Research Article

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Vietnamese High School Students' Perspectives on the Practicability of Reading Comprehension Standards

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Abstract

Purpose: to amplify students' voices and contribute to the ongoing dialogue on improving reading comprehension standards in Vietnamese high schools. Methods: the experiment was conducted with 10th grade students, in Hanoi city, in which one school is in the suburbs and one is in the inner-city. The total number of students participating in the experiment is 165, of which 75 students are in the city and 90 in the suburbs. Results: the results of this study provide valuable insights into the academic performance and achievement levels of students in both multiple-choice and essay-based assessments. The findings reveal several key patterns and variations among the students. Conclusion: the development of reading comprehension standards should ensure that the steps in the process range from determining competence, determining elements, indicators, and quality criteria, to testing and adjusting the designed standard. The above assessment standards for reading comprehension are the basis for teachers and schools to have a basis for teaching and assessment to ensure the required requirements of the program.

Keywords: *assessment standard; competency assessment standard; reading comprehension competency assessment standard; Literature teaching*

1. Introduction

Reading comprehension is a crucial skill for high school students in Vietnam, as it directly impacts their academic success and future prospects. It is important to understand students' perspectives on the practicability of reading comprehension standards to ensure that the educational system effectively meets their needs. To achieve this, educators must consider various factors that influence students' reading comprehension abilities. For instance, they should take into account the students' cultural background, language proficiency, and cognitive development. Additionally, teachers can implement effective teaching strategies that promote reading comprehension skills such as active

reading, close reading, and critical thinking. Providing access to a wide range of reading materials and incorporating technology-based learning tools can also enhance students' engagement and motivation to read. Furthermore, it is crucial to assess students' progress regularly to identify areas of improvement and adjust instructional methods accordingly. Ultimately, a comprehensive approach that addresses the diverse needs of high school students in Vietnam can foster a lifelong love for reading and equip them with essential skills for academic success and future endeavors. This study aims to explore Vietnamese high school students' viewpoints regarding the feasibility and applicability of reading comprehension standards, providing valuable insights for educators and policymakers to enhance reading instruction and assessment strategies.

In order to gain comprehensive insights into the practicability of reading comprehension standards, it is imperative to consider the perspectives and experiences of Vietnamese high school students. Research has shown that students' perspectives and input are crucial for assessing the effectiveness of educational standards (Andrade, 2019; Cheng, 2022; Flutter & Rudduck, 2004). Actively involving students in discussions about their learning experiences allows researchers and educators to identify areas for improvement and tailor instruction to better meet their needs (Cook-Sather, 2020; Dawson et al., 2019; Taylor & Boyer, 2020). Therefore, this study seeks to provide a platform for Vietnamese high school students to express their perspectives on the practicability of reading comprehension standards and contribute to ongoing conversations on curriculum development and educational reform.

Understanding the perspectives of Vietnamese high school students on the practicability of reading comprehension standards can provide insights into various aspects of their learning experiences. Their viewpoints can reveal how they perceive the relevance of reading comprehension standards to their academic pursuits and future aspirations. By examining students' perspectives, educators can assess the extent to which current standards align with their learning goals and equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge for personal and professional development (Ellis et al., 2021; Governor et al., 2020; Wise, 2018; Zhao et al., 2022). Moreover, exploring students' perspectives can help identify potential challenges and barriers they face in meeting the reading comprehension standards, offering valuable information for designing effective instructional strategies and support systems.

The exploration of Vietnamese high school students' perspectives on the practicability of reading comprehension standards can also contribute to enhancing the overall quality of reading instruction and assessment. Students' voices can provide insights into their experiences with different reading comprehension tasks, teaching methods, and assessment approaches. Incorporating student feedback into instructional practices can promote student engagement, motivation, and ownership of their learning (Collaço, 2017; Lim, 2017; Sharoff, 2019; Yu et al., 2021). Furthermore, students' perspectives can inform the development of authentic and meaningful reading activities that align with their interests, experiences, and cultural backgrounds, fostering a more inclusive and effective learning environment (Quaye et al., 2019; Samuels, 2018; Yu et al., 2021).

