Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 8 (2026)

# Project Phonics: A Strategic Intervention for Emerging Readers of Abra Highschool

Emely D. Vasquez [1]
Emzvasquez21592@gmail.com / 0009-0005-6557-4384

1 – Abra State Institute of Sciences and Technology (ASIST)

Publication Date: August 16, 2026 DOI: **10.5281/zenodo.21964622**

**Abstract**

This study aimed to determine how effective Project PHONICS as an intervention to enhance students' vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency, utilizing three different strategies. The researcher used a descriptive-experimental design accompanied with a comparative method of quantitative research. The study made use of a one-group pretest and posttest design to determine the level of cognitive language learning barrier on reading of the 35 grade 7 students before and after the use of Project PHONICS. On the other hand, the comparative method is used to determine significant differences between the level of cognitive learning barriers of the grade 7 students of Abra High School before and after the use of Project PHONICS along with Peer-Assisted Learning, Reading Tutorial, and Parent strategies.

Based on the results of the Level of Cognitive Learning Barrier before using the Project PHONICS in the Teaching Learning Process of the respondents, it could be concluded that the respondents showed the most frustration reading level and severe level barrier signifying a need for a strategy to further improve reading skills. As a whole, it gives a reason to believe that there existed significant difference in the level of reading performance of the Grade 7 students before and after using project PHONICS.

**Keywords:** *Project PHONICS, Cognitive Learning Barrier, Peer-Assisted Learning, Reading Tutorial, and Parent strategies.*

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 8 (2026)

## Introduction

Learning a language is a complex process that provides access to new opportunities, ideas, and cultures. The ability to read and understand written language is essential for both academic performance and personal growth. Given the expanding society of today's generation, a variety of language learning obstacles can hinder the progress of beginning readers. (Yi et al.,2023)

Nowadays, one of the major problems teachers encounter in the teaching-learning process is the very low level of English proficiency of learners. This issue is very alarming to all educators in the academe since the English language is at present considered as one of the most leading languages of the world. Ibrahim et al. (2019) underscored that Personal, Cognitive, and Environmental factors are just a few of the many causes of language learning obstacles.

Cognitive is one of the most prevalent difficulties. Students may find some language acquisition skills particularly difficult, such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary retention. This concept was further attested by one study of (Allanazarova, 2020) that for many years, learning vocabulary has been an essential component of learning a second language. The learning emphasizes that vocabulary learning is crucial for successfully acquiring a second language. Scholars and linguists agree that broad vocabulary is essential for effective language use. Many educators and linguists argued that an ample vocabulary is essential for productive language learning. However, most of ESL students problem with recall since they rapidly disregard freshly instructed words. Since critical thinkers believed that there were multiple reasons for ignoring issues related to memory and mental processes, they often address and evaluate these concerns. The study involves conducting small-scale research on relevant vocabulary that can be achieved with visual aids, understanding cognitive factors, contextual learning, tailored strategies, and improved teaching practices. (Allanazarova, 2020).

Globally, English is considered as a second language in addition to the native tongue and serves as a universal language. Bhasin (2021) highlighted language, encompassing words, gestures, symbols, and sounds, as a means of communicating facts and feelings.

Even though English is commonly used today as language of learners nonetheless still encountered difficulties. Nazir (2022) emphasized the struggles experienced by foreign students adjusting to new nations, especially in areas where English is used in along with their native tongues. According to Trinh and Pham (2021), one of the obstacles in the classroom include issues with students' speaking abilities, such as a lack of vocabulary and difficulty structuring their thoughts.

Linguistic methods were among the suggested solutions. In order to overcome common language barriers between educators and English language learners, Patricia Flint (2018) promoted literacy practices and drills that prioritize language practice while considering the interests of the students. The benefit of learning one's native language before learning a new or foreign language was highlighted by Mudaly and Singh (2018), who looked at how introducing a new language in the classroom causes difficulties between students and language.

In order to establish adjustments for learners who struggle with language, Tancredi (2018) recommended that instructors and psychologists work together professionally. The difficulties encountered by learners learning a second language, especially when the parents cannot comprehend the language used in the classroom, were highlighted by McConville (2019), who further highlighted the significance of multilingual instruction among educators.

