

**STRATEGIES IN FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION OF  
FIRST YEAR STUDENTS OF SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY**

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A Thesis

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The Faculty of the College of Graduate Studies

Samar State University

Catbalogan City, Samar

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Education (MAEd)

Major in English

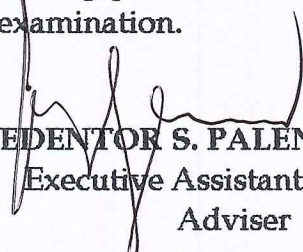
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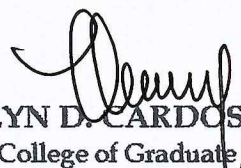
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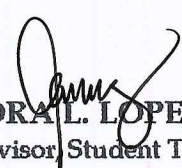
  
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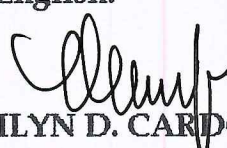
  
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Above all, I thank the Lord for showering me with immeasurable blessings and for extending His mercy so that this work may be finished in His time.

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## DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

Tatay, for teaching me that there is no end to learning and that every learning opportunity should be seized and embraced.

Nanay, for teaching me that even the most gargantuan task can be accomplished if it is done one step at a time.

Bart, for teaching not to give up even when the going gets rough

Sasuke, for showing me that love comes in many shapes and forms

Lance and Angel, for inspiring me just by their mere presence.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study aimed to ascertain the different strategies and correlates in the comprehension of figurative language among first year English major students of the College of Education of Samar State University. A combination of descriptive and correlational research design was used in this study. With regard to the relationship between the identified sociocultural factors and figurative language comprehension strategy used, it was ascertained that the respondents' age, gender, locality, parents' educational level and occupation and socio-economic status were not significantly correlated to the type of strategy used by the respondents in comprehending figurative language. It was also determined that the emotional quotient of the students was not significant to the strategy in figurative language comprehension they used. For the respondents' cognitive profile, it was ascertained that of the respondents used social strategy in language learning while most of the respondents were categorized as "average" in terms of intelligence quotient. As to the relationship between the respondents' figurative language comprehension strategy and their cognitive profile variates, the intelligence quotient of the students was not significant to the strategy in figurative language comprehension they used. Future studies in the area of nonliteral language may also consider using other types of figurative language aside from hyperbole, simile, metaphor, personification, irony and euphemism.



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## Chapter 1

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

#### Introduction

It has been many decades since the idea of communicative language teaching started to gain traction in the field of language teaching. Since the late 1970s, this language teaching approach rose to prominence, with its learner-centered and experience-based views of second language teaching and the idea that learning a language is, in essence, learning to communicate.

For some 40 years now, discussions of foreign language teaching have been dominated by the concept of communication and its various derivatives such as communicative language teaching (CLT) and communicative competence (Littlewood 3).

National language education policies have shown a strong tendency to follow this trend. This is not surprising since almost every nation has faced an increasing need for people who can communicate with speakers of other languages, particularly through 'English as a lingua franca' mindset (Sewell 4). Thus, there is an increasing need for the communicative language teaching approach to be applied in the classroom. According to Hall (41), everyday classroom practices can appear to be quite different when CLT principles are applied in differing social and educational contexts. This translated to more books

and instructional materials claiming to actualize the principles of communicative language teaching in various settings.

The primary goal of these CLT-based language materials, syllabus and classroom practices is to develop the learner's communicative competence. Savignon ("Communicative Competence" 115) described communicative competence as the ability to function in a truly communicative setting – that is, in a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total informational input, both linguistic and paralinguistic, of one or more interlocutors. Furthermore, Savignon (*"Interpreting Communicative Language Teaching"* 51) states that the nature of communicative competence is not static but dynamic; it is more interpersonal than intrapersonal and relative rather than absolute. It is also largely defined by context.

The concept of communicative competence is defined in terms of the expression, interpretation, and negotiation of meaning and looks to both psycholinguistic and socio-cultural perspectives and second language acquisition (SLA) research (Savignon, "Interpreting" 44).

By definition, CLT puts the focus on the learner. Thus, identification of learners' communicative needs provides a basis for communicative curriculum design (Van Ek and Trim 19).

In the context of Samar State University (SSU), looking at the entrance exam results from 2012 until 2016, there has been a noticeable decrease in terms of the reading scores. Average rating in reading was at 79.10 percent in 2012, 74.41



percent in 2013, 74.0 percent in 2014 and 73.6 percent in 2015. These numbers show that these students need plenty of help in improving their reading skills.

In terms of behavior, it is a common observation among teachers from various colleges that while SSU students are able to construct English sentences, they have a limited vocabulary range. There is little to no interest towards reading. Students are able to express themselves in basic, simple English sentences but they have difficulty in maintaining a simple conversation in L2.

This underlying framework of language learning and teaching is reflected in the use of figurative language. Figurative language can create social, cultural, and also psychological realities for people. Figures of speech are frequently encountered in learning contexts; and for this reason, studying them might reveal different orientations towards language learning and teaching.

There have been plentiful of previous research about metaphors and how it affects the acquisition of a second language. Metaphors are examples of figurative language, but there are many other figures of speech that have not been included in prior studies.

The focus on metaphor is understandable given that metaphors constitute the widest and most important category within figurative language. According to Littlemore et al. (126), metaphors are so pervasive in language that it would be impossible for a person to speak without using metaphor at some point, whether knowingly or not. However, this means that there is a wide area for further

research to be conducted on the other figures of speech and their links to second language acquisition.

Also, studies on the different strategies and processes in the comprehension of figurative language in the local setting remain rarely endeavored. By looking into the local subjects, this study would give significant contributions to the field of pedagogy. The results would guide language teachers in the integration of figures of speech instruction in the language classroom to produce language learners who are effective communicators in the target language.

This study explored the possibility of connecting the effects of the previous variables of non-figurative language learning, which are sociocultural factors and English performance, to figurative language learning that have been studied in isolation or have never been studied in the past. Variables which were cognitive and affective-oriented were also primarily considered and integrated into this research on figurative language processing.

This study is also expected to provide more information and to clarify further the interactionist view of language learning, which has been supported by various language teaching practitioners in the past.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study aimed to ascertain the different strategies and correlates in the comprehension of figurative language among first year English major students of

the College of Education of Samar State University. Specifically, the study sought to provide empirical answers to the following research questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in the terms of the following:
  - 1.1 sociocultural factors;
    - 1.1.1 gender;
    - 1.1.2 locality;
    - 1.1.3 socio-economic status;
  - 1.2 affective factors;
    - 1.2.1 personality;
    - 1.2.2 emotional quotient;
  - 1.3 cognitive factors;
    - 1.3.1 language learning style;
    - 1.3.2 intelligence quotient;
  - 1.4 academic performance;
    - 1.4.1 entrance test scores in English, and
  - 1.5 college affiliation?
2. What are the different strategies applied by the respondents in the comprehension of figurative language?
3. Is there a significant correlation between the figurative language comprehension strategies and the following profile of the students:
  - 3.1 sociocultural factors;
  - 3.2 affective factors;



- 3.3 cognitive factors;
  - 3.4 entrance test scores in English, and
  - 3.5 college affiliation?
4. What inputs to instructions may be derived from this study?

### **Hypotheses**

Based on the problems presented, the following hypotheses were tested:

1. There is a significant correlation between figurative language comprehension strategies and the following profiles of the students:
- 1.1 sociocultural factors;
  - 1.2 affective factors;
  - 1.3 cognitive factors;
  - 1.4 entrance test scores in Math;
  - 1.5 entrance test scores in English, and
  - 1.6 college affiliation.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The foundation of this study was derived primarily from the interrelated theories on the nature of language and language learning linked to the communicative language teaching approach.

Many researchers agree that interactions enrich the input to learning. This is anchored on the Interactionist or Sociocultural Theory of Lev Vygotsky. This theory asserts that language is a rule-governed cultural activity learned in



interaction with others (Wertsch and Tulviste 22). In essence, interactionists believe that environmental factors play a very crucial role in language acquisition and processing.

In Vygotsky's view, mental functioning in an individual can be understood only by examining the social and cultural processes from which it derives. This involves an analytic strategy that may appear to some to be paradoxical at first glance. Namely, it calls on the investigator to begin the analysis of mental functioning in the individual by going outside the individual (Wertsch and Tulviste 22). Furthermore, Vygotsky also developed the zone of proximal development (ZPD). He also pointed out that social interaction played an important role in the learning process and proposed that the ZPD is the "meeting place" of the students' "preconceptions" and "conceptual change". The ZPD is where learners construct the new language through socially mediated interaction (Newman and Holzman 79).

Vygotsky's ideas were further strengthened with the Interaction Hypothesis which stresses the importance of comprehensive input in second language acquisition; furthermore, it was also posited that an interactive input is more important than a non-interactive input (Long 42). Interactional adjustments make input comprehensive, and comprehensible input promotes acquisition; thus, interactional adjustment promotes acquisition (Lightbown and Spada 61). Long also suggests that when meaning is negotiated, input comprehensibility is usually

increased and learners tend to focus on salient linguistic features (Ariza and Hancock 109).

The influence of the interactionist theory is evident in the communicative language teaching approach, specifically in the concept of communicative competence. The term communicative competence has been used extensively in justifications and explications of communicative language teaching. This term is coined by Dell Hymes. Hymes argued that in addition to linguistic competence (the rules for describing sound systems and for combining sounds into morphemes and morphemes into sentences), one also needed notions of sociolinguistic competence (rules for using language appropriately in context) to account for language acquisition and language use (Celce-Murcia 233)

In Bachman's (1990) model of communicative competence, he adopts a much broader definition of the term "competence," which includes, among other things, the ability to deal with knowledge-based components of language that have been isolated from theoretical areas, such as 'syntax' or 'cohesion.' Speakers draw on their language knowledge, using a range of strategic skills to link the message appropriately with the social purpose and situation.

It is apparent from the communicative competence model proposed by Bachman (1990) that one must know not only the structures of the language but also its sociocultural aspects to achieve communicative competence.

Recent developments in linguistics have highlighted the importance as well as the ubiquity of metaphor in language. Despite this, the ability of second

language learners to use metaphors is often still not seen as a core ability. Using a model of communicative competence that has been widely influential in both language teaching and language testing, namely Bachman (1990), it is evident that metaphoric competence has an important role to play in all areas of communicative competence. In other words, it can contribute centrally to grammatical competence, textual competence, illocutionary competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. Metaphor is, thus, highly relevant to second language learning, teaching and testing, from the earliest to the most advanced stages of learning. The role of metaphors and figurative language in developing communicative competence is, therefore, indispensable in this model and in the communicative language teaching approach in general (Littlemore and Low 271).

From the enumerated language learning theories, it is evident that the Interactionist or Sociocultural Theory puts premium on the role of interaction and recognizes implicitly the significance of individual language learner's affective, cognitive, and sociocultural characteristics in their language acquisition and learning, particularly in literal language. On the other hand, the communicative competence model of Bachman implicitly highlights the importance of metaphoric and figurative knowledge in learning a language as it is a strong rationalization for focusing this investigation on figurative language processing. The verity of Bachman's communicative competence model, as supported by the interactionist view of language acquisition and learning was tested and validated in this study.



### Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study. As seen in this figure, one of the focuses of this research is to describe the strategies and correlates of figurative language comprehension among selected freshmen students from various colleges. The figure shows that the figurative comprehension of the respondents is described in terms of various comprehension strategies. There are eight strategies specified in the study.

As depicted in Figure 1, the description of the respondents' sociocultural, cognitive and affective profile is an integral process of this research. The sociocultural aspect includes the respondents' gender, locality or hometown, parents' educational attainment, parents' occupation and average family income per month. For the cognitive factors, the study included the respondents' language learning styles and intelligence quotient. Another variable that the researcher took into consideration was the respondents' English scores in the entrance test.

The arrows starting from the large box on the left part of the diagram and redirecting towards the other box on the right suggest the goal of the research, which is to find out if there is a significant correlation between the socio-cultural factors, cognitive factors, affective factors, English language performance and the figurative language comprehension of the selected freshmen students of Samar State University.



# Improved English Instruction for the University

## Findings and Recommendations for English Instructional Program

### Students' Profile

#### In Terms of:

- Sociocultural
  - Gender
  - Locality
  - SES
- Affective
  - Personality
  - Emotional Quotient
- Cognitive
  - Language Learning Style
  - Intelligence Quotient
- Academic Performance
  - Entrance test scores in English

### Figurative Language

#### Comprehension Strategies:

- Using Other Examples of the Same Figurative Language
- Translating the Figurative Language to One's Native Language
- Using Analogy
- Using Linguistic Markers and Attributes of Figurative Language
- Using the Literal Meaning of the Statement
- Using Negation Strategies
- Avoiding the Intended Meaning of the Statement
- Using Repetition Strategies

First Year College with above average and high-level average scores in Math in the University Entrance Test

First Year College Students of Samar State University

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

The figure also presents the possible application of the data gathered from this research, which is the improvement of the English instruction in the University.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study targeted the freshmen Samar State University. Its objective was to establish an accurate profile of the student-respondents; identify and describe the various strategies that these student-respondents employed in order to understand figurative language; and ascertain if there is a correlation in the identified strategies and the identified factors like sociocultural, affective, cognitive and reading performance. Information collected from this study will be used as reference in the preparation of various course syllabi, program of activities, preparation of instructional materials, etc. for the following targeted clientele:

**For the students.** The findings of the study will make them more aware on which specific skills they should focus on for improvement and how much effort they need to put in order to attain well-developed communicative skills for personal interest and purposes.

**For the English as a Second Language teachers.** The results of the assessment will serve as the baseline information for them in making their lesson plan of activities and for the skills to focus on which would answer the specific communicative needs of the learners.



**For the administrators.** This study will make them aware of the facilities, time and location needed in a communicative classroom, as well as the moral support expected from them, to attain the goals set for communicative language learning programs.

**For the parents.** The results of this study will assure them that their children shall be given better training on communication skills development upon the teachers' adoption of the suggestions and recommendations in this study, based on the results and findings.

**For the community.** The results of this will lead to the production of youth who have high levels of communicative competence, strongly built future leaders who are highly competent to deal with community, national or global welfare of mankind.

**For future researchers.** Future researchers may find this study invaluable as reference in terms of input which they could apply in their investigations related to this study. Moreover, authors of teaching materials for English instruction could also use this as a model of communicative test for other communicative test constructions in varied levels.

### **Scope and Delimitation**

This study focused on determining the strategies in figurative language comprehension as well as investigating if there is any significant correlation between the identified sociocultural factors, cognitive factors, affective factors,

reading performance and the figurative language comprehension of the freshmen of Samar State University.

It enclosed only, as research environment, the first year students of Samar State University enrolled in the school year 2015–2016. The control variable used was the entrance test scores in Mathematics. Only students with above average or high-average scores in their mathematics test were used as the respondents for this study.

The instruments used were standardized tests on emotional quotient and personality test for the affective factors; learning language styles and intelligence quotient for the cognitive factors. Furthermore, an interview was also conducted using a researcher-constructed interview schedule on figurative language comprehension strategies.

### **Definition of Terms**

To ensure accuracy, understanding and clarity and to institute a common frame of reference, the following terms herein were given meaning with their conceptual and operational applications in this study.

**Affective factors.** These are elements relating to, arising from, or influencing feelings or emotion (Merriam-Webster). Operationally, this pertains to emotions or mood. These are emotional factors which influence learning. It can have a negative or positive effect.

**Cognitive factors.** These are factors relating to cognition. Cognition refers to the way humans process information. It looks at how humans treat information that comes in and how this treatment leads to various responses (Ridley et al. 297). Cognitive factors refer to characteristics of the person that affect performance and learning. These factors serve to modulate performance such that it may improve or decline. These factors involve cognitive functions like attention, memory, and reasoning (Danili and Reid 72). Operationally, this refers to elements that affect the manner with which the human mind works to sort and understand information.

**Euphemism.** The substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive expression for one that may offend or suggest something unpleasant (Merriam-Webster). More technically, euphemisms are used to avoid possible loss of face. The dispreferred expression may be taboo, fearsome, distasteful or for some other reason has too many negative connotations to felicitously execute a speaker's communicative intention in a given occasion (Allan and Burridge 32). Operationally, this refers to words used to refer to awkward or taboo topics in a polite way.

**Figurative language.** Figurative language uses words or expressions with a meaning that is different from the literal interpretation. Figurative language, in comparison to nonfigurative language, uses exaggerations or alterations to make a particular point (Montgomery et al. 28). Operationally, this specifies to euphemism, hyperbole, irony, metaphor, personification and hyperbole.



**Hyperbole.** Merriam-Webster defines this as a language that describes something as better or as worse than it really is. A hyperbole is a means being used to emphasize the object's trait by expressing a dummy cognition to form a cognitive distance (Zhang 321). Claridge (2011) also adds that hyperbolic expression exceeds the credible limits of fact in the given context. Operationally, a hyperbole is the use of exaggeration as a rhetorical device.

**Irony.** According to Myers (80), there are two traditional definitions of irony. It means saying the opposite of what is meant, and it also means saying something other than what is meant. Operationally, it is the expression of one's meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous or emphatic effect.

**Locality.** This is an area or neighborhood especially regarded as a place occupied by certain people or as the scene of particular activities (Merriam-Webster). Operationally, this refers to the principal residence, city or town, of the respondents.

**Metaphor.** Oxford et al. (51) states that a metaphor is a figure of speech in which an equivalency is made with something that seems, at first blush, unrelated to it. Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics defines metaphor as a verbal relation in which an idea or image is enhanced "by the presence of one or more other ideas." Operationally, this is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable.

**Personification.** This is a figure of speech which attributes personal qualities to represent a thing or an abstraction (Merriam-Webster). Operationally, this refers to the attribution of a personal nature or human characteristics to something nonhuman, or the representation of an abstract quality in human form.

