

METACOGNITION MATTERS

ARTICLE

Soto, C., Gutierrez de Blume, A. P., Carrasco Bernal, M. A., & Contreras Castro, M. A. (2020). The role of meta-cognitive cues on the comprehension of proficient and poor readers. *Journal of Research in Reading, 43*(3), 272–289.

WHAT DID THEY DO?

Researchers conducted a study exploring whether performance differences exist between proficient and poor readers on implicit text information, aiming to explore the effect of meta-cognitive monitoring on predicted reading performance. The study included 146 Chilean undergraduate students (133 female) who were given an inconsistency detection task (texts containing certain inaccuracies) in which students were expected to stop, detect the inaccuracies, and use metacognitive skills to correct these inaccuracies. The test was intended to measure the students' meta-cognitive monitoring and regulation of reading comprehension. The students were then classified into three groups: those who had not noticed the contradiction, those who evaluated the contradiction but did not properly regulate, and students who conducted a proper process of evaluation and regulation.

WHAT DID THEY FIND?

Proficient readers exhibited higher mean scores on all measures, scoring significantly better on implicit items when compared to poor readers. Reading performance was significantly predicted by students' ability to correctly detect and repair inconsistencies within a text. Additionally, proficient and poor readers employed different meta-cognitive strategies. It should be noted that reading comprehension requires interactions of cognitive and meta-cognitive processes & meta-cognitive processes consume resources from a person's working memory. This means some information may be selected, eliminated, modified, or integrated during the comprehension process, possibly creating weak monitoring and mental representations of the text. It will be important for poor readers to invoke proper meta-cognitive cues in order to make necessary adjustments to ensure deeper understanding of a given text.

WHAT COULD THIS MEAN FOR TEACHERS?

Though this study was conducted with undergraduate students, there are implications for K-12 teachers. Continued emphasis on developing student's meta-cognitive cues will improve reading comprehension, especially for poor readers. Meta-cognitive skills such as successful detection and repair of inconsistencies in texts and monitoring for accuracy play an important role in the comprehension process. The study also supported the continued focus on student's ability to correctly identify implicit information within texts. Two main factors that can benefit poor readers are explicit instruction to a variety of cognitive strategies and meta-cognitive skills such as meta-cognitive monitoring (such as paraphrasing) and bridging strategies (i.e. asking questions that tie previous knowledge or parts of the text into their present reading). Students can make their metacognitive understandings visible by engaging in directed stopping points and jotting annotations that encourage cohesive understanding of the text and detect possible inaccuracies. Teachers should consider implementing these, as well as other metacognitive strategies, to support direct instruction of explicit and implicit understandings of new information.

