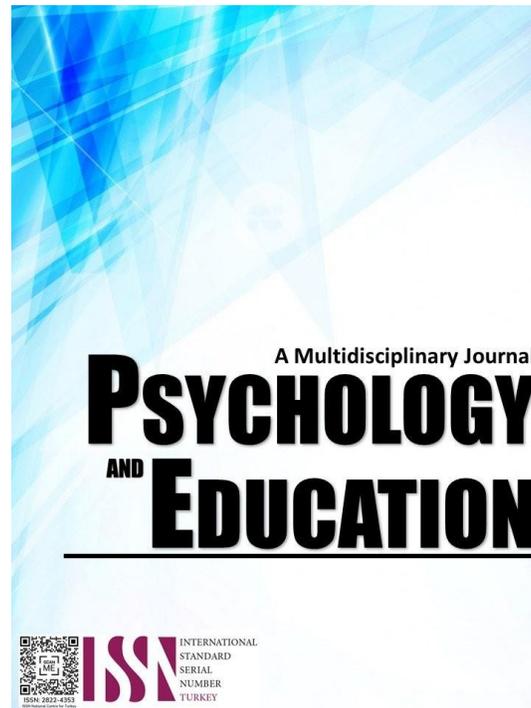


**EXPLORING READING CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES
OF SELECTED GRADE 3 LEARNERS IN GENERAL LUNA
DISTRICT, DIVISION OF QUEZON:
BASIS FOR INTERVENTION**



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Exploring Reading Challenges and Coping Strategies of Selected Grade 3 Learners in General Luna District, Division of Quezon: Basis for Intervention

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Abstract

This study explored the reading challenges and coping strategies of 112 Grade 3 learners in the General Luna District, Division of Quezon, during the 2024–2025 school year. Using an embedded mixed-method design, the research integrated quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyze the interplay between learners' socio-economic profiles (sex, parental education levels, occupational status, household income, and family sizes) and their reading difficulties in word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Quantitative data, gathered through researcher-made survey questionnaires, revealed that learners faced highly challenging reading difficulties across all domains, with word recognition challenges significantly influenced by sex and family size. Qualitative insights from open-ended responses highlighted learners' reliance on multisensory coping strategies, such as phonics exercises and timed practices, readers' theater or role playing, use of thesaurus, and various graphic organizers or visual aids. Findings underscored the need for evidence-based, learner-centered interventions, leading to the development of the "Multimodal Enhanced Remediation with Coping Approach in Direct Opportunities " (MERCADO). This intervention incorporates multimodal approaches with contextualized reading selection and lesson plan designed to address challenges in word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The study recommends piloting the MERCADO intervention, implementing gender-sensitive programs, and conducting further research to ensure sustained literacy improvements. This research contributes to enhancing literacy development among young learners in diverse socio-economic contexts.

Keywords: *reading, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension*

Introduction

Reading is a complex process encompassing sensation, perception, comprehension, application, and integration. It involves extracting meaning from printed words and symbols (Tomas et al., 2021). As a vital mode of communication, reading enables the acquisition of knowledge and ideas (Claessen et al., 2020). Furthermore, it serves as the foundation for academic success and lifelong learning.

However, reading presents various challenges on a global scale. One major issue is the lack of consensus on the appropriate chronological or cognitive age and the developmental stage at which children should begin learning to read (Hartney, 2021). The lack of clear guidelines on the appropriate timing for introducing reading and writing in a second language adds to the complexity of the learning process (Khan et al., 2020). Furthermore, in certain regions, students face challenges in understanding their textbooks due to inadequate reading proficiency (Dewanti, 2020). Reading difficulties among primary school students continue widespread in many societies (ElNaggar, 2020). Considering its importance in today's science- and technology-driven world, reading is a crucial skill that demands immediate attention and enhancement.

Meanwhile, the Philippines has recorded a significant percentage of low-performing students among all countries and economies participating in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (Tomas et al., 2021). Caraig and Quimbo (2022) found that students in Calamba City demonstrated limited vocabulary knowledge, which hindered their ability to comprehend stories and answer various questions. This issue was further exacerbated by difficulties in word recognition and reading fluency (Manlapig, 2020). Moreover, Chan and Lee (2021) highlighted that these challenges become more pronounced when readers attempt to relate the text to their personal experiences during or after reading.

The Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines has implemented various policies, memoranda, and legislative measures to enhance literacy, acknowledging the pivotal role of reading in national development. Republic Act No. 10533, also known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 or the K-12 Law, is the foundation of the country's educational reform, incorporating reading skills development across different subjects and grade levels. Similarly, Republic Act No. 7836, which established the Philippine Basic Education Literacy Learning Program, aims to address the country's low literacy rates through a comprehensive national reading initiative.

In terms of DepEd memoranda, DepEd Order No. 74, s. 2015, titled Strengthening the Implementation of the K-12 Curriculum in English and Filipino, emphasizes the need to enhance reading comprehension skills across all grade levels. DepEd Memorandum No. 202, s. 2017, known as Brigada Pagbasa, underscores the department's commitment to fostering a reading culture in schools and communities nationwide. This collaborative reading program promotes extensive reading practices and comprehension development among students through community engagement and partnerships with stakeholders. Likewise, DepEd Memorandum No. 222, s. 2020, titled Bawat Bata Bumabasa, advocates for integrating Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in early childhood education to improve reading proficiency. More recently, DepEd issued Catch-Up Fridays under DepEd Memorandum No. 001, s.

2024. This initiative aims to help students recover from learning losses while fostering essential values through dedicated learning activities every Friday.

Reading difficulties continue among learners despite the Department of Education's implementation of numerous initiatives. As a result, students adopt various coping strategies to address these difficulties and enhance their reading skills. Addressing reading difficulties to achieve academic success and personal growth is imperative. Shehzad et al. (2020) demonstrated a direct correlation between reading boredom and comprehension, emphasizing the necessity of engaging coping strategies to maintain interest. Similarly, Amani et al. (2021) emphasized addressing reading difficulties by employing socio-affective strategies that enhance confidence and emotional regulation. Research also reinforces these findings, underscoring the significance of effective coping mechanisms for children facing reading challenges, ensuring they can overcome obstacles and develop a positive reading experience (Prichard & Atkins, 2021; Amani et al., 2021).

The researcher has observed similar challenges as a reading and language teacher in the 3rd Congressional District of Quezon. Specifically, there has been a noticeable increase in non-readers 12 out of 112 (10.71%) learners were non-readers in General Luna, Quezon, particularly among Grade 3 students in Key Stage 1—a crucial phase in early learning. These reading difficulties hinder children's academic performance and negatively impact their behavior and motivation to learn.

Given these concerns, this study addresses the critical research gap by examining the reading challenges and coping strategies of Grade 3 learners in the General Luna District, Division of Quezon. Despite national efforts by the Department of Education to enhance reading proficiency, persistent issues continue to surface in international assessments and localized studies.

This research seeks to profile learners based on socioeconomic factors, identify reading challenges, and explore coping strategies. This study employs an embedded mixed-method research approach to gain valuable insights into the distinct socioeconomic and educational landscape of the General Luna District. The findings will aid in designing targeted reading intervention material to enhance literacy outcomes.

Research Questions

This study determined the reading challenges and coping strategies of selected Grade 3 learners in General Luna District, Division of Quezon. Specifically, this aimed to answer the following:

1. What is the profile of the learners in terms of:
 - 1.1. sex;
 - 1.2. socioeconomic profile:
 - 1.2.1. parental education levels;
 - 1.2.2. occupational status;
 - 1.2.3. household income, and
 - 1.2.4. family sizes?
2. What are the reading challenges encountered by the learners in terms of:
 - 2.1. word recognition;
 - 2.2. fluency
 - 2.3. vocabulary; and
 - 2.4. comprehension?
3. What are the coping mechanisms used by the learners toward reading challenges in Phil-IRI standards in terms of:
 - 3.1. word recognition;
 - 3.2. fluency
 - 3.3. vocabulary; and
 - 3.4. comprehension?
4. Is there a significant difference between learners' reading challenges when grouped according to socioeconomic profile?
5. What intervention could be developed from the results of the study?

Methodology

Research Design

The embedded mixed-method design was employed in this study, which combines both quantitative and qualitative research approaches in a simultaneous phase (Kettles, Creswell, & Zhang, 2011) with an emphasis on the quantitative data as the dominant design where qualitative data is embedded to explain and interpret the findings of the quantitative data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research problem by complementing numerical data with in-depth qualitative insights.

In this study, quantitative data on socio-economic profiles, including sex, parental education levels, occupational status, household income, and family sizes, and quantitative assessments on specific reading challenges in word recognition, fluency, vocabulary,

comprehension, and coping mechanisms were quantified using survey tools with scales. This was coupled with open-ended questions for qualitative data gathering from the respondents, enriching the understanding of participants' responses. Statistical analyses also determined differences in reading challenges based on socio-economic profiles, with qualitative data offering explanations.

Respondents

The population of the number of participants was the total number of enrolled Grade 3 learners in the public elementary schools in General Luna, Quezon. With this, the number of participants was 112 Grade 3 learners.

Further, purposive sampling was employed as a deliberate and thoughtful approach to selecting participants that align with the specific criteria and objectives of the research. The goal was to handpick individuals with characteristics relevant to the study's focus on reading challenges and coping strategies among Grade 3 learners in General Luna District, Division of Quezon.

The study applied the purposive sampling method to choose 112 Grade 3 learners. This also considered their gender, socio-economic background, family, and reading difficulties. The aim of choosing these learners with different profiles was to gain a deeper understanding of the real issues. This also aimed to determine their coping methods that were found within the group. Additionally, the selection criteria also included the identification as challenged readers or non-readers. This is based on the Phil-IRI assessment results and documented academic difficulties. This also involved prior participation in the intervention material.

Table 1. *Name of the Respondents of the Study*

<i>School</i>	<i>Number of Learner-Participants</i>	<i>%</i>
Bacong Ilaya ES	7	6.25
General Luna Central ES	18	16.07
Lavides ES	5	4.46
Magsaysay ES	6	5.36
Nieva ES	10	8.93
Sergio Balane Integrated School	13	11.61
San Ignacio ES	9	8.04
San Isidro ES	16	14.29
San Nicolas ES	8	7.14
San Vicente ES	7	6.25
Sumilang ES	5	4.46
Villarica ES	8	7.14
Total	112	100.00

Instrument

Only one (1) set of research instruments was used, considering the embedded mixed method with a concurrent approach to gathering data simultaneously. This was the researcher-made survey questionnaire with an interview question in open-ended form combined with a single instrument.

Firstly, the quantitative survey employed a structured researcher-made questionnaire with three (3) parts. The first part was to gather essential information regarding learners' sex, socio-economic status, household income, parental education levels, occupational status, and family sizes. The second part quantified the reading challenges, and the third part focused on the coping strategies of learners, specifically focusing on word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. These surveys employed Likert scales and closed-ended questions to obtain numerical data.

On the qualitative front, the structured interview with open-ended questions was integrated in every part of the survey to facilitate in-depth understanding of the variables beyond the scales. This explored their perceptions, experiences, and strategies concerning their children's reading development, emphasizing coping mechanisms, and the potential impact on reading outcomes.

Additionally, the research instruments underwent rigorous validation with the three experts in the field of reading and coping strategies (master teacher, supervisor, and school head) along with pilot testing to ensure their reliability and effectiveness in capturing the essence of the research questions.

Additionally, pilot testing was conducted to assess the reliability and effectiveness of the instruments in real-world settings. This process involved administering the questionnaire to a small sample of participants from another district and analyzing the results to identify any potential issues or areas for improvement. Internal consistency was also quantified with item analysis to ensure reliability. With thorough validation and piloting procedures, the study enhanced the credibility and validity of its findings, ultimately strengthening the overall quality of the research.

Procedure

The data-gathering procedure for this study followed a systematic and structured approach centered around the utilization of quantitative and qualitative phases. The initial step involved the establishment of research communications, encompassing the

acquisition of necessary permissions, coordination with relevant DepEd authorities, and the provision of detailed information to participants. Ethical considerations were paramount, emphasizing voluntary participation, confidentiality, and the right to withdraw without consequences.

