

Barriers of Language, Speaking Proficiency and Reading Comprehension Among Senior High School Students

Quindeliza B. Liwanan – Pacete, Ariana Camille Y. Loriño, Ilyn B. Mabangis, Cymar G. Nano, Kathleen Mae Margarete T. Coso

College of Graduate and Professional Education, Davao del Sur State College, Matti, Digos City, Davao del Sur, Philippines

Abstract. This study examined the relationship among language barriers, speaking proficiency, and reading comprehension among 120 Grade 11 and Grade 12 HUMSS students at Digos City Senior High School. Using a descriptive-quantitative research design, data were gathered through a researcher-made questionnaire and analyzed using mean, Pearson's r , and significance testing. Results showed that students experienced a high level of language barriers, with an overall mean of 3.63, particularly in learning and second language acquisition. Barriers in speaking proficiency were moderate, with an overall mean of 3.45, while reading comprehension was rated moderate to high, with an overall mean of 3.53. Correlation results revealed a weak but significant positive relationship between language barriers and reading comprehension ($r = .197$, $p = .031$). However, the relationship between speaking proficiency and reading comprehension was weak and not significant ($r = .173$, $p = .059$). The findings suggest that language barriers affect students' reading comprehension, while speaking proficiency alone may not strongly predict reading performance. The study highlights the need for targeted classroom interventions that strengthen vocabulary, confidence, pronunciation, and academic reading skills among senior high school students.

KEY WORDS

1. Language Barriers.
2. Speaking Proficiency
3. Reading Comprehension
4. Senior High School Students

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1. Introduction

Language skills—speaking and reading—are essential for academic success. However, senior high school students often face language barriers such as limited vocabulary, grammatical difficulty, and anxiety in communication. These issues hinder their ability to participate in class discussions, understand texts, and perform well academically. Previous studies (Snow, 2010; Cummins, 2000; Krashen, 1985) highlight the importance of lan-

guage exposure and comprehension strategies in developing proficiency. In the Philippine K–12 context, multilingual classrooms intensify these challenges. Thus, examining language barriers, speaking proficiency, and reading comprehension is crucial to improving students' communication skills and academic outcomes.

This study examines how senior high school students' reading comprehension, speaking ability, and language hurdles affect their academic

achievement and general communication abilities.

Language hurdles frequently show themselves as difficulties comprehending and communicating ideas because of a small vocabulary, grammatical mistakes, or a lack of familiarity with the language used in educational settings. These obstacles may make it more difficult for students to participate in productive speaking exercises and understand written content, both of which are essential in both academic and everyday contexts.

Speaking competency is the capacity to communicate orally with confidence and clarity, which is a crucial quality in a variety of contexts and situations. Conversely, reading comprehension, which is essential for success in the classroom and beyond, entails comprehending, interpreting, and evaluating written material.

The purpose of this study is to look into the relationship between these three factors—reading comprehension, speaking ability, and language barriers—and how they affect senior high school students' educational experiences. Comprehending these variables can offer valuable perspectives on the obstacles students encounter and recommend methods for strengthening their language proficiency, consequently augmenting their academic performance.

Globally, language obstacles frequently make it difficult for students to communicate effectively in academic contexts, particularly in classrooms that are multilingual or multicultural. While reading comprehension is still a fundamental ability for academic success, speaking proficiency is essential for efficient communication. According to research, children who have language obstacles typically have poorer reading comprehension and speaking skills, which may have an impact on their overall learning outcomes (Snow, 2010; Cummins, 2000).

For senior high school students, especially those from non-native language backgrounds, language barriers—whether brought on by a

lack of exposure to the dominant language, a small vocabulary, or variations in linguistic structures—create serious challenges. These difficulties may cause kids to perform poorly academically and make it difficult for them to fully engage in debates, discussions, and group projects.

Furthermore, reading comprehension is crucial for comprehending and synthesizing information, but kids who struggle with language frequently take longer to become proficient. Improving speaking ability and reading comprehension in a variety of educational settings requires addressing these problems through focused teaching techniques and language assistance programs.

A crucial field of study, especially in light of globalization and linguistic diversity in the classroom. Students' capacity to fully engage with academic content is frequently hampered by language obstacles, which has a direct impact on their speaking and reading abilities. As a basic language ability, speaking competency is essential to students' overall academic success since it affects their capacity to participate in class discussions and articulate ideas clearly.

