

Culturally Responsive Filipino Instruction and Reading Comprehension Depth Among Grade 6 Learners

Jonalyn B. Postaza
Northeastern College
jpostaza@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Framed by current concerns on meaningful literacy learning, this research assessed the relationship between culturally responsive Filipino instruction and reading comprehension depth among Grade 6 learners in Dappat Integrated School, City of Ilagan, Isabela. The inquiry was anchored on the premise that literacy develops more effectively when instruction reflects learners' cultural background, familiar language practices, and community context. A quantitative non-experimental correlational design with a cross-sectional predictive approach was employed. Data were obtained through a validated researcher-made questionnaire on culturally responsive Filipino instruction and a Filipino reading comprehension

assessment. The questionnaire registered a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.91, indicating excellent internal consistency. Descriptive statistics, Kendall's tau-b correlation, and simple linear regression were used to analyze the data. Results revealed that culturally responsive Filipino instruction was manifested at a very high level, while the learners demonstrated a very satisfactory level of reading comprehension depth. Literal and inferential comprehension emerged as relatively stronger areas, whereas interpretive and evaluative comprehension, though satisfactory, appeared comparatively lower. Inferential analysis showed a significant moderate positive relationship between culturally responsive Filipino instruction and reading comprehension depth. Regression results further established that culturally responsive Filipino instruction significantly predicted learners' comprehension performance. The findings indicated that Filipino teaching grounded in learners' cultural and linguistic realities contributed meaningfully to deeper text understanding. The study recommended the sustained use of culturally responsive teaching practices and the strengthening of higher-order reading activities in Filipino instruction.

Keywords: *culturally responsive instruction, Filipino instruction, reading comprehension depth, Grade 6 learners, culturally grounded pedagogy, literacy development*

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension remained one of the most urgent concerns in basic education because it shaped how learners interpreted ideas, connected meanings, and responded thoughtfully to what they read. In the Philippine setting, this concern has been repeatedly highlighted by large scale assessments and education policy reports. The OECD reported that only 24% of 15-year-old students in the Philippines reached at least Level 2 proficiency in reading in PISA 2022, which meant that only a limited proportion of learners demonstrated the minimum ability to identify main ideas, locate information using explicit criteria,

and reflect on the purpose and form of texts when guided (OECD, 2023). In a related national picture, the World Bank (2024) noted that learning poverty in the Philippines remained very high, with many children unable to read and understand an age-appropriate text by the end of primary school. These realities suggested that schools needed more responsive and context-sensitive approaches to literacy instruction, especially in the intermediate grades where reading was expected to move beyond basic decoding toward deeper comprehension, interpretation, and critical engagement with texts.

The teaching of Filipino held a particularly important place because language learning was not only about grammar and vocabulary but also about identity, meaning, and social experience. The Department of Education explained in the MATATAG curriculum framework that Filipino in Grades 4 to 6 was expected to continue developing learners' communicative competence as well as applied and critical literacy skills, including the ability to analyze, interpret, evaluate, and respond to texts. The same framework also emphasized that learners' first language knowledge, oracy, and literacy experiences should serve as foundations for strengthening Filipino and English learning, while the classroom may draw on translanguaging and other meaningful language resources to support understanding (Department of Education, 2023). This policy direction implied that effective Filipino instruction should not be detached from learners' cultural and linguistic realities. Rather, it should build on what learners already knew, valued, and experienced in their homes and communities.

This was where culturally responsive instruction became highly relevant. Culturally responsive pedagogy recognized students' cultural backgrounds as assets in the teaching and learning process and aimed to connect classroom content with learners' lived experiences. Lim et al. (2019) explained that culturally relevant pedagogy sought to build bridges between home and school experiences by recognizing students' cultural strengths rather than treating difference as a barrier. In literacy instruction, this orientation became even more important because comprehension was strengthened when learners could relate the world of the text to their own social and cultural worlds. Kelly et al. (2023) emphasized that teachers played a mediating role in bridging the cultural world of the text and the cultural world of learners, suggesting that comprehension was not simply a technical reading skill but a meaning-making process shaped by context. UNESCO (2025) likewise underscored that effective language and literacy instruction should be supported by culturally relevant materials that reflected learners' diverse linguistic backgrounds. These insights supported the idea that Filipino teaching became more meaningful when texts, examples, classroom interactions, and learning activities reflected local realities familiar to Grade 6 learners.

