

Assessing the Reading Skills of Grade 4, 5, and 6 Pupils of Mangan Elementary School

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ABSTRACT

Reading is an essential skill that serves as the foundation of learning and academic achievement among elementary learners. This study assessed the reading skills of Grade 4, 5, and 6 pupils of Mangan Elementary School after they participated in the Brigada Pagbasa Program of Project PADAYON-ARAL KITA with Aklan State University. The study utilized a qualitative research design involving ten selected pupils from Grades 4, 5, and 6 through convenience sampling. Data were collected through researcher-made questionnaires and analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings revealed that the participants demonstrated improvements in phonics, pronunciation, and reading comprehension. The learners reported increased confidence in reading aloud and a better understanding of reading materials. However, challenges remained in vocabulary development and word recognition, particularly in understanding unfamiliar words. The

findings indicate that Brigada Pagbasa contributed positively to the reading development of the participants by providing opportunities for guided reading practice and learning support. The study concludes that reading intervention programs remain effective in enhancing learners' reading skills and should be continuously strengthened to address the diverse literacy needs of elementary pupils.

Keywords: *reading skills, Brigada Pagbasa Program, reading intervention, elementary pupils, word recognition, phonics, vocabulary, pronunciation, reading comprehension*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a fundamental literacy skill that supports learners' academic success and personal development. It enables learners to acquire knowledge, understand lessons, communicate effectively, and participate actively in classroom activities. Reading also serves as the foundation for learning across all subject areas. Jukkalkar (2025) stated that reading skills are essential for developing comprehension, critical thinking, and lifelong learning abilities. Likewise, Abestano (2026) described reading as a preparation for life because it broadens understanding and supports intellectual growth.

Despite its importance, many elementary learners continue to experience difficulties in reading. Studies have shown that low reading proficiency remains a concern among elementary pupils, particularly in word recognition, vocabulary development, reading fluency, and reading comprehension (Librea et al., 2023; Guerrero, 2025). These difficulties affect learners' ability to understand texts, participate in classroom activities, and achieve academic success. Balisoro, Gabay, and Funa (2025) emphasized the importance of assessing learners' reading abilities to identify reading gaps and provide appropriate interventions.

Schools have implemented various reading intervention programs to improve learners' literacy skills. One of these programs is the Brigada Pagbasa Program of Project PADAYON–ARAL KITA with Aklan State University. The program provides guided reading activities and learning support to struggling readers through the participation of teachers, volunteers, and community stakeholders. The program aims to improve learners' reading skills and encourage positive reading habits.

Although the Brigada Pagbasa Program had been implemented in Mangan Elementary School, its contribution to the reading development of learners had not yet been assessed. Determining the reading skills of learners who participated in the program was necessary to evaluate its effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. The results provided useful information for strengthening future reading intervention initiatives in the school.

Therefore, this study aimed to assess the reading skills of Grade 4, Grade 5, and Grade 6 pupils of Mangan Elementary School and determine the possible effects of the Brigada Pagbasa Program on their reading development.

Literature Review

Importance of Reading Skills

Reading is a fundamental skill that supports learners' academic achievement and personal development. According to Abestano (2026), reading serves as a preparation for life by expanding learners' understanding and developing critical thinking abilities. Similarly, Jukkalkar (2025) emphasized that reading skills contribute to comprehension, communication, and lifelong learning. Because reading is essential across all subject areas, learners need to develop strong reading abilities to succeed academically.

Reading Difficulties Among Elementary Learners

Many elementary learners continue to experience challenges in reading. Librea et al. (2023) found that low reading literacy remains a concern among Filipino elementary pupils, particularly in reading comprehension and word recognition. Likewise, Guerrero (2025) reported that vocabulary limitations and comprehension difficulties significantly affect learners' reading proficiency. These challenges may hinder learners' academic performance and participation in classroom activities.

