Reading Comprehension Skills of Learners Among Medium Schools: A Basis for A Reading Enhancement Plan

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Abstract

This study assessed the reading comprehension skills of Grade 2 learners in the medium schools of Rizal District, Cagayan, during the School Year 2024-2025, as a basis for a reading enhancement plan. Utilizing a descriptive-correlational-comparative design, data were gathered from 81 pupils using a profile survey and the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA). Findings revealed that the majority of learners, predominantly 7-year-old females from Malaueg-speaking, low-income families, were "Grade Ready" in word recognition and sentence reading and were "Reading at Grade Level" in fluency and comprehension. However, a significant number still required support as "Light Refreshers."

Statistical analyses identified a significant relationship between reading skills and specific home factors: a mother's educational attainment and the availability of reading materials influenced word-level skills, while a father's educational attainment impacted reading fluency and comprehension. Notably, no significant difference was found between the comprehension levels of the two schools. The study concludes that while instructional practices are generally effective, targeted support is needed. Consequently, a reading enhancement plan is proposed, focusing on differentiated instruction, parental engagement workshops, and the strategic integration of local language to bolster foundational and comprehensive reading skills.

Keywords: *reading comprehension, CRLA, foundational reading skills, home literacy environment, parental education, reading enhancement plan, elementary education*

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is the cornerstone of academic success and lifelong learning, enabling children to access information, think critically, and participate fully in society. By the second grade, learners are expected to transition from decoding individual words to reading for meaning, a critical milestone that predicts future academic achievement. However, global and national assessments consistently highlight a pervasive challenge in reading literacy. International reports, such as those from UNESCO (2021), have pointed to significant learning losses, while national data in the Philippines has historically indicated that

many students struggle to achieve minimum proficiency levels in reading (San Juan, 2019). This underscores an urgent need to evaluate and strengthen reading instruction at its foundational stages.

The development of reading comprehension is a complex process influenced by an interplay of skills and environments. It rests upon two essential pillars: foundational skills, such as word recognition and reading fluency, which must become automatic (Ehri, 2020; Kang & Shin, 2019), and comprehensive abilities that allow for the extraction and construction of meaning from text (Duke & Cartwright, 2021). Beyond the classroom, a child's home environment plays a crucial role. Factors such as parental educational attainment and the availability of reading materials create a "scholarly culture" that significantly predicts reading success (Evans et al., 2019; Silinskas et al., 2020). Understanding the specific profile of learners and the dynamics of their home and school contexts is therefore essential for diagnosing needs and tailoring effective interventions.

In the context of the medium schools within Rizal District, it is imperative to move beyond anecdotal evidence and establish an empirical baseline on the state of reading comprehension among Grade 2 learners. While some learners may be meeting grade-level expectations, the presence of even a minority of struggling readers necessitates a proactive and targeted response. A systematic assessment is required to identify not only the overall level of reading comprehension but also the specific demographic and environmental factors that are correlated with reading outcomes in this particular locale.

This study therefore aims to assess the reading comprehension skills of Grade 2 learners in the medium schools of Rizal District. It seeks to determine the learners' proficiency in word recognition, sentence reading, fluency, and comprehension; investigate the relationship between their reading skills and their profile variables; and compare the performance between two school groups. The insights generated from this inquiry will serve as a definitive evidence base for formulating a structured Reading Enhancement Plan, designed to consolidate strengths and address the specific gaps identified, thereby ensuring that every child is equipped with the critical skill of reading for understanding.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to assess the reading comprehension of Grade 2 learners among medium schools of Rizal District, Rizal, Cagayan as a abasis for a reading enhancement plan for the School Year 2024-2025.

Specifically, it answered the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
    1.1.   Age
    1.2.   Sex
    1.3.   Parents' Highest Education Attainment
    1.4.   Parents' Gross Monthly Income
    1.5.   Reading materials used at Home
    1.6.   Language spoken at Home
2. What is the level of reading comprehension of the respondents in terms of:
    2.1.   Word Recognition and Sentence Reading
    2.2.   Reading Fluency and Comprehension
3. Is there a significant relationship between the level of reading comprehension of the respondents when grouped according to their profile variables?
4. Is there a significant difference between the level of reading comprehension of the two

groups of the respondents?
5. What reading enhancement plan can be proposed to improve the reading comprehension skill of the respondents?