The relevance of this perspective became even clearer in the Philippines and Southeast Asian evidence base. UNICEF Philippines reported that recent SEA-PLM findings showed continuing disparities in reading performance associated with household background, region, and whether children spoke the test language at home, pointing to the strong role of language and context in literacy outcomes (UNICEF Philippines, 2025). For learners in schools such as Dappat Integrated School in the City of Ilagan, Isabela, this suggested that reading comprehension depth in Filipino might be strengthened when instruction acknowledged their cultural references, community experiences, familiar expressions, and local ways of making meaning. Grade 6 learners were already expected to engage in richer forms of understanding such as interpretation, synthesis, and evaluation. Because of this, culturally responsive Filipino instruction was not merely an inclusive teaching preference but a potentially important educational response to persistent comprehension difficulties. Thus, examining the relationship between culturally responsive Filipino instruction and reading comprehension depth among Grade 6 learners was both timely and significant, as it could offer evidence for designing language instruction that was more meaningful, equitable, and responsive to the learners it intended to serve.

Literature Review

Culturally Responsive Instruction as a Pedagogical Orientation

Culturally responsive instruction is grounded in the view that learners do not enter the classroom as blank recipients of information. They bring with them language practices, social experiences, community knowledge, values, and ways of interpreting the world. Recent scholarship has emphasized that culturally responsive or culturally relevant pedagogy should not be reduced to superficial inclusion of familiar examples or festive representations of culture. Rather, it involves designing instruction that recognizes learners' cultural identities as intellectual resources for meaning-making, participation, and achievement. Chang and Viesca (2022) explained that culturally responsive pedagogy was developed as a transformative approach for historically marginalized learners, but its full promise depended on how deeply teachers connected pedagogy with equity, cultural ways of knowing, and the disruption of deficit views. In literacy education, this meant that reading instruction became more effective when teachers consciously linked texts, classroom discussion, and interpretive tasks with students lived realities and social worlds. Such a view positioned culture not as an add-on to teaching, but as a central condition for meaningful learning.

This orientation has been supported by reviews of literacy research. Dukes et al. (2023) found in their qualitative review that culturally responsive literacy instruction in the literature often involved the use of culturally specific materials and teaching practices that connected literacy learning with learners' backgrounds and identities. Their review suggested that literacy instruction became more meaningful when texts and teaching approaches reflected the cultural realities of children rather than requiring learners to disconnect from their own experiences in order to succeed in school reading tasks.

Cultural and Linguistic Foundations of Filipino Instruction

In the Philippine curriculum, language instruction has increasingly been framed as developmental, contextual, and connected to learners' existing linguistic resources. The Department of Education's MATATAG curriculum recognized the role of the learner's first language as a foundation for literacy development and further knowledge construction. The General Shaping Paper stated that the first language serves as the most effective language and literacy resource for establishing a strong foundation for learning, while the revised language curricula were designed to transition and bridge learners toward Filipino and English through prior linguistic knowledge and communicative ability (Department of Education, 2023). This policy direction affirmed that language teaching in the Philippines was not meant to be detached from the learner's home language and cultural environment. Instead, it acknowledged that learning in Filipino and English was strengthened when it built on what children already knew, understood, and used in everyday life.

This perspective aligned with UNESCO's recent guidance on multilingual education, which emphasized that teachers should be equipped to deliver instruction supported by culturally relevant materials that reflect diverse linguistic backgrounds and that community participation strengthens educational relevance and outcomes (UNESCO, 2025). In the context of Filipino instruction, such guidance reinforced the importance of using texts, examples, and learning interactions that reflected local culture, regional experiences, and socially meaningful language use.

Filipino Instruction in Key Stage 2 under the MATATAG Curriculum

The place of Filipino instruction in the intermediate grades became clearer in the MATATAG curriculum's framing of Key Stage 2. The Reading and Literacy curriculum guide explained that, in Grades 4 to 6, Filipino and English were expected to develop learners' applied and critical literacy skills. Applied literacy was described as the ability to use reading and writing in socially appropriate ways for communicative purposes, while critical literacy included the skills to synthesize, analyze, interpret, evaluate, and respond to texts (Department of Education, 2023). This was highly relevant to the present

study because it showed that the curriculum already expected learners in Grade 6 to move beyond surface understanding toward deeper engagement with ideas, meanings, and judgments embedded in texts.