Components of Reading Skills

Reading proficiency involves several essential components, including word recognition, phonics, vocabulary, pronunciation, and reading comprehension. Bitnara and Xiang (2023) emphasized that early development of foundational reading skills contributes to later reading success. Gedik and Akyol (2022) also found that phonics instruction and repeated reading practice help improve reading fluency and accuracy. These components work together to support learners' overall reading development.

Reading Comprehension and Academic Performance

Reading comprehension enables learners to understand, interpret, and respond to written texts. Piñero and Cañedo (2024) explained that comprehension skills are necessary for meaningful learning and effective communication. Similarly, Cadiz-Gabejan and Quirino (2021) found that learners with higher reading proficiency tend to demonstrate better academic performance. This suggests that improving comprehension skills can positively influence learners' educational outcomes.

Reading Intervention Programs

Various reading intervention programs have been implemented to address reading difficulties among learners. Del Mundo (2019) found that storytelling activities helped improve the reading levels of struggling readers. Likewise, Ladio (2022) reported that guided reading instruction contributed to improvements in learners' reading performance. Palad (2023) also found that structured reading interventions helped enhance pupils' reading skills. These studies indicate that intervention programs can effectively support literacy development.

Effectiveness of Reading Support Programs

Research has shown that continuous reading support contributes to learners' literacy growth. Tortola (2024) found that early reading interventions positively affect learners' reading achievement and literacy development. Main, Hill, and Paolino (2023) likewise emphasized that sustained reading programs improve learners' reading skills when implemented consistently. These findings support the importance of programs such as Brigada Pagbasa in helping learners strengthen their reading abilities.

METHODS

Research Design

The study used a qualitative research method. The qualitative research method involved collecting and analyzing non-numerical data (e.g., text, video, or audio) to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences (Bhandari, 2020). A qualitative research method was suited for the study since it gathered and obtained the intended answers to the research questions on how the participants of the study, “Assessing the Reading Skills of Grade 4, 5, and 6 Pupils of Mangan Elementary School” improved their reading skills through the Brigada Pagbasa program.

Research Locale and Participants

The study was conducted at Mangan Elementary School during School Year 2025-2026. The participants were 10 pupils selected from Grades 4, 5, and 6. The selected participants from Grade 4 and 5 were both (3) pupils, while four (4) were selected from Grade 6 pupils. Grade 4, 5, and 6 pupils of Mangan Elementary School were selected as the participants of the study because these intermediate grade levels were expected to possess foundational reading skills and engage in more complex reading tasks that require word recognition, vocabulary development, fluency, and reading comprehension.

Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling was used. Convenience sampling, also known as “opportunity or availability sampling,” was a non-probability sampling technique in which participants were selected based on accessibility and availability. This sampling technique was appropriate for the study due to the limited time and accessibility of participants because the school is already in its recognition week during the conduct of the survey. Therefore, no reading test was administered.

Research Instrument

An interview using a Google Form survey questionnaire and a researcher-made survey questionnaire was used. A Google form survey questionnaire was used for the student volunteers of Sagibin Volunteer Organization (SVO) who taught voluntarily in Grade 4, 5, and 6 pupils of Mangan Elementary School during the Brigada Pagbasa Program. It consisted of questions about their Brigada Pagbasa teaching experience. The responses of the student volunteers served as the basis for the researchers in creating a researcher-made questionnaire for the participants. A researcher-made survey questionnaire was used for the participants and consisted of twelve (12) Akeanon-language questions divided into five domains with 2 questions each: pagkilaea it mga bisaea (word recognition), pagtuon it tunog it mga letra (phonics), taeakawan (vocabulary), paagi it paghambae (pronunciation), and pag-intindi it ginabasa (reading comprehension). The responses of participants were grouped based on similar answers, such as improvements in reading, challenges encountered, and overall experiences.

Data Gathering Procedure

Permission was sought from the Sagibin Volunteer Organization (SVO) President, School Principal, personnel who keep the record for the total population of Aral beneficiaries, and the Parents/guardians of the participants. The participants were oriented on the purpose of the study and the importance of honest participation. Questionnaires were personally administered, collected, checked, organized, and prepared for analysis.

