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A MIXED METHOD INVESTIGATION ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNER AUTONOMY AND READING COMPREHENSION AMONG NON – ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT
The study aimed to describe the relationship between Learner Autonomy and Reading Comprehension of non – English major students. This study engaged mixed method design, utilizing convergent parallel approach. The participants of the study were non – English major students under the Institute of Teacher Education. There were 179 students who were randomly selected for quantitative and 10 for the qualitative which were purposively selected. Based on the results of the study, it was determined that the level of learner autonomy of students is high while the level of reading comprehension is low. In terms of significant relationship, the results revealed that there is no significant relationship between learner autonomy and reading comprehension among non-English major students in Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology. The results from the quantitative and qualitative converged when they were being corroborated. The results confirm in this study, which stated that students' learner autonomy does not affect their reading comprehension skills. The study concluded that non-English major students exhibit high levels of learner autonomy but low levels of reading comprehension. Despite no significant relationship found between learner autonomy and reading comprehension, qualitative analysis highlighted various themes indicating that learner autonomy significantly impacts students' reading comprehension and their ability to navigate learning challenges. Furthermore, to improve learner autonomy and reading comprehension among non-English major students, it is recommended to teach students how to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning, seek constructive feedback, and encourage group discussions and diverse reading materials. Additionally, regular reading and engagement with various learning resources can enhance both learner autonomy and reading comprehension skills.

KEYWORDS: *learner autonomy, reading comprehension, mixed method study, Davao del Norte, Philippines*

INTRODUCTION
Reading comprehension is a complex cognitive process involving the construction of a coherent mental representation of text information. It requires readers to interact with the text using effective strategies to derive meaning. It is essential for academic learning and development, and students need to actively engage with texts to improve their comprehension skills. It encourages critical thinking and requires readers to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information, which helps develop deeper understanding and insight. However, students easily divert focus, and lack of determination is the reason why students have problem in reading comprehension. This shows that attention and motivation are significant barriers to students' ability to understand and interpret text. Moreover, students often lack vocabulary, which limits the ability to understand and interpret text effectively (Muzaffar & Sifl, 2021).

In global setting especially in Sudan, English language is taught as a foreign language in secondary level. However, there are multiple factors contribute to students' difficulties in understanding and interpreting text. Students face reading comprehension problems due to lack of vocabulary, motivation, and inadequate teacher training and curriculum. In Nepal, students also faced difficulty in terms of reading comprehending in English language. Even after earning degrees, many face issues with English. Despite its importance in Nepal, English language teaching has numerous problems, and few studies have been done to suggest solutions (Eltayb, 2021; Ghambir, 2020).

Moreover, in the Philippine setting, the ability to read and comprehend are essential skills for students to survive and understand how society works because most information is presented through text. Prior research shows that reading helps mental development. However, Philippines has poor performance in international assessments due to different factors influencing reading comprehension. In a study, it was revealed that reading comprehension levels and skills of Grade 8 students at Baguio City National Science High School, focusing on the use of English as a primary language was low and indicates the need for improvement. Similarly, Grade 10 students at Aloran Trade High

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School have low proficiency in reading comprehension, with literal, reorganizational, inferential, and evaluative comprehension all being difficult for them. It found that students had low overall proficiency in reading comprehension. They found literal and reorganizational comprehension moderately difficult, while inferential and evaluative comprehension were highly challenging (Basali, 2024; Cabural & Infantado, 2023)

Based on previous citations, it is clear that students around the world face difficulties with reading comprehension skills. This issue is both global and national. Conducting a study on reading comprehension in higher education holds significant social relevance as it directly impacts the academic success and overall learning experience of students. Effective strategies to enhance reading comprehension not only contribute to a better understanding of course materials but also foster critical thinking and analytical skills. Addressing this topic is crucial for creating a supportive educational environment, improving student performance, and fostering lifelong learning. Insights gained from such a study can inform the development of evidence-based teaching practices and resources, providing educators with valuable tools to support students' reading development. By understanding and implementing effective reading comprehension strategies, higher education institutions can contribute to the holistic intellectual growth of students, preparing them for success in a knowledge-driven and complex society.

Lastly, the researcher has observed that there are lot of studies have been conducted that is focusing on reading comprehension skills of students. However, most of these studies have been conducted in global and national setting and only few studies have been conducted in the local setting. To cite some, the study of Febriani et al. (2019) entitled "*Reading Comprehension Problems in Reading Section of Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) Test*" focuses on the vocabulary difficulties which hinder students' comprehension skills. Also, the study of Fitriani & Zulpa (2024) entitled "*Analysis of the Problems Encountered by Students in Reading Comprehension"* focuses on lack of student interest and unfavorable environments when trying to enhance reading comprehension skills. Moreover, these studies are different from the present study as the study focuses on the learner autonomy of the non - English major students in accordance to their reading comprehension by a convergent parallel study highlighting on its effect in their comprehension skills through reading and comprehension of the English language. Hence, the present study fills the gap that previous studies failed to examine and explore making new results and findings essential and significant in the field of teaching.

This served as the basis for the institution for adhering developments needed for the program, concerning the needs of non - English major students solely to the purpose of enhancing their reading comprehension skills. The research findings will be disseminated through the distribution of copies of research papers, reports, or concise summaries to relevant stakeholders, collaborators, and community members. This dissemination approach aims to facilitate accessibility for key individuals, enabling them to actively participate in understanding the important findings of the research. By providing physical copies of research papers, the researcher aims to broaden the impact and significance of the study within academic, collaborative, and community contexts. Further, study serves as an embodiment of knowledge which includes presentations and publication in scientific forums or journals to share the study's findings contributed to the broader body of knowledge within their field of study.

