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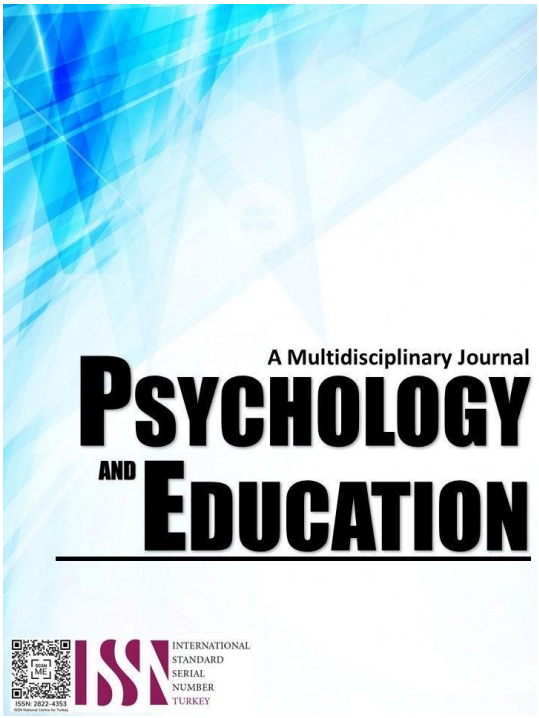

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Research Article

Teachers' Reading Strategies and the Reading Abilities of Key Stage 1 Learners with Learning Challenges

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Abstract

Reading proficiency in the early grades is foundational to a child's academic success and long-term educational outcomes. It serves as the doorway to learning across all subject areas, enabling learners to engage meaningfully with school content and build confidence in their abilities. However, in many disadvantaged and underserved communities, young learners continue to struggle with reading despite the implementation of various instructional strategies designed to support literacy development. Rural areas like the Second District of Eastern Samar face challenges that contribute to ongoing literacy gaps. As a result, Key Stage 1 learners are at increased risk of falling behind, making it difficult to meet grade-level reading expectations essential for future academic success. Thus, this study aimed to examine the extent of implementation of evidence-based reading strategies among Grade 2 teachers and their relationship to the reading performance of learners with identified learning challenges. Employing a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design, the study focused on six instructional approaches: phonics-based instruction, sight word reading strategies, multisensory approaches, guided and shared reading, scaffolding strategies, and the use of assistive technology and digital resources. Data were collected through validated teacher surveys and reading assessments using the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA).Findings revealed that all six strategies were consistently applied in classrooms, with phonics-based instruction and scaffolding strategies receiving the highest mean implementation mean scores of 3.78. The CRLA results showed that 97% of Grade 2 classes were classified as "Grade Ready," indicating strong reading proficiency levels. However, correlational analysis revealed that only sight word reading strategies demonstrated a statistically significant but weak positive relationship with learners reading performance with r value of 0.369 and p value of 0.035. The overall correlation between the combined use of all strategies and reading performance was negligible. These results suggest that while the consistent use of reading strategies exists, their direct influence on learner reading performance may be shaped by broader contextual and instructional factors. The study recommends strengthened professional development programs, focused integration of sight word instruction, tiered intervention systems, and reflective teaching practices to enhance literacy instruction and learner outcomes. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on effective early literacy practices in resource-constrained educational settings.

Keywords: *reading strategies, early literacy, Grade 2 learners, CRLA, sight word instruction, teacher implementation, Eastern Samar*

Introduction

Reading is a foundational skill that plays a pivotal role in a child's academic success, cognitive development, and lifelong learning. According to Snowling and Hulme (2019), the early years of schooling are critical for acquiring reading proficiency, particularly at Key Stage 1, where foundational literacy skills are first introduced. However, many young learners encounter significant obstacles in mastering these skills, particularly those with learning challenges. These difficulties often manifest in key areas such as phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary acquisition, and reading comprehension. As a result, learners who struggle during these early years often fall behind their peers, leading to lowered motivation, diminished self-confidence, and a long-term risk of academic underachievement.

As stated by Lane et al., (2025) early intervention using structured, evidence-based reading strategies significantly improves literacy outcomes for young learners. These strategies include systematic phonics instruction, guided oral reading, repeated reading, and multisensory learning. Despite the proven effectiveness of these approaches, many teachers, particularly in low-resource or rural areas, continue to rely on generalized teaching methods that may not sufficiently support learners with reading difficulties. This situation underscores the need for context-specific, research-based reading interventions that align with learners' individual needs and capacities.

In the Second District of Eastern Samar, teachers in central schools face these very challenges. According to Echavez et al., (2024) educators in rural and under-resourced Philippine schools frequently struggle to differentiate instruction due to limited access to instructional materials, inadequate training, and large class sizes. These obstacles hinder their ability to apply targeted interventions that can address the needs of struggling readers. Furthermore, as noted by Dinoro et al., (2023) many teachers lack exposure to specialized training in reading intervention and do not have access to diagnostic tools that could help identify specific learner difficulties early.

This study is anchored in Scaffolding Theory, introduced by Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976) and deeply rooted in Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). According to Vygotsky (1978), the ZPD defines the range between what a learner can do

independently and what they can achieve with the assistance of a more capable individual. Scaffolding, in this context, refers to the temporary and adjustable support provided by the teacher to bridge that gap. As learners become more proficient, the support is gradually withdrawn, allowing them to take greater responsibility for their learning.

