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Identifying Reading Difficulties and Designing School-Based Remediation Programs for Secondary Learners

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Abstract

This study examined the reading difficulties of Grade 7 students in a public secondary school in Sorsogon, Philippines, and developed structured remedial reading activities aligned with identified gaps. The study aimed to determine specific oral reading miscues an d comprehension levels based on Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) results and to design targeted remediation activities. The main research question asked: What specific reading difficulties are manifested by Grade 7 students, and how can structured remedial activities be developed to address these gaps? A descriptive–developmental research design was employed. The population consisted of 407 Grade 7 students enrolled during School Year 2018–2019. Using purposive sampling, 306 students classified under frustration and instructional levels based on Phil-IRI pre-test results were included in the study. Eight English teachers participated in a focus group discussion to provide contextual data on instructional strategies. Data were collected using the Phil-IRI reading assessment tool, documentary analysis of reading records, and a researcher-developed interview guide. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, and rank, while qualitative responses were grouped and descriptively analyzed. Results revealed that 38% of the students were under frustration level and 62% were under instructional level. Among frustration-level students, mispronunciation was the most dominant oral reading miscue (99%). Among instructional-level students, repetition ranked highest (60%). In terms of comprehension, frustration-level students were limited primarily to literal comprehension, with minimal performance at inferential and higher-order levels. Instructional-level students demonstrated stronger literal and inferential skills but showed reduced performance in critical and application-level comprehension. Teacher strategies were largely general and motivational rather than diagnostic-based. The findings indicate that foundational decoding weaknesses constrained comprehension development, particularly among frustration-level learners. A structured Reading Remediation Program was therefore developed, emphasizing phonemic awareness, decoding accuracy, fluency training, and progressive comprehension enhancement. It is recommended that schools implement level-based remediation sessions and conduct periodic diagnostic assessments to monitor progress. Professional development for teachers in structured reading intervention is also advised. The study implies that systematic diagnostic assessment combined with targeted instructional design can strengthen reading proficiency at the early secondary level and support sustained literacy development.

Keywords: Reading Difficulties, Oral Reading Miscues, Reading Comprehension Levels, Phil-IRI, Reading Remediation, Secondary Education, Diagnostic Assessment, Literacy Intervention

1. Introduction

Reading had been recognized as a foundational academic skill across educational systems. It had been required for learning in language, mathematics, science, and social studies. Skilled reading had been understood as the integration of accurate word recognition and language comprehension, which together supported meaning construction (Hoover & Gough, 1990; Castles et al., 2018). When decoding had been

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weak, cognitive resources had been diverted from comprehension processes. When language knowledge had been limited, inferential and critical understanding had also been constrained. Contemporary reading science had therefore emphasized that effective instruction must address both word-level and comprehension-level processes in an integrated manner (Castles et al., 2018).

In the Philippine context, reading performance had been monitored through national and school-based assessments. The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) had been institutionalized as a diagnostic tool for classifying learners into independent, instructional, and frustration levels to guide instructional planning (Department of Education, 2018a; Department of Education, 2018b). Despite these mechanisms, national and international indicators had revealed persistent literacy concerns. Results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 had shown that a large proportion of Filipino learners performed below minimum proficiency in reading (OECD, 2019). Reports on learning poverty had likewise indicated that many learners in low- and middle-income settings had struggled to read and understand age-appropriate texts by the end of primary education, which had implications for later academic progression (World Bank, 2022). These findings had suggested that early secondary schools had been receiving students with unmet foundational reading needs.

Reading difficulty at the secondary level had not been limited to comprehension alone. Oral reading behaviors such as mispronunciation, substitution, insertion, omission, and repetition had reflected weaknesses in phonological processing and automatic word recognition. When these foundational skills had not been consolidated, fluency and comprehension had been adversely affected (Castles et al., 2018). Evidence among adolescents had shown that oral reading fluency remained associated with comprehension outcomes, although the strength of this relationship varied depending on reader characteristics and task demands (Washburn, 2022). For learners with persistent comprehension difficulties, explicit instruction targeting inferential reasoning had demonstrated positive effects on reading outcomes, particularly among English learners and struggling readers (Hall et al., 2020). Broader syntheses had also confirmed that structured, evidence-based reading interventions could improve reading performance among learners with identified difficulties when instruction had been systematic and targeted (Solari et al., 2022).

