

Original Article

Basic Sight Word Recognition Exercises and Learners' Reading Comprehension

Vince Kenneth G. Ahat¹, Sheila Mae Bucio², Michelle T. Palmero³, Alma L. Morales⁴ ,
Weena Mae G. Ampo⁵ , Leo H. Malalis⁶

Author Information:

¹Cebu Sacred Heart College-Bohol Campus,
Tagbilaran City, Bohol, Philippines

²Napo Elementary School, Napo, Alicia,
Bohol, Philippines

³Montessori Educational Learning Center of
Ubay Inc., Highway Tapon, Ubay, Bohol,
Philippines

⁴Lombog Elementary School, Lombog,
Guindulman, Bohol, Philippines

⁵Bohol Island State University, Tagbilaran,
Bohol, Philippines

⁶Tambis Elementary School, Bohol,
Philippines

Corresponding Author:

vincekennethahat54@gmail.com

Article History:

Date received: April 18, 2026

Date revised: June 19, 2026

Date accepted: July 1, 2026

Recommended citation:

Ahat, V.K., Bucio, S.M., Palmero, M.,
Morales, A., Ampo, W.M., & Malalis, L.
(2026). Basic sight word recognition
exercises and learners' reading
comprehension. *Journal of Interdisciplinary
Perspectives*, 4(7), 345-350.
<https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2026.209>

Abstract. Reading comprehension is a fundamental component of literacy development; however, many learners continue to experience difficulties due to insufficient mastery of foundational skills such as sight-word recognition. Despite the widespread use of basic sight-word recognition exercises in early-grade instruction, limited empirical evidence exists regarding their implementation and learners' reading comprehension in localized contexts. This study examined basic sight-word recognition exercises and learners' reading comprehension in selected public elementary schools in Alicia District, Bohol, Philippines. A quantitative descriptive research design was employed, involving 269 respondents composed of 52 teachers and 217 learners from Grades 4 to 6. Data were gathered using a validated 16-item teacher questionnaire adapted from Lyon (2020; Cronbach's alpha = 0.92) and the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) to assess learners' reading comprehension. Weighted mean and percentage distribution were used for data analysis. Findings revealed that basic sight-word recognition exercises were widely practiced among teachers, with a composite mean of 3.59. Moreover, most learners were classified as independent readers (54.38%), followed by Instructional readers (43.78%) and Frustration readers (1.84%). The findings suggest that teachers consistently implement sight-word recognition exercises, while most learners demonstrate independent reading comprehension levels. Based on the results, it is recommended that teachers continue integrating structured sight-word activities into reading instruction to further support literacy development in their classrooms.

Keywords: Reading comprehension; Reading instruction; Sight word recognition; Word recognition; Literacy development.

Reading is widely recognized as a foundational skill that shapes learners' academic success and lifelong learning. In early education, the ability to recognize words automatically—particularly basic sight words—plays a critical role in developing reading fluency and comprehension. Sight word recognition enables learners to instantly identify commonly used words without decoding, thereby freeing cognitive resources for constructing meaning. This process is grounded in the theory of orthographic mapping, which explains how readers store written words in long-term memory for rapid retrieval. As emphasized by Ehri (2014), as cited in Boucher et al. (2024), automatic word recognition is a central component of skilled reading, facilitating the transition from effortful decoding to fluent comprehension. Without this automaticity, learners are likely to experience cognitive overload, limiting their ability to understand texts effectively.

The present study is further anchored in the Simple View of Reading and its contemporary extensions, which posit that reading comprehension is the product of decoding and linguistic comprehension. Building on this, Denton et al. (2021) highlight that efficient word recognition is a necessary condition for reading proficiency, while Donegan and Wanzek (2021) propose an integrative model in which automatic word recognition dynamically interacts with higher-level language processes. These theoretical perspectives collectively suggest that strengthening sight-word recognition is not merely a mechanical skill-building activity but a critical pathway to improving comprehension outcomes.