The first phase, which was the actual collection of data, commenced with the quantitative phase. Subsequently, the structured quantitative researcher-made surveys, encompassing the Socioeconomic Profile Questionnaire, Reading Challenges Survey, and Coping Strategies Survey, were administered to the identified sample population of 112 grade three learners. This phase employed purposive-criterion sampling to ensure a representative selection. The quantitative data underwent statistical treatment, including frequency count and percentage calculations, as well as weighted mean analysis.

Concurrently with the quantitative phase, the research also gathered the qualitative component with integrated open-ended questions. The qualitative data collected underwent thematic analysis using the Clarke and Braun (2017) model, contributing to a deeper understanding of the qualitative aspects of the research questions. All the data gathered were presented and tabulated with relevant analysis and interpretation of data in both quantitative and qualitative contexts.

Data Analysis

The statistical treatment and data analysis for this study, employing the Embedded Mixed Method design, involved a twofold approach: quantitative statistical analysis and qualitative thematic analysis.

In the quantitative part, data collected through structured surveys utilized rigorous statistical procedures. Frequency count and percentage calculations were applied to assess the prevalence and distribution of socio-economic profiles of the 112 selected grade three learners. Additionally, a weighted mean analysis was employed to determine the reading challenges encountered by the respondents when grouped according to profile with a 5-point Likert Scale where 5=Very Highly Challenging (VHC), 4=Highly Challenging (HC), 3=Moderately Challenging (MC), 2=Less Challenging (LC), and 1=Not Challenging (NC).

Similarly, weighted mean was also utilized to analyze the coping strategies used by the learners toward reading challenges in terms of word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. This also incorporated 5-point liker scale where 5=Always, 4=Oftentimes, 3=Sometimes, 2=Rarely, 1=Never.

Moreover, Analysis of Variance or ANOVA was used to test the hypothesis on the significant difference between the reading challenges encountered by the learners when grouped according to socio-economic profile.

Concurrently, in the qualitative part, data gathered from the open-ended interview questions with the learners underwent thematic analysis following the Clarke and Braun model. This qualitative approach involved systematically identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns or themes within the data.

The process starts with familiarization, where the researcher immerses herself in the data through multiple readings to gain a deep understanding. Initial codes were then generated by systematically labeling relevant segments of the data. The subsequent phase involved searching for overarching themes that encapsulate patterns or meanings within the dataset. These themes were reviewed for coherence and consistency, and a thematic map was developed to visualize relationships. The final stages of defining and naming themes and producing the report involved refining and consolidating themes, ensuring they accurately represented the data. Clarke and Braun's model was iterative, which allowed for revisiting previous stages as needed. Member checking and validation were also crucial to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the analysis.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the tabulated data and descriptive and inferential statistical analysis results. The analyzed data are also interpreted with relevant insights and comparisons with the cited literature and studies.

Part I. Socioeconomic Profile of the Learners

Table 2. *Socioeconomic Profile of the Learners in terms of Sex*

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	46	41.07
Female	66	58.93
Total	112	100.00

Table 2 presents the socioeconomic profile of the Grade 3 learners in terms of sex. Among the 112 learners, 66 (58.93%) were female and 46 (41.07%) were male. This distribution reflects a slightly higher representation of female learners than male learners. The total number of participants represents the entire sample size utilized for this study.

The findings suggest that female learners constitute a more significant proportion of the Grade 3 population in the General Luna District. This gender distribution may affect how educational interventions are designed and implemented. These results also highlight the need to consider potential gender-based preferences or learning styles when designing reading programs.

Additionally, the teachers should use strategies that help both the males and females to improve their skills in reading equally. The findings also suggest that even small differences between genders show the importance of giving fair support and opportunities to all learners. Both males and females may face varying challenges in learning to read. This must be recognized to help them meet their reading needs.

The findings are also aligned with Rassel et al. (2021) who noted that small but meaningful gender differences in language skills is critical. Their study also supports the concept that while males and girls are equally engaged in learning, there is a slight difference in their reading abilities. There is also a variation in their reading preferences. This affects how well the teaching methods work for them.

However, it contradicts the study of Alimonsurin and Corlet (2023) that gender alone does not significantly relate to reading performance but may influence task suitability. Furthermore, Avvisati (2020) emphasized that while macrostructural socioeconomic factors like gender and household income might not directly impact reading skills, microstructural factors such as parental involvement and task specificity play a more substantial role.

Table 3. *Socioeconomic Profile of the Learners in terms of Parental Education Levels*

<i>Parental Education Levels</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
College Graduate	15	13.39
High School Graduate	59	52.68
Elementary Graduate	38	33.93
Total	112	100.00

Table 3 shows the socioeconomic profile of the Grade 3 learners in terms of parental education levels.

Most respondents (52.68%) had parents who were high school graduates. This is followed by 33.93% of the learners whose parents are elementary graduates and 13.39% of college graduates. This indicates that most of the learners' parents have attained a high school level of education, with a smaller proportion having completed college. The data also reflects the parents' educational background within the study sample, which is a significant factor in understanding the learners' reading challenges and coping mechanisms.

The results further suggest that parents' educational attainment may influence the learners' reading development. Parents with higher education levels often possess more knowledge and skills to support their children's literacy activities, whereas those with lower educational attainment may face challenges providing such support. For public elementary schools, this emphasizes the importance of bridging the gap through programs that educate parents on effective ways to support their children's learning. This also indicates the need for specific instructional strategies that account for the varying levels of parental involvement and home literacy support. Lastly, the findings underscore the necessity of providing equitable resources and interventions among the learners to mitigate the disadvantages of lower parental education levels.

The findings also confirm the results of Sultan et al. (2020) that students with well-educated parents exhibit better readability and Comprehension due to a more supportive home literacy environment. On the other hand, Zhang & Holden (2023) suggested that while parental education plays a role, other factors, such as the home literacy environment and individual differences in emergent literacy, significantly contribute to reading difficulties.

Table 4. *Socioeconomic Profile of the Learners in terms of Parents' Occupational Status*

<i>Occupational Status</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Contractual	36	32.14
Temporary	64	57.14
Regular/Permanent	12	10.71
Total	112	100.00

Table 4 indicates the socioeconomic profile of the Grade 3 learners regarding their parents' occupational status. It revealed that most of the learners' parents got temporary jobs, with 57.14%. Moreover, the next highest is having the contractual employment with 36 individuals (32.14%). On the other hand, there were 12 individuals (10.71%) with regular or permanent employment status. These show that majority of the parents are less stable that may also affect their children's access to education learning resources.

This also implies that a number of learners were from household with temporary or unstable source of income. This can also further imply that socio-economic stability of the learners' families can possibly influence their capability to be consistent in supporting their learners' needs in schools. Additionally, these also showed that there is a need to further offer additional support for the learners' families to be of more resourceful. Here, the teachers must be mindful of these learners' potential challenges, such as limited access to learning materials, and adapt their teaching strategies accordingly. The findings also showed that learners' interventions are needed to help mitigate economic instability's effects on their academic performance, particularly in literacy and reading.

These findings of the current study is supported by Rassel et al. (2021) where family socioeconomic conditions, such as occupational status, significantly influence students' academic achievements. Moreover, the link and relationship between economic stability and

access to resources like books or supplemental learning materials is particularly evident, as families with higher occupational stability are more likely to invest in their children's education. However, based on the study of Zhang & Holden (2023), there are reading difficulties that cannot be simply attributed to socioeconomic factors. This includes the occupational status of the parents. Their study highlights the multifactorial nature of literacy outcomes, suggesting that other variables, such as home literacy environments and emergent literacy skills, are also critically important.

Table 5. *Socioeconomic Profile of the Learners in terms of Household Income*

<i>Household Income</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
₱25,001 - ₱ 50,000	11	9.82
₱10,001 - ₱25,000	62	55.36
₱10,000 and less	39	34.82
Total	112	100.00

Table 5 presents the socioeconomic profile of the Grade 3 learners regarding household income.

Statistics show that among the 112 learners, the majority of 62 learners (55.36%) come from households with an income ranging from ₱10,001 to ₱25,000 per month. This is followed by 39 learners (34.82%) from households earning ₱10,000 or less, while only 11 learners (9.82%) belong to households with an income ranging from ₱25,001 to ₱50,000. These figures indicate that a significant portion of the learners come from low-income households, which may affect their educational access and support to reading.

Similarly, the findings underscore most learners' economic challenges in the study, with most households falling into the low-income bracket. This financial limitation may affect the learners' access to resources, such as books, tutoring, or technology, essential for developing literacy skills. Hence, findings emphasized that schools must provide free or subsidized resources, such as reading materials or supplementary programs, to bridge the gap caused by economic disparities. Meanwhile, teachers must recognize the financial constraints of their learners and adapt their teaching strategies to ensure inclusivity, such as by incorporating low-cost or no-cost learning activities. Also, the learners from low-income households show the call for additional interventions, such as after-school programs, to help mitigate the negative impact of economic limitations on their academic performance.

Likewise, Pittman et al. (2020) noted that participants from schools with low socioeconomic status often lack the explicit knowledge needed to teach struggling readers, indicating a need for focused interventions in economically disadvantaged settings. Furthermore, Avvisati (2020) found that household income as a macrostructural parameter may not directly correlate with reading skills. Conversely, the findings align less directly with Rassel et al., (2021) that psychological and individual differences over socioeconomic factors.

Table 6. *Socioeconomic Profile of the Learners in terms of Family Size*

<i>Family Size</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
6 and more child	21	18.75
4 - 5 Child	28	25.00
2 - 3 Child	48	42.86
1 Child	15	13.39

Table 6 shows the profile if the Grade 3 learners in terms of socio-economic status of their respective family. The findings showed that majority of the learners equivalent to 48 (42.86%), come from families with 2–3 children, followed by 28 learners (25.00%) from families with 4–5 children. On the other hand, the families having six or more children accounted to 21 learners (18.75%), while 15 (13.39%) come from families with only one child in the family. These findings generally indicate a prevalence of medium-sized families (2–3 children) in the study sample, with fewer learners coming from small or huge families.

These results imply that most learners come from medium-sized families, which could mean a balanced allocation of parental attention and resources compared to larger families, where resources might be stretched, or smaller families, where expectations could be more concentrated on a single child. Additionally, the result emphasizes that schools should look at opportunities to recognize the potential challenges faced by learners from larger families, who may have limited access to educational support at home. The reading teachers should also know that family size can influence learners' home environments and adjust their teaching strategies to provide additional support where necessary. Teachers need to recognize learners' unique challenges from various family sizes and adapt their instructional strategies to ensure inclusivity, perhaps by fostering peer-assisted learning or creating low-cost take-home materials for learners' reading activities and mastery.

Moreover, the findings suggest opportunities for focused parental engagement for learners from smaller families, which schools and teachers could leverage by encouraging family participation in literacy activities. Meanwhile, coming from a larger family could mean greater competition for parental attention and resources, potentially impacting learners' ability to focus on academic tasks like reading. Hence, schools can consider implementing interventions, such as after-school programs, to mitigate these challenges.

The findings confirm the research of Haeck & Lefebvre (2021) that family size is associated with literacy outcomes, with larger families often correlating with more pronounced reading difficulties due to reduced individualized attention and resources. Similarly, Hamdiah

and Yusoff (2021) found that factors like mother-child reading time significantly improve children's reading achievement, highlighting the importance of individualized parental involvement in learners' reading competencies.

In contrast, Wen and Yu (2025) emphasized the role of dynamic profiling, such as tracking reading ability and socioeconomic factors, to design interventions for diverse learner needs, underscoring the importance of personalized strategies irrespective of family size. The current study's findings support the notion that family size is a critical socioeconomic factor in literacy development, emphasizing the need for targeted school-level and home-level interventions to address disparities arising from family dynamics.