Research Questions

1. What is the level of learner autonomy and reading comprehension among non - English major students?
2. Is there a significant relationship between learner autonomy and reading comprehension among non - English major students?
3. What are the lived experiences and coping mechanisms of non - English major students with regard to their learner autonomy and reading comprehension?
4. What are the insights of the non – English major students in the relationship between learner autonomy and reading comprehension?
5. To what extent do the quantitative result corroborate with the qualitative result?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed mixed methods design, which involves combining the elements of qualitative research and quantitative research in order to enlighten and give answers to research questions. Mixed methods are crucial for purposes other than validation. It makes it possible to combine several research methods, which results in an all-encompassing and holistic perspective on the topic of study. This approach not only provides validation for the research findings but also facilitates a deeper comprehension of the phenomena being studied. Researchers may be able to uncover new information by integrating the findings from several approaches that would have gone undiscovered using a single strategy (George, 2021). Also, according to Bryman (2007), mixed methods research plays a vital role in research beyond mere validation. It enables the integration of multiple research methods, leading to a comprehensive and holistic perspective on the subject of study. This approach not only validates research but also allows for a more profound understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. By combining the results obtained from different methods, researchers can potentially reveal new insights that might have been overlooked using a single-method approach.

Participants

Quantitative Phase

The respondents of this study were non – English major education students from first year levels in Kapalong College Agriculture, Sciences and Technology during the second semester of S.Y. 2023-2024. These majors include: Generalist, Mathematics, and

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Filipino. The inclusion criteria guaranteed representation from enrolled students in non – English major program who maintained regular student status, who were enrolled in the second semester of the academic year 2023–2024 and has basic level English proficiency and comprehension skills, which was open to participants of any gender who demonstrated a willingness to participate. Conversely, English major students were an exclusion criterion, as to maintain focus on the non – English majors. Specifically, sixty-seven from the BEEd – Generalist, sixty-nine from Mathematics, and forty-three from Filipino major, garnering a total of 179 respondents for the second semester of the academic year 2023-2024. They were chosen as the respondents of the study because the research was centered on evaluating the relationship between learner autonomy and reading comprehension of non – English major students.

Table 1.1 Distribution of Respondents

Major	*Population*	*Sample*	*Percentage*
Generalist	187	67	13.55%
Mathematics	191	69	13.84%
Filipino	119	43	8.62%
TOTAL	**497**	**179**	**36.02%**

This sampling method was particularly appropriate in this study because the respondents, which were the non – English major education students is randomly selected based on strata, which in this case are the first year non – English education program in Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology. This also ensures that all of the respondents in the population have equal chances of being selected. The researcher will write a formal request letter to the College Registrar and gained access to the population of non – English major education students from first year levels. The researcher then will gather the data from the population of non – English education students to compute the sample. After getting the data, the researcher sent the information to her statistician for computation of the study sample.

Qualitative Phase

Qualitative research methods also offer a flexible and dynamic approach to research, as they enable the researcher to delve deeper into participant responses and explore the subject (Tiley, ,2017). In the qualitative phase, similar to the quantitative component, participants of this study were non – English major education students from first year levels in Kapalong College Agriculture, Sciences and Technology during the second semester of S.Y. 2023-2024. These majors include: Generalist, Mathematics, and Filipino. The inclusion criteria guaranteed representation from enrolled students in non – English major program who maintained regular student status, who were enrolled in the second semester of the academic year 2023–2024 and has basic level English proficiency and comprehension skills, which was open to participants of any gender who demonstrated a willingness to participate. Conversely, English major students were an exclusion criterion, as to maintain focus on non – English majors. Only 10 participants of non – English major students were enjoined in the qualitative phase: five (5) for in- depth interview and another five (5) for focus group discussion. All of them were non – English major education student at KCAST and he or she is a 1st year student. It was noted that participants in qualitative phases must not have participated in the data collection of quantitative phases.

Table 1.2 Profiles of the Participant

ASSIGNED CODE	SEX	YEAR-LEVEL
IDI-01	Female	1st year
IDI-02	Female	1st year
IDI-03	Female	1st year
IDI-04	Male	1st year
IDI-05	Female	1st year
FGD-01	Female	1st year
FGD-02	Female	1st year
FGD-03	Female	1st year
FGD-04	Female	1st year
FGD-05	Female	1st year

Data Collection

Quantitative Phase

In the quantitative phase, an adapted questionnaire was used for the non – English major education students. It was administered to a group of non – English major education students who are in a face-to-face learning set-up. This meant that the researcher personally had an actual encounter with the respondents. After the respondents signed the informed consent form, they were given a survey questionnaire which measured their learner autonomy and level of reading comprehension. The respondents were not needed to include their name as it was optional. Also, they were given ample time to complete the survey, so that valid answers were gathered from each of them.

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Qualitative Phase

For the qualitative phase, a one-on-one interview was conducted to the identified participants in order to gather the lived experiences of the non – English major education students with regard to their learner autonomy in reading comprehension. An interview guide was used both for the in-depth interview and focus group discussion. Hence, to ensure authenticity of selection, the researcher invited through personal contact the informants and they were informed of the tasks they've done and that includes the time set for everyone's convenience.