According to Gratis (2022), language barriers encompass linguistic limitations that cause misunderstandings or comprehension issues during communication. These barriers could be caused by linguistic disparities between countries and cultures, as well as problems like speech difficulties or a lack of knowledge. Gratis highlighted the dialectical variations can change syntax and meaning, making comprehension difficult even when people speak the same language. As Gratis pointed out, the use of unnecessary or complicated phrases might affect language problems. This needless intricacy may cause misunderstandings and make it challenging for people to understand the intended message.

Lughat (2022) examined the causes of language barriers, their effects on verbal and nonverbal communication, and suggestions for efficient communication in order to address the critical problem of decreasing barriers for improved fluency. Lughat emphasized the importance of this problem, particularly in today's modern society where language is an essential way of establishing connections.

Furthermore, even within commonly spoken languages like English, regional differences in the way languages are used might cause misunderstandings. Language barriers frequently happen when people give the same words or messages different meanings based on their varying works, according to Sandhya (2020). Effective communication in a variety of interconnected and diverse contexts requires an understanding of and commitment to overcoming these language difficulties.

Language barriers affect students' capacity to interact with peers and authority figures in the classroom and are not limited to outside settings. Teachers play a role in overcoming these barriers and creating an atmosphere that promotes learning.

Language difficulties commonly appear during the Developmental Phase, when students encountered more complicated subject matter demanding advanced English proficiency, according to Mohapi (2023), who examined language usage throughout developmental phases. Bellen (2023) highlighted language struggles as a prevalent issues, problems impeding successful teaching and learning, particularly in different situations, emphasizing the significance of communication diversity in the classroom.

Harina (2019) highlighted the impact of the classroom environment on language difficulties, particularly in schools where English is not the primary language of instruction. The choice of teaching materials and the overall environment significantly influence on students' language proficiency and communication skills.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 8 (2026)

According to some reports, Filipino students have performed noticeably poorly on several tests in recent years, raising questions about the K–12 curriculum's efficacy. Among the problems noted include an abused curriculum, high demands on instruction within limited time limits, and an all-encompassing academic burden on both educators and students these hindered the development of basic abilities like reading and simple numeracy.

The Department of Education (DepEd) issued DepEd Order (DO) No. 010, s. 2024 on July 23, 2024, which provides policy guidelines for the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum. The MATATAG Curriculum, also known as "Bansang Makabata, Batang Makabansa," one goal is to address educational challenges. This initiative sought to prioritize the mastery of literacy and numeracy skills among learners. Furthermore, The Department of Education launched the MATATAG Curriculum to strengthen the nation's basic education system, with an emphasis on improving literacy and general educational results. It is designed to create a more conducive environment for emerging readers in the Philippines. By providing structured literacy instruction, engaging content, differentiated approaches, and a supportive community, the curriculum aims to improve reading outcomes and cultivate a generation of confident, capable readers. These factors combined can significantly impact the literacy levels of young learners and contribute to their overall academic success.

The researcher thought of applying this teaching strategy in the field because based from the researcher's experiences, teaching a group of 21st century students is not easy. Every now and then, some students in the English class actually do not participate and some rarely participate in the teaching-learning process. Whenever students are asked to answer, they are very hesitant to answer. The researcher believed that the students act that way because they were not confident enough to express their ideas, this may be due to lack of English vocabulary skills. In fact, these students possess intelligence and wisdom because if they are permitted to express their ideas in Tagalog or in Iloco, good and brilliant ideas come out from their tongue, and everybody wants to talk and share in front of the class. But if they are asked to answer in English, no one has the courage to answer. It seems that they know nothing about the lesson. This may be due to the fact that they were at a loss for appropriate words to express their ideas.

The researcher applied an intervention to engage readers in the school where she teaches. Interventions targeting cognitive barriers in learning, especially in language acquisition and literacy. This intervention can facilitate better learning outcomes for individuals who face challenges due to cognitive factors. In addition, promoting reading habits is essential for developing cognitive abilities and intellectual curiosity. As already seen, reading is more than just a hobby; it's a potent instrument that broadens one's perspective, develops critical thinking skills, and enhances the intellect.

