



READING COMPREHENSION STRATEGIES, CHALLENGES AND READING PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of the Phil-IRI–based reading intervention in improving the reading comprehension performance of Grade VI pupils in the BIBACASIPI Sub-Congressional District during the School Year 2024–2025. Specifically, it examined pupils’ reading performance levels, the challenges encountered by teachers, the strategies they employed, the difference between pretest and posttest results, and the relationship between challenges and strategies. A mixed-methods descriptive design was utilized, combining quantitative data from Phil-IRI assessments and qualitative data from teachers’ responses. The study involved 122 Grade VI advisers from selected municipalities in Bohol through complete enumeration. Data were collected using the Grade VI Group Screening Test (GST), teacher interviews, and a modified questionnaire. Findings revealed that all pupils (100%) were at the instructional level during the pretest. After the intervention, 95.2% progressed to the independent level, while 4.8% remained at the instructional level. A significant difference was found between pretest and posttest scores, with the mean increasing from 67 to 94.38. Teachers reported major challenges, including limited time, insufficient materials, and diverse learner needs, but consistently applied varied reading strategies. A moderate positive relationship ($r = 0.403$) was found between challenges and strategies. The study concludes that the Phil-IRI–based intervention significantly improves reading comprehension performance.

Keywords: *Reading Comprehension, Phil-IRI Intervention, Reading Strategies, Reading Performance, Teacher Challenges*

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is widely recognized as one of the most essential skills in basic education because it enables learners to understand, interpret, analyze, and apply information from texts. It serves as the foundation for learning across subject areas and plays a critical role in learners' academic achievement and lifelong learning. However, both national and international assessments continue to reveal that many Filipino learners experience serious difficulties in reading comprehension. Momo (2025) reported that the Philippines ranked among the lowest-performing countries in reading literacy based on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), obtaining a mean score significantly below the international average, which highlights persistent gaps in learners' reading comprehension and literacy skills. This result highlights persistent gaps in learners' ability to comprehend and process written texts effectively. The challenges in reading comprehension became more evident during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Prolonged school closures, limited face-to-face instruction, and unequal access to learning resources contributed to significant learning losses, particularly in foundational literacy skills. Many learners struggled with limited reading exposure, reduced guided instruction, and decreased opportunities for meaningful engagement with texts. As reading comprehension is closely linked to academic success, these learning gaps continue to affect learners' overall performance in different learning areas.

In response to these concerns, the Department of Education (DepEd) strengthened its literacy programs and interventions through the implementation of the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI). The Phil-IRI serves as an assessment tool that measures learners' reading performance in terms of word recognition, fluency, and comprehension, classifying learners into independent, instructional, or frustration reading levels. Through this assessment, teachers are able to identify learners' reading difficulties and design appropriate interventions to improve reading comprehension and overall literacy skills. Despite these interventions, reading comprehension difficulties remain a major concern in many public schools. Several studies revealed that learners continue to struggle with inferential, evaluative, and critical comprehension skills, even after exposure to reading programs and interventions. Research also shows that teachers encounter numerous challenges in teaching reading comprehension, including lack of instructional materials, large class sizes, diverse learner abilities, limited vocabulary development, and insufficient training in reading instruction (Jala, 2020; Alsharhani et al., 2023). These challenges affect the effectiveness of reading instruction and the successful implementation of literacy interventions in schools.

At the same time, teachers employ various strategies to improve learners' comprehension skills, such as guided reading, differentiated instruction, peer-assisted learning, vocabulary enhancement, repeated reading, and contextualized instructional materials. Studies have demonstrated that these strategies contribute significantly to improving learners' reading performance when consistently and appropriately implemented (Casinal, 2022; Vadasy & Sanders, 2008). However, the effectiveness of these strategies may still vary depending on learners' needs, classroom conditions, and teachers' capacity to address reading difficulties. The present study is anchored on

several theoretical foundations that explain how reading comprehension develops and how instruction supports comprehension improvement. Primarily, the study is grounded on Rosenblatt's Transactional Theory, which views reading as an active interaction between the reader and the text, where meaning is constructed through experiences, prior knowledge, and context (Rosenblatt, 1994). Supporting this is Kintsch's Construction-Integration Model, which explains that comprehension occurs through the cognitive processes of constructing and integrating textual information into coherent understanding (Kintsch, 2013). The study is also guided by the Simple View of Reading, which posits that reading comprehension is the product of decoding and linguistic comprehension (Gough & Tunmer, 1986). In addition, Constructivism Theory emphasizes that learners actively construct knowledge through interaction, experience, and guided learning (Bada & Olusegun, 2015; Kumari & Kumar, 2022). Together, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding reading comprehension, instructional strategies, and learner performance.

