

To cite this article: Susana D. Barrozo and Milagros S. Esparrago (2025). Reading Fluency and Comprehension Level of Grade 6 Learners in Rapu-Rapu West District, Albay Division: Basis for the Development of Culture-Based Reading Materials. International Journal of Education, Business and Economics Research (IJEBER) 5 (3): 100-112

READING FLUENCY AND COMPREHENSION LEVEL OF GRADE 6 LEARNERS IN RAPU-RAPU WEST DISTRICT, ALBAY DIVISION: BASIS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURE-BASED READING MATERIALS

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<https://doi.org/10.59822/IJEBER.2025.5305>

ABSTRACT

Reading fluency and comprehension are two important factors that can improve the reading skills of the learners. Reading fluency is comprised of three elements: accuracy, rate, and prosody, while reading comprehension consists of three levels: independent, instructional, and frustration. This study determines the reading fluency and comprehension levels of grade 6 learners in rapu-rapu west district for sy 2024-2025. It also examines the significant relationship between fluency and comprehension. Quantitative methods using frequency, percentage, and pearson & spearman correlation were applied which achieved this goal. Reading fluency and comprehension tests of english texts adapted to 2018 phil-iri tool were used as tools and were utilized to evaluate 346 grade 6 learners. The results showed that most learners were in the frustration level for reading fluency in terms of rate and prosody. However, most students were at the instructional and independent levels in terms of accuracy. Despite this, no learners were independent readers, and many were in the frustration level for comprehension. Through careful analysis, the study revealed that there is no significant relationship between reading fluency and comprehension. The study concluded that accurate reading with proper pace and expression is crucial for comprehension. It also emphasized the need for diverse teaching strategies, culture-based reading materials, and tailored reading programs.

KEYWORDS: - Fluency, Comprehension, 2018 Phil-iri Tool, Teaching Strategies, Culture-based Reading Materials.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Ability to read is one of the most essential skills a learner should possess. It is one of the most important skills being taught in school. Reading is the process of taking in the sense of meaning of letters and symbols. The majority of learners in language classes, English in particular, are significantly behind in all language macro skills. Some learners hardly sound out the written symbols while others have low level vocabulary and can't even spell simple words correctly. Some find it difficult to decode the written symbols more to comprehending the text they are reading. Learners' won't be able to comprehend what they're reading if they can't read words and combine them into sentences correctly (Schwartz, et al., 2019).

Due to a lack of fluency, learners find it difficult to understand the material they are reading, which leads to low reading performance—a persistent problem for various educational institutions around the world. Lack of fluency makes it difficult for students to decode words effectively, which impairs understanding. According to various researches, many students struggle with comprehension more than simple decoding, which results in subpar academic performance, especially in nations like the U.S. (Sparks, 2019) and Romania (Saviran et al., 2020). Furthermore, reading outcomes were exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly for learners in underprivileged communities (Kuhfeld et al., 2023; Azevedo et al., 2021). Learners continue to struggle with reading comprehension and accuracy in nations like South Africa (Phala et al., 2022) and Turkey (Akyol et al., 2019), underscoring the need for targeted educational interventions.

Furthermore, learners from some ASEAN countries, reading comprehension and fluency present significant challenges. Bella et al. (2022) discovered that eighth-grade pupils in Bandar Lampung experience difficulties comprehending narrative texts, which leads to poor reading scores. In the same way, Treffers-Daller et al. (2022) observed that students' limited vocabulary impairs their comprehension of textbook material in India. According to Nanda et al. (2020), low reading comprehension among Indonesian secondary school pupils is frequently brought on by a lack of drive, a small vocabulary, and a lack of prior knowledge. Similar issues are encountered by Vietnamese students, who, according to Ha Le (2021), blame their reading problems on a lack of vocabulary and prior knowledge.

Moreover, reading fluency and comprehension are also significant challenges for learners in the Philippines. The pandemic escalated the “learning poverty” in the country to alarming degree. Learning poverty, which has become a major worry for the nation, is defined by the World Bank as the inability to read and comprehend a simple text or tale by the age of 10. Prior to the 2019 pandemic, a World Bank report revealed that the Philippines had a 69.5% rate of learning poverty. But by 2021, things had significantly worsened, with the percentage reaching 91%. This indicates that nine out of ten Filipino learners under the age of ten are illiterate in simple texts.