In general, this research study supported the idea that the intervention for emerging readers in the school is impacted by the language learning barrier. Additionally, the findings of this study were highly significant and helpful to language teachers in supporting second language learners. To help students understand the value of literacy development in achieving global competency, teachers must be aware of the significance of Project PHONICS as an enrichment.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 8 (2026)

The study sought to answer the following questions: (1) What is the level of cognitive language learning barrier on reading of the grade 7 students before the use of Project Phonics in terms of: Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Fluency? (2) What is the level of cognitive language learning barrier on reading of the grade 7 students after the use of Project Phonics - Reading Tutorial Strategy in terms of: Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Fluency? (3) What is the level of cognitive language learning barrier on reading of the grade 7 students after the use of Project Phonics - Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy in terms of: Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Fluency? (4) What is the level of cognitive language learning barrier on reading of the grade 7 students after the use of Project Phonics – Follow-up with Parents Strategy in terms of: Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Fluency? (5) Is there a significant difference between the level of cognitive learning barriers of the grade 7 students of Abra High School before and after the use of Project PHONICS along Reading Tutorial, Peer-Assisted Learning and with Parents Strategy?

## Materials and Methods

The study utilized descriptive-experimental design accompanied with a comparative method of quantitative research. Additionally of utilizing the one-group pre-test post-test design, which involves providing a single group a pre-test before the study and a post-test after the study, it also creates a high-quality decision-making process and organizes the study's results to facilitate data analysis. This design aimed to combine and compare the data collected during these tests.

On the other hand, the comparative method was used in this research as it aimed to investigate the effect of strategic interventions on reading. By analyzing the effectiveness of interventions, teachers made sensible decisions about applying these strategies in literacy instruction. The respondents of this study consisted of twenty-seven (27) males and eight (8) females), a total of thirty-five (35) Grade 7 students of Abra High School, school year 2024 – 2025. The student participants were divided as follows: 7 from section Puffin, 9 from section Peahen, 11 from section Goldcrest, 1 from section Calypso, 3 from section Chaffinch, 3 from section Haribon, and 1 from section 7 Kestrel.

The researcher adopted a departmental program to address the needs and gaps of students, particularly in literacy. Making use of the Project PHONICS *Promoting Reading Habits to Optimize and Nurture Intellectual Curiosity and Cognitive Skills* through teacher Ann Michelle Espelimbergo as the proponent who believed that a key element of successful reading training is phonics. It promotes vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency that builds the foundation for decoding and advances literacy development in general. A 20-item paper-and-pen test was used to measure the vocabulary and comprehension of the students, while a 153-word reading passage was used to measure reading fluency. The language teacher determined which among the reading intervention was essential for helping learners to improve their reading skills.

The researcher asked for the help of the Master teachers and subject teachers in determining the level of cognitive learning barrier as to vocabulary and comprehension, and

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 8 (2026)

fluency of learners. The Pre-test was administered to the 35 students during English class. The intervention implemented every afternoon after class, the reading tutorial strategy, students read one-on-one with the teacher. For the peer-assisted strategy, students could also read with the other group of students. For the Follow-up strategy, students were given reading materials to complete at home as part of their assignment that additionally included a follow-up question for the next session. Furthermore, home visitation is used also as a follow-up method to administer the test. After each strategy, Post-test was administered.

After the implementation of the intervention and the administration of the instruments, the data were gathered, combined, and statistically analyzed. In addition, the remaining month of the semester is dedicated in validating, interpreting, and presenting the data, as well as meeting with the advisor, critics, and statistician to review and refine the research paper.

## Results

**The level of cognitive language learning barrier on reading of the grade 7 students before the use of Project Phonics in terms of:**

a. **Vocabulary**
b. **Comprehension, and**
c. **Fluency ?**

| Reading Performance | With Non-Reader | | | Without Non-Reader | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | X | Reading Level | Level Barrier | X | Reading Level | Level of Barrier |
| **Vocabulary** | 41.43 | Frustration | Severe | 63.04 | Frustration | Severe |
| **Comprehension** | 42.50 | Frustration | Severe | 64.67 | Frustration | Severe |
| **Fluency** | 56.97 | Frustration | Severe | 86.70 | Independent | Not Severe |

*Norm::*

| ***Reading Level*** | ***Vocabulary/Comprehension*** | ***Fluency*** | ***Level of Barrier*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Independent*** | *97-100%* | *80-100%* | *Not Severe* |
| ***Instructional*** | *90-96%* | *59-79%* | *Low Severe* |
| ***Frustration*** | *89% and below* | *58% below* | *Severe* |

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 8 (2026)

The average score for vocabulary with Non-readers 41.43, placing them in the Frustration category with a Severe level barrier. This indicates that the content's vocabulary is difficult or unfamiliar. Students have never encountered these words before, thus guessing the meanings which they failed to understand the word and concept.