In a similar vein, reading comprehension is essential for learning a variety of subjects and comprehending difficult materials. In order to become proficient, language learners must be exposed to intelligible information in both spoken and written forms, according to Krashen's information Hypothesis (1985). These obstacles may be more severe for senior high school students due to things like socioeconomic level, language background, and availability of high-quality education. According to research by Chung Nation (2006), students' individual language exposure and the learning environment both influence their linguistic abilities, which has a big impact on their academic performance.

Students who struggle with language competence encounter significant obstacles in comprehending the curriculum and developing criti-

cal thinking abilities, therefore addressing these barriers is essential for enhancing educational outcomes. Thus, researching these variables offers important insights into how teachers may help students overcome language barriers and enhance their academic achievement, especially in multilingual and diverse classrooms.

The research of senior high school students' reading comprehension, speaking ability, and language hurdles reveals important issues with the Philippine educational system. Limited exposure to English as a second language frequently results in linguistic hurdles, which impair students' capacity to express ideas clearly and successfully understand complicated texts. Because of their limited vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, and lack of opportunity to practice outside of the classroom, many Filipino students have trouble speaking English.

Additionally, the interaction of motivation, self-esteem, and instructional quality—including instructor feedback—affects their reading comprehension skills. Due to a lack of communicative teaching strategies and a dependence on conventional grammar-focused approaches, studies reveal that senior high school students, who are part of the first cohort under the K–12 curriculum, face substantial challenges in learning English. These obstacles have an impact not only on their academic achievement but also on their confidence and participation in class activities like group projects and oral presentations.

1.1. Research Questions—This study aims to determine the language barriers experienced by senior high school students and create a necessary intervention. It seeks to answer the following specific questions:

- (1) To determine the level of Barriers of Language in terms of:
 - (1) learning
 - (2) acquisition
- (2) To infer the level of Barriers of Speaking Proficiency in terms of:
 - (1) language
 - (2) communications skills
- (3) To ascertain the level of Reading Comprehension in terms of:
 - (1) learning
 - (2) perception
- (4) To find out the significant relationship between the following:
 - (1) Barriers of Language to Reading Comprehension
 - (2) Speaking Proficiency to Reading Comprehension

1.2. Significance of the Study—The study on the Barriers of Language, Speaking Proficiency, and Reading Comprehension among Senior High School Students holds significant value to various stakeholders: For Students This study can help students identify the barriers they face in language learning, speaking proficiency, and reading comprehension. By understanding these challenges, students can adopt strategies to overcome them, ultimately improving their academic performance and communica-

tion skills. This empowers them to succeed in their studies and prepare for future professional endeavors.

For Teachers The findings of this study can guide teachers in designing more effective teaching strategies and interventions tailored to address the specific language-related challenges of their students. Insights from the study can also help educators adopt more inclusive and adaptive approaches to foster language development and comprehension skills.

For School Administrators School administrators can use the results of this study to implement policies and programs that support language development, such as supplemental training for teachers, reading intervention programs, or the integration of technology to enhance language learning. This ensures the institution creates an environment conducive to improving literacy and communication skills among students.

For Curriculum Developers The study can inform curriculum developers about the specific needs of senior high school students in language learning. By addressing these barriers, they can refine curriculum content to make it more engaging, practical, and aligned with students' linguistic and cognitive development. **For Researchers** Future researchers can use this study as a reference to further explore the relationship between language barriers, speaking proficiency, and reading comprehension. It also opens opportunities for further investigation into innovative solutions and interventions to improve language acquisition in educational settings.

For Parents This study provides parents with a better understanding of the challenges their children face in language learning and comprehension. Awareness of these barriers enables them to offer appropriate support and encouragement, fostering their children's academic and personal growth.

For Policy Makers Policy makers in the education sector can use the study's findings to develop and advocate policies that emphasize the importance of language proficiency and literacy development in senior high school education. This can lead to a more robust and equitable education system.

By shedding light on the interplay between language barriers, speaking proficiency, and reading comprehension, this study contributes to creating a holistic approach to language education, benefiting all stakeholders involved.

1.3. *Scope and Limitation of the Study* —

The scope of the study on language barriers, speaking proficiency, and reading comprehension among senior high school students focuses on identifying the key challenges students face in these areas, with particular emphasis on how language-related difficulties affect their academic performance. It examines the influence of various factors such as cultural background, socioeconomic status, and prior exposure to the language of instruction.

The study also explores the correlation between speaking proficiency and reading comprehension, and how these skills interrelate in the learning process. The limitations of the study include the specific focus on senior high school students, which may not reflect the experiences of students at other educational levels.