**Simile.** Another figure of speech that compares unlike things that is often introduced by "like" or "as" (Merriam-Webster). Operationally, this involves the comparison of one thing with another thing of a different kind, used to make a description more emphatic or vivid, usually marked by "like" and "as."

**Sociocultural factors.** Culture is the way people live (Chastain 145). Brown (104) also defines culture as "a way of life." He also adds that culture also includes the ideas, customs, skills arts and tools that characterize a given group of people in a given period of time. Moreover, Trifonovitch (73) defines socioculture as "an all-inclusive system that incorporates the biological and technical behavior of human beings with their verbal and the non-verbal systems of expressive behavior starting from birth, "and its "all-inclusive system" is acquired as the native culture." Operationally, it refers to various elements from the society and culture. It is composed of social behaviors like norms and traditions and categories such as gender roles, geographical location of residence, and social relationships.

**Language Learning Strategies.** Oxford (22) defines this as specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective and more transferable to new situations. Merriam-Webster defines strategy as a careful plan or method for achieving a particular

goal usually over a long period of time. Operationally, this refers to a method or technique used to facilitate learning a language.



## Chapter 2

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This chapter presents and discusses some conceptual and research literature and studies, which added valuable insights and input to this research undertaking.

#### Related Literature

Any utterance, from a simple “uh-huh” to an hour-long lecture, is the complex output of a variety of psychological processes—formulating what to say, selecting the right words, monitoring the effects of the message to the audience and so forth. Likewise, any act of message interpretation is based on both psycholinguistic processes and social-interactional factors such as beliefs on what the speaker is trying to achieve by his or her message (Fussell and Kreuz 117).

The distinction between natural and non-normal language has gone beyond the study of what is and what is not grammatical to what is basic and derived in other language-related domains, especially to forms of language considered literal from that considered nonliteral. The nonliteral language here includes metaphor, irony, indirect requests, proverbs and all forms of language in which what is being expressed differs from what the speaker intends to convey.

According to Katz (202), one cannot examine language as a cognitive object of nature independent of the social interactions of people in communication. The

understanding of language that is emerging is of a complex interactive system that, even at the earliest moments of production and comprehension, simultaneously integrates knowledge of linguistic structure—that is, how language is used and the sociocultural factors of relevance. He also added that nonliteral language, because it is so contextual and reflects speaker's intentions above and beyond what is being expressed, is an ideal crucible for examining the effect of social and cultural knowledge to language.

Trifonovitch (109) stated that the process of socialization prepares the individual for the linguistically and non-linguistically accepted patterns of the society in which he/she lives. The said conceptual assumptions of culture justifies the inclusion of gender, home region, residence while schooling and mother tongue as the set of variables under the sociocultural factors.

It has been claimed that it is exactly the need to go beyond the literal interpretation and grasp the intended meaning that makes figurative language special and more demanding for processing (Levorato and Cacciari 130). Unlike literal language, such expressions depend more heavily on both linguistic and visual context, and are often—in fact, impossible—to understand in the absence of such context. Still, in everyday communication, much of the meaning is implied, and can be understood following linguistic and contextual cues (Coulson 173). It is this context sensitivity of natural language that has inspired the continuity claim that figurative language is not exceptional. From this perspective, all language and all its sentences are ambiguous whereby the content of all utterances largely



underdetermines their interpretation (Gibbs 141; Sperber and Wilson 119). This approach suggests that figurative language is rather to be found on a continuum from literal to loose to metaphorical language and should not be considered as a departure from normal language use. While this is one of the more radical interpretations, all approaches arguing for a lack of exceptionality in figurative language sustain that it is pervasive both in language and in thought (Turner 23; Fauconnier 360). If this is true, then it is not a special form of language.

There have been few empirical endeavors conducted in finding the association of sociocultural factors (Lakoff and Johnson 55) and the comprehension of figurative language.

In language learning, the importance of affective factors like personality emotional state and emotional quotient has been well-established. For example, the term personality is an affective category that is viewed as "a dynamic organization, inside the person, of psychophysical systems that create a person's characteristics patterns of behaviors, thoughts, and feelings" (Carver, Sutton and Scheier 743).

Another component is emotional intelligence (EI), which is defined as the ability, capacity, or skill to identify, assess, and manage the emotions of one's self and others (Bradberry, Travis and Greaves 22). Goleman offered another but related perspective on Emotional Intelligence. According to Goleman (47), emotional intelligence is composed of the individual's ability of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.

Cognitive factors such as language learning styles and the intelligence quotient are also well-established categories.

Within second language education, a number of definitions of language learning strategy (LLS) have been used by key figures in the field. Early on, Tarone (289) defines a language strategy as "an attempt to develop linguistic and sociolinguistic competence in the target language- to incorporate these into one's inter-language competence." Finally, building on work in her book for teachers, Oxford (124) provides this helpful definition:

...language learning strategies -- specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques that students (often intentionally) use to improve their progress in developing L2 skills. These strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of the new language. Strategies are tools for the self-directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability.

Intelligence quotient, which is an integral component of cognitive factors, is defined as a score derived from one of the several standardized tests designed to assess intelligence (Plucker and Esping). For this research, the Culture Fair Intelligence Test was selected since it provides a valid measure of intelligence regardless of one's culture (Institute for Personality and Ability Testing).

Figurative language is one of the most common expressions of creative behavior in everyday life. However, the cognitive mechanisms behind figures of speech such as metaphors remain largely unexplained. Recent evidence suggests that fluid and executive abilities are important to the generation of conventional and creative metaphors (Beaty and Silvia 261).

### **Related Studies**

Figurative language comprehension and its relation to affective and sociocultural factors is a subject that received attention in the last decade. Figurative language comprehension is sometimes linked to one's emotional state and creativity (Lubart and Getz 286; Fussell and Moss 8) by some studies. In 2006, Pavlenko gave a relatively original rundown on the topic of emotions that is related to the experiences of bilinguals and multilinguals (Heredia and Cieřlicka 231).

Several studies involving cross-linguistic and cross-cultural translations revealed that metaphoric and figurative language comprehension is strongly influenced by sociocultural aspects (Van Brabant 411; Silva 168; Charteris-Black 119; Kovecses 108; Littlemore 281).

On the other hand, there have been a number of researches on the cognitive processes involved in the comprehension of metaphors and other figures of speech. In some studies, metaphor comprehension is viewed to be similar to the understanding of literal language (Cacciari and Glucksberg 261; Gibbs 287; Coulson and Davenport 315; Gibbs 162; Benedek et al. 104; Giora 41), while other empirical findings suggest that it involves more intricate cognitive process such as matching the argument to the close neighbors of the predicate of a metaphorical sentence (Kintsch and Bowles 221; Sadoski and Paivio 113; Dascalu 287) and using more frequent imagery in metaphorical sentences than those in non-metaphorical sentence (Gibbs 165).



There are also studies that focus on the rules, properties and features carried by the metaphors and other figurative language in metaphor or figurative language processing. Understanding metaphors involves the process of proper attribution (Cacciari and Glucksberg 111; Beaty and Silvia 345) or comprehending metaphors as what they appear to be and not by transforming them into similes, sometimes known as direct comparisons (Johnson 149). Some researchers suggest that in the initial stage of metaphor processing, both the topic and the vehicle play a significant role (Gentner and Wolff 271) while other studies indicate that the role played by the topic and vehicle are different from the initial phase of metaphor comprehension (Gernsbacher et al. 437; Mcglone and Manfredi 1211; Eriksson 87).

Sentence and discourse structure in metaphor comprehension and interpretation are also considered important since the recognition of metaphor-a relevant feature of a metaphoric topic will facilitate the understanding of a metaphor. Similarly, other studies have considered the facilitative role of conventional metaphors in comprehending novel metaphors and figurative language (Keysar et al. 581; Gentner and Wolff 222). It is also worthy to consider in this light that other researchers have focused on the effects of working memory, figurative language type, reading ability, (Qualls and Harris 94) and individual differences (Blasko and Kazmerski 277) as possible factors governing metaphoric and figurative language comprehension.

Previous studies dealing with the connection between linguistic factors and figurative language processing only focused on metaphors and idioms most of the



time. Some of these focused on its role in language learning and teaching such as its importance in expanding language learners' general vocabulary. Others have focused on the significance of metaphors in teaching and learning specialized vocabulary such as its impact on vocabulary learning in the fields of economics (Charteris-Black 115). Aspects of metaphor processing in relation to general vocabulary retention (Boers 558; Turker 29) are also well-studied areas of inquiry in the field of applied linguistics. Its impact on the teaching of foreign languages such as Italian and other languages (Danesi 457; Turker 30) has been well-publicized.

Evidence on the important role of metaphors and figurative language in language pedagogy and learning has been observed not only in vocabulary teaching but also in the development of instructional materials and pedagogic strategies. Low (131), for example, recommends that developers of language learners' materials make use of the insights provided by the processes of metaphor representation because this aspect of cognitive activity is reflected in most communicative syllabuses. Cameron (679) stresses the idea that metaphor creates a unique and effective language learning outcomes as observed among teachers who apply metaphors to suit explanations to a particular group of listeners. Using metaphors in grammar teaching such as the teaching of prepositions (Boers and Demecheleer 199; Cook 52) is also held to be more productive rather than solely using literal language.

While there are several studies that prove the critical role of figurative language in language thinking, learning, and performance, investigations that deal with the strategies in the teaching of metaphor and figurative language have been limited, most of the researches conducted in this area focus on the goal of metaphorical and figurative performance through cross-linguistic awareness-raising activities (Deignan et al 356; Chen and Lai 418) and teacher scaffolding (Littlemore 57). Some studies confirm the importance of learner autonomy, reflective activities (Storch 293), and strategy monitoring (Cohen 103) in enhancing second language learning and performance in both literal and figurative aspects.

Some strategies of figurative language comprehension have been explicitly identified while other strategies of figurative comprehension are implicitly discussed in the findings of previous studies.

One such strategy is the attribution strategy. This was one of the strategies identified by Bortfeld and McGlone (77) which refers to the process of understanding a figurative statement by looking into its properties and related categories. This was defined further by Glucksberg (237). The attribution strategy of metaphor comprehension involves the process of searching for "attributes of the vehicle concept that can possibly be attributed to the topic."

Other supporters of the attribution strategy in figurative language comprehension are Gentner and Bowdle (197), who explained that metaphors suggest a basic "relational structure" that mediates the concepts of the topic and vehicle of the metaphorical statement. This is best seen when people construct

their understanding of their universe by establishing abstract concepts about the realities of their world (Lakoff and Johnson 87). A process called cross-domain mapping, which involves the linking of one semantic domain to the other, shapes the relational structures of concept related to the physical and psychological universe of an individual, and occurs simultaneously with metaphor construction.

Another comprehension strategy that is connected to the attribution strategy is the use of analogy. In fact, there is confirmation that there exists a continuum of both attribution and analogy strategies in metaphor comprehension (Bortfield and Mcglone 82).

Analogical reasoning is a process whereby partial similarities are observed between concepts so that the characteristics of one of the concepts can be used to shed light on the other. Paivio and Walsh (203) confirm that analogy is a cognitive process that is essential in metaphoric processing. They explain that analogical reasoning and metaphoric reasoning are closely similar because they both involve the skills to perceive a partial similarity between two different domains. This processing of metaphorical sentences does not only involve the skills of analogy but also entails strong associative skills, sometimes called as associative fluency. Individuals who are good at making a broad range of connections and divergent search strategies or networks of associations are more likely to produce more interpretations of a given metaphor rather than those who rely on convergent search strategy (Miller 1987).



Using context clues and linguistic devices is a distinct strategy of figurative language comprehension, especially for metaphors (Ortony et al. 469; Gibbs 151; Yağiz and Izadpanah 954). Gentner and Wolff (266) provide empirical evidence that language learners use linguistic devices in figurative language comprehension.

The view that conventional figurative statements are comprehended faster than novel figurative language has been tested and confirmed in some studies involving metaphorical processing task (Gentner and Wolff 271). Other researchers have confirmed that interpreting a figurative statement requires the same strategy of using the meaning of literal language (Bulut and Celik-Yazici 108; Zarci and Pour 327).

Other communication strategies have been found to be facilitated by applying metaphors and figurative language which might be evident in summarizing and closing off encounters to shift topics (Drew and Holt 499), structuring arguments (Cameron and Low 128), signaling problems in conversation patterns, and framing techniques and written journalistic texts (Cameron and Low 187). The pervasive role of figurative language in the performance of language tasks is strongly supported by Bachman's (1990) theory of communicative competence because it requires a language learner to use his "ability to interpret cultural references and figures of speech."

What we know for sure is that idioms are good candidates for revealing the repertoire of strategies for making sense of linguistic expressions in their first



language (L1) as well as second language (L2). In L2, this repertoire encompasses several different strategies that go from assuming that any incomprehensible expressions one runs across in discourse may be an idiom to the presence of idiom-prone lexemes that we probabilistically associate to nonliteral expressions, from looking at whether an idiom string with similar wording exists in L1 to computing the semantic interpretation of the string trying to infer the potential nonliteral meaning (Cacciari 204)

Along with the aforementioned factors, the communicative nature and discourse goals of the situation is thought to affect or initiate metaphoric and figurative language comprehension and production. Some have suggested that the latter may even be influenced by the person's goal to extend the semantics of the lexicon, by the cognitive style of the language learners, or by the interactions of cognitive and linguistic aspect (Dirven 91; Littlemore 62).

In the literature on the figurative language comprehension, various instruments and procedures for determining the strategies and measuring the level of figurative language comprehension have been used. The researcher attempted to review these instruments and methodologies to determine their strengths and weaknesses thereby guiding the construction, selection, modification and development of the new research instruments used in this research.

In neurolinguistic and psycholinguistic studies of figurative language comprehension, the use of "timed-approach" has been the practice (Bortfield and

Mcglone 83; Eriksson 141). An obvious limitation to this approach in determining the strategy of figurative language processing is its emphasis on the time of completion and not on the more important process or product.

Related to the method of determining possible figurative language comprehension is the use of Processing Set, which involves asking the participants to interpret a literal and figurative set of sentences (Gibbs 152; Cacciari and Tabossi 473; McKenna et al. 309). Unlike the timed approach, this method has the advantage in terms of its direct emphasis in determining the strategies of comprehension through the comparison of the answers made by the respondents in the two sets of sentences.

The Think-Aloud Procedure (Bulut and Yacizi 177) is one of the procedures used in previous researches that emphasize cognitive-oriented technique. As outlined in the said procedure, the respondents are asked to reflect and think on the strategies they applied in figurative language processing. This approach, however, focuses only on the responses of the respondents and not on the instruments and data-gathering procedures used in studies on figurative language comprehension and production served as guide to this research in selecting and validating the instruments used.

A unique technique employed in researches on figurative language processing is that of Bowdle and Gentner (2005), who used the Norming Approach in the classification of the type of figurative language. They conclude in their

research that the said approach involves the process of rating the selected figurative statements in terms of its conventionality and novelty.

Using one's native sociocultural concepts in the interpretation of figurative statements could be gleaned from previous studies dealing with figurative language processing. This view is supported by Lakoff (211) and Hall and Cook (301) who find using the native language facilitates the understanding of conceptual metaphors. Related to this premise is the evidence provided in the investigation of Kellerman (38) who corroborates the notion that language learners apply the process of transferring first language knowledge of figurative language-idioms in particular-in learning figurative language in the second language.

From the previously stated literature, it can be gleaned that few studies have been conducted in terms of figurative language comprehension. This can perhaps be explained by the fact that the comprehension process is less observable than the production process. It should be noted that the investigations on the figurative language have focused mostly on metaphors and little attention has been given to other types of tropes. The procedural aspects of some previous researches reflected the use of less naturalistic forms of language especially those that were involved in experiments with priming processes to elicit metaphoric or figurative language processing of an individual.

A common limitation of the students of figurative language is their focus only on the possible strategy and their exclusion of the other strategies. A careful review of the studies cited showed that the composition of different types of



strategies used in figurative language comprehension has not been done so far. Believing that it is possible—and needful to fulfill the said data and methodological gaps on the subject, this writer thus ventured to undertake this study.

## Chapter 3

### METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains a detailed presentation of the of the research design employed in this study. It also includes a discussion of the research instruments used in data gathering, the validation of the instruments, the sampling and data gathering procedures and the statistical treatment used.

#### Research Design

A combination of descriptive and correlational research designs was used in this study.

The primary objective of this study was to determine the strategies employed by selected freshmen of Samar State University in understanding figurative language. The researcher used the descriptive design since there was a need to describe the students' profile and the strategies these respondents used in understanding figurative language. This meant the focus was on the qualitative aspect of the data analysis.

To establish a well-rounded profile, a series of standardized tests was given to the student-respondents. The Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire for personality and the Bar-On Emotional Intelligence-Inventory for emotional quotient were used to collect data for the affective factors. The cognitive factors

were measured through the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) and the Culture Fair IQ Test.

A researcher-constructed interview schedule was used to develop the sociocultural profile of the subjects as well to ascertain the various strategies they employed in figurative language comprehension. The researcher used the Nvivo software to conduct a content analysis of the subjects' interview answers.

Another objective of this study was to determine if there is a significant correlation between sociocultural factors, affective factors, cognitive factors, English scores in the entrance test and the strategies used by the students in figurative language comprehension. This, in turn, called for a correlational research design and entailed a quantitative approach to data analysis.

Various statistical tools were used to aid in the analysis of the data. These were: frequency counts and percentages, weighted means, standard deviation, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and the Fisher's t-test.

### **Instrumentation**

To accumulate relevant and reliable data in obtaining the strategies of the identified respondents as well as the affective, cognitive and socio-cultural factors, the researcher used four sets of instruments.

One of these was the instrument for sociocultural factors which is a researcher-constructed questionnaire. This is a simple, self-administered instrument composed of a combination of open-ended and closed questions. This



instrument helped determine participant attributes like gender, hometown or locality, and as well as their socioeconomic status.