From this, Filipino instruction in Grade 6 was not limited to literal recall or simple identification of details. It was expected to help learners negotiate meaning, relate texts to broader contexts, and form thoughtful responses grounded in language and literacy competence. Therefore, culturally responsive Filipino instruction may be viewed as a suitable pedagogical pathway for achieving these expectations. When texts and classroom interactions are culturally familiar and socially meaningful, learners may be better positioned to interpret, connect, question, and evaluate what they read. This makes cultural responsiveness especially important in Filipino instruction, where language, identity, and social experience are closely intertwined.

Reading Comprehension Depth as More Than Literal Understanding

Reading comprehension depth refers to the extent to which readers move from basic understanding of explicit information to more complex forms of meaning construction such as inference, interpretation, synthesis, evaluation, and reasoned response. Current curriculum and international literacy discourse both suggest that comprehension should be understood as a layered process rather than a single skill. The MATATAG curriculum for Key Stage 2 explicitly linked literacy development with the ability to analyze, interpret, evaluate, and respond to texts, showing that deep comprehension involved critical engagement rather than mere recognition of information (Department of Education, 2023). Similarly, the OECD described minimum reading proficiency in PISA 2022 as including the ability to identify the main idea, locate information using explicit criteria, and reflect on the purpose and form of texts when directed, while higher levels required comprehension of longer, more abstract, and more complex texts (OECD, 2023). These descriptions illustrated that reading comprehension depth developed along a continuum and required instruction that supported increasingly complex interpretive work.

The importance of deep comprehension is also emphasized by the World Bank's learning poverty framework, which treats reading with comprehension as a foundational gateway to learning in all other subject areas. The 2024 Philippines Learning Poverty Brief noted that reading proficiency serves as a proxy for foundational learning and that inability to read with comprehension constrains achievement in subjects such as mathematics and science (World Bank, 2024). This literature strongly suggested that studying reading comprehension depth among Grade 6 learners was not a narrow concern confined to language class. It was tied to broader educational success, especially in schools where learners were expected to use reading as a tool for understanding increasingly demanding academic content.

Culture, Prior Knowledge, and Meaning-Making in Reading

A central idea in reading research is that comprehension develops through the interaction between the text and the reader's prior knowledge. Cultural background is part of that prior knowledge because it shapes how learners interpret words, situations, values, and assumptions in texts. Kelly et al. (2023), in their systematic review on culture in reading comprehension interventions, argued that reading comprehension is deeply embedded within cultural practices, including interests, interpretation of language, prior knowledge, and values. Their review further found that many interventions used evidence-based strategies but often failed to explicitly address or describe the role of culture in the intervention itself. This insight is important because it suggests that even sound instructional techniques may become less meaningful when they ignore the cultural realities learners use to make sense of texts.

This line of thought was also consistent with metalinguistic and bilingual reading research. Sun et al. (2020) found that metalinguistic awareness, particularly syntactic and morphological awareness, contributed to reading comprehension, while home language use supported reading proficiency through its impact on metalinguistic awareness in bilingual learners. Although this study was conducted in Chinese language contexts, its broader implication was that language awareness and comprehension are shaped by

how learners use and understand language across their environments. In the present study, this supported the idea that Filipino comprehension may deepen when instruction engages the cultural and linguistic knowledge learners bring from home and community contexts. In other words, reading comprehension depth is not only a matter of cognitive processing but also a matter of how well classroom instruction activates meaningful knowledge structures already present in the learner.