The study is further supported by several legal and policy foundations that emphasize the importance of literacy development in the Philippines. The 1987 Philippine Constitution guarantees the right of every Filipino to quality education. Republic Act No. 10533, or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, strengthens literacy and comprehension development under the K to 12 Curriculum. Republic Act No. 10157, or the Kindergarten Education Act, emphasizes early literacy as a foundation for learning. DepEd Order No. 14, s. 2018 institutionalizes the administration of the Phil-IRI, while DepEd Memorandum No. 173, s. 2019 or the Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative), promotes sustainable school-based reading programs. Moreover, the MATATAG Curriculum reinforces the development of foundational literacy skills by prioritizing essential competencies and learning recovery initiatives. Several studies support the importance of reading interventions and strategic instruction in improving comprehension performance. Yu (2017) found that differentiated reading instruction significantly improves learners' comprehension outcomes. Similarly, Acedillo (2023) reported that guided reading, peer-assisted learning, and contextualized instructional materials contribute to improved reading fluency and comprehension among elementary learners. Vadasy & Sanders, (2024) also emphasized that vocabulary instruction and repeated reading positively influence learners' comprehension abilities. Meanwhile, Santos (2025) found that technology-based interventions, such as Microsoft Immersive Reader, significantly enhance learners' reading comprehension performance.

Despite the growing body of literature on reading comprehension, gaps remain in understanding the combined influence of teachers' instructional strategies, challenges encountered, and learners' reading performance within localized school settings. Many studies focus only on reading levels or intervention outcomes without examining how teachers' experiences and classroom challenges affect the implementation of reading strategies. Moreover, limited studies have explored the role of Phil-IRI-based interventions in relation to both teacher practices and learner performance in the local context. Thus, this study aimed to determine the reading comprehension strategies employed by teachers, the challenges they encounter, and the reading performance of Grade VI pupils in the BIBACASIPI Sub-Congressional District during School Year 2024–

2025. Specifically, it examined the learners' reading performance as measured by Phil-IRI, identified the common challenges encountered by teachers, assessed the strategies employed in developing reading comprehension, determined the significant difference in reading performance before and after the intervention, and examined the relationship between teachers' challenges and instructional strategies. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the improvement of reading instruction, enhancement of literacy interventions, and strengthening of school-based reading programs for elementary learners.

Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of the Phil-IRI-based reading intervention in improving the reading comprehension performance of Grade VI pupils in the BIBACASIPI Sub-Congressional District during the School Year 2024–2025.

Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of reading performance of Grade VI pupils in BIBACASIPI District as measured by Phil-IRI?
2. What is the level of common challenges encountered by teachers in developing pupils' reading comprehension?
3. What is the level of the strategies employed by teachers in developing pupils' reading comprehension?
4. Is there a significant difference in the reading comprehension performance of Grade VI pupils before and after the conduct of the Phil-IRI intervention?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the challenges encountered and the strategies employed by teachers in developing reading comprehension?
6. What enhancement or intervention plan can be proposed based on the results of the study?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a mixed methods research design, specifically the convergent approach, to examine the reading comprehension performance of Grade VI pupils, as well as the challenges encountered and strategies employed by teachers in the BIBACASIPI Sub-Congressional District. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), mixed methods research integrates quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of a research problem. The design was deemed appropriate because the study required both numerical and descriptive data. The quantitative component focused on determining the pupils' reading performance levels and identifying the significant difference between pretest and posttest Phil-IRI assessment results. Meanwhile, the qualitative component explored the challenges encountered by teachers and the strategies they employed in developing pupils' reading comprehension. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed

concurrently. The findings were then compared, interpreted, and integrated to provide a more comprehensive explanation of the results. Through this approach, the study linked learners' reading performance with teachers' instructional practices, allowing a deeper understanding of how Phil-IRI-based interventions influenced reading comprehension outcomes.