The focus group discussion centered on the exploration of individuals' opinions, experiences, concerns, and desires regarding the specific issues at hand. The method used was an effective way to bring people from similar background and experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest. The group was guided by the researcher in which she introduced the topic for discussion (Zacharia, et al., 2021). It's important to note that the methodology of focus group research explicitly emphasizes the use of interaction. The discussions take forms, including one-on-one sessions, and were recorded through audio recording,
with additional notes taken. Face to face group discussion was used as a convenient way for conducting the discussions.

Furthermore, in-depth or one-on-one interviews was also conducted to provide a valuable opportunity for exploring the perceptions of non – English major education students regarding their experiences and challenges in reading comprehension. Ten (10) students were purposively selected for the interviews, which was conducted by the researcher. The in-depth interviews were audio recorded, lasting from 20 to 30 minutes, and were carried out face to face.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Phase

The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Here are the discussions to each of the statistical tool: (1) Mean was a descriptive statistical tool used to determine the status of learner autonomy and level of reading comprehension of the students, to answer research questions or problems numbers 1, 2, and 3; (2) Standard Deviation was an inferential statistical tool used to measure how spread out the responses of the respondents are; and (3) Pearson-r was an inferential statistical tool used to determine the relationship between learner autonomy and reading comprehension of non – English major students.

Qualitative Data Phase

In the study, the researcher employed coding and thematic analysis. This involved examining the patterns and themes that emerged from the utterances or statements of the participants/informants during the one-on-one and focus group interviews. The themes were formulated with the purpose of analyzing the lived experiences of non – English major education students in the relationship of learner autonomy and reading comprehension. The data was carefully analyzed to identify and extract relevant themes that shed light on the research objectives and provided insights into the participants' experiences in the context.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The investigation's quantitative and qualitative were presented in this chapter. The presentation of quantitative results started with the quantitative descriptive results which presents the status of learner autonomy and level of reading comprehension of non - English major students. Consequently, the presentation of the results of the qualitative phase followed which includes the thematic analysis of the lived experiences and insights of non - English major students with regard to their learner autonomy and reading comprehension.

Quantitative Phase

Status of Learner Autonomy of non – English Major Students

Table 2.1. Status of Learner Autonomy

Variables and Indicators	Mean	Description
A. Cognitive Domain		
1. Comprehending English texts well.	3.82	High
2. Applying effective strategies to enhance my reading comprehension.	3.77	High
3. Utilizing available learning resources such as library, internet, dictionaries, etc. to boost my English reading.	3.78	High
4. Noticing that when my method of reading is inappropriate, I quickly find a more practical one.	3.69	High
5. Understanding the relying reason when I discover my mistakes in reading comprehension.	3.78	High
Category Mean	3.77	High
B. Metacognitive Domain		
1. Developing a clear plan for engaging in extensive reading on my own in addition to the given assignments by the teacher.	3.79	High

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2.	Employing strategies to optimize my use of various opportunities to read English texts.	3.68	High
3.	Adjusting my reading plans based on my progress.	3.53	High
4.	Assessing consistently my approach to completing English tasks in accordance with my predetermined plans.	3.68	High
5.	Assessing my own reading progress	3.70	High
Category Mean		3.67	High
C.	*Affective Domain*		
1.	Having the confidence to ignore difficult words while reading	3.79	High
2.	Trying new techniques while reading English texts.	3.63	High
3.	Trying to deal with emotional issues that may hinder my English reading studies.	3.73	High
4.	Knowing my strengths and weaknesses in my English reading.	3.71	High
5.	Feeling motivated when I have the freedom to choose what I will read.	3.58	High
Category Mean		3.69	High
D.	*Action Oriented Domain*		
1.	Applying newly learned English techniques into practice but encountering challenges.	3.85	High
2.	Selecting effective methods to become a better reader such as reading English newspapers, magazines, novels, etc.	3.75	High
3.	Identifying areas for improvement in my methods of reading.	3.59	High
4.	Answering most of the reading comprehension questions without any problem.	3.71	High
5.	Choosing books which suit me, neither too difficult nor too easy.	3.69	High
Category Mean		3.72	High
E.	*Social Domain*		
1.	Thinking that collaborating with my classmates helps to improve my level of reading comprehension.	3.74	High
2.	Trying activities in which I can read on my own in English reading courses.	3.64	High
3.	Trying to find opportunities to participate in activities such as pair/group discussion, etc. during the class.	3.59	High
4.	Studying with other people, e.g., practicing with a language partner, or practicing and reviewing materials with classmates.	3.64	High
5.	Exchanging ideas with friends on how to comprehend a reading text better.	3.79	High
Category Mean		3.68	High

Shown in Table 2.1 is the status of learner autonomy among non - English major students in Kapalong College Agriculture of Sciences and Technology. It obtained an overall mean score of 3.71 with a descriptive equivalent of High. This means that the non - English major students oftentimes manifested their learner autonomy. The variable of the study is the learner autonomy which has five indicators namely: cognitive, metacognitive, affective motivational, action oriented, and social.

Cognitive. In terms of cognitive, the category mean is 3.77, which is described as high. This means that it is oftentimes manifested by the students. Among the items under this indicator, Item No.1 – *comprehending English text well* got the highest mean of 3.82 with a descriptive equivalent as high. This only means it is oftentimes manifested by the English major students. Meanwhile, the lowest mean of 3.69 was obtain from item No.4 – *noticing that when my method of reading is inappropriate, I quickly find a more practical one* with descriptive equivalent as high which mean it is oftentimes manifested by the non - English major students.

