

READING FLUENCY AND COMPREHENSION OF GRADE 2 LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

Reading is a fundamental skill that opens doors for young learners, but for many second graders, finding that rhythm can be a real struggle. When a child struggles to read smoothly or grasp the meaning of a story, school can feel overwhelming. This is why researchers and teachers are always looking for practical ways to bridge the gap. This study focused on a technique called repeated reading, a straightforward approach where students read the same short story several times to build their confidence, speed, and understanding. To see if this strategy really made a difference, the study followed a group of Grade 2 pupils through a "before and after" process. First, the students took a pre-test to assess their reading skills. Then they dove into practice sessions, reading age-appropriate passages repeatedly with supportive guidance. Once the sessions were finished, they took a post-test to measure how much they had grown. The idea was to see if spending more time with the same words would help the lightbulb click on for their fluency and comprehension. The results were encouraging: many students started reading faster, made fewer mistakes, and even began to read with more "feeling" or expression. They also seemed to get a better handle on what the stories were actually about. While the data did not show a massive, statistically "game-changing" leap between the two tests, the steady progress suggests that repeated reading is a valuable tool. It is a gentle, effective way to help struggling readers find their footing and start feeling more at home with the books they read.

Keyword: *Reading level, Reading comprehension*

1. THESIS STATEMENT

Fluency is the bridge that connects simple recognition of words to actually understanding what they mean. It is about more than just speed; it is about reading with accuracy and the kind of natural rhythm that makes a story come alive. When a child can read smoothly, they do not have to spend all their mental energy sounding out every syllable, which leaves them free to focus on the "big picture" of the story. On the other hand, when fluency is missing, every subject in school becomes an uphill battle. Catching this early does not just help with reading class—it sets the stage for a child to succeed in everything they do for years to come.

One of the most practical ways to help kids find this flow is through repeated reading. It is exactly what it sounds like: a student reads the same passage a few times until the words feel familiar and comfortable. With every turn of the page, their confidence grows, their pace quickens, and they start to add a small quantity of personality and emotion to their voice. It is a simple, flexible

strategy that works just as well in a traditional classroom as it does in an online setting, especially when teachers are there to provide a little extra guidance and model how the text should sound.

Second grade is a massive turning point. It is that pivotal year when children are expected to stop "learning to read" and start "reading to learn." At this age, they should be able to pick up a short book and understand it on their own, but the reality for many Filipino students is quite different. National and international tests show that many second graders are still struggling to keep up. While strategies like oral blending and repeated reading have been proven to help, we still do not have enough local research to know exactly how they work best in our own classrooms.

That is where this study comes in. Since most of what we know about repeated reading comes from other countries, there is a real need to see how it can help students right here in the Philippines. By examining how this method affects Grade 2 learners, we hope to give teachers better

tools for their classrooms and help schools build stronger reading programs. Ultimately, the goal is to support the kids who are struggling the most, giving them the solid foundation they need not just to pass their exams, but to enjoy a lifetime of learning

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The literature gathered here helps us understand how a child learns to read smoothly and actually grasp the story behind the words. It explains why repeated reading is such a popular tool and highlights the "missing pieces" in our current research—especially the lack of studies focused on our local classrooms—that this project aims to address.

At its heart, this method is based on the idea of automaticity. Think of it like learning to drive or play an instrument: at first, you are focused on every tiny movement, but with practice, those movements become second nature. When a student reads the same story multiple times, their brain stops working so hard to "crack the code" of each word. This frees up their mental energy to focus on the good stuff—like adding expression to their voice and actually thinking about what the story means. Recent studies from 2025 show that this does not just help little kids; it is a game-changer for everyone from elementary students to those learning English as a second language.

Research from 2024 and 2025 also shows that this strategy works best when students are not just left on their own. When they have a "blueprint" to follow—like listening to an audio recording of the story or getting quick, helpful feedback from a teacher—their comprehension scores soar. Critics used to worry that kids were memorizing the words like robots, but newer findings show a real "transfer effect." This means the confidence and speed they gain on one story actually stick with them when they pick up a brand-new book. It acts as a vital bridge for students who usually find reading frustrating, helping them move from just "saying words" to truly understanding them.

However, we have also learned that the way we use this tool matters. For example, reading a passage up to seven times with audio help can significantly boost a student's scores. However, it is most effective when the stories are interesting and culturally familiar to them. Scholars today suggest that while repetition is a powerful engine

for fluency, we should pair it with "wide reading"—exposing kids to many different types of books—to keep them engaged and prevent boredom. Ultimately, repeated reading is not just a repetitive drill; it is a strategic stepping stone that, when done right, can significantly close the gap for struggling readers.

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter walks through the specific steps and methods we used to bring this study to life. It covers everything from the overall plan and the schools involved to the tools we used and how we made sense of the data. By being open and organized about our process, we want to make sure the study is transparent and easy for other researchers to follow or even try out themselves.