In classroom practice, particularly in the early grades, teachers employ various sight-word recognition exercises such as flashcards, repetition drills, games, and contextual reading activities. These instructional approaches are commonly used to support learners' reading development and improve familiarity with high-frequency words. Existing literature (e.g., Aliyar and Peters, 2021; Hall et al., 2023) highlights the importance of integrating foundational reading skills with comprehension instruction. However, much of the research discusses these domains as separate constructs. Moreover, limited studies have described the implementation of structured sight-word recognition exercises alongside learners' reading comprehension levels in actual classroom settings, particularly in localized contexts. This gap in the literature underscores the need to document current classroom practices in sight-word instruction and learners' reading comprehension performance.

Furthermore, in many local and developing educational contexts, including public elementary schools in the Philippines, learners often face constraints such as limited access to print-rich environments, large class sizes, and insufficient instructional resources. These factors may affect the development of automatic word recognition and learners' reading comprehension. Studies have shown that learners who are not exposed to rich literacy environments have fewer opportunities to interact with printed texts, limiting the development of foundational reading skills necessary for comprehension (Khosa, 2025). In the Philippine context, challenges in reading environments and literacy practices among learners have also been documented, highlighting gaps in support systems both at home and in school (Quintano et al., 2025). Despite the relevance of these contextual challenges, there remains a scarcity of localized studies describing sight-word recognition practices and learners' reading comprehension in public elementary school settings. Addressing this gap is essential for providing context-sensitive instructional insights that may support literacy instruction and reading development among learners.

Given these considerations, this study is undertaken to describe the implementation of basic sight-word recognition exercises and the reading comprehension levels of learners in selected public elementary schools in Alicia District, Bohol, Philippines. Specifically, it seeks to document the extent to which structured sight-word recognition activities are implemented in classroom instruction and to present learners' reading comprehension levels based on available assessment data. Anchored in established reading theories and addressing a local empirical gap, the study aims to generate descriptive evidence that may contribute to literacy research and provide a reference for instructional planning. The study is limited to selected schools in the district, and the findings are intended to reflect the specific classroom contexts in which the data were gathered.

This study aimed to describe the implementation of basic sight-word recognition exercises and the reading comprehension levels of learners in selected public elementary schools in Alicia District during School Year 2025–2026. This study sought to answer the following questions: 1) What is the level of implementation of the basic sight word recognition exercises as practiced by teachers? 2) What is the level of learners' reading comprehension?

Methodology

Research Design

The study utilized a quantitative descriptive research design. This design is appropriate for describing variable implementation patterns without manipulation or experimental control. Specifically, it described teachers' use of basic sight-word recognition exercises and learners' reading comprehension performance. The design does not involve testing relationships between variables and does not permit causal inference.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The study was conducted in two selected public elementary schools in Alicia District, Bohol, Philippines, namely Napo Elementary School and Alicia Central Elementary School. A total of 269 respondents participated in the study, composed of 52 teachers and 217 learners from Grades 4 to 6. Teacher-respondents described the frequency with which they implemented basic sight-word recognition exercises in their reading instruction. At the same time, learner-respondents participated in the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) assessment of reading comprehension.

To present the data in a clear and organized manner, learners' reading comprehension scores were classified based on the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) scoring ranges and summarized using frequency counts and percentages. This produced a descriptive profile of learners' reading comprehension levels across Independent, Instructional, and Frustration levels. The classification reflects the distribution of learners across comprehension levels rather than mean scores. Learners from Grades 4 to 6 were included because they possess the foundational literacy skills necessary for reading comprehension assessment.

A purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants. Teacher-respondents were selected for their active involvement in teaching reading, while learner-respondents were selected from Grades 4 to 6 enrolled in the participating schools during School Year 2025–2026. Participants who did not meet these criteria were excluded from the study. The findings are context-specific and are limited to the participating schools in Alicia District, Bohol. Therefore, the results are not intended to be generalized beyond Napo Elementary School and Alicia Central Elementary School.

Research Instrument

The study utilized two main research instruments. The first was a survey questionnaire for teachers, designed to determine the basic sight-word recognition exercises implemented in classroom instruction. The items were adapted from Lyon (2020) and consisted of 16 statements measured using a 4-point Likert scale to capture the frequency of implementation. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire underwent expert validation by specialists in language education and reading instruction, who reviewed the items for clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study's objectives. Necessary revisions were made based on their recommendations to improve the instrument's overall quality.