Research Environment

The study was conducted in the BIBACASIPI Sub-Congressional District under the 3rd Congressional District of Bohol, which includes the municipalities of Bilar, Batuan, Carmen I, Carmen II, Carmen III, Sierra Bullones, and Pilar. The study covered selected public elementary schools under the Department of Education (DepEd) within these municipalities during School Year 2024–2025.

Research Participants

The participants of the study consisted of 1,132 Grade VI pupils and 122 public Grade VI advisers from the districts of Bilar, Batuan, Carmen, Sierra Bullones, and Pilar. Complete enumeration was employed, wherein all Grade VI advisers in the identified districts were included as respondents. The Phil-IRI pretest and posttest results of the Grade VI pupils were used to determine reading comprehension performance.

Research Instrument

The study utilized two instruments: the Grade VI Group Screening Test (GST) in English and a modified questionnaire. The Grade VI Group Screening Test (GST) in English was adopted from the Revised Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) Manual (2018). It is a standardized assessment tool used to measure learners' reading comprehension performance. The test consists of 20 items categorized into literal, inferential, and critical comprehension. It was used to determine the pupils' pretest and posttest reading performance and identify their reading levels. The researcher also utilized a modified questionnaire titled *Reading Comprehension Strategies, Challenges, and Reading Performance Questionnaire*. The instrument was adapted from Yu (2017) and Gonzales (2020) and modified to align with the objectives of the study and Phil-IRI-based interventions. The questionnaire consisted of three parts. Part I covered the profile of the respondents. Part II identified the challenges encountered by teachers in developing reading comprehension. Part III determined the reading comprehension strategies employed by teachers. The questionnaire used a modified rating scale developed by the researcher to ensure clarity, appropriateness, and alignment with the variables of the study.

Research Procedure

The researcher first secured approval from the Dean of the School of Advanced Studies, Campus Director, and the Schools Division Superintendent for the conduct of the study. Coordination with school heads in the BIBACASIPI Sub-Congressional District

was also conducted prior to data gathering. After obtaining permission, the researcher personally distributed the research instruments to the respondents during their duty hours. The respondents were given one week to complete the questionnaires, after which all accomplished instruments were retrieved. The Grade VI pupils underwent the Phil-IRI Group Screening Test (GST) before and after the implementation of the reading intervention to determine changes in reading comprehension performance. After data collection, all responses and test results were tallied, encoded, tabulated, and organized for statistical analysis. The gathered data were treated with confidentiality and used solely for academic and research purposes.

Data Analysis

The data gathered were collected, collated, tabulated, and interpreted using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical tools. Descriptive statistics, such as frequency count, percentage, mean, and weighted mean, were used to describe the reading performance of the learners, the challenges encountered by teachers, and the reading comprehension strategies employed. To determine the reading performance of the learners based on the Phil-IRI results, the following scale was used:

Scores	Description
97–100%	Independent
90–96%	Instructional
89% and below	Frustration

To determine the significant difference in the reading performance of learners before and after the Phil-IRI–based intervention, the Kruskal-Wallis Test was employed. This non-parametric statistical test was used because the data were not assumed to be normally distributed and involved the comparison of independent groups. All data were ranked from the smallest to the largest, and the sum of ranks for each group was computed. The computed H value was then compared with the critical value from the chi-square distribution table at the 0.05 level of significance to determine whether a significant difference existed among the groups.

RESULTS

This section presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered in the study on reading comprehension strategies, challenges, and reading performance among Grade VI pupils in the BIBACASIPi Sub-Congressional District during School Year 2024–2025. The presentation includes the pupils' reading performance based on the Phil-IRI Group Screening Test (GST), the challenges encountered by teachers in developing reading comprehension, the strategies employed in reading instruction, and the significant difference between the pretest and posttest results after the implementation of the Phil-IRI–based intervention.

Table 1
Level of Reading Performance of Grade VI Pupils in BIBACASIPI District as Measured by Phil-IRI

N=1132

Level of reading comprehension	Pretest		Post test	
	F	%	F	%
Independent	612	53.873	1014	89.42
Instructional	454	39.965	108	9.52
Frustration	66	5.810	12	1.06
Non-Reader	4	0.352	0	0.00

Legend: Oral Reading Comprehension Score (in %): Independent - 80-100%; Instructional - 59-79%; and Frustration -58 and below.