To assess the extent to which the repeated reading practice improved, we used a quasi-experimental design. Essentially, this means we looked at one specific group of students and compared their reading levels before and after the intervention. As experts like Capili and Anastasi (2024) point out, this is a great approach when you cannot randomly split students into different groups but still want to see if a specific teaching method is actually causing a change. By using a pre-test and a post-test, we were able to obtain clear, measurable data on how students improved while keeping the study grounded in a normal classroom setting.

The study took place at Pigpamulahan Integrated School, Caburacanan Elementary School, and Kulaman Integrated School in District X, Malaybalay City. These are public schools that serve students from Kindergarten through Junior High. We chose these specific sites because many of their learners currently struggle with reading flow and understanding, and the schools are already very supportive of new ways to boost literacy. Conducting our research here allowed us to get a realistic look at how these strategies work in an actual classroom, with the students who need them most.

4. LIMITATIONS

To get a clear picture of where the students started, the study looked back at previous reading assessments, like oral reading tests, which had already flagged some challenges with fluency and understanding. We brought together 100 boys and girls from various schools across the division, a

group large enough to give us a solid, reliable look at whether repeated reading truly makes a difference.

By working with this group, we were able to see how students with a wide range of reading backgrounds progressed, while focusing specifically on those who needed the most support. We intentionally chose Grade 2 learners who were at that critical stage where improving their flow and comprehension would have the biggest impact on their future in school.

5. RESULTS

The following results were revealed in this study:

When we first looked at the numbers, it was clear that the students were starting from a difficult place. Before the practice sessions began, most learners were struggling quite a bit. Their scores in reading rhythm and understanding were low, and their reading speed was not only slow but also very inconsistent—some kids were moving much faster or slower than others.

After the assessment, it started to see some encouraging changes across the board. The average scores for reading with expression and understanding the story climbed up to a "moderate" level, and we noticed that students were generally picking up the pace. What is even better is that the scores became less scattered; the students were not just getting better, they were becoming more consistent in their skills.

However, when based on the data through a more formal statistical lens, the results were more modest. While the students' reading speed did trend upward, the jump was not large enough to be considered "statistically significant." In scientific terms, we could not prove beyond a doubt that the intervention was the sole cause of the faster speed. So, while we can clearly see the students improved on the surface, the statistical evidence suggests that for this specific group and timeframe, the change was more of a steady nudge forward than a massive leap.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

The study concludes that there is a critical "literacy gap", as 100% of the Grade 2 learners are currently performing below their expected grade-

level reading competency. With a significant majority identified as Low Emerging Readers, it is evident that the foundational mechanics of decoding and word recognition remain the primary barriers to academic success. While students show a functional ability to identify literal facts from a text, their performance falters significantly when tasked with inferential comprehension. This "common wall" suggests that while learners are beginning to "word-call," they have not yet developed the critical thinking skills or vocabulary depth required to read between the lines or reach a level of "Excellent" mastery.

Furthermore, the research concludes that reading level is not a predictor of reading comprehension for this specific cohort. The nearly non-existent correlation and non-significant indicate a profound "disconnect" in the learning process; being able to phonetically decode a word does not equate to understanding its meaning. This highlights that comprehension is a distinct, multifaceted cognitive journey that cannot be achieved through mechanical reading drills alone. Consequently, the study accepts the null hypothesis, confirming that for these learners, understanding is driven by factors beyond simple fluency, such as prior knowledge, linguistic context, and engagement.

Ultimately, these results serve as a call for a recalibrated instructional heart within the classroom. To bridge this divide, the focus must shift from merely tracking reading speeds to a dual-approach strategy: rebuilding the foundational decoding skills of the "Low Emerging" 63% while simultaneously providing the "missing keys" of vocabulary and critical thinking to the "Good" 53% who are stalled at a literal understanding. By acknowledging that nearly one out of every three students is currently feeling "lost" or disconnected, the school can transform these findings into a targeted intervention plan that ensures no child is left to face the frustration of reading without meaning.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

To further strengthen teachers' management practices and reduce classroom misbehavior, this study recommends the following:

Based on what we have learned, we recommend that future versions of this program give students more time and more frequent sessions. We know from other research that for these skills to really

"stick" and show up in the data, the practice needs to be a steady, long-term habit rather than a quick sprint.

We also suggest that teachers move away from a "one-size-fits-all" approach. Since every child in our study reacted differently—some thrived while others needed more help—it is important to mix things up. Tailoring the lessons to focus on specific needs, like building vocabulary for one student or working on "reading with feeling" for another, could make the whole strategy much more powerful.

Lastly, for any researchers looking to take this further, it would be great to see this study repeated with a much larger group of students and tracked over a longer period. Looking at the long-term impact and using more advanced data analysis would help us prove exactly how much of a difference this makes in a child's life. By expanding the scope, we can get a much clearer picture of how to turn these "promising" results into a proven success story for every young reader.

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