A pilot test was conducted with 20 respondents who had characteristics like those of the target participants but were not included in the actual study. The pilot test results were analyzed to determine the instrument's reliability using Cronbach's Alpha. The computed Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.92, indicating excellent internal consistency and high reliability of the instrument. This suggests that the items consistently measure the extent of implementation of basic sight word recognition exercises.

The second instrument used in the study was the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI), a standardized assessment tool developed by the Department of Education to evaluate learners' reading performance. The Phil-IRI has established validity and reliability as it is widely used in public schools across the Philippines. It classifies learners into reading levels based on their comprehension scores, providing a reliable measure of learners' reading comprehension. Specifically, learners who scored 8–10 were classified as the Independent Level, indicating that they can read and understand the text independently. Scores ranging from 5–7 were categorized as the Instructional Level, indicating that learners can read and comprehend the text with minimal teacher guidance. Meanwhile, scores ranging from 2–4 were classified as the Frustration Level, indicating that learners have trouble with reading and require intensive support. Learners who scored 0–1 were classified as non-readers.

Data Gathering Procedure

A systematic procedure was followed in conducting the study. Initially, the researcher secured formal approval

from the Dean of the School of Advanced Studies. Subsequently, permission was obtained from the Schools Division Superintendent of Bohol, the District Supervisor of Alicia District, and the school heads of Napo Elementary School and Alicia Central Elementary School. Upon approval, the researcher administered the survey to the teacher-respondents to collect data on the sight-word recognition exercises used in their classrooms. At the same time, the Phil-IRI assessment was administered to learners in Grades 4-6 to determine their reading comprehension levels. Data collection was conducted face-to-face in the school setting during School Year 2025–2026. After all responses were gathered, the data were carefully checked, tallied, tabulated, and organized for descriptive analysis.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics only. The weighted mean was used to determine the level of implementation of sight-word recognition exercises. Frequency and percentage distribution were used to describe learners’ reading comprehension levels. All results were presented as overall and composite summaries to provide a clear description of classroom practices and learner performance in reading. No inferential statistical tests were conducted, as the study is purely descriptive.

Ethical Considerations

The study strictly observed ethical standards throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all teacher participants and relevant school authorities. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. Confidentiality and anonymity were ensured by removing all identifying information from the data. All collected information was used solely for academic and research purposes. The study also ensured that there was no disruption to learners’ regular classes and complied with institutional and Department of Education (DepEd) research guidelines. Data were securely stored and accessed only by the researcher. Upon completion of the study, all digital and printed materials were properly disposed of to ensure data privacy and security.

Results and Discussion

Teachers’ Sight Word Recognition Exercises

Table 1. Teachers’ Sight Word Recognition Exercises			
Variable	Weighted Mean	Descriptive	Interpretation
Teachers’ Sight Word Recognition Exercises	3.59	Always	Highly Practiced

Table 1 presents the level of implementation of basic sight-word recognition exercises as practiced by teachers. The results are summarized as a composite mean, reflecting the overall frequency of implementation of various instructional strategies for teaching sight words. These strategies encompass a combination of traditional, interactive, and technology-supported activities designed to reinforce learners’ recognition of high-frequency words. The findings provide a general overview of how frequently these instructional approaches are utilized in classroom practice to support learners’ reading development. Overall, the table yielded a composite mean of 3.59, interpreted as Always and Highly Practiced. This indicates that teachers frequently implement sight-word recognition exercises in their reading instruction. The result suggests that exposure to sight words is consistently integrated into classroom practices, which may support learners’ familiarity with high-frequency words and contribute to foundational literacy development. From a theoretical perspective, this is consistent with orthographic mapping theory, which emphasizes repeated exposure to printed words as a pathway to automatic word recognition (Balnig et al., 2024; Leachman et al., 2025).

