

Metacognitive Reading Skills Practices and Learners' Critical Reading Performance

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Abstract

Metacognitive reading skills play a vital role in helping learners regulate their comprehension and develop the higher-order thinking skills required for critical reading. This study determined the level of metacognitive reading skills practices and learners' critical reading performance in selected public districts of the Division of Cagayan de Oro City, School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, it sought to determine the respondents' level of metacognitive reading skills practices in terms of planning, monitoring, and evaluating; determine the learners' level of critical reading performance based on identifying authors' bias, distinguishing fact from opinion, drawing conclusions, analyzing arguments, and synthesizing essential information; examine the significant relationship between respondents' assessment level of their metacognitive reading skills practices and critical reading performance; and identify which metacognitive reading skills practices significantly predict the learners' critical reading performance. The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design involving 180 Grade 7 independent learners selected through stratified sampling. Data were gathered using an adapted and modified from established Metacognitive Reading Skills Practices Questionnaire and a researcher-made Critical Reading Performance Test. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data.

The findings revealed that learners generally practiced metacognitive reading skills, with monitoring as the highest mean, while their overall critical reading performance demonstrated limited reading proficiency, although they performed best in synthesizing essential information. The results further showed significant relationships between metacognitive reading skills practices and selected dimensions of critical reading performance. Moreover, monitoring and evaluating significantly predicted learners' critical reading performance, whereas planning did not. The study concludes that strengthening learners' metacognitive monitoring and evaluating skills contributes to improving critical reading performance. It is recommended that teachers should integrate explicit metacognitive reading instruction and provide learning activities that strengthen learners' monitoring and evaluating strategies to enhance critical reading performance.

Keywords: metacognitive reading skills, critical reading performance

1. Introduction

Critical reading is an essential skill that enables learners to understand, analyze, evaluate, and interpret information beyond its surface meaning. In an increasingly information rich environment, learners are expected not only to comprehend texts but also to examine ideas carefully, identify relevant information,

recognize different perspectives, evaluate evidence, and form reasoned conclusions. However, many learners continue to experience difficulties in developing these higher order reading skills because they may focus mainly on understanding words and sentences without actively examining the purpose, meaning, and implications of what they read. One factor that may contribute to this difficulty is limited metacognitive awareness, which involves learners' ability to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own thinking and reading processes. Metacognitive strategies can help learners establish reading goals, monitor their understanding, recognize areas of difficulty, adjust their approaches, and evaluate whether they have achieved their intended outcomes. These strategies may also promote reading comprehension, critical thinking, confidence, and active engagement before, during, and after reading. Through conscious reflection on their learning processes, learners can recognize their strengths and weaknesses and become more independent and effective readers. However, despite the recognized benefits of metacognitive strategies, there remains limited research examining how specific practices such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating are related to learners' critical reading practices beyond general reading comprehension. Since critical reading requires learners to question ideas, examine evidence, recognize assumptions, compare information, and develop reasoned interpretations, understanding the role of metacognition in this process is important. Therefore, further investigation is needed to examine the relationship between metacognitive strategies and learners' critical reading practices and to provide insights that may support the development of more reflective, analytical, and independent readers.

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the level of metacognitive reading skills practices and learners' critical reading performance in select districts of the Division of Cagayan de Oro, School Year 2025-2026.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the respondents' level of assessment of their metacognitive reading skills practices in terms of planning, monitoring, and evaluating?
2. What is the learners' level of critical reading performance based on identifying author's bias, distinguishing fact from opinion, drawing conclusions, analyzing arguments and synthesizing essential information?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' assessment of their metacognitive reading skills practices and their critical reading performance?
4. Which of the metacognitive reading skills practices significantly predict the learners' critical Reading performance?