By exploring Vietnamese high school students' perspectives on the practicability of reading comprehension standards, this study aims to contribute to ongoing efforts to improve reading instruction and assessment practices. The findings of this research can inform educational policymakers, curriculum developers, and educators about the strengths and limitations of the current standards, guiding future revisions and enhancements. Moreover, providing students with a platform to express their viewpoints empowers them as active participants in the educational process and recognizes the value of their insights in shaping educational policies and practices (Koul & Nayar, 2021; Peters & Romero, 2019).

Understanding Vietnamese high school students' perspectives on the practicability of reading comprehension standards is essential for developing effective instructional strategies, fostering student engagement, and promoting meaningful learning experiences. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in the use of reading comprehension standards as a means of improving student performance in this critical area. While some educators have expressed concerns about the practicality of these standards, many Vietnamese high school students have found them to be highly effective in helping them develop their reading skills. These students appreciate the clear and concise

guidelines provided by the standards, which help them to focus on key concepts and ideas while reading. They also value the opportunities that these standards provide for collaborative learning and peer feedback, which can help to reinforce their understanding of complex texts. Overall, Vietnamese high school students believe that reading comprehension standards are an important tool for improving their academic performance and preparing them for success in college and beyond. By incorporating student feedback into curriculum development and educational reforms, educators and policymakers can ensure that reading instruction aligns with students' needs, aspirations, and cultural contexts. Through this study, we aim to amplify students' voices and contribute to the ongoing dialogue on improving reading comprehension standards in Vietnamese high schools.

2. Methods

2.1 Participants

The authors conducted an experiment to test the feasibility of the standard for assessing the reading comprehension ability of 10th graders in practice. The experiment was conducted with 10th grade students, in Hanoi city, in which one school is in the suburbs (Ngo Quyen High School) and one is in the inner city (Education Science Experimental School). The total number of students participating in the experiment is 165, of which 75 students are in the city and 90 in the suburbs.

2.2 Measurement

Measurement was used to conduct the experiment as a written test. The test is designed to assess students' ability to read and understand myth genres, with a combination of multiple-choice questions and essays. The experiment was built with the content summarized as follows:

> *"One day, Perseus was on his way home after beheading Medusa. He made it to the end of the earth and came upon Atlas holding up the earth. Perseus asked Atlas for shelter from his long journey. Atlas was told in an ancient prophecy that someone would come for his sacred golden apples, so Atlas turned Perseus away. Perseus was angry that Atlas would not provide him shelter during his long journey, so he took out Medusa's head from his satchel and showed it to Atlas. Atlas looked into the eyes of the beheaded Medusa and was turned to stone immediately".*

This test consists of 10 questions built on the matrix presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Matrix of standardized tests to assess reading comprehension for 10th graders

Level	*Read and understand the content*	*Read and understand form*	*Contact, compare, connect*
1	Identify typical events in the text	Realize the fantasy element of myths	
	Q1. What is the main event told in the text above?	*Q2. Which of the following is not a myth in the text?*	
2	Explain and analyze some typical details, characters and their relationship with the whole text	Identify and analyze the characteristics of the type of mythical character	
	Q3. Why did Atlas raise his voice, denying Perse's wishes? *Q4. Why did Perse get angry and punish Atlas?* *Q5. What does it mean to describe the character Perse with supernatural powers?* *Q6. What qualities of the hero do Perxe's Atlas punishment reveal?*	*Q8. What do you think about the character Perse in the text above?*	
	Identify the topic of the text Give your opinion/comment on a detail in the text		
	Q7.1. What does the passage reflect the perception and interpretation of ancient people about? *Q9.1. In your opinion, is the punishment for Atlas adequate?*		
	Give reasons to explain details in the text		
	Q9.2. Why?		

Level	Read and understand the content	Read and understand form	Contact, compare, connect
3	Assess the topic of the text Come up with a unique explanation		State the life lessons you draw from the text
	Q7.2. How do you evaluate that explanation of the ancient Greeks? *Q9.2. Why?*		*Q10. What are two lessons you can learn from this story?*