The respondents' affective factors were measured by administering two standardized tests, namely: the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire for personality and the Bar-On Emotional Intelligence-Inventory to test emotional quotient. The tests were conducted by a licensed psychometrician.

The Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) is a comprehensive measure of normal-range personality that is widely used in settings in which an in-depth, integrated picture of the whole person is needed. It is a test developed by Raymond B. Cattell, Maurice Tatsuoka and Herbert Eber. The test is a 185-item multiple-choice test, which is written at a fifth-grade reading level. The items sample a range of actual behaviors by asking questions about daily, concrete situations, rather than asking respondents to simply make a self-assessment of their personality traits as some instruments do (Cattell and Schuerger 11)

The Bar-On Emotional Intelligence (EQ-i) is composed of interpersonal, intrapersonal, stress, adaptability, general mood, inconsistency, and the total emotional quotient. It is a self-report measure designed to measure a number of constructs related to EI. The EQ-i consists of 133 items and takes approximately 30 minutes to complete. It gives an overall EQ score as well as scores for the following five composite scales and 15 subscales (Bar-On).

In order to quantify the cognitive factors, a third set of the research instrument was used. This set is composed of two standardized tests, the Strategy

Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) developed by Rebecca Oxford and the Culture Fair IQ Test.

The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) was used for determining the language learning strategies of the respondents. There are six (6) identified strategies for language learning. These are: remembering more effectively; using all your mental processes; compensating for missing knowledge; organizing and evaluating learning; managing your emotions; and learning with others.

The SILL was developed by Rebecca Oxford. Two versions of SILL are available. The first one is used for individuals whose native language is English, and they are learners of other languages than English. It consists of 80 items (Version 5.1). The second one is used with learners of English as a second or foreign language. It consists of 50 items (Version 7.0) (Fazeli 501).

For this study, the most suited test was the latter, SILL Version 7.0. This 50-item taxonomy covers six broad categories, each represented by a number of individual strategies (items). Each of the 50 statements describes what learners generally do while learning an L2, and students were asked to indicate the extent to which each statement reflects or describes what they themselves do (Khalil 111). Learners are asked to rate the statements on a separate answer sheet by marking the response (1, 2, 3, 4, or 5) that tells how true the statement is in terms of what they actually do when they are learning the new language. The rating scale is composed of the following scales: 1 for never or almost never true of me, 2 for

generally not true of me, 3 for somewhat true of me, 4 for generally true of me, 5 for always or almost true of me.

The Culture Fair Intelligence Test is a nonverbal measure of fluid intelligence first conceived in the 1920s by the prom-measurement psychologist Raymond B. Cattell. The goal of the CFIT is to measure fluid intelligence—analytical and reasoning ability in abstract and novel situations—in a manner that is as "free" of cultural bias as possible. It is a standardized test composed of non-verbal test items designed to measure individual intelligence quotient by reducing the influence of verbal fluency, culture climate, and educational level. It requires only that the examinee be able to perceive relationships in shapes and figures. Each scales contain four subtests involving different perceptual tasks so that the composite intelligence measure avoids spurious reliance on a single skill (Institute for Personality and Ability Testing).

The academic performance data were based on the respondents' SSU Entrance Exam score in English and Math.

The final section of the research instrument focused on the measurement and description of the respondents' strategies in figurative language comprehension.

The Figurative Language Comprehension Test aimed to determine the different strategies employed by the respondents in understanding the various figures of speech that were presented to them. The test is composed of six items. Each one representing some common tropes of figurative language, namely:



simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, irony and euphemism. Some of the stimulus statements in the test were based on previous studies of figurative language comprehension and production (Palagar 339; Bortfield and Mcglone 81).

The test was administered through a one-on-one interview session. The subjects were provided with six examples of figures of speech and were given time to process and explain what those figures of speech meant. Answers to each of the test items were categorized among the eight strategies previously identified by the researcher.

The test for this study was constructed to determine the strategies applied by the said language learners in comprehending figurative language statements. Strategies of figurative language comprehension could be determined through the type of response or interpretation that the interviewee provided.

In each item, there were eight possible strategies of figurative language comprehension : 1) making associations to other examples of figurative language; 2) translating the figurative language to one's native language; 3) making use of analogy; 4) making use of linguistic markers and attributes of figurative language; 5) resorting to the literal meaning of the figurative language; 6) making use of the avoidance strategy; 7) using repetition; and 8) using negation aspect of figurative language form.

This research instrument, while adapting the same characteristics of instruments used in previous studies, has incorporated other important features. For instance, one of the significant changes was that the test was given through an

interview instead of a pen-paper test. Furthermore, the test was not limited to metaphors and euphemisms, which are most common, but also included other types of figurative language.

The table below presents a set of prototype statements representing the nine strategies of comprehension used in this study:

Strategy	Prototype Statements
Using Other Examples of the Same Figurative Language	<p><u>Figurative Language Stimulus:</u> The eyes are the windows to the soul.</p> <p>This statement has the same meaning and structure as the statement "The eyes are doorways to a person."</p>
Translating the Figurative Language to One's Native Language	The meaning of this sentence can best be translated to "Ang mga mata ang bintana sa kaluluwa."
Using Analogy	The eye is compared to a window. When you look through an open window, there are many things that you can see or witness; the same thing can be said about the eyes.
Using Linguistic Markers and Attributes of Figurative Language	The word "eye" is compared to a "window." The word "window" has the connotation of having something inside which is a good descriptor of eyes to the soul.
Using the Literal Meaning of the Statement	The statement clearly states that if you look at a person's eyes, you are looking at their soul.

Strategy	Prototype Statements
Avoiding the Intended Meaning of the Statement	The speaker seems to hate his/her eyes.
Using Repetition Strategies	It is clearly stated in the sentence that the eyes are the windows to the soul.
Using Negation Strategies	The statement did not say that the eyes are not the windows to the soul.
Other strategies	This would depend on answer and explanations provided by the subjects.

### **Validation of Instrument**

In order to come up with a valid and reliable instrument, validation and dry run was conducted. The test was first submitted to the researcher's adviser and some English professors for critiquing and correction. It was also submitted to the panel members during the study's pre-oral defense for review.

As a dry run, the approved draft of the test was rolled out to 10 students from the Northwest Samar State University (NWSSU) on November 12. There were two students from each of the five colleges or departments in NWSSU that were identified as the subjects for the pilot testing. A letter of request was submitted to the various college deans requesting for two students from their respective colleges that would meet the prescribed criteria: enrolled freshmen and should have above average or high-level average performance in their mathematics subjects.



The results of the pilot testing were also subjected to content analysis using the Nvivo software to ascertain that the test achieved its purpose and gather the information needed in this study.

### **Sampling Procedure**

To get the necessary samples for this study, the stratified sampling procedure was used. The target of this study was the first year students of Samar State University who met the prerequisites which were: should have a rating of above average or high-level average in the Math subject of the entrance test and should be within the age of 16 to 20 years old.

Given the small number of students who met the requirements, the researcher used the total enumeration method and considered the total of 42 who met the criteria set as the total respondents for this study.

### **Data Gathering Procedure**

The researcher secured the approval of the deans of the various colleges of Samar State University through a letter of approval, duly noted by the university president, to allow the conduct of the study.

To secure a copy of the freshmen's entrance test scores in mathematics, a letter of request was presented to the university guidance counselor, noted by the vice president for Academic Affairs and approved by the university president.

After getting a list of students with above average or high-level average in the mathematics entrance test, the researcher enlisted the help of the university registrar to ascertain the status of the identified students.

Initially, there were 47 students who were included as respondents in the list but upon checking, five students were unofficially enrolled that they were removed from the respondent list.

Once the list of respondents was finalized, a separate request was submitted to the Office of Guidance Services to request for the English scores of the students in the entrance test.

The researcher proceeded to get in touch with the student-respondents through face to face conversation, phone call or text messaging to orient them of the study and to get their consent. Depending on their availability, the students were scheduled to take the standardized tests. Most of them were free on Saturdays so initial rollout of the tests was scheduled on December 5. A registered psychometrician was enlisted to administer the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF); the Bar-On Emotional Intelligence (EQ-i); the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL); and the Culture Fair IQ Test.

After taking the tests, the respondents were scheduled for a one-on-one interview. This covered the sociocultural questionnaire as well as the Figurative Language Comprehension Test. The data from the interviews underwent content analysis to provide more substance to the various strategies that the respondents used to comprehend figurative language.

### **Statistical Treatment of Data**

After all data were gathered, tallied, scored and tabulated, the researcher analyzed and treated the data statistically. The study used both descriptive and inferential statistical tools in analyzing the collected data. These statistical tools were mean, standard deviation, frequency distribution, percentage distribution, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, and Fisher's t-test for independent samples.

**Frequency counts and percentage.** This was used to organize the data on the profile of the student-respondents.

**Weighted means.** This was used to analyze and interpret the relative to the respondents' cognitive factors, academic performance, and different strategies in the comprehension of figurative language.

**Standard deviation.** This was used also in organizing the data on the profile of the student-respondents as well as in analyzing and interpreting their cognitive factors, academic performance, and the figurative language comprehension.

**Dependency burden ratio.** This was measured using the following indicators: dependency burden, educational attainment of parents, occupation of parents, and monthly family income. This was used to determine the respondent's socio-economic status.

#### **A. Dependency Burden Ratio**

The formula in finding the dependency burden ratio:



$$\text{D.B.R.} = \frac{\text{EN of persons earning}}{\text{EN of persons not earning}}$$

The score values in resulting quotient:

<u>Ratio</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Score</u>
0.40-below	High Dependency Burden	1
0.41-0.70	Average Dependency Burden	2
0.71-above	Low Dependency Burden	3

#### B. Educational Attainment

The categories of the educational attainment of the family income:

1. some elementary
2. elementary graduate
3. some high school
4. high school graduate
5. some college
6. vocational school graduate
7. college graduate (four-year course and others)

The following are the scores for educational attainment:

<u>Items on IQs</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Score</u>
1, 2	Elementary	1
3, 4	High School	2
5, 6, 7	College	3

#### C. Occupation of the Head of the Family

The categories of occupation are assigned on these scores:

<u>Scale Number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Score</u>
1	Unskilled laborers, farm workers with less than two has a land, most tenant farmers, landless farm laborers, some fish vendors	1
2	Skilled laborers, government clerks, classroom teachers, some <i>sari-sari</i> store owners, some clerks, owners of small farms, some fishermen, some tenant farmers, employees	2
3	Minor government officials, principal teacher, most businessmen, owners of medium and operating fishing boat. Large landowners, highly successful professionals, government officials, managers of big firms, big businessmen	3

D. Monthly Family Income

Questions regarding sources of family income aside from the monthly income of the head of the family include:

1. yield from agricultural land
2. rental house and/or lot
3. income from business and part-time jobs
4. salary and other aid in the form of money sent by children, relatives, and parents

5. pension or back pay
6. others

The income classification of the head of the family:

<u>Scale number</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Score</u>
Below P6,500.00	Low Income Group	1
P6,500.00-P19,999.00	Middle Income Group	2
P20,000.00 and above	Upper Income Group	3

The summary of the rank point assignment for socio-economic status:

### **Socio-Economic Status Rating Scale**

#### **A. Dependency Burden**

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
0.71 and above	0.41-0.70	0.40 and below

#### **B. Education**

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
Elementary	High School	College

#### **C. Occupation**

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
Scale 1	Scale 2	Scale 3

#### **D. Combined Family Income**

<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
Below P6,500.00	P6,500-P19,999	P20,000 and above

The respondents were classified into the following groups using the five indicators and rating scale as basis for measuring socio-economic status:

1.00 - 1.74	Low socio-economic status
1.75-2.69	Middle socio-economic status
2.70-3.00	High socio-economic status



**Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient.** This was used to determine the relationship between the social cultural factors, cognitive factors, affective factors, and the level of English language performance to the different strategies of figurative language competencies by the student-respondents.

## Chapter 4

### PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents a discussion of findings obtained from the various data-gathering procedures. This includes the sociocultural profile, affective profile, cognitive profile, English/reading performance in the entrance test and strategies in figurative language comprehension of selected freshmen of Samar State University.

The succeeding section focuses on the nature of correlation between the independent and dependent variables of the study. The last section tackles the content analysis of the various responses of the student-respondents during the figurative language comprehension interview.

#### Profile

This part presents the respondents' profile in terms of the identified sociocultural factors, affective factors, cognitive factors and their correlation with the figurative comprehension strategies of the student-respondents.

**Sociocultural profile.** The succeeding tables present the respondents' profile in terms of age, sex, parents' educational background, parents' occupation and other socio-economic factors.

**Age.** As may be gleaned from Table 1, the age group with the highest number was 17 years old with 17 students or 40.48 percent. On the other

hand, the age group with the lowest frequency was 20 years old with only three students, or only 7.14 percent.

Generally speaking, the ages of the student-respondents were 17 years old with a standard deviation of 1.21 years.

**Gender.** As observed from Table 1, 25 of the respondents, or 59.5 percent of the total sample were male and seventeen respondents, or 40.5 percent of the total sample, were female.

**Table 1**

**Age, Sex and Locality of the Respondents**

<b>Age</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Percent</b>
20	3	7.14
19	4	9.52
18	5	11.90
17	17	40.48
16	13	30.95
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>17.22 years</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>SD</b>	<b>1.21 years</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Gender</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Female	17	40.5
Male	25	59.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Locality</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Urban	25	59.5
Rural	17	4.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>



In general, there were more male student-respondents than female respondents.

**Locality.** From the same table, 59.5 percent of the sample came from urban areas or from different barangays within the borders of the city. On the other hand, 40.5 percent hailed from rural areas or neighboring municipalities like Jiabong, Motiong, Paranas, Villareal, Hinabangan, San Sebastian and Pinabacdao from the east; Tarangnan from the north and Daram and Zumarraga from the southwest direction.

In general, most of the respondents were from Catbalogan City.

**Socio-economic status.** Table 2 shows that there were 32 respondents, or 76.19 percent, that were from the middle income level. On the other hand, there were ten students, or 23.81 percent, who are from a low income level family.

Generally, the respondents for the study came from the middle class.

**Table 2**

**Socio-economic Status of the Student-respondents**

<b>Socio-Economic Status</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1-74 (Low Income Level)	10	23.81
1.75-2.69 (Middle Income Level)	32	76.19
2.70-3.00 (High Income Level)	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Parents' educational background.** Table 3 illustrates that, in terms of educational attainment among the respondents' fathers, 17 or 40.48 percent were able to reach college level. For the mothers, 15 or 35.71 percent reached college level. On the other hand, 16.67 percent of the respondents' fathers and 7.14 percent of their mothers were only able to reach elementary level.

**Table 3**  
**Educational Background of the Parents of the Student-respondents**

Educational Background	Father		Mother	
	f	Percent	f	Percent
College Graduate	6	14.29	11	26.19
College Level	17	40.48	15	35.71
High School Graduate	3	7.14	3	7.14
High School Level	2	4.76	0	0.00
Elementary Graduate	7	16.67	10	23.81
Elementary Level	7	16.67	3	7.14
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Occupation.** Based on the data reflected in Table 4, majority of the respondents' fathers work as skilled laborers, government clerks, classroom teachers, some sari-sari store owners, some clerks, owners of small farms.

It is also important to note that majority of the respondents' mothers which means a frequency count of 28 or 66.67 percent work as unskilled laborers, farm workers, tenant farmers, fish vendors and stay-at-home mothers.

**Table 4**  
**Occupation of the Parents of the**  
**Student-Respondents**

Occupation	Father		Mother	
	f	Percent	f	Percent
Minor government officials, principal teacher, most businessmen, owners of medium and operating fishing boat. large landowners, highly successful professionals, government officials, managers of big firms, big businessmen	3	7.14	3	7.14
Skilled laborers, government clerks, classroom teachers, some <i>sari-sari</i> store owners, some clerks, owners of small farms, some fishermen, some tenant farmers, employees	26	61.90	9	21.43
Unskilled laborers, farm workers with less than two has a land, most tenant farmers, landless farm laborers, some fish vendors	10	23.81	28	66.67
Not specified	3	7.14	2	4.76
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>



**Monthly income.** As shown in Table 5, a significant portion of the respondents, 42.8 percent, indicated a monthly income of less than Php6500. This can be attributed to the data on Table 4 which shows that the common occupation of the respondents, parents were unskilled laborers, farm workers, tenant farmers and fish vendors.

**Table 5**

**Monthly Income of the Respondents' Parents**

<b>Monthly Income</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Percent</b>
29,000-31,499	2	4.76
26,500-28,999	0	0.00
24,000-26,499	0	0.00
21,500-23,999	1	2.38
19,000-21,499	4	9.52
16,500-18,999	1	2.38
14,000-16,499	5	11.90
11,500-13,999	1	2.38
9,000-11,499	5	11.90
6,500-8,999	1	2.38
4,000-6,499	18	42.86
1,500-3,999	3	7.14
Not Specified	1	2.38
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>10251.22</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>SD</b>	<b>7456.712</b>	<b>-</b>

**Affective factors.** Two important components of the respondents' affective profile are presented in this section. Shown with accompanying statistical tables, these affective variables include their personality and emotional quotient.

**Personality.** Table 6 shows the personality profile of the respondents. Values are based on the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF), a standardized test administered by a psychometrician.