Additionally, the study is constrained to a particular geographic location, limiting the generalizability of its findings to broader populations. The people involved in the study include senior high school students, as the primary participants, because they are directly impacted by language barriers and academic challenges. Teachers are also involved as they are the facilitators of the students' language learning experiences and play a crucial role in assessing and improving proficiency levels.

Lastly, school administrators and language specialists are included to provide insights into the educational policies and interventions aimed at addressing language barriers in the curriculum. Their involvement is essential to understanding both the practical and policy-driven responses to language proficiency challenges in education.

1.4. *Definition of Terms*—

The following are the definitions of terms used in this research and are defined according to the purpose of this research to assist better comprehension of the readers. **Language Barriers.** often manifest as challenges in understanding and expressing ideas due to limited vocabulary, grammatical

errors, or unfamiliarity with the language used in educational contexts. Speaking Proficiency refers to the ability to express thoughts clearly and confidently in oral communication, which is an essential skill in various subjects and interactions.

Reading Comprehension. involves understanding, interpreting, and analyzing written text, a critical skill for success in the classroom and beyond.

1.5. Review of Related Literature—

1.5.1. *Language Barriers*—Speaking proficiency, reading comprehension, and language barriers are closely connected factors that influence the academic performance and communication skills of senior high school students. In multilingual and multicultural classrooms, students often struggle when they lack enough vocabulary, grammar knowledge, pronunciation skills, or confidence to express and understand ideas clearly. Garcia and Leung (2020), Akbulut (2021), and Bernardo (2020) emphasize that language difficulties affect both oral and written communication, making it harder for learners to understand texts and participate in academic discussions. These concerns are also addressed in the Philippine K–12 curriculum under Republic Act No. 10533, which promotes Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education to reduce language gaps and improve learning outcomes.

Several authors define language barriers as communication problems caused by differences in language, culture, dialect, vocabulary, and interpretation. Gratis (2022), Friedman (2023), Lughat (2022), Sandhya (2020), and Rodriguez (2021) explain that misunderstandings may occur when people use different dialects, complex words, cultural expressions, gestures, or professional terms. In classrooms, these barriers may prevent students from confidently sharing ideas, understanding lessons, or interacting with teachers and classmates. Narzoles and Palermo (2021) also found that even learners or workers with English background still experience

difficulties in grammar, pronunciation, accents, idioms, listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

1.5.2. *Speaking Proficiency*—Speaking proficiency is an essential part of communicative competence, especially for senior high school students preparing for higher education and future careers. Studies by Eslit and Valderama (2023), Viola-Bangelisan and Eslit (2023), Mercado (2022), Rayla and Sonsona (2021), and Manuel (2022) reveal that students commonly struggle with fluency, grammar, vocabulary, organization, confidence, pronunciation, articulation, and interaction. These studies suggest that students need more speaking activities, communication drills, and classroom opportunities that build confidence and real-life communication skills. Fan and Yan (2020) further stress that speaking ability is difficult to assess, so classroom-based and authentic speaking tasks are necessary.

Other studies highlight the factors and strategies that may improve speaking skills. Gamotin (2021) found that code-switching and exposure to English media and reading materials can support fluency, while Wang, Abdullah, and Leong (2022) identified motivation, anxiety, and technology use as important themes in speaking development. Kilag et al. (2024) also emphasized that task-based learning and teacher support help students overcome vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation problems. These findings show that speaking proficiency improves when students receive consistent practice, supportive instruction, and meaningful exposure to the language.

1.5.3. *Reading Comprehension*—Reading comprehension is also vital to academic success because it allows students to understand, interpret, and evaluate written texts. Villegas (2024), Mabborang and Balero (2023), Manuel (2022), and Cablingan (2025) found that students' reading comprehension is influenced by reading materials at home, learning mode, aca-

demic track, vocabulary knowledge, and the ability to identify main ideas, facts, opinions, and deeper meanings. While some students perform well in literal comprehension, many still struggle with evaluative, integrative, and critical reading tasks.

Recent studies also show that vocabulary alone does not always guarantee strong comprehension. Anji et al. (2025) found no significant relationship between vocabulary size and reading comprehension among senior high school students in Davao City, suggesting that prior knowledge, reasoning, and critical thinking may also play important roles. Oliveira et al. (2023) similarly noted that comprehension develops as learners improve their ability to process meaning, especially in narrative texts. These findings are consistent with broader literacy concerns, including the low reading performance of Filipino students in international assessments such as PISA 2018.