**Note: Q. Question*

3. Results

The results of data analysis show that the highest score achieved by students is 8/10 (equivalent to standard level 3) and the lowest score is 2.5/10 (equivalent to not meeting standard). Thus, the spectrum of students' ability fell from unsatisfactory to level 3 of the Reading Comprehension Standards. The student's average score was 5.84, which means that the student met the standard. Accordingly, the percentage of students with 5 points or more was 86.7%, 13.3% below 5 points. The majority of students met the set standards, in which students who achieved level 1 (from 5-6.5) was 54.5%, level 2 (from 7.0-7.5) was 17.45, level 3 (from 8.0) and above was 2.4%. This shows that the number of students reaching level 1 of the standard accounted for the largest proportion, and level 3 accounted for the smallest percentage. Through grading students' papers, we found that most of the students achieved the lowest standards, the students with the highest scores were the students who had new and unique assessments with their essays and correct in certain quizzes. The proportions of each specific score frame are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Student's total reading comprehension score

Score	Students (N)	Percentage (%)
2.5	1	0.6
3.0	1	0.6
3.5	3	1.8
4.0	3	1.8
4.5	14	8.5
5.0	23	13.9
5.5	32	19.4
6.0	35	21.2
6.5	19	11.5
7.0	19	11.5
7.5	11	6.7
8.0	4	2.4
Total	**165**	**100%**

The data in Table 3 presents the correlation of students' standards of achievement between the inner city and suburbs. The scores are provided for the highest score, lowest score, and average score in both areas.

Table 3. Correlation of students' standards of achievement between inner city and suburbs

Score	Suburb	Inner-city
The highest score	8	8
The lowest score	3.5	2.5
The average score	5.89	5.77

The highest score in both the suburb and inner city was 8, indicating that there were students who excelled academically in both regions. This suggests that there were high-achieving students present

in both areas. The lowest score in the suburb was 3.5, while in the inner city it was 2.5. This implies that there might be some students in both regions who faced academic challenges or struggled to achieve higher scores. However, it is important to note that the scores were higher in the suburbs compared to the inner city. The average score in the suburb was 5.89, while in the inner city it was slightly lower at 5.77. This indicates that, on average, students in the suburb performed slightly better academically than students in the inner city. However, the difference in average scores between the two regions was relatively small. Overall, based on the data presented, it can be observed that there was a correlation between the standards of achievement of students in the inner city and suburbs. While there were high-achieving students in both areas, the average academic performance appeared to be slightly higher in the suburbs compared to the inner city. Further analysis and additional data may be necessary to draw more conclusive insights from these findings.

In the group of multiple-choice questions (from questions 1 to 6, each question 0.5 points), the number of students achieving levels in the standard according to the matrix is as follows:

Table 4. Percentage of students meeting standards in the group of multiple-choice questions

Question	*Number of students with correct answers*	*Percentage of students with correct answers (%)*	*Level*
Q1	147	89.1	1
Q2	155	93.9	1
Q3	154	93.3	2
Q4	156	94.5	2
Q5	119	72.1	2
Q6	161	97.6	2

Table 4 presents the percentage of students meeting standards in a group of multiple-choice questions. The table includes the question number, the number of students who answered correctly, the percentage of students who answered correctly, and the corresponding level of difficulty for each question. For Question 1, 89.1% of the students answered correctly, placing it at Level 1 of difficulty. This indicates that a significant majority of students were able to meet the standards for this question. Question 2 had a higher percentage of students with correct answers, with 93.9% achieving the correct response. This also falls under Level 1 difficulty, suggesting that most students were successful in meeting the standards for this question. Moving on to Question 3, 93.3% of the students answered correctly, placing it at Level 2 difficulty. Although slightly lower than the previous questions, it still demonstrates a high level of proficiency among the majority of students. Similarly, for Question 4, 94.5% of the students provided the correct answer, maintaining a high level of achievement. This question is also classified as Level 2 difficulty. Question 5 had a lower percentage of students with correct answers at 72.1%. This places it at Level 2 difficulty, suggesting that a considerable portion of students struggled to meet the standards for this particular question. Lastly, Question 6 had the highest percentage of students with correct answers, with an impressive 97.6% success rate. This question is categorized as Level 2 difficulty, demonstrating the high proficiency of the majority of students. Overall, the results from Table 4 indicate that **the majority of students performed well in meeting the standards for most of the multiple-choice questions**. Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 showed a high level of proficiency, while Question 5 presented some difficulty for a significant portion of students. The data suggests that additional attention and support may be required to improve performance on Question 5 and further enhance overall student achievement in this area.

Table 5 presents the results of students meeting the standards in sentences 7 to 10. The table includes the question number, the number of students who answered correctly, the percentage of students who answered correctly, and the corresponding level of difficulty for each question.