As Salem, (2016) emphasized, scaffolding is especially effective in early literacy instruction. Teachers using this approach can support reading development by breaking tasks into manageable parts, modeling strategies, providing guided practice, and using prompts and cues. Furthermore, scaffolding not only enhances comprehension and fluency but also fosters learners' confidence and autonomy. When implemented appropriately, it becomes a powerful framework for addressing diverse learning needs in inclusive classrooms.

The Grade 2 reading instruction, scaffolding enables teachers to adapt and tailor instruction in response to the learner's needs. It encourages responsiveness, flexibility, and guided progression from simple to complex tasks. As stated by Otaiba et al.,(2025), such a responsive approach is particularly beneficial for learners who may not succeed with traditional, one-size-fits-all instruction. Despite the availability of effective instructional models, many Filipino teachers, especially in Eastern Samar, are unable to fully implement these strategies due to persistent systemic barriers. According to Barrett et al., (2019) among the most common challenges teachers face are insufficient resources, limited access to quality professional development, and the lack of instructional materials tailored to individual learner profiles.

In many public school classrooms, especially in central schools of the Second District of Eastern Samar, the student-teacher ratio makes it difficult to provide one-on-one instruction or apply scaffolding techniques effectively. As stated by Tolentin, C. (2023). most teachers continue to rely on standardized reading instruction methods that do not consider learners' specific cognitive or linguistic challenges. This generalization leads to an instructional mismatch, where struggling readers receive insufficient support and intervention.

Binti Yaacob & Mohd Rashid, (2024) in their Malaysian-based study, emphasized the importance of empowering teachers through ongoing training and equipping them with contextually relevant strategies. Cited in that study is the necessity for strong collaboration between schools, families, and the wider educational system to ensure that learners with reading difficulties receive holistic support. In a similar vein, this research identifies the need for collaborative and contextual interventions to close literacy gaps.

While international studies support the use of targeted reading interventions, their implementation and success vary depending on local contexts. Instructional effectiveness often depends not only on the strategy used but also on how well it is adapted to learners' sociocultural and linguistic backgrounds. This highlights the importance of conducting localized studies to evaluate what works best in specific settings.

Given these realities, there is a compelling need to conduct this study to explore the strategies employed by Grade 2 teachers in the central schools of the Second District of Eastern Samar and determine how these strategies influence the reading development of learners with learning challenges. By addressing this gap, the study hopes to offer practical, context-sensitive insights that will contribute to more effective literacy instruction and improved reading outcomes for struggling learners.

Research Questions

This study aimed to assess the extent to which teachers implement various reading strategies to improve the reading skills of Key Stage 1 learners and address their reading difficulties as a basis for developing an intervention program. Specifically, it sought to answer the following research question:

1. What are the reading strategies for Key Stage 1 learners with learning challenges?
2. What is the level of reading abilities among grade 2 learners?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the reading strategies and level of grade 2 reading abilities?

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design, which was deemed appropriate for investigating both the types of reading strategies utilized by Grade 2 teachers and the extent to which these strategies were associated with the reading abilities of Key Stage 1 learners with learning challenges in the Second District of Eastern Samar.

The descriptive component of the study enabled the researcher to identify and document the reading strategies that were implemented in classroom settings, as well as to describe the levels of reading abilities demonstrated by learners. As noted by Fraenkel, Wallen, and Hyun (2019), descriptive research was suitable for understanding current educational practices and identifying the challenges encountered in the learning environment. This approach aligned with the first two research questions, which sought to determine the reading strategies employed by teachers and to assess the reading proficiency levels of learners.

In addition, the study incorporated a correlational component to examine the relationship between the reading strategies used by Grade 2 teachers and the reading abilities of learners. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), correlational research is used to measure the degree of association between two or more quantifiable variables. In this context, it was essential to determine whether the frequency and type of reading strategies applied by teachers were significantly associated with improved reading performance among struggling

readers. This component directly addressed the third research question and provided empirical evidence on whether specific instructional practices contributed to literacy outcomes.

Respondents

This study was conducted across all central public elementary schools within the Second District of Eastern Samar, a geographically diverse region located along the southeastern coastline of Eastern Samar, Philippines, including some areas near the Leyte Gulf. The district comprises twelve municipalities namely Maydolong, Balangkayan, Llorente, Hernani, General MacArthur, Salcedo, Mercedes, Guiuan, Lawaan, Balangiga, Giporlos, and Quinapondan. These areas were selected due to their representative rural context, which is often characterized by challenges such as limited instructional resources, high learner-to-teacher ratios, and socio-economic constraints that impact literacy instruction.

The study involved a total of thirty-four (34) Grade 2 teachers from these central schools, all of whom were directly responsible for delivering reading instruction to young learners at a critical stage in their literacy development. These teachers were selected as respondents due to their firsthand experience in implementing various evidence-based reading strategies and addressing foundational literacy challenges. Their perspectives were considered vital in evaluating both the extent and effectiveness of reading strategy implementation in real classroom settings.

To ensure comprehensive and accurate data collection, the study employed total enumeration sampling, wherein all qualified Grade 2 teachers from the central schools within the defined municipalities were included. As Creswell and Creswell (2018) note, total enumeration is appropriate when the target population is small and accessible, as it allows researchers to obtain insights from the entire group of interest without the biases introduced by random sampling. This approach not only enhanced the reliability of the findings but also supported the development of a more targeted and representative literacy intervention framework for the region.

Instruments

This study utilized a researcher-modified and validated survey questionnaire designed to assess the reading strategies employed by Grade 2 teachers and to determine the overall reading profile of their learners in the central schools of the Second District of Eastern Samar. The development of the instrument was grounded in established theoretical and empirical literature on effective reading instruction.