1.6. Theoretical/Conceptual Framework— A theoretical framework exploring the relationship between language barriers, speaking proficiency, and reading comprehension among senior high school students can be grounded in the interaction between cognitive, social, and linguistic factors. Language barriers often arise from insufficient vocabulary, unfamiliarity with complex sentence structures, or difficulties in understanding diverse accents or dialects. These barriers hinder effective communication, which can affect speaking proficiency. As students struggle to express themselves fluently, their ability to engage in productive conversations or articulate thoughts clearly becomes limited, further perpetuating difficulties in language acquisition. Speaking proficiency, in turn, is closely linked to reading comprehension, as both require the ability to process and interpret language effectively. Students with higher speaking proficiency tend to have a better understanding of texts because they are more adept at decoding and making sense of written language.

Conversely, students facing language barriers may find it challenging to both speak and comprehend reading materials at the same level, limiting their academic performance. Furthermore, reading comprehension involves not just decoding words, but also extracting meaning, which requires cognitive skills such as inference, recall, and interpretation—skills that can be impaired by language barriers. By examining the interplay of these three variables—language barriers, speaking proficiency, and reading comprehension—a comprehensive understanding of how these elements affect language acquisition and academic performance among senior high school students can be developed. This theoretical framework emphasizes the importance of addressing language barriers to enhance both speaking proficiency and reading comprehension, leading to improved overall language development in educational settings. The interplay of variables in the conceptual framework on language barriers, speaking proficiency, and reading comprehension among senior high school students highlights the complex relationship between these factors in academic performance. Language barriers, such as limited vocabulary, poor grammar, and unfamiliarity with academic language, can hinder a student's ability to express themselves effectively in both spoken and written forms. This lack of fluency in speaking can lead to difficulties in participating in class discussions, oral exams, or presentations, which in turn affects their overall speaking proficiency. On the other hand, speaking proficiency itself can impact reading comprehension, as students with better speaking skills are more likely to engage in active discussions about texts, facilitating deeper understanding. Conversely, students who struggle with reading comprehension may face challenges in fully grasping the meaning of texts, making it harder for them to articulate thoughts clearly when speaking. Thus, there is a cyclical relationship between these variables, where language barriers create difficulties in

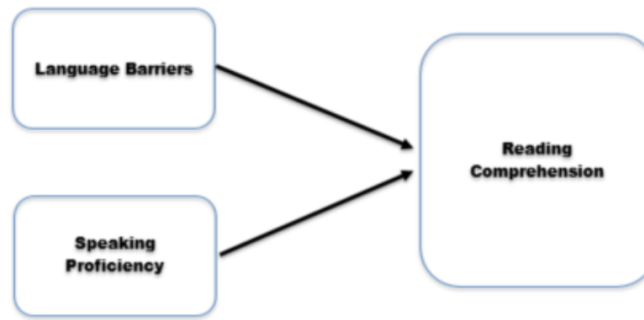


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

both speaking and reading, and poor proficiency in one area may exacerbate weaknesses in the other. To break this cycle, it is crucial to address language barriers through targeted interventions that improve both speaking proficiency and reading comprehension, fostering a more supportive environment for learning.

1.7. Hypothesis—There is no significant relationship between language barriers, speaking proficiency and reading comprehension among senior high school students.

2. Methodology

This study made use of the descriptive-quantitative research design. As a research method, it represents a systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying phenomena (DowneWamboldt, 1992; Schreier, 2012 cited in Elo Kaariaimen, Kanste, Polkki, Utrianien & Kyngars, 2014). Thus, the present study described and quantified the English proficiency level of the senior high school students along with speaking proficiency and reading comprehension.

2.1. Research Locale—This study will be conducted in Digos City Senior High School located in Digos City Davao del Sur, Philippines. The respondents are HUMSS students. This educational institution provides a suitable setting for the research, as it accommodates HUMSS students specializing in Humanities and Social Sciences. The campus environment, diverse student population, and access to educational resources make it an ideal locale for exploring the relationship between reading comprehension and speaking proficiency in language barriers among senior high school students.