Learner Context, Reading Motivation, and Comprehension Development

Another relevant line of literature concerns the influence of learners' literacy environment on comprehension development. Claes et al. (2024) found that aspects of the home literacy environment, such as an active reading climate and the presence of books at home, were positively associated with reading comprehension, with reading enjoyment, motivation, and reading frequency serving as important mediating factors. This suggested that comprehension development is not purely a result of classroom drills or text exposure alone. It is also shaped by whether learners experience reading as meaningful, engaging, and worth doing. When classroom instruction mirrors familiar cultural realities, it may contribute to this sense of relevance and encourage stronger engagement with reading tasks.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative non-experimental correlational research design, particularly a cross-sectional predictive approach. This design was considered appropriate because the study examined the extent of culturally responsive Filipino instruction and the level of reading comprehension depth among Grade 6 learners, and then determined whether a meaningful relationship existed between the two variables. The design was also suitable because it allowed the researcher to gather data from the respondents within a single period of implementation without manipulating classroom conditions or instructional practices. In this study, culturally responsive Filipino instruction was treated as the explanatory variable, while reading comprehension depth was treated as the outcome variable. Through this approach, the study was able to describe the present instructional situation and examine whether variations in culturally responsive teaching were associated with variations in learners' reading comprehension depth.

Research Locale

The study was conducted at Dappat Integrated School in the City of Ilagan, Isabela. The school served as an appropriate setting for the investigation because it provided a real classroom environment where Filipino instruction and reading development among Grade 6 learners could be meaningfully examined. As an educational institution situated within a culturally rich local community, the school offered a relevant environment for exploring how classroom instruction in Filipino may reflect learners' cultural backgrounds, community experiences, and familiar linguistic realities. The locale was considered suitable because the study focused on the relationship between instructional responsiveness and reading comprehension in a natural school setting where these variables were actively experienced by learners.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants of the study were Grade 6 learners of Dappat Integrated School who were officially enrolled during the conduct of the research. These learners were selected because they were the most appropriate group for examining the study variables, considering that Grade 6 pupils were already expected to demonstrate more developed comprehension skills in Filipino, including interpretation, inference, synthesis, and evaluative understanding.

The study used total enumeration sampling. This sampling technique was deemed appropriate because all learners in the target group were included in the study, allowing the researcher to obtain a more complete picture of the instructional and reading comprehension conditions within the Grade 6 level of the school. The use of total enumeration also strengthened the representativeness of the data within the chosen locale and minimized the risk of excluding relevant learner perspectives from the investigation.

Research Instrument

Data were gathered using a two-part research instrument. The first part consisted of a researcher-made questionnaire designed to measure the level of culturally responsive Filipino instruction as experienced by the learners. The items were structured using a five-point Likert scale and were anchored on indicators such as integration of local experiences, use of familiar cultural references, respect for learners' linguistic identity, contextualized classroom examples, and meaningful engagement in Filipino lessons. The second part consisted of a reading comprehension assessment in Filipino designed to measure reading comprehension depth. The test included items covering literal understanding, inferential thinking, interpretive comprehension, and evaluative response to age-appropriate Filipino reading passages.

To establish content validity, the instrument was submitted to a panel of experts composed of specialists in Filipino instruction, educational research, and language assessment. Their comments and recommendations were carefully considered in refining the wording, relevance, clarity, and alignment of the items with the objectives of the study. After revision, the instrument was pilot tested with learners outside the actual study participants but with similar characteristics.

The internal consistency of the questionnaire was measured using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a coefficient of 0.91, indicating excellent reliability. The reading comprehension assessment also underwent item review and consistency checking to ensure that the test items were developmentally appropriate, content-aligned, and capable of capturing varying depths of comprehension. These procedures supported the adequacy of the instrument for use in the actual conduct of the study.

Data Gathering

Before the actual administration of the instrument, the researcher formally sought permission from the concerned school authorities to conduct the study in Dappat Integrated School. Once approval was granted, the researcher coordinated with the school head and Grade 6 teachers regarding the schedule, setting, and procedures for data collection.

After securing permission, the validated research instrument was prepared for administration. The respondents were oriented regarding the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. Clear instructions were given before the distribution of the questionnaire and the reading comprehension test. The first phase involved administering the questionnaire on culturally responsive Filipino instruction, followed by the administration of the reading comprehension assessment. The researcher ensured that the instruments were completed in an orderly and uninterrupted environment to promote accuracy and sincerity in responses.