The survey tool was adapted and structured based on validated domains from previous studies and widely recognized frameworks. Specifically, the domains and items were informed by the findings and instructional components highlighted by the National Reading Panel (2000) on the five pillars of reading (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension), Ehri's (2005) work on sight word recognition, Birsh and Carreker's (2018) structured literacy approaches, and the Fountas and Pinnell (2017) framework on guided reading.

Additionally, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory and the concept of scaffolding were considered in framing the strategies under supportive instruction. The section on assistive technology and digital resources was informed by the studies of Okolo and Bouck (2007) on technology-supported interventions for struggling readers. These sources collectively provided the conceptual basis for the six domains incorporated in the instrument.

The research instrument was divided into two main parts. The first part consisted of 30 items under six domains of instructional practices: (1) phonics-based strategies, (2) sight word recognition strategies, (3) multisensory approaches, (4) guided and shared reading strategies, (5) scaffolding strategies, and (6) assistive technology and digital resources. Respondents rated the frequency of use of each strategy using a four-point Likert scale: 4 – Always, 3 – Sometimes, 2 – Rarely, and 1 – Never. This section was intended to capture the scope and consistency of instructional practices used to support learners facing reading difficulties.

The second part of the instrument gathered contextual data on learners' reading profiles based on the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) results. Teachers identified the number of students in their class within five literacy levels: Non-Reader, Full Refresher, Moderate Refresher, Light Refresher, and Grade Ready. This provided critical insights that complemented the first part of the survey and allowed for a more comprehensive interpretation of instructional effectiveness.

To ensure content validity, the instrument was reviewed by a panel of experts in early literacy, language education, and assessment. Based on their suggestions, several items were refined to improve clarity and alignment with the target constructs. A pilot test was conducted among Grade 2 teachers in non-central public elementary schools of Eastern Samar. This setting was purposefully chosen to ensure that the pilot did not overlap with the main study population. The instrument demonstrated high internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .89, indicating strong reliability.

The instrument was administered through a combination of face-to-face delivery and online distribution via Google Forms, depending on the accessibility and preference of the respondents. This flexible approach ensured maximum participation, especially in geographically dispersed or resource-limited areas. The average completion time was approximately 20–30 minutes. Participation was voluntary, and all responses were treated with confidentiality and used solely for academic purposes, in adherence to ethical research standards.

Data Analysis

To assess the extent to which teachers implement various reading strategies to enhance the reading skills of Key Stage 1 learners and address their reading difficulties, the data were carefully organized, processed, and prepared for analysis. Responses gathered through Likert-scale survey items were quantified using assigned numerical values to enable objective interpretation.

To answer the first research question regarding the reading strategies used for learners with reading challenges, descriptive statistics such as mean scores were computed. These provided a summary of the frequency and consistency with which different reading strategies were employed by Grade 2 teachers.

For the second research question concerning the level of reading abilities among Grade 2 learners, frequency and percentage distributions were calculated based on the results of the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA). This analysis determined the proportion of learners across the reading performance categories.

To address the third research question, which examined whether there is a significant relationship between the use of reading strategies and learners' reading performance, correlational analysis was conducted. Pearson's correlation coefficient (r) and corresponding p-values were computed to assess the strength and significance of associations between specific reading strategies and reading proficiency levels.

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to established ethical standards to ensure the integrity of the research process and the protection of participants' rights. Prior to the commencement of data collection, formal approval was sought from the Department of Education (DepEd) through Regional Office and the Schools Division Office of Eastern Samar. Authorization was granted to conduct the study within the identified central public elementary schools.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Each Grade 2 teacher who participated in the study was provided with a clear explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, and their role as respondents. Participants were informed of their right to voluntarily participate or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly upheld throughout the research process. Respondents were not required to disclose any personal identifying information, and all responses were treated with the highest level of confidentiality. Data collected were securely stored and used solely for academic and research purposes.

Additionally, measures were taken to ensure that the research did not disrupt regular instructional duties. The administration of the survey was designed to be non-intrusive and considerate of the teachers' schedules. By implementing these ethical safeguards, the study ensured compliance with research ethics and upheld the dignity, privacy, and autonomy of all participants.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the analysis and interpretation of data gathered in relation to the implementation of reading strategies and the reading abilities of Grade 2 learners. The findings are organized according to the research questions in the study. The results provide insight into the types of reading strategies employed by teachers, the current reading proficiency levels of Key Stage 1 learners, and the correlation between strategy use and learners' reading performance.

Reading Strategies Used for Grade Two Learners

Table 1. *The Use of Phonic Based Instruction by Grade Two Teachers*

	Indicator	*Mean*	*Description*	*Interpretation*
1.	I explicitly teach letter-sound relationships to help students decode words.	4	Always	Consistently Used
2.	I incorporate blending and segmenting exercises to strengthen phonemic awareness.	3.88	Always	Consistently Used
3.	I use phonics games and activities to reinforce letter-sound correspondences.	3.47	Always	Consistently Used
4.	I provide structured phonics instruction before introducing new texts.	3.79	Always	Consistently Used
5.	I assess students' phonics skills regularly to adjust instruction accordingly.	3.79	Always	Consistently Used
	Total Mean Score	3.78	Always	Consistently Used

Note. Description and interpretation are based on the following scale:4.00–3.25 = Always (Consistently Used);3.24–2.50 = Sometimes (Occasionally Used);2.49–1.75 = Rarely (Seldom Used);1.74–1.00 = Never (Not Used at All).