Within this framework, diagnostic assessment had been considered critical. Reading profiles that distinguished between word recognition gaps and higher-order comprehension weaknesses had allowed teachers to match instruction to specific learner needs. In Cumadcad National High School, Castilla, Sorsogon, Grade 7 learners had been identified through Phil-IRI results as belonging to frustration and instructional levels. Observed difficulties had included oral reading miscues and limited comprehension across literal, inferential, critical, and application levels. Although teachers had employed strategies such as peer tutoring and reading activities, systematic post-diagnostic intervention planning had not been consistently implemented. This situation had underscored the need for a structured approach that linked assessment results with targeted remediation.

The present study had therefore been undertaken to determine the specific reading difficulties of Grade 7 students based on Phil-IRI results, to examine instructional strategies employed by English teachers, and to develop remedial reading activities aligned with identified gaps . The study had been grounded in established reading theory and recent empirical evidence, and it had aimed to contribute a school-based model for diagnostic-informed reading remediation at the early secondary level.

Aim of the Study

This study aimed to determine the reading difficulties of Grade 7 students of Cumadcad National High School based on Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) results, examine the reading

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comprehension strategies employed by English teachers, and develop structured reading remediation activities aligned with the identified gaps in word recognition and comprehension.

Research Questions

1. What specific oral reading difficulties (e.g., mispronunciation, substitution, insertion, omission, reversal, repetition, refusal to pronounce) are manifested by Grade 7 students based on Phil-IRI results?
2. What is the level of reading comprehension of Grade 7 students in terms of:
    - literal comprehension,
    - inferential comprehension,
    - critical comprehension, and
    - application comprehension?
3. What strategies in reading comprehension are employed by English teachers in addressing students' reading difficulties?
4. Based on the identified reading gaps, what structured remedial reading activities may be developed to address the specific difficulties of Grade 7 students?

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on established models of reading that explain the interaction between word recognition and comprehension processes. The **Simple View of Reading** posited that reading comprehension is the product of decoding and linguistic comprehension (Hoover & Gough, 1990). When decoding is weak, comprehension is constrained even if language knowledge is adequate. Conversely, when language comprehension is limited, fluent decoding alone does not ensure understanding. This framework justified the examination of oral reading miscues and comprehension levels as interrelated components of reading performance.

The study was also informed by **Scarborough's Reading Rope**, which conceptualized skilled reading as the integration of word recognition strands (phonological awareness, decoding, sight recognition) and language comprehension strands (vocabulary, background knowledge, verbal reasoning, literacy knowledge) (Castles et al., 2018). Weakness in any strand was understood to affect overall reading proficiency. The observed miscues such as mispronunciation, substitution, insertion, omission, and repetition were interpreted as indicators of fragile word recognition processes, which in turn limited comprehension outcomes.

Further, the study was grounded in a **diagnostic–prescriptive instructional model**, where assessment results inform targeted intervention. Diagnostic data derived from the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) were used to identify learners' reading levels and specific gaps (Department of Education, 2018a). Structured remediation was therefore designed based on identified needs rather than generalized instruction.

Evidence from intervention research supported the need for explicit, targeted instruction in reading comprehension, particularly inference-making and higher-order processes among struggling readers (Hall et al., 2020). Meta-analytic findings also confirmed that systematic and structured reading interventions yield measurable improvements among learners with reading difficulties (Solari et al., 2022). These empirical foundations justified the development of remediation activities aligned with diagnostic findings.

