



# Factors Affecting Reading Proficiency and Difficulties of Grade 5 Pupils: Bases for a Reading Intervention Program

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## Abstract

This study determined the socio-demographic factors affecting the reading proficiency and reading difficulties of Grade 5 pupils in a public elementary school in Aklan as the bases for coming up with a reading intervention program. The descriptive-correlation research design was employed with thirty (30) pupils, whose scores were less than 14 in the “Pangkatang Pagtatasa ng Klase” based on Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (PHIL-IRI) guidelines, purposively chosen as participants of the study. The PHIL-IRI, specifically for Grade 5 Filipino, was composed of graded passages designed to determine the individual pupil’s performance in oral and silent reading and listening comprehension. These three types of assessments aimed to find the pupils’ reading level—independent, instructional or frustration. The results of the study showed that the pupils’ reading proficiency was “frustration” level. The pupils had difficulties in reading particularly in “maling bigkas” with 708 errors, pagpapalit” with 42 errors, “pagkakatalas” with 13 errors and “pagsisingit” with 11 errors for a total of 774 errors. Family monthly income and available reading materials had positive significant relationship with the pupils’ level of reading proficiency. However, educational attainment of parents, family monthly income and available reading materials at home were found to have a significant negative correlation with pupils’ reading difficulties. Hence, a “Re-read” reading intervention program was designed to help improve the pupils reading proficiency and reduce their reading difficulties.

**Keywords:** *Reading proficiency, reading difficulties, reading intervention program*

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## **Introduction**

Reading is indeed one of the most important macro skills that should be developed among learners to become successful in their literacy and academic endeavors. It is the most important to master to ensure success in learning (Alderson, 2014; Schwartz, 2015) and reading proficiency entails two things: (1) Decoding skills (Word Recognition) that enable children to read a text, and (2) meaning-making or comprehension skills that enable children to understand, engage and get involved with a piece of text (Dickey, 2019).

Teaching reading since 2020 has been forced to have a short time shift to modular learning because of the threats of the pandemic, and academic institutions' closure was one of the initiatives to suppress the transmission of the virus. The COVID-19 pandemic has both accelerated these trends and massively disrupted learning.

To continue learning amidst the pandemic, the Alegria Elementary School (AES) where the researcher is currently teaching opted to have modular distance learning as their learning delivery modality. Teachers initiated printed reading materials, activity sheets, modules, and summative tests to provide learners with instructional materials that would improve their reading proficiency. However, the researcher is uncertain if the parents practice reading exercises or activities for their children at home because some parents just finished elementary school and have difficulty reading, while some parents work most of the time as fishermen or farmers.

Moreover, the quality of teaching reading has been greatly affected by the pandemic and supervised reading practices were not conducted since the school adopted the modular approach. In this effect, the development of reading proficiency of the pupils was delayed.

In this light, the researcher would like to find out the reading proficiency level in Filipino of the grade five learners in AES and provide necessary interventions needed based on the level of reading proficiency of the learners.

## **Methodology**

The descriptive-correlation research design will be employed in this study. Correlational studies are designed to estimate the extent to which different variables are related to one another in the population of interest.

Descriptive research involves gathering data that describe events and then organizing, tabulating, depicting, and describing the data collection (Glass & Hopkins, 1984).

Correlational research is a non-experimental quantitative design in which the researcher applies correlational statistics to measure and describe the degree of association among variables or sets of scores (Creswell., 2012). They attempt to find relationships between the characteristics of the respondents and their reported behaviors and opinions (Marczyk et al., 2005).

In this study, a descriptive research design will be used in determining the profile of the respondents as well as the level of reading proficiency in Filipino in terms of word recognition and reading comprehension. Also, descriptive research will be used to determine the perceived reading difficulties of the respondents. On the other hand, a correlational research design will be used to determine whether there exists a relationship between the respondents' profiles and the level of reading proficiency in Filipino. Also, this will be used to determine whether the level of proficiency in word recognition is related to proficiency in reading comprehension or vice versa.

## **Findings**

The mean score of the pupils in the Phil-IRI test is 120.17 and its equivalent mean percentage is 82.37 which means that the pupils' level of reading proficiency is at a "Frustration" level.

The pupils have committed a total of 774 errors in "indibidwal na pagbabasa" which indicates that they have difficulties in reading particularly in "Maling Bigkas" with 708 errors, "Pagpapalit" with 42 errors, "Pagkakatalas" with 13 errors, and "Pagsisingit" with 11 errors.

Family monthly income (p-value = 0.024) and available reading materials (p-value = 0.016) have a positive significant relationship with the pupils' level of reading proficiency. Educational attainment of parents (p-value = 0.050), family monthly income (p-value = 0.002), and available reading materials at home (p-value = 0.047) has a significant negative correlation with the pupils' reading difficulties. A "Re-read" reading intervention program was proposed in the study.

## **Conclusion**

Many of the grade 5 pupils found the reading materials used to them difficult and made them commit several errors while reading. The pupils mispronounced the words, omitted some words while reading, substituted words in the reading selection with other words, and inserted unnecessary words while reading.

This reading proficiency of the pupils is directly influenced by their family monthly income and the available reading materials at home. Pupils who is from family with good monthly income tend to have better reading proficiency than those with pupils from low income family. Further,

pupils with more available reading materials at home have better reading proficiency. The capability of the family, through their income, to acquire reading materials had help pupils practice reading at home which gives them reading advantages over other pupils.

Educational attainment of parents, family monthly income, and available reading materials at home have an inverse effect on the reading difficulties of the pupils. The pupils whose parents have low educational attainment exhibited more reading difficulties, similarly, pupils from low-income families tend to commit more errors in reading, and pupils who have a lesser number of reading materials at home have more difficulties in reading.

Pupils from these demographic profiles need to be prioritized and be given a reading intervention program designed to help them improve their reading proficiency and reduce reading difficulties.

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