Among the instructional strategies commonly referenced in the literature, interactive digital tools such as online sight-word games or applications received comparatively lower emphasis in implementation, reflecting a broader tendency toward traditional instructional methods. This may indicate possible constraints such as limited access to technological resources, insufficient training, or preference for established classroom practices. While digital tools have been recognized in the literature as potentially enhancing engagement and individualized learning, their effectiveness depends on accessibility and classroom conditions rather than frequency of use alone (Waldmann & Levlin, 2024; de Oliveira et al., 2023). Overall, the findings indicate that teachers maintain a high level of implementation of sight-word recognition exercises in their classrooms. This suggests consistent instructional exposure to sight words among learners, which is theoretically aligned with foundational reading development frameworks such as orthographic mapping and the Simple View of Reading (Royanto, 2025; Aratea

et al., 2023).

Learners' Reading Comprehension Level

Table 2. *Learners' Reading Comprehension Level*

Score Range	Description	Comprehension Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
8-10	High Comprehension	Independent	118	54.38
5-7	Moderate Comprehension	Instructional	95	43.78
2-4	Low Comprehension	Frustration	4	1.84
Total			217	100%

Table 2 presents the distribution of learners by reading comprehension level based on Phil-IRI results. The categories reflect Independent, Instructional, and Frustration levels, providing insight into learners' reading proficiency. The Independent level recorded the highest frequency of 118 learners (54.38%), indicating that more than half of the learners can read and comprehend texts without assistance. This suggests that most learners demonstrate functional reading proficiency and can engage with texts independently. While this may be consistent with effective reading instruction practices in general, the present study does not establish causation for any specific instructional strategy; instead, it reports learners' current reading status. On the other hand, the Frustration level showed the lowest frequency, with 4 learners (1.84%), indicating that only a very small proportion of learners experience significant difficulty with reading comprehension. This suggests that most learners are functioning at acceptable reading levels, although a small group may require targeted intervention. As supported by related literature, learners with low reading proficiency often require structured remediation; however, this study only describes the distribution of reading levels and does not identify causal factors. Overall, the distribution of learners across comprehension levels shows that most learners are performing at satisfactory to advanced reading levels, while only a minimal number require intensive support. These results provide a descriptive snapshot of reading performance within the participating schools.

Conclusion

The study describes the implementation of basic sight-word recognition exercises and learners' reading comprehension levels within the context of the two participating public elementary schools in Alicia District, Bohol, Philippines. The findings show that teachers consistently implement sight-word recognition exercises as part of their reading instruction, while learners demonstrate varying levels of reading comprehension performance within these school settings. Moreover, the results underscore the importance of regular exposure to sight-word recognition activities in foundational reading instruction. These classroom practices align with the view that word recognition is a key component of reading development, particularly in supporting learners' familiarity with high-frequency words and reading fluency.

Furthermore, the findings have practical implications for educational leaders and curriculum planners seeking to strengthen literacy programs by continuing to support foundational reading instruction. This may include enhancing teacher training, improving access to instructional materials, and supporting classroom-based reading activities that integrate systematic sight-word recognition within broader reading instruction.

The study is limited to descriptive analysis of classroom practices and learner performance within the participating schools in Alicia District. Therefore, findings should be interpreted within this specific context. For future research, it is recommended that studies further explore sight-word recognition practices and reading comprehension using expanded samples and multiple sources of classroom data, such as observations, instructional records, and lesson plans.

Contributions of Authors

Author 1: conceptualization, data gathering, data analysis

Author 2: data analysis, data gathering

Author 3: proposal writing, data gathering

Author 4: proposal writing, data gathering

Funding

This research received no external funding from any government agency, commercial organization, or private institution. The study was made possible through the personal support and contributions of the authors' families, loved ones, and personal resources, which assisted in various aspects of the research and publication process.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper. The research was conducted independently, and no personal, financial, or professional relationships influenced the study's design, data collection, analysis, interpretation, or publication.

Acknowledgment

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to all individuals who contributed to the completion of this study. We extend our appreciation to our families and loved ones for their unwavering encouragement, understanding, and support throughout the research journey.

Special recognition is given to Dr. Leo H. Malalis for his invaluable support and assistance. His support, encouragement, and dedication greatly contributed to the development of this research—from conceptualizing the title, reviewing and editing the manuscript, assisting with revisions, and supporting the publication process. His generosity, patience, and belief in the value of this work were instrumental in bringing this study to completion.

The authors also thank their advisers, experts, and all individuals who provided guidance, constructive feedback, and inspiration during the conduct of this research.