Conceptual Framework

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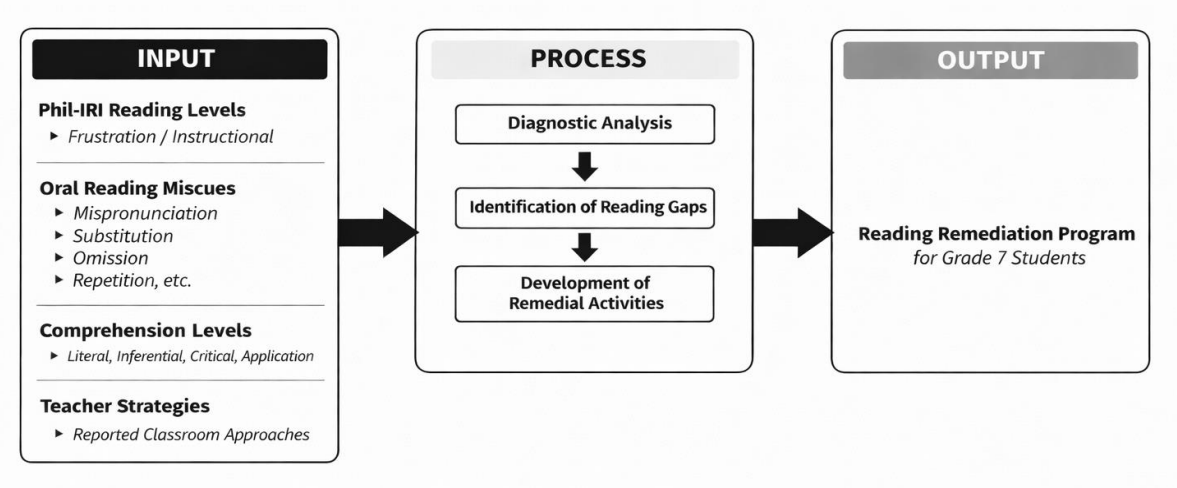

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Diagnostic-to-Remediation Model for Grade 7 Reading

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study using an Input–Process–Output (IPO) structure. The framework illustrates how diagnostic reading data were systematically translated into structured remediation activities.

The **Input** component includes the Phil-IRI reading level classification (frustration and instructional levels), observed oral reading miscues (mispronunciation, substitution, omission, repetition, and related errors), identified comprehension levels (literal, inferential, critical, and application), and teacher-reported classroom strategies. These elements represent the foundational data used to understand learners' reading performance.

The **Process** component consists of three sequential stages: diagnostic analysis, identification of specific reading gaps, and development of remedial activities. Diagnostic analysis involved examining Phil-IRI results and reading behaviors. Identified gaps were categorized according to word recognition and comprehension difficulties. Based on these findings, structured remediation activities were designed to target specific weaknesses.

The **Output** component is the proposed Reading Remediation Program for Grade 7 students. This output reflects a structured, evidence-informed intervention aligned with identified reading needs.

The framework assumes that systematic diagnostic assessment, when followed by targeted instructional design, leads to the development of appropriate remediation strategies to address reading difficulties among early secondary learners.

2. Review of Literature

Reading difficulties in early secondary school have been linked to weaknesses in word recognition and language comprehension. This relationship has been explained through established models of reading, where decoding and linguistic comprehension have been treated as necessary conditions for successful comprehension (Hoover & Gough, 1990). In applied settings, persistent errors in oral reading have been interpreted as markers of fragile word recognition and limited automaticity, which have reduced the capacity for meaning construction (Castles et al., 2018). This evidence has supported the use of diagnostic

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profiling when remediation has been planned, rather than relying on generalized reading activities (Castles et al., 2018).

In the Philippines, the Revised Philippine Informal Reading Inventory has been used as a classroom-based assessment to classify learners into independent, instructional, and frustration levels in oral and silent reading and related comprehension tasks (Department of Education, 2018a). Literacy indicators have also shown continuing concerns at scale. Results from PISA 2018 have reported low reading proficiency among many Filipino learners (OECD, 2019). Learning poverty estimates have similarly indicated that many learners have not reached basic reading comprehension benchmarks by the end of primary school, which has increased the likelihood of reading difficulties in subsequent grades (World Bank, 2022). This context has supported school-based remediation models that have begun with assessment results and have proceeded to targeted intervention planning (Department of Education, 2018a).

