidenier, MacArthur, & Wrigley, 2010). It was a follow-up to *Research-Based Principles for Adult Basic Education Reading Instruction* (Kruidenier, 2005). *Applying Research in Reading Instruction for Adults: First Steps for Teachers* (McShane, 2005) presented the consensus among experts about the implications of their research for instruction that gave a major stress on comprehension as one major factor in successful reading. Teachers can target instruction to meet students' needs (Kruidenier, 2002) and select appropriate materials at learners' instructional levels through valid assessment results. Systematic, sequenced, direct, and explicit instruction has been viewed to be engaging and relevant to learners' needs.

It is of great importance to find out the current problems rooted on low proficiency in reading in order to improve and strengthen students' reading comprehension skills as a core component of their greater learning. Academic success can be assured if students are equipped with reading comprehension skills forged with defined reading programs and other classroom-based interventions as they grapple with the rigors of coping with reading assignments and academic challenges of their courses. It is on this ground that the idea of this research evolved.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

The study utilized quantitative-qualitative method of research. This method involves observation and interpretation of conditions that really exist, the factors and other phenomenal occurrences that attribute to such existence. It likewise attempts to discover "what", "why", "when" and "how" something occurs. (Saunders et al, 2000).

Lester (1999) explained the purpose of phenomenological approach in qualitative research which is to illuminate a given phenomenon and how it is perceived by the people who are involved in the situation. For this study, it was carried over through the conduct of reading comprehension test, focus group discussion, crosschecking interviews and data verification from students, college instructors and school administrators on reading instruction and students' reading problems and needs. This method gave the author of this study a leeway for an exhaustive exploration of the problems and difficulties met by college instructors with the millennial students and comprehensive analysis of their reading comprehension levels.

2.2 Research Setting

This study took place in government-operated Higher Education Institution (HEI) colleges and universities in Nueva Ecija, Philippines. These schools are under the supervision of the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), the government's agency in-charge to oversee the operations of all the state universities and colleges in the country. The study involved five colleges and four universities in the province of Nueva Ecija. Selection of those schools was based on the number of students enrolled in their programs and their national and regional school standing and performance.

2.3 Research Participants and Instruments

The data for this study were reliably gathered from the students and college teachers. The participants of the study were the 699 freshman students from selected colleges and universities. These were the students enrolled in general education courses: 281 out of 452 students from the five selected colleges were taken as respondents, while 418 out of 1,614

students comprised the respondents from the four selected universities. The total sample students were determined using the Raosoft Sample Size Calculator software. A total of 53 teachers from all the participating schools were involved in the interview. Their responses to the standard questions contributed to the findings and analysis of the study.

Data for this study were gathered using the standardized IELTS General Reading Test and Interview Guide for Teachers and Students. To elicit qualitative information on the major issues of reading instruction and reading program as well as to gather in-depth information on teachers' views of reading, common problems of students in reading, several interview sessions and focused-group discussions were conducted.

The author has complied and strictly observed the ethical mandates in conducting this study by maintaining the anonymity of the participants. The raw data, documentation and interview responses of the different conversations and discussions between the author and the participants were kept with utmost confidentiality with the assurance that all these were utilized for this research only.

2.4 Data Collection Method

The author secured a letter of approval from the school heads. He personally conducted the administration of the reading test and survey questionnaire according to schedule coordinated with the academic adviser/teacher of each class/year level for the specific time of the participants' availability. After conducting the first set of exam and survey, the author recorded, tallied and analyzed the scores.

The participants were informed about the research and their consent to be part of it was first solicited. After their approval, they were invited to a focus group discussion which was held in a very comfortable venue, free from destruction and any other unnecessary intervening factors that might affect the data gathering procedures. A follow-up interview with students and teachers was scheduled to determine the factors that contribute to students' strengths and weaknesses in reading, common reading activities, reading strategies employed as well as their difficulties in reading.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Students' Reading Comprehension Levels in Different Taxonomies

Following the International English Language Testing System's descriptive categorization to explain students' performance in reading comprehension test, the level of their performance is classified based on its band score that corresponds to a level of reading competence. In addition, the level of students' reading comprehension was described using percentage to show their comprehension level in each reading taxonomy – literal, interpretive and applied.