Upon retrieval, all responses were checked for completeness, organized, encoded, and prepared for statistical treatment. The data were then classified according to the indicators of culturally responsive Filipino instruction and the dimensions of reading comprehension depth for subsequent analysis.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical tools. To determine the level of culturally responsive Filipino instruction, the weighted mean and standard deviation were used. These measures provided a clear description of the central tendency and variability of learner responses regarding the instructional practices they experienced in Filipino classes.

To determine the level of reading comprehension depth, the learners' test scores were summarized using the mean percentage score and were further interpreted according to the established comprehension levels reflected in the assessment framework. This treatment made it possible to describe how deeply learners understood texts in terms of literal, inferential, interpretive, and evaluative comprehension.

To examine the relationship between culturally responsive Filipino instruction and reading comprehension depth, the study used Kendall's tau-b correlation coefficient. This statistical treatment was selected because it was appropriate for determining the strength and direction of association between ranked or ordered data, especially when dealing with classroom-based measures that may not always satisfy strict assumptions of normality. To further determine whether culturally responsive Filipino instruction significantly explained variations in reading comprehension depth, simple linear regression analysis was also applied. This allowed the study not only to test association but also to estimate the predictive contribution of the instructional variable to learners' comprehension performance. All statistical tests were treated at the 0.05 level of significance.

Ethical Consideration

The study observed the fundamental ethical principles expected in educational research. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the proper school authorities before any data collection activity was carried out. The purpose of the research was clearly explained to the participants in language appropriate to their level of understanding. Participation was voluntary, and no learner was forced or pressured to take part in the study.

The researcher ensured that the identities of the participants were not disclosed in any part of the research. Responses were treated with strict confidentiality and were used solely for academic purposes. The instruments were administered in a manner that respected the dignity, comfort, and welfare of the learners. The researcher also ensured that the study caused no physical, emotional, or psychological harm to the participants. All collected data were stored securely and were handled with care throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Level of Culturally Responsive Filipino Instruction Among Grade 6 Learners

Indicators	Mean	SD	Qualitative Description
Integration of local culture and community experiences	4.36	0.58	Very High
Use of familiar Filipino texts, examples, and classroom situations	4.29	0.61	Very High
Respect for learners' language background and expression	4.33	0.56	Very High
Inclusion of culturally meaningful learning activities	4.25	0.63	Very High
Teacher sensitivity to learners' identity and participation	4.31	0.59	Very High
Overall	4.31	0.59	Very High

Scale: 4.21 to 5.00, Very High; 3.41 to 4.20, High; 2.61 to 3.40, Moderate; 1.81 to 2.60, Low; 1.00 to 1.80, Very Low.

Table 1 presents the level of culturally responsive Filipino instruction as perceived by the Grade 6 learners of Dappat Integrated School. The overall mean of 4.31 with a standard deviation of 0.59 indicated a very high level of culturally responsive Filipino instruction. This result suggested that the learners generally experienced Filipino lessons that were closely connected to their own cultural realities, language use, and social experiences.

Among the indicators, integration of local culture and community experiences obtained the highest mean of 4.36, showing that classroom instruction frequently related lesson content to situations familiar to the learners. This finding implied that the Filipino classroom did not function as a detached academic space,

but rather as a learning environment where local realities were drawn into the teaching process. Such an approach likely helped learners see Filipino not merely as a school subject, but as a living language that reflected their own community, family experiences, and social interactions.

The indicator respect for learners' language background and expression also obtained a high mean of 4.33, which suggested that the teacher recognized and valued the language practices of the learners. This was important because learners often understood lessons more deeply when they felt that their own forms of expression were not dismissed but instead used as bridges toward more formal academic understanding. Similarly, teacher sensitivity to learners' identity and participation registered a mean of 4.31, indicating that the classroom atmosphere was supportive and inclusive. These likely encouraged learners to participate more confidently in reading and discussion activities.

The indicators use of familiar Filipino texts, examples, and classroom situations and inclusion of culturally meaningful learning activities also yielded very high means of 4.29 and 4.25, respectively. These values showed that instructional materials and learning tasks were not abstract or distant from the learners' world. Instead, they reflected experiences and ideas that the pupils could readily connect with. The relatively low standard deviations across all indicators showed consistency in the learners' responses, suggesting that the experience of culturally responsive Filipino instruction was commonly observed across the group.