Intervention evidence has supported structured approaches that have targeted specific gaps in word reading and comprehension. For adolescents with limited reading proficiency, oral reading fluency has been found to relate to comprehension, although variability across profiles has been reported, which has reinforced the need for diagnostic alignment (Washburn, 2022). Inference instruction delivered in small groups has shown positive effects on inferential and general comprehension outcomes among middle-grade English learners with comprehension difficulties (Hall et al., 2020). Meta-analytic evidence has also indicated that reading interventions for English learners with word reading difficulties have produced meaningful gains when instruction has been systematic and explicit (Solari et al., 2022). These findings have supported remediation designs that have linked diagnosed miscues and comprehension levels to targeted activity sets, consistent with the diagnostic-to-remediation logic used in the present study.

3. Methodology

This study employed a **descriptive–developmental research design**. The descriptive component was used to determine the existing reading difficulties of Grade 7 students through diagnostic assessment. The developmental component focused on the preparation of structured remedial reading activities based on the identified gaps. No experimental manipulation of variables was conducted.

Research Design

A descriptive approach was applied to examine oral reading behaviors and comprehension levels of learners. The study described observable reading miscues and categorized comprehension performance into established levels. The developmental phase translated diagnostic findings into targeted remediation activities intended to address specific reading weaknesses.

Participants

The participants consisted of Grade 7 students enrolled at Cumadcad National High School, Castilla, Sorsogon, during School Year 2018–2019. Out of 407 students, 306 were identified as respondents. These students were classified under the **frustration** and **instructional** reading levels based on their Phil-IRI pre-test results. Eight English teachers handling Grade 7 classes also participated in a focus group discussion. Their inclusion provided contextual insights into classroom practices and instructional strategies used to address reading difficulties.

Instruments

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The primary instrument used in the study was the **Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI)**. This standardized tool was utilized to assess oral reading performance and comprehension levels. It provided data on reading miscues such as mispronunciation, substitution, omission, insertion, and repetition, as well as comprehension performance across literal, inferential, critical, and application levels.An interview guide developed by the researcher was used during the focus group discussion with the English teachers. Documentary analysis of Phil-IRI records supplemented the data gathered.

Data Collection Procedure

Prior to data collection, permission was secured from the school administration. Phil-IRI pre-test results were obtained and examined to identify learners under frustration and instructional levels.A focus group discussion was conducted with the Grade 7 English teachers to explore instructional practices and strategies used in reading instruction. The session lasted for more than one hour. Responses were recorded, grouped, and analyzed according to recurring themes.
After analyzing both quantitative and qualitative findings, structured remedial reading activities were developed to address the identified reading gaps.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using **frequency counts, percentages, and rank** to determine the prevalence of specific oral reading miscues and levels of comprehension. Qualitative data from the focus group discussion were grouped and descriptively analyzed to identify common strategies and challenges encountered in reading instruction.

Ethical Considerations

Approval was obtained from the school administration prior to the conduct of the study. Participation of teacher-respondents was voluntary. Student assessment data were treated confidentially and were used strictly for research purposes.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1. Distribution of Grade 7 Students According to Reading Level

Reading Level	Male (f)	Female (f)	Total (f)	Percentage (%)
Frustration	73	31	104	38%
Instructional	105	97	202	62%
Total	178	128	324	100%

Table 1 presents the distribution of Grade 7 students according to reading level based on Phil-IRI results. Out of the 324 identified respondents under frustration and instructional levels, 104 students (38%) were classified under the **frustration level**, while 202 students (62%) were classified under the **instructional level**.

The frustration level indicates that students demonstrated significant difficulty in word recognition and comprehension, requiring intensive instructional support. The instructional level suggests that students could read with guidance but still required structured assistance to improve comprehension and fluency. The data show that a larger proportion of students belonged to the instructional level. However, the

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presence of a substantial percentage under frustration level indicates that reading difficulties remained a serious concern among Grade 7 learners.