**Table 6**  
**Personality of the Student-respondents**

Factors	Low		Average		High		Total	Mean
	f	%	f	%	f	%		
Primary Factors								
Warmth	8	19.05	31	73.81	3	7.14	42	5
Reasoning	4	9.52	37	88.10	1	2.38	42	5
Emotional	6	14.29	35	83.33	1	2.38	42	5
Dominance	9	21.43	30	71.43	3	7.14	42	5
Liveliness	2	4.76	36	85.71	4	9.52	42	5
Rule-Consciousness	3	7.14	37	88.10	2	4.76	42	5
Social-Boldness	6	14.29	35	83.33	1	2.38	42	5
Sensitivity	8	19.05	32	76.19	2	4.76	42	5
Vigilance	0	0.00	27	64.29	15	35.71	42	7
Abstractedness	1	2.38	29	69.05	12	28.57	42	7
Privateness	0	0.00	31	73.81	11	26.19	42	6
Apprehension	1	2.38	35	83.33	6	14.29	42	6
Openness	5	11.90	30	71.43	7	16.67	42	6
Self-Reliance	13	30.95	25	59.52	4	9.52	42	5
Perfectionism	2	4.76	34	80.95	6	14.29	42	6
Tension	7	16.67	33	78.57	2	4.76	42	5
Global Factors								
Extraversion	8	19.05	33	78.57	1	2.38	42	5
Anxiety	0	0.00	33	78.57	9	21.43	42	6
Tough-mindedness	5	11.90	32	76.19	5	11.90	42	5
Independence	5	11.90	33	78.57	4	9.52	42	5
Self-control	3	7.14	38	90.48	1	2.38	42	5

Legend: 1-3 Low  
4-7 Average  
8-10 High

From the table, it can be gleaned that majority of the respondents were within the average standard ten score (STEN). The highest rating was on reasoning and rule-consciousness with a frequency count of 37 or 88.10 percent. The sample group was comfortable in using both concrete and abstract reasoning. They showed knowledge of the rules but they were open or positive to non-conforming in certain circumstances. The lowest rating was on self-reliance with a count of 25 or 59.52 percent. This result may be connected to the language learning strategy most often used, the social strategy.

**Emotional quotient.** Based on the data reflected in Table 7, the emotional quotient profile of the student-respondents, in general, was average in terms of adaptability, with a mean score of 98.64 and standard deviation of 14.62. The students did well in reality testing, flexibility and problem solving parts of the test.

The samples were very flexible and able to adjust to changing circumstances and situations. The responses to the Adaptability component of the test suggest that most of the respondents were practical, understood problematic situations, and could usually come up with effective solutions. Not only are these valuable personal attributes for home and family life, but those with good adaptability thrive in work settings that require someone who is "down-to-earth," has clear thinking, and adapts easily to changing demands.



Another factor where the respondents fared well was positive impression factor, with a mean score of 104.28 and a standard deviation of 15.61. The positive impression score indicates a tendency towards overly positive self-presentation, the tendency was small and should not have a major influence on the results and interpretation of the scores.

**Table 7**  
**Emotional Quotient of the Student-respondents**

Factor	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Intrapersonal	80.17	11.31	Low
Interpersonal	88.81	11.40	Low
Stress Management	76.90	12.17	Very Low
Adaptability	98.64	14.62	Average
General Mode	85.55	11.02	Low
Total EQ	80.95	10.35	Low
Positive Impression	104.28	15.61	Average
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>87.90</b>	<b>10.16</b>	<b>Low</b>

Legend:

130+	Markedly High
120-129	Very High
110-119	High
90-109	Average
80-89	Low
70-79	Very Low
Under 70	Markedly Low

**Cognitive factors.** The essential components of the respondents' cognitive profile are presented in this section.

**Language Learning Styles.** As observed in Table 8, most of the respondents used metacognitive strategies as well as social strategies in language learning. Based on the Strategy Inventory of Language Learning

(SILL), there were 12 respondents, or 28.57 percent of the sample, who used social strategies and the second most-used strategy, the metacognitive strategy indicated, with a frequency count of 10 or 23.81 percent.

**Table 8**

**Student-respondents' Language Learning Strategy**

<b>Learning Strategy</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Memorization Strategies	5	11.90
Cognitive Strategies	8	19.05
Compensation Strategies	4	9.52
Metacognitive Strategies	10	23.81
Affective Strategies	3	7.14
Social Strategies	12	28.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Metacognitive strategies are employed for managing the overall learning process. Some activities along this strategy are: identifying one's own learning style preferences and needs, planning for a second language task, gathering and organizing materials, arranging a study space and a schedule, monitoring mistakes, and evaluating task success, and evaluating the success of any type of learning strategy (Oxford 273).

Activities like asking questions to get verification, asking for clarification of a confusing point, asking for help in doing a language task, talking with a native-speaking conversation partner, and exploring cultural and social norms are part of social strategies. These strategies help the

learner work with others and understand the target culture as well as the language (Oxford 273). Social strategies were significantly associated with L2 proficiency in studies by the South African EFL study by Dreyer and Oxford (116) and the investigation of native-English-speaking foreign language learners by Oxford and Ehrman (68).

On the other hand, it may also be gleaned from the table that the least used were affective strategies with a frequency count of three or 7.14 percent.

**Intelligence Quotient.** Table 9 reveals that most of the respondents had average intelligence quotient (IQ), as indicated by the highest

**Table 9**

**Intelligence Quotient of the Student-respondents**

Score	f	Percent	Interpretation
130-144	3	7.14	Gifted
120-129	2	4.76	Superior
110-119	2	4.76	High Average
90-109	32	76.19	Average
80-89	1	2.38	Low Average
70-79	0	0.00	Boarder Line
55-69	2	4.76	Extremely Low
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>	-
<b>Mean</b>	<b>101.10</b>	-	<b>Average</b>
<b>SD</b>	<b>14.41</b>	-	-



frequency count of 32 or 76.19 percent. Three respondents, or 7.14 percent, were categorized as gifted and two other respondents, or 4.76 percent, had very superior I.Q. However, one respondent or 2.38 percent had low average I.Q., while two respondents, or 4.76 percent, had extremely low I.Q.

**English performance.** As gleaned from Table 10, majority of the respondents, with a frequency count of 34 or 80.95 percent, got an average level in English in the university entrance test. Only two, or 4.76 percent of the total sample, had above average scores in the same test. Furthermore, there were six respondents, or 14.29 percent, that got below average in the entrance test for English.

**Table 10**

**Entrance Test Scores of the Student-respondents for English**

<b>Score</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
51 - 55	2	4.76	Above Average
32 - 50	34	80.95	Average
0 - 31	6	14.29	Below Average
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>	-
<b>Mean</b>	<b>39.07</b>	-	<b>Average</b>
<b>SD</b>	<b>6.90</b>	-	-

**College affiliation.** From the data shown in Table 11, majority of the respondents, with a frequency count of 17 or 40.50 percent, were from the College of Education. A big portion, 35.7 percent or 15 students, was from the College of Engineering. Furthermore, only one student, or 2.40

percent of the sample, was from the College of Industrial Technology and College of Nursing and Health Sciences respectively.

**Table 11**  
**Respondents' College Affiliation**

<b>College Affiliation</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>Percent</b>
College of Arts and Sciences	8	19.00
College of Education	17	40.50
College of Engineering	15	35.70
College of Industrial Technology	1	2.40
College of Nursing and Health Sciences	1	2.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>

### **Figurative Language Comprehension Strategies**

The succeeding tables (Tables 12.1-12.3) detail the comprehension strategies used by the respondents for each of the identified figures of speech.

As shown in Table 12.1, the most commonly used strategy for comprehending hyperbole and simile was analogy with a frequency count of 23, or 54.76 percent, and 33 or 73.33 percent, respectively. Respondents showed more variation in strategy when interpreting a hyperbole with five different strategies compared to only three strategies employed for simile.

**Table 12.1**  
**Student-respondents' Strategies in the Comprehension**  
**of Figurative Language-Hyperbole and Simile**

Language Figurative Strategy	Hyperbole		Simile	
	f	%	F	%
Using Other Examples of the Same Figurative Language	4	9.52	0	0.00
Translating the Figurative Language to One's Native Language	0	0.00	0	0.00
Using Analogy	23	54.76	33	73.33
Using Linguistic Markers and Attributes of Figurative Language	13	30.95	8	17.78
Using the Literal Meaning of the Statement	0	0.00	0	0.00
Avoiding the Intended Meaning of the Statement	1	2.38	0	0.00
Using Repetition Strategies	1	2.38	1	2.22
Using Negation Strategies	0	0.00	0	0.00
Other Strategies	0	0.00	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Table 12.2 illustrates the comprehension strategies utilized by the respondents in order to comprehend metaphor and personification. The most frequent strategy for comprehending metaphor was analogy with a frequency count of 23, or 51.11 percent. On the other hand, majority of the students, or 51.11 percent, used linguistic markers and attributes of figurative language to understand personification.



Table 12.2

**Student-respondents' Strategies in the Comprehension  
of Figurative Language-Metaphor  
and Personification**

Language Figurative Strategy	Metaphor		Personification	
	f	%	f	%
Using Other Examples of the Same Figurative Language	0	0.00	0	0.00
Translating the Figurative Language to One's Native Language	2	4.44	2	4.44
Using Analogy	23	51.11	14	31.11
Using Linguistic Markers and Attributes of Figurative Language	8	17.78	23	51.11
Using the Literal Meaning of the Statement	9	20.00	1	2.22
Avoiding the Intended Meaning of the Statement	0	0.00	1	2.22
Using Repetition Strategies	0	0.00	1	2.22
Using Negation Strategies	0	0.00	0	0.00
Other Strategies	0	0.00	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>

As gleaned from Table 12.3, the students used varying techniques to understand the figures of speech presented to them. To comprehend irony, 14 students, or 33 percent, used analogy while 11 students, or 26.20 percent, used the literal meaning of the statement provided. In terms of euphemisms, the respondents predominantly used two strategies, namely linguistic markers and attributes of figurative language and determining the literal meaning of the sentences, with each one registering a frequency count of 20 or 47.60 percent.

Table 12.3

**Student-Respondents' Strategies in the Comprehension  
of Figurative Language-Irony and Euphemism**

Language Figurative Strategy	Irony		Euphemism	
	f	%	f	%
Using Other Examples of the Same Figurative Language	0	0.00	0	0.00
Translating the Figurative Language to One's Native Language	0	0.00	0	0.00
Using Analogy	14	33.00	2	4.80
Using Linguistic Markers and Attributes of Figurative Language	9	21.40	20	47.60
Using the Literal Meaning of the Statement	11	26.20	20	47.60
Avoiding the Intended Meaning of the Statement	0	0.00	0	0.00
Using Repetition Strategies	1	2.40	0	0.00
Using Negation Strategies	0	0.00	0	0.00
Other Strategies	7	17.00	0	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Correlation Between the Figurative Language  
Comprehension Strategies and  
Students' Profile**

This section details the correlation of identified components of the respondents' profiles to their comprehension strategies.

**Sociocultural factors.** Table 13 shows that gender, locality, and socio-economic status in terms of gender, locality, parents' occupation and average monthly income were not significantly related to the type of strategy used in

Table 13

**Correlation between the Figurative Language Comprehension  
Strategies and the Student-Respondents'  
Sociocultural Factors**

Sociocultural Factors	Chi-Square/ r-value	df	P-value	Evaluation
Gender	8.96	5	0.1108	Not Significant
Locality	7.02	5	0.2193	Not Significant
Mother's Occupation	18.84	15	0.221	Not Significant
Father's Occupation	12.81	15	0.617	Not Significant
Average Monthly Income	50.72	45	0.2583	Not Significant

figurative language comprehension. This is indicated by the p-values of the computed test statistics that were higher than 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis, which states that there is no significant correlation between gender, locality and socio-economic status and figurative language comprehension strategy, is accepted.

**Affective factors.** Table 14 shows that among the two identified affective factors, personality and emotional quotient, there was no significant correlation noted when compared with figurative language comprehension strategies. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.



Table 14

**Correlation between the Figurative Language Comprehension  
Strategies and the Student-respondents' Affective Factors**

<b>Affective Factors</b>	<b>Chi-Square Value</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>P-value</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
<b>Personality</b>				
Warmth	7.95	10	0.6339	Not Significant
Reasoning	6.04	10	0.8119	Not Significant
Emotional Stability	8.40	10	0.5903	Not Significant
Dominance	4.43	10	0.9261	Not Significant
Liveliness	3.76	10	0.9575	Not Significant
Rule-consciousness	2.82	10	0.9854	Not Significant
Social Boldness	5.30	10	0.8703	Not Significant
Sensitivity	11.82	10	0.2971	Not Significant
Vigilance	3.55	5	0.6159	Not Significant
Abstractedness	5.75	10	0.2971	Not Significant
Privateness	4.13	5	0.5307	Not Significant
Apprehension	7.71	5	0.1728	Not Significant
Openness to Change	8.11	10	0.61	Not Significant
Self-reliance	9.48	10	0.4871	Not Significant
Perfectionism	12.37	10	0.2613	Not Significant
Tension	7.85	10	0.6432	Not Significant
<b>Global Factors</b>				
Extraversion	5.39	10	0.8633	Not Significant
Anxiety	1.80	5	0.8759	Not Significant
Tough-mindedness	14.66	10	0.1449	Not Significant
Independence	16.44	10	0.0877	Not Significant
Self-control	5.76	10	0.8352	Not Significant
<b>Emotional Quotient</b>				
Intrapersonal	17.97	15	0.2143	Not Significant
Interpersonal	13.89	15	0.5341	Not Significant
Stress Management	19.12	15	0.2082	Not Significant
Adaptability	18.51	20	0.5538	Not Significant
General Mode	8.45	15	0.9046	Not Significant
Total EQ	14.00	20	0.8303	Not Significant
Positive Impression	26.97	25	0.3573	Not Significant

**Cognitive factors.** As observed in Table 15, both the identified cognitive variables of language learning style and intelligence quotient, were not significantly correlated. This is derived from the values of language learning style and intelligence quotient which p-values far exceeded the 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Table 15**

**Correlation between the Figurative Language Comprehension Strategies and the Student-respondents' Cognitive Factors**

<b>Cognitive Factors</b>	<b>r-value</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Evaluation</b>
Language Learning Style	0.047	0.771	Not Significant
Intelligence Quotient	-0.239	0.133	Not Significant

**English performance.** Table 16 illustrates that the student-respondents' entrance test scores in both English and math have no significant correlation to the strategies of figurative language comprehension.

Table 16

**Correlation between the Figurative Language Comprehension Strategies  
and the Student-respondents English Language Performance**

English Language Performance	r-value	df	p-value	Evaluation
Entrance Test Scores in Math	1.23	5	0.9424	Not Significant
Entrance Test Scores in Reading	54.07	15	2.55E-06	Significant

The subjects were asked to share their interpretation of the statement, "She cried a river when she heard the news." This sentence is an example of hyperbole.

Majority of the subjects pointed out that the sentence in front of them was not to be taken literally. They were able to note this immediately upon reading the sentence. They pointed out that the girl could not literally be crying a river because that would be impossible. Furthermore, they provided some characteristics of a river that represented or attributed the crying of the person referred to in the sentence. For instance, it was mentioned that rivers are fast-flowing and strong, and a number of the participants attributed this to the girl's crying being that the tears were falling fast and that she was crying a lot.



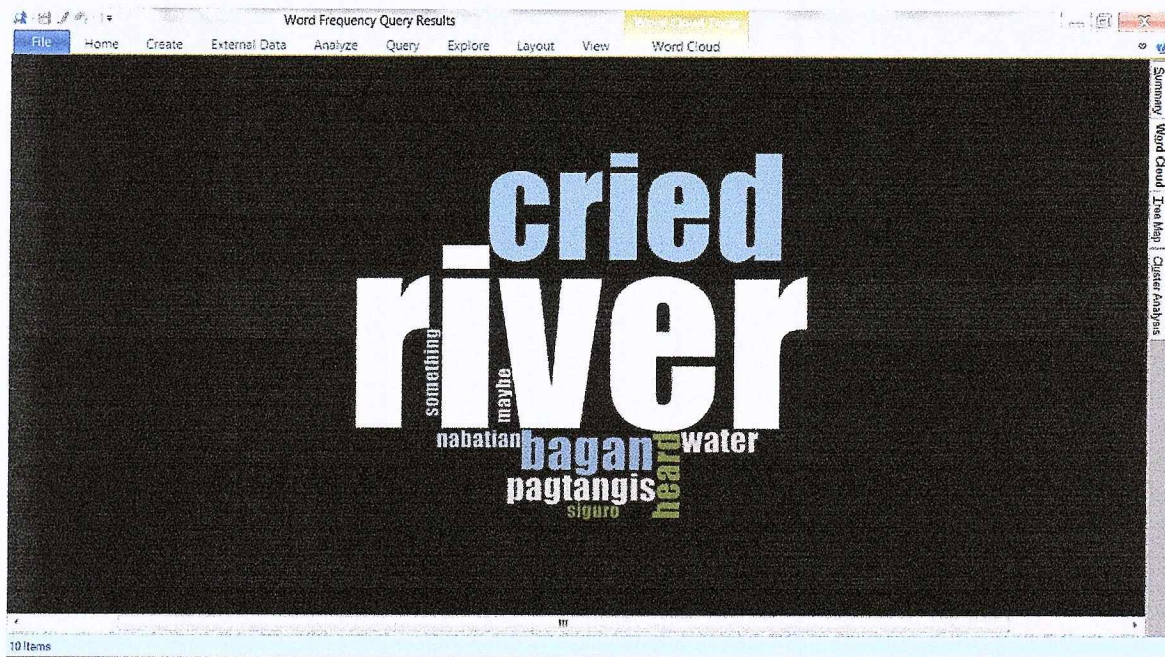


Figure 2. Word Cloud on Hyperbole

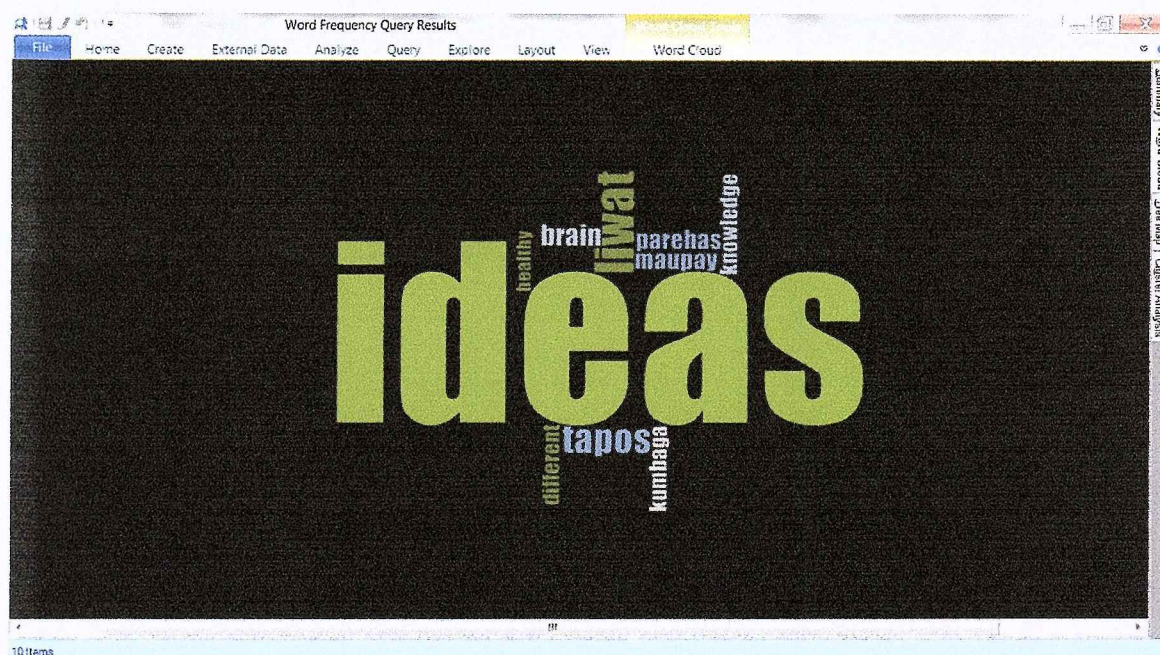
Another one pointed out was that rivers are continuously flowing, and it takes a lot of effort to stop a river from flowing. This was connected to the sentence that the girl was perceived to be crying ceaselessly or nonstop. The girl was crying too much that it would be hard to make her stop.

