



Modular Reading Worksheets and Reading Levels of Grade 7 Students: An Action Research Study

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of modular reading worksheets on the reading comprehension levels of Grade 7 students at Panagaan National High School. Using a sequential-explanatory mixed-methods design, 106 Grade 7 students participated in the quantitative phase, while 8 students were randomly selected for qualitative interviews. Reading comprehension was measured through the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) pre-test and post-test. Quantitative data were analyzed using weighted mean, standard deviation, and percentage scores, while qualitative data from interviews were analyzed through axial coding. Results showed an increase in the students' mean score from 2.85 (35.63% MPS) in the pre-test to 3.68 (46.00% MPS) in the post-test. A difference was observed between pre-test and post-test reading profiles, indicating a positive shift in performance after the intervention. Qualitative findings revealed that students perceived the modular reading worksheets as easy to comprehend, relevant to their real-life experiences, and enjoyable to use during learning activities. The study concludes that the use of modular reading worksheets was associated with improved reading scores and positive learner engagement among Grade 7 students.

C. INTRODUCTION

a. Rationale

Reading comprehension is a fundamental skill that enables learners to understand, interpret, and apply information from texts. Pressley and Afflerbach (1995) described reading as a constructive process where readers actively interact with the text to construct meaning. In the Philippine context, proficiency in reading is considered the cornerstone of academic achievement and lifelong learning. Gu (2003) emphasized that reading is the most dominant skill in second language learning because it serves as the primary tool for students to access information across subject areas.

However, recent national assessments continue to show that many Filipino learners struggle with reading comprehension. This challenge was further aggravated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to learning loss and widened the gap between grade-level expectations and actual learner performance.

To address reading difficulties, the Department of Education implemented the Revised Philippine Informal Reading Inventory through DepEd Order No. 14, s. 2018. Phil-IRI is a diagnostic tool used to determine learners' reading levels: Independent, Instructional, and Frustration. It also measures oral reading, silent reading, and comprehension.

Casingal (2022) studied the efficacy of Phil-IRI combined with remedial classes among intermediate pupils and found significant improvement in reading performance. Similarly, a 2026 study by researchers from NEUST used Phil-IRI to diagnose Grade 3 learners in

Cabanatuan City. The pretest revealed that 48.33% were at Frustration level and 5.00% were Non-Readers. After implementing the GABAY BASA instructional module, frustration readers dropped to 10.83% while independent readers increased from 14.17% to 52.50%. The results were statistically significant at $p < .001$. These studies validate Phil-IRI as an effective basis for designing targeted reading interventions.

Various reading interventions have been implemented in Philippine schools to address low comprehension levels. One common and practical strategy is the use of reading worksheets. Lorca (2023) reported a school-based intervention at San Gabriel Elementary School where Phil-IRI identified 3 slow readers in Grade 4. The teacher implemented 15-minute daily remediation using strategies such as A Word A Day, Dolch Basic Sight Words, Fuller Method, and Reading Comprehension Worksheets. The report concluded that these techniques led to “remarkable improvement” in the learners’ reading speed and comprehension.

Pagute and Apas (2025) also examined the effect of interactive activities on Grade 4 learners’ comprehension. Their posttest results showed that 64.28% of learners reached the Instructional level and 7.15% reached the Independent level after the intervention. Only 28.57% remained at the Frustration level. The study highlighted that targeted and structured reading activities are crucial for learners who are struggling with comprehension.

Pocan, Bailon, and Pocan (2022) further emphasized the need for strategic reading interventions for “left-behind learners” in the post-pandemic period. They argued that level-appropriate and contextualized materials must be provided to help learners recover from learning loss.

The modular approach aligns with DepEd’s commitment to accessible and learner-centered instruction. Modular reading materials allow students to work at their own pace, receive immediate feedback, and focus on specific reading skills. In the context of reading, modules that are skill-focused, culturally responsive, and aligned with learners’ reading levels have been found effective in improving comprehension.