Part II. Reading Challenges Encountered by the Learners

Table 7. Reading Challenges Encountered by the Learners in terms of Word Recognition

Indicators	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
1. Difficulty sounding out unfamiliar words.	36	34	29	13	0	3.83	Highly Challenging	1.5
2. Struggles with letter-sound correspondence.	34	39	23	16	0	3.81	Highly Challenging	4
3. Misreads words.	21	34	45	11	1	3.56	Highly Challenging	9
4. Skips or add small words.	29	44	29	9	1	3.81	Highly Challenging	4
5. Relies heavily on context clues.	22	30	43	17	0	3.51	Highly Challenging	10
6. Slow word recognition speed difficulty.	31	42	28	11	0	3.83	Highly Challenging	1.5
7. Difficulty with sight words.	31	39	32	10	0	3.81	Highly Challenging	4
8. Confusion between similar-looking words.	23	37	35	16	1	3.58	Highly Challenging	8
9. Reliance on guessing.	22	42	29	19	0	3.60	Highly Challenging	7
10. Struggles with multisyllabic words.	29	38	31	14	0	3.73	Highly Challenging	6
Overall Mean						3.71	Highly Challenging	

Legend: 4.51 – 5.00 = Very Highly Challenging, 3.51 – 4.50 = Highly Challenging, 2.51 – 3.50 = Moderately Challenging, 1.51–2.50 = Less Challenging, 1.00–1.50 = Not Challenging

Table 7 shows the reading challenges encountered by Grade 3 learners in terms of word recognition. It could be gleaned that most of the respondents stated that word recognition is highly challenging across all indicators. This is supported by an overall mean score of 3.71.

Three of the indicators got the highest mean scores. Most learners have difficulty sounding out unfamiliar words (3.83). As mentioned by the learner:

“I stutter on it and is and on difficult words.”

Moreover, the learners said that finding long words is difficult for them.

“I find long words that I don't know yet difficult; sometimes, I also can't understand the meaning of a word, especially if it's new to me.”

This suggests that learners struggle not only with word recognition and sounding letters but also with grasping the meaning of new words, which may hinder their reading fluency and comprehension. It implies that learners need more explicit and focused instruction on phoneme recognition, multisyllabic word decoding, and vocabulary-building strategies to overcome their challenges.

Subsequently, learners have struggled with letter-sound correspondence, skipping or adding small words, and difficulty with sight words, all exhibiting a mean of 3.81. These findings suggest that learners experience significant difficulty in recognizing the sounds of the words and associating sounds with letters at a moderate speed, foundational for effective word recognition.

On the other hand, the indicator with the lowest mean score, which relies heavily on context clues, got a mean score of 3.51, highlighting the breadth of challenges learners face in related and context-based vocabularies in day-to-day reading activities.

Generally, the findings indicate the pressing need for schools to implement systematic reading intervention that address learners' difficulty in sounding out unfamiliar words and relatively slow speed in recognizing the words with difficulty. The findings also emphasize that schools must implement systematic phonics and decoding programs addressing these challenges. Furthermore, the teachers are encouraged to adopt multimodal approaches, such as phoneme-based flashcards and sight-word games, to enhance word recognition skills of the learners.

Conversely, learners need consistent exposure to structured reading exercises and scaffolded learning opportunities to build automaticity in word recognition. Additionally, integrating differentiated instruction into daily lessons can address the varied needs of learners and promote more effective interventions.

Meanwhile, overcoming these challenges will require the learners to have regular practice through structured reading programs, guided reading sessions, and access to leveled reading materials that gradually increase in difficulty as they progress.

These findings are similar to the results of Graham et al. (2020) that persistence, self-efficacy, and strategy-based instruction play pivotal roles in improving reading skills and learners' word recognition. The struggles in decoding longer words and associating phonemes with graphemes underscore the necessity of phonics instruction and strategy-based approaches. The current findings support this, suggesting that learners struggling with word recognition could benefit from targeted strategies that enhance phoneme awareness, decoding, and vocabulary-building skills.

However, unlike Alimonsurin and Corlet (2023), this study does not categorize learners into specific profiles but highlights challenges consistently as "Highly challenging" across the sample. This indicates the need for universally accessible, inclusive, and structured interventions to support all learners in overcoming word recognition difficulties.

Table 8. Reading Challenges Encountered by the Learners in Terms of Fluency

Indicators	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
1. Choppy or uneven reading.	22	49	28	13	0	3.71	Highly Challenging	3.5
2. Pauses in inappropriate places.	22	32	43	15	0	3.54	Highly Challenging	9.5
3. Slow reading rate.	20	37	38	17	0	3.54	Highly Challenging	9.5
4. Lack of expression while reading.	28	41	29	14	0	3.74	Highly Challenging	1
5. Difficulty with intonation.	27	29	39	17	0	3.59	Highly Challenging	8
6. Hesitation while reading.	27	38	29	18	0	3.66	Highly Challenging	6
7. Re-reading lines or sentences.	27	41	28	16	0	3.71	Highly Challenging	3.5
8. Lack of phrasing or chunking.	28	41	28	15	0	3.73	Highly Challenging	2
9. Struggles with connecting ideas.	33	31	29	19	0	3.70	Highly Challenging	5
10. Difficulty maintaining pace.	26	39	29	18	0	3.65	Highly Challenging	7
Overall Mean						3.66	Highly Challenging	

Legend: 4.51 – 5.00 = Very Highly Challenging, 3.51 – 4.50 = Highly Challenging, 2.51 – 3.50 = Moderately Challenging, 1.51–2.50 = Less Challenging, 1.00–1.50 = Not Challenging

Table 8 presents the reading challenges encountered by Grade 3 learners in terms of fluency. Majority of the learners encountered reading challenges in terms of fluency, with an overall mean score of 3.66. It is described as highly challenging.

The table shows that most learners lack expressions while reading, with the highest mean score of 3.74, ranking first among the indicators. It reflects significant struggles in reading with appropriate intonation and emotion. Next in line is a lack of phrasing or chunking, with a mean of 3.73, highlighting difficulties in grouping words into meaningful phrases. The third-ranked is that learners experience choppy or uneven reading, often rereading lines or sentences with a mean score of 3.71, pointing to learners' struggles with maintaining smooth reading flow and understanding the text.

On the other hand, the lowest-scoring indicators, "Pauses in inappropriate places" and "Slow reading rate," both scored 3.54, indicating that while these challenges are less prominent, they still fall within the "Highly Challenging" category.

Based on the interview, learners describe their challenges in fluency. One learner said that:

It is hard for me to read quickly because I get confused with letters and sounds.

It simply shows a significant difficulty in reading speed, pronunciation, and understanding unfamiliar terms.

Another learner emphasizes their struggle with decoding and pronunciation.

"Sometimes, when words are long, it takes me a while to understand how to pronounce them.

The thematic analysis identified a recurring theme of "struggles with speed, pronunciation, and unfamiliar terms," indicating the need for instructional interventions to enhance reading fluency through guided practice, targeted phonics activities, and exposure to varied vocabulary.

The findings imply schools must implement structured reading programs that address fluency challenges through guided and repetitive reading practices. The results also indicate that reading teachers should adopt evidence-based approaches, such as choral reading, repeated reading, and modeling appropriate phrasing and intonation. Providing opportunities for learners to engage with leveled texts that gradually increase in complexity will also build their confidence and proficiency. Furthermore, for learners, consistent practice in guided sessions and exposure to fluency-focused activities are essential to overcoming these challenges. Additionally, learners must be given regular opportunities to practice fluency through guided reading sessions and engaging with increasingly complex texts.

The findings are consistent with the study of Tomas et al. (2021) that many learners were frustrated with their reading fluency, largely due to the non-mastery of reading elements. The current study similarly identifies challenges such as difficulty in pausing correctly, grouping words into phrases, and maintaining a steady pace, all reflecting a lack of foundational fluency skills. Moreover, Keezhatta

and Omar (2020) emphasized that reading in an EFL context is not a natural process and requires deliberate efforts to integrate other skills like phonics and pronunciation, which align with the struggles reported in this study.

Table 9. *Reading Challenges Encountered by the Learners in terms of Vocabulary*

	<i>Indicators</i>	5	4	3	2	1	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Verbal Description</i>	<i>Rank</i>
1.	Limited sight word vocabulary.	29	41	29	13	0	3.77	Highly Challenging	4
2.	Difficulty understanding context clues.	39	27	28	18	0	3.78	Highly Challenging	3
3.	Relies heavily on familiar words.	27	39	28	18	0	3.67	Highly Challenging	7
4.	Difficulty with synonyms and antonyms.	28	35	39	10	0	3.72	Highly Challenging	5
5.	Struggles with word definitions.	43	37	28	4	0	4.06	Highly Challenging	1
6.	Limited knowledge of prefixes and suffixes.	35	48	29	0	0	4.05	Highly Challenging	2
7.	Difficulty with figurative language.	26	39	29	18	0	3.65	Highly Challenging	8
8.	Struggles with academic vocabulary.	27	41	28	16	0	3.71	Highly Challenging	6
9.	Reliance on memorization.	26	31	44	11	0	3.64	Highly Challenging	9
10.	Inability to use context to infer meaning.	19	37	42	14	0	3.54	Highly Challenging	10
							Overall Mean	3.76	Highly Challenging

Legend: 4.51 – 5.00 = Very Highly Challenging, 3.51 – 4.50 = Highly Challenging, 2.51 – 3.50 = Moderately Challenging, 1.51-2.50 = Less Challenging, 1.00-1.50 = Not Challenging

Table 9 illustrates the reading challenges encountered by Grade 3 learners in terms of vocabulary. The overall mean score of 3.76 indicates that vocabulary challenges are highly challenging for the learners.

The result revealed that learners struggle with word definitions, with the highest mean score of 4.06. It suggests that learners face significant difficulties understanding and recalling word meanings. Moreover, learners were highly challenged because they limited knowledge of prefixes and suffixes, supported by a mean score of 4.05. It highlighted that learners' challenges in grasping word structures.

Moreover, they experienced difficulty understanding context clues, with a mean score of 3.78, which reflects the learners' struggles to infer word meanings from textual context. Conversely, the lowest-ranking indicator, the inability to use context to infer meaning, scored 3.54. These findings revealed that learners face widespread difficulties acquiring, applying, and retaining vocabulary skills essential for reading proficiency.

Similarly, the qualitative responses provide deeper insights into the learners' vocabulary challenges, with the recurring theme identified as "Difficulty understanding meanings of unfamiliar words.

Some of the responses of the learners are:

When I do not know the meaning of a word, I find it difficult to understand what I am reading.

I can no longer understand the content of what we are discussing.

The participants' statements revealed that the Grade Three (3) learners' challenges in having very limited vocabulary greatly influence their capability to understand the individual words and terms that further impedes their understanding of entire texts or discussions. This aligns with the need for interventions that emphasize meaningful vocabulary acquisition. It further indicates that the students must have more specific and responsive vocabulary instruction that emphasizes word meanings, context-based understanding, and strategies for inferring meanings of unfamiliar words to improve their general reading skills in dealing with vocabulary.

The research results also showed the importance of implementing systematic vocabulary-building programs in schools. The program should incorporate explicit vocabulary instruction focusing on word structures (e.g., prefixes and suffixes) and relationships (e.g., synonyms and antonyms). The teachers should also apply strategies such as context clue exercises, word mapping, and leveled texts to provide learners with consistent exposure to new vocabulary. Additionally, learners must be encouraged to employ new words in oral and written contexts, reinforcing their retention and understanding. Thus, the provision of clear access to different reading materials and interactive vocabulary tools will further support learners in addressing these challenges and improving their capabilities in reading.

The research findings similarly conform with the research of Mohammed and Ab Rashid's (2021) that the difficulties in vocabulary are critical hindrance to reading comprehension among Saudi EFL learners. Like the current research, they also emphasized that the impact of textbook difficulty and teaching styles on learners' vocabulary acquisition. Melesse and Enyew (2020) emphasized the role of phonemic awareness and reading strategies in improving vocabulary performance, which supports the current study's recommendation to emphasize structured and strategic vocabulary teaching approaches. However, Abdalla et al. (2021) stressed that the program interventions can positively and significantly enhance learners' vocabulary recall and understanding, underscoring the value of targeted support for learners facing similar challenges. Unlike Abdalla's study, which focused on intervention outcomes, the present study

provides a broader diagnostic of vocabulary issues, suggesting a need for systemic instructional changes to address these challenges comprehensively among the learners with different nature.