This distribution justified the need for diagnostic analysis of specific oral reading miscues and comprehension gaps, which served as the basis for the development of remedial reading activities.

Table 2. Oral Reading Miscues of Grade 7 Students by Reading Level

Difficulties	**Frustration Level (n=104)**		**Instructional Level (n=202)**	
	Frequency (f)	%	Frequency (f)	%
Mispronunciation	103	99%	5	2%
Substitution	81	66%	79	39%
Insertion	40	33%	82	41%
Omission	37	30%	74	37%
Reversal	23	19%	50	25%
Repetition	71	58%	121	60%
Refusal to Pronounce	18	17%	–	–

Table 2 presents the oral reading miscues committed by Grade 7 students under frustration and instructional levels.
Among students under the **frustration level**, mispronunciation ranked highest with 103 out of 104 students (99%). This indicates that almost all learners in this category experienced difficulty in correctly pronouncing words. Substitution (66%) and repetition (58%) followed as the most common miscues. These findings suggest weaknesses in phonological processing and word recognition skills.

For students under the **instructional level**, repetition ranked first with 121 students (60%), followed by insertion (41%) and substitution (39%). Although these students were able to read with assistance, the presence of repeated miscues indicates that fluency and automaticity were not fully developed. Notably, refusal to pronounce was not observed among students at the instructional level, suggesting better confidence and basic decoding ability compared to those under frustration level.

Overall, the data reveal that oral reading miscues were more severe and frequent among students under frustration level. These patterns highlight the need for remediation activities focused on pronunciation, phonics reinforcement, and fluency development.

Table 3. Comprehension Levels of Grade 7 Students by Reading Level

Comprehension Level	**Frustration Level (n=104)**		**Instructional Level (n=202)**	
	Frequency (f)	%	Frequency (f)	%
Literal	52	50%	170	84%
Inferential	1	1%	161	80%
Critical	0	0%	138	68%
Application	0	0%	92	46%

Table 3 presents the comprehension performance of Grade 7 students across four levels: literal, inferential, critical, and application. Among students under the **frustration level**, only 52 students (50%) demonstrated literal comprehension. Very few students reached the inferential level (1%), and none achieved the critical or application levels. This indicates that learners under frustration level struggled not only with decoding but also with higher-order comprehension skills.

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For students under the **instructional level**, 170 students (84%) demonstrated literal comprehension. A high proportion also performed at the inferential level (80%). However, performance decreased at the critical level (68%) and further declined at the application level (46%). This pattern suggests that while instructional-level students could identify explicitly stated information and make basic inferences, fewer were able to evaluate, analyze, or apply ideas beyond the text.

The results show that comprehension difficulties were more pronounced among students under frustration level. Even among instructional-level students, higher-order comprehension skills remained underdeveloped. These findings reinforce the need for remediation activities that address not only pronunciation and fluency but also inferential reasoning and critical thinking skills in reading.

Table 4. Reading Comprehension Strategies Employed by Grade 7 English Teachers

Reading Strategy	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Reading Contest	6	75%
Book Report	5	62.5%
Drop Everything and Read (DEAR)	4	50%
Peer Tutoring / Buddy System	7	87.5%
Reward System	5	62.5%
Use of Interesting Materials	6	75%

(n = 8 teachers)

Table 4 presents the reading comprehension strategies reported by Grade 7 English teachers during the focus group discussion. The most frequently reported strategy was **peer tutoring or buddy system**, utilized by 7 out of 8 teachers (87.5%). This suggests that collaborative learning was commonly employed to support struggling readers. Reading contests and the use of interesting materials were also widely practiced (75%), indicating efforts to motivate students and increase engagement in reading activities.

Book reports and reward systems were used by 62.5% of teachers, while Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) was employed by half of the respondents. Although these strategies promote reading exposure and motivation, they appear to focus primarily on engagement rather than structured diagnostic intervention. The findings indicate that while teachers implemented varied strategies, these approaches were largely general in nature. There was limited evidence of systematic, level-based remediation aligned with specific oral reading miscues and comprehension gaps.