Significance

The findings of this study may benefit various stakeholders by providing insights into the relationship between learners' metacognitive reading skills practices and critical reading performance. For the Department of Education, the results may serve as a basis for strengthening literacy programs, instructional policies, and reading interventions that promote critical reading skills and support the competencies outlined in the Revised K to 12 Curriculum and MELC standards. For teachers, the findings may provide meaningful guidance on integrating metacognitive practices such as planning, monitoring, and evaluating into classroom instruction to improve learners' ability to identify bias, distinguish fact from opinion, draw conclusions, analyze arguments, and synthesize information while promoting active engagement, deeper comprehension, and higher order thinking. For learners, the study may emphasize the

importance of becoming active and self-regulated readers by developing awareness of their reading processes, enabling them to plan before reading, monitor their understanding while reading, and evaluate their learning after reading. These practices may help learners understand texts more deeply, think critically, and apply information in academic and real-life situations. Finally, the study may provide future researchers with a useful reference for further investigations on metacognitive reading skills, critical reading performance, reading comprehension, self-regulated learning, and literacy development in different educational contexts.

Scope and Limitations

This study focused on determining the level of metacognitive reading skills practices and critical reading performance among selected Grade 7 learners in the Division of Cagayan de Oro City during School Year 2025 to 2026. The study involved 180 independent Grade 7 learners selected from a population of 1,553 learners in identified public secondary schools. It examined metacognitive reading skills practices in terms of planning, monitoring, and evaluating and critical reading performance in identifying author's bias, distinguishing fact from opinion, drawing conclusions, analyzing arguments, and synthesizing essential information, aligned with the Grade 7 Matatag Curriculum standards for informational texts. The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory was used only as a screening tool to identify independent readers and was not used to measure critical reading performance. The study was limited to selected large and medium secondary schools within identified districts of the Division of Cagayan de Oro City, with data gathered during the school year to reflect classroom-based reading experiences. Therefore, the findings are specific to the selected learners and schools and may not be generalized to other divisions or regions, but they may provide useful insights into the relationship between metacognitive reading practices and critical reading performance among junior high school learners.

Literature Review

Metacognitive Reading Skills Practices

Metacognitive reading skills provide learners with strategies for managing their thinking before, during, and after reading activities. Revandika and Utiya (2025) found that structured inquiry activities improved learners' planning by helping them organize ideas, set goals, and select appropriate strategies before engaging in academic tasks. Nath (2021) similarly reported that planned instruction strengthened critical reading skills, particularly among learners with limited awareness of reading strategies. For monitoring, Wang et al. (2023) found that learners with stronger metacognitive monitoring and more accurate judgments of their comprehension demonstrated better reading performance, suggesting that effective readers adjust their strategies when difficulties arise. In terms of evaluation, Hanifa et al. (2025) established a positive relationship between metacognitive evaluation and literacy performance, as learners who assessed their thinking and strategies were better able to identify errors, correct misunderstandings, and improve their approaches. Overall, these findings indicate that planning prepares learners for reading tasks, monitoring helps them regulate comprehension during reading, and evaluating enables them to assess and refine their understanding, thereby supporting deeper analysis and critical engagement with complex texts.

Learners' Critical Reading Performance

Critical reading requires learners to actively examine information, question ideas, evaluate evidence, and construct meaning from texts rather than simply understand their literal content. Frisancho and Delgado Ramos (2025) explained that recognizing authorial bias requires readers to examine the credibility, background, and perspective of information sources. Ghimire and Mokhtari (2025) likewise found that metacognitive monitoring and regulation contribute to better reading performance by helping learners adjust their strategies and evaluate information more carefully. Hanaki et al. (2026) demonstrated that structured visual activities can help learners organize information, identify misunderstandings, and develop more accurate conclusions. Malik and Shvetsova (2026) further emphasized that metacognitive awareness enables learners to recognize reasoning patterns, examine evidence, and assess the coherence of arguments. Bernardo and Mante Estacio (2023) found in the Philippine context that awareness of metacognitive reading strategies significantly predicted reading proficiency among Filipino learners. These findings collectively suggest that metacognitive skills support critical reading by helping learners identify bias, distinguish reliable information from personal opinions, draw logical conclusions, analyze arguments, and synthesize essential ideas from texts.

2. Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive correlational research design to examine the relationship between learners' metacognitive reading skills practices and their critical reading performance. The design was appropriate because it allowed the researcher to describe the existing levels of planning, monitoring, and evaluating practices and determine their relationship with critical reading performance without manipulating or controlling the learning conditions. It also enabled the study to determine the degree and direction of the relationship between metacognitive reading skills practices and learners' ability to identify author's bias, distinguish fact from opinion, draw conclusions, analyze arguments, and synthesize essential information. Data were gathered in a natural educational setting to reflect authentic classroom-based reading behaviors. The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory was used only as a screening tool to identify learners classified as independent readers and was not used to measure critical reading performance. Through this research design, the study provides meaningful information about the relationship between metacognitive reading practices and critical reading performance, which may contribute to improving reading instruction and developing learners' higher order reading skills.

Participants

The study involved 180 Grade 7 learners identified as independent readers through school-based reading assessments such as the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory, selected from a population of 1,553 learners across ten public secondary schools in four districts of the Division of Cagayan de Oro City. The respondents were selected based on their reading proficiency and ability to engage in the critical reading tasks required in the study, including identifying author's bias, distinguishing fact from opinion, drawing conclusions, analyzing arguments, and synthesizing essential information. Their participation provided relevant data aligned with the Grade 7 Revised K to 12 Curriculum. By including learners from different schools and districts, the study considered varied academic contexts, instructional experiences, and reading environments, providing a broader understanding of learners' critical reading performance within the division.

Data Collection

The study used a two-part questionnaire as the main data gathering instrument. The first part assessed learners' metacognitive reading skills practices in terms of planning, monitoring, and evaluating using a four-point Likert scale ranging from Always to Never. The second part measured learners' critical reading performance through a researcher made 50 item tests based on a Table of Specifications and aligned with the Grade 7 Matatag Curriculum for Quarters 3 and 4. The test assessed learners' ability to identify author's bias, distinguish fact from opinion, draw conclusions, analyze arguments, and synthesize essential information. It included reading passages covering topics such as screen time and learning, reading program outcomes, school uniforms, environmental responsibility, and health and food choices, which were selected and adapted to ensure relevance, authenticity, and alignment with the intended critical reading competencies.

Data Analysis

The study employed appropriate statistical tools to analyze the gathered data. Mean and standard deviation were used to determine the level of learners' metacognitive reading skills practices in terms of planning, monitoring, and evaluating. Frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to describe learners' critical reading performance based on the 50-item test aligned with the Revised K to 12 Curriculum. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was applied to determine the degree and direction of the relationship between metacognitive reading skills practices and critical reading performance. Finally, Multiple Linear Regression Analysis was used to determine which metacognitive reading skills significantly predict learners' critical reading performance.

3. Results and Discussions

Problem 1. What is the respondents' level of assessment on their metacognitive reading skills practices in terms of planning, monitoring, and evaluating?

Table 1

Summary of the Respondents' Level of Assessment on Metacognitive Reading Skills Practices

Variable	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Planning	3.21	0.58	Practiced
Monitoring	3.23	0.60	Practiced
Evaluating	3.11	0.63	Practiced
Overall	3.18	0.60	Practiced

Table 1 shows that Grade 7 learners generally practiced metacognitive reading skills in terms of planning, monitoring, and evaluating, with an overall mean of 3.18 and standard deviation of 0.60, interpreted as Practiced. This indicates that learners regularly used strategies before, during, and after reading to prepare for tasks, monitor their comprehension, and assess their understanding, supporting more active, reflective, and self-directed reading. Among the three areas, monitoring obtained the highest mean of 3.23 with a

standard deviation of 0.60, indicating that learners were most consistent in checking their understanding, connecting new information with prior knowledge, recognizing difficulties, and adjusting their reading strategies while reading. However, evaluating obtained the lowest mean of 3.11 with a standard deviation of 0.63, although still interpreted as Practiced, suggesting that learners were less consistent in reflecting on the effectiveness of their strategies and assessing the credibility and quality of information after reading. The findings indicate that while metacognitive practices are already part of learners' reading behaviors, evaluation may require further strengthening through reflection questions, self-assessment activities, strategy evaluation, and guided discussion. Providing learners with regular opportunities to examine what strategies worked, why they were effective, and how they could improve their future reading approaches may enhance their reflective thinking, critical analysis, information literacy, and independent reading skills. Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of developing all three metacognitive practices, particularly evaluation, to help learners become more conscious, purposeful, and self-regulated readers.