Table 1. Summary Results of Students' Reading Comprehension

Reading Comprehension Taxonomies	Frustration		Instruction		Independent	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Literal	118	16.88	476	68.1	105	15.02
Interpretive	463	66.24	211	30.19	25	3.58
Applied	453	64.81	218	31.19	28	4.01

The results yielded to the findings that the great majority are at the instruction level with 68.1% under literal, 66.24% were at the frustration level under interpretive, and only 4.01% were found independent under the applied taxonomy.

Literal comprehension is the understanding of the written meaning of a passage which includes the definition of words, the context of the writing, the main idea of the passage, and the sequence of thought chosen by the author. The figures above show that most of the students were found the under instruction level. This means that their word recognition errors are not frequent and comprehension aid recall are satisfactory. Meanwhile, interpretive comprehension deals with the readers' broader understanding of the passage being read and their ability to deduce and conclude out of the context being able to work at various levels of abstraction. Most of the students in this taxonomy were found at the frustration level. This finding shows that they need rigid remedial work and intensive monitoring of their reading to be able to come up with the required comprehension level to process information of textbooks and other instructional materials. Looking at the students' performance in applied taxonomy where the greater number of millennial readers were found at the frustration level and very few of them were at the independent level paints a clear picture of poor performance in reading in general. Applied comprehension measures the readers' understanding to come up with new or alternate solutions to the problems, issues, and arguments presented by the authors. The questions in this level elicit the reader's opinion or decision as applied in daily life situations. This result shows that their ability to create new ideas or new ways of expression with the

use of their prior knowledge or new information they got from the text is categorically poor.

The low extremity of scores obtained by the respondents in each taxonomy above shows that reading is still one major issue that needs to be addressed even in tertiary education. The findings above conform to one of the current problems met by college instructors - that students cannot read effectively and comprehend fully the materials assigned to them. The results boil down to the common understanding that entering college freshman students have to be equipped with the required skills in reading comprehension to be able to cope with academic reading to succeed in their college endeavors. Those readers who are at the “frustration” level must be given immediate assistance; otherwise, their coming to college becomes a frustrating venture.

Together with the above finding is the challenge for the teachers to never stop seeking for opportunities for students to engage in quality discussions of the meaning and interpretation of texts in various content areas as one important way to improve their reading comprehension. Moreover, students will greatly benefit in reading and increase their comprehension in literal, interpretive, and applied level when teachers are able to provide explicit and intensive instruction in word study, word meaning, and comprehension, as well as improve their craft through professional learning activities.