Table 10. *Reading Challenges Encountered by the Learners in terms of Comprehension*

Indicators	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
1. Difficulty identifying the main ideas.	28	33	41	10	0	3.71	Highly Challenging	6
2. Struggles with summarizing.	24	43	38	7	0	3.75	Highly Challenging	3
3. Difficulty making inferences.	24	28	44	16	0	3.54	Highly Challenging	10
4. Reliance on literal understanding.	21	48	33	10	0	3.71	Highly Challenging	6
5. Difficulty with cause and effect.	41	38	33	0	0	4.07	Highly Challenging	1
6. Struggles with sequencing.	25	41	36	10	0	3.72	Highly Challenging	4
7. Inability to identify details.	25	36	39	12	0	3.66	Highly Challenging	9
8. Difficulty with text structure.	28	36	33	15	0	3.69	Highly Challenging	8
9. Struggles with drawing conclusions.	26	48	27	11	0	3.79	Highly Challenging	2
10. Difficulty with making connections.	25	42	33	12	0	3.71	Highly Challenging	6
Overall Mean						3.74	Highly Challenging	

Legend: 4.51 – 5.00 = Very Highly Challenging, 3.51 – 4.50 = Highly Challenging, 2.51 – 3.50 = Moderately Challenging, 1.51–2.50 = Less Challenging, 1.00–1.50 = Not Challenging

Table 10 shows the reading challenges encountered by Grade 3 learners in terms of Comprehension. Most learners were highly challenged across all indicators, with an overall mean of 3.74.

The highest-ranking indicator was difficulty with cause and effect, which scored 4.07, highlighting significant struggles in understanding relationships between events and their outcomes. This was followed by struggles with concluding, with a mean score of 3.79, reflecting the learners' difficulty interpreting implicit meanings. Also, the student's struggles with summarizing were ranked third with a mean of 3.75, indicating that learners find it challenging to condense and extract key information from texts. Conversely, the lowest-ranking indicator, difficulty making inferences, scored 3.54, emphasizing the learners' struggle to deduce meanings or insights beyond the text.

Moreover, the qualitative data provides deeper insights into the comprehension struggles experienced by the learners, with the theme "Difficulty retaining and understanding long or complex texts" emerging from their responses.

Some of the learners shared that:

Yes, sometimes it is hard for me to understand what I am reading because there are many words, I do not know yet"

When the story is long or has many parts, I get confused and cannot remember the details anymore" shows that the learners' challenges with retaining information and grasping the main ideas in complex or lengthy texts.

Also, another participant emphasized that to have many words is very difficult.

"I find it hard when there are many new words, and there are no pictures to help me understand,"

It emphasized the role of visual aids and vocabulary in supporting comprehension.

This indicates that the learners need strategies in instruction to help them learn best. It should help them simplify the text. This should also help them understand the text easily.

The findings emphasized the need for schools to develop specific and responsive interventions to address comprehension challenges, particularly those related to concluding, identifying main ideas, and processing complex texts. The results also imply that the schools must implement structured reading programs focusing on comprehension-building strategies, such as summarizing, making inferences, and identifying key details. Moreover, these results underline the need for teachers' use of scaffolding techniques, incorporating visual aids, and teaching learners how to break down texts into manageable parts. Teaching strategies such as guided reading, using graphic organizers, and applying context clues can help improve learners' comprehension skills. Lastly, regular practice with reading strategies and exposure to diverse texts will be crucial in building learners' ability to comprehend and retain information, particularly with complex material.

Similarly, the findings confirm the results of Amaliah and Dj (2023) found that the effectiveness of context clue strategies in improving students' comprehension. Similar to the present study, their results show that guidance in using context clues, such as synonyms, antonyms, and examples, can significantly enhance learners' ability to infer the meaning of unknown words and comprehend texts. Capin et al., (2022) highlighted the role of targeted interventions in improving comprehension, especially for students with existing comprehension deficits, consistent with the need for structured support identified in the present study.



However, Spakov et al. (2021) focused on applying eye-tracking technologies for comprehension improvement, the current study underscores traditional instructional approaches such as visual aids and scaffolded reading.

Part III. Coping Mechanisms Used by the Learners Toward Reading Challenges in Phil-IRI Standards

Table 11. Coping Mechanisms Used by the Learners toward Reading Challenges in Phil-IRI Standards in terms of Word Recognition

Word Recognition Challenges	Coping Mechanism	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
Difficulty sounding out unfamiliar words	1. Break down the word into smaller syllables and sound them out individually.	12	14	17	2	0	3.80	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Use mnemonic devices or visual aids to help remember the pronunciation of unfamiliar words.	10	8	12	1	0	3.87	Oftentimes Used	2
	3. Practice phonics exercises focusing on blending sounds to form words.	22	10	2	2	0	4.44	Oftentimes Used	1
Struggles with letter-sound correspondence.	1. Do interactive games to reinforce letter-sound associations.	10	13	11	5	0	3.72	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Practice phonemic awareness activities, such as rhyming or segmenting sounds in words.	10	21	9	2	0	3.93	Oftentimes Used	2
	3. Engage in multisensory activities where I can see, hear, and feel the letter-sound connections.	14	12	5	0	0	4.29	Oftentimes Used	1
Misreads words.	1. Do re-reading and self-correction when encountering misread words.	9	13	11	3	0	3.78	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Use finger-pointing or tracking tools to guide attention to each word while reading.	29	12	19	0	0	4.17	Oftentimes Used	2
	3. Practice repeated exposure to the same words in different contexts.	11	2	3	0	0	4.50	Oftentimes Used	1
Skips or adds small words.	1. Use of finger pointing or tracking to promote word-by-word reading.	9	11	17	0	1	3.71	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Practice reading aloud with a focus on accuracy and fluency.	11	25	12	3	0	3.86	Oftentimes Used	2
	3. Use visual cues to highlight the importance of each word in a sentence.	10	11	2	0	0	4.35	Oftentimes Used	1
Relies heavily on context clues.	1. Apply predicting, inferencing, and using surrounding words.	12	22	10	0	0	4.05	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Identify context clues and their relationship to the meaning of the text.	11	17	8	0	0	4.08	Oftentimes Used	1
	3. Engage in activities that focus on building vocabulary.	10	14	8	0	0	4.06	Oftentimes Used	2
Slow word recognition speed.	1. Implement timed reading exercises to improve.	13	11	3	0	0	4.37	Oftentimes Used	1
	2. Encourage regular reading practice with progressively more challenging texts.	8	12	18	0	0	3.74	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Utilize strategies like chunking or word families to help increase reading speed and accuracy.	12	23	11	1	0	3.98	Oftentimes Used	2
Difficulty with sight words.	1. Use flashcards or sight word games to practice recognition.	33	14	11	2	0	4.30	Oftentimes Used	2
	2. Incorporate sight words into daily reading activities for familiarity.	16	11	7	0	0	4.26	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Practice repetitive exposure to sight words through activities like writing, spelling games, and reading drills.	12	6	0	0	0	4.67	Always Used	1
Confusion between similar-looking.	1. Apply discrimination skills to differentiate between similar-looking words.	16	9	3	0	0	4.46	Oftentimes Used	1
	2. Ask the teacher about the distinguishing features of word pair.	22	15	10	3	0	4.12	Oftentimes Used	2
	3. Use mnemonic devices to highlight differences and similarities between confusing word pairs.	14	8	11	0	1	4.00	Oftentimes Used	3
Reliance on guessing.	1. Do self-monitoring and self-correction when guessing leads to errors.	10	9	8	0	0	4.07	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Ask the teacher what I do not know.	18	27	3	0	0	4.31	Oftentimes Used	1
	3. Skip the words I do not know.	13	19	5	0	0	4.22	Oftentimes Used	2
Struggles with	1. Break down multisyllabic words into smaller	31	12	8	4	0	4.27	Oftentimes Used	2

multisyllabic words.	parts.								
	2. Analyze on prefixes, suffixes, and roots.	11	17	3	0	0	4.26	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Ask the teacher for opportunities for repeated exposure.	16	8	2	0	0	4.54	Always Used	1

Legend: 4.51 – 5.00 = Always Used, 3.51 – 4.50 = Oftentimes Used, 2.51 – 3.50 = Sometimes Used, 1.51–2.50 = Rarely Used, 1.00–1.50 = Never Used

Table 11 presents the coping mechanisms employed by Grade 3 learners to address word recognition challenges in the Phil-IRI Standards.

The result indicates that for each identified challenge, learners utilized specific strategies, with the highest mean per challenge highlighting their preferred coping methods. The coping mechanisms were mainly interpreted as oftentimes used. It highlighted the consistent engagement of learners with effective approaches to improve their reading skills.

The most effective coping mechanism for difficulty sounding out unfamiliar words was practice phonics exercise focusing on blending sounds to form words, with a mean score of 4.44, described as oftentimes used. This highlights the significance of phonics-based interventions in helping learners develop word recognition skills.

Moreover, with a mean score of 4.29 described as oftentimes used where learners tended to engage in multisensory activities where they could see, hear, and feel the letter-sound connections. This emphasizes the importance of multisensory approaches in reinforcing phonemic awareness.

Additionally, “misread words, is strategized to do “practiced repeated exposure to the same words in different context” ranking the highest. This earned the mean of 4.50 and interpreted as “Oftentimes Used.”. This also reflects the need for repetition and contextual learning.

Similarly, for "Skips or adds small words," the most effective strategy was "Use visual cues to highlight the importance of each word in a sentence," which scored 4.35, also described as "Oftentimes Used." This underscores the role of visual aids in promoting word-by-word reading accuracy.

Moreover, in addressing "Relies heavily on context clues," the top strategy was "Identify context clues and their relationship to the meaning of the text," scoring a mean of 4.08, verbally interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." In "Skip word recognition speed," the highest-ranking coping mechanism was "Implement timed reading exercises to improve," with a mean of 4.37, described as "Oftentimes Used." This finding highlights the importance of structured and timed practices in improving reading speed.

Furthermore, for "Difficulty with sight words," learners found "Practice repetitive exposure to sight words through activities like writing, spelling games, and reading drills" most effective, with the highest mean of 4.67, verbally interpreted as "Always Used." This result indicates the importance of regular and engaging practice in mastering sight words. In "Confusion between similar-looking words," the strategy "Apply discrimination skills to differentiate between similar-looking words" ranked highest, with a mean of 4.46, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." This indicates the need to develop analytical skills to distinguish subtle word differences.

Further, for "reliance on guessing," the most effective mechanism was "Ask the teacher what I do not know," with a mean of 4.31, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." This result underscores the value of teacher guidance in resolving reading challenges. Lastly, for "Struggles with multisyllabic words," the strategy "Ask the teacher for opportunities for repeated exposure" scored the highest mean of 4.54, verbally interpreted as "Always Used," reflecting the critical role of continuous exposure and support in mastering complex words.

Similarly, the qualitative responses support the quantitative findings, emphasizing themes such as "Improving recognition through practice and repetition."

Learners shared coping strategies like:

"I will practice reading more carefully at home," and

"When I find reading difficult, I repeat the words until I understand them."

These responses reflect learners' determination to actively engage in repetitive, structured practice to overcome word recognition challenges. The thematic analysis underscores the importance of consistent practice and the integration of interactive and visual strategies to aid in overcoming reading difficulties involving repetition, guidance, and multisensory or multimodal methods to overcome word recognition challenges.

The research findings indicate the critical importance of implementing structured, evidence-based interventions to address the word recognition challenges faced by learners. The high mean scores for coping mechanisms such as practicing phonics exercises, engaging in multimodal activities, and using repetition and contextual learning strategies suggest incorporating these methods into daily instruction. These strategies enhance learners' ability to sound out unfamiliar words and build fluency and confidence in recognizing complex or similar-looking words. This also implies that schools must provide resources such as flashcards, sight word games, and leveled reading materials while ensuring teachers are trained to integrate multisensory and phonics-based instruction.



Meanwhile, the teachers may work on scaffolding learning through chunking, modeling, and offering repeated exposure to challenging words. Moreover, the focus on repetition, guidance, and interactive tools also emphasized the need to keep the learners actively involved. They should be given regular practice to improve their reading skills. These only show that there must be an inclusive and flexible reading activities to address the different learning styles. This will ensure that all students will be having a fair access to useful learning resources. This can also make a big difference on their development in literacy.

