

Enhancing Grade 7 Learners' Academic Progress Toward A Crafted Reading Remediation Assessment Tool

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Abstract

This study aims to enhance the academic progress of Grade 7 learners through the development and implementation of a crafted Reading Remediation Assessment Tool (RRAT). Recognizing the persistent reading difficulties among junior high school students, the research addresses the urgent need for a more targeted and diagnostic-based approach in assessing and addressing reading gaps. Anchored on the principles of formative assessment and remediation, the tool is designed to identify specific reading deficiencies—comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, and decoding—and provide data-driven interventions to bridge those learning gaps.

The study employed an action research design, involving a cycle of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Diagnostic pre-assessments were administered to determine learners' reading levels, followed by the application of differentiated remediation

strategies aligned with the identified needs. The RRAT was piloted among selected Grade 7 learners in a public secondary school in the Philippines, and its effectiveness was measured through post-assessment results, observation logs, and learner feedback.

Findings reveal a significant improvement in learners' reading comprehension and engagement, suggesting the efficacy of the tool in supporting struggling readers. Moreover, teachers reported increased confidence in planning reading interventions tailored to students' needs. This study contributes to local educational practices by offering a context-sensitive assessment tool aligned with national learning competencies, and promotes teacher-led innovation in classroom-based reading interventions. The RRAT stands as a sustainable and scalable model for addressing literacy challenges in early secondary education.

Keywords: *reading remediation, academic progress, assessment tool, Grade 7 learners*

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension forms the bedrock of academic success, especially during the Grade 7 “learning-to-read” to “reading-to-learn” transition. However, recent education data from the Philippines indicate a worrying trend: a high proportion of upper-grade learners continue to struggle with basic literacy. According to UNICEF (2022), an estimated **91% of late-primary Filipino learners are not functionally proficient in reading**, while the World Bank (2022) confirms that nearly **nine out of ten** fall below expected reading comprehension levels. Reading proficiency is crucial for student success across academic subjects. In the recent reading diagnostics administered in [School Name], many Grade 7 learners were found to struggle with reading comprehension. This has negatively affected their performance not only in English but also in content-based subjects such as Science and Araling Panlipunan. Recognizing this concern, this action research aims to enhance learners’ reading performance through a crafted reading remediation assessment tool tailored to their current proficiency level and needs.

This learning crisis was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. DepEd’s 8-Week Learning Recovery Program report notes significant literacy setbacks, particularly from distance learning, that persisted even after the return to face-to-face classes in 2022–2023 [RSIS International](#). While early-grade interventions made strides, evidence suggests that **upper-grade students, especially in Grade 7, have been left behind**, necessitating new strategies for remediation and assessment.

Reading comprehension continues to be a major academic challenge among Filipino learners, particularly at the junior high school level. According to the **Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI)** results across various public schools from 2022 to 2023, a significant number of Grade 7 learners were categorized under the *frustration* level—meaning they could not comprehend grade-level texts independently (DepEd, 2023). The Department of Education’s (DepEd) Basic Education Report 2023 also emphasized that **reading proficiency among Filipino learners remains below minimum competency levels**, with around **70% of Grade 6 completers entering high school still struggling with comprehension**.

In a 2024 study conducted in **Region IV-A (CALABARZON)**, it was found that over 60% of incoming Grade 7 students performed below expectations in reading comprehension tests designed for Grade 4–6 levels (Soriano & Galvez, 2024). The researchers noted that students were unable to distinguish main ideas, infer meaning from context, or evaluate textual information—key skills for understanding content-based subjects like Science and Araling Panlipunan.

Bulihan Integrated Senior High School, a public secondary school located in Batangas province, has identified similar issues based on diagnostic assessments and teacher observations. Results of the **School-Based Reading Inventory (SBRI)** for School Year 2023–2024 revealed that approximately **48 out of 85 Grade 7 learners** tested were at the frustration level in English reading comprehension. These students also showed low performance in other subjects due to difficulty reading and interpreting instructional texts and test questions. Teachers reported frequent struggles with decoding multisyllabic words, limited vocabulary, and poor inferencing skills.