Table 1 presents the extent to which Grade 2 teachers utilize phonic-based instructional strategies in teaching early reading. The overall mean score of 3.78 falls within the "Always" range, indicating that teachers consistently implement phonics instruction as part of their regular teaching practices. This high level of usage reflects a strong commitment to evidence-based reading instruction aligned with foundational literacy development frameworks.

Among the five indicators, the highest mean score of 4.00 was observed for the item "I explicitly teach letter-sound relationships to help students decode words." This suggests that all respondents systematically and regularly introduce phoneme-grapheme correspondences, a core element of effective phonics instruction. According to Castles et al., (2018) explicit teaching of letter-sound relationships is essential for developing students' decoding ability, which is a critical skill in early reading acquisition.

On the other hand, the lowest mean score of 3.47 was recorded for the item "I use phonics games and activities to reinforce letter-sound correspondences." While still falling within the "Always" category, this slightly lower score may reflect a more traditional or structured approach to instruction, with less frequent integration of playful, game-based reinforcement strategies. This finding highlights a potential area for enhancing instructional engagement. Johnston and Watson (2014) emphasized that incorporating phonics games and multisensory activities can enhance learner motivation and retention, particularly for struggling readers.

Further, other indicators, such as the use of blending and segmenting exercises with a mean score of 3.88, structured phonics instruction before introducing new texts with a mean score of 3.79, and regular phonics assessment with a mean score of 3.79, also received high ratings, highlighting the comprehensive and systematic nature of phonics instruction practiced by the teachers. These results are supported by the National Reading Panel (2000), which concluded that systematic and explicit phonics instruction significantly improves children's reading outcomes, especially in the early years. The consistent implementation of phonics-based instruction in the classrooms reflects alignment with current best practices in early literacy education. As Ehri (2014) noted, phonics instruction facilitates orthographic mapping, enabling learners to store and retrieve words efficiently, thereby supporting fluent and independent reading.

Table 2. *The use of Sight of Word Reading Strategies by Grade Two Teachers*

Indicator	*Mean*	*Description*	*Interpretation*
1. I introduce high-frequency words through repetitive exposure.	3.79	Always	Consistently Used
2. I use flashcards and word walls to reinforce sight word recognition.	3.91	Always	Consistently Used
3. I encourage students to read and write sight words in different contexts.	3.67	Always	Consistently Used
4. I integrate sight word games and interactive activities into lessons.	3.67	Always	Consistently Used
5. 1I assess sight word mastery through regular informal assessments.	3.79	Always	Consistently Used
Total	3.76	Always	Consistently Used

Note. Description and interpretation are based on the following scale:4.00–3.25 = Always (Consistently Used);3.24–2.50 = Sometimes (Occasionally Used);2.49–1.75 = Rarely (Seldom Used);1.74–1.00 = Never (Not Used at All).

Table 2 presents the extent to which Grade 2 teachers implement sight word reading strategies to support early literacy development. It is shown in the table that the sight word reading strategy has an overall mean score of 3.76 and falls within the "Always" range, suggesting that teachers consistently employ sight word strategies in their instructional practices.

The indicator that obtained the highest mean score, was recorded for the item "I use flashcards and word walls to reinforce sight word recognition" with the means score of 3.91. This indicates that visual reinforcement tools such as flashcards and word walls are frequently and reliably integrated into classroom instruction. According to Paige (2020), these tools offer repeated visual exposure, which supports automatic recognition of high-frequency words, a skill that is crucial for developing reading fluency. Word walls and flashcards also serve as accessible references, enabling learners to independently engage with print during reading and writing tasks.

On the other hand, the items with the lowest mean scores were indicators "I encourage students to read and write sight words in different contexts" and "I integrate sight word games and interactive activities into lessons" with a mean score of 3.67. While these scores still fall under the "Always" category, they suggest slightly less frequent use of context-based and game-based reinforcement strategies. These findings highlight areas where instruction may benefit from increased emphasis on applying sight words in meaningful contexts and through interactive learning, both of which are strongly supported by literacy research. According to Coyne et al., (2019), engaging students in multiple encounters with sight words across various contexts enhances retention and functional use, while interactive activities have been shown to improve motivation and deeper learning.

Moreover, the indicators "I introduce high-frequency words through repetitive exposure" and "I assess sight word mastery through regular informal assessments" both received strong mean ratings of 3.79, emphasizing a structured approach to instruction and monitoring. Repeated exposure to high-frequency words is critical for developing orthographic memory and rapid word recognition, while informal assessments help tailor instruction to student needs.

Table 3 shows how often Grade 2 teachers use multisensory approaches when teaching reading. The overall average score of 3.70 means these strategies are consistently used. This result shows that teachers are committed to using a mix of visual, auditory, tactile, and movement-based methods to support their students'learning. These approaches are widely recognized as helpful in building strong early reading skills.

The highest mean score of 3.97, came from the item "I incorporate visual aids like pictures and charts to enhance word recognition."

This means visual strategies are the most commonly used. Using visual aids helps students connect words to images, which improves their ability to remember and recognize words. Birsh and Carreker (2018) support this, saying that visual tools are very useful in helping children learn to decode, understand, and remember new words.