Problem 2. What is the learners' level of critical reading performance based on identifying author's bias, distinguishing fact from opinion, drawing conclusions, analyzing arguments and synthesizing essential information?

Table 2
Summary of the Learners' Level of Critical Reading Performance

Mean	SD	Interpretation	Variable
Identifying Author's Bias	67.33	19.04	Demonstrate limited reading proficiency
Distinguishing Fact from Opinion	70.50	20.20	Demonstrate limited reading proficiency
Drawing Conclusions	67.56	16.27	Demonstrate limited reading proficiency
Analyzing Arguments	64.33	13.42	Demonstrate limited reading proficiency
Synthesizing Essential Information	89.39	16.18	High Reading Proficiency
Overall	71.82	17.01	Demonstrate limited reading proficiency

Table 2 shows that the Grade 7 learners obtained an overall mean of 71.82 with a standard deviation of 17.01 in critical reading, interpreted as Demonstrate Limited Reading Proficiency. This indicates that although learners showed competence in some critical reading skills, they experienced difficulties with higher order tasks that require analysis, evaluation, interpretation, and evidence-based reasoning. Among the five dimensions, synthesizing essential information obtained the highest mean of 89.39 with a standard deviation of 16.18, interpreted as High Reading Proficiency, indicating that learners were generally able to identify important ideas, select relevant details, connect information, and construct coherent interpretations of texts. In contrast, analyzing arguments obtained the lowest mean of 64.33 with a standard deviation of 13.42, interpreted as Demonstrate Limited Reading Proficiency, showing that learners had greater difficulty evaluating evidence, assessing the credibility of information, making logical judgments,

and supporting their interpretations with textual evidence. The findings suggest the need for continued instructional support and explicit learning activities that develop analytical reasoning, inferential thinking, critical questioning, and evidence-based evaluation. Strategies such as summarization, graphic organizers, collaborative learning, reflective activities, and guided analysis of texts may help strengthen learners' ability to connect ideas, evaluate information, analyze arguments, and develop deeper understanding. Overall, the results highlight the importance of integrating metacognitive and critical reading strategies to help learners progress from basic comprehension toward more analytical, evaluative, and independent reading.

Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between the respondents' Level of assessment on their metacognitive reading skills practices and their critical reading performance?

Table 3

Result of the Test on Relationship between the Respondents' Level Assessment on Metacognitive Reading Skills Practices and Critical Reading Performance

Metacognitive Reading Skills Practices	Critical Reading Performance					Overall r- p-
	Author's Synthesizing	Distinguishing Fact and Opinion	Drawing Conclusions	Analyzing Argument		
	r-value	r-value	r-value	r-value		
	p-value	p-value	p-value	p-value		
Planning	r-0.105 p-0.159 NS	0.127 0.088 NS	0.1 0.18 NS	0.046 0.537 NS	0.067 0.37 NS	0.089 0.267 NS
Monitoring	r-0.246 p-.001 S	0.206 0.006 S	0.216 0.004 S	0.111 0.139 NS	0.170 0.023 S	0.189 0.034 S
Evaluation	r-0.283 p-.001 S	0.249 .001 S	0.221 0.003 S	0.003 0.081 NS	0.073 0.331 NS	0.183 0.083 NS

Table 3 shows the relationship between learners' metacognitive reading skills practices and their critical reading performance. The findings revealed that planning and evaluating had no significant relationship with overall critical reading performance, while monitoring demonstrated a significant positive relationship. Planning obtained a correlation of 0.089 with a p value of 0.267, and evaluating obtained a correlation of 0.183 with a p value of 0.083, indicating that these practices were not significantly associated with learners' overall critical reading performance. In contrast, monitoring showed a significant

positive relationship with critical reading performance, with a correlation of 0.189 and a p value of 0.034, although the relationship was weak. This indicates that learners who more consistently checked their understanding, recognized comprehension difficulties, verified information, and adjusted their reading strategies tended to demonstrate better critical reading performance, particularly in identifying author's bias, distinguishing fact from opinion, drawing conclusions, and synthesizing essential information. The findings suggest that monitoring plays an important role in helping learners recognize misunderstandings and make appropriate adjustments while reading. Therefore, reading instruction may provide more opportunities for learners to practice monitoring through self-questioning, comprehension checks, annotation, think aloud activities, rereading, and reflection to strengthen their critical reading abilities.