The findings of NEUST’s GABAY BASA module and the San Gabriel ES worksheet intervention support this claim. Both studies used materials anchored on Phil-IRI results and reported positive changes in learners’ reading profiles. This suggests that when reading materials are matched to the diagnosed needs of learners, learning becomes more effective.

The reviewed literature establishes that reading comprehension remains a critical concern in Philippine basic education. Phil-IRI has been proven effective in diagnosing reading levels and in guiding the development of interventions. Recent local studies from 2022 to 2026 show that the use of worksheets, modules, and interactive activities significantly improves learners’ reading performance, particularly those at the frustration level.

Given these findings, the present study seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by determining the effectiveness of modular reading worksheets in improving the reading comprehension levels of Grade 7 students in a public secondary school. This study is anchored on the premise that structured, level-appropriate, and self-paced reading materials can help learners transition from frustration to instructional and eventually to independent reading levels.

In response to this challenge, the researcher conducted a study on Modular Reading Worksheets and Reading Levels of Grade 7 Students: An Action Research. This study aimed to determine the effect of modular reading worksheets on improving students’ reading comprehension levels, which can serve as a basis for designing interventions to address reading difficulties.

The study was conducted at Panagaan National High School, Mahayag North District, Division of Zamboanga del Sur during School Year 2019–2020. The respondents were 106 Grade 7 students enrolled in English classes in the said school.

c. Research Problem/ Questions

This action research aimed to determine the impact of modular reading worksheets on the reading comprehension levels of Grade 7 students at Panagaan National High School, Mahayag North District, Division of Zamboanga del Sur. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

What is the reading comprehension level of Grade 7 students in the pre-test as measured by Phil-IRI?

What is the reading comprehension level of Grade 7 students in the post-test as measured by Phil-IRI?

Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test reading comprehension levels of Grade 7 students?

What are the students' impressions of the modular reading worksheets?

D. METHODOLOGY

This research employed sequential-explanatory mixed as a method of discovering the answers to the research questions.

a. Participants/ Data Source

Participants of this research were the 106 grade 7 students of Panagaan National High School which were already identified by the proponent. Specifically, 53 males and 53 females who are coming from the three sections in grade 7.

Random interview of the participants was done to verify the results of the quantitative data. Phil-IRI Pre and Post tests results were also used to determine reading levels of the subjects.

b. Data Gathering Procedure and Instruments

The researcher secured permission to conduct the Phil-IRI tools relative to the reading levels of the grade 7 students of Panagaan National High School. After the approval, the researcher personally administered the pre and post tests to the grade 7 students involved as the respondents of the research investigation. The gathering of data underwent two phases: Descriptive- Quantitative Method in which the weighted mean and the standard deviation were used as statistical treatment of the study to determine the impact of modular reading worksheets in increasing the reading levels and the significant difference of the mean score of the pre and post tests and the Qualitative- Narrative Method in which the interview of participants was done in order to verify the computed results.

To determine the responses of the grade 7 students on their reading levels using the pre and post tests passages for grade 7 in the pre and post tests. The following scale was used:

Percentile Scale	Adjectival Equivalent
80-100%	Independent
59-79%	Instructional
58-below	Frustration

c. Data Analysis

This research directed to determine the impact of modular reading worksheets in increasing the reading levels of grade 7 students of Panagaan National High School, Mahayag North District, Zamboanga del Sur Division during School Year 2019-2020.

In order to determine the main purpose of this research, the proponent looked into the reading levels of the subjects using the pre and post test reading passage for grade 7 and the significant difference of the students' reading levels in the pre and post tests. Each child was required to read the same set of pre and post test tools. The pre test was conducted before they underwent the month long modular reading worksheets implementation. The post test was done after the modular reading worksheets as intervention tools were given. Random Interview was also done in order to verify the results generated in the study. Hence, narrative analysis was done through axial coding in the gathered qualitative data.