This research is also supported by the findings of Melesse and Enyew (2020) that phonemic awareness techniques are helpful. Strategies such as breaking words into parts and using interactive exercises can help the learners to improve their reading skills. Similarly, Abdalla et al., (2021) emphasized how mnemonic techniques boost learners' memory and understanding. This reinforces the need to help them read more complex words.

Table 12. Coping Mechanisms Used by the Learners toward Reading Challenges in Phil-IRI Standards in terms of Fluency

Fluency Challenges	Coping Mechanism	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
Choppy or uneven reading.	1. Practice reading aloud with a focus on smoothness and fluency.	29	13	9	2	0	4.30	Oftentimes Used	1
	2. Use echo reading techniques where I imitate a fluent model reader.	9	11	8	4	0	3.78	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Read in phrases or chunks rather than focusing on individual words.	13	8	4	2	0	4.19	Oftentimes Used	2
Pauses in inappropriate places.	1. Observe my classmates or my teachers on what to do.	8	12	8	2	0	3.87	Oftentimes Used	1
	2. Practice reading with attention to punctuation marks.	12	25	18	6	0	3.70	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Ask the teacher or my classmate on where to pause or stop.	5	9	5	2	0	3.81	Oftentimes Used	2
Slow reading rate.	1. Implement timed reading exercises.	13	34	9	0	0	4.07	Oftentimes Used	2
	2. Set goals for increasing reading speed gradually.	12	33	8	0	0	4.08	Oftentimes Used	1
	3. Compete with other learners to read more quickly.	0	2	1	0	0	3.67	Oftentimes Used	3
Lack of expression while reading.	1. Convey emotions and meaning while reading.	12	34	17	0	0	3.92	Oftentimes Used	2
	2. Watch my teacher or classmates on expressive reading.	8	15	18	0	0	3.76	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Engage in activities like reader's theater or role-playing to practice reading with expression and dramatic flair.	2	5	1	0	0	4.13	Oftentimes Used	1
Difficulty with intonation.	1. Practice reading dialogue or scripts with attention to the natural rise and fall of speech.	14	22	24	2	0	3.77	Oftentimes Used	2
	2. Use audio recordings of fluent readers to demonstrate proper intonation patterns.	11	17	16	2	0	3.80	Oftentimes Used	1
	3. Ask for feedback and guidance on appropriate intonation when reading aloud.	1	0	3	0	0	3.50	Sometimes Used	3
Hesitation while reading.	1. Preview texts before reading to anticipate difficult words or phrases.	17	27	11	3	0	4.00	Oftentimes Used	2
	2. Practice decoding unfamiliar words quickly to reduce hesitations during reading.	9	14	12	3	0	3.76	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Promote self-confidence and risk-taking in reading.	3	11	2	0	0	4.06	Oftentimes Used	1
Re-reading lines or sentences.	1. Monitor summarizing or paraphrasing as one reads.	18	11	12	0	0	4.15	Oftentimes Used	2
	2. Pause periodically to check for understanding and adjust reading pace accordingly.	23	33	11	0	0	4.18	Oftentimes Used	1
	3. Watch and model my teacher or classmates.	0	2	2	0	0	3.50	Sometimes Used	3
Lack of phrasing or chunking.	1. Model fluent reading with appropriate phrasing and chunking of text.	8	17	12	0	0	3.89	Oftentimes Used	1
	2. Ask my teacher to identify phrases or groups of words that naturally go together in sentences.	2	12	7	0	0	3.76	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Rely on visual cues like highlighting or underlining to indicate where to pause.	9	27	18	0	0	3.83	Oftentimes Used	2
Struggles with connecting ideas.	1. Identify main ideas and supporting details in a text.	12	31	8	0	0	4.08	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Look for mind maps to visually represent the	10	22	5	0	0	4.14	Oftentimes Used	2



	connections between ideas.								
	3. Discuss with my classmates on how different parts of a text relate to each other.	8	13	3	0	0	4.21	Oftentimes Used	1
Difficulty maintaining pace.	1. Practice sustained reading sessions with a focus on maintaining a consistent reading pace.	26	38	19	0	0	4.08	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Use pacing tools like a metronome or digital timer.	10	6	2	0	0	4.44	Oftentimes Used	1
	3. Ask for feedback from my teacher or classmates.	3	8	0	0	0	4.27	Sometimes Used	2

Legend: 4.51 – 5.00 = Always Used, 3.51 – 4.50 = Oftentimes Used, 2.51 – 3.50 = Sometimes Used, 1.51–2.50 = Rarely Used, 1.00–1.50 = Never Used

Table 12 shows the coping mechanisms employed by Grade 3 learners to address reading challenges in Phil-IRI Standards for Fluency. Every fluency challenge is paired with coping strategies, with the highest mean per challenge identified. Similarly, the findings underscore the importance of structured interventions to address fluency challenges among Grade 3 learners.

Moreover, each fluency challenge is paired with coping strategies, highlighted by the most effective mechanism. For "Choppy or uneven reading," learners found "Practice reading aloud with a focus on smoothness and fluency" the most effective strategy, earning a mean score of 4.30, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." Similarly, for "Pauses in inappropriate places," the highest-ranking strategy was "Observe my classmates or my teachers on what to do," with a mean of 3.87, described as "Oftentimes Used." Also, the challenge of a "Slow reading rate" was best addressed by "Set goals for increasing reading speed gradually," which ranked highest with a mean of 4.08 and was categorized as "Oftentimes Used." Additionally, "Engage in activities like reader's theater or role-playing to practice reading with expression and dramatic flair" ranked first for "Lack of expression while reading," with a mean of 4.13 interpreted as "Oftentimes Used."

Moreover, in terms of "Difficulty with intonation," learners favored the strategy "Use audio recordings of fluent readers to demonstrate proper intonation patterns," with the highest mean score of 3.80, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used," reflecting the value of auditory modeling. Similarly, "Hesitation while reading" was best addressed by the coping mechanism "Promote self-confidence and risk-taking in reading," achieving the top mean score of 4.06, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used," indicating the importance of building self-assurance in learners. For "Rereading lines or sentences," the preferred strategy was "Pause periodically to check for understanding and adjust the reading pace accordingly," which earned the highest mean score of 4.18, described as "Oftentimes Used."

Furthermore, as to the challenge "Lack of phrasing or chunking," the most effective coping mechanism was "Model fluent reading with appropriate phrasing and chunking of text," with a mean of 3.89 described as "Oftentimes Used". Additionally, for "Struggles with connecting ideas," learners identified "Discuss with my classmates on how different parts of a text relate to each other" as the most effective strategy, scoring 4.21 described as "Oftentimes Used". Lastly, in terms of "Difficulty maintaining pace," "Use pacing tools like a metronome or digital timer" was ranked as the most effective strategy, scoring 4.44 interpreted as "Oftentimes Used". These findings highlight the learners' reliance on repetitive, collaborative, and guided strategies to overcome fluency-related difficulties effectively.

Furthermore, the qualitative responses based on the thematic analysis are aligned with the quantitative findings, reflecting the theme of "Practicing fluency through repetition and support."

Learners shared strategies such as:

"To read quickly, I repeat the reading of words until I get used to them," and

"Sometimes, I read aloud so I can hear myself and better remember the sounds of the letters."

These responses demonstrate a reliance on repetition, guided support, and self-monitoring to overcome fluency challenges. The thematic analysis results indicate the significance of practice and auditory reinforcement, suggesting that learners benefit from repeated exposure and real-time feedback to enhance fluency.

Similarly, the qualitative data highlights the significant role of repetition, guided practice, and auditory reinforcement in addressing fluency challenges among learners. Responses suggest that learners actively engage in self-directed strategies to enhance their fluency. These findings imply that learners benefit from structured and repetitive approaches that allow them to practice and internalize reading patterns. Furthermore, the emphasis on auditory feedback underscores the importance of incorporating activities like reading aloud and guided support into reading instruction. Thus, by providing learners with opportunities for repeated exposure to words, real-time corrections, and scaffolding, schools, and teachers can foster fluency development, helping learners build confidence and proficiency in reading. These strategies encourage learners to become independent and self-regulated in overcoming their reading difficulties.

Furthermore, the research findings underscore the value of experiential and hands-on learning approaches. Learners benefit from opportunities to model fluent reading, utilize audio recordings, and participate in collaborative activities like peer discussions to connect ideas. These strategies emphasize the role of guided practice and real-time feedback in building fluency, as evidenced by the preference for activities that promote rhythm, expression, and connection between ideas. Moreover, the findings suggest that schools must integrate fluency-focused interventions, such as guided reading programs, role-playing exercises, and visual or pacing tools, into their



curriculum. Meanwhile, learners, on the other hand, must be encouraged to engage in repeated practice and self-monitoring to internalize effective fluency skills.

The findings are consistent with Serrano (2023) that the positive impact of short, repeated reading sessions on vocabulary and fluency development. Similarly, Capin et al., (2022) highlighted the benefits of guided reading interventions in improving oral reading fluency, aligning with the strategies learners found most effective in this study. Additionally, Amaliah and Dj (2023) demonstrated how structured strategies, such as context-based exercises, can improve Comprehension and fluency, which parallels the use of chunking and summarization in this study. However, unlike Spakov et al. (2021), who emphasized the role of technology in providing immediate feedback, the current study highlights the importance of hands-on and self-monitoring strategies for fluency development. These findings reinforce the value of combining repetition, guided support, and interventions in addressing fluency challenges.

Table 13. Coping Mechanisms Used by the Learners toward Reading Challenges in Phil-IRI Standards in terms of Vocabulary

Vocabulary Challenges	Coping Mechanism	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
Limited Sight Word Vocabulary.	1. Use flashcards or sight word games for frequent practice.	24	26	4	0	0	4.37	Oftentimes Used	1
	2. Incorporate sight words into daily reading and writing activities.	11	21	4	0	0	4.19	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Engage in repetitive reading of texts containing high-frequency words.	8	11	3	0	0	4.23	Oftentimes Used	2
Difficulty understanding context clues.	1. Examine the surrounding words and sentences.	14	23	6	0	0	4.19	Oftentimes Used	1
	2. Skip the words that I do not know.	16	21	8	0	0	4.18	Oftentimes Used	2
	3. Ask my classmates or the teachers.	8	10	6	0	0	4.08	Oftentimes Used	3
Relies heavily on familiar words.	1. Look from dictionary the new vocabulary.	14	18	19	0	0	3.90	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Write vocabulary notebook where I record and review new words.	19	21	16	0	0	4.05	Oftentimes Used	2
	3. Ask my teachers or classmates.	3	2	0	0	0	4.60	Always Used	1
Difficulty with synonyms and antonyms.	1. Use matching games and activities that focus on pairing synonyms and antonyms.	8	14	11	0	0	3.91	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Create word maps or charts that visually display synonyms and antonyms for common words.	6	11	7	0	0	3.96	Oftentimes Used	2
	3. Incorporate synonym and antonym practice into daily reading and writing tasks.	11	32	12	0	0	3.98	Oftentimes Used	1
Struggles with word definition.	1. Use thesaurus to help learners independently find and understand word meanings.	28	21	2	0	0	4.51	Always Used	1
	2. Use visual aids, such as pictures and graphic organizers, to illustrate word definitions.	21	18	2	0	0	4.46	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Engage in interactive vocabulary activities that involve discussing and using new words in context.	11	8	1	0	0	4.50	Oftentimes Used	2
Limited knowledge of prefixes and suffixes.	1. Ask for direct instruction on common prefixes and suffixes and meanings.	10	12	4	0	0	4.23	Oftentimes Used	2
	2. Use word-building activities that encourage the combination of root words.	18	22	10	0	0	4.16	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Create word walls or charts that display examples of words.	14	17	5	0	0	4.25	Oftentimes Used	1
Difficulty with figurative language.	1. Ask parents for meaning and examples of common figurative language.	8	11	12	0	0	3.87	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Use the visual and contextual clues to explain figurative expressions in reading passages.	23	33	11	0	0	4.18	Oftentimes Used	2
	3. Ask teacher for creative writing activities to practice using the expressions.	10	2	2	0	0	4.57	Always Used	1
Struggles with academic vocabulary.	1. Ask teacher for explicit instruction and practice with academic terms.	12	27	16	0	0	3.93	Oftentimes Used	2
	2. Ask for graphic organizers to help me categorize and understand academic vocabulary.	19	31	7	0	0	4.21	Oftentimes Used	1
Reliance on memorization.	1. Use mnemonic devices and memory aids to make vocabulary learning more effective.	19	22	11	0	0	4.15	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Engage with new words through games and gamified discussions.	17	14	5	0	0	4.33	Oftentimes Used	2
	3. Practice memorized text through dialogues.	13	9	2	0	0	4.46	Oftentimes Used	1
Inability to use context to infer meaning.	1. Look for synonyms and antonyms.	18	21	14	0	0	4.08	Oftentimes Used	2
	2. Practice inferring meaning from the context in different texts.	12	23	21	0	0	3.84	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Ask teachers to model the thought process of using	2	1	0	0	0	4.67	Always Used	1

context clues to infer the meanings in shared reading activities.