Data Analysis

The data gathered from the questionnaire were analyzed by focusing on pupils' responses regarding their experiences before and after participating in Brigada Pagbasa. Since the study employed a qualitative approach, the researchers carefully read, reviewed, and interpreted all responses to identify common ideas and recurring themes shared by the participants.

Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary. The participants, school authorities, and parents/guardians were informed of the study's purpose and procedures. Privacy and confidentiality were maintained, and the researchers sought to avoid discomfort or harm during data collection. Because the participants were minors, future studies should explicitly document parental or guardian consent and pupil assent procedures.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Participants

The study involved 10 pupils who were selected from Grades 4, 5, and 6. The selected participants were both (3) pupils from Grades 4 and 5, while four (4) were selected from Grade 6 pupils.

Brigada Pagbasa: Teaching Experience of the Student Volunteers

According on the responses of student volunteers, the instruction during Brigada Pagbasa sessions mainly focused on developing learners' reading skills, particularly in areas such as word recognition, phonics, vocabulary, pronunciation, and reading comprehension.

Brigada Pagbasa Learning Experience of the Participants

Domain i: pagkilala it mga bisaya (word recognition)

In terms of word recognition, the responses of the participants were both positive and negative. Some learners showed improvement in identifying and reading words, while others still experienced difficulties despite the decoding and repeated practice activities.

Domain ii: pagtuon it mga tunog it letra (phonics)

Regarding phonics, the responses of the participants were mostly positive. Most of the participants reported that learning letter sounds helped them improve their reading by making it easier to identify and pronounce words. They also shared that understanding vowel sounds strengthened their reading skills, as it guided them in forming and reading words more accurately.

Domain iii: taeakawan (vocabulary)

In terms of vocabulary, the responses of the participants were mostly negative. Most of the participants reported limited new words learned during Brigada Pagbasa and still experienced difficulties in understanding word meanings. Furthermore, in relation to how their understanding of words affected their reading, most learners indicated that unclear vocabulary hindered their comprehension of the text.

Domain iv: paagi it paghambae (pronunciation)

With regard to pronunciation, the responses of the participants were mostly positive. Most of the participants reported improvement in their pronunciation of words when reading aloud. They also shared that they felt more confident when reading in front of others and their confidence was increased after the implementation of Brigada Pagbasa.

Domain v: pag-intindi it ginabasa (reading comprehension)

In terms of reading comprehension, the responses of the participants were mostly positive. Most of the participants improved their understanding of the stories they read compared to before Brigada Pagbasa. They also indicated that they became better at answering questions after reading a story, showing greater ability to comprehend and interpret the text.

Table 1. *Summary and Interpretation of the Responses of Participants in each Domain.*

Domains	Summary of Responses	Interpretation
Pagkilaea it mga Bisaea (Word Recognition)	Some participants improved in identifying words, while others still struggled.	Responses were both positive and negative.
Pagtuon it mga Tunog it Letra (Phonics)	Most of the participants improved pronunciation through letter sounds and vowel recognition.	Responses were mostly positive.
Taeakawan (Vocabulary)	Most of the participants had limited vocabulary improvement and difficulty understanding words.	Responses were mostly negative.
Paagi it Paghambae (Pronunciation)	Most of the participants became more confident and improved in reading aloud.	Responses were mostly positive.
Pag-intindi it Ginabasa (Reading Comprehension)	Most of the participants better understood stories and answered questions more effectively.	Responses were mostly positive.

As shown in Table 1, the findings of the study showed that Brigada Pagbasa helped improve the reading skills of the participants in different areas. Based on the responses of the learners, the program provided meaningful learning experiences that contributed to the development of their reading abilities, particularly in word recognition, phonics, vocabulary, pronunciation, and reading comprehension. The reading activities conducted during the sessions allowed the participants to practice reading more often and gradually improve their confidence and understanding.