Non-reader excluded, the score increased to 63.04, Frustration, with a Severe level barrier. The mean score for comprehension among students with non-reader 42.50, which placed them in the Frustration level with a Severe barrier, and 64.67, classified in the Frustration level with a Severe barrier without non-readers. Considering vocabulary and comprehension scores are remarkably low, a direct result of students unable to access and understand the material content. Students at this level struggled to interpret materials, resulting to cognitive overload and poor comprehension. With non-reader students, a mean score of 56.97 for fluency reading level, as frustration and a severe level of barrier. Students without non-readers had an average score of 86.70 and an Independent reading level categorized as Not Severe. These results signify a need for a strategy to further improve reading performance. The implications of these findings are critical for instructional planning. Teachers may need to consider differentiated instruction strategies or targeted interventions, such as Project PHONICS, to support non-readers without limiting the progress of others. While more competent students may improve on their own, struggling readers can face major challenges that can be addressed by establishing graded reading groups or providing remedial tutoring. In order to close the gap in reading performance and ensure fair learning outcomes, this data ultimately emphasized the significance of early intervention and specialized training.

**The level of cognitive language learning barrier on reading of the grade 7 students after the use of Project Phonics - Reading Tutorial Strategy in terms of:**

a. **Vocabulary**
b. **Comprehension, and**
c. **Fluency?**

| Reading Performance | With Non-Reader | | | Without Non-Reader | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | X | Reading Level | Level Barrier | X | Reading Level | Level of Barrier |
| **Vocabulary** | 71.43 | Frustration | Severe | 89.29 | Frustration | Severe |
| **Comprehension** | 60.00 | Frustration | Severe | 74.11 | Frustration | Severe |
| **Fluency** | 59.37 | Frustration | Severe | 73.09 | Instructional | Low Severe |

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 8 (2026)

*Norm:*

| ***Reading Level*** | ***Vocabulary/Comprehension*** | ***Fluency*** | ***Level of Barrier*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Independent*** | *97-100%* | *80-100%* | *Not Severe* |
| ***Instructional*** | *90-96%* | *59-79%* | *Low Severe* |
| ***Frustration*** | *89% and below* | *58% below* | *Severe* |

Across all reading performance Vocabulary, Comprehension, and Fluency, students with non-readers consistently executed Frustration with a level of Barrier as Severe with a mean of 71.43, 60.00, and 59.37 respectively. This implied that even in the absence of non-readers, vocabulary is still an important barrier. The high barrier indicated that students have trouble comprehending and using terms correctly, which may hinder reading comprehension overall. This indicates that students still lack basic word recognition and related responsiveness that they need to read independently. The responses they gave probably indicated guesswork, difficulty comprehending the meaning of words, and trouble decoding even basic words or sentences. For both groups, comprehension skills revealed themselves in the Frustration Level. The ratings were quite poor, especially for the non-reader category. This proved that students couldn't understand what they read, which is a crucial component of literacy.

While those without non-readers scored higher in Vocabulary, with a mean of 89.29, a descriptive rating of Frustration, Severe, Comprehension with a mean of 74.11, a descriptive rating of Frustration, Severe, and Fluency with a mean of 73.09 categorized as Instructional, Low Severe respectively. The group without non-readers achieved the Instructional Level with a Low Severe challenge. In line with this, removing non-readers significantly increases fluency (reading quickly, accurately, and expressiveness). Nonetheless, fluency is still an important challenge for the group with non-readers.

The intervention improved the students' vocabulary, particularly when they functioned without a non-reader. In the absence of the non-reader, comprehension increased by almost 14 points. This implies that when students work on their own, they will recognize concepts better. Fluency improved greatly, and the one-on-one strategy encourages more fluent readers to focus on meaning instead of decoding. This implies that fluency is more approachable to the tutorial strategy in groups with stronger standard reading skills.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 8 (2026)

**The level of cognitive language learning barrier on reading of the grade 7 students after the use of Project Phonics - Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy in terms of:**

a. **Vocabulary**
b. **Comprehension, and**
c. **Fluency?**

| Reading Performance | With Non-Reader | | | Without Non-Reader | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | X | DR | Level Barrier | X | DR | Level of Barrier |
| **Vocabulary** | 65.71 | Frustration | Severe | 78.57 | Frustration | Severe |
| **Comprehension** | 60.18 | Frustration | Severe | 74.33 | Frustration | Severe |
| **Fluency** | 59.37 | Instructional | Low Severe | 73.09 | Instructional | Low Severe |