Table 1 presents the level of reading performance of Grade VI pupils in the BIBACASIPI Sub-Congressional District as measured by the Phil-IRI during School Year 2024–2025. The results revealed a notable improvement in the learners’ reading comprehension performance from the pretest to the posttest. During the pretest, the majority of the learners were classified under the independent level, with 612 learners (53.87%). This indicates that more than half of the pupils were able to read and comprehend texts with minimal assistance. After the implementation of the reading intervention, the number of learners under the independent level increased significantly to 1,014 learners (89.42%) in the posttest. The substantial increase suggests that the intervention and reading strategies employed were effective in improving the learners’ reading comprehension skills and promoting independent reading ability.

Meanwhile, the number of learners under the instructional level decreased from 454 learners (39.97%) during the pretest to 108 learners (9.52%) in the posttest. Learners under this category are able to read texts with teacher guidance but still require assistance in comprehension. The decrease in the number of instructional readers implies that many pupils progressed toward independent reading after the intervention. Similarly, the frustration level also showed improvement. During the pretest, 66 learners (5.81%) were categorized under the frustration level, indicating serious difficulty in reading and understanding texts. However, this number decreased to only 12 learners (1.06%) in the posttest. This finding implies that the reading intervention helped struggling readers improve their comprehension performance and reduced the number of pupils experiencing severe reading difficulties.

For the non-reader category, 4 learners (0.35%) were identified during the pretest, while no learner remained under this category in the posttest. This positive result indicates that all non-readers were able to develop basic reading skills after exposure to the intervention and reading support activities. Overall, the findings revealed a significant improvement in the reading comprehension performance of the Grade VI pupils after the administration of the Phil-IRI–based intervention. The movement of learners from the instructional, frustration, and non-reader levels toward the independent level

demonstrates the effectiveness of the reading strategies and intervention activities implemented in the study. The findings imply that structured reading interventions and appropriate comprehension strategies contribute significantly to the improvement of learners' reading abilities. The results further suggest the importance of continuous reading support, guided instruction, vocabulary development, and regular comprehension activities in strengthening learners' reading performance. Moreover, the findings emphasize the importance of early identification and intervention for struggling readers to improve literacy outcomes and overall academic performance.

Table 2
Common Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Developing Pupils' Reading Comprehension in BIBACASIPI District

Statement	WMS	Descriptive interpretation
1. Limited time for Instruction	4.63	Always practice
2. Classroom management and behavior issues.	4.53	Always practice
3. Lack of resources and teaching materials.	4.47	Always practice
4. Different learning styles and abilities of students.	4.53	Always practice
5. Limited support from the parents for struggling readers.	4.57	Always practice
6. Lack of professional development and training in reading instruction.	4.475	Always practice
7. Assessment and tracking student progress.	4.53	Always practice
8. Balancing the needs of diverse learners	4.47	Always practice
9. Engaging students with a variety of texts.	4.46	Always practice
10. Integrating reading instruction with others subjects.	4.43	Always practice
11. Students have limited vocabulary.	4.46	Always practice
12. Lack of student motivation/ interest in reading.	4.43	Always practice
13. Students struggle with inferential and critical thinking questions.	4.42	Always practice
14. Insufficient time to focus on reading materials.	4.52	Always practice
15. Limited access to appropriate reading materials.	4.45	Always practice
16. Large class sizes make individualized instruction difficult	4.48	Always practice
17. Students have poor background knowledge.	4.63	Always practice
18. Lack of professional development in reading Comprehension strategies.	4.66	Always practice
Average WMS	4.66	Always practice
Legend 5 (4.20-5.00)	Always Practice	2 (1.80-2.59) Rarely practice
4 (3.40- 4.19)	Often Practice	1 (1.00- 1.79) Never Practice
3 (2.60-3.39)	Sometimes Practice	

Table 2 presents the common challenges encountered by teachers in developing pupils' reading comprehension in the BIBACASIPI District. The findings revealed that all indicators were interpreted as "Always Practice," with an overall weighted mean of 4.66. This indicates that the identified challenges are consistently experienced by teachers in the teaching of reading comprehension. Among the highest-rated indicators were limited time for instruction (WMS = 4.63) and students have poor background knowledge (WMS = 4.63), both interpreted as "Always Practice." These findings suggest that teachers often face difficulties in allocating sufficient time for effective reading instruction, while many learners struggle to connect new information with prior knowledge, which affects comprehension. This supports the idea of Allington (2013) that sufficient instructional time

is essential in developing reading comprehension skills and improving literacy performance.