Metacognitive. In terms of metacognitive, the category mean is 3.67, which is described as high. This means that it is oftentimes manifested by the students. Among the items under this indicator, Item No.1 – *developing a clear plan for engaging in extensive reading on my own in addition to the given assignments by the teacher* got the highest mean of 3.79 with a descriptive equivalent as high. This only means it is oftentimes manifested by the non -

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English major students. Meanwhile, the lowest mean of 3.53 was obtained from Item No.3 – *adjusting my reading plans based on my progress* with descriptive equivalent as high which mean it is oftentimes manifested by the non - English major students.

Affective Motivational. In terms of affective motivational, the category mean is 3.69, which is described as high. This means that it is oftentimes manifested by the students. Among the items under this indicator, Item No.1 - *having the confidence to ignore difficult words while reading* got the highest mean of 3.79 with a descriptive equivalent as high. This only means it is oftentimes manifested by the non - English major students. Meanwhile, the lowest mean of 3.58 was obtain from Item No.5 - *feeling motivated when I have the freedom to choose what I will read* with descriptive equivalent as high which mean it is oftentimes manifested by the non - English major students.

Action Oriented. In terms of action oriented, the category mean is 3.72, which is described as high. This means that it is oftentimes manifested by the students. Among the items under this indicator, Item No.1 – *applying newly learned English techniques into practice but encountering challenges* got the highest mean of 3.85 with a descriptive equivalent very high. This only means it is oftentimes manifested by the English major students. Meanwhile, the lowest mean of 3.59 was obtain from Item No.3 – *identifying areas for improvement in my methods of reading* with descriptive equivalent as high which mean it is oftentimes manifested by the non -English major students.

Social. In terms of social, the category mean is 3.68, which is described as high. This means that it is oftentimes manifested by the students. Among the items under this indicator, Item No.5 – *exchanging ideas with friends on how to comprehend a reading text better* got the highest mean of 3.79 with a descriptive equivalent very high. This only means it is oftentimes manifested by the English major students. Meanwhile, the lowest mean of 3.59 was obtain from Item No.3 –*trying to find opportunities to participate in activities such as pair/group discussion, etc. during the class* with descriptive equivalent as high which mean it is oftentimes manifested by the non -English major students.

Level of Reading Comprehension of non – English Major Students

Table 2.2. Levels of Reading Comprehension in Terms of Literal Comprehension

Item No.	**Frequency**	**Percentage**	**Overall Mean**	**Description**
A. Literal Comprehension				
0	7	3.91%		
1	17	9.50%		
2	38	21.23%		
3	36	20.11%		
4	15	8.38%	3.68	High
5	30	16.76%		
6	18	10.06%		
7	5	2.79%		
8	13	7.26%		
Total	179	100.00%		
Item No.	Frequency	Percentage	Overall Mean	Description
B. Interpretative Comprehension				
0	9	5.03%		
1	15	8.38%		
2	36	20.11%		
3	41	22.91%		
4	17	9.50%	3.62	High
5	26	14.53%		
6	19	10.61%		
7	3	1.68%		

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8	13	7.26%		
Total	179	100.00%		

Item No.	Frequency	Percentage	Overall Mean	Description
C. Evaluation Comprehension				
0	6	3.35%		
1	12	6.70%		
2	31	17.32%		
3	42	23.46%		
4	32	17.88%	3.74	High
5	23	12.85%		
6	17	9.50%		
7	4	2.23%		
8	12	6.70%		
Total	179	100.00%		

Item No.	Frequency	Percentage	Overall Mean	Description
D. Creative Comprehension				
0	6	3.35%		
1	26	14.53%		
2	40	22.35%		
3	34	18.99%		
4	21	11.73%	3.39	Moderate
5	26	14.53%		
6	11	6.15%		
7	4	2.23%		
8	10	5.59%		
9	1	0.56%		
Total	179	100.00%		

Shown in Table 2.2 is the level of reading comprehension among non-English major students in Kapalong College of Agriculture of Sciences and Technology. It obtained an overall mean score of 14.41 with a descriptive equivalent as low. This means that the non-English major students have low reading comprehension. The variable of the study which is reading comprehension which has four indicators namely: literal comprehension, interpretive comprehension, evaluation comprehension, and creative comprehension.

Literal Comprehension. In terms of literal comprehension, the category mean is 3.68, with a descriptive equivalent as high. This means that the level of reading comprehension among students is very satisfactory as manifested. Among the 179 respondents, the highest frequencies are at 2 (21.23%) and 3 (20.11%). This indicates that the majority of students scored 2 and 3 among 10 questions for literal comprehension.

Interpretive Comprehension. In terms of interpretive comprehension, the category mean is 3.62, with a descriptive equivalent as high. This means that the level of reading comprehension among students is very satisfactory as manifested. Among the 179 respondents, the highest frequencies at 2 (20.11%) and 3 (22.91%). This indicates that the majority of students scored 2 and 3 among 10 questions for interpretive comprehension.

Evaluation Comprehension. In terms of evaluation comprehension, the category mean is 3.74, with a descriptive equivalent as high. This means that the level of reading comprehension among students is very satisfactory as manifested. Among the 179 respondents, the highest frequencies at 2 (17.32%), 3 (23.46%), and 4 (17.88%). This indicates that the majority of students scored 2, 3, and 4 among 10 questions for evaluation comprehension.

Creative Comprehension. In terms of creative comprehension, the category mean is 3.39, with a descriptive equivalent as moderate. This means that the level of reading comprehension among students is satisfactory as manifested. Among the 179 respondents, the highest frequencies at 2 (22.35%), and 3 (18.99%). This indicates that the majority of students scored 2 and 3 among 10 questions for creative comprehension.