Table 3.*The Use of Multisensory Approaches by Grade Two Teachers*

	Indicator	*Mean*	*Description*	*Interpretation*
1.	I use tactile strategies (e.g., sandpaper letters, letter tracing) to reinforce learning.	3.32	Always	Consistently Used
2.	I incorporate visual aids like pictures and charts to enhance word recognition.	3.97	Always	Consistently Used
3.	I encourage students to use gestures and body movements to connect with words.	3.63	Always	Consistently Used
4.	I integrate auditory strategies, such as songs and rhymes, to support retention.	3.76	Always	Consistently Used
5.	I provide hands-on activities that engage multiple senses in reading instruction.	3.85	Always	Consistently Used
	Total	3.70	Always	Consistently Used

Note. Description and interpretation are based on the following scale:4.00–3.25 = Always (Consistently Used);3.24–2.50 = Sometimes (Occasionally Used);2.49–1.75 = Rarely (Seldom Used);1.74–1.00 = Never (Not Used at All).

The lowest mean score of 3.32, was for the indicator "I use tactile strategies (e.g., sandpaper letters, letter tracing) to reinforce learning." While this still falls under "Always" on the scale, it's clear that tactile strategies are used less than the others. This might be due to a lack of materials or training on how to use them. Still, these types of activities are important, especially for learners who struggle with reading or have dyslexia, as noted by Syahputri, (2019)

Other strategies such as using hands-on activities with the mean score of 3.85, songs and rhymes with the mean score of 3.76, and movement-based methods like gestures with a mean score of 3.63. These help make reading lessons more engaging and memorable. Research by Mustafa Gazioğlu & Neslihan Karakuş, (2023) shows that learning through more than one sense can strengthen memory and help students understand abstract concepts more easily.

Table 4. *The Use of Guided and Shared Reading Strategies by Grade Two Teachers*

	Indicator	*Mean*	*Description*	*Interpretation*
1.	I conduct small-group guided reading sessions tailored to students' needs.	3.64	Always	Consistently Used
2.	I model fluent reading and comprehension strategies during shared reading.	3.82	Always	Consistently Used
3.	I provide opportunities for students to participate in interactive read-aloud.	3.88	Always	Consistently Used
4.	I encourage students to predict, question, and summarize texts during reading.	3.73	Always	Consistently Used
5.	I offer individualized feedback and support during guided reading sessions.	3.82	Always	Consistently Used
	Total	3.77	Always	Consistently Used

Note. Description and interpretation are based on the following scale:4.00–3.25 = Always (Consistently Used);3.24–2.50 = Sometimes (Occasionally Used);2.49–1.75 = Rarely (Seldom Used);1.74–1.00 = Never (Not Used at All).

Table 4 shows how Grade 2 teachers often integrate guided and shared reading in their instructions. The results indicates that the overall mean score of 3.77 suggests that these approaches are consistently used, indicating that most teachers in Grade 2 particularly in second district of Eastern Samar regularly apply these strategies to support reading development.

The indicator with highest mean score of 3.88, is item "I provide opportunities for students to participate in interactive read-aloud." This result shows that teachers place strong value on reading aloud to students and encouraging them to engage with the text. Interactive read-alouds give learners a chance to hear fluent reading, build vocabulary, and deepen comprehension. According to Altamimi & Ogdol, (2023), read-alouds that involve student interaction help create a richer learning experience by encouraging prediction, questioning, and discussion.

Two items tied for the second highest mean score which are "I model fluent reading and comprehension strategies during shared reading" and "I offer individualized feedback and support during guided reading sessions," both with a mean score of 3.82. These results highlight the importance teachers place on modeling effective reading behaviors and providing immediate support tailored to individual needs. As noted by Gough Kenyon et al., (2018) modeling and feedback are essential components of guided reading because they help learners internalize strategies and grow more independent over time.

The lowest mean score, 3.64, was recorded for "I conduct small-group guided reading sessions tailored to students' needs." Although this is still within the "Always" category, it reflects slightly less frequent use compared to the other strategies. This may point to challenges related to class size, time management, or a lack of instructional materials. However, small-group instruction remains a best practice for differentiated learning. According to Fountas and Pinnell (2017), small-group guided reading is one of the most effective

ways to address the diverse reading levels found in a typical classroom.

Another item, "I encourage students to predict, question, and summarize texts during reading," received a solid mean of 3.73, reflecting how comprehension strategies are embedded in teacher practice. Encouraging active engagement with texts supports higher-order thinking and deepens understanding, which is essential for early readers developing fluency and critical thinking skills.

The data show that Grade 2 teachers consistently implement guided and shared reading strategies. They most often use interactive read-alouds and provide individualized support and modeling. While small-group guided reading is used slightly less frequently, it remains an essential area for continued emphasis. These findings support the ongoing promotion of balanced literacy approaches that integrate modeling, participation, and feedback to foster reading growth among young learners.

Table 5. *The Use of Scaffolding Strategies by Grade Two Teachers*

Indicator	*Mean*	*Description*	*Interpretation*
1. I use modeling and think-aloud techniques to guide students' reading comprehension.	3.76	Always	Consistently Used
2. I gradually release responsibility to students as they become more independent readers.	3.7	Always	Consistently Used
3. I provide graphic organizers to help students structure their thoughts while reading.	3.61	Always	Consistently Used
4. I adjust the level of reading support based on students' progress.	3.88	Always	Consistently Used
5. I use questioning techniques to scaffold students' understanding of texts.	3.97	Always	Consistently Used
Total	3.78	Always	Consistently Used

Note. Description and interpretation are based on the following scale:4.00–3.25 = Always (Consistently Used);3.24–2.50 = Sometimes (Occasionally Used);2.49–1.75 = Rarely (Seldom Used);1.74–1.00 = Never (Not Used at All).

Table 5 presents how frequently Grade 2 teachers apply scaffolding strategies during reading instruction. The overall mean score of 3.78, which falls under the "Always" category, indicates that scaffolding is consistently practiced. This suggests that teachers in the second district of Eastern Samar regularly provide structured support to help young learners gradually develop reading independence and comprehension skills.