References

- Alacida, C., Asas, M., Aparilla, G., Bernacer, J.G., Butihen, J., Hingpit, C., Monares, M.G., Vallentos, M., & Ampo, W.M. (2025). Exploring academic decline among e-gamers: A phenomenological approach to learners' academic experiences. *Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 48(8), 1267–1272. <https://doi.org/10.70838/pemj.480806>
- Aliyar, M., & Peters, E. (2022). Incidental acquisition of Italian words from comic books. *Reading in a Foreign Language*, 34(2), 349–377. <https://tinyurl.com/4kwh3ydv>
- Aratea, M., Placido, C.A., Amarille, D.H., & Tiu, A.M. (2023). Relationship of vocabulary mastery and reading comprehension of students. *International Journal of Academic Research*. <https://tinyurl.com/2ss2c88x>
- Balnig, B., Guibone, L.J., & Alda, R. (2024). The relationship between reading fluency components and comprehension skills: A descriptive correlational study. *Journal of Education and Innovation*. <https://tinyurl.com/2jcvck9p>
- Boucher, A., Bhat, B., Clemens, N., Vaughn, S., & O'Donnell, K. (2024). Reading interventions for students in Grades 3–12 with significant word reading difficulties. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 57(4), 203–223. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00222194231207556>
- Denton, C., Montroy, J., Zucker, T., & Cannon, G. (2021). Designing an intervention in reading and self-regulation for students with significant reading difficulties, including dyslexia. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, 44(3), 170–182. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0731948719899479>
- de Oliveira, A.M., Santos, J.L.F., & Capellini, S.A. (2023). Reading comprehension performance of elementary and senior high school students. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1086040>
- Donegan, R., & Wanzek, J. (2021). Effects of reading interventions implemented for upper elementary struggling readers: A look at recent research. *Reading and Writing*, 34(8), 1943–1977. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11145-021-10123-y>
- Ehri, L. (2014). Orthographic mapping in the acquisition of sight word reading, spelling memory, and vocabulary learning. *Scientific Studies of Reading*, 25(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888438.2013.819356>
- Hall, C., Dahl-Leonard, K., Cho, E., Solari, E., Capin, P., Conner, C., Henry, A., Cook, L., Hayes, L., Vargas, I., Richmond, C., & Kehoe, K. (2023). Forty years of reading intervention research for elementary students with or at risk for dyslexia: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 58(2), 285–312. <https://doi.org/10.1002/rrq.477>
- Khosa, M. (2025). The effects of a print-rich literacy environment on developing early reading skills in the foundation phase classroom. *Reading Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02702711.2024.2447243>
- Leachman, M., Wolters, A., & Kim, Y.-S. G. (2025). The relation between text reading and reading comprehension: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Educational Psychology*. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000932>
- Lusaran, C.J., Lusica, T., Mantica, R., Olasiman, K., Pelenio, M., Jr., Pintac, J., Timario, M., & Ampo, W.M. (2026). Status of learners in numeracy and reading literacy: Examining their performance and challenges with words and numbers. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 4(2), 66–72. <https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2025.774>
- Mahfouz, M.A.S., & Mohamed, A.H.H. (2023). Using word reading fluency curriculum-based measurements to monitor students' reading progress in Grade 2. *Education Sciences*, 13(2), 217. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13020217>
- Metsala, J. (2023). Longitudinal contributions of morphological awareness, listening comprehension, and gains in word reading fluency to later word- and text-reading fluency. *Front. Educ.* <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2023.1194879>
- Purnomo, J.S., & Royanto, L. (2025). Effective reading interventions for slow learners: Sight word and phonemic awareness approaches. *Jurnal Paedagogy*. <https://doi.org/10.33394/jp.v12i1.13250>
- Quintano, C., Esto, J., & Sumayo, G. (2025). Reading practices and reading environments among Grade 6 pupils in a public elementary school. *International Journal of Philosophy, Linguistics, and Humanities*. <https://doi.org/10.70847/592961>
- Waldmann, C., & Levlin, M. (2024). Reading profiles in secondary school: Concurrent language and cognitive abilities, and retrospective and prospective reading skills. *Front. Psychol.* <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1287134>