There were also interviewees who noted that the sentence presented was exaggerated. Some of them were even able to correctly determine that the figure of speech in the statement is a hyperbole. After identifying the figurative speech, they provided their interpretation of the statement. They claimed that this made the process easier for them since they knew this primarily because of the exaggeration which is a characteristic of hyperboles. When asked how this affected their interpretation of the sentence, it was found that ascertaining the type of figure of speech worked like a context clue that they used to help them in understanding the statement.

Majority of the students focused on the “news” that was mentioned in the sentence. Many suggested that the news that the girl heard was very tragic that involved her family or someone important to her which caused her to cry a lot.

The next sentence in the figurative comprehension test is, “Ideas are like food.” This is an example of simile. Similes are one of the most common figures of speech in the English language, surpassed only by metaphors in terms of usage (Oxford et al. 2014).





**Figure 3. Word Cloud on Simile**



It is very easy to identify a simile because of key words "like" and "as." This is precisely why all respondents were able to correctly identify the figure of speech type in the sentence even though they were not explicitly asked what type it was.

There was a wide range of answers provided by the students. They were also able to explain their train of thought really well. But this doesn't mean that everyone had an easy time interpreting or comprehending the statement. Notably, there were some who needed a few minutes to think about the sentence and figure out what it meant. When asked about the extra time they took, they explained that they needed a little more time to find the similarities between food and ideas.

There were three overall themes in the answers. The first one focused more on the intrinsic qualities similar to both food and ideas. There are food that are healthy and good for the body while there are those that will make someone sick. The same can be said with ideas. There are ideas that can be beneficial and advantageous to a person while there are also bad and ridiculous ideas that can be life-threatening or disadvantageous. To quote one of the interviewees, "Ideas are like food because there are good and bad food like there are good and bad ideas. It's up to us to establish if we will take the good ones or the bad ones."

Another theme focused on the purpose of food and ideas. Food is eaten, digested and absorbed by the body. This is necessary in order for the body to survive and for man to continue living. The same could be said for ideas. Ideas are read about or listened to, digested and absorbed by the mind. This is necessary

to add knowledge and even develop more ideas. "Ideas are like food maybe because food gives nutrients for our body to function well so ideas give us knowledge for our brains to function well. For us to have more ideas and knowledge about certain topics," expounded one of the respondents.

Some of the answers were also on the ubiquity of both food and ideas. Food can be found everywhere and the same can be said about ideas. We are surrounded with many possible sources of food, and everything around us can also inspire us to create and form ideas.

There was one explanation which was quite unique from all the answers provided. According to one of the students, "I agree that ideas are like food because just like food, food has many varieties like a hotdog could be something more than just hotdog like cheese dog. They're inventing new ways to make the food taste better. They cannot just stick with one food. They combine food, and there are so many seasonings and so many side dishes. This is just like ideas because an idea is so broad. You can think of new ideas about a certain situation every time like for example in a math problem, there isn't just one way to solve it. You can solve it in many different ways."

Littlemore (2003) points out that the use of metaphor pervades all languages and communication. In addition, Oxford et al. (2014) states that metaphors are so pervasive in language that it would be impossible for a person to speak without using metaphor at some point, whether knowingly or not.

The third statement in the comprehension test, "Life is a gambling game," had a metaphor in it. Since metaphors are easily recognizable, all the interviewees were able to ascertain the type of figurative speech.

Most respondents compared the attributes of a gambling game to life. One student said that life in itself is a gamble because "there will be instances when we need to make a choice or a decision. We try to make the best decision from what we know but the truth is, we sometimes do not know if we made the right or wrong choice. That's what makes life a gamble; there are no guarantees."

Some cited the fact that life is unpredictable, and there is no way to tell what is going to happen next. It is unstable because in our lives, sometimes, we are forced to take a risk. Because it is a risk, we do not know if we will win or lose. Just like when you gamble. Another reason why life is like a gambling game, according to some of the respondents, is because "in life we have to take a chance. Sometimes we have to let go and gamble."

Life is also very inconsistent. As a couple of respondents mentioned, "It has been said that life is a wheel. We do not really know when it will turn. One day we are on top, and the next day we may be at the bottom."

There were also some advice and words of wisdom shared by the respondents. Majority of the interviewees emphasized that willingness to take risks is needed to be successful in life. It is also important to know what





Figure 4. Word Cloud on the Metaphor

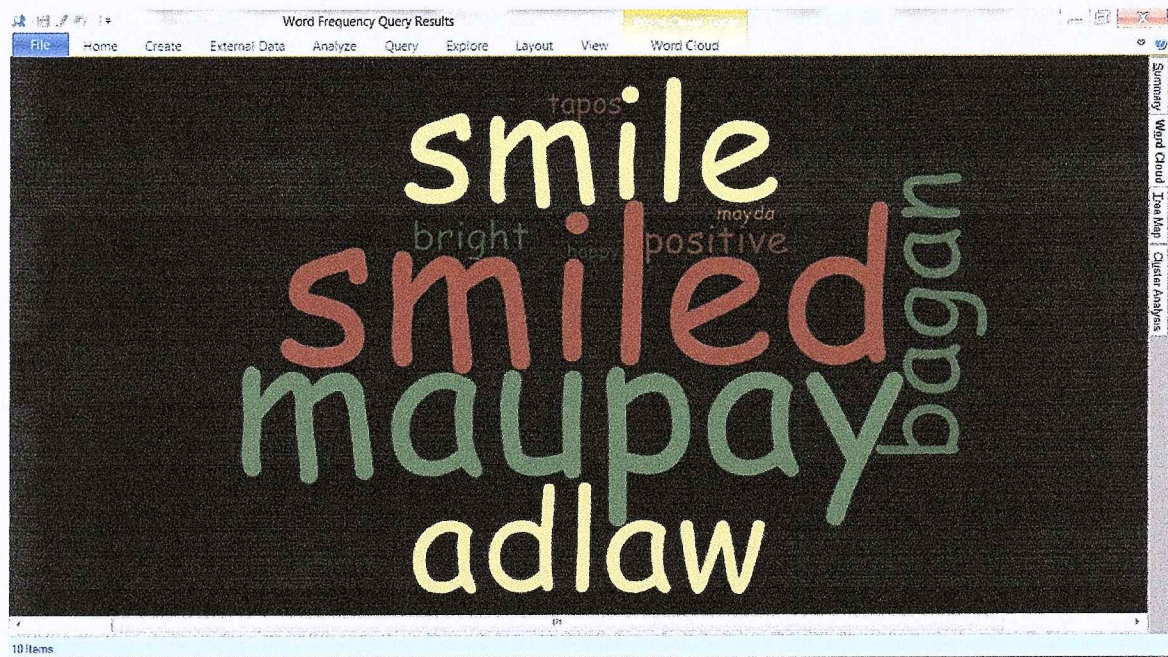
strategies and techniques help minimize those risks. "Sometimes, it's about being wise. When you are in a game, you should know many different techniques. You also need to have confidence and to be competent enough to survive."

The next sentence is "The sun smiled down on her." This contains an example of personification. Compared to the previous sentences, some respondents struggled to verbalize what they understood from the sentence. They also did not attempt to determine the type of figure of speech.

Respondents attributed a very positive and happy meaning to the statement. "That day is a sunny that's why the sun smiled down on her. The word sun and smile tells me it's a bright day," said one of the respondents. Another pointed out that "the sun is shining brightly like it is smiling on the girl. When you say the sun smiled, it means the sun is smiling brightly." Furthermore, one of the respondents even related this sentence to another one with a similar structure. He said, "The day is good. It's not rainy or cloudy. You can see that the sky is clear and the sun is shining. I think this is similar to when somebody says 'the world is crying when it rains'."

Some of the subjects took "sun" as a symbolism for morning or start of a new day. One student explained that since the sun rising in the morning signifies the start of a new day, and the sun setting at nighttime indicates the end of a day. So, the word "sun" or even a drawing or picture of it brings out those





**Figure 5. Word Cloud on the Personification**



meanings. It means it is "good luck for the day. It means that she will have a good day. It's almost as if the sun is giving her a chance for this day. The word 'sun' tells me it's just the beginning of the day and she has the whole day ahead of her."

One of the respondents talked about inspiration and motivation as symbolized by the "sun." "For me, if one person is truly happy, the way she sees things is different. Everything is bright when a person is happy and everything is gloomy and dark if the person is sad. So, the way I see it, the girl in the sentence is very happy because in her eyes, the sun is smiling down at her."

Irony is a device of both mind and language for acknowledging gap between what is expected and what is observed (Gibbs Jr. and Colston 122). Irony is one of the most challenging figurative speeches to detect and understand because it involves a more complicated process. One major theory is that irony is understood as a secondary meaning after the primary semantic meaning has been analyzed and rejected in the present context (Gibbs Jr. and Colston, 124).

In the entire comprehension test, the subjects had a hard time interpreting this. This difficulty is not isolated here but has already been observed in other similar studies.

The respondents were asked to read an excerpt from a long poem:

Water, water everywhere  
and all the boards did shrink.  
Water, water everywhere  
nor any drop to drink. (Coleridge 1978)

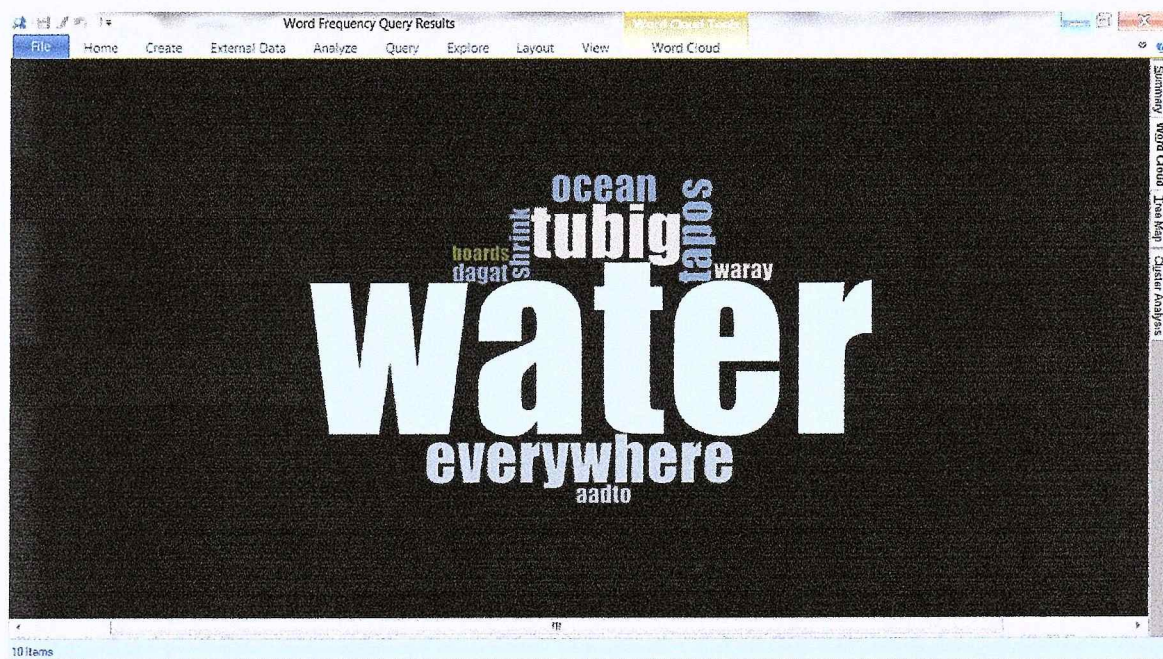


Figure 6. Word Cloud on the Irony

The students were asked to read and understand the excerpt and deduce where the setting of the poem is. They were also given ample time to justify their answer or to elucidate more on the topic.

After a closer look at the transcription, it was noted that majority of the answers to this item were polarized. It seemed that they only had two choices for their answers although there were slight variations noted in their explanations.

Some of the students interpreted the poem and the irony in the excerpt to mean that the setting for the poem was in the desert. This is primarily because of the allusion that there was "nor any drop to drink." The first thing that came to their minds when thinking of a place with no water to drink were be hot and dry places like Africa and other deserts.

Some, on the other hand, decided that because of the clues in the lines especially the "water, water everywhere" and "nor any drop to drink," the setting for the poem is in the middle of the sea where somebody might be surrounded by water, but since it is sea water, it is not safe to drink.

The last item in the comprehension test goes this way, "We won't be able to hang out with Shirley anymore. She already met her maker." The latter of the two sentences contains a euphemism which is another type of figurative language.

The responses collected can be categorized into three themes. Some students explained that the euphemism "met her maker" meant that Shirley is



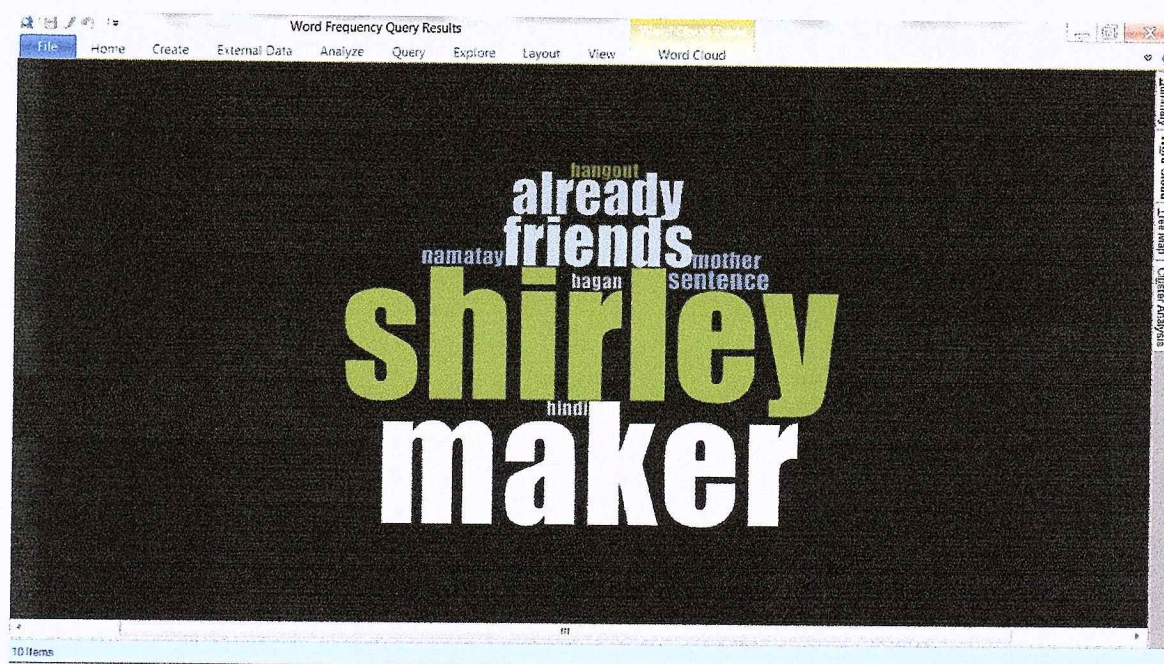


Figure 7. Word Cloud on the Euphemism

dead already. This is based on the belief that all creatures come from a powerful entity, a god who made us and everything around us. Therefore, the word “maker” pertains to God. So along this context, “met her maker” means that Shirley is already with God.

On the other hand, some subjects took their interpretation on a different light. The word “maker” refers to Shirley’s parents, specifically her mother. The explanation is almost the same as the first theme. Parents are the ones who give life to their children, nurture them and support them so they attributed the word “maker” to the parents. In this case, Shirley cannot be with her friends anymore because she needs to be with her parents.

A small portion of the respondents chose to derive their explanations from context clues in the sentences. The word “maker” meant somebody who completes Shirley so the reason she cannot be with her friends anymore is because she has found herself a boyfriend or a husband that she will be spending a lot of her time with.

### **Inputs to Instruction**

The study puts into perspective some information that may prove essential in the context of classroom instruction.

1. Generally, the male respondents do well in Mathematics than females. This trend can be seen in the sample for the study which is predominantly male.