Legend: 4.51 – 5.00 = Always Used, 3.51 – 4.50 = Oftentimes Used, 2.51 – 3.50 = Sometimes Used, 1.51–2.50 = Rarely Used, 1.00–1.50 = Never Used

Table 13 highlights the coping mechanisms employed by learners to address challenges in vocabulary acquisition as per Phil-IRI Standards.

Findings revealed that for "Limited Sight Word Vocabulary," the coping mechanism "Use flashcards or sight word games for frequent practice" ranked highest with a mean of 4.37, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." In the case of "Difficulty Understanding Context Clues," learners prioritized "Examine the surrounding words and sentences," which gained a mean score of 4.19, also interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." For learners struggling with "Relies Heavily on Familiar Words," the highest-rated strategy was "Ask my teachers or classmates," which achieved a mean of 4.60, interpreted as "Always Used."

Similarly, when addressing "Difficulty with Synonyms and Antonyms," the strategy "Incorporate synonym and antonym practice into daily reading and writing tasks" ranked the highest with a mean score of 3.98, described as "Oftentimes Used." For "Struggles with Word Definition," the top-ranked mechanism was "Engage in interactive vocabulary activities that involve discussing and using new words in context," with a mean score of 4.57, interpreted as "Always." For "Limited Knowledge of Prefixes and Suffixes," the strategy "Create word walls or charts that display examples of words" scored the highest with a mean of 4.25, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." Also, for "Difficulty with Figurative Language," learners highly favored "Ask my teacher for creative writing activities to practice using these expressions," which ranked the highest with a mean score of 4.57, interpreted as "Always Used."

Moreover, learners experiencing "Struggles with Academic Vocabulary" found "Ask for graphic organizers to help categorize and understand academic vocabulary" the most effective, with a mean score of 4.21, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." Moreover, for "Reliance on Memorization," the coping mechanism "Practice what I memorize through dialogue" ranked the highest with a mean score of 4.46, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." Lastly, for "Inability to Use Context to Infer Meaning," the most effective coping strategy was "Ask teachers to model the thought process of using context clues during shared reading sessions," with a mean score of 4.67, verbally interpreted as "Always Used." These results indicate the significance of interactive, teacher-led, and resource-driven strategies for vocabulary development.

Likewise, responses from the qualitative data support the quantitative findings, reflecting the theme "Addressing unfamiliar vocabulary through support and resources." Learners shared responses such as:

"When I encounter a difficult word, I ask my teacher or my mom what it means" and

"I also ask my classmates or look it up in the dictionary."

These responses emphasize the reliance on external support systems, including teachers, peers, and dictionaries, to overcome vocabulary challenges. The thematic analysis reveals that learners thrive with accessible resources and guidance, underlining the importance of fostering a collaborative and resource-rich learning environment.

Moreover, the qualitative findings reveal that learners rely heavily on external support, such as asking teachers, parents, and peers and using dictionaries to address unfamiliar vocabulary. This highlights the importance of creating a collaborative learning environment where resources and guidance are readily accessible. The findings suggest that providing learners with opportunities to seek support and engage with vocabulary through contextual and interactive activities can significantly enhance their understanding and confidence in using new words effectively.

The findings show the need for the schools to incorporate structured and interactive vocabulary-building activities. This must be integrated into the curriculum. The schools can further enhance the learning environment with the provision of word walls, flashcards, dictionaries, and graphic organizers. Also, the teachers should implement modeling strategies and the use of context clues. They can also apply techniques in teaching prefixes and suffixes. Moreover, the learners should actively participate in the vocabulary development.

The results of this study are also aligned with the studies of Dewanti (2020) that vocabulary acquisition is vital in improving the reading comprehension of the learners and in overall literacy. Their research, similar to this study, demonstrated the effectiveness of using dictionaries and the use of direct instruction to support the vocabulary retention. Additionally, Keezhatta and Omar (2020) found that technology-based interventions in developing the vocabulary of the learners complement the strategies identified in this research. However, while the current study focuses on the direct teacher and peer support, the findings of Keezhatta and Omar (2020) placed more emphasis on the use of digital tools.

Table 14 presents learners' coping mechanisms to address comprehension challenges in Phil-IRI Standards.

Based on the findings, for "Difficulty in identifying main ideas," the coping mechanism "Ask my teacher for clues on topic sentences and summarizing paragraphs" achieved the highest mean of 4.00, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." Similarly, for "Struggles with summarizing," the strategy "Use Artificial Intelligence to summarize for me" ranked highest with a mean of 4.21, also interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." In addressing "Difficulty making inferences," learners favored the strategy "Ask guidance from other people,"



which garnered a mean of 4.06, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." For "Reliance on literal understanding," the most effective strategy was "Use texts with rich, layered meanings to practice looking beyond the literal level," which scored a mean of 4.40, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used."

Table 14. Coping Mechanisms Used by the Learners toward Reading Challenges in Phil-IRI Standards in terms of Comprehension

Comprehension Challenges	Coping Mechanism	5	4	3	2	1	Mean	Verbal Description	Rank
Difficulty in identifying main ideas.	1. Ask my teacher for clues on topic sentences and summarizing paragraphs.	4	12	4	0	0	4.00	Oftentimes Used	1
	2. Look for graphic organizers, such as concept maps, to visually represent the main ideas and supporting details.	8	14	19	0	0	3.73	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Practice with short texts, gradually increasing complexity.	11	22	18	0	0	3.86	Oftentimes Used	2
Struggles with summarizing.	1. Ask for explicit instruction on summarizing techniques.	21	24	11	0	0	4.18	Oftentimes Used	2
	2. Copy from my classmates.	20	22	14	0	0	4.11	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Use Artificial Intelligence to summarize for me.	21	32	8	0	0	4.21	Oftentimes Used	1
Difficulty making inferences.	1. Use context clues.	0	11	4	0	0	3.73	Sometimes Used	3
	2. Ask guidance from other people.	11	16	9	0	0	4.06	Oftentimes Used	1
	3. Use think-aloud strategies.	4	12	8	0	0	3.83	Oftentimes Used	2
Reliance on literal understanding	1. Practice critical thinking.	8	14	11	0	0	3.91	Oftentimes Used	2
	2. Ask for practice and more examples.	11	26	18	0	0	3.87	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Use texts with rich, layered meanings to practice looking beyond the literal level.	14	21	0	0	0	4.40	Oftentimes Used	1
Difficulty with cause and effect.	1. Ask for explicit cause-and-effect language and signal words to help identify relationships in texts.	28	22	5	0	0	4.42	Oftentimes Used	1
	2. Request for graphic organizers, like cause-and-effect charts, to visually map out relationships.	9	11	2	0	0	4.32	Oftentimes Used	2
	3. Practice with targeted reading passages that highlight clear cause-and-effect scenarios.	8	11	3	0	0	4.23	Oftentimes Used	3
Struggles with sequencing	1. Ask clear instruction on identifying sequence words and phrases that signal order.	14	24	18	0	0	3.93	Oftentimes Used	2
	2. Use graphic organizers, such as timelines or sequence chains, to help visualize the order of events.	6	17	11	0	0	3.85	Oftentimes Used	3
	3. Engage in sequencing activities, such as arranging story events in the correct order.	7	11	4	0	0	4.14	Oftentimes Used	1
Inability to identify details.	1. Ask teacher guidance for close reading.	16	22	14	0	0	4.04	Oftentimes Used	2
	2. Use highlighting or annotating techniques to mark key details in the text.	12	18	8	0	0	4.11	Oftentimes Used	1
	3. Practice with targeted exercises that require finding and discussing specific details in passages.	9	11	12	0	0	3.91	Oftentimes Used	3
Difficulty with text structure.	1. Ask for more examples.	18	38	24	0	0	3.93	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Use graphic organizers with specific text structures to aid comprehension.	8	12	4	0	0	4.17	Oftentimes Used	2
	3. Neglect the text that I do not know.	14	24	6	0	0	4.18	Oftentimes Used	1
Struggles with drawing conclusions.	1. Ask teacher for guidance.	11	21	12	0	0	3.98	Oftentimes Used	3
	2. Use guiding questions to prompt learners to think beyond the text and draw logical conclusions.	23	34	11	0	0	4.18	Oftentimes Used	1
	3. Engage in group discussions where learners can share and debate their conclusions based on textual evidence.	12	22	10	0	0	4.05	Oftentimes Used	2
Difficulty with making connections.	1. Use graphic organizers, like Venn diagrams or connection webs, to map out relationships between ideas.	4	12	4	0	0	4.00	Oftentimes Used	1
	3. Ask parents and teachers' help.	8	14	19	0	0	3.73	Oftentimes Used	2

Legend: 4.51 – 5.00 = Always Used, 3.51 – 4.50 = Oftentimes Used, 2.51 – 3.50 = Sometimes Used, 1.51-2.50 = Rarely Used, 1.00-1.50 = Never Used

Additionally, in terms of "Difficulty with cause and effect," the coping mechanism "Ask for explicit cause-and-effect language and signal words to help identify relationships in texts" scored the highest mean of 4.42, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." Learners addressing "Struggles with sequencing" found "Engage in sequencing activities, such as arranging story events in the correct order" to be the most effective, with a mean of 4.14, interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." For "Inability to identify detail", the most preferred strategy was "Using highlighting or annotating techniques to mark the key details in the text," with a mean score of 4.11 and interpreted as "Oftentimes Used." Similarly, for "Difficulty with text structure," learners prioritize "Skipping unfamiliar text," which received the



mean score of 4.18 also interpreted as “Oftentimes Used.”

For “Struggles with concluding,” the top-ranked approach was “Using guiding questions to encourage deeper thinking and logical conclusions,” with a mean score of 4.18, again categorized as “Oftentimes Used.” Lastly, for “Difficulty with making connections,” most learners favored using graphic organizers, such a Venn diagrams or connection webs, to visually map relationships between ideas, scoring a mean of 4.00, also interpreted as “Oftentimes Used.”

The qualitative data further supports these findings, emphasizing “Enhancing comprehension through rereading and assistance.” Learners also expressed the coping strategies like:

“I reread slowly and think about each part” and

“I can remember stories better when someone helps me.”

These responses show that learners rely on strategies involving how to slow down their reading. This focused on the details, and they seek support from others to improve. This indicates that structured assistance is vital to help them overcome challenges in comprehension.

Generally, the findings emphasize the importance of integrating structured comprehension activities into school reading programs. Also, the schools can provide tools like graphic organizers, highlight markers, and guided discussions to help learners break down texts into manageable parts. The data also underscores the need for specific strategies to address comprehension difficulties, such as identifying main ideas, making inferences, summarizing, and understanding text structures.

Moreover, these findings suggest that collaborative and supportive learning environments are critical for improving Comprehension. Teachers must actively model effective strategies during lessons, such as concluding, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, and utilizing text structure for better understanding. Encouraging group discussions, peer learning, and using tools like Venn diagrams and concept maps will foster a culture of shared learning and exploration. Learners can also benefit from structured activities that gradually increase text complexity, helping them build confidence in tackling advanced reading tasks.

These findings also conform with those of Tomas et al., (2021) who emphasized the need for intervention reading programs. These should be structured to enhance comprehension. Their research like the current study also emphasized summarization strategies and inference-making. Those are essential to improve the reading comprehension of the learners.

Similarly, Al Nooh 92021) also identified comprehension and retention as major challenges among the learners. However, while they primarily attributed these struggles to lack of reading culture, the current study underscores the effectiveness of structured strategies. This involved reviewing key details and exploring alternative scenarios to improve comprehension.