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Significant Relationship of learner Autonomy and Reading Comprehension

Table 3. Significant Relationship Between Learner Autonomy and Reading Comprehension among Non-English Major Students in Kapalong College of Agriculture Sciences and Technology

Variable	Mean	R-Value	P-Value	Decision @=0.05
Learner Autonomy	3.71	-.232	.002	H_o Rejected
Reading Comprehension	14.41			

Presented in Table 3 is the result of the significant relationship between learner autonomy with a mean rating of 3.71 described as high which means that it is oftentimes manifested and reading comprehension with a mean rating of 14.41 described as low which means that it is seldom manifested among English major students in Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology.

Doing an in-depth analysis of the table, the total mean of 3.71 in learner autonomy and 14.41 in reading comprehension showed a weak negative correlation between variables with a total -.232 R-value which means that means there is a small preference for higher levels of learner autonomy to be associated with lower levels of reading comprehension. The weak negative correlation shows that there is no strong relationship between learner autonomy and reading comprehension. Students' ability to self-direct their learning does not strongly predict their reading comprehension abilities.

In addition, result also showed that the P-value of both variable is .002 that is less than .005 level of significance which means that there is a significant relationship between learner autonomy and reading comprehension. Hence, this indicated that the null hypothesis which was tested at 0.05 alpha levels was being rejected. To which, the statement that there is a significant relationship between learner autonomy and reading comprehension among non-English major students in Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology.

Lived Experiences of Non-English Major Students with Regards to the Relationship Between Learner Autonomy and Reading Comprehension

There are three essential themes which are created based on the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion of the participants on the first research question. Table 4.1 deals on the lived experiences of the non-English major students in exercising learner autonomy in learning and reading comprehension. The essential themes which emerged from the transcriptions of the participants' responses for the research question number one are consisted of overarching themes which are summarized in the said table.

Table 4.1. Lived Experiences of Non-English Major Students with Regards to the Relationship Between Learner Autonomy and Reading Comprehension

There are three essential themes which are created based on the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion on the first research question. They are; difficulty in identifying learning resources, maintaining focus and prioritizing learning goals, and use of social and technological resources to enhance learning. The essential themes which emerged from the transcriptions of the participants' responses for the research question number one consisted of overarching themes which are summarized in the said table.

Issues Probed	Core Ideas	Code/Categories	Essential Themes	Theoretical Support
Challenges in identifying and utilizing appropriate learning resources to enhance reading and comprehension skills independently	• Difficulty finding credible sources of learning materials. • Struggling to find appropriate learning resources that fit learning needs.	Struggling with learning resources	Difficulty in identifying learning resources	Self-Directed Learning Theory
	• Uncertainty about the level of reading and comprehension skills • Fear of using inappropriate learning resources that won't enhance skills.	Uncertainty in skills and resources		
Balancing coursework and	• Prioritizing what needs to be done.	Concentrate on priorities	Maintaining Focus and	

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improving reading comprehension skills	• Trying to finish the coursework first before trying to read materials.		Prioritizing Learning Goals	Goal-Setting Theory
	• Reading aloud worksheets and trying to understand. • Use of worksheets to complete tasks and improve reading comprehension.	Time management and learning balance		
Strategies and coping mechanisms in exercising learner autonomy	• Use online learning resources to understand and assess the level of reading comprehension. • Use of internet and reading materials to understand new words.	Using technology for learning	Use of Social and Technological Resources to Enhance Learning	Socio-Cultural Theory of Learning
	• Recognize the need for guidance to improve comprehension. • Ask someone for help when facing difficulties.	Seeking help from others		

Difficulty in Identifying Learning Resources. In the context of exercising learner autonomy in reading comprehension among non-English major students, in the experiences shared by the students, experiencing difficulty in identifying the suitable learning resources, they see this as a challenge in finding the credible source that can aid and fit their learning. Struggling to identify the right resources can lead to inefficient use of study time. Students might spend more time searching for materials than actually engaging with the content, which can slow their progress in learning.

This idea is supported by Maffea (2020), which stated that students face challenges in finding appropriate learning resources, which affects their academic success and motivation. The abundance of information makes it hard to identify credible sources, leading to potential misinformation and inefficient learning. Students often lack the skills for effective information retrieval and critical evaluation, making it harder to find relevant materials. Additionally, limited access to high-quality resources like peer-reviewed journals and specialized databases disproportionately affects underprivileged students. These challenges result in increased frustration, reduced engagement, and hindered academic performance and self-directed learning abilities.

Maintaining Focus and Prioritizing Learning Goals. In the context of exercising learner autonomy in learning and reading comprehension skills, non-English major students commonly expressed that staying concentrate and setting clear, achievable objectives for their educational journey is crucial. In a world filled with distractions and competing demands, maintaining focus on learning and exercising reading comprehension abilities is important for effective development and academic success. This theme underscores the importance of strategic learning, time management, and the ability to remain committed to one's learning objectives amidst various distractions.

The findings could relate to the study of Mc Millan (2019), of which prioritizing learning goals underscores its positive impact on student focus and academic achievement. Studies indicate that when students set clear and specific learning goals, they exhibit higher levels of motivation and persistence, which contribute to better academic performance. Research also shows that goal prioritization helps students manage their time more effectively, reducing procrastination and enhancing productivity. Additionally, setting and prioritizing goals fosters a sense of accountability and self-discipline, encouraging students to take ownership of their learning process.