2. Generally, learners are very sociable and interactive. This is supported in the personality test where the respondents had low ratings in self-reliance and in the emotional quotient test where the respondents did well in adaptability and considering that most frequently used strategy in figurative language is social strategy.



## Chapter 5

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the salient findings, conclusions, and recommendation of the study.

#### Summary of Findings

The following were the salient findings derived from the study:

1. The mean age of the student-respondents was 17 years old with a standard deviation of 1.21 years.
2. Twenty-five or 59.5 percent of the respondents were males, while 17 or 40.5 percent, were females.
3. Twenty-five or 59.5 percent of the respondents were from the urban area while 17 or 40.5 percent of the sample hailed from rural areas.
4. For the students' socio-economic status, there were 32 or 76.19 percent of the total sample from the middle-income level while the rest of the respondents, 10 or 23.81 percent, belonged to the low-income level.
5. Six or 14.29 percent of the respondents' fathers were able to finish college and get a degree. On the other hand, there were 11 or 26.19 percent of the respondents' mothers who were able to secure baccalaureate degrees.
6. In terms of parents' occupation, 26 or 61.90 percent of the fathers were skilled laborers, government clerks, classroom teachers, *sari-sari* store

owners, clerks, owners of small farms, and self-employed; while 28, or 66.67 percent, mothers were unskilled laborers, homemakers and stay-at-home mothers.

7. In terms of monthly average income, 18 or 42.8 percent of the families indicated earning a monthly income of Php 4,000–Php 6,499.

8. In terms of their personality, the majority was within the average standard ten score (STEN). The highest rating was on reasoning and rule-consciousness with a frequency count of 37 or 88.10 percent, while the lowest rating was on self-reliance with a count of 25 or 59.52 percent.

9. For emotional quotient, the highest rated were the adaptability factor with a mean of 98.64 and standard deviation of 14.62; and the positive impression factor with a mean of 104.28 and standard deviation in 15.61. Both factors were interpreted to be at the average level.

10. Twelve respondents, or 28.57 percent, used social strategies in learning a second language. The second most-used strategy was the metacognitive strategy with a frequency count of 10 or 23.81 percent of the total sample.

11. Majority of the respondents' intelligence quotients were "average" with a frequency count of 32 or 72.19, percent while three respondents or 7.14 percent, were identified "gifted."

12. Majority of the respondents, with a frequency count of 34 or 80.95 percent, got an average level in English in the university entrance test. On the other hand, six respondents, or 14.29 percent, got below average.

13. Majority of the respondents, with a frequency count of 17 or 40.50 percent, were from the College of Education. A big portion, 35.7 percent or 15 students, of the samples were from the College of Engineering.

14. In terms of figurative language comprehension strategy, the most commonly used strategy was analogy with a frequency count of 109 or 43.25 percent. The use of linguistic markers in a figurative language statement is the second commonly used strategy, with a frequency count of 81 or 32.14 percent.

15. The most commonly used strategy for comprehending hyperbole and simile was analogy with a frequency count of 23 or 54.76 percent and 33 or 73.33 percent, respectively.

16. The most frequent strategy for comprehending metaphor was analogy with a frequency count of 23 or 51.11 percent. On the other hand, majority of the students, or 51.11 percent, used linguistic markers and attributes of figurative language to understand personification.

17. In terms of strategy used to comprehend irony, 14 students, or 33 percent, used analogy, while 11 or 26.20 percent used the literal meaning of the statement provided. For euphemisms, the respondents predominantly used two strategies, namely, (a) linguistic markers and attributes of figurative language and (b) determining the literal meaning of the sentences, with each one registering a frequency count of 20 or 47.60 percent.

18. With regard to the relationship between the identified sociocultural factors and figurative language comprehension strategy used, it was ascertained



that the respondents' age, gender, locality, parents' educational level and occupation and socio-economic status were not significantly correlated to the type of strategy used by the respondents in comprehending figurative language.

19. Pertaining to the relationship between the identified affective factors and figurative language comprehension strategy, it was also determined that there was significant correlation between the figurative strategy comprehension strategy and the personality and the emotional quotient of the respondents.

20. In terms of the connection between the identified cognitive factors and figurative language comprehension strategy, there was no significant correlation between the students' intelligence quotient and language learning style and the figurative strategy comprehension strategy that the respondents used.

21. For the relationship between the student-respondents entrance test scores in both English and Math and their figurative strategy comprehension strategy, it was revealed that there was no significant correlation between the two variables.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the aforementioned findings, the following conclusions were considered:

1. As to the respondents' sociocultural profile, the mean age of the student-respondents was 17 years old. The sample group was dominantly male and majority came from urban areas. Their mothers were more educationally

qualified than their fathers. Most of the respondents' mothers were full-time housewives while their fathers were mostly fishermen and self-employed. In addition, majority of the respondents were of middle-income level in their socio-economic status.

2. As to the relationship between the respondents' figurative language comprehension strategy and their sociocultural profile variates, it was found that the age of the respondents was not significant to the strategy in comprehension used.

3. It was also determined that there was no connection between the respondents' gender and their figurative language comprehension strategy.

4. There was also no connection observed between the socio-economic status of the respondents and their figurative language comprehension strategy.

5. In terms of the student-respondents' affective profile, it was determined that this sample group was adaptable and had a very positive impression of themselves for their emotional quotient.

6. As to the relationship between the respondents' figurative language comprehension strategy and their affective profile variates, it was found that the emotional quotient of the students was not significant to the strategy in figurative language comprehension they used.

7. It was also determined that the emotional quotient of the students was not significant to the strategy in figurative language comprehension they used. For the respondents' cognitive profile, it was ascertained that most of the

respondents used the social strategy in language learning while most of the respondents were categorized as “average” in terms of intelligence quotient.

8. As to the relationship between the respondents’ figurative language comprehension strategy and their cognitive profile variates, the intelligence quotient of the students was not significant to the strategy in figurative language comprehension they used.

9. There was also no connection between the language learning strategy of the student-respondents and their figurative comprehension strategy.

10. Using analogy was the most commonly used figurative language comprehension strategy that the student-respondents preferred to use during the comprehension test.

11. Majority of the student-respondents’ entrance test scores were average.

12. There was no relationship between the students’ entrance test performance and their figurative language comprehension strategies.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are considered relevant in view of improving the English Instructional Program for English language teachers of Samar State University.

1. There should be a shift in the focus of English classroom instructions specifically in the teaching of reading skills and literature. Traditionally, classroom



activities tend to be along the line of memorization strategies, compensation or even cognitive strategies. However, based on the output of the study, course syllabi should incorporate and utilize various activities that promote the metacognitive and social strategies in learning a second language as well.

2. Language teachers may offer a wider selection of activities, performance tasks, and motivational activities so as to catch and retain the interest of the students. L2 teachers may also consider alternative methods of assessment and to be more flexible and open to various interpretations of nonliteral language like figures of speech.

3. Since this study is focused only on the strategies in figurative language comprehension, future researchers should try to investigate on the skill of figurative language production and also try to investigate on the impact of the level of figurative language comprehension and production to academic performance.

4. Future studies in the area of nonliteral language may also consider using other types of figurative language aside from hyperbole, simile, metaphor, personification, irony and euphemism.

5. Another area that could be investigated is the use of other instruments for measuring English language performance like non-traditional or alternative assessment tools.

6. Further research can be done to examine the teaching strategies used by English teachers in high school as there may be a link to the frequently-used strategies used by students in figurative language comprehension.

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## A P P E N D I C E S

**APPENDIX A**

**Republic of the Philippines  
SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Graduate Studies  
Catbalogan City**

November 23, 2015

**DR. EUSEBIO T. PACOLOR  
University President  
This University  
Catbalogan City**

**ATTENTION:DR. FLORABELLE B. PATOSA  
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences  
This University**

Sir:

The undersigned is a graduate student of Samar State University, Catbalogan City. She is conducting a research study entitled "**Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University.**"

In this regard, she would like to ask permission from your good office if you would allow her to conduct an interview to selected first year students from the College of Arts and Sciences. The data which will be gathered will serve as bases for the analyses and interpretation of the study.

Hoping for your favorable approval and accommodation on this request.

Respectfully yours,

**MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA  
Researcher**

**Recommending Approval:**

**FLORABELLE B. PATOSA, Ph. D.  
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences**

**Approved:**

**EUSEBIO T. PACOLOR, Ph. D.  
University President**

Republic of the Philippines  
SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Graduate Studies  
Catbalogan City

November 23, 2015

**DR. EUSEBIO T. PACOLOR**  
University President  
This University  
Catbalogan City

**ATTENTION:DR. ALEX A. CARDOSO**  
Dean, College of Industrial Technology  
This University

Sir:

The undersigned is a graduate student of Samar State University, Catbalogan City. She is conducting a research study entitled "**Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University.**"

In this regard, she would like to ask permission from your good office if you would allow her to conduct an interview to selected first year students from the College of Industrial Technology. The data which will be gathered will serve as bases for the analyses and interpretation of the study.

Hoping for your favorable approval and accommodation on this request.

Respectfully yours,

**MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA**  
Researcher

**Recommending Approval:**

**ALEX A. CARDOSO, Ph. D.**  
Dean, College of Industrial Technology

**Approved:**

**EUSEBIO T. PACOLOR, Ph. D.**  
University President



Republic of the Philippines  
SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Graduate Studies  
Catbalogan City

November 23, 2015

DR. EUSEBIO T. PACOLOR  
University President  
This University  
Catbalogan City

ATTENTION: VICTORIA M. TAFALLA, Ph. D.  
Dean, College of Education  
This University

Sir:

The undersigned is a graduate student of Samar State University, Catbalogan City. She is conducting a research study entitled "**Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University.**"

In this regard, she would like to ask permission from your good office if you would allow her to conduct an interview to selected first year students from the College of Education. The data which will be gathered will serve as bases for the analyses and interpretation of the study.

Hoping for your favorable approval and accommodation on this request.

Respectfully yours,

MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA  
Researcher

Recommending Approval:

VICTORIA M. TAFALLA, Ph.D.  
Dean, College of Education

Approved:

EUSEBIO T. PACOLOR, Ph. D.  
University President

Republic of the Philippines  
SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Graduate Studies  
Catbalogan City

November 25, 2015

**DR. EUSEBIO T. PACOLOR**  
University President  
This University  
Catbalogan City

**ATTENTION: ENGR. MA. LOURDES P. AMANTE**  
Dean, College of Engineering  
This University

Sir:

The undersigned is a graduate student of Samar State University, Catbalogan City. She is conducting a research study entitled **"Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University."**

In this regard, she would like to ask permission from your good office if you would allow her to conduct an interview to selected first year students from the College of Engineering. The data which will be gathered will serve as bases for the analyses and interpretation of the study.

Hoping for your favorable approval and accommodation on this request.

Respectfully yours,

**MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA**  
Researcher

Noted:

**REDENTOR S. PALENCIA, Ed. D.**  
Thesis Adviser

Recommending Approval:

**ENGR. MA. LOURDES P. AMANTE**  
Dean, College of Engineering

Approved:

**EUSEBIO T. PACOLOR, Ph. D.**  
University President

Republic of the Philippines  
SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Graduate Studies  
Catbalogan City

November 23, 2015

DR. EUSEBIO T. PACOLOR  
University President  
This University  
Catbalogan City

ATTENTION: DR. DOLORES L. ARTECHE  
Dean, College of Nursing  
This University

Sir:

The undersigned is a graduate student of Samar State University, Catbalogan City. He is conducting a research study entitled "**Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University.**"

In this regard, she would like to ask permission from your good office if you would allow her to conduct an interview to selected first year students of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. The data which will be gathered will serve as bases for the analyses and interpretation of the study.

Hoping for your favorable approval and accommodation on this request.

Respectfully yours,

MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA  
Researcher

Recommending Approval:

DR. DOLORES L. ARTECHE  
Dean, College of Nursing

Approved:

EUSEBIO T. PACOLOR, Ph. D.  
University President

**Republic of the Philippines  
SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Graduate Studies  
Catbalogan City**

October 19, 2015

**DR. EUSEBIO T. PACOLOR  
University President  
This University  
Catbalogan City**

**ATTENTION: MAE SMILE V. CAÑAL, RGC  
Head, Guidance Services  
This University**

Sir:

The undersigned is presently conducting a research entitled "Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University."

In this regard, she would like to ask permission from your good office if you would allow her to obtain the entrance test results for the Mathematics and English subjects for the incoming first year students for S.Y. 2015 - 2016. The data which will be gathered will serve as bases for the analyses and interpretation of the study.

Hoping for your favorable approval and accommodation on this request.

Respectfully yours,

**MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA  
Researcher**

**Recommending Approval:**

**MARILYN D. CARDOSO, Ph. D.  
Vice President for Academic Affairs**

**Approved:**

**EUSEBIO T. PACOLOR, Ph. D.  
University President**



Republic of the Philippines  
SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Graduate Studies  
Catbalogan City

April 19, 2016

DR. MARILYN D. C ARDOSO  
University President  
This University  
Catbalogan City

ATTENTION: MAE SMILE V. CAÑAL, RGC  
Head, Guidance Services  
This University

Ma'am:

The undersigned is presently conducting a research entitled "**Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University.**"

In this regard, she would like to ask permission from your good office if you would allow her to obtain the entrance test results for all incoming freshmen students for the past three years. This data will help the researcher in painting an objective situationer which will provide a more solid foundation for the study.

Hoping for your favorable approval and accommodation on this request.

Respectfully yours,

MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA  
Researcher

Noted:

REDENTOR S. PALENCIA, Ed. D.  
Thesis Adviser

Recommending Approval:

VICTORIA M. TAFALLA, Ph. D.  
Dean, College of Graduate Studies  
Approved:

MARILYN D. CARDOSO, Ph. D.  
University President

Republic of the Philippines  
SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Graduate Studies  
Catbalogan City

October 21, 2015

DR. AVELINA N. BERGADO  
University President  
Northwestern Samar State University  
Calbayog City, Samar

ATTENTION: HELEN S. CABRAL, Ph. D.  
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences  
Northwestern Samar State University

Ma'am:

The undersigned is a graduate student of Samar State University, Catbalogan City. She is conducting a research study entitled "**Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University.**"

In this regard, she would like to ask permission from your good office if you would allow her to conduct a pilot testing on the study's interview schedule for validation. Furthermore, she would like to request to get two respondents from all the various colleges to undergo the pilot testing. The two respondents identified in each college should have "above average" performance in their Mathematics subject. The data which will be gathered on the said testing will serve as bases on the making of the final copy of the said research instruments.

Hoping for your favorable approval and accommodation on this request.

Respectfully yours,

MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA  
Researcher

Recommending Approval:

HELEN S. CABRAL, Ph. D.  
Dean, College of Arts and Sciences  
Approved:

AVELINA N. BERGADO, Ed. D.  
University President

Republic of the Philippines  
SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Graduate Studies  
Catbalogan City

October 21, 2015

DR. AVELINA N. BERGADO  
University President  
Northwestern Samar State University  
Calbayog City, Samar

ATTENTION: ROMEO B. SANTOS, ME  
Dean, College of Engineering and Technology  
Northwestern Samar State University

Ma'am:

The undersigned is a graduate student of Samar State University, Catbalogan City. She is conducting a research study entitled **"Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University."**

In this regard, she would like to ask permission from your good office if you would allow her to conduct a pilot testing on the study's interview schedule for validation. Furthermore, she would like to request to get two respondents from the all the various colleges to undergo the pilot testing. The two respondents identified in each college should have "above average" performance in their Mathematics subject. The data which will be gathered on the said testing will serve as bases on the making of the final copy of the said research instruments.

Hoping for your favorable approval and accommodation on this request.

Respectfully yours,

MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA  
Researcher

Recommending Approval:

ROMEO B. SANTOS, ME  
Dean, College of Engineering and Technology  
Approved:

AVELINA N. BERGADO, Ed. D.  
University President



Republic of the Philippines  
**SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY**  
 College of Graduate Studies  
 Catbalogan City

October 21, 2015

**DR. AVELINA N. BERGADO**  
 University President  
 Northwestern Samar State University  
 Calbayog City, Samar

**ATTENTION: NANCY L. GETALADO, Ph. D.**  
 Dean, College of Information Technology  
 Northwestern Samar State University

Ma'am:

The undersigned is a graduate student of Samar State University, Catbalogan City. She is conducting a research study entitled **"Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University."**

In this regard, she would like to ask permission from your good office if you would allow her to conduct a pilot testing on the study's interview schedule for validation. Furthermore, she would like to request to get two respondents from the all the various colleges to undergo the pilot testing. The two respondents identified in each college should have "above average" performance in their Mathematics subject. The data which will be gathered on the said testing will serve as bases on the making of the final copy of the said research instruments.

Hoping for your favorable approval and accommodation on this request.

Respectfully yours,

**MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA**  
 Researcher

**Recommending Approval:**

**NANCY L. GETALADO, Ph. D.**  
 Dean, College of Information Technology  
 Approved:

**AVELINA N. BERGADO, Ed. D.**  
 University President



Republic of the Philippines  
SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Graduate Studies  
Catbalogan City

October 21, 2015

DR. AVELINA N. BERGADO  
University President  
Northwestern Samar State University  
Calbayog City, Samar

ATTENTION: ENRIQUE MONTECALVO, Ph. D.  
Dean, College of Education  
Northwestern Samar State University

Ma'am:

The undersigned is a graduate student of Samar State University, Catbalogan City. She is conducting a research study entitled "**Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University.**"

In this regard, she would like to ask permission from your good office if you would allow her to conduct a pilot testing on the study's interview schedule for validation. Furthermore, she would like to request to get two respondents from the all the various colleges to undergo the pilot testing. The two respondents identified in each college should have "above average" performance in their Mathematics subject. The data which will be gathered on the said testing will serve as bases on the making of the final copy of the said research instruments.

Hoping for your favorable approval and accommodation on this request.