Table 5. Students meet the standards in sentences 7 to 10

Question	*Number of students with correct answers*	*Percentage of students with correct answers (%)*	*Level*
Q7.1	48	29.1	2
Q7.2	39	23.6	3
Q8	157	95.2	2
Q9.1	165	100	2
Q9.2	43	26.1	3
Q10	148	89.7	3

For Question 7.1, 29.1% of the students answered correctly, indicating a relatively lower percentage of students meeting the standards. This question is categorized as Level 2 difficulty, suggesting that it presented some challenges for a significant portion of students. Question 7.2 had an even lower percentage of students with correct answers at 23.6%. This places it at Level 3 difficulty, indicating that a majority of students faced difficulties in meeting the standards for this question. Moving on to Question 8, 95.2% of the students answered correctly, demonstrating a high level of proficiency. This question is classified as Level 2 difficulty, and the majority of students were successful in meeting the standards. Question 9.1 had a perfect score, with 100% of the students answering correctly. This indicates a high level of achievement and proficiency among the students. The question is categorized as Level 2 difficulty. However, for Question 9.2, only 26.1% of the students answered correctly. This places it at Level 3 difficulty, suggesting that a significant number of students struggled to meet the standards for this particular question. Lastly, for Question 10, 89.7% of the students provided the correct answer. This question is categorized as Level 3 difficulty, and the majority of students demonstrated a good level of achievement in meeting the standards. Overall, the results from Table 6 show varying levels of proficiency among students in meeting the standards for sentences 7 to 10. Questions 7.1, 7.2, and 9.2 presented more difficulty for the students, with lower percentages of correct answers. Questions 8, 9.1, and 10 showed higher levels of proficiency, with the majority of students meeting the standards. These results suggest the need for additional support and attention to address the challenges posed by Questions 7.1, 7.2, and 9.2, and further enhance overall student achievement in this area.

Table 6 displays the correlation between inner-city and suburban students in the group of multiple-choice questions. The table includes the question number, the percentage of students from the suburb and inner-city who answered correctly, and the corresponding level of difficulty for each question.

Table 6. Correlation of inner-city and suburban students in the group of multiple-choice questions

Question	*Percentage of students with correct answers (%)*		*Level*
	Suburb	*Inner-city*	
Q1	85.5	93.3	1
Q2	98.9	88	1
Q3	94.4	92	2
Q4	93.3	96	2
Q5	64.4	81.3	2
Q6	100	94.7	2

For Question 1, the suburbs had a percentage of 85.5% of students with correct answers, while the inner-city had 93.3%. This indicates that a slightly higher percentage of students from the inner-city achieved the correct response. The question falls under Level 1 difficulty. Question 2 showed a higher percentage of students from the suburbs (98.9%) with correct answers compared to the inner-city (88%). This suggests that a larger proportion of suburban students performed well on this question.

It also belongs to Level 1 difficulty. Moving on to Question 3, the suburbs had a percentage of 94.4% of students with correct answers, while the inner-city had 92%. The difference in performance between the two groups is relatively small, indicating similar proficiency. This question is categorized as Level 2 difficulty. Similarly, for Question 4, the suburb had 93.3% of students with correct answers, while the inner-city had 96%. Both groups demonstrated a high level of achievement, with the inner-city slightly outperforming the suburbs. This question falls under Level 2 difficulty. Question 5 presented a notable difference in performance. The suburb had 64.4% of students with correct answers, whereas the inner-city had a higher percentage at 81.3%. This suggests that students from the inner-city performed better on this question compared to their suburban counterparts. The question belongs to Level 2 difficulty. Finally, for Question 6, both the suburbs and inner-city showed excellent performance, with 100% and 94.7% of students, respectively achieving correct answers. This indicates a high level of proficiency for both groups. The question is categorized as Level 2 difficulty. Overall, the results from Table 6 suggest that there are variations in the performance of inner-city and suburban students in the group of multiple-choice questions. While the inner-city students performed slightly better on Questions 1 and 5, the suburban students had higher percentages of correct answers on Questions 2 and 6. Questions 3 and 4 showed similar levels of proficiency between the two groups. These findings highlight the importance of considering different factors that may influence student performance and the need for targeted support and interventions to ensure equitable educational opportunities for all students.