A student who struggles with reading will also perform poorly in other courses, such as Science and Mathematics. Most Filipino students had poor reading performance. It was also evident in the results provided by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Out of 81 countries, the Philippines performed poorly in reading comprehension, mathematics, and science, and its performance did not improve much. In 2018, the Philippines ranked lowest out of 79 participating countries. In 2022, it is ranked 76th out of 81 countries.

This learning poverty affects schools in the DepEd Albay Division, especially in Rapu-Rapu West District, where students struggle to comprehend the material thoroughly and fluently. The results of the CRLA and Phil-IRI assessments, which were carried out in the various schools within the aforementioned district, clearly showed the low literacy levels. It is also apparent in the general academic achievement of the pupils, as many were kept in their grade level due to their inability to read. Teachers must put more effort into helping learners develop this necessary skill because reading comprehension affects their academic success.

The current problem led the researcher to this present study and motivated to determine the reading fluency and comprehension skills of Grade 6 learners that will be the bases in developing a culture-based reading material in enhancing the reading fluency and comprehension of the learners before they complete the elementary grades. Resolving the critical literacy crisis in Rapu-Rapu West District will generate substantial benefits. Students will experience improved academic outcomes, including increased literacy rates and reduced grade retention.

2.0 FRAMEWORK

This study, grounded in Automaticity Theory, Schema Theory, and Information Processing Theory provides foundation for understanding the cognitive processes involved in reading fluency and comprehension and offer insights into how reading fluency and comprehension should be taught and developed among learners. Also, it provides ideas on what reading activities and interventions should be done to develop a proficient reader, resulting to Continuous Learning Progression Theory. Automaticity Theory comes from the word automatic which means the person's ability to identify and process information with little effort. This has been applied to reading fluency in assessing the learner's capacity to read words quickly without having to think about it. Learners' quick word recognition boost reading rate, improves accuracy by reducing decoding errors, and enhances prosody by focusing on rhythm, intonation, and expression. The Schema Theory involves processing information of the reader based on prior knowledge and experiences which enables them to comprehend what they read. At the independent level, readers utilize their schemas to understand texts efficiently, requiring little assistance. At the instructional level, learners may need guidance in making connections between new and pre-existing knowledge. At the frustration level, the readers lack of relevant schemas may hinder understanding leading to difficulty processing the text. With the use of existing frameworks or schemas, readers can interpret, organize, and understand the text, allowing them to become proficient reader. Information Processing Theory, clarifies the connection between reading fluency and comprehension. Automatic word identification, accuracy, and prosody are indicators of fluent reading, which lessens cognitive load and frees up more time for comprehension.

The Continuous Progression Learning Theory highlights the significance of developing lifetime reading competency by stressing exposure to a variety of texts, meaningful learning experiences, and ongoing support. The research utilizes IVDV model to determine the reading fluency and comprehension level of Grade 6 learners in Rapu-Rapu West, Albay Division. Data collection on the fluency and comprehension level of the learners inform targeted solutions. The study culminates in the development of culture-based reading materials to enhance the reading proficiency of the learners.

3.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study evaluates the reading fluency level of Grade 6 learners in English by examining their accuracy, rate, and prosody. It also assesses their comprehension levels across independent, instructional, and frustration levels. Also, the study analyzes the significant relationship between reading fluency and comprehension levels. Based on the findings, culture-based reading materials are developed to enhance the overall reading fluency and comprehension of the learners.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

This research thoroughly assessed the reading fluency and comprehension levels of Grade 6 learners in Rapu-Rapu West District, Albay Division along with their significant relationship using quantitative and correlational research design. This was conducted at the 14 elementary schools in Rapu-Rapu West District which aimed to determine the learners reading fluency and comprehension levels. The 346 Grade 6 learners were assessed using the adapted literary passage and comprehension questions from 2018 Phil-IRI Tool. Moreover, ethical considerations were observed during the conduct of the study. The researcher sought permission to conduct the study by writing a letter to the Schools Division Superintendent of Albay and the Public Schools District Supervisor of Rapu-Rapu West District. Following the approval of the SDS and PSDS, the researcher requested permission from the school heads in writing to conduct the study at their school. Information letter and parental consent were given to the School Heads for dissemination and distribution. The parental consent was obtained during the assessment process. Only students who had parental consent were evaluated.

Various methods and statistical tools were employed depending on the objectives of the study. Data for Objective 1, which aims is to evaluate the reading fluency level of Grade 6 learners in English based on accuracy, rate, and prosody and Objective 2, which focuses on assessing the comprehension level of the pupils along independent, instructional, and frustration were analyzed in this study using frequency and percentage. For Objective 3, The relationship between reading fluency and comprehension was determined using the Pearson and Spearman correlation coefficients.