*Norm:*

| ***Reading Level*** | ***Vocabulary/Comprehension*** | ***Fluency*** | ***Level of Barrier*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Independent*** | *97-100%* | *80-100%* | *Not Severe* |
| ***Instructional*** | *90-96%* | *59-79%* | *Low Severe* |
| ***Frustration*** | *89% and below* | *58% below* | *Severe* |

The table shows Level of Cognitive Learning Barrier after integrating Project PHONICS using Peer-Assisted Learning in the Teaching-Learning Process

With a mean of 65.71 and 60.18 for vocabulary and comprehension, respectively, students categorized as non-readers remain to perform at the Frustration–Severe level, indicating that peer-assisted tactics might not be enough to significantly improve the lowest performers. Both sections remain at the Frustration-Severe level for students without non-readers, with corresponding means of 78.57 and 74.33. Both the instructional and non-reader fluency scores (59.37 and 73.09, respectively) were categorized as Low Severe.

**The level of cognitive language learning barrier on reading of the grade 7 students after the use of Project Phonics – Follow-up with Parents Strategy in terms of:**

a. **Vocabulary**
b. **Comprehension, and**
c. **Fluency?**

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 8 (2026)

| Reading Performance | With Non-Reader | | | Without Non-Reader | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | X | DR | Level Barrier | X | DR | Level of Barrier |
| **Vocabulary** | 82.86 | Frustration | Severe | 89.29 | Frustration | Severe |
| **Comprehension** | 76.61 | Frustration | Severe | 84.15 | Frustration | Severe |
| **Fluency** | 63.34 | Instructional | Low Severe | 75.72 | Instructional | Low Severe |

*Norm:*

| ***Reading Level*** | ***Vocabulary/Comprehension*** | ***Fluency*** | ***Level of Barrier*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Independent*** | *97-100%* | *80-100%* | *Not Severe* |
| ***Instructional*** | *90-96%* | *59-79%* | *Low Severe* |
| ***Frustration*** | *89% and below* | *58% below* | *Severe* |

The table reveals the Level of Cognitive Learning Barrier after integrating the Project PHONICS using Parent Follow Up in the Teaching Learning Process

Reading performance of students with non-reader in vocabulary with a mean of 82.86 and comprehension with a mean of 76.61 both showed a descriptive rating of Frustration and severe level while reading performance of students without non-reader showed a mean of 89.29 in vocabulary and a mean of 84.15 in comprehension both a descriptive rating of frustration and severe. The data strongly supports that parental follow-up is a key contributor to reading improvement, especially for struggling learners. It suggests that reinforcing learning at home with consistent support significantly reduces cognitive barriers. Both groups fall under the Instructional level with Low Severe barriers with a mean of 63.34 and 75.72, respectively. Non-readers benefit more noticeably from this approach than in other strategies, indicating that parental involvement helps bridge foundational gaps that peer or teacher-led interventions alone may not fully address.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 8 (2026)

**The t-test showing Significant Differences between the level of Reading Performance before and after using Project PHONICS with Peer Assisted, reading Tutorial and Parent Follow Up along Without Non-Readers**

| Reading Performance | Project Phonics Strategies employed Without Non-Readers | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Reading Tutorial | Peer Assisted | Parent Follow-up |
| **Vocabulary** | 4.114** | 11.466** | 11.466** |
| **Comprehension** | 5.225** | 5.153** | 11.199** |
| **Fluency** | 0.281 | 0.281 | 0.032 |
| **As a whole** | **4.528**** | **8.067**** | **11.746**** |

Legend: *-0.05 Level of Significance
**- 0.01 Level of Significance

As a whole, the table shows the significant that there existed significant difference in the level of reading performance of the Grade 7 students before and after using project PHONICS with reading tutorial (t=4.528), peer assisted (t=8.067), and parent follow-up (t=11.746) along without non-readers which were all found highly significant at 0.01 level of significance. This means that in general, the project PHONICS really served its purpose in enhancing the reading performance of the grade 7 students of Abra High School.

As shown in the table, Vocabulary existed a significant difference to the strategies employed to the grade 7 students particularly on reading tutorial (t= 4.114), as well as Peer assisted (t= 11.466) and Parent follow-up. This indicated that students engaged in peer-assisted activities like vocabulary sharing sessions, word games, and partner reading, and that those who received parent follow-up activities like reading aloud to parents or home word drills had significantly increased their vocabulary. Students' vocabulary application, comprehension, and word recognition all improved as a result of these strategies.