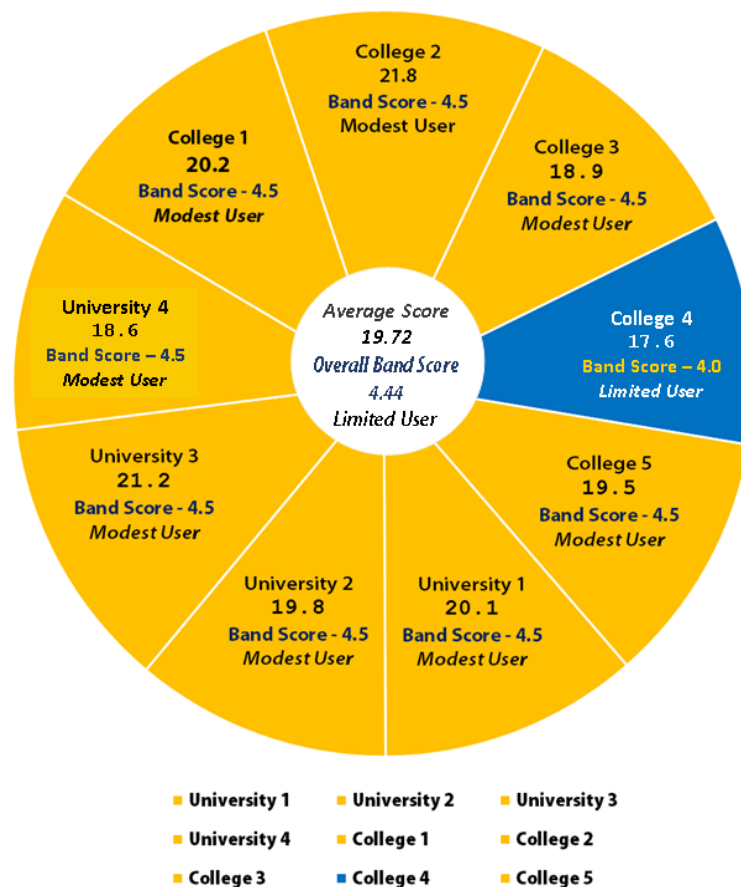


Figure 1. Overall Average Score in Reading Comprehension

All parts of the test and the overall band score were reported in whole and half band scores. The reading marking schemes of the IELTS General Reading Test were converted to the IELTS 9-band-scale. Band scores were obtained using the IELTS reading marking schemes.

The overall average score in reading comprehension of all the respondents by school is presented in Figure 1. The figure reveals the average score with its corresponding band scores based on the IELTS band scale from 0-9. Each band score was given a corresponding description. The average scores with equivalent band scores and description are presented. Of the 9 schools, 8 have been described as ‘Modest User’ with the band score of 4.5. These are U1 - 20.1, U2 - 19.8, U3 - 21.2, U4 - 18.6, C1 - 20.2, C2 - 21.8, C4 - 18.9, C5 - 19.5; except C4 - 17.6 with the band score of 4.0 was described as ‘Limited User’.

Data presented in the figure above indicate the overall scores of the respondents by school in the three reading taxonomies – literal, interpretive, and applied. The findings show that majority of the Millennials are identified as ‘Limited User’,

having obtained an average score of 19.72 with band score of 4.44. This result is a snapshot of low-achieving students. According to the IELTS band score interpretation, 'Limited User' means that learner's basic competence is limited to familiar situations, coping with overall meaning in most situations; has frequent problems in understanding and expression; and is not able to use complex language. The findings above disclose the idea that majority of the millennial college readers have not fully acquired yet the much-needed skills to apply certain instructions and information to a given situation. Students have frequent problems in understanding and text analysis, and that most of them were not able to use complex language. It may be agreed that they may not have been exposed to reading passages or academic text which required them to apply and synthesize information and imply meaning, hence, they lagged behind.

The results above pose a good opportunity for teachers, reading specialists, school heads and subject-area program heads to plan together and evaluate which area of their school program needs to be assessed and upgraded to improve and enrich the reading instruction that caters the needs of wide spectrum of readers. Likewise, it calls for every educator to sustain all efforts and determination they can exert to uplift students' reading proficiency through various programs and academic interventions for such thrusts. The primary task of every teacher is to develop and transform every frustration and instruction reader to become an independent and lifelong reader. In so doing, students must be engaged to more reading tasks and activities that may goad their interests in learning English. Millennials tend to thrive when they are given the opportunity to have a fully immersive educational experience and they even enjoy the challenges of being a part of it.

3.2 Millennials' Common Reading Difficulties

The respondents from all the participating schools had the following difficulties in their reading schemes. These results were correlated with their perception in doing reading tasks and their performance in the reading comprehension test.