2.2. Research Participants—Population Sampling Technique This study made use of stratified random sampling and purposive sampling wherein the researcher selected a sample based on the given information about the population. I will select Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) students at Digos City Senior High School. The participants were selected based on the purpose of the sample that can provide profound and comprehensive information. Presumably, a stratified random sampling and purposive sampling method would allow the re-

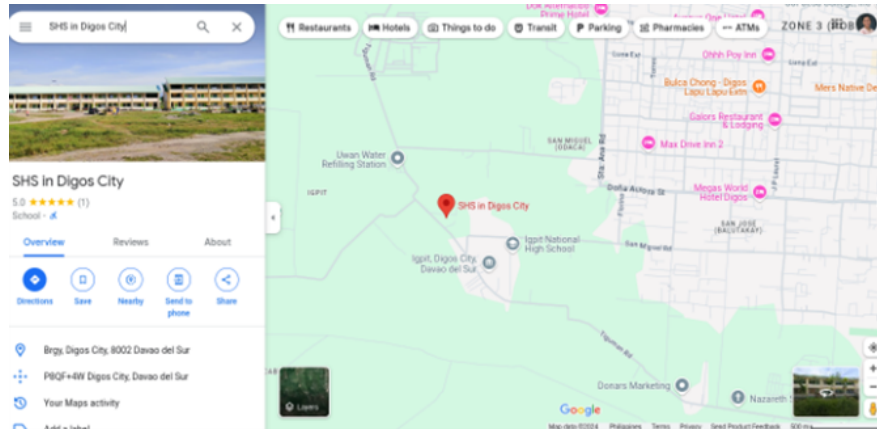


Fig. 2. Google Map of the Digos City Senior High School

searcher to gather quantifiable information from the data being collected.

2.3. Research Instrument—A questionnaire designed to collect data. The questionnaire is designed to contain two main parts in terms of language factors and non-language factors, which includes reading and speaking disorders that may be produced in English reading and speaking activities. They are language barriers, reading comprehension and speaking proficiency.

2.4. Data Collection and Gathering Procedure—The process to distribute a questionnaire to the participants and to answer the gather information, respondents will be informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. This procedure is for the research on Barriers of Language, Speaking Proficiency and Reading Comprehension. It will employ descriptive statistics to profile language proficiency levels and inferential statistics to compare groups. The procedure begins with designing a survey to assess students' perceived language challenges, their self-assessed speaking proficiency, and reading comprehension habits. The survey should include both closed-ended questions, such as Likert scale items,

and open-ended questions to gather nuanced insights. A standardized test may be administered to objectively evaluate speaking proficiency and reading comprehension, ensuring the tools are aligned with the students' grade level and curriculum. Focus group discussions or one-on-one interviews can further explore personal experiences with language barriers and their effects on academic performance. The study will be conducted by first obtaining permission from school authorities and ethical clearance to ensure compliance with data privacy and ethical standards. After recruiting participants, researchers will administer the tools in a controlled environment, such as classrooms or quiet spaces, to minimize distractions. Data collection sessions will be scheduled during school hours to ensure accessibility and maximize participation. Results from surveys, tests, and interviews will then be analyzed to identify patterns, correlations, and underlying factors affecting students' language skills. The researcher will use a self-made survey questionnaire to collect data. The researcher employs a survey questionnaire that will be created and designed by herself as the main tool in gathering data.

The mean provides a measure of central tendency, offering insight into the average level of speaking proficiency and reading comprehension,

as well as the prevalence of language barriers within the group. This basic descriptive statistic sets the stage for more advanced anal-

Level	Range of Mean	Description	Interpretation
5	4.50–5.00	Very High	Indicates strong disagreement or disagreement, suggesting minimal barriers.
4	3.50–4.49	High	Indicates strong disagreement or disagreement, suggesting minimal barriers.
3	2.50–3.49	Moderate	Neutral, indicating some barriers but not significant.
2	1.50–2.49	Low	Indicates agreement or strong agreement, suggesting significant barriers.
1	1.00–1.49	Very Low	Indicates agreement or strong agreement, suggesting significant barriers.

ysis. Using Pearson’s r , researchers can determine the strength and direction of relationships between pairs of variables. For instance, it can quantify how strongly speaking proficiency correlates with reading comprehension or whether language barriers are negatively associated with these skills. A significant negative correlation between language barriers and both speaking proficiency and reading comprehension might suggest that overcoming these barriers is essential for academic success. Finally, multiple regression allows for a more complex analysis by examining the combined and individual impacts of multiple predictors (e.g., language barriers and speaking proficiency) on a dependent variable like reading comprehension. This tool can help identify the relative importance of each factor, providing a nuanced understanding of how these variables interact. For example, it may reveal whether speaking proficiency mediates the effect of language barriers on reading comprehension or whether language barriers independently hinder both. Together, these statistical methods paint a comprehensive picture of the interplay between these critical factors, offering valuable insights for targeted interventions in educational settings.