Respectfully yours,

MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA  
Researcher

Recommending Approval:

ENRIQUE MONTECALVO, Ph. D.  
Dean, College of Education  
Approved:

AVELINA N. BERGADO, Ed. D.  
University President

Republic of the Philippines  
SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Graduate Studies  
Catbalogan City

October 21, 2015

DR. AVELINA N. BERGADO  
University President  
Northwestern Samar State University  
Calbayog City, Samar

ATTENTION: LEO JESUS M. LACABA, DM  
Dean, College of Education  
Northwestern Samar State University

Ma'am:

The undersigned is a graduate student of Samar State University, Catbalogan City. She is conducting a research study entitled "**Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University.**"

In this regard, she would like to ask permission from your good office if you would allow her to conduct a pilot testing on the study's interview schedule for validation. Furthermore, she would like to request to get two respondents from all the various colleges to undergo the pilot testing. The two respondents identified in each college should have "above average" performance in their Mathematics subject. The data which will be gathered on the said testing will serve as bases on the making of the final copy of the said research instruments.

Hoping for your favorable approval and accommodation on this request.

Respectfully yours,

MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA  
Researcher

Recommending Approval:

LEO JESUS M. LACABA, DM  
Dean, College of Management  
Approved:

AVELINA N. BERGADO, Ed. D.  
University President

Republic of the Philippines  
SAMAR STATE UNIVERSITY  
College of Graduate Studies  
Catbalogan City

October 21, 2015

**DR. AVELINA N. BERGADO**  
University President  
Northwestern Samar State University  
Calbayog City, Samar

Ma'am:

The undersigned is a graduate student of Samar State University, Catbalogan City. She is conducting a research study entitled "**Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University.**"

In this regard, she would like to ask permission from your good office if you would allow her to conduct a pilot testing on the study's interview schedule for validation. The data which will be gathered on the said testing will serve as bases on the making of the final copy of the said research instruments.

Hoping for your favorable approval and accommodation on this request.

Respectfully yours,

**MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA**  
Researcher

Noted:

**MARILYN D. CARDOSO, Ph. D.**  
Dean, College of Graduate Studies

Approved:

**AVELINA N. BERGADO, Ed. D.**  
University President



## APPENDIX B

## RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

Name of Researcher: Mae Saschiel P. Montallana
Title of the Study: Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University.

Please read and complete this form carefully. If you are willing to participate in this study, ring the appropriate responses and sign and date the declaration at the end. If you do not understand anything and would like more information, please ask.

- I have had the research satisfactorily explained to me in verbal and / or written form by the researcher. YES / NO
- I understand that the research will involve: an EQ test, IQ test, Personality Test, Strategy Inventory in Language Learning and an audio taped one-on-one 30-minute interview. YES / NO
- I understand that I may withdraw from this study at any time without having to give an explanation. YES / NO
- I understand that all information about me will be treated in strict confidence and that I will not be named in any written work arising from this study. YES / NO
- I understand that any audiotape material of me will be used solely for research purposes and will be destroyed on completion of your research. YES / NO
- I understand that you will be discussing the progress of your research with others YES / NO

I freely give my consent to participate in this research study and have been given a copy of this form for my own information.

Signature over Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX C

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### I. Opening

- A. (Establish Rapport) [shake hands] Hi, thank you for coming/showing up to our scheduled interview. How are you doing today? The other day, I explained what this study is about and what it entails. Let me just repeat that. This study is entitled "Strategies in Figurative Language Comprehension of Selected First Year Students of Samar State University". You already took the standardized tests and filled out the sociocultural questionnaire.
- B. (Purpose) Today, you will be taking the Figurative Comprehension Test but instead of being a pen and paper test, you will be answering the test verbally.
- C. (Directions) I will be showing you six (6) sentences that have different figures of speech. After reading them, tell me how you understood the statement. I will emphasize that there are no right or wrong answers so do not worry about that. This research focuses more on how you comprehend or understand the statements. Also, there is no time limit so if you need time to gather your thoughts and think about your answer, feel free to do so.
- D. (Time Line) The interview should take about 20 to 30 minutes.

#### II. Body

- 1. She cried a river when she heard the news. (Hyperbole)  
Choices:
  - a. The statement has the same meaning and structure as the sentence: "She cried an ocean when she learned about what happened." (Strategy 1)
  - b. The object of the verb (river) is a word that connotes a forceful flowing body of water. Thus, the girl in the statement must have been crying intensely when she heard the news. (Strategy 4)
  - c. The statement clearly states that the crying of the girl resulted to the flowing of the river. (Strategy 5)
  - d. The speaker in the statement seems to be emphasizing the river when she cried after hearing the news. (Strategy 6)

- e. The statement states that when she heard the news, she cried a river. (Strategy 7)
  - f. The meaning of this statement is best translated to "Han iya pakahibaro han nahitabo, nagtinuok hiya hin sapa." (Strategy 2)
  - g. The image of "crying a river" is best compared to the image of the flowing of a river, which is commonly seen to be forceful. From this, it can be implied that crying a river means crying intensely. (Strategy 3)
  - h. The statement does not say that she did not cry a river after she heard the news. (Strategy 8)
  - i. Another interpretation that is not found in the choices: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Ideas are like food. (Simile)
- Choices:**
- a. This statement has the same meaning and structure as the statement: "Concepts are like snacks." (Strategy 1)
  - b. The meaning of this sentence can be best translated to: "An mga ideya in pagkaon." (Strategy 2)
  - c. The image of ideas is compared to the image of food because both categories share the same property of something that has to be digested and processed. (Strategy 3)
  - d. In this sentence, the word "ideas" is compared to "food" because it has a connotation of something that has to be digested, which is a good descriptor of the nature of "ideas". (Strategy 4)
  - e. The statement clearly says that ideas are food because it has to be eaten. (Strategy 5)
  - f. The speaker in the statement seems to be very fond of foods because he used it as analogy for ideas. (Strategy 6)
  - g. It is clearly stated in the statement that ideas are like food. (Strategy 7)
  - h. The statement does not say that ideas are not food. (Strategy 8)
  - i. Another statement that is not found in the choices: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Life is a gambling game. (Metaphor)
- Choices:**
- a. In this sentence, the word life is compared to gambling game. The word "gambling game" has a connotation of being uncertain, which is a good descriptor of the nature of life. (Strategy 4)
  - b. The statement clearly says that life is a gambling game because many people spend their lives in casinos and other forms of gambling. (Strategy 5)
  - c. This statement has the same meaning and structure as the statement: "Life is a casino." (Strategy 1)
  - d. The meaning of this sentence can be best translated to: "An kinabuhi бага-бага hin huygo." (Strategy 2)



- e. The image of life is compared to the image of gambling game, because both share the same property of being unpredictable. (Strategy 3)
- f. The speaker in the statement seems to be very fond of gambling because he used it as an analogy for the nature of life. (Strategy 6)
- g. It is clearly stated in the statement that the life is like a gambling game. (Strategy 7)
- h. The statement does not say that life is not a gambling game. (Strategy 8)
- i. Another interpretation that is not found in the choices: \_\_\_\_\_

4. The sun smiled down on her. (Personification)

**Choices:**

- a. In this sentence, the word smile is used to describe the sun. The word "smile" has a connotation of being happy or positive, which means that the sun is shining brightly. (Strategy 4)
- b. The statement clearly says the girl sees a smiley face on the sun. (Strategy 5)
- c. This statement has the same meaning and structure as the statement: "The gods smiled down on her." (Strategy 1)
- d. The meaning of this sentence can be best translated to: "Na-ismayl an adlaw ha iya." (Strategy 2)
- e. The image of a smiling sun as compared to the image of a sad sun would tell us that a "smiling" sun means shining brightly while a "sad" sun would mean a gloomy day. (Strategy 3)
- f. The speaker in the statement seems to hate the weather. (Strategy 6)
- g. It is clearly stated in the statement that the sun was smiling down to her. (Strategy 7)
- h. The statement does not say that the sun was sad. (Strategy 8)
- i. Another interpretation that is not found in the choices: \_\_\_\_\_

5. "Water, water, everywhere,  
And all the boards did shrink;  
Water, water, everywhere,  
Nor any drop to drink."

- The Rime of the Ancient Mariner (Coleridge) (Irony)

**Choices:**

- a. In this sentence, the words "water", "everywhere" and the phrase "not a drop" connotes a situation where there is a lot of water but it is unclean or not drinkable. Therefore, the situation here is out at sea where there is water everywhere but you cannot drink it because it's salt water. (Strategy 4)
- b. The statement clearly says that the person is surrounded by water. (Strategy 5)

- c. This statement has the same meaning as the statement: "It's like finding ten thousand spoons when all you need is a knife." (Strategy 1)
  - d. The meaning of this sentence can be best translated to: "Tubig, tubig ha ngatanan nga bahin. Nga tanan nga tabla nagtitikaguti. Tubig, tubig ha ngatanan nga bahin pero biskan us aka npatak diri pwede inomon." (Strategy 2)
  - e. The image of "water everywhere" creates many possible situation but the phrase "not a drop to drink" narrows down the possible situation to being lost at sea. a maker of a human is compared to the image of a mythical being or a God. Therefore, if Shirley has gone to meet God, that means she is dead. (Strategy 3)
  - f. The speaker in the statement seems to hate drowning. (Strategy 6)
  - g. It is clearly stated in the statement that there is a lot of water involved. (Strategy 7)
  - h. The statement does not say that the water was not everywhere (Strategy 8)
  - i. Another interpretation that is not found in the choices:
6. Shirley won't be attending her graduation since she has already met her maker. (Euphemism)

**Choices:**

- a. In this sentence, the word maker has a connotation of being the creator. Therefore, the statement means that Shirley is died. (Strategy 4)
- b. The statement clearly says that Shirley is not here because she visited her parents. (Strategy 5)
- c. This statement has the same meaning as the statement: "Shirley won't be attending her graduation since she passed away." (Strategy 1)
- d. The meaning of this sentence can be best translated to: "Diri makakakadto hi Shirley han iya paggradwar kay nakigkita na hiya han iya Tagahimu." (Strategy 2)
- e. The image of a maker of a human is compared to the image of a mythical being or a God. Therefore, if Shirley has gone to meet God, that means she is dead. (Strategy 3)
- f. The speaker in the statement seems to hate the graduation. (Strategy 6)
- g. It is clearly stated in the statement that the Shirley will not be attending her graduation. (Strategy 7)
- h. The statement does not say that Shirley did not meet her maker. (Strategy 8)
- i. Another interpretation that is not found in the choices: \_\_\_\_\_



### III. Closing

- A. Thank you so much for responding to the questions and for helping me in my study. If you have any questions later on, please feel free to contact me. Rest assured that the information you provided will be considered confidential and will be handled with care.

## APPENDIX D

## Strategic Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

Version 7.0 (ESL/EFL)

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## Directions

This form of the STRATEGY INVENTORY LANGUAGE LEARNING (SILL) is for students of English as a second or foreign language. On the separate worksheet, write the response (1, 2, 3, 4 or 5) that tells HOW TRUE OF YOU THE STATEMENT IS.

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Usually not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Usually true of me
5. Always or almost true of me

NEVER OR ALMOST NEVER TRUE OF ME means that the statement is very rarely true of you.

USUALLY NOT TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true less than half the time.

SOMEWHAT TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true of you about half the time.

USUALLY TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true more than half time.

ALWAYS OR ALMOST TRUE OF ME means that the statement is true of you almost always.

Answer in terms of how well the statement describes YOU. Do not answer how you think you should be, or what other people do. There are no right or wrong answers to these statements. Put your answer in a separate worksheet. Please make no marks on the items. Work as quickly as you can without being careless. This usually takes about 20-30 minutes to complete. If you have any questions, let the teacher know immediately.

## EXAMPLE:

I actively seek out opportunities to talk with native speakers in English.

On this page put an "x" in the blank underneath the statement that best describes what you actually do in regard to English now. Do not make any marks on the worksheet yet.

Never or Almost Never Always	Generally Not	Somewhat	Generally	Always or Almost
True of Me	True of Me	True of Me	True of Me	True of Me
1	2	3	4	5
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

If you have answered the question above, you have just completed the example item.

Now wait for the teacher to give you the signal to go to the other items. When you answer the questions, work carefully but quickly. Mark the rest of your answers on the worksheet, starting with item 1.

### Strategic Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

Version 7.0 (ESL/EFL)

©R. Oxford. 1989

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Usually not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Usually true of me
5. Always or almost true of me

(Write answer on the worksheet)

#### PART A.

1. I think of relationships between what I already know and new things I learn in English.
2. I use new English words in a sentence so I can remember them.
3. I connect the sound of a new English word and an image or picture of the word to help remember the word.
4. I remember a new English word by making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used.
5. I use rhymes to remember English words.
6. I use flashcards to remember new English words.
7. I physically act out new English words.
8. I review English lessons often.
9. I remember new English words or phrases by remembering their location on the page, on the board or on a street sign.

#### PART B.

10. I say or write a new English word several times.
11. I try to talk like native English speakers.
12. I practice the sounds of English.
13. I use the English words I know in different ways.
14. I start conversations in English.
15. I watch English language TV shows spoken in English or go to movies spoken in English.

Strategic Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

Version 7.0 (ESL/EFL)

©R. Oxford. 1989



1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Usually not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Usually true of me
5. Always or almost true of me

16. I read for pleasure in English.
17. I write notes, messages, letters or reports in English.
18. I first skim an English passage (read over the passage quickly) then go back and read carefully.
19. I look for words in my own language that are similar to new words in English.
20. I try to find patterns in English.
21. I find the meaning of an English word by dividing it into parts that I understand.
22. I try not to translate word-for-word.
23. I make summaries of information that I hear or read in English.

#### PART C.

24. To understand unfamiliar English words, I make guesses.
25. When I can't think of a word during a conversation in English, I use gestures.
26. I make up new words if I do not know the right ones in English.
27. I read English without looking up every new word.
28. I try to guess what the other person will say next in English.
29. If I can't think of an English word, I use a word or phrase that means the same thing.

#### Strategic Inventory for Language Learning (SILL)

Version 7.0 (ESL/EFL)

©R. Oxford. 1989

1. Never or almost never true of me
2. Usually not true of me
3. Somewhat true of me
4. Usually true of me
5. Always or almost true of me

#### PART D.

30. I try to find as many ways as I can to use my English.
31. I notice my English mistakes and use that information to help me do better.
32. I pay attention when someone is speaking English.



- 33. I try to find out how to be a better learner in English.
- 34. I plan my schedule so I will have enough time to study English.
- 35. I look for people I can talk to in English.
- 36. I look for opportunities to read as much as possible in English.
- 37. I have clear goals for improving my English skills.
- 38. I think about my progress in learning English.

PART E.

- 39. I try to relax whenever I feel afraid of using English.
- 40. I encourage myself to speak English even when I am afraid of making a mistake.
- 41. I give myself a reward or treat when I do well in English.
- 42. I notice if I am tense or nervous when I am studying or using English.
- 43. I write down my feelings in a language learning diary.
- 44. I talk to someone else about how I feel when I am learning English.

PART F.

- 45. If I do not understand something in English,, I ask the other person to slow down or say it again.
- 46. I ask English speakers to correct me when I talk.
- 47. I practice English with other students.
- 48. I ask for help from English speakers.
- 49. I ask questions in English.
- 50. I try to learn about the culture of English speakers.

## APPENDIX E

### PILOT TESTING Results

As a dry run, the approved draft of the test was rolled out to ten (10) students from the Northwest Samar State University (NWSSU) last November 12, 2015. There were two students from each of the five (5) colleges or departments in NWSSU that were identified as the subjects for the pilot testing. A letter of request was submitted to the various College Deans requesting for two students from their respective colleges that would meet the prescribed criteria: enrolled freshmen student and should have above average or high-level average performance in their Mathematics subjects.

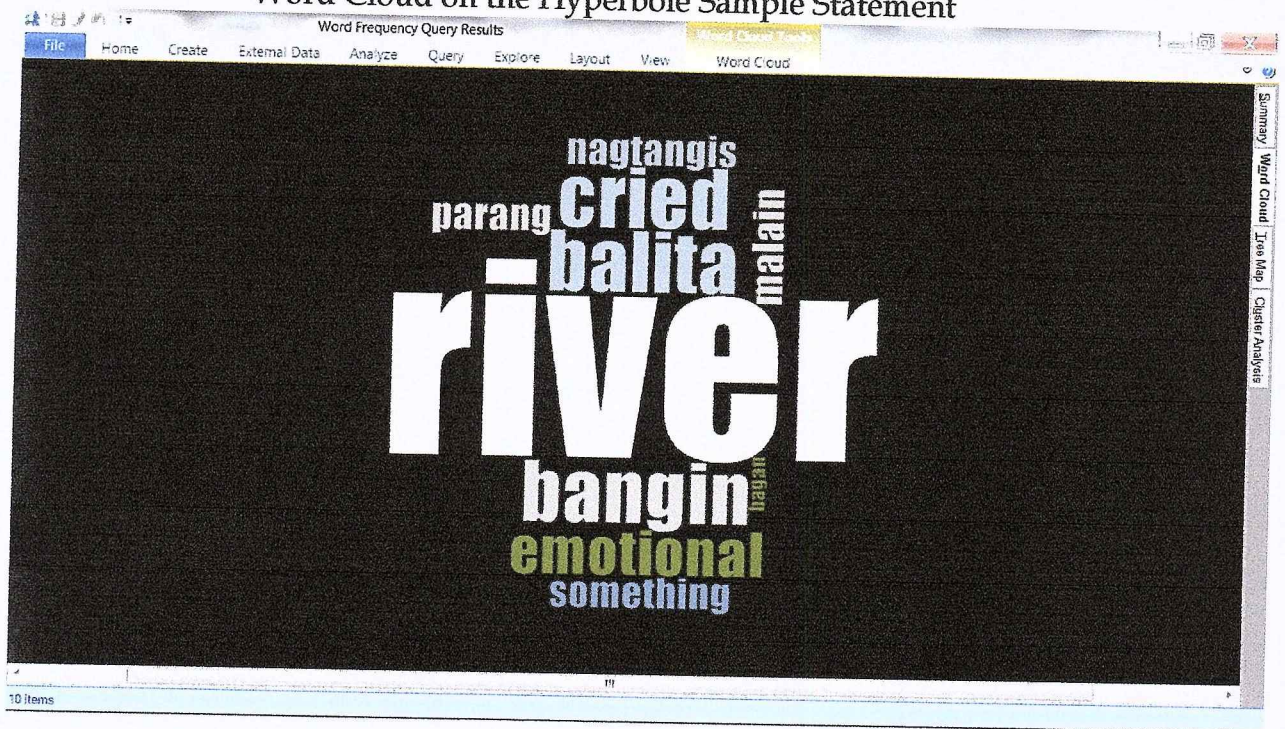
**Figurative Language Comprehension Strategies.** As shown in the table below, the most commonly used strategy is analogy with a frequency count of 29 or 48.3 percent. The use of linguistic markers in a figurative language statement is the second commonly-used strategy, with a frequency count of 13 or 21.7 percent.