In terms of word recognition, the responses of the participants showed both positive and negative experiences. Some learners shared that they became more capable of identifying and reading words because of the repeated reading activities and decoding exercises. However, several participants still experienced difficulty in recognizing unfamiliar words. This suggested that while the program helped improve the reading skills of some learners, others may still need additional support and continuous practice to strengthen their word recognition abilities.

The findings also revealed that phonics instruction positively affected the learners' reading development. Most of the participants explained that learning letter sounds and vowel sounds made reading easier for them. Through these activities, the learners were able to pronounce and identify words more accurately. This indicated that phonics activities played an important role in helping the participants develop their basic reading skills.

In terms of vocabulary, the responses of the participants were mostly negative. Most of the participants stated that they still had difficulty understanding unfamiliar words and learning new vocabulary terms during the implementation of Brigada Pagbasa. Because of limited vocabulary knowledge, participants also struggled to fully understand the stories they read. This finding suggested that vocabulary enhancement should be given greater emphasis in future reading intervention activities.

Meanwhile, the findings on pronunciation showed mostly positive responses. The participants shared that they improved in pronouncing words correctly and became more confident when reading aloud in front of others. The regular reading activities helped lessen their fear and hesitation in reading, which contributed to the improvement of their confidence and oral reading skills.

Lastly, the findings on reading comprehension revealed positive responses from most participants. The learners expressed that they understood stories better and became more capable of answering comprehension questions after reading. This indicated that Brigada Pagbasa helped improve the participants' ability to comprehend and interpret texts. Overall, the findings suggested that Brigada Pagbasa was beneficial in enhancing the reading development of the participants despite some challenges encountered in vocabulary and word recognition.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it can be concluded that Brigada Pagbasa helped improve the reading skills of Grade 4, 5, and 6 pupils of Mangan Elementary School. The participants shared positive experiences in areas such as *phonics*, *pronunciation*, and *reading comprehension*, showing that the program became helpful in developing their reading abilities. Through regular reading activities and guidance, the learners became more confident in reading aloud, identifying words, and understanding stories.

However, the study also revealed that some participants still experienced difficulties in *word recognition and vocabulary*. Some learners continued to struggle with unfamiliar words and understanding word meanings, which also affected their comprehension. This shows that while Brigada Pagbasa contributed positively to the reading development of the learners, there are still areas that need further improvement and continuous support.

Overall, the study found that Brigada Pagbasa served as an effective reading intervention program for the participants. The program provided opportunities for learners to practice and improve their reading skills while also helping them develop confidence and interest in reading. Therefore, continuous implementation of reading intervention programs like Brigada Pagbasa may further help learners improve their reading performance and academic development.

Recommendations

Department of Education and Division Offices may strengthen support for reading intervention programs by providing sufficient reading materials, training opportunities, and monitoring systems for schools implementing Brigada Pagbasa. They may also encourage schools to conduct continuous literacy programs that focus on improving the reading abilities of struggling learners. School heads and Administrators may support the implementation of Brigada Pagbasa by allocating time for reading activities, encouraging teacher participation, and building partnerships with parents and community volunteers. They may also organize school-based reading activities that promote learners' interest and engagement in reading. Teachers are encouraged to continue using learner-centered and interactive reading strategies that motivate pupils to participate actively during reading sessions.

Teachers may also provide regular monitoring, feedback, and encouragement to learners who experience reading difficulties. Creating a positive and supportive classroom environment may further help improve learners' confidence and reading performance. Parents and Guardians are encouraged to support their children's reading development at home by providing time for reading practice and offering motivation and guidance. Maintaining communication with teachers regarding the learners' progress may also help strengthen the partnership between home and school in improving literacy skills. Future researchers may conduct similar studies using a wider scope, a larger number of participants, or different research methods to further assess the effectiveness of Brigada Pagbasa and other reading intervention programs. Additional studies may also explore other factors that influence the reading development of elementary learners.

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