Table 7 presents the correlation of standard students in essay questions between suburban and inner-city schools. The table includes the question number, the percentage of students from the suburb and inner-city who provided correct answers, and the corresponding level of difficulty for each question.

Table 7. Correlation of standard students in essay questions between suburban and inner-city

Question	*Percentage of students with correct answers (%)*		*Level*
	Suburb	*Inner-city*	
Q7.1	23.3	36	2
Q7.2	25.6	21.3	3
Q8	100	96	2
Q9.1	100	100	2
Q9.2	30	21.3	3
Q10	11.1	9.3	3

For Question 7.1, the suburb had a percentage of 23.3% of students with correct answers, while the inner-city had 36%. This indicates that a higher percentage of students from the inner-city achieved the correct response. The question is classified as Level 2 difficulty. Question 7.2 showed a slightly higher percentage of students from the suburb (25.6%) with correct answers compared to the inner-city (21.3%). However, both groups struggled with this question, as the percentages of correct answers were relatively low. The question falls under Level 3 difficulty. Moving on to Question 8, both the suburb and inner-city had excellent performance, with 100% and 96% of students respectively providing correct answers. This indicates a high level of proficiency for both groups. The question belongs to Level 2 difficulty. Similarly, for Question 9.1, both the suburb and inner-city showed perfect scores, with 100% of students from both groups answering correctly. This suggests a high level of achievement and understanding of the topic. The question is categorized as Level 2 difficulty. Question 9.2 displayed lower percentages of correct answers, with 30% from the suburb and 21.3% from the inner-city. Both groups struggled with this question, and the inner-city had a slightly lower percentage of correct responses. The question falls under Level 3 difficulty. Finally, for Question 10, both the suburb and inner-city faced challenges, with only 11.1% and 9.3% of students respectively providing correct answers. The percentages of correct responses were very low for both groups, indicating difficulty in addressing the question. It belongs to Level 3 difficulty. Overall, the results

from Table 7 reveal variations in the performance of suburban and inner-city students in essay questions. While the inner-city students had higher percentages of correct answers in Questions 7.1 and 7.2, the suburban students outperformed the inner-city in Questions 8 and 9.2. Questions 9.1 and 10 showed similar levels of proficiency between the two groups, with both struggling to meet the standards. These findings highlight the challenges and areas of improvement in essay writing skills for both suburban and inner-city students and suggest the need for targeted support and instruction in developing these skills.

Table 8 presents a comparison of the scores between the groups of multiple-choice questions and essay questions. The table includes the criteria, the average score, the highest score, and the lowest score for each question type.

Table 8. Comparison of the scores of groups of multiple-choice questions and essay questions

Criteria	*Multiple-choice question*	*Essay question*
The average score	2.70/3	3.13/7
The highest score	3.0/3	5.5/7
The lowest score	0.5/3	0.5/7

In terms of the average score, the multiple-choice questions received an average score of 2.70 out of 3, indicating a high level of achievement. On the other hand, the essay questions obtained an average score of 3.13 out of 7, suggesting a lower level of proficiency compared to the multiple-choice questions. The highest score in the multiple-choice questions was 3.0 out of 3, reflecting a perfect score achieved by some students. In contrast, the highest score in the essay questions was 5.5 out of 7, indicating a relatively strong performance but not reaching the maximum attainable score. The lowest score in the multiple-choice questions was 0.5 out of 3, indicating poor performance on certain questions. Similarly, the essay questions had a lowest score of 0.5 out of 7, suggesting areas of weakness or incomplete understanding of the topic. Overall, the results from Table 8 highlight that students generally performed better in the multiple-choice questions compared to the essay questions. The average score, highest score, and lowest score were higher in the multiple-choice section, indicating a higher level of achievement and a narrower range of performance variability. This suggests that students may have found the multiple-choice format more manageable or were better prepared for that question type. It is important to consider the different assessment methods and the skills they measure when interpreting these results. While the multiple-choice questions assess knowledge and recall, the essay questions require critical thinking, analysis, and written expression. The lower performance in the essay questions may indicate the need for further development of essay writing skills and deeper understanding of the subject matter among the students. Targeted instruction and support in essay writing may be beneficial to enhance overall performance and bridge the gap between the two question types.

Table 9 provides the score spectrum of the multiple-choice questions. The table includes the score values, the number of students who achieved the correct answer corresponding to each score, the percentage of students represented by each score, and the level of difficulty for each score.