Part IV. Assessment of the Significant Difference between the Learners Reading Challenges when Grouped According to Socioeconomic Profile

Table 15. Statistical Table showing the Significant Difference between the Reading Challenges Encountered by the Learners in Terms of Word Recognition when Grouped According to Socioeconomic Profile

Socio-Economic Profile		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value	Interpretation
Sex	Between Groups	6.496	16	0.406	1.871	0.033	Significant
	Within Groups	20.612	95	0.217			
	Total	27.107	111				
Educational Level	Between Groups	9.554	16	0.597	1.465	0.130	Not Significant
	Within Groups	38.723	95	0.408			
	Total	48.277	111				
Occupational Status	Between Groups	8.333	16	0.521	1.433	0.143	Not Significant
	Within Groups	34.524	95	0.363			
	Total	42.857	111				
Household Income	Between Groups	8.858	16	0.554	1.540	0.102	Not Significant
	Within Groups	34.142	95	0.359			
	Total	43.000	111				
Family Sizes	Between Groups	23.289	16	1.456	1.803	0.042	Significant
	Within Groups	76.702	95	0.807			
	Total	99.991	111				

Legend: “If the p-value is less than or equal to the level of significance (0.05), reject Ho; otherwise, failed to reject Ho.”

Table 15 presents the statistical analysis of the significant difference in reading challenges learners encounter in terms of word recognition when grouped according to their socioeconomic profile. The analysis identifies sex and family size as significant factors influencing reading challenges, as their p-values are less than or equal to the 0.05 level of significance. Meanwhile, educational levels, the occupational status, and the income by household are not significant predictors of the identified variations in reading challenges. This is because their p-values exceed the threshold.

Specifically, in terms of sex, the computed F-value is 1.871, with a P-value of 0.033, indicating a significant difference as the P-value is less than the level of significance (0.05). This also indicates that the reading challenges of the learners significantly varied between sex categories. Moreover, as to family sizes, the F-value of 1.803 and P-value of 0.0042 showed significant difference. This suggests that the number of children within the family influences how the learners encountered the challenges.

On the other hand, in terms of educational level, the F-value is 1.465, with a P-value of 0.130, which is greater than 0.05, indicating no significant difference. This suggests that the educational level of the learners' parents does not significantly affect the reading challenges they face in terms of word recognition. Additionally, as to occupational status, an F-value of 1.433 and a P-value of 0.143 indicate no significant difference. This implies that the parents' occupational status does not significantly contribute to the learners' word recognition challenges. Lastly, concerning household income, the F-value is 1.540, with a P-value of 0.102, also greater than 0.05, suggesting no significant difference. This means that household income does not substantially affect the reading challenges faced by learners in word recognition.

The results indicate that socioeconomic factors such as Sex and family size significantly impact the reading challenges faced by learners, particularly in word recognition. This suggests the need for schools to design interventions that address the specific needs of male and female learners and consider family size as a factor influencing academic performance. Additionally, the reading teachers must adopt differentiated instructional strategies catering to gender-specific challenges and provide additional support to learners from larger families who may experience less individual attention at home. Furthermore, recognizing and addressing these challenges through targeted support mechanisms will enable the learners to overcome difficulties in word recognition and improve overall literacy skills.

This validates the findings of Alimonsurin and Corlet (2023), who emphasized that sex and family size influence the appropriateness of reading tasks and highlighted the importance of tailored interventions.

Similarly, the study of Haeck and Lefebvre (2021) found that the family size plays a vital role in literacy outcomes of the learners. However, the lack of significance observed in the household income and in educational level contrast the findings of Avvisati (2020) who linked reading improvements to microstructural socioeconomic factors.

Additionally, Zhang and Holden (2023) identified minor gender differences in verbal abilities. Whereas, the significant difference found in this study suggests that sex-related factors in literacy challenges require a further in-dept analysis.

Consistently, the findings that household income does not significantly impact reading difficulties conform with the research of Pittman et al., (2020), who noted that economic factors alone do not necessarily lead to better reading outcomes without targeted interventions. This also reinforces the findings of Sultal et al., (2020) that family socioeconomic backgrounds should be considered in designing reading programs. This must be considered even if their direct influence is limited.

Table 16. *Statistical Table showing the Significant Difference between the Reading Challenges Encountered by the Learners in Terms of Fluency when Grouped According to Socioeconomic Profile*

Socio-Economic Profile		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value	Interpretation
Sex	Between Groups	4.444	15	0.296	1.255	0.246	Not Significant
	Within Groups	22.663	96	0.236			
	Total	27.107	111				
Educational Level	Between Groups	6.118	15	0.408	0.929	0.536	Not Significant
	Within Groups	42.158	96	0.439			
	Total	48.277	111				
Occupational Status	Between Groups	4.863	15	0.324	0.819	0.654	Not Significant
	Within Groups	37.994	96	0.396			
	Total	42.857	111				
Household Income	Between Groups	4.689	15	0.313	0.783	0.693	Not Significant
	Within Groups	38.311	96	0.399			
	Total	43.000	111				
Family Sizes	Between Groups	11.685	15	0.779	0.847	0.624	Not Significant
	Within Groups	88.306	96	0.920			
	Total	99.991	111				

Legend: "If the p-value is less than or equal to the level of significance (0.05), reject Ho; otherwise, failed to reject Ho."

Table 16 presents the statistical analysis of the significant difference in reading challenges encountered by learners in terms of fluency when grouped according to their socioeconomic profile.

The results indicate that none of the socioeconomic variables analyzed (sex, educational level, occupational status, household income, and family sizes) showed a significant difference in the reading challenges faced by the learners. This conclusion is supported by the fact that all P-values are more significant than the 0.05 level of significance.

In terms of sex, the computed F-value is 1.255, with a P-value of 0.246, indicating no significant difference. This shows that the

difficulties in fluence are not affected by the learners' gender or sex-related orientations. Also, the educational level with the F-value is 0.929, and the P-value is 0.536, which is greater than 0.05, showing no significant effect of the educational background of the learners' parents on their reading fluency challenges.

Similarly, in terms of occupational status, the F-value is 0.819, and the P-value is 0.654, suggesting that the occupational roles of parents do not significantly impact the fluency challenges faced by their children. Likewise, household income with an F-value of 0.783 and a P-value of 0.693 fails to demonstrate a significant difference, implying that economic status does not affect reading fluency. Lastly, family sizes also showed no significant impact, as evidenced by an F-value of 0.847 and a P-value of 0.624, suggesting that the number of children in a household does not contribute to reading fluency challenges.

The results indicate that the reading fluency challenges encountered by learners are not significantly influenced by socioeconomic factors such as Sex, educational level, occupational status, household income, or family size. This implies that the challenges related to fluency are likely intrinsic to the learners' capabilities or the quality of instruction and support provided in schools. The findings also highlight the need to focus on instructional strategies and programs that target fluency development across all socioeconomic backgrounds. Reading teachers, in particular, should also adopt evidence-based fluency interventions, such as guided reading sessions and repeated reading exercises, that cater to a broad spectrum of learners. Moreover, for the learners, the findings suggest that practice and differentiated instruction, rather than socioeconomic background, play a pivotal role in overcoming fluency challenges.

Furthermore, the findings of this study align with those of Capin et al., (2022), also found no significant differences between socioeconomic groups regarding oral reading fluency (ORF) and Comprehension outcomes when standardized practice was provided. This also confirms the concept that fluency in reading is impacted by instructional practices than by socioeconomic variables. Equally, Amaliah and Dj (2023) highlighted the importance of context-based strategies to enhance understanding and fluency rather than socioeconomic status of the learners that is indirectly concerning their studies.

On the other hand, the results are in contrast with Sultan et al. (2020), which observed significant differences in readability and comprehension based on socioeconomic factors such as household financial income and education of the parents. It further suggests that fluency challenges are distinct from comprehension challenges and are less dependent on external socioeconomic conditions. Also, Spakov et al. (2021) emphasized the potential of technology-supported interventions for diverse kinds of learners, this study recommends that learner material development activities or workshops should focus on instructional design rather than addressing socioeconomic disparities of the learners.

In general, the research results show that there is a need for universal, high-quality instructional approaches not limited by learners' socioeconomic backgrounds that further underscores the need for equitable access to effective design and build fluency skills of the learners in the public elementary schools.

Table 17. *Statistical Table showing the Significant Difference between the Reading Challenges Encountered by the Learners in terms of Vocabulary when Grouped According to Socio-Economic Profile*

Socio-Economic Profile		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value	Interpretation
Sex	Between Groups	4.164	17	0.245	1.004	0.462	Not Significant
	Within Groups	22.943	94	0.244			
	Total	27.107	111				
Educational Level	Between Groups	7.567	17	0.445	1.028	0.437	Not Significant
	Within Groups	40.710	94	0.433			
	Total	48.277	111				
Occupational Status	Between Groups	5.601	17	0.329	0.831	0.654	Not Significant
	Within Groups	37.256	94	0.396			
	Total	42.857	111				
Household Income	Between Groups	5.867	17	0.345	0.874	0.606	Not Significant
	Within Groups	37.133	94	0.395			
	Total	43.000	111				
Family Sizes	Between Groups	17.565	17	1.033	1.178	0.297	Not Significant
	Within Groups	82.426	94	0.877			
	Total	99.991	111				

Legend: "If the p-value is less than or equal to the level of significance (0.05), reject H_0 ; otherwise, failed to reject H_0 ."

Table 17 shows the statistical analysis of the significant difference in reading challenges encountered by learners in terms of vocabulary when grouped according to their socioeconomic profile. The findings showed that none of the factors in socioeconomic category that were examined along with sex educational level, occupational status, household income, and family size, significantly influenced the vocabulary challenges encountered by the learners. These research findings are also supported by the fact that all indicated p-values are greater than the level of significance of 0.05 respectively.

The computed F-value is 1.004, with a P-value of 0.462, indicating no significant difference in terms of sex. The findings indicate that difficulties faced by the learners in vocabulary are not influenced by gender or sex. Similarly, as to educational level, the F-value is

1.028, and the P-value is 0.437, which is greater than 0.05, showing no significant relationship between the academic background of the parents of the learners and vocabulary-related challenges of the learners.

Further, as to occupational status, the F-value is 0.831, and the P-value is 0.654, showing no impact on the parents' occupations on learners' vocabulary challenges. Regarding household income, an F-value of 0.874 and a P-value of 0.606 suggest that economic status does not substantially affect learners' vocabulary acquisition. Lastly, family size also showed no significant difference, as evidenced by an F-value of 1.178 and a P-value of 0.297, indicating that the number of children in a household does not significantly influence vocabulary challenges.

The findings indicate that socioeconomic factors, such as Sex, educational level, occupational status, household income, and family size, do not significantly influence the vocabulary challenges faced by learners. The results also suggest that vocabulary difficulties may be more closely tied to intrinsic learner characteristics, instructional quality, or access to vocabulary-building resources, regardless of socioeconomic background. Findings also highlight the need to implement vocabulary enhancement programs that are universally accessible and not dependent on the learners' socioeconomic circumstances. In schools, the reading teachers must focus on providing explicit vocabulary instruction, contextual learning strategies, and engaging activities to build learners' word knowledge, while the learners should have consistent exposure to new words through reading, discussion, and vocabulary-building exercises that they can also apply practically in their day-to-day learning classes. This simulates the skills they learned to be applied daily.

The result aligned with Capin et al., (2022) which emphasized that targeted interventions, rather than socioeconomic factors, significantly improve reading-related skills, including vocabulary. Likewise, Spakov et al. (2021) stressed the role of instructional systems and classroom practices in overcoming learning challenges. This supports the idea that vocabulary difficulties can be addressed through quality teaching rather than socioeconomic determinants.

However, the results contrast with studies such as Sultan et al. (2020) and Rassel et al. (2021), which observed significant relationships between socioeconomic factors like household income and vocabulary development. These related studies affirmed that learners from wealthier families often have greater access to books and educational resources, which enhances vocabulary learning and acquisition. This discrepancy also emphasized contextual-related differences or suggests that other factors, such as teacher effectiveness and curriculum design, play a more critical or substantial role in vocabulary acquisition within the current study's population of learners.