Hypotheses

This study was guided by the hypotheses that:

1. there is no significant relationship on the level of reading comprehension of the respondents when grouped according to their profile variables; and
2. there is no significant difference between the level of reading comprehension of the two groups of the respondents.

Scope and Delimitation

This study focused on the assessment of the reading comprehension of Grade 2 pupils in the medium schools of Rizal District, Cagayan, namely Rizal Central School (RCS) and Gaggabutan Elementary School (GAGES). The study utilized only one section per school.

The level of reading comprehension was limited to the results of the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA), which measured the word recognition, sentence reading, reading fluency, and comprehension of the learners.

The assessment was conducted after the first quarter of the school year 2024–2025.

METHODS

Research Design

In this study, the researcher utilized a descriptive design, specifically the correlational-comparative design. A descriptive study is one that is designed to describe the distribution of one or more variables without regard to any causal or other hypothesis. In this study, this design was used to describe the reading comprehension of the Grade 2 pupils, particularly their decoding and comprehension skills, as well as their profile.

The correlational aspect focused on the relationship between the level of reading comprehension of the respondents when grouped according to their profile variables, while the comparative aspect aimed to determine the difference between the levels of reading comprehension of the two groups of respondents.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study were the Grade 2 pupils of the medium schools in Rizal District. The medium schools were considered by the researcher to obtain a sufficient and manageable number of respondents and to maintain a specific scope and context for the study.

As an inclusion criterion, only Grade 2 pupils enrolled for the school year 2024–2025 were taken as respondents of the study. Excluded were pupils who transferred during the current school year and learners with special needs. The Systematic Random Sampling technique was utilized to select the respondents, wherein the sample sizes per school were based on enrollment figures, calculated using Slovin's Formula. The table below presents the distribution of respondents.

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents of the Study

Name of Medium School	Total Respondents
Rizal Central School Gaggabutan	38
Elementary School	43
Total	81

Data Gathering Tool

The study used two tools to collect the needed data: the Profile Survey Questionnaire and the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA).

The Profile Survey Questionnaire was used to gather data on the respondents' age, sex, parents' highest educational attainment, parents' gross monthly income, reading materials used at home, and language spoken at home.

On the other hand, the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) was used to assess the reading comprehension of the respondents. It was a standardized test prescribed by the Department of Education, designed to help teachers quickly determine the reading profiles of their Grade 1 to Grade 3 learners and develop appropriate reading instructional strategies.

The tool had two major parts: the first part tested the word recognition and sentence reading of the learners based on the number of letters sounded out correctly, number of rhymes sounded correctly, and sentences read correctly. While, the second part tested the fluency and reading comprehension of the learners based on reading miscues, number of words read within 2 minutes, total time used in reading, and the number of words read per minute.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before the conduct of the study, a letter was addressed to the University President through the chairman of the IRB, noted by the Research Adviser, and concurred by the Dean of the Graduate School to obtain approval for conducting the study. The researcher sought an Ethics Clearance as a tool to assess the ethical compliance of the research process through the IRB office. Before any research could begin, the Ethics Committee had to approve it. The Ethics Clearance served as a resource for researchers who wanted to conduct research with integrity, honesty, and fairness.

Afterward, permission was also sought from each of the School Principals of the medium schools in Rizal District. The researcher visited the respective offices to deliver the permission letters and to personally explain the purpose and procedure of the study, if deemed necessary. The researcher explained that data gathering would be conducted after the first quarter of SY 2024–2025.

Upon approval, the researcher identified the participants with the help of the school principals and class advisers. An Informed Consent Form was given to the selected participants for their parents to sign. Afterward, data collection began. The Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment was administered individually to the pupils.

During the scheduled data collection, the researcher personally administered the questionnaires, and reiterated the purpose of the study and explained what the participants needed to do. Utmost care was taken to secure accurate and complete responses. The researcher remained

present until the participants finished answering the questionnaires to assist them and clarify any questions.

Statistical Tools

For SOP 1, frequency counts and percentages were used to describe the profile of the pupils, particularly their age, sex, parents' highest educational attainment, parents' gross monthly income, reading materials used at home, and language spoken at home.

