

Memory and Reading Comprehension

What was the goal of the study?

The researchers wanted to know if there was a relationship between reading comprehension and two types of memory: 1) short-term memory and 2) working memory in adult learners.

Why was the study conducted?

Little adult literacy research exists exploring the relationship between reading comprehension and memory capacity, which may have implications for theory and practice.

What did the study find?

Both short-term and working memory contributed to 19% of the variance in reading comprehension performance. However, when controlling for age, word reading, fluency, and oral vocabulary, the contribution was significantly decreased, with each contributing less than 2% of variance in reading comprehension performance.

Who participated in the study?

The participants in this study were 407 adult learners who read between third and eighth grade levels and were native English speakers.

How was the study conducted?

The researchers used a hierarchical regression and commonality analyses, which are both statistical techniques used to test the relationship between variables.

How can people use the results?

The results of this study demonstrate that practitioners should focus more on foundational reading skills and include working memory training only as a supplemental component.

Reference

Talwar, A., Greenberg, D., & Li, H. (2018). Does memory contribute to reading comprehension in adults who struggle with reading? *Journal of Research in Reading*, 41(S1), S163-S182