Table 2. Millennials' Common Reading Difficulties

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Pearson's rho	Sig.p (2-tailed)	Interpretation
1. Explaining the passages/ texts read.	3.26	0.73	.552*	.014	average
2. Reading passages/ texts with unfamiliar vocabulary	1.12	0.50	.504**	.028	most difficult
3. Maintaining concentration on the passage being read.	2.95	0.62	.617**	.000	average
4. Taking part in class discussions about the text read and reacting to author's purpose.	1.82	0.90	.502*	.000	difficult
5. Making summary of the text/passage read	2.26	0.93	.508**	.026	difficult
6. Understanding too long reading selections	2.79	1.03	.810*	.002	average
7. Using appropriate reading strategies and writing styles	2.84	0.69	.530*	.026	average
8. Analyzing the structure of arguments/texts read	2.55	0.83	.504**	.026	difficult

Table 2 presents the common reading problems that hamper the reading comprehension of many students. The item where the great majority of the students had difficulty was "Reading passages/ texts with unfamiliar vocabulary" (M=1.12) interpreted as "most difficult". Meanwhile, "Taking part in class discussions about the text read and reacting to author's purpose." (M=1.82); "Making summary of the text/passage read" (M=2.26) and "Analyzing the structure of arguments/texts read" (M=2.55) were the items that most of the Millennials found "difficult" in accomplishing reading tasks. The findings above indicate that their difficulties in reading are grounded on word recognitions, meaning making, inferences, text and structure analysis and summary making. This result can be attributed to the previous findings that college readers lacked the necessary skills mostly in interpretive and applied reading comprehension levels. On the other hand, a large portion of students' reading difficulties were found in "Explaining the passages/texts read." (M=3.26); "Maintaining concentration on the passage being read." (M=2.95); "Understanding too long reading selections" (M=2.79); and "Using appropriate reading strategies and writing styles" (M=2.84) interpreted as "average". The findings indicate that students struggle with the text to make it comprehensible. Their difficulties in distinguishing among different reading purposes, tracking complex sentence structures, explaining the main ideas or concept in a text and using different writing styles have to be addressed. Students need to be equipped with meaningful reading strategies that help them make inferences, application and synthesis in order to get the gist of the reading material being studied and use different strategies to understand academic texts that contain technical terms or reading selections that require extensive contextual knowledge.

Taken all together the findings presented above, it can be concluded that the college students' reading difficulties have direct influence in their comprehension levels and reading performance. This result poses a serious concern in improving the reading instruction in colleges and universities. Having the kind of readers whose vocabulary resources are thin, whose making summary of the text/passage read is difficult to accomplish, and whose reading process to deduce meaning and make analysis out of the text read is unsatisfactory call much attention to educators in tertiary to address the common

reading predicaments that the millennials are confronted with. There is also an urgent need to emphasize reading strategies to strengthen their metacognition skills in order to have better comprehension and control over their learning progress by purposeful and wilful effort. The studies of Shanakan, Callison, Carriere, Duke, Pearson, Torgesen, et al. (2010) and Luckner & Handley (2008) many other similar studies have pointed out the fact that reading comprehension forms the basis for the learning process and that college entrants' reading levels must be diagnosed and analyzed to design necessary interventions or to create a program suited to their needs. In so doing, teachers must be equipped with differentiated pedagogical reading strategies, different reading assessment tools, and other teaching techniques that will arm them to successfully help students make progress in their reading. With thorough understanding on the wide variety of authentic reading materials, explicit instruction, and other approaches in reading, teachers may opt to rethink and redo their pedagogies so that students will be catered with sufficient abilities needed to achieve higher thinking skills and thereby helping them to succeed academically.

3.3 Common Reading Problems Identified by the Reading Teachers

A total of 53 teachers were interviewed to identify the common reading problems of their students. Their responses on this part have helped the present study to obtain more substantial results on students' common problems in reading.