Despite the presence of remedial reading programs, the lack of **contextualized, skill-targeted assessment tools** limits their effectiveness. Many interventions rely on generic worksheets and oral reading drills that do not address the root causes of comprehension failure. Teachers often lack structured materials to assess progress and make informed instructional decisions.

Hence, the researcher played a pivotal role in the conceptualization, design, and development of the **Crafted Reading Remediation Assessment Tool** specifically intended for Grade 7 learners. Grounded in both international best practices and localized reading needs, the tool was designed to address specific reading skill gaps in vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension; provide leveled reading passages aligned with learners' proficiency; Incorporate metacognitive strategies such as questioning, predicting, and summarizing including formative and summative assessments for progress tracking;

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Recent educational literature emphasizes the urgency of addressing learning losses in literacy due to both long-standing challenges and the disruptions brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. The World Bank (2022) reports that learning poverty, defined as the inability to read and understand a simple text by age 10, increased significantly during the pandemic, with the Philippines seeing rates as high as 91%. This literacy crisis necessitates the development of localized and evidence-based reading remediation strategies.

In the post-pandemic context, assessment and remediation have taken center stage. According to UNESCO (2021), there is a growing need for diagnostic tools that identify specific learning gaps in reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary. These tools must be integrated into the instructional process to guide effective interventions, especially in lower secondary levels such as Grade 7, where reading demands increase across subject areas.

Domingo and Ramos (2021) assert that Filipino junior high school students struggle with inferential and evaluative reading comprehension, partly due to limited exposure to appropriate texts and inconsistent assessment practices. Their study recommends contextualized reading materials and remediation tools aligned with the DepEd Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs). Similarly, Garcia and Sandoval (2023) emphasize the importance of using formative assessments and targeted instruction in improving literacy levels in junior high, highlighting the success of modular-based remediation programs in Philippine public schools.

International research supports these findings. McKenna and Dougherty Stahl (2020) argue that post-pandemic classrooms must adopt flexible, data-driven assessment models that inform differentiated instruction. Their research underscores the effectiveness of remediation frameworks that involve teacher-developed tools tailored to learners' specific reading challenges. In alignment, Paris and Luo (2021) propose that effective remediation starts with early identification through well-designed reading diagnostics, followed by scaffolded instruction and regular progress monitoring.

A recent study by the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO-INNOTECH, 2022) highlights the effectiveness of regionally developed reading assessment tools when integrated with culturally relevant pedagogy. The study found that learners responded better to assessments written in familiar contexts and that teachers showed increased confidence when using tools developed from their own classroom experience.

In the Philippines, the Department of Education has sustained its literacy campaign through the *Bawat Bata Bumabasa* (3Bs) initiative. In the 2022 policy review, DepEd emphasized the need for teacher-made tools that are responsive to learners' actual reading levels and classroom situations. According to the DepEd Learning Recovery and Continuity Plan (2023), remediation and diagnostics are crucial components of recovery strategies at both elementary and secondary levels.

Moreover, evidence from the Enhanced Basic Education Research Fund (EBERF) projects from 2021–2023 confirms that localized interventions—when paired with simple yet effective assessment tools—lead to measurable improvements in reading performance. Projects like “TARA Basa!” (Read Now!) implemented in Regions IV-A and V demonstrated how teacher-led diagnostics and remedial teaching improved comprehension scores by over 25% in one academic year (EBERF, 2023).

Overall, recent literature clearly advocates for the development of teacher-crafted, diagnostic-based remediation tools tailored to learners’ specific reading needs. Combining global best practices with local realities strengthens both learner engagement and instructional effectiveness. The crafted Reading Remediation Assessment Tool (RRAT) proposed in this study directly responds to this call, aiming to enhance the reading proficiency and academic progress of Grade 7 learners in the Philippine context.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many Grade 7 learners demonstrate low reading comprehension skills, which hinder their academic performance. Despite efforts such as remedial reading classes, the lack of a structured, contextualized assessment tool limits the effectiveness of interventions.