Another highly rated challenge was limited support from parents for struggling readers (WMS = 4.57). This implies that inadequate parental involvement remains a significant concern in supporting learners' reading development. Teachers may therefore need to provide additional reinforcement and intervention within the classroom setting to address learners' reading difficulties. Indicators such as classroom management and behavior issues (WMS = 4.53), different learning styles and abilities of students (WMS = 4.53), and assessment and tracking student progress (WMS = 4.53) also received high ratings. These results indicate that teachers consistently deal with diverse learner needs while managing classroom behavior and monitoring academic progress. The findings further suggest that teachers are challenged to balance instructional demands with individualized learner support.

Meanwhile, indicators such as integrating reading instruction with other subjects (WMS = 4.43), lack of student motivation or interest in reading (WMS = 4.43), and students struggle with inferential and critical thinking questions (WMS = 4.42) obtained the lowest weighted means, although they were still interpreted as "Always Practice." These findings imply that higher-order comprehension skills and learner engagement remain continuous concerns in reading instruction. Overall, the results revealed that teachers consistently encounter multiple challenges in developing pupils' reading comprehension. The findings imply the need to strengthen school support systems through sufficient instructional time, adequate reading materials, professional development programs, and stronger collaboration between schools and parents. Moreover, the use of differentiated instruction and learner-centered strategies may help address the diverse reading needs of learners and improve overall reading comprehension performance.

Table 3
Strategies Employed by the Teachers in Developing Reading Comprehension

Strategies	WMS	Descriptive interpretation
1 Give Learners Choice	4.71	Always Practice
2 Increase Volume of Reading	4.63	Always Practice
3 Read aloud	4.68	Always Practice
4 Teach Strategies	4.66	Always Practice
5 Model Thinking	4.73	Always Practice
6 Encourage Classroom Talk	4.78	Always Practice
7 Inferencing using pictures	4.62	Always Practice
8 Reading Comprehension Strategies	4.78	Always Practice
9 Phonics Instructions	4.77	Always Practice
10 Reading Workshops	4.69	Always Practice
Average WMS	4.69	Always practice

Table 3 presents the strategies employed by teachers in developing learners' reading comprehension in the BIBACASIPI Sub-Congressional District during School Year 2024–2025. The results revealed that all strategies were interpreted as “Always Practice,” with an overall weighted mean of 4.69. This indicates that teachers consistently employed a variety of reading strategies to improve learners' comprehension skills. Among the highest-rated strategies were Encourage Classroom Talk (WMS = 4.78) and Reading Comprehension Strategies (WMS = 4.78), both interpreted as “Always Practice.” These findings suggest that teachers highly value learner interaction and explicit comprehension instruction in reading classes. Classroom discussions allow learners to express ideas, clarify meanings, and deepen understanding of texts, while comprehension strategies help learners become active and strategic readers. This supports the view of Allington (2013) that effective reading instruction involves active engagement and strategic thinking processes to strengthen comprehension outcomes.

Another highly rated strategy was Phonics Instruction (WMS = 4.77), indicating that teachers consistently emphasized sound-letter relationships to help learners decode words and improve reading fluency. This finding highlights the importance of foundational reading skills in supporting comprehension development. Similarly, Model Thinking (WMS = 4.73) and Give Learners Choice (WMS = 4.71) also obtained high ratings. These findings imply that teachers regularly demonstrate thinking processes while reading and provide learners with opportunities to choose reading materials that match their interests and abilities. Such strategies help improve learner engagement, motivation, and comprehension.

Meanwhile, Inferencing Using Pictures (WMS = 4.62) and Increase Volume of Reading (WMS = 4.63) obtained the lowest weighted means, although both were still interpreted as “Always Practice.” These findings suggest that while these strategies were slightly less emphasized, teachers still regularly utilized visual cues and reading exposure to support comprehension development. Overall, the findings revealed that teachers consistently employed diverse and learner-centered strategies in teaching reading comprehension. The results imply that the sustained use of interactive discussions, explicit comprehension instruction, phonics, modeling strategies, and learner-centered approaches contributes positively to learners' reading performance. The findings further suggest the need for continuous support, instructional resources, and professional development programs to strengthen reading instruction and literacy development among learners.