5.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Reading fluency level of Grade 6 learners along accuracy, rate, and prosody

This study evaluated the reading fluency and comprehension levels of Grade 6 learners along **Accuracy**. Learners from seven different schools—A, B, C, E, G, K, and M—are classified in the independent level whose reading accuracy ranges between 80% and 91%. This corresponds to 45.09% or 156 out of 346 learners in the district. Among the seven schools, two - B and E -

achieved the highest percentage, both obtaining 91%. Meanwhile, learners from the other seven schools—D, F, H, I, J, L, and N—fall within the instructional level wherein they are in the range of 73% to 79% reading accuracy. This is equivalent to 54.91% or 190 learners of 346. Overall, the average percentage of the district in reading accuracy is 79.64% or 80% which is independent level. Table 1.a below shows the result of fluency level of Grade 6 learners in English along accuracy.

Table 1.a
Reading Fluency Level of Grade 6 Learners in English along Accuracy

Schools	Enrolment	Frequency	Accuracy	
			Percentage	Interpretation
A	45	33	82%	Independent
B	20	18	91%	Independent
C	24	20	83%	Independent
D	26	20	76%	Instructional
E	13	12	91%	Independent
F	26	21	79%	Instructional
G	28	22	80%	Independent
H	23	17	75%	Instructional
I	29	22	76%	Instructional
J	38	28	74%	Instructional
K	14	11	81%	Independent
L	25	18	73%	Instructional
M	12	10	80%	Independent
N	23	17	74%	Instructional
TOTAL	346	269		

Interpretation:

Independent – 80-100%; Instructional – 59-79%; Frustration – 58% & below

According to the results, reading accuracy ranges from 80% to 91%, and nearly half of the learners (45.09%) in the seven schools perform well at the independent level. This suggests that these learners can read fluently without much assistance. It implies that most learners in the district were showing a strong foundation in reading fluency in terms of accuracy, which can help them succeed academically when they move on to increasingly challenging books in higher grade levels. Schools that assist reading development at this level, especially those with higher percentages like B and E, could be used as models for exchanging best practices.

Learners in the instructional level, making up 54.91% of the district, have reading accuracy ranging from 73% to 79%, indicating that they require some support to improve their fluency in terms of accuracy. Since they are still developing their reading abilities, these learners might benefit from more focused interventions or organized instruction. To address particular areas of difficulty, teachers in schools that fall under the instructional category (D, F, H, I, J, L, and N) should think about implementing strategies like guided reading or individualized instruction. This is especially important if they want to raise these learners to the independent level and improve their overall reading fluency skills. The findings highlight the need for targeted reading interventions to improve reading accuracy, especially for pupils at the instructional level. According to Hasbrouck (2020), it is essential to maintain at least 95% accuracy for independent reading and comprehension. In addition, Egloff et al. (2019) recommend frequent oral reading as a useful technique to improve reading accuracy.

Rate. In terms of rate, the Grade 6 learners in the 14 schools of Rapu-Rapu West District are in the frustration level. Two schools are within the range of 46%-50%, another two schools are in the 51%-60% range, eight schools are categorized in the 61%-70% range, and two schools are classified within the 71%-74% range. The findings revealed that the reading rate of the learners in 14 schools ranges from 46%, the lowest and 74%, the highest. Both are at a level of frustration considering the respective percentages drop to 89% and lower. Table 1.b presents the reading fluency level of the Grade 6 learners along rate.

Table 1.b
Reading Fluency Level of Grade 6 Learners in English along Rate

Schools	Enrolment	Frequency	Rate	
			Percentage	Interpretation
A	45	22	49%	Independent
B	20	14	71%	Independent
C	24	17	70%	Independent
D	26	12	46%	Instructional
E	13	9	66%	Independent
F	26	17	65%	Instructional
G	28	18	64%	Independent
H	23	12	53%	Instructional
I	29	20	70%	Instructional
J	38	28	74%	Instructional
K	14	9	67%	Independent
L	25	17	69%	Instructional
M	12	6	54%	Independent
N	23	16	69%	Instructional
TOTAL	346	217		

Interpretation:

Independent – 97-100%; Instructional – 90-96%; Frustration – 89% & below

This indicates that, on a rate basis, every student from the responding schools was in frustration level. Frustration is the lowest level, the readers in this level finds the text so difficult that they cannot read it with proper speed. They struggle to read the word correctly in a given period of time. Based on what the researcher observed during the oral reading test, learners were reading the text slowly. They frequently pause and appear to be considering how to read the words in the passage before sounding it out. Their uncertainty regarding the correct way of reading the words suggests that they may be overanalyzing the text in the reading process, which consequently leads to an extended duration in reading the text. The reason could be that they were not used to the new and unfamiliar words they were reading. Brysbaert (2019) asserts that children, adults, and non-native English speakers generally have lower reading rates. With the right guidance, assistance, instruction, and intervention from the teacher, these students who were at the frustration level can advance to the instructional and independent levels. According to Felts (2019), teachers must deliver excellent instruction if they want their students to succeed. Certain level-appropriate teaching techniques can be used to meet students' preferred methods of learning, which will boost engagement and motivation.

Prosody. The results show 78.57% or 11 out of 14 schools were in “approaching fluency level” while three (3) or 21.43% are in “non-fluent level”. Out of 346 students, only 81 or 23.41% were deemed non-fluent, while 265 or 76.59% of the Grade 6 learners were determined to be in the

“approaching fluency level”. Majority of the learners are nearing fluency in prosody; however, a notable number of learners still struggle with prosody, remaining at non-fluent level. Below is Table 1.c which presents the reading fluency level of Grade 6 learners along prosody.

Table 1.c
Reading Fluency Level of Grade 6 Learners in English along Prosody

Schools	Enrolment	Frequency	Score	Prosody	
				Percentage	Interpretation
A	45	39	6	86%	Non-Fluent
B	20	11	4	57%	Approaching Fluency
C	24	14	4	57%	Approaching Fluency
D	26	15	4	57%	Approaching Fluency
E	13	9	5	71%	Non-Fluent
F	26	15	4	57%	Approaching Fluency
G	28	16	4	57%	Approaching Fluency
H	23	13	4	57%	Approaching Fluency
I	29	12	3	43%	Approaching Fluency
J	38	16	3	43%	Approaching Fluency
K	14	8	4	57%	Approaching Fluency
L	25	11	3	43%	Approaching Fluency
M	12	7	4	57%	Approaching Fluency
N	23	16	5	71%	Non-Fluent
TOTAL	346	202			

Interpretation:

Non-Fluent – 5-7; Approaching Fluency – 3-4; Fluent – 0-2

The findings show that most schools and learners exhibit an "approaching fluency level" in prosody, indicating an overall good performance. This implies that a significant percentage of learners are working toward full fluency by grasping the fundamentals of speech rhythm, intonation, and stress patterns. However, a small but significant portion of learners and schools are classified as being at the "non-fluent level." To help this group advance toward fluency and enhance their prosodic abilities, they might need more assistance and focused interventions. Despite these obstacles, most learners are making improvement, and those who are having trouble can be assisted in realizing their full prosody potential with consistent work. In order to produce proficient readers, prosody should be incorporated into teaching reading since it has a beneficial effect on reading fluency and comprehension. Also, students who read with prosody and expression develop into fluent, expressive readers who can articulate the meaning and emotion of the text they are reading. Rawian (2021) claims prosodic components should be carefully studied during language instruction since they are an integral part of a language and not just a byproduct. Also, Tong et al (2023) states that language instructors may want to incorporate prosody into their reading courses in order to improve reading activities and assess students' comprehension and word decoding abilities. Kocaarslan (2019) recommended that prosody be given greater thought in order to enhance students' reading comprehension abilities in the classroom.

2. Comprehension level of the learners along frustration, instructional, and independent.

The same passage that was used to evaluate the learners' reading fluency level was also utilized to assess their reading comprehension. Following the passage's reading, the learners were asked to answer eight (8) comprehension questions. Here are the findings.

Independent Level. The findings indicate that there is a significant concern in reading comprehension, as none of 346 Grade 6 learners across the 14 schools have reached the independent level. The 0% attainment highlights gaps in foundational literacy and critical thinking. This fact is concerning because all of the research respondents are sixth-grade learners. At this

level, they are supposed to be good readers with strong comprehension skills. This is a serious situation that requires immediate attention from the parents, teachers, school administrators, and reading materials and program developers. Based on observations of the researcher during the assessment process, students struggle to comprehend the paragraph they are reading because it is written in English. They have trouble understanding some of the words there. Learners didn't concentrate on understanding the content; they just read it. It appears that the learners only desire to read the text through to the end, even if they don't understand it. This supports the claim made by Aşıkcan et al. (2023) that students' inability to respond to basic questions suggests that they are having difficulty understanding what they have read and are only repeating the material out. The objective of teaching reading is to help students comprehend what they are reading, not merely how to sound out words in the text. Comprehension is one of the most important aspects of reading and is also the foundation of all academic skills. Without comprehension, children gain no meaning from what they read. A strong comprehension skill is something that every student should strive to develop.