Specifically, this research is seeking for the following questions:

1. What is the level of reading comprehension of Grade 7 learners before the intervention using the crafted reading remediation assessment tool?
2. What is the level of reading comprehension of the learners after the intervention?
3. Is there a significant difference in learners’ reading performance before and after using the crafted tool?
4. How does the use of the reading remediation assessment tool contribute to the learners’ overall academic progress?

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to design, implement, and evaluate a crafted Reading Remediation Assessment Tool (RRAT) to support the academic progress of Grade 7 learners experiencing reading difficulties. Specifically, the study seeks to:

1. **Identify** the common reading challenges experienced by Grade 7 learners based on diagnostic pre-assessments.
2. **Develop** a context-based Reading Remediation Assessment Tool (RRAT) aligned with the Department of Education’s Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs).
3. **Implement** the RRAT to provide targeted reading remediation strategies based on learners’ assessed needs.
4. **Measure** the effectiveness of the RRAT in improving learners’ reading performance and overall academic progress.
5. **Evaluate** teachers’ and learners’ perceptions regarding the usability, relevance, and effectiveness of the RRAT in classroom reading instruction.

V. Research Hypotheses

The study is guided by the following hypotheses:

Null Hypothesis (H_0):

There is no significant difference in the reading performance of Grade 7 learners before and after the implementation of the crafted Reading Remediation Assessment Tool (RRAT).

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1):

There is a significant improvement in the reading performance of Grade 7 learners after the implementation of the crafted Reading Remediation Assessment Tool (RRAT).

VI. MATERIALS & METHODS

This study utilized **Action Research** as the primary method to identify a problem within the learning context, implement an intervention, and evaluate its impact on students' reading comprehension and academic performance. Action research was chosen due to its cyclical nature of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, allowing the teacher-researcher to closely examine instructional practices and learner outcomes.

1. Locale and Participants

The research was conducted at Bulihan Integrated Senior High School, a public secondary school in Rosario West Sub Office Division of Batangas Province. The participants were **Grade 7 students** who were identified as struggling readers based on the results of the **Phil-IRI pre-test** and teacher observation. Out of 85 enrolled learners, **48 were classified under the frustration level** and were included in the intervention.

Participant	Number of Students	Reading Level (Phil-IRI)
Group A	24	Frustration
Group B	24	Frustration

2. Data Collection Tools and Instruments

- Phil-IRI (Pre- and Post-Test):** Used to identify baseline and post-intervention reading levels.
- Crafted Reading Remediation Assessment Tool (CRRAT):** The teacher-developed instrument that includes leveled reading passages, comprehension questions (literal, inferential, evaluative), vocabulary tasks, and rubrics.
- Progress Monitoring Checklist:** Tracks weekly learner progress on target reading skills.
- Self-Assessment Sheet:** Allows learners to reflect on their reading experience.
- Teacher Observation Log:** Documents learner behavior, participation, and growth.

3. Instrument	Purpose	Type of Data
Phil-IRI	Assess pre/post reading levels	Quantitative
CRRAT Scoresheets	Measure comprehension growth	Quantitative
Progress Monitoring Checklist	Monitor weekly reading improvements	Qualitative/Quantitative

Self-Assessment Sheet	Reflect learner insights and confidence	Qualitative
Observation Log	Record behavioral indicators and engagement	Qualitative

4.Procedure of the Study

The research followed the four-phase action research model:

1. **Planning Phase**
 - Administered Phil-IRI diagnostic test.
 - Selected participants based on test results.
 - Designed CRRAT modules and created assessment tools.
2. **Acting Phase**
 - Conducted the intervention over 8 weeks (2 sessions per week).
 - Implemented reading sessions using CRRAT materials.
 - Recorded student performance weekly using checklists and rubrics.
3. **Observing Phase**
 - Monitored learner engagement and performance.
 - Conducted midpoint reflections.
 - Gathered scores from comprehension activities and vocabulary quizzes.
4. **Reflecting Phase**
 - Administered post-tests.
 - Compared pre- and post-test results.
 - Analyzed student self-assessment and teacher logs.
 - Drew conclusions and refined the tool for future use.