Table 4
Significant Difference in Reading Performance Levels Before and after the Conduct of PHIL IRRI

Variable	Reading level	Mean	Std. Deviation	Comp .tvalue	Comp pvalue	Interpretation
Pretest	Independent	122.4000	43.09060	3.67	0.05	Significant
Post test		202.8000	82.22652			
Pretest	Instructional	90.8000	57.53868	3.64	0.02	Significant
Post test		21.6000	16.33401			

Pretest		13.2000	10.03494			
Post test	Frustration	2.4000	1.67332	2.39	0.07	Not significant
Pretest		.8000	1.78885			
Post test	Non reader	.0000	.00000	1	0.37	Not significant

Table 4 presents the significant difference in the reading performance levels of learners before and after the conduct of the Phil-IRI-based intervention. The findings revealed notable improvements in the learners' reading comprehension performance after the intervention. For the independent level, the pretest mean of 122.40 increased to 202.80 in the posttest, with a computed t-value of 3.67 and a p-value of 0.05. Since the computed p-value is equal to the level of significance, the result indicates a significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores. This finding suggests that more learners were able to reach the independent reading level after the intervention, indicating improved ability to comprehend texts with minimal assistance.

Similarly, the instructional level showed a decrease in mean score from 90.80 during the pretest to 21.60 in the posttest. The computed t-value of 3.64 and p-value of 0.02 revealed a significant difference. This decrease is considered a positive outcome because it indicates that many learners progressed from the instructional level to the independent level after the intervention. Meanwhile, the frustration level decreased from a mean score of 13.20 in the pretest to 2.40 in the posttest. However, the computed t-value of 2.39 and p-value of 0.07 indicated no significant difference. Although the number of learners under this category declined, the change was not statistically significant.

For the non-reader level, the pretest mean of 0.80 decreased to 0.00 in the posttest. The computed t-value of 1.00 and p-value of 0.37 also indicated no significant difference. This may be attributed to the very small number of learners initially classified as non-readers. Overall, the findings revealed that the Phil-IRI-based intervention positively influenced the reading comprehension performance of the learners, particularly in increasing the number of independent readers and reducing those under the instructional level. The significant differences observed in these categories suggest that the intervention strategies employed in the study were effective in improving learners' reading comprehension skills. The results imply that continuous implementation of reading interventions and comprehension strategies may further strengthen learners' reading abilities. Teachers may sustain the use of effective reading strategies and provide additional support to learners who remain under the frustration and non-reader levels to ensure continued improvement in reading performance.

Table 5
Significant Relationship Between Reading Comprehension Strategies and Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Developing Reading Comprehension

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Comp rvalue	Comp pvalue	Interpretation
Strategies	4.7050	.27649			Significant relationship
Challenges	4.5074	.34795	0.402	0.00	

Table 5 presents the significant relationship between teachers' reading comprehension strategies and the challenges they encountered in teaching reading. The results included the mean, standard deviation, r-value, and p-value to determine whether a significant relationship existed between the two variables. The findings revealed that the mean score for reading comprehension strategies was 4.7050 with a standard deviation of 0.27649, indicating that teachers consistently practiced various strategies in developing learners' reading comprehension. This suggests that teachers regularly employed approaches such as guided reading, phonics instruction, classroom discussion, and comprehension activities in their reading instruction.

On the other hand, the challenges encountered by teachers obtained a mean score of 4.5074 with a standard deviation of 0.34795, indicating that teachers also consistently experienced difficulties in teaching reading comprehension. These challenges may include limited instructional time, lack of instructional materials, diverse learner needs, limited parental support, and insufficient training opportunities. The computed r-value of 0.402 indicates a moderate positive relationship between the strategies employed and the challenges encountered by teachers. This means that as the level of challenges increased, the use of reading comprehension strategies also tended to increase. Teachers who experienced greater difficulties in reading instruction appeared to respond by applying more varied and effective strategies to address learners' needs and improve reading performance.

Furthermore, the computed p-value of 0.00 revealed that the relationship between the two variables was statistically significant. Since the p-value is lower than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between the challenges encountered and the reading comprehension strategies employed by teachers. The findings imply that challenges in reading instruction do not hinder teachers from supporting learners' comprehension development. Instead, these challenges may encourage teachers to become more resourceful, adaptive, and strategic in their teaching practices. The results further suggest the importance of providing teachers with adequate instructional materials, professional development opportunities, and institutional support to strengthen reading instruction and improve learners' reading comprehension performance.