Table 3. Reading Problems Identified by the Reading Teachers

	Total	Percentage
1. inability to pay attention to the discussion.	32	60.38
2. confusion about the meaning of words and sentences.	39	73.58
3. inability to connect ideas in a passage.	23	43.4
4. omission of or glossing over detail.	8	15.09
5. difficulty distinguishing significant information from minor details.	24	45.28
6. lack of concentration during reading.	37	69.81
7. trouble in remembering or summarizing what is read.	20	37.74
8. difficulty connecting what is read to prior knowledge.	20	37.74
9. difficulty applying content of a text to personal experiences.	16	30.19
10. difficulty in reading text orally.	14	26.42
11. lack strategies and skills to understand texts and passages.	29	54.72

It can be seen in Table 3 that more than half of the college reading teachers have identified that their students have confusion about the meaning of words and sentences, 73.58%; lack of concentration during reading, 69.81%; and lack strategies and skills to understand texts and passages, 54.72%. While few of the teachers have observed that their students have difficulty in distinguishing significant information from minor details, 45.28%; unable to connect ideas in a passage, 43.40%; have trouble in remembering or summarizing what is read, 37.74%; have difficulty connecting what is read to prior knowledge, 37.74%; have difficulty applying content of a text to personal experiences, 30.19%; have difficulty in reading text orally, 26.42%; and have omission of or glossing over detail, 15.09%.

By and large, the students' common reading difficulties as well as the common reading problems observed by their teachers portrayed congruent results. The main culprit for lack of academic progress of students, according to their teachers, is poor comprehension. Having identified the problems that students encountered in reading, college teachers had borne the weight of uplifting literacy in college education. The problems on vocabulary, making summaries, concentration and attention during reading, and appropriate reading strategies and insufficient skills to understand texts and passages are mostly the aspects that interfere with their reading and learning progress.

By understanding the kind of information that Millennials are seeking, it will be helpful for teachers to engage them more deeply in reading content. Finding out what kind of information they seek is one way to bring a different approach in reading. Key words, blogs, twitter trending topics and other tools that can provide gateways into relevant content are interesting means to induce them to productive reading. These pieces of information can serve as springboards in class discussions to sustain their interest in reading and link such information to greater contents of academic reading and thereby engaging them into deeper sense of reading and discourse. The study of Roberts and Roberts (2008) emphasized that students need to become deep readers who focus on meaning, as opposed to surface readers who only focus on facts and information.

Millennials, in general are reading for information, so they read with purpose and are adept at scanning for details; however, this also means that they may not be giving reading their full attention. This is why the findings above reveal that majority of them have confusion about the meaning of words and sentences, they lacked concentration during reading; they had difficulty distinguishing significant information from minor details; and they lacked the necessary strategies and skills to understand the texts and passages being read.

The results above behoove the reading teachers to assess areas in reading instruction where students start to struggle and determine weaknesses that need targeted support. Teachers must look for a program that can solve students' difficulties which are manageable and practical to implement. While it is true to say that no program exists that will meet the need of all students; however, it appears that both individualized instructional approaches such as instruction designed to meet students' needs with weekly assessments and instruction utilizing research-based standardized protocol interventions can be effective, although more research is needed before definitive conclusions can be made (Vaughn, Wexler, et al., 2011). It is of paramount consideration that teachers must consistently implement the principles of effective instruction such systematic and differentiated instruction with scaffolding, explicit instruction with modelling, immediate and specific feedback on students' performance, multiple opportunities for students to maximize and apply their learning, and frequent progress monitoring of their learning.

3.4 Instructional Reading Interventions to Address the Problems in Reading

The following are the common instructional reading interventions that were obtained during the interview sessions with the teacher-respondents from different colleges and universities in the province. They gave the following responses:

Table 4. Teachers' Instructional Reading Interventions

	Total	Percentage
1. reviewing the previous lesson.	35	66.04
2. providing worksheets or tasks to work on.	32	60.38
3. giving supplementary reading materials.	34	64.15
4. giving more assistance during class discussion.	29	54.72
5. giving basic reading assignments related to prior knowledge.	26	49.06
6. assigning more simplified graphic organizers.	7	13.21
7. spending more time working on reading individually	15	28.3
8. having other students work on reading with the student having difficulty.	19	35.85