Since none of the 346 learners had attained the independent reading level, the results show serious concerns about the Grade 6 learners' reading comprehension abilities. This implies that all students still need assistance and direction in order to comprehend texts, which could impair their capacity to critically analyze information and use reading comprehension in a variety of subject areas. These findings emphasize the necessity for focused interventions, like structured reading programs, comprehension techniques, and teacher-led support, to improve learners' reading ability because independent reading is crucial for both academic performance and lifetime learning. Wantchekon et al. (2019), reading comprehension is essential for daily living as well as academic performance.

Instructional Level. In this level, only three (3) schools—C, K, and L—have students at the instructional level while the majority (11 schools) are in frustration level. The data revealed that only three (3) or 1% out of 346 learners are at instructional level while the overwhelming 99% or 343 learners at frustration level.

According to the findings, only a small number of learners—especially those from schools C, K, and L—are currently performing at the instructional level. This suggests that these schools might be providing their students with better support systems or strategies that help them interact with texts more successfully. Nonetheless, the vast majority of learners in the other schools continue to struggle with reading on their own and easily understanding texts, remaining at the frustration level. This disparity reveals a serious reading proficiency gap that requires immediate intervention. With only a small number of learners in schools C, K, and L would be excellent examples of best practices that other institutions could adopt. The strategies used in these schools must be examined and lessons learned in order to create more comprehensive reading programs and focused interventions for the larger student body, which will enable more learners to move past the frustration level and toward greater reading independence.

To effectively develop reading skills at the instructional level, teachers need to employ a variety of strategies that cater to learners' specific needs and abilities. Teachers must carefully organize the reading lessons and the approaches they will employ to teach reading. The reading materials ought

to be appropriate for the learners' level. Also, reading interventions and programs can significantly aid in the growth of students' reading abilities and help them reach higher reading comprehension levels. It is extremely important that teachers give reading activities that will help students become independent readers. The learner at this level needs support and guidance from the teacher, parent, and tutor. This is supported by Safitri et al. (2023), who state that teachers should provide texts and activities that will help students understand the material more quickly in order to increase comprehension abilities. Additionally, Decena (2021) asserts that by giving students a variety of level-appropriate tasks, teachers can help learners overcome their reading challenges, particularly in comprehension.

Frustration Level. In this level all learners from eleven (11) schools are in frustration level while in the three schools – C, K, and L – the percentage ranges from 93% - 96% indicating that some learners in these schools have higher level of comprehension. Out of 346 Grade 6 learners of Rapu-Rapu West District, 343 or 99% of the learners are at this level.

The findings show that 99% of the students' reading comprehension is at the Frustration Level, which is cause for serious concern. According to this, the majority of pupils have a seriously hard time comprehending texts; they probably have trouble decoding words, understanding what they read, and making sense of it. The need for strengthened fundamental literacy development and gaps in reading instruction are highlighted by this pervasive problem. Targeted interventions, such as remedial reading programs, individualized instruction, and teacher support to improve comprehension abilities, are urgently needed, as evidenced by the overwhelming number of learners at the Frustration Level. Learners who struggle with reading comprehension may experience significant effects that impact their academic performance, social connections, and future opportunities. Academic achievement in any subject is directly impacted by poor reading comprehension. Learners that have trouble understanding texts will struggle in their classes.

Maranga et al. (2023), states that learners who can't comprehend are unable to extract meaning from the text they are reading. Also, Elleman et al. (2019) claimed that to improve understanding, early and ongoing attention to vocabulary, inference, background knowledge, and comprehension monitoring abilities throughout the growth process is required.