Moreover, for SOP 2, frequency counts and percentages were used to analyze the scores of the pupils in both word recognition, sentence reading, reading fluency, and comprehension. These were further analyzed using the following range of scores and their interpretations:

For word recognition: 0–14 – full refresher

15–20 – moderate refresher For sentence reading:

7–16 – light refresher

17–20 – grade ready

Furthermore, the reading comprehension test and reading fluency were scored based on the correct answers given in the objective-type test and on the percentage of the passage read accurately. The following rubric was used:

Reading Level	Criteria	Observations Level	
Full Intervention	Learner reads less than 25% of the passage accurately.	Level 1	Reads word by word
Moderate Intervention	Learner reads between 26% to 50% of passage accurately in 2 minutes AND answers 1 to 2 questions correctly.	Level 2	Reads word in chunks
Light Intervention	Learner reads between 51% to 75% of passage accurately 2 in minutes AND answers 3 to 4 questions correctly.	Level 3	Reads fluently but not observing functuation marks
Meets Expectation	Learner reads between 76% to 100% of passage accurately in 2 minutes AND answers 5 to 6 questions correctly.	Level 4	Reads fluently with proper expression

Chi-square Cramer's V was also used to determine the relationships of the comprehension levels when the pupils are grouped by profile variables.

Finally, Independent T-test was used to determine the difference of the comprehension levels of the two groups of pupils.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Summary of Findings

1. Profile of the Respondents
- Majority of them were 7 years old, mostly females, Malaueg speaking and belonging to low-income families. Most of them had fathers who were college graduates and mothers who were either high school graduates or reached college level. Most of them had books as the

most available reading material at home.

2. Level of Reading Comprehension
   Word Recognition and Sentence Reading

- Results of the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) revealed that learners were 'grade ready' on word recognition and sentence reading. However, a significant number fell under 'light refresher' level.

   Reading Fluency and Comprehension

- Majority of the learners were 'Reading at Grade Level', while a few were 'Transitioning Readers' in terms of their reading fluency and comprehension.

3. Correlation between the Level of Reading Comprehension of the respondents when grouped according to their profile variables

- Mother's educational attainment and availability of reading materials at home significantly affected learners' word recognition and sentence reading, while other variables such as age, gender, father's education, family income, and language spoken did not show significant relationships.

- Only father's educational attainment had significant influence, while other variables, including age, gender, mother's educational attainment, family income, reading materials, and language spoken, did not have statistically
   significant relationships with reading fluency and comprehension.

4. Comparison on the Level of Reading Comprehension of the two groups of the respondents

- There was no statistically significant difference between the two schools. In terms of the two school's difference in the reading fluency and comprehension of Grade 2 learners, the mean score for Rizal Central School was higher than for Gagabutan Elementary School, however the difference was not statistically significant.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher concluded that the Grade 2 learners in the medium schools of Rizal District, Cagayan, had reading comprehension skills that met their grade level requirements. They demonstrated adequate word recognition and sentence reading skills, as well as strong reading fluency and comprehension abilities. This implied that the Grade 2 teachers had used effective strategies in teaching reading and further proved the appropriateness of the schools' reading curriculum. Despite this, the researcher recommended that additional support be provided to improve fluency and comprehension.

The researcher further concluded that parental education and access to reading materials were key determinants of reading success in Grade 2 learners, highlighting the significant role of home support in reading. On the other hand, demographic factors such as age, gender, and family income did not affect early reading development.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

1. The teachers may maintain the good practices which can result in the good standing of the

learners' reading comprehension skills.

2. The school administrators may conduct parental literacy workshops to equip families with strategies for supporting reading at home, especially for learners who have parents with low educational attainment.

3. Administrators and teachers may implement a school-based reading program in support to learners who belong to low- income families.

4. Given that most learners speak Malaueg at home, teachers may integrate the local language into early literacy instruction to support reading comprehension.

5. Teachers may implement strategies that can support learners below the expected levels of word and sentence recognition such as Phonics-Based Instruction, Guided Reading and Repeated Reading, Sight Word Recognition, Comprehension Strategies, and Multisensory Approaches

6. To support the learners struggling with fluency and comprehension, teachers may implement Guided Repeated Reading, Explicit Vocabulary Instruction, Paired and Echo Reading and Comprehension Strategy Instruction.

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