

# Voice of the Learners' Analysis and Its Relation to the Reading Performance of Frustration Readers in Sampaloc National High School, Tanay, Rizal

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## ABSTRACT

This descriptive study examined the voice of Grade 7 frustration readers and its relationship to their reading performance at Sampaloc National High School, Tanay, Rizal. Total enumeration was used to include all 70 learners identified as frustration readers through the Philippine Informal Learners Reading Assessment during School Year 2014–2015. A researcher-made questionnaire-checklist gathered learners' perceptions of the effectiveness of reading materials, reading activities, and teachers' reading strategies. Frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, tests of difference, and correlation analysis were used. Most respondents were 12 years old (70.0%), male (68.6%), eldest siblings (42.9%), from families earning PHP 5,000–9,000 monthly (78.6%), and had parents with high school-level

education (61.4%). Learners rated reading materials ( $M = 2.66$ ), reading activities ( $M = 3.15$ ), and teachers' reading strategies ( $M = 3.29$ ) as moderately effective. Significant differences were found in perceptions of teachers' reading strategies when grouped by age ( $p = .011$ ), reading materials when grouped by sex ( $p = .044$ ), and reading materials when grouped by parents' educational attainment ( $p = .047$ ). All respondents remained at the frustration reading level, with most scoring only two or three out of seven comprehension items. Learners' perceptions of reading materials, activities, and strategies were not significantly related to reading performance. The findings support the use of learner-responsive, leveled, visually supported, cooperative, and engaging reading interventions.

**Keywords:** *voice of the learners; frustration readers; reading performance; reading intervention; learner engagement; reading strategies*

## INTRODUCTION

Quality education requires meaningful learner participation. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes the right of children to express their views and communicate ideas. In schools, this principle supports the inclusion of learner perspectives when planning instructional programs and interventions. Listening to learners is particularly important when schools respond to persistent difficulties such as low reading proficiency.

Reading is more than decoding printed words. It also requires comprehension, interpretation, and the ability to engage critically with a text. Learners who remain at the frustration level encounter difficulties in understanding grade-appropriate selections and responding accurately to comprehension questions. These difficulties can limit participation across subject areas because reading is foundational to academic learning.

Sampaloc National High School implemented reading activities and a computer-based reading intervention to address the needs of struggling readers. Despite these efforts, the school continued to identify a substantial number of Grade 7 frustration readers. The persistence of the problem suggested a need to examine

the reading intervention from the learners' perspective. Learners may provide useful information about which materials, activities, and teacher strategies they find understandable, engaging, and responsive to their needs.

Learner voice refers to the perspectives, experiences, and preferences that students communicate regarding their learning. Garlick et al. (2007) emphasized that learner involvement in identifying areas for exploration and interpreting information can deepen engagement. McLaughlin and Waterhouse (2008) similarly noted that listening to young people can help transform school processes and learning experiences. In reading instruction, this means that teachers should consider learners' responses when selecting materials and structuring activities.

This study examined the profile of Grade 7 frustration readers, their perceptions of reading materials, reading activities, and teachers' reading strategies, differences in these perceptions when grouped by selected profile variables, their reading performance, and the relationship between learner perceptions and reading performance. The findings were used as a basis for practical recommendations for reading intervention.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Learner Voice and Educational Responsiveness***

Learner voice strengthens the responsiveness of educational programs by recognizing students as participants rather than passive recipients. Rogers (2005) presented learner voice as a bridge to learning, while Garlick et al. (2007) described student participation as a means of increasing engagement. For struggling readers, inviting feedback may reveal which practices encourage participation and which practices create barriers to comprehension.

### ***Reading Materials, Activities, and Strategies***

Effective reading interventions require materials and activities that match learners' readiness, interests, and needs. Navarro (2005) emphasized the value of appropriate instructional materials, while Martinez (2008) discussed strategies for motivating slow readers. Ruzo (2008) likewise highlighted the importance of approaches that increase learner motivation and performance. Materials supported by pictures, real objects, peer interaction, and engaging tasks may help learners participate more confidently in reading sessions.

### ***Reading Performance and Individual Differences***

Reading development varies among learners. Dizon (2009) emphasized that differences in reading ability require individualized and appropriately grouped instruction. Learner profile variables may affect how students evaluate reading materials and instructional practices. However, positive perceptions of an intervention do not automatically produce improved reading performance, particularly when learners begin at the frustration level and require sustained remediation.

## **METHODS**

### **Research Design**

The study employed a descriptive research design using a researcher-made questionnaire-checklist. The design was appropriate because the study described the learners' profile, assessed their perceptions of reading materials, reading activities, and teachers' reading strategies, and examined differences and relationships among the variables.

### **Research Locale**

The study was conducted at Sampaloc National High School in Sampaloc, Tanay, Rizal. The school had implemented reading-related activities and a computer-based reading intervention to support learners who experienced difficulty in reading.

### Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants were the 70 Grade 7 learners identified as frustration readers based on the Philippine Informal Learners Reading Assessment Administered during School Year 2014–2015. Total enumeration was used because all identified frustration readers were included in the study.

Table 1. *Distribution of Grade 7 Respondents by Section*

Section	Population	Respondents
Kaayusan	50	0
Kagitingan	50	2
Kalayaan	50	5
Kapayapaan	50	5
Karunungan	50	7
Katapatan	50	11
Kaunlaran	50	21
Kalinisan	50	19
Total	400	70

### Research Instrument

A researcher-made questionnaire-checklist was used to obtain learners' perceptions of the reading intervention. The instrument covered three areas: reading materials, reading activities, and teachers' reading strategies. The study also used reading-assessment results to describe the performance of respondents.

### Data Gathering Procedure

The identified Grade 7 frustration readers answered the questionnaire-checklist. Their responses were consolidated and compared with their reading-assessment results. The data were organized according to the study objectives and analyzed using the statistical treatments specified in the original manuscript.

### Data Analysis

Frequency counts and percentages described the respondents' profile and reading performance. Weighted means summarized learners' perceptions. Tests of difference examined variation in learners' perceptions when grouped according to profile variables. Correlation analysis determined whether perceptions of reading materials, reading activities, and teachers' reading strategies were related to reading performance. Statistical decisions were made at the .05 level of significance.

### Ethical Consideration

The study involved school-based reading data and learner responses. The reporting of results was limited to aggregated information. Learner identities were not disclosed in the manuscript, and the findings were presented for instructional improvement.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Profile of the Respondents

The respondent profile shows that most Grade 7 frustration readers were 12 years old, male, eldest siblings, from families with a monthly income of PHP 5,000–9,000, and had parents with high school-level education. These characteristics describe the participants but should not be interpreted as direct causes of low reading performance.

Table 2. *Profile of the Respondents*

Profile Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	11	2	2.9
	12	49	70.0
	13	12	17.1

	14 and above	7	10.0
Sex	Male	48	68.6
	Female	22	31.4
Sibling position	Eldest	30	42.9
	Middle	18	25.7
	Youngest	22	31.4
Monthly family income	PHP 10,000–19,000	4	5.7
	PHP 5,000–9,000	55	78.6
	PHP 4,000 and below	11	15.7
Parents' educational attainment	College level/vocational	5	7.1
	High school level	43	61.4
	Elementary level	22	31.4

### Learners' Analysis of Reading Materials, Activities, and Strategies

Learners rated all three aspects of the reading intervention as moderately effective. Teachers' reading strategies received the highest composite mean ( $M = 3.29$ ), followed by reading activities ( $M = 3.15$ ) and reading materials ( $M = 2.66$ ). The grand mean of 3.03 indicates that learners recognized the usefulness of existing practices but still expected more responsive and engaging support.

Table 3. *Summary of Learners' Analysis of the Reading Intervention*

Aspect	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Reading materials	2.66	Moderately Effective	3
Reading activities	3.15	Moderately Effective	2
Teachers' reading strategies	3.29	Moderately Effective	1
Grand mean	3.03	Moderately Effective	

The highest-rated reading-material practices involved printed pictures associated with short stories ( $M = 3.76$ ) and the use of real objects in presenting selections ( $M = 3.66$ ). The most favored reading activity was unlocking difficulties through games ( $M = 3.96$ ), followed by answering comprehension questions in writing ( $M = 3.79$ ). Among teachers' strategies, cooperative and peer tutoring received the highest rating ( $M = 4.01$ ), followed by soliciting learners' ideas about their learning styles ( $M = 3.94$ ) and listening carefully to learners' needs and preferences ( $M = 3.87$ ). These results support reading sessions that are visually supported, collaborative, and responsive to learner preferences.

Table 4. *Highest-Rated Reading Practices Based on Learner Responses*

Aspect	Practice	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Reading materials	Printed pictures associated with short stories	3.76	Effective
Reading materials	Real objects in presenting the selection	3.66	Effective
Reading activities	Unlocking difficulties through games	3.96	Effective
Reading activities	Written answers to comprehension questions	3.79	Effective

Teachers' strategies	Cooperative and peer tutoring approach	4.01	Effective
Teachers' strategies	Soliciting ideas about learners' learning styles	3.94	Effective
Teachers' strategies	Listening to learners' needs and preferences	3.87	Effective

### Differences in Learners' Analysis When Grouped by Profile

Differences in learner perceptions were limited to selected comparisons. Perceptions of teachers' reading strategies differed significantly by age ( $p = .011$ ). Perceptions of reading materials differed significantly by sex ( $p = .044$ ) and parents' educational attainment ( $p = .047$ ). No significant differences were found when learners were grouped according to sibling position or monthly family income. These findings suggest that some reading supports may need to be differentiated according to learner characteristics, while other profile variables do not appear to influence learners' assessments of the intervention.