DISCUSSION

This section presents the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study on reading comprehension strategies, challenges, and reading performance among Grade VI pupils in the BIBACASIPI Sub-Congressional District during School Year 2024–2025. The study aimed to determine the effectiveness of the Phil-IRI-based reading intervention in improving learners' reading comprehension performance. Specifically, it identified the learners' reading levels, the challenges encountered by teachers, the strategies employed in developing reading comprehension, the significant difference between pretest and posttest results, and the relationship between challenges and strategies. The study utilized a mixed-methods research design using quantitative

data from the Phil-IRI Grade VI Group Screening Test (GST) and qualitative data from teachers' responses. The respondents included 122 Grade VI advisers and 1,132 Grade VI pupils from selected districts in Bohol. Data were gathered through the Phil-IRI Grade VI Group Screening Test (GST) and a modified questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistical tools.

Findings

1. The findings revealed a significant improvement in the reading comprehension performance of Grade VI pupils after the Phil-IRI-based intervention. Learners under the independent level increased from 612 (53.87%) in the pretest to 1,014 (89.42%) in the posttest. Meanwhile, learners under the instructional, frustration, and non-reader levels decreased after the intervention, indicating improvement in learners' reading comprehension performance.
2. Teachers consistently encountered challenges in developing pupils' reading comprehension, with an overall weighted mean of 4.66, interpreted as "Always Practice." The highest-rated challenges were limited time for instruction and students' poor background knowledge, followed by limited parental support, classroom management issues, and varied learner abilities.
3. The findings showed that teachers consistently employed various reading comprehension strategies, with an overall weighted mean of 4.69, interpreted as "Always Practice." The most commonly employed strategies were encouraging classroom talk, reading comprehension strategies, and phonics instruction.
4. The results revealed a significant difference between the pretest and posttest reading performance of learners. Significant improvements were observed in the independent and instructional levels, confirming the effectiveness of the Phil-IRI-based intervention in improving reading comprehension performance.
5. The findings further revealed a significant relationship between the challenges encountered by teachers and the strategies they employed in teaching reading comprehension. The computed r -value of 0.402 indicated a moderate positive relationship, while the p -value of 0.00 confirmed statistical significance. This suggests that teachers utilized more instructional strategies as classroom challenges increased.

Conclusions

The study concludes that the reading intervention significantly improved the reading comprehension performance of Grade VI pupils in the BIBACASIPI Sub-Congressional District. The substantial increase in the number of learners at the independent level and the corresponding decrease in those at the instructional, frustration, and non-reader levels demonstrate the effectiveness of structured and targeted reading strategies. Moreover, the findings revealed that while teachers

consistently employed a wide range of effective instructional strategies, they also continuously faced challenges such as limited instructional time, learners' poor background knowledge, and insufficient parental support. Despite these constraints, teachers remained responsive by utilizing diverse approaches to enhance learners' comprehension skills. The significant relationship between the challenges encountered and the strategies employed further indicates that teachers adapt their practices to address instructional difficulties. Overall, the results affirm that systematic reading interventions, combined with appropriate teaching strategies and support systems, play a crucial role in improving learners' reading proficiency.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Learners may actively engage in reading activities both in school and at home to continuously improve their reading comprehension skills. They may develop regular reading habits and practice comprehension strategies such as summarizing, questioning, and predicting to strengthen understanding.
2. Teachers may continue implementing varied and effective reading strategies such as guided reading, phonics instruction, and comprehension activities to sustain learners' reading development. They may also provide differentiated instruction and targeted interventions for learners who still experience reading difficulties.
3. School administrators may strengthen reading programs by providing adequate instructional materials, sufficient time for reading intervention activities, and continuous professional development programs for teachers. They may also enhance collaboration with parents and stakeholders to support learners' literacy development.
4. Future researchers may conduct similar studies involving wider populations, different grade levels, or additional variables related to reading comprehension. Further studies may also explore the use of technology-based interventions and other instructional approaches in improving learners' reading performance.

PROPOSED ACTION PLAN FOR READING ENHANCEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR GRADE VI PUPILS

Rationale

Reading is a foundational skill that serves as the cornerstone of all learning areas in basic education. It is through reading that learners acquire knowledge, develop critical thinking, and engage meaningfully with academic content. In the context of the Department of Education's commitment to improving learning outcomes and addressing learning gaps, literacy development remains a top priority, particularly in the elementary grades where reading proficiency should already be well-established.