Using Social and Technological Resources to Enhance Learning. In the context of exercising learner autonomy in learning and reading comprehension skills, non-English major students uses both social interaction and technological tools to optimize educational outcomes. Students have access to a wide range of resources in today's linked society because of digital platforms. Moreover, utilizing social interactions through asking questions with their peers and discussion enhances understanding in specific area of learning. In addition, students having access to a range of ideas and engaging content, technology tools like educational apps and multimedia platforms enhance the process of learning.

This supports the findings with the study of Kiong (2023), which stated that students who use advanced technologies and seek guidance from others see significant improvements in their learning. Technologies like educational software and online resources offer personalized and engaging learning experiences

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with instant feedback, accommodating various learning styles and promoting deeper understanding. Additionally, collaborating with peers, mentors, or online communities enhances learning by sharing knowledge and diverse perspectives.

Insights of Non-English Major Students with Regards to the Relationship Between Learner Autonomy and Reading Comprehension

Table 4.2. Insights of Non-English Major Students with Regards to the Relationship Between Learner Autonomy and Reading Comprehension

There are three essential themes which are created based on the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion on the second research question. They are; employing active learning strategies and utilizing diverse resources, fostering autonomous learning, and having different resources to enhance reading comprehension. The essential themes which emerged from the transcriptions of the participants' responses for the research question number two consisted of overarching themes which are summarized in the said table.

Issues Probed	Core Ideas	Code/Categories	Essential Themes	Theoretical Support
Insights of students in the relationship between learner autonomy and reading comprehension	• Recognize the importance of active engagement and self-directed learning strategies. • Understand the importance of learning new vocabulary from readings.	Active learning and reading strategies	Employing Active Learning Strategies and Utilizing Diverse Resources	Social Cognitive Theory
	• Understand that using various learning resources can help improve language and comprehension skills. • Recognize the difficulties in finding learning resources that match their needs and skill levels.	Utilizing different learning resources		
Focus on student's learning	• Using learning resources and evaluating comprehension to improve. • Encourage self-directed learning.	Promotes learning on their own	Fostering Autonomous Learning	Self-Directed Learning Theory
	• Consistently practice reading and learning. • Importance of seeking help when encountering difficulties.	Enhancing comprehension skills		
Suggestions and techniques for students	• Provide activities for students to improve comprehension skills. • Provide workshops on study methods and critical thinking skills.	Reading comprehension activities	Having Different Resources to Enhance Reading Comprehension	Cognitive Load Theory

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Use of Social Interaction and Technological Resources to Enhance Learning. In the context of exercising learner autonomy in learning and reading comprehension skills, non-English major students uses both social interaction and technological tools to optimize educational outcomes. Students have access to a wide range of resources in today's linked society because of digital platforms. Moreover, utilizing social interactions through asking questions with their peers and discussion enhances understanding in specific area of learning. In addition, students having access to a range of ideas and engaging content, technology tools like educational apps and multimedia platforms enhance the process of learning.

This idea is supported by the study of Li (2023), active engagement significantly enhances students' learning by fostering deeper understanding and retention of knowledge. Studies have shown that interactive techniques, such as group discussions and hands-on activities, lead to improved critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Additionally, diverse sources of knowledge enrich the learning experience by providing multiple perspectives and contexts. Hence, the study suggests that when students actively participate in their learning process, they develop better metacognitive abilities and are more motivated to learn. Thus, active engagement strategies create a dynamic and collaborative learning environment that supports academic success.

Employing Active Learning Strategies and Utilizing Diverse Resources. The insights of the non-English major students in accordance with them exercising learner autonomy in reading comprehension are being elaborated based on the similar responses given by the participants. Based on the information given by the participants, it is claimed that having credible resources, active and self-directed learning can help enhance one's reading comprehension skills.

In congruence, the study of Jose (2020) stated that autonomous learning enhances students' efficiency, responsibility, and motivation. Implementing autonomous learning strategies can lead to improved planning skills, self-decision making, and a heightened sense of accountability. The study revealed that learners should not rely heavily on teachers rather learn to be self-directed, motivated, and delved beyond the learning horizon. It was implicated that autonomous learning is necessary for students to take responsibility for their advancements, developed their planning and prioritizing skills, improved self-decision, motivation, and willingness.

Having Different Resources to Enhance Reading Comprehension. Utilizing multiple resources to foster comprehensive reading comprehension enable students to deepen their understanding, engage critically with content, and apply acquired knowledge in various contexts. This integrates traditional and digital resources to ensure the educational experience and achieve proficiency in reading comprehension.

Consequently, the study of Solis et al., (2022), underscores that using various learning resources enriches the learning experience by offering diverse perspectives and methodologies. Further, it caters to different learning styles, ensuring that visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners all find material that suits them. This variety keeps learners engaged and motivated, preventing monotony and enhancing retention. Different resources can provide deeper insights and a broader understanding of the subject matter. Hence, a multifaceted approach to learning fosters critical thinking and problem-solving skills, preparing learners for real-world challenges.

Data Integration of the Salient Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Table 5. Joint Display of Salient Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The present study on the learner autonomy and reading comprehension among non-English major students in a local college carries out a mixed methods approach employing convergent parallel approach. The fifth research question of the study involves the corroboration of the findings from quantitative and qualitative phase. The table 5 on the salient quantitative and qualitative findings presents the focal points in the first column which contains the aspect or focal points of the study followed by the quantitative and qualitative findings in the second and third column. The findings from the quantitative phase are usually the indicators with the highest mean while the qualitative findings which display the identified responses show confirmation or disconfirmation to the quantitative results. The fourth column is the nature of the data integration, and the fifth column contains the axiological implications made based on the data described in preceding columns.