3. Results and Discussion

The findings demonstrate that students frequently struggle to comprehend lessons, convey ideas, and finish academic assignments due to high levels of language barriers in both learning (mean = 3.77) and acquisition (mean = 3.58). These results corroborate other studies that demonstrate how language limitations seriously impair students’ capacity to fully engage in class activities and comprehend instructional content (Edumadze, 2022). Students’ answers also indicate that

2.5. *Ethical Considerations*—The research follows strict ethical guidelines to uphold the integrity of the study and show respect for all participants and contexts. Because the research is mainly focused on language barriers, reading comprehension and speaking proficiency instead of involving human participants, ethical considerations center on obtaining parental and institutional consideration, ensure confidentiality and anonymity of participants, inform participants about the purpose and voluntary nature of the study and how the findings can be used in education. Equity in Education. Researchers highlight the ethical obligation to provide equitable education, which requires addressing barriers in language and literacy. According to Banks (2015), culturally responsive teaching strategies help ensure that students from diverse linguistic backgrounds receive equal opportunities for academic success. Failure to consider language diversity can perpetuate educational inequities. Inclusive Pedagogy. Tomlinson (2014) emphasizes that importance of differentiated instruction, which aligns teaching methods with individual students’ language proficiency and reading levels. This practice is not only pedagogically but also ethically.

language competency has a significant impact on academic performance, which is consistent with research showing that low language proficiency makes it harder for students to interact with academic materials, which lowers accomplishment (Nguyen, 2021).

3.1. The Level of Barriers of Language in Terms of Language and Acquisition—High scores for motivation, confidence, vocabulary retention, and anxiety in second language acquisition are indicative of trends that have been repeatedly noted in the literature. According to research, affective factors—such as worry, speaking anxiety, and low self-esteem—are significant psychological obstacles that prevent learners from successfully acquiring and using a second language (Siregar, 2023). Similarly, research demonstrating that cognitive overload and uneven exposure might impede acquisition and fluency development supports the difficulty in recalling vocabulary and grammar rules noted in the current results (Rahmani Khasawneh, 2022). Practicing the second language outside of the classroom (mean = 3.26), the sole item with a moderate rating, supports the claim that little exposure to the actual world limits opportunities for meaningful communication, which is essential for developing automaticity and fluency (Yusuf Weda, 2021). Overall, the results support long-standing evidence that psychological, cognitive, and environmental factors influence language learning in addition to instructional aspects. The high overall mean (3.63) highlights the need for improved instructional support, more exposure opportunities, and interventions that foster linguistic competence and confidence because language barriers continue to have a substantial impact on students’ academic experiences and language development (Arslan, 2019).

Table 1. Level of Barriers of Language

Barriers of Language	Mean	Verbal Description
Learning	3.77	High
How often do you find it difficult to understand lessons because of language barriers?	3.59	High
Which language do you find most challenging when learning?	3.91	High
Do you feel that language proficiency affects your academic performance?	3.87	High
In which subjects do you experience the most difficulty due to language?	3.78	High
Do you find it difficult to express your ideas clearly in written or oral form because of language limitations?	3.81	High
Acquisition	3.58	High
How often do you feel motivated to learn a second language?	3.63	High
How confident are you in your ability to learn a second language?	3.58	High
Do you find it difficult to remember vocabulary and grammar rules in a second language?	3.63	High
How often do you practice speaking the second language outside of class?	3.26	Moderate
Do you experience anxiety or fear when speaking or using the second language?	3.59	High
Overall Mean	3.63	High

3.2. *The Level of Barriers of Speaking in Terms of Language and Communication Skills*—With an overall mean of 3.45, the results show that students confront moderate barriers to speaking competency, indicating that although learners can use English to some extent, they still encounter discernible difficulties. Students had moderate difficulties with general speaking skills, engagement in English-speaking activities, and particular oral communication components, according to the mean score for language-related barriers (3.36). These results are consistent with studies that demonstrate that learners' poor fluency and comfort in the target language frequently result in decreased engagement and reluctance in speaking tasks (Allen-Abulhassan, 2023). The higher mean of 3.51 in the communication skills category indicates that practical speaking difficulties are marginally more prevalent. According to Papi and Khajavy (2023), students report having a moderate level of confidence while speaking in front of groups and having trouble remembering words throughout

a conversation. These problems are frequently associated with speaking anxiety and the cognitive load associated with real-time communication. Pronunciation problem was the most highly ranked barrier (mean = 3.99), suggesting that articulation of English sounds continues to be a significant struggle. This is in line with research showing pronunciation to be one of the most enduring difficulties among ESL learners (Setiawan et al., 2024). The premise that exposure alone does not ensure speaking confidence or accuracy is shown in the fact that students reported high levels of English usage outside of class and felt they had a sufficient vocabulary, but they do not completely overcome their speaking deficiencies (De Guzman, 2024). Overall, the results demonstrate that pronunciation problems, word retrieval challenges, and communication anxiety—factors generally acknowledged in the literature as major obstacles to oral language development in second-language contexts—are the main factors impeding students' speaking proficiency (Hayakawa et al., 2020).