The figures above show the efforts done by the college reading teachers to help their students in reading: reviewing of the previous lesson, 66.04%; providing extra worksheets or tasks to work on, 60.38%; giving of supplementary reading materials, 64.15%; providing additional assistance during class discussion, 54.72%; and giving basic reading assignments related to prior knowledge, 49.06%; are evident. These can be considered as good drives to help struggling and underachieving readers do better in their studies. However, teachers must carefully weigh the kind of reading texts they assign to their students as part of corrective reading approach. By carefully choosing the appropriate materials for specific type of students, they can ensure that the intervention is successfully carried out. By evaluating whether or not students have improved their performance at sufficient rates informs teachers to adjust their instructional approaches and teaching methodologies.

Since Millennials were "born digital," and have integrated technology into their daily lives, language and literature teachers can use their enthusiasm to social networking sites, blogs and other interactive sites as timely opportunities to teach and enhance language lessons and reading activities. For instance, requiring students to post compositions, articles, dialogues, captions on photos and written reports on their blogs and Facebook and Twitter can bring different approaches to teaching and offer chances of learning English creatively. Further, their reactions and in-depth analyses on plot, settings, conflict and other elements of fiction from novels and stories read can also be encouraged to be posted and published on those social networking sites. In this way, they will become self-starters to look for supplementary reading materials that suit their taste, do pleasure reading or basic reading tasks related to their experience, and improve their reading habits. There is an evidence that a good reader forms visual images to represent the content being read, connects to emotions, recalls settings and events, predicts what will happen next, asks questions, and thinks about the use of language. One important step to make this work is to connect the text they are reading with what they already know and to attach the facts, ideas, concepts, or perspectives to that known material.

A good combination of technological tools such as computer or video-based interventions, multimedia programs, technology-based assessment audio recordings with explicit instruction can successfully increase students' performance in reading. Crafting explicit instruction in reading allow students to obtain a wide array of reading strategies, techniques and approaches to reading that can enhance their comprehension and metacomprehension. This means that teachers need to tailor an instruction that is specifically addressing students' problems and needs in reading and give them meaningful opportunities throughout the lesson to gain comprehension, direct their own learning and exercise reading strategies relative to the given tasks.

3.5 Factors that Contribute to Students' Problems in Reading

To understand the aspects integral to reading comprehension, this study also explored teachers' views on some of the factors that contributed to students' problems in reading.

Table 5. Factors that Contribute to Students' Problems in Reading

	Total	Percentage
1. reading habits at home	40	75.47
2. low perception on reading	32	60.38
3. parents' educational background	9	16.98
4. family socio economic status	16	30.19
5. school and classroom facilities	22	41.51
6. class hour / schedule	23	45.28

Data in Table 5 shows several factors identified by college reading teachers that hamper students' reading comprehension such as reading habits at home, 75.47%; low perception on reading, 60.38%; class hour schedule, 45.28%; school and classroom facilities, 41.51%; and parents' educational background, 16.98%. Teachers believe that the factors cited above affect students' reading patterns and performance. During the individual interview, teachers disclosed their common observations on students' inadequate reading habits at home resulting to low performance in English and in other subjects. Moreover, based on their personal experience and observation, they admitted that most of their students do not adopt reading as part of their personal learning lifestyle. For them, reading English is merely fulfilling the classroom tasks, assignments, projects or for examination purposes. It is not a common habit for them to read in English for self-interest and intrinsic purpose.

Teachers added that some students these days do not realize the relevance of reading and are poorly motivated to read particularly in the English language. Apart from this, many students gave priority to other activities such as sports, social life and work (Wagner, 2009). From the results of the interview, it is significant to affirm that developing good reading habit is not only important to elementary and high school learners but even to college learners or young adults. Students with good reading habits, regardless of age and grade level, are able to understand questions easily and better express themselves as opposed to those who do not have good reading habits or did no reading at all.