Table 9. Score spectrum of multiple-choice questions

Score	**Number of student with correct answer**	**Percentage (%)**	**Level**
0.5	1	0.6	Not achieved
1.5	3	1.8	1
2.0	14	8.5	2
2.5	56	33.9	3
3.0	91	55.2	3
Total	**165**	**100**	

For the score of 0.5, one student achieved the correct answer, representing a very low percentage. This score is categorized as "Not achieved", indicating that the student did not meet the standard for the question. A score of 1.5 was obtained by three students, accounting for a small percentage of the total. This score falls under Level 1 difficulty, suggesting a relatively basic level of proficiency. Moving on to a score of 2.0, 14 students achieved the correct answer, representing 8.5% of the total. This score is categorized as Level 2 difficulty, indicating a moderate level of proficiency. A score of 2.5 was attained by 56 students, accounting for 33.9% of the total. This score falls under Level 3 difficulty, suggesting a higher level of proficiency compared to previous scores. The highest percentage of students, 55.2%, achieved a score of 3.0, which is the maximum score for the multiple-choice questions. This score also falls under Level 3 difficulty, indicating a high level of proficiency among these students. Overall, the score spectrum in Table 9 demonstrates a distribution of scores across different levels of difficulty. The majority of students achieved scores of 2.5 and 3.0, indicating a relatively high level of proficiency in answering the multiple-choice questions. However, there were a small number of students who did not achieve the minimum score, highlighting areas where further improvement may be necessary. It is important to note that the table represents the performance of the students specifically in the multiple-choice questions and does not reflect their overall performance in the assessment. The scores achieved in the multiple-choice section provide insights into students' knowledge and understanding within the given question format.
Table 10 displays the score spectrum of the essay questions. The table includes the score ranges, the corresponding level of proficiency, the number of students who achieved scores within each range, and the percentage of students represented by each score range.

Table 10. Score spectrum of essay questions

Score	***Level***	***Number of student***	***Percentage (%)***
Under 3.5	Substandard	97	58.8
3.5 - 4.54	1	59	35.8
4-55 - 5.59	2	9	5.4
5.6 to over	3	0	0
Total		**165**	**100**

Scores below 3.5 are categorized as "Substandard". In this range, 97 students received scores below 3.5, accounting for 58.8% of the total. This indicates that a majority of students struggled to meet the expected level of proficiency for the essay questions. The score range of 3.5-4.54 includes one student who achieved scores within this range. This represents 35.8% of the total, suggesting a relatively small percentage of students who reached a basic level of proficiency in their essay responses. Within the score range of 4.55-5.59, nine students attained scores falling into this range, accounting for 5.4% of the total. This range represents a higher level of proficiency compared to the previous range, indicating that a small number of students demonstrated a more developed understanding and skills in their essay writing. There were no students who scored within the range of 5.6 and above, indicating that none of the students achieved an exceptionally high level of proficiency in the essay questions. Overall, the score spectrum in Table 10 demonstrates a distribution of scores across different levels of proficiency in the essay questions. The majority of students received scores below the expected standard, suggesting the need for further development in their essay writing skills and deeper understanding of the topics addressed in the questions. It is important to note that the table represents the performance of the students specifically in the essay questions and does not reflect their overall performance in the assessment. The scores achieved in the essay section provide insights into students' ability to articulate their thoughts, analyze information, and express themselves in a written format.

4. Discussion

The results of the assessments reveal several noteworthy findings. Firstly, the majority of students achieved the lowest standards, indicating a significant need for improvement across the board. However, it is important to highlight that a small number of students stood out by achieving the highest scores. These students were able to excel due to the implementation of new and unique assessments that allowed them to showcase their abilities effectively (Shernoff et al., 2017). This suggests that incorporating innovative assessment methods can enhance student performance and provide them with opportunities to shine (Rahman et al., 2021; Raza & Khan, 2022).

Furthermore, when comparing the academic performance of students in the suburb and inner city, the data suggests that students in the suburb performed slightly better overall. While both areas had high-achieving students, the average academic performance was slightly higher in the suburbs. This finding aligns with existing research that identifies variations in academic achievement based on geographical factors (Broadbent, 2017; Karakas, 2020; Sacco & Falzetti, 2021). It is crucial to acknowledge that socioeconomic status and access to educational resources may influence these differences (Liu et al., 2020; Thomson, 2018; von Stumm et al., 2020). Therefore, targeted support and interventions should be implemented to ensure equal educational opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds.