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Aspect Or Focal Point	Quantitative Findings	Qualitative Findings	Nature Of Data Integration	Axiological Implications
Learner Autonomy of non-English major Students	On the table 2, the indicator *cognitive* with an overall mean of 3.77 specifically in the item number 3 - utilizing available learning resources such as library, the internet, dictionaries, etc. to boost my English reading. (3.78; high)	On the table 4.1 the theme *use of social and technological resources to enhance learning* category of *using technology for learning* specifically in the core idea 1- *use online learning resources to understand and assess the level of reading comprehension.*	Merging – Converging	The high rating for cognitive suggests that non-English major students recognize and appreciate the importance of these resources in their learning process.
	On the table 2, the indicator *metacognitive* with an overall mean of 3.67 specifically the item number 5 - assessing my own reading progress. (3.70; high)	On the table 4.1 the theme *maintaining focus and prioritizing learning goals* category of *concentrate on priorities* specifically in the core idea 2- *trying to finish the coursework first before trying to read materials.*	Merging – Converging	The high rating for metacognitive suggests that non-English major students recognize the importance of self-monitoring and reflection in improving their reading skills.
	On the table 2, the indicator *affective motivational* with an overall mean of 3.69 specifically the item number 2 - trying new techniques while reading English texts. (3.63; high)	On the table 4.1 the theme *maintaining focus and prioritizing learning goals* category of *time management and learning balance* specifically in the core idea 1- *reading aloud worksheets and trying to understand.*	Merging – Converging	The high rating suggests that non-English major students recognize the significance of being open to new methods and actively engaging with texts through varied approaches.
	On the table 2, the indicator *action oriented* with an overall mean of 3.72 specifically the item number 2 - selecting effective methods to become a better reader, such as reading English newspapers, magazines, novels, etc. (3.75; high)	On the table 4.2 the theme *employing active learning strategies and utilizing diverse resources* category of *utilizing different learning resources* specifically in the core idea 1- *understand that using various learning resources can help improve language and comprehension skills.*	Merging – Converging	The high rating suggests that non-English major students appreciate the importance of actively choosing and engaging with a variety of reading materials to improve their skills. They recognize that reading different types of books and materials can expose them to diverse vocabulary, writing styles, and content, which collectively contribute to better reading comprehension and overall literacy.
	On the table 2, the indicator *social* with an overall mean of 3.68 specifically the item number 5 - exchanging ideas with my	On the table 4.1 the theme *use of social and technological resources to enhance learning* category of *seeking help from*	Merging – Converging	The high rating suggests that non-English major students recognize the importance of discussing and sharing strategies

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	friends on how to comprehend a reading text better. (3.79; high)	*others* specifically in the core idea 1- *recognize the need for guidance to improve comprehension.*		with peers to enhance their understanding of texts. They value the insights and perspectives that their friends can offer, which can contribute to a deeper comprehension of reading materials.
Reading Comprehension among non-English major Students	On the table 2, the indicator *literal comprehension* with an overall mean of 3.68 specifically the item number – 1 Why couldn't the blue jay drink water in the jar?	On the table 4.2 the theme *employing active learning strategies and utilizing diverse resources* category of *active learning and reading strategies* specifically in the core idea 2- *understand the importance of learning new vocabulary from reading.*	Merging – Converging	The data presented regarding the literal comprehension indicator with an overall mean of 3.68, highlights the value students place on understanding explicit details and factual information from texts. The specific item "Why couldn't the blue jay drink water in the jar?" reflects the importance of grasping literal meaning to answer straightforward questions based on the text.
	On the table 2, the indicator *interpretive comprehension* with an overall mean of 3.62 specifically the item number – 2 What is the main idea in the story?	On the table 4.2 the theme *employing active learning strategies and utilizing diverse resources* category of *utilizing different learning resources* specifically in the core idea 2- *recognize the difficulties in finding learning resources that match their needs and skill levels.*	Merging – Converging	The data presented specifically regarding the interpretive comprehension indicator with an overall mean of 3.62, underscores the importance students place on understanding the underlying meaning and main ideas in texts. The specific item "What is the main idea in the story?" reflects the need for students to move beyond literal comprehension to grasp the broader themes and messages within a narrative.
	On the table 2, the indicator *evaluation comprehension* with an overall mean of 3.74 specifically the item number – 3 What do you think the jay felt when she was unable to drink?	On the table 4.2 the theme *fostering autonomous learning* category of *promotes learning on their own* specifically in the core idea 1- *using learning resources and evaluating comprehension to improve.*	Merging – Converging	The data presented specifically regarding the evaluation comprehension indicator with an overall mean of 3.74, highlights the value students place on higher-order thinking skills in understanding texts. The specific item "What do

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				you think the jay felt when she was unable to drink?" reflects the importance of evaluating and interpreting the emotions and motivations of characters, which requires students to go beyond surface-level reading.
	On the table 2, the indicator *creative comprehension* with an overall mean of 3.39 specifically the item number – 4 Why was the jay happy?	On the table 4.2 the theme *fostering autonomous learning* category of *enhancing comprehension skills* specifically in the core idea 1- *consistently practice reading and learning.*	Merging – Converging	The data presented specifically regarding the creative comprehension indicator with an overall mean of 3.39, underscores the value students place on imaginative and innovative thinking in their understanding of texts. The specific item "Why was the jay happy?" suggests that students recognize the importance of interpreting and constructing creative responses based on the content they read.