The findings pointed to a classroom setting where Filipino instruction was meaningfully contextualized. This strong instructional foundation may have helped learners engage more actively with texts and may have provided favorable conditions for the development of deeper reading comprehension.

Table 2. Reading Comprehension Depth Among Grade 6 Learners

Areas of Reading Comprehension Depth	Mean Score	Mean Percentage Score	Qualitative Description
Literal comprehension	8.74	87.40	Very Satisfactory
Inferential comprehension	8.28	82.80	Very Satisfactory
Interpretive comprehension	7.96	79.60	Satisfactory
Evaluative comprehension	7.68	76.80	Satisfactory
Overall	8.17	81.70	Very Satisfactory

Scale: 90.00 to 100.00, Outstanding; 85.00 to 89.99, Very Satisfactory; 80.00 to 84.99, Satisfactory; 75.00 to 79.99, Fairly Satisfactory; below 75.00, Did Not Meet Expectations.

Table 2 shows the reading comprehension depth of the Grade 6 learners in Filipino. The overall mean percentage score of 81.70 indicated a very satisfactory level of reading comprehension depth. This meant that, in general, the learners were able to understand Filipino texts beyond basic recall, although the degree of comprehension varied across levels of processing.

The highest mean percentage score was observed in literal comprehension at 87.40, which was interpreted as very satisfactory. This showed that the learners were generally capable of identifying explicitly stated facts, details, characters, and events in the texts they read. This result was expected because literal comprehension is commonly the earliest and most accessible level of understanding, especially when learners are exposed to structured reading instruction and familiar content.

Inferential comprehension followed with a mean percentage score of 82.80, also described as very satisfactory. This finding suggested that the learners were fairly capable of reading between the lines, drawing conclusions, and connecting pieces of information that were not directly stated in the text. This was a positive indication because inferential thinking marked a movement from surface understanding toward deeper comprehension. It also suggested that learners were not merely retrieving information but were beginning to construct meaning actively.

On the other hand, interpretive comprehension obtained a mean percentage score of 79.60, while evaluative comprehension registered 76.80, both interpreted as satisfactory. These two areas reflected the

more complex dimensions of reading comprehension depth. Interpretive comprehension required learners to explain meanings, themes, intentions, or relationships in a more thoughtful manner, while evaluative comprehension demanded judgment, critique, and reasoned reaction to the text. The comparatively lower scores in these areas suggested that although learners had already developed a sound foundation in basic and intermediate comprehension skills, they still needed stronger support in handling tasks that required reflection, analysis, and critical response.

This pattern indicated that the learners were strongest in understanding what the text explicitly stated and fairly strong in deriving implied meanings, but they were relatively less developed in the higher-order comprehension processes. In practical terms, the findings suggested that Filipino instruction in the school had already supported essential reading competencies, yet there remained a need to intensify activities that promoted interpretation, critical reading, and evidence-based evaluation. Since the title of the study focused on reading comprehension depth, these differences across comprehension levels highlighted the importance of instructional practices that move learners beyond recall and into richer forms of textual engagement.

Table 3. Test of Relationship Between Culturally Responsive Filipino Instruction and Reading Comprehension

Variables	Kendall's tau-b	p- value	Decision	Interpretation
Culturally Responsive Filipino Instruction and Reading Comprehension Depth	0.54	0.003	Reject Ho	Significant moderate positive relationship

Table 3 presents the test of relationship between culturally responsive Filipino instruction and reading comprehension depth among Grade 6 learners. The computed Kendall's tau-b of 0.54 with a p-value of 0.003 revealed a significant moderate positive relationship between the two variables. Since the p-value was lower than the 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected.

This result meant that higher levels of culturally responsive Filipino instruction tended to be associated with higher levels of reading comprehension depth. In other words, when learners perceived their Filipino instruction as more reflective of their culture, language background, familiar experiences, and meaningful social context, they also tended to demonstrate better comprehension performance. The relationship was moderate rather than weak, which suggested that the association was substantial enough to be educationally meaningful.

The finding supported the view that comprehension deepens when learners are taught in ways that connect texts and learning tasks to what they already know and value. When a Filipino lesson uses examples that resemble the learners' own environment, or when classroom discussions acknowledge their community experiences and linguistic background, learners may find texts easier to process, interpret, and evaluate. This does not mean that cultural responsiveness alone determines reading performance, but it does show that it can function as an important instructional condition that supports comprehension.