Among the indicators, the highest mean score of 3.97, was for the item "I use questioning techniques to scaffold students' understanding of texts." This finding highlights that teachers place strong emphasis on using strategic questioning to guide learners' thinking while reading. Well-crafted questions can prompt deeper comprehension, help clarify meaning, and encourage learners to engage critically with texts. According to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, questioning is a powerful instructional tool that enables learners to function within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), allowing them to build knowledge with appropriate guidance (Salem, 2016).

The second highest score was recorded for "I adjust the level of reading support based on students' progress" with the mean score of 3.88. This shows that teachers are responsive to individual learning needs and actively modify their support as learners grow more confident. Responsive instruction is a key component of effective scaffolding. As noted by Suryani et al., (2023), the gradual removal of support as students gain mastery is essential to foster autonomy and build literacy skills effectively.

At the lower end of the range, the indicator "I provide graphic organizers to help students structure their thoughts while reading" received the lowest mean score of 3.61. Although it still falls within the "Always" category, this slightly lower rating may suggest that visual aids such as story maps, Venn diagrams, or sequencing charts are used less frequently than other scaffolding strategies. However, the use of graphic organizers as effective tools in helping learners organize information, clarify relationships among ideas, and enhance reading comprehension.

The remaining strategies such as modeling and think-alouds with the mean score of 3.76 and gradual release of responsibility with the mean score of 3.70, also received strong scores. These strategies align with the widely accepted "I Do, We Do, You Do" model of scaffolding, which transitions learners from guided to independent practice. Latson, (2022) emphasized the value of think-alouds and modeling in making invisible cognitive processes visible to learners, particularly in early reading instruction.

Table 6 provides insights into how Grade 2 teachers integrate assistive technology and digital tools into reading instruction. The overall mean score of 3.30 indicates that, on average, these strategies are consistently used, falling within the "Always" category. However, the variability in individual item scores suggests that while some digital tools are regularly used, others are applied only occasionally.

The highest mean score, 3.52, was recorded for the indicator "I assess the effectiveness of digital resources in improving reading outcomes." This suggests that many teachers are actively evaluating the impact of technology on learners' progress. This practice is critical in ensuring that tools used in the classroom are not only engaging but also instructionally effective.

According to Al-Awidi and Aldhafeeri (2017), ongoing evaluation of digital tools helps educators make informed decisions about technology integration and ensures alignment with learning goals.

The second highest score, 3.35, was given to "I integrate online phonics programs to reinforce reading instruction." This highlights the

growing reliance on phonics-based applications and programs that provide interactive and adaptive learning experiences. These tools offer immediate feedback and allow for differentiated instruction, making them valuable for supporting early literacy (Saharuddin et al., 2025)

Table 6. The Use of Assistive Technology and Digital Resources by Grade Two Teachers

	Indicator	*Mean*	*Description*	*Interpretation*
1.	I incorporate audiobooks and text-to-speech software to support struggling readers.	3.14	Sometimes	Occasionally Used
2.	I use interactive e-books and literacy apps to enhance reading engagement.	3.23	Sometimes	Occasionally Used
3.	I integrate online phonics programs to reinforce reading instruction.	3.35	Always	Consistently Used
4.	I encourage students to use adaptive reading tools (e.g., dyslexia-friendly fonts).	3.29	Always	Consistently Used
5.	I assess the effectiveness of digital resources in improving reading outcomes.	3.52	Always	Consistently Used
	Total	3.30	Always	Consistently Used

Note. Description and interpretation are based on the following scale:4.00–3.25 = Always (Consistently Used);3.24–2.50 = Sometimes (Occasionally Used);2.49–1.75 = Rarely (Seldom Used);1.74–1.00 = Never (Not Used at All).

Similarly, the indicator "I encourage students to use adaptive reading tools (e.g., dyslexia-friendly fonts)" received a score of 3.29, showing a relatively strong presence of inclusive digital practices. Adaptive tools are especially beneficial for learners with reading challenges, helping reduce barriers to accessing text. Research by Campado et al., (2023) supports the use of accessibility features in digital platforms to assist learners with special educational needs.

In contrast, the lowest mean score, 3.14, was noted for "I incorporate audiobooks and text-to-speech software to support struggling readers." While still close to the "Always" range, this score falls under "Sometimes," indicating occasional use. This may reflect limited access to such tools or a lack of training in their integration. However, audiobooks and text-to-speech technologies are powerful tools for supporting learners with decoding difficulties and increasing exposure to language and content (Raffoul & Jaber, 2023).

The item "I use interactive e-books and literacy apps to enhance reading engagement" followed with a mean score of 3.23, also within the "Sometimes" range. Although these tools are designed to motivate and engage learners through multimedia features, their occasional use might be linked to constraints such as device availability, internet connectivity, or teacher familiarity.

Table 7. *Summary of Reading Strategies Utilized by Grade Two Teachers*

	Reading Strategies Used By Grade 2 Teachers	*Mean*	*Description*	*Interpretation*
1.	Phonic-Based Instruction	3.78	Always	Consistently Used
2.	Sight of Word Reading Strategies	3.76	Always	Consistently Used
3.	Multisensory Approaches	3.70	Always	Consistently Used
4.	Guided and Shared Reading Strategies	3.77	Always	Consistently Used
5.	Scaffolding Strategies	3.78	Always	Consistently Used
6.	Assistive Technology and Digital Resources	3.30	Always	Consistently Used
	Total	3.68	Always	Consistently Used

Note. Description and interpretation are based on the following scale:4.00–3.25 = Always (Consistently Used);3.24–2.50 = Sometimes (Occasionally Used);2.49–1.75 = Rarely (Seldom Used);1.74–1.00 = Never (Not Used at All).