Learner Autonomy. In the quantitative phase, under the indicator of cognitive, the specific item was rated by the participants as high *in utilizing available learning resources such as library, the internet, dictionaries, etc. to boost my English reading*. This result is connected with the qualitative findings, which is categorized as *using technology for learning*, specifically in the core idea - *use online learning resources to understand and assess the level of reading*, under the essential theme of *use of social and technological resources to enhance learning*. It is safe then to say that the qualitative merges the quantitative.

In addition, in the quantitative phase, under the indicator of metacognitive, the specific item was rated by the participants as high *assessing my own reading progress*. This result is connected with the qualitative findings, which is categorized as *concentrate on priorities*, specifically in the core idea *trying to finish the coursework first before trying to read materials*, under the essential theme of *maintaining focus and prioritizing learning*. Hence, this can be viewed that the qualitative merges with the quantitative.

Similarly, in the quantitative phase, under the indicator of affective motivational, the specific item was rated by the participants as high *trying new techniques while reading English texts*. This result is connected with the qualitative findings, which is categorized as *time management and learning balance*, specifically in the core idea of *reading aloud worksheets and trying to understand*, under the essential theme of *theme maintaining focus and prioritizing learning goals*. This can be viewed that the quantitative and qualitative merges.

Moreover, in the quantitative phase, under the indicator of action oriented, the specific item was rated by the participants as high *selecting effective methods to become a better reader, such as reading English newspapers, magazines, novels, etc*. This result is connected with the qualitative findings, which is categorized as *utilizing different learning resources*, under the essential theme of *employing active learning strategies and utilizing diverse resources*. Thus, this can be viewed that the quantitative and qualitative merges.

Furthermore, in the quantitative phase, under the indicator of social, the specific item was rated by the participants as high *exchanging ideas with my friends on how to comprehend a reading text better*. This result is connected with the qualitative findings, which is categorized as *seeking help from others*, specifically in the core idea *realizing the need for guidance from others for better comprehension enhancement*, under the essential theme of *use of social and technological resources to enhance*

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learning. This can be stated that the quantitative and qualitative merges.

Reading Comprehension. In the quantitative phase, under the indicator of literal comprehension, the specific item was rated by the participants as low in *why couldn't the blue jay drink water in the jar?*. This result is connected with the qualitative findings, which is categorized as *active learning and reading strategies*, specifically in the core idea *understand the importance of learning new vocabulary from reading* under the essential theme of *employing active learning strategies and utilizing diverse resources*. It is safe then to say that the qualitative merges the quantitative.

Moreover, In the quantitative phase, under the indicator of interpretive comprehension, the specific item was rated by the participants as moderate in *what is the main idea in the story?*. This result is connected with the qualitative findings, which is categorized as *utilizing different learning resources*, specifically in the core idea *recognize the difficulties in finding learning resources that match their needs and skill levels.*, under the essential theme of *employing active learning strategies and utilizing diverse resources*. It is safe then to say that the qualitative merges the quantitative.

Additionally, In the quantitative phase, under the indicator of evaluation comprehension, the specific item was rated by the participants as low in *what do you think the jay felt when she was unable to drink*?. This result is connected with the qualitative findings, which is categorized as *promotes learning on their own*, specifically in the core idea *using learning resources and evaluating comprehension to improve*, under the essential theme of *fostering autonomous learning*. It is safe then to say that the qualitative merges the quantitative.

Finally, in the quantitative phase, under the indicator of creative comprehension, the specific item was rated by the participants as low in *why was the jay happy?*. This result is connected with the qualitative findings, which is categorized as *enhancing comprehension skills*, specifically in the core idea *consistently practice reading and learning*, under the essential theme of *fostering autonomous learning*. It is safe then to say that the qualitative merges the quantitative.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

First, the level of learner autonomy among non-English major student is high in terms of cognitive, metacognitive, affective motivational, action oriented, and social. The overall result is high. Also, the level of reading comprehension among English major students is low in term of literal comprehension, interpretive comprehension, evaluation comprehension, and creative comprehension. Hence, this indicate that the indicators of learner autonomy are oftentimes manifested and reading comprehension are seldom manifested by the non-English major students.

Second, the findings revealed the significant relationship of learner autonomy and reading comprehension among non-English major students using the Mean, R-Value and P-Value. It was revealed that both variables are rejected hence, there is no significant relationship between learner autonomy and reading comprehension among non-English major students.

Third, the thematic analysis of the qualitative data was done based on the responses gained through the conduct of in-depth interview (IDI) and focus group discussion (FGD). The results gave more information about the side of the in terms of their lived experiences and coping mechanism of non-English major students regarding on how the exercise learner autonomy in reading comprehension. Qualitatively, non-English major students have been experiencing different situations that contribute to their learner autonomy, aiming to enhance their reading comprehension.

The following themes emerged: challenges in identifying learning resources, maintaining focus and prioritizing learning goals, and using social interaction and technological resources to enhance learning.

Fourth, from the participants responses, other themes are identified which show the insights shared of non-English major students with regards to exercising learner autonomy in reading comprehension. The following are the themes: employing active learning strategies and utilizing diverse resources, fostering autonomous learning, and having different resources to enhance reading comprehension.

Lastly, to better understand the impact of learner autonomy in reading comprehension of the non-English major students, the responses were analyzed thematically to confirm the qualitative results of the study. Both the findings from the two phases are integrated based on the nature plan. The level of learner autonomy (LA) and reading comprehension (RC) of the participants were based on the quantitative results, showed that it converged to the data gained from the qualitative phase. Both quantitative and qualitative results confirms that learner autonomy significantly impacted the student's reading comprehension in all aspects. Hence, this strengthens their capacity to comprehend nuances, discourses and apply the linguistic function based on the given contexts.

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