The results further confirmed that there is a significant difference between comprehension and the Project phonics strategies employed on reading tutorial (t= 5.225), Peer assisted (t= 5.153), and Parent follow- up (t= 11.199). The results indicate that these strategies effectively supported non-readers in understanding and interpreting texts, highlighting the importance of personalized and peer-supported instruction for improving comprehension skills. On fluency, no significant difference is found. This suggests that fluency might require more targeted interventions beyond what is provided by these strategies, or that fluency development may take more time to show measurable results.

Online ISSN: 3082-5121
Aloysian Interdisciplinary Journal of Social Sciences, Education, and Allied Fields
https://journals.aloysianpublications.com
Volume 2 Issue 8 (2026)

**The t-test showing Significant Differences between the level of Reading Performance before and after using Project PHONICS with Peer Assisted, reading Tutorial and Parent Follow Up along With Non-Readers.**

| Reading Performance | Project Phonics Strategies employed Without Non-Readers | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Reading Tutorial** | **Peer Assisted** | **Parent Follow-up** |
| Vocabulary | 5.112** | 7.364** | 11.697** |
| Comprehension | 4.744** | 4.693** | 8.809** |
| Fluency | 0.172 | 0.962 | 1.541 |
| **As a whole** | **5.** 238** | **6.251**** | **8.721**** |

Legend: *-0.05 Level of Significance
**- 0.01 Level of Significance

Generally, the existed significant difference in the mean scores in reading comprehension of the Grade 7 students of Abra High School before and after using the Project PHONICS with reading tutorial (t=5.238) peer assisted (t=6.251), and parent follow-up (t=8.721) along with non-readers. All these values were found significant at 0.01 level, hence highly significant. This means that the Project PHONICS really enhances the performance of the students in reading, such as vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. The result further confirms a significant difference between vocabulary and reading tutorial (t= 5.112), as well as peer assisted (t= 7.364) and parent follow-up (t= 11.697). According to these findings, every one of these strategies considerably enhanced the vocabulary growth of students who were non-readers. The method that displayed the highest level of relevance was Parent Follow-Up, indicating that parental involvement—possibly through reinforcement at home—plays a crucial role in improving language abilities.

Comprehension significantly change to Project PHONICS strategies reading tutorial (t= 4.744), Peer assisted (t= 4.693) and Parent follow-up (t=8.809). The results show that each strategy helped enhance students' ability to understand and process text.

## Discussion

The findings revealed that before the implementation of Project PHONICS, the Grade 7 students demonstrated Frustration reading levels with Severe cognitive language learning barriers in vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency, particularly when non-readers were included. This indicates that many students experienced difficulties in word recognition, understanding

texts, and reading with accuracy and expression, highlighting the need for an appropriate reading intervention.

After the implementation of Project PHONICS using the three intervention strategies—Reading Tutorial, Peer-Assisted Learning, and Parent Follow-Up—students' reading performance improved across all three reading components. Although vocabulary and comprehension generally remained within the Frustration level, their mean scores increased, while fluency improved to the Instructional level with a Low Severe barrier in most cases. Among the three strategies, Parent Follow-Up produced the greatest improvement, followed by Peer-Assisted Learning and Reading Tutorial, emphasizing the value of consistent support both at home and in collaborative learning environments.

Furthermore, the t-test results confirmed highly significant differences between the pretest and posttest scores for vocabulary and comprehension across all intervention strategies, demonstrating the effectiveness of Project PHONICS in enhancing students' reading performance. However, no significant improvement was observed in fluency, suggesting that fluency development requires more intensive practice and a longer intervention period. Overall, the findings support the effectiveness of Project PHONICS as a reading intervention in reducing cognitive language learning barriers and improving the reading abilities of Grade 7 students, particularly when complemented by active parental involvement and structured instructional support.