Table 7 summarizes the extent to which Grade 2 teachers apply various reading strategies in their classrooms. With an overall mean score of 3.68, all strategies fall within the "Always" category, indicating that teachers consistently use a range of evidence-based methods to support literacy development among early-grade learners.

Among the six strategies assessed, both Phonic-Based Instruction and Scaffolding Strategies received the highest mean scores, 3.78. This finding reflects a strong emphasis on foundational decoding skills and structured support tailored to student needs. Phonics instruction remains a central component of early literacy, particularly in helping children decode unfamiliar words and build fluency. Castles et al., (2018) affirm that systematic phonics instruction significantly benefits beginning readers and supports long-term reading success. Similarly, scaffolding such as modeling, guided practice, and gradual release—has been shown to enhance learners' comprehension and confidence (Burns, 2022)

Close behind is Guided and Shared Reading, with a mean of 3.77. This approach allows teachers to model reading strategies, engage students in discussions, and provide individualized feedback. According to Barnes et al., (2023) shared and guided reading sessions promote fluency and comprehension by offering students support within their zone of proximal development.

Furthermore, Sight Word Reading Strategies with a mean score of 3.76 and Multisensory Approaches with a mean score of 3.70 also received strong ratings. The consistent use of sight word recognition techniques helps develop automaticity, which is essential for fluent reading. Meanwhile, multisensory learning such as using visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic inputs has been proven to enhance word recognition and memory retention, particularly for young and struggling readers.

The lowest mean score, 3.30, was recorded for Assistive Technology and Digital Resources. Although still within the "Always" category, this lower score suggests that while digital tools are present in instruction, they may not be as deeply integrated as other strategies. Factors such as limited access to devices, internet connectivity, or lack of training may contribute to less frequent use. However, as noted by Ogirima et al., (2017) digital tools like audiobooks, literacy apps, and adaptive reading software can significantly support learners with reading difficulties and increase engagement when effectively implemented.

Overall, the data show that Grade 2 teachers in the second district of Eastern Samar consistently employ a balanced mix of reading strategies. Emphasis is placed on phonics, scaffolding, and guided/shared reading, while the integration of technology although present may benefit from further enhancement. These findings align with best practices in literacy instruction and underscore the importance of equipping teachers with ongoing training and resources to support a diverse range of learners.

Reading Level Abilities among Grade Two Learners

Table 8. *Distribution of Class Reading Profile among Grade 2 Level Based on CRLA Result*

Reading Level	*Frequency*	*Percentage*
Full Refresher	0	0
Moderate Refresher	0	0
Light Refresher	1	3%
Grade Ready	33	97%
Total	34	100%

Note. Reading levels were classified based on learners' CRLA scores and mean scale ratings: 1.00–1.74 (0–10) = Full Refresher; 1.75–2.49 (11–16) = Moderate Refresher; 2.50–3.24 (17–26) = Light Refresher; 3.25–4.00 (27–30) = Grade Ready. The results reflect teacher-identified reading profiles for Grade 2 learners.

Table 8 displays the distribution of class-level reading profiles among 34 Grade 2 classes in the second district of Eastern Samar, as assessed using the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA). Each frequency count reflects a class profile, not individual student data. The results show that 33 or 97% out of 34 classes were classified as "Grade Ready," while only 1 or 3% class fell under the "Light Refresher" level. Notably, no class was categorized under the "Moderate Refresher" or "Full Refresher" levels.

The overwhelmingly high percentage of classes under the Grade Ready category indicates that the majority of Grade 2 learners across these classrooms are performing at a level appropriate to their grade. This suggests that foundational reading skills such as decoding, fluency, and basic comprehension are being successfully developed in most classrooms. These findings reflect the consistent application of effective instructional strategies, including phonics-based instruction, guided reading, scaffolding techniques, and multisensory approaches, as shown in previous tables.

The presence of only one class in the Light Refresher category indicates a minimal but notable need for supplementary support. This class may include learners who require occasional reinforcement in specific areas such as vocabulary, fluency, or comprehension. According to Rupley et al., (2020) early detection of reading difficulties is essential to prevent long-term learning gaps. Implementing targeted interventions at this stage can ensure learners return to grade-level proficiency without needing more intensive remediation.

Therefore, the class reading profiles of Grade 2 in this assessment reflect strong overall reading readiness across schools. The results support the notion that current literacy instruction is effective in promoting essential reading competencies. However, the presence of even a single class needing light refresher support reinforces the need for continued monitoring, early intervention, and responsive teaching strategies to maintain and further improve literacy outcomes at the classroom level.

Relationship between Reading Strategies and Reading Level Abilities

Table 9 presents the results of a correlational analysis conducted to determine the relationship between the different reading strategies utilized by Grade 2 teachers and the reading performance of their learners.

Among the strategies analyzed, Sight Word Reading Strategies was the only variable that showed a statistically significant relationship with reading performance with correlation coefficient of .369 and a p value of .035. This low but significant positive correlation suggests that increased use of sight word strategies may contribute to improved reading outcomes among Grade 2 learners. This finding supports the work of Eisnor (2022), who emphasized that the automatic recognition of high-frequency words is crucial for reading fluency, which in turn supports comprehension.