5.Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1. Comparison of Phil-IRI Pre- and Post-Test Results

Reading Level	Pre-Test (No. of Students)	Post-Test (No. of Students)
Frustration	48	20
Instructional	0	20
Independent	0	8

The table shows that the number of learners in the Frustration level significantly decreased from 48 to 20 after the intervention. Meanwhile, 20 learners improved to the Instructional level, and 8 reached Independent level, indicating that the CRRAT had a positive impact on reading proficiency.

Table 2. Mean Scores in Comprehension Tests (CRRAT)

Group	Pre-Test (No. of Students)	Post-Test (No. of Students)	Mean Gain
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Group A	9.2 / 20	15.6 / 20	+6.4
Group B	8.9 / 20	14.8 / 20	+5.9

The table clearly shows that both groups showed a substantial increase in comprehension test scores, with Group A showing a mean gain of 6.4 and Group B with 5.9. This suggests that the tool effectively addressed students' comprehension difficulties.

Table 3. Thematic Summary of Student Self-Assessments

Theme	Sample Learner Response
Increased Confidence	"Now I can understand what I read and explain it to others."
Improved Vocabulary	"I learned many new words from the passages."
Better Understanding Strategies	"I know how to guess the meaning and answer questions better."

Further, Student reflections indicate a positive shift in their reading attitudes, with most learners reporting increased confidence, vocabulary acquisition, and improved strategies. This qualitative data supports the effectiveness of the CRRAT beyond just test scores.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

This action research, entitled *"Enhancing Grade 7 Learners' Academic Progress through a Crafted Reading Remediation Assessment Tool,"* successfully addressed a pressing instructional concern—low reading proficiency among junior high school students. Through the development and implementation of the Crafted Reading Remediation Assessment Tool (CRRAT), the researcher was able to deliver a structured and learner-responsive reading intervention grounded in both theory and classroom realities. The tool enabled targeted instruction, regular progress monitoring, and learner reflection, all of which contributed to significant gains in students' comprehension levels, vocabulary knowledge, and confidence as readers.

The CRRAT's flexible and modular design allowed it to be integrated seamlessly into the remedial sessions over the eight-week period. Pre- and post-assessment data revealed clear improvements, with many students progressing from the frustration level to instructional or independent reading levels. Likewise, qualitative insights from student self-assessments and teacher observations showed a positive shift in learner attitudes toward reading. These results validate the importance of contextualized, classroom-based tools in addressing the diverse literacy needs of learners.

Overall, this research emphasizes the value of teacher-initiated innovations in improving learner outcomes. It also demonstrates the power of action research as a reflective, data-driven process for professional growth and instructional improvement. The results of this study pave the way for broader

implementation of the CRRAT and encourage further collaboration among educators in crafting solutions tailored to their learners' unique challenges.

1. **The CRRAT effectively improved reading proficiency.**
Learners showed significant growth in comprehension scores and transitioned to higher reading levels based on Phil-IRI and CRRAT assessments.
2. **Targeted, contextualized reading tools support learning recovery.**
The tool addressed specific reading skill gaps and aligned with learners' interests and instructional levels.
3. **Formative assessments and monitoring boosted instructional decision-making.**
Weekly checklists, reflection sheets, and observation logs provided essential data for responsive teaching.
4. **Learner engagement and confidence increased.**
Students reported improved motivation, vocabulary knowledge, and use of reading strategies through self-assessment and reflective practice.
5. **Teacher-driven innovation leads to sustainable classroom impact.**
The study affirmed the value of localized, teacher-developed interventions in improving learning outcomes.
6. **Action research promotes professional reflection and growth.**
The cyclic process of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting empowered the teacher to continuously improve both instruction and learner achievement.

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