The research further aimed to find out the basis of planning, particularly in the formulation of strategies to increase reading levels through the use of modular reading worksheets.

E. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Based on the analysis of data, the following questions were resolved and findings were made:

What is the reading comprehension level of Grade 7 students in the pre-test as measured by Phil-IRI?

Table 1

PHIL-IRI Tests	Total Raw Score	Mean Score	Mean Percentage Score	Reading Comprehension Profile
Pre Test	302	2.85	35.63%	Frustration
Post Test	390	3.68	46%	Frustration

Table 1 presents the pre-test and post-test results of Grade 7 students in reading comprehension as measured by the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI).

For the pre-test, the students obtained a total raw score of 302, with a mean score of 2.85 and a Mean Percentage Score (MPS) of 35.63%. Based on the Phil-IRI reading level criteria, an MPS of 57% and below is classified as Frustration level. This means that before the intervention, the majority of Grade 7 students experienced significant difficulty in understanding the text independently. At this level, learners typically need intensive teacher guidance, repeated readings, and additional support to comprehend grade-level passages.

What is the reading comprehension level of Grade 7 students in the post-test as measured by Phil-IRI?

For the post-test, after the implementation of modular reading worksheets, the total raw score increased to 390, with a mean score of 3.68 and an MPS of 46.00%. Although the reading comprehension profile remained at the Frustration level, there was an observable improvement of 10.37 percentage points and 0.83 points in the mean score compared to the pre-test.

The data indicate that while students have not yet moved to the Instructional level, the modular reading worksheets contributed to an increase in comprehension performance. The upward shift in scores suggests that the intervention provided students with more accessible and structured reading practice, which helped reduce comprehension difficulties. Continued use of level-appropriate and scaffolded reading materials is recommended to help learners progress from Frustration to Instructional and eventually to Independent levels.

Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test reading comprehension levels of Grade 7 students?

Table 2

PHIL IRI Tests	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pretest	2.85	1.49
Post test	3.68	1.63

Table 2 shows the comparison of the mean scores and standard deviations of Grade 7 students in the pre-test and post-test of the Phil-IRI.

In the pre-test, students obtained a mean score of 2.85 with a standard deviation of 1.49. In the post-test, after the use of modular reading worksheets, the mean score increased to 3.68 with a standard deviation of 1.63. This reflects a mean gain of 0.83 points.

The increase in the mean score suggests an improvement in the students' reading comprehension performance following the intervention. The slight increase in the standard deviation from 1.49 to 1.63 indicates that while the overall performance improved, the variability in students' scores also became slightly wider.

What are the students' impressions of the modular reading worksheets?

The following are the students' impressions with the modular reading worksheets:

Easy to comprehend. This emerged as a recurring theme in the participants' responses during the interview.

"I like the module....omm..amm..kay naa siya'y mga keywords sa questions nga maoy posible basehan sa paglocate sa answers."

"Sayonan ko sir kay gamay ra ang words sa mga selections dayon dili pud kaayo lalom ang mga words nga gigamit."

"It is easy because every set of worksheets has a specific skill to develop especially in comprehending the text."

The responses indicate that students found the worksheets accessible due to three factors: the presence of guide keywords that aided in locating answers, the use of simple and concise language in the reading selections, and the structured focus on specific comprehension skills in each set. This suggests that the design of the modular worksheets reduced cognitive load and supported students in processing the text more independently.

Appropriate. Another common theme that emerged from the students' responses.

"Kasagaran sa mga worksheets sir kay dali ra sabton kay makarelate ko sa mga experiences nga naa sa selection for example katong "A Job for Bob" nga selection sir nagtalk siya about corn farming nga kasagaran naa sa among palibot."

"Ang mga worksheets sir kay naghisgot ug mga experiences that as a seventh grader, amoa pud na experience."

"The activities given are relatable because they are based on real-life experience."