On the other hand, the strategy Phonic-Based Instruction yielded a low correlation with r value of .221 with reading performance but was not statistically significant. Although phonics is widely recognized as a foundational skill in early reading, the lack of significance in this context may be attributed to the already high percentage of Grade 2 learners identified as "Grade Ready." This could suggest that most students have already internalized basic phonics skills, reducing the variance in performance that can be explained by this strategy.

Multisensory Approaches also showed a low correlation of .321 but did not reach statistical significance with a p value of .068. While this approach has been widely supported in the literature for engaging diverse learners and enhancing retention (Birsh & Carreker, 2018), the small effect size and lack of significance in this study may be due to variability in implementation or limitations in access to materials.

Table 9. *Relationship between Reading Strategies and Reading Performance of Grade 2 Learners*

Variable 1	*Variable 2*	*Correlation Coefficient*	*Interpretation*	*P value*	*Interpretation*
Phonic-Based Instruction	Reading Performance	.221	Low Correlation	.217	Not Significant
Sight of Word Reading Strategies		.369	Low Correlation	.035	Significant
Multisensory Approaches		.321	Low Correlation	.068	Not Significant
Guided and Shared Reading Strategies		.074	Negligible Correlation	.681	Not Significant
Scaffolding Strategies		.0.59	Negligible Correlation	.744	Not Significant
Assistive Technology and Digital Resources		.027	Negligible Correlation	.881	Not Significant

The remaining strategies such as Guided and Shared Reading Strategies Scaffolding Strategies and Assistive Technology and Digital Resources showed negligible correlations with reading performance and were statistically not significant. These findings suggest that, the use of these particular strategies was not strongly associated with variation in reading performance levels. This does not negate their instructional value but rather indicates that their direct impact on measured performance may be influenced by other factors such as student engagement, level of implementation, or duration of exposure.

The results indicate that among the six reading strategies, only sight word reading strategies had a statistically significant relationship with reading performance, although the strength of the relationship remained low. The findings underscore the complexity of literacy development and suggest that while multiple strategies are consistently used, their impact may vary depending on contextual, instructional, and learner-specific variables. Ongoing professional development and differentiated instruction remain critical to ensuring the effective application of these strategies in the classroom.

Table 10. *Overall Correlation Between Reading Strategies and Reading Performance of Grade 2 Learners*

Variable 1	*Variable 2*	*Correlation Coefficient*	*Interpretation*	*P value*	*Interpretation*
Reading Strategies	Reading Performance	.199	Negligible Correlation	.266	Not Significant

Table 10 presents the overall correlation between the combined use of various reading strategies and the reading performance of Grade 2 learners. The analysis yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.199, which is interpreted as a negligible relationship. The corresponding p-value of 0.266 indicates that the relationship is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

This result suggests that, the different reading strategies implemented by teachers do not have a strong or significant direct impact on the measured reading performance of Grade 2 learners. A negligible correlation implies that other variables may play a more substantial role in influencing learner outcomes, such as the quality of implementation, learners' home literacy environment, instructional time, or individual differences in learning pace and readiness.

Although this finding does not diminish the importance of using evidence-based reading strategies in early education, it emphasizes that strategy use alone may not be a sufficient predictor of reading success unless paired with consistent implementation, differentiated instruction, and learner engagement. As noted by Sun et al., (2021) the effectiveness of reading strategies is influenced by how they are integrated into instruction, the level of support provided, and the extent to which they meet learners' specific needs.

Additionally, the lack of significance in the overall correlation aligns with the idea that reading development is multifaceted and often requires a combination of instructional strategies, targeted interventions, and environmental supports to show measurable gains in performance. According to Snow and Matthews (2016), literacy growth in early grades is best supported through a systemic approach involving not just strategies, but also curriculum alignment, teacher training, and family involvement.

Conclusion

This study found that Grade 2 teachers in the Second District of Eastern Samar consistently applied a wide range of evidence-based reading strategies, including phonics-based instruction, sight word recognition, multisensory approaches, guided and shared reading, scaffolding techniques, and the integration of assistive technology. All strategies were rated under the "Always" category, indicating regular and structured use in day-to-day classroom instruction. Among these, phonics-based instruction and scaffolding stood out as the most frequently used, highlighting teachers' emphasis on building strong foundational skills and providing supportive, learner-centered environments. Encouragingly, learner performance data from the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) showed

that 97% of the classes were considered "Grade Ready," reflecting the overall effectiveness of current teaching practices in fostering early literacy development.

However, when the relationship between the strategies and learner performance was analyzed, only sight word reading strategies showed a statistically significant—though modest—correlation with reading achievement. This suggests that while a variety of methods are being used, their impact on student outcomes may depend less on the number of strategies and more on how thoughtfully and effectively they are implemented. It also points to the possibility that factors beyond the classroom, such as learner motivation, differentiated instruction, and support at home, may influence reading success just as much as the strategies themselves.

Based on these insights, it is recommended that schools continue to support teachers through regular professional development, especially in enhancing practices that are less frequently applied such as the use of assistive technologies, phonics games, and tactile learning activities. Sight word instruction, given its demonstrated link to improved reading performance, should be further integrated across instructional activities, reinforced with engaging tools like word walls, flashcards, and digital games. To support learners who may be struggling, an early literacy intervention framework is also encouraged. This should include regular assessments, tailored support at varying levels of need, and continuous progress monitoring. Lastly, establishing reflective teaching practices through observation, peer feedback, and self-assessment can help ensure that strategies are not only used, but used meaningfully and responsively. Together, these actions can help strengthen literacy instruction and better support every child's journey to becoming a confident reader.

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