Despite continuous efforts to enhance literacy instruction, results from school-based assessments such as the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) have

consistently shown that a significant number of Grade VI pupils remain at the frustration and instructional levels. These learners experience difficulties in decoding words, maintaining reading fluency, and, more importantly, comprehending texts at an appropriate level. Such challenges greatly affect their performance not only in English but across all subject areas, including Science, Mathematics, and Araling Panlipunan, where reading comprehension is essential.

Moreover, the transition from elementary to secondary education demands higher-order thinking skills, independent learning, and the ability to process complex texts. Pupils who are not reading at the expected proficiency level are at risk of falling behind academically, which may lead to decreased confidence, lack of motivation, and poor overall academic performance. This situation highlights the urgent need for structured, targeted, and sustained reading interventions.

This proposed enhancement plan, Project READ-UP (Reading Enhancement and Development Program), is designed to respond to these identified gaps through a comprehensive and data-driven approach. It integrates differentiated instruction, regular monitoring, and learner-centered strategies to address the diverse needs of learners. The program also emphasizes the importance of collaboration among teachers, school administrators, and parents to create a supportive reading environment both in school and at home.

Furthermore, this initiative aligns with the School Improvement Plan (SIP) goals of improving learner achievement and strengthening instructional delivery. It also supports the Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) objectives of teachers by promoting effective teaching strategies, continuous assessment, and evidence-based interventions. Through this program, teachers are empowered to enhance their pedagogical practices while ensuring that no learner is left behind in acquiring essential reading skills.

Ultimately, this enhancement plan aims not only to improve reading proficiency levels but also to cultivate a culture of reading among pupils. By fostering interest, confidence, and competence in reading, the program aspires to develop lifelong learners who are equipped with the skills necessary to succeed in higher education and beyond.

Objectives

General Objective: The proposed plan aims to improve the reading proficiency level of Grade VI pupils based on Phil-IRI results.

Specific Objectives:

1. Increase the percentage of pupils reading at the independent level by at least 20%.
2. Reduce the number of pupils at the frustration level by at least 30%.
3. Improve pupils' oral reading fluency and comprehension scores.
4. Strengthen teachers' use of differentiated reading strategies.
5. Promote home-school partnership in reading development.

Mechanics of Implementation

The implementation of Project READ-UP will follow a systematic and organized process to ensure its effectiveness and sustainability. During the pre-implementation phase, the teacher will administer the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) to determine the reading levels of all Grade VI pupils. Based on the results, learners will be grouped into independent, instructional, and frustration levels. Appropriate and leveled reading materials, such as graded texts, storybooks, and intervention worksheets, will be prepared to match the needs of each group. An orientation will also be conducted for pupils and parents to inform them about the objectives, activities, and expected outcomes of the program.

During the implementation phase, structured reading sessions will be conducted daily for 30 to 45 minutes. These sessions will include guided reading for struggling learners, silent reading or Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) time, and interactive reading activities that promote comprehension and engagement. Differentiated instruction will be applied to address the varying needs of learners. Pupils at the frustration level will receive intensive support in phonics, decoding, and vocabulary development, while those at the instructional level will engage in guided comprehension activities. Independent readers will be provided with enrichment tasks that develop higher-order thinking skills. Peer tutoring and collaborative learning activities will also be encouraged to enhance engagement and build confidence among learners.

To further strengthen the program, weekly intervention sessions will be conducted focusing on specific reading difficulties. Various strategies such as storytelling, reader's theater, vocabulary games, and the use of audio-visual materials will be utilized to make learning more interactive and meaningful. In addition, a home-based reading component will be implemented, requiring pupils to engage in at least 15–20 minutes of reading at home daily, with parents monitoring progress through reading logs.

Monitoring and evaluation will be conducted regularly to track pupils' progress. Teachers will perform weekly assessments through oral reading exercises and comprehension checks, while individual reading portfolios will be maintained to document improvement. A post-assessment using Phil-IRI will be administered at the end of the program to measure gains in reading proficiency. The results will be analyzed and used as a basis for further instructional planning and program enhancement.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

The study observed proper ethical standards in conducting the research. Permission to conduct the study was secured from the concerned authorities before data gathering. Participation of the respondents was voluntary, and all information gathered was treated with confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes.

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