3. Significant relationship between reading fluency and comprehension level of the learners

This study uses Pearson and Spearman t-tests to evaluate the relationship between reading fluency and comprehension. The critical t value at the 5% significance level is 1.96, which serves as the standard margin of error. If the computed t value is less than 1.96, the relationship between the variables is not significant; if it exceeds 1.96, the variables are considered correlated. This method was applied to determine the relationship between reading fluency—comprising accuracy, rate, and prosody—and reading comprehension, which is categorized into three levels: independent, instructional, and frustration. A summary of the results is presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Significant Relationship between Reading Fluency Level and Comprehension Level of Grade 6 Learners

Reading Fluency Components	COMPREHENSION LEVEL								
	INDEPENDENT			INSTRUCTIONAL			FRUSTRATION		
	Computed t	Tabulated t at 5%	Remarks	Computed t	Tabulated t at 5%	Remarks	Computed t	Tabulated t at 5%	Remarks
A. Accuracy	0	1.96	H ₀ =accepted	0.24	1.96	H ₀ =accepted	0.38	1.96	H ₀ =accepted
B. Rate	0	1.96	H ₀ =accepted	0.14	1.96	H ₀ =accepted	0.10	1.96	H ₀ =accepted
C. Prosody	0	1.96	H ₀ =accepted	1.01	1.96	H ₀ =accepted	1.74	1.96	H ₀ =accepted

The results presented in Table 2 accepted the study's hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between reading fluency and comprehension at the independent level. The computed t values for accuracy, rate, and prosody were all 0, which is less than the critical t value of 1.96. A similar outcome was observed at the instructional level, where the t values were 0.14 for rate, 0.24 for accuracy, and 1.01 for prosody—again, all below the critical t value of 1.96 at the 5% level. At the frustration level, the results showed t values of 0.38 for accuracy, 0.10 for rate, and 1.74 for prosody, which also failed to reach significance. These findings confirm the study's hypothesis, demonstrating that reading fluency components—accuracy, rate, and prosody—do not have a statistically significant correlation with reading comprehension across independent, instructional, and frustration levels.

In this situation, fluency does not immediately affect understanding, thus teachers should focus on methods that improve both skills separately. To assist learners in becoming more proficient readers, a well-rounded strategy that incorporates both fluency and comprehension-focused instruction is necessary and required. This claim is supported by Makebo, et al. (2022), as a learner's reading accuracy and speed improve, so does their reading comprehension. Ardington et al. (2021), asserts that reading fluency is necessary for the development of higher-order reading skills. Also, Gedik et al. (2022) said teachers can help pupils comprehend what they are reading by helping them become more fluent readers.

4. Culture-based reading materials development in improving the reading rate, accuracy, prosody, and comprehension level of the learners

In order to address the current state of Grade 6 learners' reading fluency and comprehension level, the researcher developed culture-based reading materials in a form of "Tigsik". These reading materials are written in Bicol in a form of poetry incorporating local culture, practices, traditions, and values of people in the municipality of Rapu-Rapu. Each literary piece is translated in English language and includes five (5) comprehension questions. This aims to develop and enhance the reading fluency and comprehension of Grade 6 learners.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study results, several conclusions were drawn regarding the status of reading fluency and comprehension levels of Grade 6 learners in Rapu-Rapu West District, Albay Division. Firstly, Grade 6 learners in Rapu-Rapu West District demonstrate an independent level in accuracy, a frustration level in rate, and an approaching fluency level in prosody. These results highlight significant challenges in reading fluency, especially in terms of rate and prosody and underscore the

necessity for focused interventions, as both are crucial elements of total reading fluency. Secondly, the reading comprehension levels of Grade 6 learners showed no learner at the independent level, a small number at instructional level, and the overwhelming majority at frustration level. The low reading comprehension scores highlight an urgent need for strategic interventions, such as focused reading programs, enhanced teaching strategies, and teacher-led assistance, to help children better absorb and comprehend the text. Thirdly, there is no significant relationship between reading fluency and comprehension across levels. Immediate intervention and structured reading programs are encouraged to improve both reading fluency and comprehension. Lastly, a culture-based reading material can be developed to enhance or improve the fluency and comprehension level of Grade 6 learners.

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Author Profile



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Milagros S. Esparrago, EdD is an accomplished educator with over 30 years of service in the Department of Education (DepEd), rising from elementary school teacher to Education Supervisor II. Passed the Graduate Record Program (GRE) of Princeton University in 1989 and presented her dissertation on Moral Development internationally at the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, in 1990. Recognized among the Top 10 superintendent eligibles in 1996. Served 15 years in the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), from Education Supervisor II to Chief Education Program Specialist (CEPS), and was designated Officer-in-Charge in the Office of the Assistant Regional Director. Appointed as OIC President of the University of Eastern Philippines, Northern Samar, through secondment. A seasoned research panelist and judge, and co-author of *Gender and Society* (2023).