Table 5. *Differences in Learners' Analysis When Grouped by Profile*

Profile Variable	Aspect	p-value	Interpretation
Age	Reading materials	.602	Not significant
Age	Reading activities	.511	Not significant
Age	Teachers' reading strategies	.011	Significant
Sex	Reading materials	.044	Significant
Sex	Reading activities	.646	Not significant
Sex	Teachers' reading strategies	.704	Not significant
Sibling position	Reading materials	.127	Not significant
Sibling position	Reading activities	.333	Not significant
Sibling position	Teachers' reading strategies	.239	Not significant
Monthly family income	Reading materials	.348	Not significant
Monthly family income	Reading activities	.671	Not significant
Monthly family income	Teachers' reading strategies	.108	Not significant
Parents' educational attainment	Reading materials	.047	Significant
Parents' educational attainment	Reading activities	.943	Not significant
Parents' educational attainment	Teachers' reading strategies	.448	Not significant

Note. Significant at  $p < .05$ .

### Reading Performance of the Respondents

All 70 respondents were classified at the frustration reading level. Most learners scored either three out of seven items (42.9%) or two out of seven items (37.1%). The result confirms that the respondents required intensive reading support. Their difficulty in answering comprehension questions indicates that intervention should address both decoding and comprehension.

Table 6. *Reading Performance of Respondents at the Frustration Level*

Score out of 7	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
4	6	8.6	4
3	30	42.9	1

2	26	37.1	2
1	8	11.4	3
Total	70	100.0	

### Relationship Between Learners' Analysis and Reading Performance

Learners' perceptions of reading materials, reading activities, and teachers' reading strategies were not significantly related to reading performance. The correlation coefficients were weak, and all p-values were greater than .05. The result indicates that positive or negative evaluations of the existing intervention did not explain variation in the respondents' reading scores. Since all participants were already at the frustration level, improvement may require more intensive, differentiated, and sustained intervention rather than isolated adjustments to a single instructional component.

Table 7. *Relationship Between Learners' Analysis and Reading Performance*

Aspect	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Interpretation
Reading materials	.036	.767	Not significant
Reading activities	.080	.510	Not significant
Teachers' reading strategies	.053	.666	Not significant

Note. Significant at  $p < .05$ .

### Recommended Reading Intervention Priorities

The findings support a practical set of priorities for strengthening the reading intervention. These priorities are based on the practices learners rated most favorably and on the need for intensive assistance among frustration readers.

Table 8. *Recommended Reading Intervention Priorities*

Priority Area	Recommended Action	Persons Involved	Expected Contribution
Responsive materials	Provide leveled short stories with pictures and use real objects where appropriate.	Reading teachers	More accessible and engaging texts
Engaging activities	Use games to unlock difficult words and provide guided written comprehension tasks.	Reading teachers	Improved participation and comprehension practice
Peer-supported learning	Strengthen cooperative reading and peer tutoring.	Reading teachers and peer tutors	Increased confidence and collaborative practice
Learner voice	Regularly ask learners about their preferences, challenges, and learning styles.	Reading teachers	More responsive intervention planning
Progress monitoring	Use periodic oral reading and comprehension assessment to regroup learners and refine instruction.	English Department	Evidence-based remediation and monitoring

## CONCLUSION

The Grade 7 frustration readers perceived the reading materials, reading activities, and teachers' reading strategies as moderately effective. They responded most positively to visually supported materials, the use of real objects, games for unlocking difficulties, written comprehension tasks, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, and strategies that listened to their learning preferences. Selected differences in learner perceptions were found according to age, sex, and parents' educational attainment, while sibling position and monthly family income did not significantly differentiate perceptions. All respondents remained at the frustration reading level, and learners' assessments of the intervention were not significantly related to reading performance. The study demonstrates that learner voice is valuable for improving the design of reading support, but stronger performance requires sustained, leveled, and evidence-based remediation.

## Recommendations

Reading teachers should enhance their instructional repertoire through training on differentiated reading intervention, comprehension support, learner motivation, and progress monitoring.

Frustration readers should receive leveled reading materials and activities aligned with their needs, interests, and current reading performance. Short stories supported by pictures, real objects, games, written comprehension tasks, cooperative learning, and peer tutoring may be prioritized.

The English Department should periodically collect learner feedback and use reading-assessment results to revise intervention plans, regroup learners, and monitor progress.

School leaders should support the implementation and evaluation of a structured reading intervention plan that includes teacher development, learner voice, and family engagement.

Future researchers may conduct experimental or longitudinal studies to determine which learner-responsive strategies produce measurable improvements in reading proficiency.

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