## Conclusion

The findings of the study led to the conclusion that before the implementation of Project PHONICS, the Grade 7 students exhibited Frustration reading levels with Severe cognitive learning barriers, indicating the need for effective reading interventions to improve their vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. After the implementation of Project PHONICS, the Reading Tutorial Strategy resulted in improved reading performance, although students generally remained at the Frustration level, with fluency showing greater responsiveness among learners with stronger baseline reading skills. Similarly, the Peer-Assisted Learning Strategy contributed to improvements in reading performance; however, it was not sufficient on its own to produce substantial gains among the lowest-performing students, suggesting the need for additional targeted support. The findings also demonstrated that Parent Follow-Up played a significant role in enhancing students' reading performance, particularly among struggling readers, highlighting the importance of parental involvement in reinforcing literacy skills at home. Overall, the study concludes that Project PHONICS effectively enhanced the reading performance of the Grade 7 students of Abra High School by improving their vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency, thereby reducing their cognitive learning barriers in reading.

The study recommends the continued implementation and expansion of Project PHONICS, particularly the Reading Tutorial, Peer-Assisted Learning, and Parent Follow-Up strategies, as these effectively improved students' vocabulary and comprehension. Teachers

should regularly integrate guided reading and tutorial activities, while structured peer-assisted learning with clearly defined roles should be adopted to maximize student engagement and learning. Since Parent Follow-Up produced the greatest improvement, schools should strengthen home-school partnerships by providing parents with practical reading support strategies, such as phonics activities, storytelling, and shared reading. In addition, schools should implement targeted interventions to further develop reading fluency through oral and repeated reading activities, conduct Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions to enhance teachers' instructional practices for struggling readers, and administer regular reading assessments to monitor students' progress and guide data-driven instructional decisions.

**References**

Bhasin H. (2021). What are Language Barriers? And How to Overcome Them. https://www.marketing91.com/language-barr iers/

Bellen, A. (2023). The Communication Barriers of Kapampangan Dialect among the Native-born Students of College of Education. Retrieved, April, 2023, from https://www.academia.edu/49022561/

Chiao-Yi, Wu., Beth, A., O'Brien. (2023). 1. Brain Signatures of Reading Within Different Types of Learners and Across Written Languages: Evidence and Implications for Education.

Flint, (2018). Hurdling Over Language Barriers: Building Relationships with Adolescent Newcomers Through Literacy Advancement. Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy Volume 62, Issue 5 p. 509-519.

Gratis, B. (2022). Overcoming language barriers to communication. Retrieved https://nulab.com/learn/collaboration/overcoming-language-barriers-communication/

Harina, T. (2019). An Analysis of Students' Barriers in Speaking English Fluently. A Case Study at Department of English Language Education of Ar-Raniry State Islamic University.

Ibrahim, Ahmad, S., Abuarqoub. (2019). Language barriers to effective communication. 24(6):64-77.

Lughat, I. (2022). Language Barriers and Language Learners: A Review. Retrieved from http://www.awraqthaqafya.com/2023/M., Allanazarova. (2020). Vocabulary Retention in Cognitive Theory. 6(9):414-419.

https://www.deped.gov.ph/matatag-curriculum/CSTA Philippines Website McConville, K. (2019). Language Barriers in The Classroom: From Mother Tongue to National Language. Retrieved, April 2023, from https://www.concernusa.org/story/language-barriers-in-classroom/Mohapi, N. (2023). The Impact of Language Barriers on the Academic Achievement in South Africa's Schools. Retrieved, April 20, 2023, from https://www.academia.edu/8699204/Mudaly, V., & Singh, K. (2018). Language: A barrier when teaching and learning business studies. International Journal of Science and Research, 74 (9/1), 56–71.

Natalie, Da, Costa. (2022). 1. Integrating reading strategy and phonics instruction to enhance foreign language reading comprehension: A complex approach to a complex phenomenon. Journal of language teaching.

Nazir, (2022). Language Barrier, language-related issues and Stress among International Students in Turkish universities. IBN Haldun University.

Sandhya, J. (2020). 6 Language Barriers in Communication. Retrieved from https://www.fictioncommunication.com/6- language-barriers-in-communication/

Tancredi, A. (2018). Adjusting language barriers in secondary classrooms through professional collaboration based on student consultation. Master of Philosophy thesis, Queensland University of Technology. Retrieved from https://eprints.qut.edu.au/122876/2/__qut.edu.au_Documents_StaffHome_StaffGroupH%24_halla_Desktop_Haley_Tancredi_Thesis.pdf

Trinh, N. B., & Pham, D. T. T. (2021). Challenges in Speaking Classrooms among Non-English Majors. Vietnam Journal of Education, 5(2), 37–42. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.52296/vje.2021.52