Table 2. Level of Barriers of Speaking Proficiency

Barriers of Speaking Proficiency	Mean	Verbal Description
Language	3.36	Moderate
How would you rate your overall speaking proficiency in English?	3.33	Moderate
How often do you participate in English-speaking activities (e.g., discussions, presentations, casual conversations)?	3.25	Moderate
In your opinion, which aspect of speaking do you find most challenging?	3.42	Moderate
Communication Skills	3.51	High
How confident are you when speaking in English in front of your classmates or a group?	3.13	Moderate
How often do you find yourself searching for words or phrases when speaking in English?	3.43	Moderate
Do you find it difficult to pronounce English words correctly?	3.99	High
How often do you use English outside of school (e.g., in conversations, media, or social media)?	3.50	High
Do you feel that you have enough vocabulary to express your thoughts in English?	3.62	High
Overall Mean	3.45	Moderate

3.3. The Level of Reading Comprehension in Terms of Learning and Perception—With an overall mean of 3.53, the results show that students have moderate to high levels of reading comprehension, indicating that while most students have sufficient reading skills, they nevertheless face some difficulties. Students modestly read for pleasure (3.12) and exhibit a variety of reading material preferences (3.05) when it comes to learning-related reading habits (mean = 3.61). They do, however, devote a significant amount of time to reading activities every day (4.26) and often read aloud while studying (3.73), which is a strategy known to support comprehension through multimodal processing—consistent with research demonstrating that active reading strategies improve understanding and retention of information (Hayakawa et al., 2020). The average score of 3.53 for reading perception shows that students commonly believe they are proficient readers. They express confidence in their ability to comprehend academic (3.62) and recreational (3.58) reading materials, and they rate their to-

tal reading skill as excellent (3.73). These results are consistent with research indicating that, particularly in settings where students are exposed to a variety of reading activities, self-perceived reading confidence positively contributes to actual comprehension outcomes (De Guzman, 2024). Despite these advantages, students still report moderate difficulty with academic texts (3.33) and some difficulties with leisure reading (3.53). These findings are consistent with research on reading barriers among ESL learners (Allen-Abulhassan, 2023) and reflect the common struggle learners face when encountering complex vocabulary, lengthy passages, or unfamiliar topics.

Overall, the findings imply that although students' reading comprehension abilities are fairly excellent, understanding may be further improved by providing more assistance when reading academic texts and encouraging regular leisure reading habits. This is in line with research showing that exposure and purposeful reading practices both play a major role in the development of higher-order reading skills (Setiawan et al., 2024)

3.4. Correlations—The results of the analysis showed a small but statistically significant positive correlation between the respondents' reading comprehension and their degree of linguistic obstacles. With a p-value of .031 and a Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = .197$, the results fall below the significance level of .05. This suggests that, despite the small correlation, reading comprehension scores tend to rise slightly as language barriers do. The correlation is deemed statistically significant since the

p-value is less than .05 (SPSS, 2024). This implies that students' reading comprehension performance is impacted by language hurdles in a quantifiable, although slight, way. Put differently, students who encounter more linguistic barriers may exhibit marginally greater difficulties with reading comprehension. Despite the small correlation, its significance emphasizes how important it is to address language-related challenges in student support programs and instructional practices (SPSS, 2024).

A weakly positive association between students' reading comprehension scores and their speaking skills was revealed by the correlation analysis. There is just a minor trend for read-

ing comprehension scores to rise as speaking proficiency increases, according to the Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = .173$. The p-value of .059, which is larger than the .05 threshold,

Table 3. Level of Reading Comprehension

Reading Comprehension	Mean	Verbal Description
Learning	3.61	High
How often do you read for leisure (e.g., novels, magazines, articles)?	3.12	Moderate
How many hours do you spend on reading each day (including school-related reading)?	4.26	High
What type of reading materials do you prefer?	3.05	Moderate
Do you read aloud when studying or learning new material?	3.73	High
Perception	3.53	High
How would you rate your overall reading proficiency?	3.73	High
How confident are you in understanding what you read in academic materials?	3.62	High
How confident are you in understanding what you read in leisure reading materials (e.g., books, magazines)?	3.58	High
Do you find academic reading materials (e.g., textbooks, articles) easy to understand?	3.33	Moderate
Do you encounter difficulties when reading for leisure (e.g., novels, magazines)?	3.53	High
Overall Mean	3.53	High

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Between SOP1 and SOP3

Variable	SOP1	SOP3
SOP1	1	.197*
SOP3	.197*	1

Note. $N = 120$. $r = .197$, $p = .031$. *Correlation is significant at the .05 level, two-tailed.