Generally, the results suggest that there must be a fair or equitable evidence-based interventions in schools that prioritize vocabulary instruction and provide every learner with fair varying opportunities to build their language skills, regardless of the socioeconomic background and reading levels of the learners in their respective grade levels.

Table 18. *Statistical Table showing the Significant Difference between the Reading Challenges Encountered by the Learners in Terms of Comprehension when Grouped According to Socio-Economic Profile*

Socio-Economic Profile		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Value	P-Value	Interpretation
Sex	Between Groups	5.005	16	0.313	1.345	0.187	Not Significant
	Within Groups	22.102	95	0.233			
	Total	27.107	111				
Educational Level	Between Groups	6.172	16	0.386	0.870	0.604	Not Significant
	Within Groups	42.104	95	0.443			
	Total	48.277	111				
Occupational Status	Between Groups	6.159	16	0.385	0.997	0.467	Not Significant
	Within Groups	36.698	95	0.386			
	Total	42.857	111				
Household Income	Between Groups	5.477	16	0.342	0.867	0.608	Not Significant
	Within Groups	37.523	95	0.395			
	Total	43.000	111				
Family Sizes	Between Groups	16.985	16	1.062	1.215	0.271	Not Significant
	Within Groups	83.006	95	0.874			
	Total	99.991	111				

Legend: "If the p-value is less than or equal to the level of significance (0.05), reject H_0 ; otherwise, failed to reject H_0 ."

Table 18 shows the statistical analysis of the significant difference in reading challenges learners encounter in terms of Comprehension when grouped according to their socioeconomic profile. The study reveals that none of the socioeconomic factors examined, including Sex, educational level, occupational status, household income, and family size, significantly influenced the learners' comprehension challenges. Generally, all the P-values exceeded the 0.05 significance level, indicating no statistically significant difference across these groups.

Specifically in terms of sex, the computed F-value is 1.345, with a P-value of 0.187, which is greater than the 0.05 threshold, indicating no significant difference. This suggests that comprehension challenges faced by learners do not vary based on gender. Similarly, parents' educational level yielded an F-value of 0.870 and a P-value of 0.604, signifying no significant difference. This implies that parental education does not have a noticeable impact on the learners' comprehension challenges.



Furthermore, in terms of occupational status, the F-value is 0.997, and the P-value is 0.467, which is greater than 0.05, showing no significant relationship between the parents' jobs and learners' comprehension difficulties. For household income, the F-value of 0.867 and a P-value of 0.608 also indicate no significant difference, suggesting that family income does not significantly influence comprehension challenges. Lastly, for family size, there was a F-value of 1.215 and a P-value of 0.271 which revealed that no significant difference was found. This further implies that the number of children in a household does not affect the learners' abilities to understand texts.

The findings indicate that socioeconomic factors, such as Sex, educational level, occupational status, household income, and family size, do not significantly impact the comprehension challenges faced by learners. This also indicates that comprehension difficulties may stem more from factors related to instructional methods, access to resources, and individual learner characteristics rather than socioeconomic conditions. For schools, this highlights the need to focus on enhancing reading comprehension strategies universally, irrespective of socioeconomic background. Teachers should adopt differentiated instructional techniques and provide explicit training in comprehension skills, such as using context clues and making inferences. Additionally, learners should be exposed to diverse reading materials and scaffolded exercises to strengthen their ability to understand complex texts.

The findings align with studies like Capin et al., (2022), which emphasized the importance of specific instructional strategies over socioeconomic factors in improving comprehension skills. Similarly, Spakov et al. (2021) stressed the role of classroom-based interventions and supportive learning systems in addressing comprehension difficulties. This supports the notion that teaching quality and learning resources are pivotal in overcoming comprehension challenges.

Meanwhile, these findings contrast with studies such as Alharbi (2022) and Al Nooh (2021), which highlighted socioeconomic factors such as household income and parental education as significant contributors to comprehension skills. These studies suggested that learners from higher-income families with educated parents have better access to books, supplementary learning materials, and conducive home environments, positively affecting their comprehension abilities. The lack of such relationships in the current study also indicates that the difficulties that learners face are generally more influenced by systemic instructional issues. Not only the socioeconomic factors and disparities. Also, the findings diverge from Swanenflugel and Kuhn (2020) that socioeconomic factors most of the time influence comprehension indirectly. This occurs through reduced access to different structured learning environments as well as the effective practices of teachers in teaching reading skills.

Part V. Reading Intervention Material Developed Based on the Research Results

The reading intervention material titled, “Multimodal Enriched Reading Intervention with Coping Approach in Direct Opportunities,” also known as “MERCADO” is designed based on the findings of the study to further improve the skills of the learners in reading with focus on word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Table 19. Research Findings as Basis for the Reading Intervention Focus and Features

<i>Indicators</i>	<i>Challenges</i>	<i>Intervention Focus based on the Challenges</i>	<i>Coping Strategies</i>	<i>Intervention Features Based on Coping Strategies</i>
Word Recognition	Difficulty sounding out unfamiliar words.	Sounds of Unfamiliar Words	Practice phonics exercises focusing on blending sounds to form words.	Phonics Practices
	Slow word recognition speed.	Speed in Word Recognition	Implement timed reading exercises to improve.	Timed Reading Drills
Fluency	Lack of expression while reading.	Expressive Reading	Engage in activities like reader's theater or role-playing to practice reading with expression and dramatic flair.	Reader's Theater and Role-Playing Activities
	Lack of phrasing or chunking.	Phrasing and Chunking	Model fluent reading with appropriate phrasing and chunking of text.	Guided Fluent Reading Sessions
Vocabulary	Difficulty understanding context clues.	Contextual Understanding	Examine the surrounding words and sentences.	Context Clue Exercises
	Struggles with word definitions.	Expanding Word Meanings	Use thesaurus to help learners independently find and understand word meanings.	Thesaurus-Based Vocabulary Building
Comprehension	Limited knowledge of prefixes and suffixes.	Word Structure Mastery	Create word walls or charts that display examples of words.	Prefix and Suffix Word Walls
	Difficulty with cause and effect	Cause-and-Effect Relationships	Ask for explicit cause-and-effect language and signal words to help identify relationships in texts.	Cause-and-Effect Graphic Organizers
	Struggles with drawing conclusions.	Creative Thinking	Use guiding questions to prompt learners to think beyond the text and draw logical conclusions.	Structured Brainstorming and Idea Generation Activities

Struggles with
summarizing.Identifying Key
InformationUse Artificial Intelligence to
summarize for me.Guided Reading Exercises
for Identifying Themes

MERCADO as intervention material has been meticulously developed based on the research findings to address the specific reading challenges faced by learners in word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension in an intervention material with designed lesson plan. This intervention integrates research-backed coping strategies and innovative resources to provide structured and engaging opportunities for skill development, enabling learners to overcome key barriers to reading proficiency.

The findings revealed that word recognition posed significant challenges, particularly in sounding out unfamiliar words and improving word recognition speed. To tackle these, MERCADO employs phonics practices and timed reading drills to build decoding skills and enhance reading accuracy. These interventions provide learners with repetitive and interactive opportunities to strengthen their ability to identify and blend sounds and read with greater speed and confidence.

Additionally, in fluency, learners struggled with a lack of expression and difficulties in phrasing or chunking. The intervention incorporates reader's theater and role-playing activities to encourage expressive reading, enabling learners to connect meaningfully with the text. Additionally, guided fluent reading sessions focus on modeling appropriate phrasing and chunking, helping learners develop smoother and more natural reading patterns.

Moreover, difficulties in understanding context clues, word definitions, and limited knowledge of prefixes and suffixes were highlighted for vocabulary. MERCADO responds with context clue exercises, thesaurus-based vocabulary building, and prefix and suffix word walls. These strategies expand learners' vocabulary by combining direct instruction with creative and independent word-learning activities, promoting meaningful engagement with new vocabulary.

Lastly, in terms of comprehension, learners faced challenges in understanding cause-and-effect relationships, drawing conclusions, and summarizing information. The intervention material integrates cause-and-effect graphic organizers, structured brainstorming and idea-generation activities, and guided reading exercises for theme identification. These interventions develop learners' analytical and creative thinking, enabling them to connect ideas, synthesize information, and enhance their comprehension skills.

Additionally, MERCADO is built around a carefully selected narrative, "Maya and the Lost Puppy," which presents a relatable and emotionally engaging context that encourages empathy, reflection, and active participation. The story's simple yet meaningful plot allows learners to explore reading tasks with confidence and purpose, making it an ideal core text for early intervention.

The intervention follows the 4A's learning cycle for its implementation—Activity, Analysis, Abstraction, and Application—spanning four instructional days, each focused on a core literacy domain. Day 1 targets Word Recognition through phonics and speed drills; Day 2 enhances Fluency with expressive reading, role-play, and self-recording; Day 3 develops Vocabulary via context clue hunts, affix exploration, and word walls; and Day 4 improves Comprehension through cause-effect mapping, summarizing, and visual storytelling. Coping strategies were used as activities and approaches in the intervention proper. The intervention is intentionally multimodal that is new to the output with contextualized reading selection, incorporating audio-visual storytelling, interactive whiteboard tools, apps like Kahoot and Canva, and collaborative group work. Each lesson is paired with a formative quiz and performance task to track progress and reinforce learning. Ultimately, MERCADO equips learners with the skills, confidence, and strategies to become independent, engaged, and reflective readers to lessen the challenges that learners experience.

The developed intervention aligns with the work of Wen and Yu (2025), emphasizing the necessity of considering socioeconomic profiles in designing reading interventions. Similar to their study, the results here suggest that an individualized understanding of learners' backgrounds significantly enhances the effectiveness of interventions. However, Ratna (2021) underscores the broad contribution of socioeconomic factors like family size and household income to reading challenges.

Conclusions

Based on the presented summary of findings, the following conclusions were drawn. Majority of the respondents are female whose parents are high school graduates with temporary occupation earning 10,000–25,000 pesos with two to three children in the family. The challenges encountered were word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, all of which were found to be highly challenging. To cope with these challenges, learners oftentimes use multisensory coping strategies such as phonics practices, timed reading activities, readers' theater, context clues exercises, thesaurus-based vocabulary building, word walls, graphic organizers like flashcards, and brainstorming activities. The null hypothesis is rejected, indicating a significant difference in word recognition reading challenges when learners are grouped according to sex and family size. However, the null hypothesis is failed to be rejected, showing no significant difference in challenges in fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension when grouped according to socio-economic profile. As a result of the research, the Multimodal Enriched Reading Intervention with Coping Approach in Direct Opportunities or "MERCADO" was developed as a reading intervention.

Based on the conclusions presented, the following recommendations were given. Since the majority of learners are female with parents who are high school graduates working in temporary occupations and earning between 10,000–25,000 pesos monthly, there is a wide

diversity of respondents; hence, policymakers may ensure equitable access to educational resources, especially for families with lower income and temporary employment. Gender-sensitive literacy programs should also be implemented to address the varying needs of male and female learners. Recognizing that learners face highly challenging difficulties in word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, which hinder their reading development, the school heads may institutionalize structured reading programs like the MERCADO intervention that comprehensively address these challenges. They may also allocate resources to facilitate multisensory approaches and ensure their integration into the curriculum. Given that learners oftentimes use multisensory strategies to cope with their reading challenges, teachers are recommended to incorporate these preferred strategies into their teaching practices, while parents are encouraged to reinforce these strategies at home. Moreover, parents can create a supportive reading environment by engaging children in games or guiding them in dictionary use and other vocabulary-building activities. Acknowledging that there are significant differences found in word recognition challenges based on sex and family size, while other socio-economic factors showed no significant effect, reading teachers may employ differentiated strategies that address the unique needs of male and female learners, as well as those from larger families. Additionally, for other reading areas like fluency and comprehension, universally effective teaching approaches like guided reading sessions may be used. Since the MERCADO intervention was designed based on the study's results to address challenges in word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension with multisensory and learner-centered features, reading coordinators are encouraged to pilot the MERCADO intervention in schools, assess its effectiveness, and adapt it for scalability. Future researchers may explore the long-term impact of multisensory approaches and identify additional factors affecting reading proficiency, ensuring continuous improvement in literacy programs.

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