#### Student-Respondents' Strategies in the Comprehension of Figurative Language (PILOT TESTING)

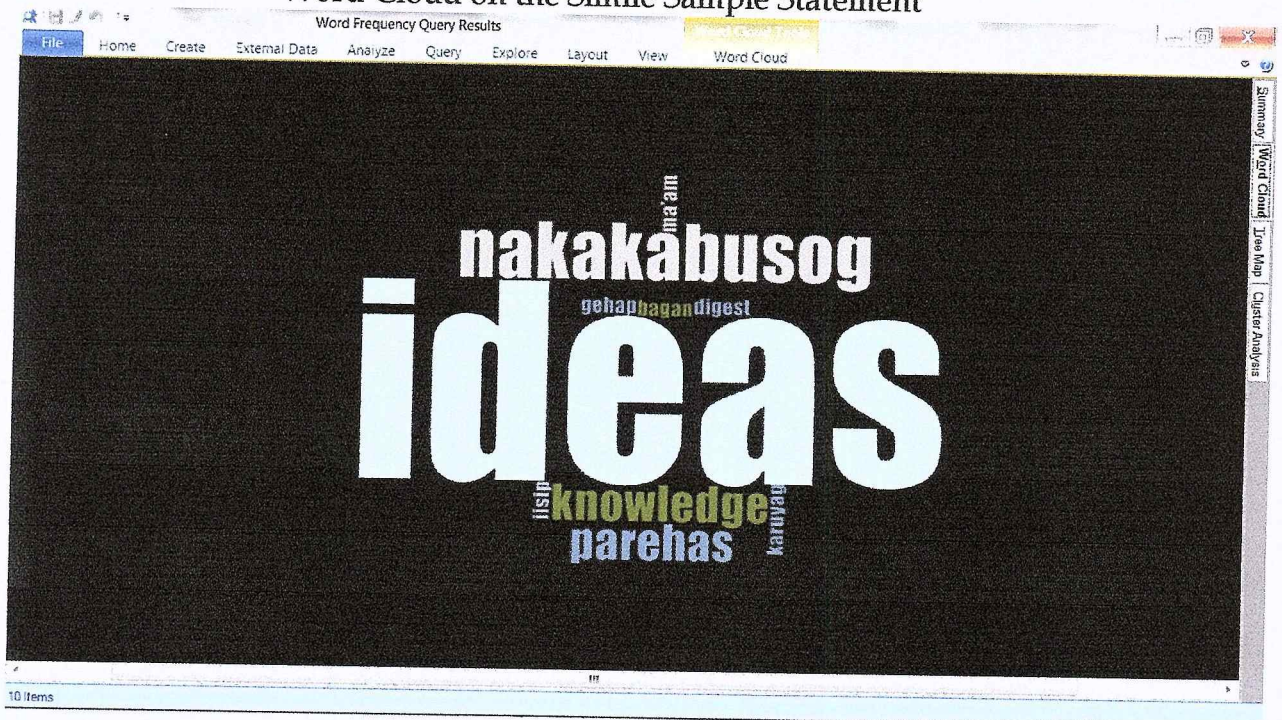
Language Figurative Strategy	f	%
Using Other Examples of the Same Figurative Language	1	1.7%
Translating the Figurative Language to One's Native Language	1	1.7%
Using Analogy	29	48.3%
Using Linguistic Markers and Attributes of Figurative Language	13	21.7%
Using the Literal Meaning of the Statement	11	18.3%
Avoiding the Intended Meaning of the Statement	3	5.0%
Using Repetition Strategies	2	3.3%
Using Negation Strategies	0	0.0%
Other Strategies	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>



### Word Cloud on the Hyperbole Sample Statement

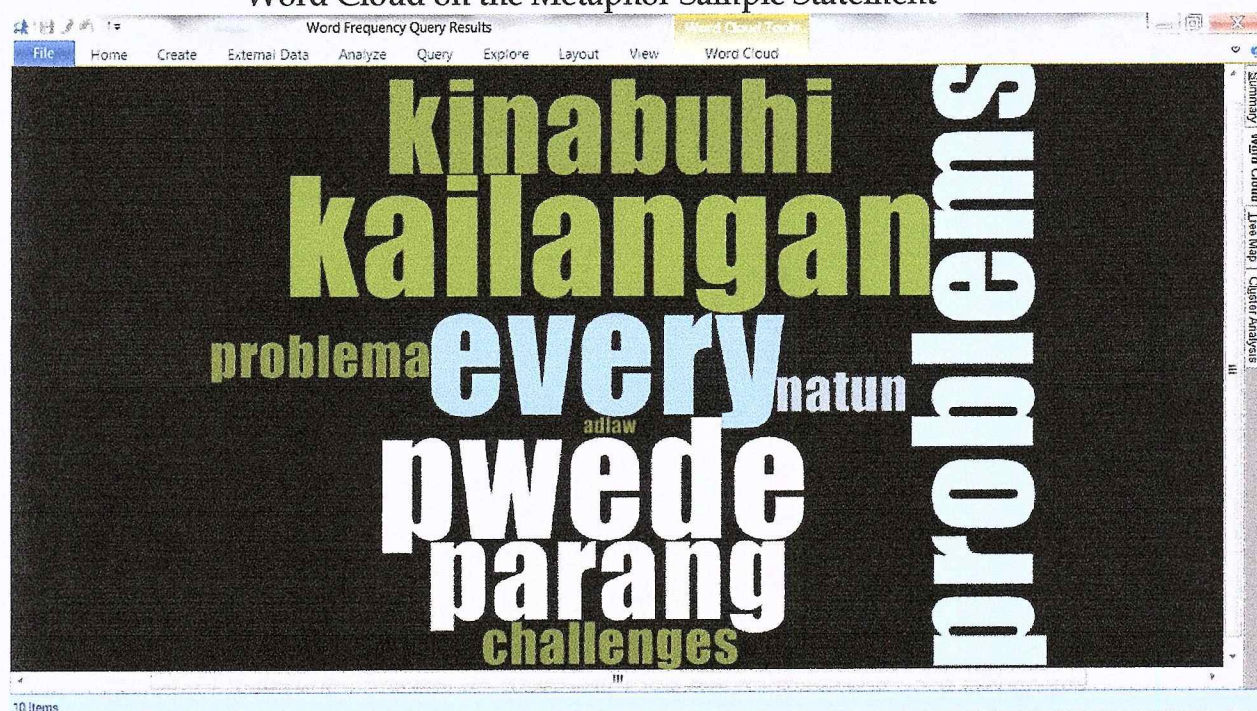


### Word Cloud on the Simile Sample Statement

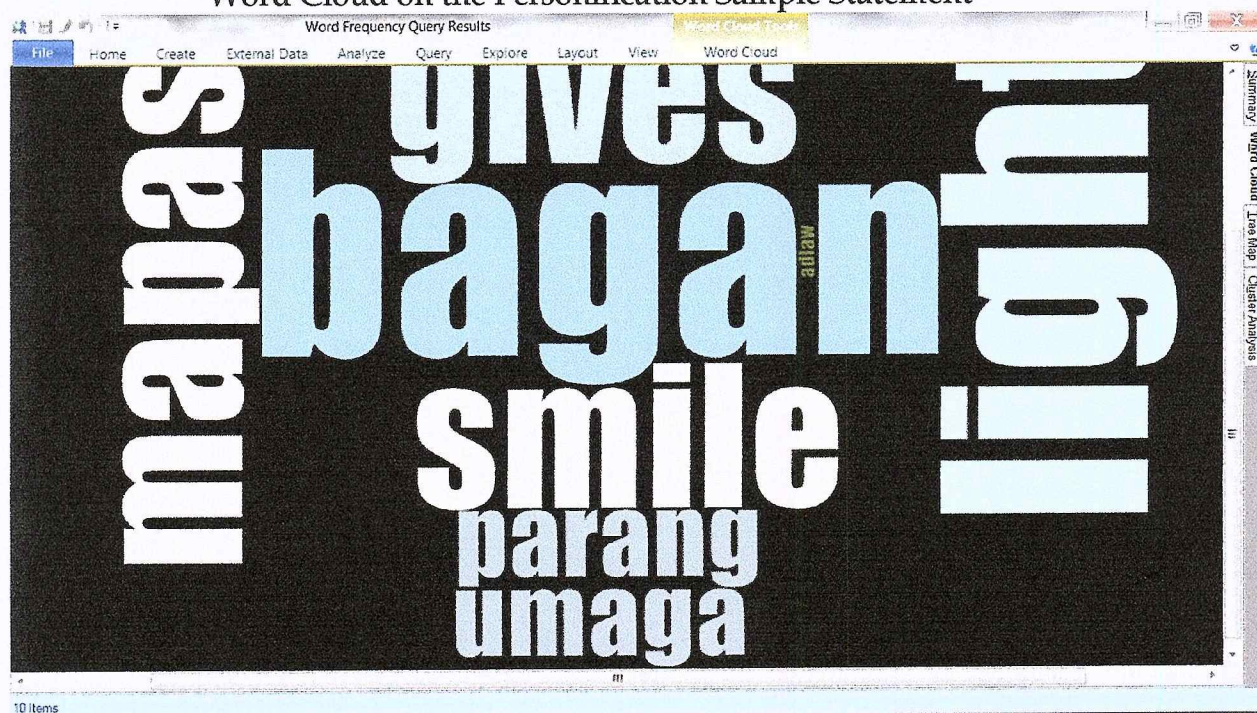




### Word Cloud on the Metaphor Sample Statement

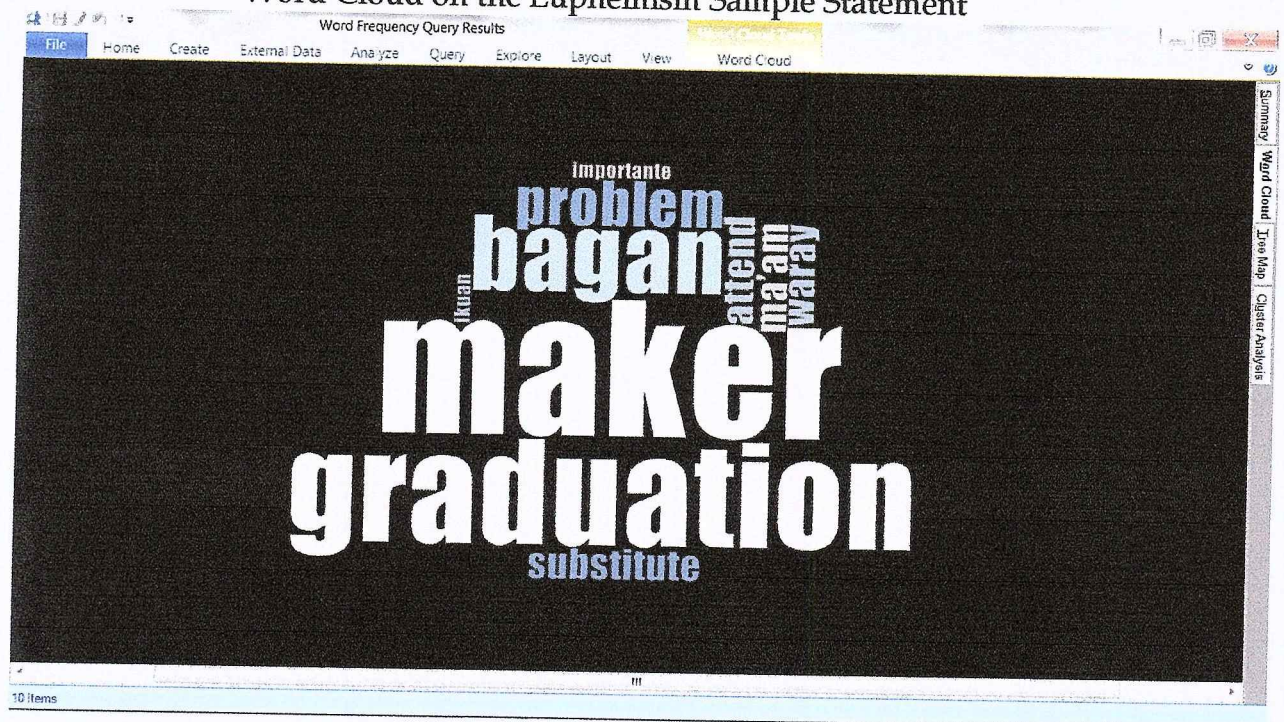


### Word Cloud on the Personification Sample Statement

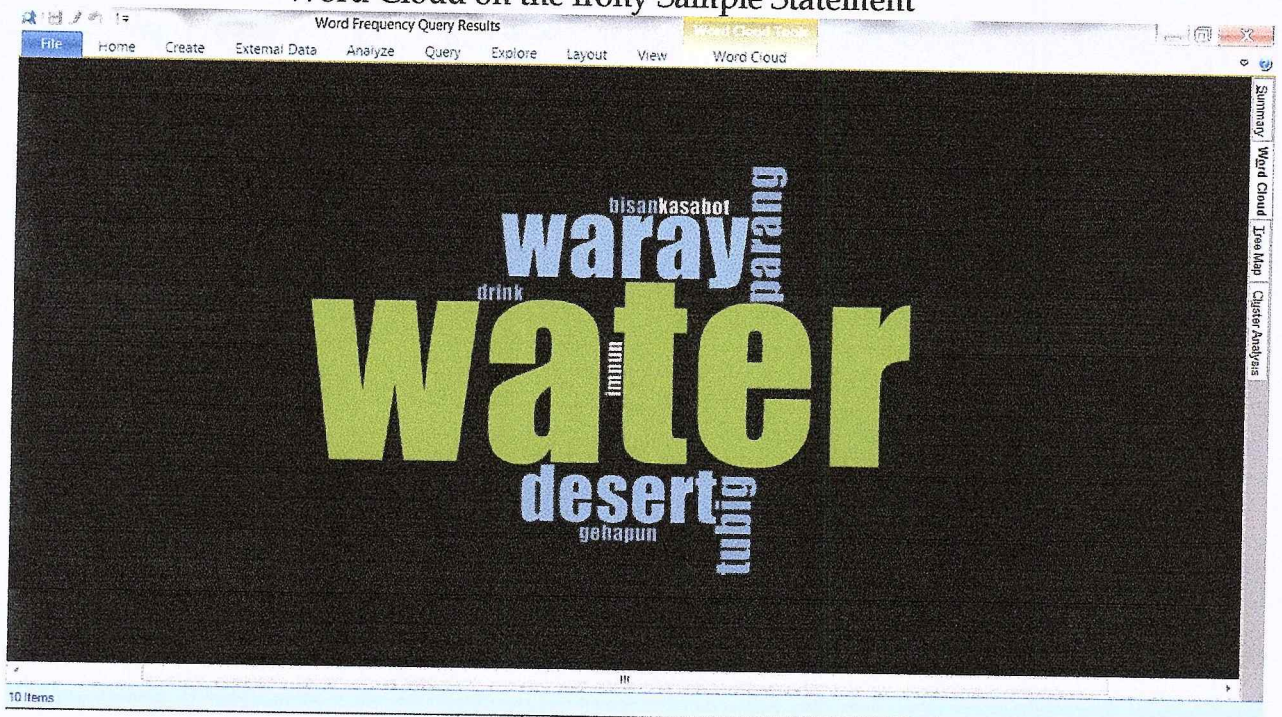




### Word Cloud on the Euphemism Sample Statement



### Word Cloud on the Irony Sample Statement



# CURRICULUM VITAE



**CURRICULUM VITAE**

**Name :** MAE SASCHIEL P. MONTALLANA

**Birthday :** December 20, 1982

**Place of Birth:** Tacloban City, Leyte

**Citizenship :** Filipino

**Parents :** Creole L. Montallana  
Casilda P. Montallana

**Siblings :** Kim Creole P. Montallana

**Civil Status :** Single

**EDUCATION**

**Post Graduate Education :** Diploma in Teaching  
Cebu Technological University  
(2011-2012)

**College Education :** Bachelor of Arts  
Major in Political Science  
UP Visayas Tacloban College  
(1999 - 2003)  
College of Immaculate Conception  
(2003 - 2005)

**High School Education :** Samar National School  
Catbalogan City, Samar  
(1995-1999)

**Elementary Education :** Sacred Heart College  
(currently St. Mary's College of Catbalogan)  
Catbalogan City, Samar (1988-1995)

**PERTINENT EXPERIENCE RECORD**

Instructor I  
Samar State University, Main Campus  
2014 to present

Full time High School Teacher  
St. Mary's College of Catbalogan  
2013-2014

Part time College Instructor  
St. Mary's College of Catbalogan  
2013-2014

**ELIGIBILITY**

Licensure Exam for Teachers (LET) – 85.60%  
September 2012

Career Service Professional Exam – 88.11%  
March 2003

Career Service Sub-Professional Exam – 87.61%  
July 2002

**MEMBERSHIP TO PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

Linguistic Society of the Philippines  
Member



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