Table 5. Correlation Analysis Between Barriers of Language and Reading Comprehension

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Pearson's r	Strength of Correlation	p -value	Remark
Level of Barriers of Language	Reading Comprehension	.197	Weak Positive Correlation	.031	Significant

indicates that this link was not statistically significant. The study cannot draw the conclusion that speaking ability is significantly correlated with respondents' reading comprehension because the result is not significant (SPSS, 2024). This implies that reading comprehension levels are not consistently predicted by differences

in pupils' speaking abilities. Although there is a slight upward tendency, it is not statistically supported and is too weak to be regarded as a significant relationship. Therefore, variations in this group's reading comprehension score may be better explained by other factors than speaking ability (SPSS, 2024).

Table 6. Pearson Correlation Between SOP3 and SOP2

Variable	SOP3	SOP2
SOP3	1	.173
SOP2	.173	1

Note. $N = 120$. The relationship between SOP3 and SOP2 was weak, positive, and not statistically significant, $r = .173$, $p = .059$.

Table 7. Correlation Analysis Between Speaking Proficiency and Reading Comprehension

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Pearson's r	Strength of Correlation	p -value	Remark
Level of Speaking Proficiency	Reading Comprehension	.173	Weak Positive Correlation	.059	Not Significant

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the data gathered from 120 Grade 11 and Grade 12 HUMSS students, the study found that the respondents experienced a high level of language barriers, with an overall mean of 3.63. This indicates that students often encounter difficulties in understanding lessons, expressing ideas, remembering vocabulary and grammar rules, and using a second language confidently.

4.1. Findings—The level of barriers in speaking proficiency was found to be moderate, with an overall mean of 3.45. This shows that while students can communicate in English to some extent, they still experience challenges in pronunciation, confidence, word choice, fluency, and participation in English-speaking activities.

For reading comprehension, the students obtained an overall mean of 3.53, which indicates a moderate to high level. This means that students generally show acceptable reading comprehension skills, but they still experience some difficulty in understanding academic texts and

certain reading materials.

The correlation analysis revealed a weak but significant positive relationship between language barriers and reading comprehension, with $r = .197$ and $p = .031$. This means that language barriers have a measurable relationship with students' reading comprehension.

Meanwhile, the relationship between speaking proficiency and reading comprehension was found to be weak and not significant, with $r = .173$ and $p = .059$. This suggests that speaking proficiency does not strongly predict the reading comprehension level of the respondents.

4.2. *Conclusions*—Based on the findings, the study concludes that senior high school students experience noticeable language barriers that may affect their academic learning and communication skills. Although students show a moderate level of speaking proficiency and a moderate to high level of reading comprehension, challenges in vocabulary, pronunciation, confidence, grammar, and language use remain evident.

The significant relationship between language barriers and reading comprehension suggests that students' difficulties with language can influence how they understand written texts. However, speaking proficiency was not significantly related to reading comprehension, which means that students' ability to speak English may not directly determine their ability to comprehend reading materials.

Overall, the study concludes that language barriers remain an important concern among senior high school students and must be addressed through appropriate classroom strategies and language development activities.

4.3. *Recommendations*—Based on the findings and conclusion, it is recommended that teachers provide more vocabulary-building and grammar-support activities to help students overcome language barriers and improve their

understanding of academic texts. Reading intervention programs should also be strengthened by including activities that develop comprehension, word recognition, and the ability to understand complex passages.

It is also recommended that speaking activities be conducted more frequently in class through group discussions, oral presentations, role-playing, and guided conversations. These activities can help students improve their confidence, pronunciation, fluency, and ability to express their ideas clearly. Students should also be encouraged to practice English outside the classroom by reading, speaking, watching educational materials, and participating in language-based activities.

Furthermore, teachers may use simpler explanations, concrete examples, and contextualized learning materials to help students better understand lessons despite language difficulties. School administrators may also develop language support programs that focus on reading comprehension, communication confidence, pronunciation, and second language acquisition. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies with a larger population or in other academic strands to further examine the relationship among language barriers, speaking proficiency, and reading comprehension.

5. References

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