This finding further supports the development of structured reading remediation activities tailored to identified student needs.

Table 5. Summary of Identified Reading Gaps and Corresponding Remedial Focus

Identified Reading Gap	Reading Level Affected	Instructional Focus	Proposed Remedial Emphasis
Mispronunciation	Frustration	Phonics and sound recognition	Vowel and consonant drills, phonetic practice, syllabication
Substitution	Frustration & Instructional	Word recognition accuracy	Sight word reinforcement, decoding exercises
Repetition	Frustration & Instructional	Fluency development	Guided oral reading, repeated reading activities
Insertion	Instructional	Visual tracking and	Controlled reading passages,

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Identified Reading Gap	Reading Level Affected	Instructional Focus	Proposed Remedial Emphasis
		decoding	monitoring strategies
Omission	Frustration & Instructional	Attention to text accuracy	Structured sentence reading, word-by-word tracking
Reversal	Frustration & Instructional	Letter-sound discrimination	Blending and segmenting drills
Limited Inferential Skills	Both Levels	Inferencing strategies	Guided questioning, context clue activities
Limited Critical & Application Skills	Instructional	Higher-order thinking	Analytical questioning, text-based reflection tasks

Table 5 summarizes the alignment between identified reading gaps and the proposed remedial focus areas.

Students under the frustration level exhibited severe word recognition difficulties, particularly mispronunciation. This finding justified phonics-based and pronunciation-focused activities as primary remediation components. Substitution and repetition were common across both reading levels, indicating the need for fluency-building exercises and reinforcement of accurate decoding skills.

At the comprehension level, students under frustration level demonstrated difficulty progressing beyond literal understanding. Instructional-level students showed some inferential ability but weaker performance in critical and application tasks. Therefore, remediation for instructional-level students emphasized inferential reasoning and higher-order comprehension strategies.

The table demonstrates that remediation was not generalized but was structured according to specific diagnostic findings. The proposed activities were designed to directly target the identified gaps in word recognition and comprehension, ensuring alignment between assessment results and instructional intervention.

Table 6. Proposed Structure of the Reading Remediation Program for Grade 7

Remediation Component	Target Group	Focus Skill Area	Instructional Approach	Expected Outcome
Phonemic Awareness and Sound Recognition	Frustration Level	Letter–sound correspondence	Explicit phonics drills, vowel and consonant sound exercises	Improved pronunciation accuracy
Decoding and Word Recognition	Frustration Level	Blending and syllabication	Guided oral reading, sight word reinforcement	Reduced substitution and omission errors
Oral Reading Fluency	Both Levels	Automaticity and pacing	Repeated reading, paired reading	Reduced repetition and insertion miscues
Literal Comprehension	Both Levels	Fact identification	Guided questioning, structured passages	Improved literal comprehension performance
Inferential Comprehension	Instructional Level	Contextual reasoning	Think-aloud strategies, inference drills	Increased inferential accuracy
Critical and	Instructional	Analysis and	Reflective questioning,	Improved higher-order

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Remediation Component	Target Group	Focus Skill Area	Instructional Approach	Expected Outcome
Application Skills	Level	application	short response tasks	comprehension

Table 6 presents the structured design of the proposed Reading Remediation Program. The program was differentiated according to reading level classification.

For students under the **frustration level**, the primary emphasis was placed on phonemic awareness, sound recognition, and decoding skills. These foundational components were prioritized because mispronunciation and other word recognition errors were dominant among this group. The expected outcome was improved accuracy in oral reading.

For students under the **instructional level**, remediation focused on strengthening comprehension processes, particularly inferential, critical, and application skills. Although these learners demonstrated literal understanding, higher-order comprehension required further development.

For both groups, oral reading fluency was integrated into the program to reduce repetition and improve pacing. The structure shows that remediation activities were systematically aligned with identified diagnostic gaps rather than implemented as general reading exercises.