Problem 4. Which of the metacognitive reading skills practices significantly predict the learners' critical Reading performance?

Table 4
Regression Analysis of Metacognitive Reading Skills Practices Predicting Learners' Critical Reading Performance

Metacognitive Reading Skills Practices	Critical Reading Performance					Overall
	B	SE	β^*	t	p-value	
Planning	2.60	1.49	0.13	1.75	0.082	NS
Monitoring	5.05	1.34	0.272	3.77	<.001	S
Evaluating	4.36	1.13	0.278	3.86	<.001	S

Table 4 presents the results of the multiple linear regression analysis examining which metacognitive reading skills practices significantly predict learners' critical reading performance. The findings revealed that evaluating and monitoring were significant predictors, while planning was not a significant predictor. Evaluating obtained the highest standardized beta coefficient of $\beta = 0.278$ with $p < .001$, indicating that it made the strongest contribution to predicting critical reading performance. Monitoring also significantly predicted performance with $\beta = 0.272$ and $p < .001$, showing that learners who actively checked their understanding, recognized comprehension difficulties, and adjusted their reading strategies tended to demonstrate stronger critical reading performance. In contrast, planning obtained $\beta = 0.130$ with $p = 0.082$, indicating that it did not make a statistically significant independent contribution when monitoring and evaluating were considered in the regression model. The findings suggest that evaluating and monitoring are important metacognitive processes in developing critical reading because they enable learners to reflect on their understanding, assess the effectiveness of their strategies, identify weaknesses, respond to difficulties, and make appropriate adjustments while reading. Although planning remains an important part of metacognitive regulation because it helps learners establish goals and prepare for reading tasks, planning alone may not be sufficient to predict critical reading performance without continued monitoring and evaluation. Overall, the results highlight the importance of providing learners with regular

opportunities to monitor their comprehension and evaluate their reading processes through self-questioning, reflection, annotation, comprehension checks, guided reading, and other activities that promote self-regulation and higher order reading skills.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The development of metacognitive reading skills plays an important role in strengthening learners' critical reading abilities. Providing learners with opportunities to plan their reading, monitor their understanding, and evaluate their learning processes can help them become more aware of how they approach and understand different texts. These practices encourage learners to become active participants in the reading process and support the development of independent and purposeful reading habits. In addition, integrating metacognitive strategies into classroom reading activities can help learners examine information more carefully, reflect on their understanding, and make thoughtful interpretations of texts. When learners are guided to ask questions, check their comprehension, reflect on their strategies, and evaluate information, they are more likely to develop deeper and more meaningful reading experiences. Thus, consistent and structured integration of metacognitive strategies in reading instruction can contribute to the development of learners who are more reflective, analytical, and critical readers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following are recommended:

1. English teachers should strengthen learners' evaluating skills through structured post-reading activities such as self-assessment, reflection, checking answers against textual evidence, and evaluating the effectiveness of reading strategies. These activities may help learners become more reflective and independent readers who can identify areas for improvement and make appropriate adjustments to enhance their reading performance.
2. School heads and English teachers may implement reading intervention programs that prioritize the development of learners' ability to analyze arguments which was identified as the lowest-performing dimension of critical reading performance. Instructional activities such as identifying claims and evidence, comparing opposing viewpoints, evaluating the strength of supporting evidence, debating issues, and analyzing persuasive texts using authentic reading materials may help strengthen learners' higher-order thinking and argument analysis skills.
3. Teachers should emphasize teaching of monitoring strategies throughout the reading lesson. Reading practice such as comprehension monitoring, self-questioning, think aloud, stating confusing information, rereading, and reflections on the use of strategies can be utilized. Teachers have the greatest responsibility of assessing whether the information being read is reliable and credible.
4. Curriculum developers, school heads, and researchers may consider developing instructional materials, intervening programs, and other resources that can be used to promote metacognitive reading skills alongside instruction on critical reading. The use of these techniques will be aimed at promoting learners' monitoring and evaluating reading skills. Further studies can also be conducted to determine other factors that influence critical reading performance and the extent to which they influence it.

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