The students' statements reveal that the content of the modular reading worksheets aligned with their personal and community contexts. By featuring topics such as corn farming and everyday experiences common to Grade 7 learners, the materials became more meaningful and accessible. This connection to real-life situations suggests that the relevance of the content contributed to students' engagement and understanding of the texts.

Enjoyable. This theme was also evident in the students' responses during the random interview.

"I enjoyed working with the modular reading worksheets because I was able to answer the questions in every worksheet."

"Nalingaw ko sir kay nakakat-on ko pamaagi ug unsaon pagsabot ang akong mga gibasa."

"Malipay kaayo ko sir every time magpa activity ka namo gamit ang mga worksheets kay dagko jud ko ug scores sa mga reading activities."

The responses indicate that enjoyment stemmed from three interrelated factors: a sense of competence in answering the questions, the acquisition of strategies for understanding texts, and positive academic outcomes such as higher scores. These findings suggest that the modular reading worksheets not only supported skill development but also fostered positive emotions toward reading activities, which may contribute to sustained learner motivation.

F. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that there was an improvement in the Mean Percentage Score (MPS) of Grade 7 students from the pre-test to the post-test after the implementation of modular reading worksheets. However, based on the Phil-IRI criteria, both the pre-test and post-test results remained at the Frustration level. This indicates that while there was a positive gain in reading comprehension performance, students still require substantial support to read and understand grade-level texts independently.

The quantitative data were supported by qualitative data from the interviews. Three main themes emerged from the students' responses: easy to comprehend, appropriate, and enjoyable. These themes suggest that the modular reading worksheets were positively received by the

learners and helped them engage more with reading activities, even though their overall reading level did not yet progress to the Instructional level.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of modular reading worksheets contributed to a modest improvement in the reading comprehension of Grade 7 students. However, the intervention alone was not sufficient to move students out of the Frustration level. Continuous and more intensive reading interventions are still needed to address their reading difficulties.

Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study should be interpreted with caution due to several limitations.

First, the study was conducted in only one school, which limits the generalizability of the results to other schools with different contexts, resources, and learner profiles.

Second, the study did not include a control group. Without a comparison group that did not receive the intervention, it is difficult to fully attribute the improvement in MPS solely to the modular reading worksheets, as other factors may have contributed to the change.

Third, the intervention period was short. The limited duration may not have been enough to produce substantial movement from the Frustration level to the Instructional or Independent levels.

Fourth, there is a possibility of test familiarity. Since the same Phil-IRI passages may have been used in both pre-test and post-test, students might have become familiar with the test format, which could have influenced the post-test scores.

Fifth, the qualitative data came from only eight interview participants. While their insights were valuable, such a small number may not fully represent the experiences and perceptions of all Grade 7 students involved in the study.

Lastly, the data were collected in 2019–2020, before and during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The learning conditions during that period may differ from the current educational setting, thus affecting the applicability of the findings to present-day classrooms.

Despite these limitations, the study provides useful insights into the potential of modular reading worksheets as a supplementary intervention for struggling readers.

Implications, Reflections, and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the continued utilization and enhancement of modular reading worksheets to the following:

Curriculum Implementation Division. It is recommended that the Curriculum Implementation Division consider the integration and adoption of modular reading worksheets as supplementary reading materials. These materials should be contextualized and aligned with the K to 12 curriculum to address the reading needs of learners, particularly those in the frustration level.

School Administrators. School heads are encouraged to support English teachers in the development, reproduction, and implementation of modular reading worksheets. Provision of time, resources, and training will help ensure the effective delivery of reading interventions in school.

Teachers. English teachers are recommended to regularly use modular reading worksheets that are level-appropriate and anchored on students' interests and experiences. Teachers should also conduct pre- and post-assessments to monitor learners' progress and adjust instructional strategies accordingly.

Future Researchers. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct a similar study with a larger population and over a longer period. Additional variables such as vocabulary development, fluency, and motivation may also be explored to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of modular reading materials.

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