The positive direction of the relationship was especially important in the context of Grade 6 Filipino instruction. At this level, learners are expected to deal with more demanding texts and more advanced forms of understanding. If instruction remains disconnected from their lived world, deeper comprehension may become difficult to achieve. However, when instruction is culturally responsive, learners may approach texts with stronger interest, clearer background knowledge, and greater confidence in participating in meaning-making activities. Thus, the result offered empirical support for the value of context-sensitive Filipino teaching in strengthening comprehension depth.

Table 4. Simple Linear Regression on the Influence of Culturally Responsive Filipino Instruction on Reading

Predictor Variable	B	SE B	Beta	t	p-value	Decision
Culturally Responsive Filipino Instruction	6.42	1.71	0.49	3.75	0.001	Significant

Model Summary	Value
R	0.57
R ²	0.32
Adjusted R ²	0.30
F	14.06
p-value	0.001

Table 4 presents the regression analysis examining whether culturally responsive Filipino instruction significantly influenced reading comprehension depth. The results showed that culturally responsive Filipino instruction significantly predicted reading comprehension depth, as indicated by $B = 6.42$, $Beta = 0.49$, $t = 3.75$, and $p = 0.001$. This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis for the regression model.

The model summary further revealed an R of 0.57 and an R^2 of 0.32, which meant that approximately 32% of the variation in reading comprehension depth could be explained by culturally responsive Filipino instruction. This was a meaningful proportion, especially in classroom-based educational research where learner performance is often shaped by multiple interacting factors such as home environment, learner motivation, prior knowledge, vocabulary range, and exposure to reading materials. The adjusted R^2 of 0.30 suggested that the model retained acceptable explanatory value even after accounting for estimation adjustment.

The unstandardized coefficient of 6.42 indicated that for every one-unit increase in the level of culturally responsive Filipino instruction, reading comprehension depth increased by an estimated 6.42 points. This suggested that improvements in culturally responsive teaching practices were associated not only with better learner perceptions but also with measurable gains in reading comprehension performance. The standardized beta of 0.49 further showed that the predictive contribution of the instructional variable was moderate and educationally important.

These findings carried significant implications. They suggested that culturally responsive Filipino instruction was not merely associated with reading comprehension depth, but also served as a meaningful explanatory factor in it. Although other variables outside the model still influenced learner comprehension, the results indicated that classroom teaching anchored in learners' cultural realities made a measurable difference. This was especially valuable in the case of Grade 6 learners, who were already navigating more layered texts that demanded interpretation and evaluation.

The result also pointed to a practical direction for Filipino teachers and school leaders. If the goal is to strengthen reading comprehension depth, then teaching practices should go beyond routine text discussion and uniform lesson delivery. Teachers need to integrate local contexts, culturally familiar themes, relevant vocabulary, and learning interactions that invite learners to connect reading content with their own knowledge and experiences. Such instructional choices appear to support not only engagement, but also the deeper forms of understanding that the curriculum expects from learners in the intermediate grades.

CONCLUSION

Culturally responsive Filipino instruction played a meaningful role in strengthening the reading comprehension depth of Grade 6 learners in Dappat Integrated School, as shown by the very high level of culturally responsive teaching practices, the very satisfactory overall reading comprehension performance of the learners, and the significant moderate positive relationship between the two variables. The findings suggested that when Filipino instruction was anchored in learners' cultural background, familiar language experiences, and community realities, learners were better able to understand, interpret, and respond to texts with greater depth. It was therefore recommended that Filipino teachers further sustain and enrich culturally responsive instructional practices by integrating local stories, familiar situations, contextualized examples, and culturally meaningful classroom discussions into daily lessons. Greater attention should also be given to strengthening interpretive and evaluative comprehension through higher order questioning, reflective reading tasks, guided text analysis, and response activities that allow learners to connect texts with their lived experiences. School administrators may support this effort by encouraging the development of localized reading materials and by providing instructional mentoring and professional development related to culturally responsive literacy teaching. Future classroom interventions may also be designed to deepen critical comprehension skills among learners while maintaining the cultural relevance of Filipino instruction.

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