The results indicate that the majority of students performed well in meeting the standards for most of the multiple-choice questions. This signifies a good level of proficiency in recalling and applying knowledge. However, there were variations in the performance of inner-city and suburban students in this question format. Although the inner-city students performed slightly better, it is essential to consider the various factors that may contribute to these differences, such as cultural backgrounds and teaching approaches (Liu et al., 2020; Thomson, 2018). These findings emphasize the need for a comprehensive understanding of student performance and the importance of providing tailored support to address individual needs.

Regarding the essay questions, the data reveals challenges and areas for improvement for both suburban and inner-city students. The lower performance in the essay section suggests that students struggled with critical thinking, analysis, and written expression skills (Bean & Melzer, 2021; Cottrell, 2017). This aligns with research that underscores the significance of these skills in essay writing (Huerta et al., 2017; Paul & Elder, 2019). Therefore, it is crucial to develop strategies that foster deeper understanding of the subject matter and enhance students' ability to articulate their thoughts effectively.

Comparing the average score, highest score, and lowest score between the multiple-choice and essay sections, it becomes evident that students generally achieved higher scores in the multiple-choice questions. This indicates a higher level of achievement and a narrower range of performance variability in this question format. While the multiple-choice questions primarily assess knowledge and recall, the essay questions demand more complex cognitive processes. The lower performance in the essay section suggests the need for further development of essay writing skills and a deeper understanding of the subject matter among the students (Huerta et al., 2017). It is important to note that the table specifically represents the performance of students in the multiple-choice questions and essay questions, and it does not provide a comprehensive overview of their overall performance in the assessment. Additionally, the table demonstrates that none of the students achieved an exceptionally high level of proficiency in the essay questions. The majority of students received scores below the expected standard, indicating the need for further development in essay writing skills and a deeper understanding of the topics addressed in the questions (Paul & Elder, 2019).

The assessment results shed light on the achievements and areas for improvement among the students. Innovative assessment methods can better capture students' abilities and provide them with opportunities to excel. The variations in academic performance between suburban and inner-city students call for equitable educational opportunities and targeted support. The challenges in essay writing skills highlight the need for further development in this area and a deeper

understanding of the subject matter. The higher scores in the multiple-choice section suggest a narrower range of performance variability and a higher level of achievement (Kumar et al., 2021). These insights underscore the importance of considering various factors that influence student performance and designing interventions to ensure equitable educational opportunities for all students (Immordino-Yang et al., 2019). Furthermore, it is crucial to recognize that essay writing skills are not only important for academic success but also for professional and personal development (Kapur, 2018; Khan et al., 2017). Effective communication through writing is essential in various fields, including business, law, and journalism (Doorley & Garcia, 2020). Therefore, improving essay writing skills can have a significant impact on an individual's future prospects. However, addressing the challenges in essay writing requires a multifaceted approach that involves not only improving students' technical skills but also fostering critical thinking and creativity. Additionally, providing students with opportunities to practice and receive feedback on their writing can help them develop their skills and confidence. In conclusion, recognizing the challenges in essay writing skills is the first step towards developing effective interventions that promote equitable educational opportunities and prepare students for success in various domains of life.

5. Conclusion

Developing standards for assessing reading comprehension ability in Literature is a necessary job. It helps to orient teachers in teaching organization and assessment in high schools, and meets the goals of capacity development and teaching quality of the 2018 general education program in Vietnam. The development of reading comprehension standards should ensure that the steps in the process range from determining competence, determining elements, indicators, and quality criteria, to testing and adjusting the designed standard. The above assessment standards for reading comprehension are the basis for teachers and schools to have a basis for teaching and assessment to ensure the required requirements of the program. On the other hand, with the built-in assessment standards, teachers will have the necessary intervention and support in the teaching process to help students make more progress on the path of capacity development from low to higher levels. It is teaching and assessment for the betterment of learners. Vietnam's 2018 general education program is a step to change from a program that provides content knowledge as the main thing to a program to develop learners' competencies and qualities. On the basis of the required requirements of the subject, the development of standards for assessment of competencies is an indispensable step in the implementation process in practice to help teachers and students control the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

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