The current research result calls for the reading teachers to sustain students' interest to reading and transform their views on reading into more essential and vicarious perceptions that may result to good academic performance or satisfactory scholastic achievements. Meanwhile, teachers perceive students' family socio economic status and their parents' educational background as minor factors to reading problems as these two variables may seem to be uncontrollable and portray personal limitations on the part of the learners and their family.

3.6 Suggested Classroom-Based Remedial Reading Interventions

The very goal of any interventions is to accelerate literacy development so that students are able to make substantial progress toward accomplishing reading tasks appropriate for their current level. While planning intensive instruction or remedial interventions, Ciullo and Reutebuch (2014) suggested using the assessment information to answer the following questions:

- What do these students need?
- What must I do differently for these students or this student?
- Upon what strengths can I build?
- How should I group students?
- Am I moving too fast and for which students?
- Am I moving too slowly and for which students?
- Where did learning break down?

By carefully considering the questions above, teachers can practically weigh and identify which part of instruction, reading program and students' performance need to be targeted and improved. Moreover, a thorough understanding of what has been taught and to what extent students have mastered the learning objectives may indicate whether it is necessary to provide more guided practice, or reteach or schedule more instructional time for certain topics for struggling readers who need more practice and feedback or implement more modeling and guided practice for students who do not demonstrate knowledge of or sufficient use of strategies. Students must be made aware of the why, when,

how, and where to use a strategy, and must be informed as to how to apply the skills through teachers' modeling of the lesson and the skills applied to learn it.

In the light of the findings of this study, the following approaches to remedial programs may help teachers in assisting students to catch up on basic reading skills.

Guided Reading/Intensive Reading Instruction

This remedial reading program is a simplified literature-based approach to aid struggling college students in reading. To make this work, teachers can use reading assessment tools to determine students' comprehension level. There are free online reading assessment tools that teachers can utilize to conduct some remedial reading lesson. Teachers need to ensure that students are given a healthy, balanced diet of literacy activities. After having identified students' current reading level, teachers may assign carefully selected reading topics based on complexity of text and content. To coach students about different reading tasks, teachers should follow the following sequence: direct explanation of the lesson, modeling specific strategies, guide students to practice, and provide application/independent practices.

Reading Guild/ Reader of the Day / Reader in the Spotlight for Vocabulary Development

Teachers of English literature, personality development, history, humanities and the like, can inspire students to read inspirational and self-motivational books, and other similar books that can help them reveal their passion for reading and train them to purposive reading. A reader of the day can share a single piece of literature to the class and encourage them to make reactions and comments about the shared topic or story. In the same manner, teachers may also assign term papers/reaction papers/home reading reports that are not confined to the classics but also to bestsellers that carry the universal and timeless message and themes that appeal to students' reading tastes. In this way, students will be motivated to read and achieve greater academic accomplishments. A basic vocabulary assignment may include writing sentences using the newly learned vocabulary words from the day's lesson. They may learn not just the skills of surface reading but also inferential reading such as deducing the meaning of a word from context clues, analyzing word's potential meaning based upon its component parts and looking up words they do not understand.

Support Groups led by Student Organizations/Honor Circle/Academic Clubs for Peer Reading

Students can be encouraged to join and participate in clubs and organizations where they can do group studies or tutorial sessions with their peers. Giving the students opportunities to engage in meaningful reading and writing activities, including reading their own work and peers' work can also be done in this intervention where students have the chance of exchanging ideas with their reading buddies.

Weekly Journal for Personal Writing Experience

While this activity is mostly recommended to elementary and high school students, college reading teachers may opt to try this helpful activity to train students think critically and develop their writing skills. Journals provide so much growth in students' writing abilities and use of grammar mechanics. A large repertoire of their vocabulary will be maximized as they are encouraged to utilize vocabularies in writing their thoughts. Some teachers provide prompts to help students begin their writing. Others leave decisions about the direction and flow of student journals up to the students. Strong writing skills effectively enhance students' chances for success.

Individualized Remedial Class

Many remedial reading classes have a strong focus on writing. Students might, for example, be required to write a response to each piece they read and might have to submit regular book reports. Some college instructors use reading material to teach students how to improve their own writing by, for example, helping a student recognize the elements of a well-formed paragraph or a strongly supported argument. Students in remedial reading classes may be taught the basic rules of logic, general guidelines for forming arguments and tools for analyzing argumentative and analytical pieces of literature. Classroom-based discussion and reading responses may play important roles in doing this remedial.

DEAR TIME (Drop Everything and Read) for Pleasure Reading

DEAR time program provides students with much more than a just-sit-there-and-read experience. It gives the teacher a structured time to touch base with each student over a period of time, assess progress, and target instruction. Even more important, it gives students time to read what they want to read, share what they have read, and receive the support they need for further reading explorations and reflections. Daily reading sessions last between twenty and thirty minutes and are followed by fifteen minutes in which students can write on their reading response logs or journals. When a student completes a book, he or she conferences with the teacher to discuss the book and shares his or her reading log.

Interactive Reading Corners / Reading Centers

Having an avenue for students to explore other genres of reading by offering access to a wide range of high quality

reading materials will surely help them develop good reading habits. Aside from libraries, these reading areas can be the agora and action spot of the campus by featuring environment where students can do homework, research, access information, listen to music, watch movies, and use the Internet. In a digital world, media savvy is important to jobs, recreation and social engagement. If educational leaders and policymakers alike believe that literacy is a cornerstone of a digital society, it is imperative to say that they need to expand the way students understand and manage information technology. This managerial function may suggest for proper budget allocation on digital software materials and technology-based resources needed for advanced instruction and high-tech library facilities.

4. Conclusion

The great majority of the millennial readers were at the frustration level in interpretive taxonomy, most of them were at the instruction level in literal taxonomy, and very few of them were found independent under the applied taxonomy. They lacked college-level academic reading skills as most of them were limited of the necessary strategies to comprehend academic texts, and had frequent problems in understanding and expressing their ideas, which resulted to students taking a surface approach to reading. Their difficulties in reading have direct effects in their reading comprehension. Such difficulties may impact their attitude towards learning, views about reading, and school performance as a whole.

Improving the reading comprehension skills of the Millennials and reaching out those struggling readers require collective efforts from the school administrators, reading specialists and college instructors. The adolescents of today deserve improved reading instruction to suit the technology savvy learning styles and strategies of millennial learners so that they are able to meet the rigorous challenges posed by new standards in higher education.

Revisiting the reading instruction, curriculum and existing reading programs along with policy implementations that foster and promote effective learning in millennial way require a paradigm shift from teacher-centeredness to learner-centeredness with outcomes-based learning opportunities as the ultimate goal in teaching inside the millennial classrooms. By offering holistic programs that sharpen and develop learners' perceptions, attitudes, values, character, and life will ensure total development of well-rounded students who are capable and skillful in all facets of life. There is a wide array of reading interventions and reading programs that educational leaders, policy makers as well as curriculum specialists can choose from to elevate the level of students' reading comprehension.

Acknowledgements

The researcher acknowledges with deep gratitude and appreciation the priceless assistance given by the individuals in the accomplishment of this research work. Utmost recognition and appreciation are due to all the researcher's professors at the Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, Graduate School – for their encouragement, guidance, support and expertise; to the school administrators and principals, teachers, and students of all the participating institutions - for their priceless cooperation and time accorded during the conduct of the study; and to the Private Education Assistance Committee (PEAC) through Research for School Improvement Towards Excellence (RSITE) Program – for its initiative to encourage innovation-driven efforts, research-based outputs and improvements for education sectors. With all the supports and generous assistance extended to the researcher in finishing his research project, immense gratitude and deep appreciation will ever remain.

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