The proposed structure reflects a targeted and level-based intervention model intended to address specific reading weaknesses among Grade 7 students.

Table 7. Overall Summary of Diagnostic Findings and Intervention Implications

Diagnostic Area	Key Findings	Implication for Instruction	Remedial Priority
Reading Level Classification	38% under frustration; 62% under instructional	Majority require guided instruction; significant group needs intensive support	High
Oral Reading Miscues	Mispronunciation dominant in frustration; repetition dominant in instructional	Weak phonological decoding and limited fluency	High
Literal Comprehension	Moderate in frustration; high in instructional	Basic comprehension present but fragile	Moderate
Inferential Comprehension	Very low in frustration; relatively high in instructional	Weak reasoning and contextual understanding among low readers	High (Frustration)
Critical & Application Skills	Absent in frustration; moderate in instructional	Limited higher-order processing	High (Instructional)
Teacher Strategies	Mostly motivational and general strategies	Need for structured, diagnostic-based remediation	High

Table 7 consolidates the major findings of the study and links them to instructional implications. The distribution of students across reading levels revealed that a considerable proportion of learners required structured support. Oral reading miscues were most severe among students under frustration level, particularly mispronunciation, indicating foundational decoding weaknesses. Among instructional-level students, repetition suggested incomplete fluency development.

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Comprehension analysis showed that literal comprehension was the most developed skill across both groups. However, inferential, critical, and application skills were limited, especially among frustration-level learners. This pattern indicates that decoding difficulties directly constrained comprehension progression.

The instructional strategies reported by teachers were largely motivational in nature. While beneficial for engagement, they were not systematically aligned with specific diagnostic gaps. Therefore, the findings justify the implementation of a structured, level-based remediation program grounded in assessment results.

Proposed Reading Remediation Program

Based on the diagnostic findings, a structured Reading Remediation Program for Grade 7 students was developed. The program was designed to address identified gaps in word recognition, oral reading fluency, and comprehension. It followed a level-based approach to ensure that instructional activities were aligned with learners' specific reading needs. The program recognized that students under frustration level required intensive support in decoding, while students under instructional level needed structured enhancement of comprehension skills.

The primary objective of the program was to improve pronunciation accuracy and decoding skills among students classified under frustration level. Reducing oral reading miscues such as mispronunciation, substitution, omission, insertion, and repetition was considered essential. At the same time, the program aimed to strengthen literal comprehension skills and gradually develop inferential, critical, and application-level understanding among learners. These objectives ensured that remediation addressed both foundational and higher-order reading processes.

The program consisted of two major components. The first component focused on word recognition and fluency development. Activities included phonemic drills, syllabication exercises, blending and segmenting tasks, guided oral reading, and repeated reading practice. These activities were structured to reinforce correct pronunciation and improve reading automaticity. Emphasis was placed on accuracy before speed to ensure mastery of decoding skills.

The second component emphasized comprehension enhancement. Literal comprehension activities focused on identifying main ideas, recalling details, and sequencing events. Inferential activities required learners to use context clues, make predictions, and draw conclusions from text. Critical and application-level tasks encouraged learners to evaluate ideas, analyze text meaning, and relate reading content to real-life situations. These activities were sequenced to gradually move learners from basic understanding toward deeper comprehension.

The program was intended to be implemented in small groups during scheduled remedial sessions. Students were grouped according to reading level classification to ensure appropriate instructional pacing. Instruction was teacher-guided and scaffolded to provide structured support. Progress monitoring was recommended through periodic oral reading checks and comprehension assessments. Improvement was measured by reduction in oral reading miscues and increased comprehension performance.

Overall, the proposed remediation program reflected a systematic diagnostic-to-intervention model. It ensured that identified reading difficulties were directly addressed through structured, targeted, and level-appropriate instructional activities.

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Conclusion

The study identified significant reading difficulties among Grade 7 students, particularly among those classified under frustration level. A considerable proportion of learners demonstrated persistent oral reading miscues, with mispronunciation emerging as the most prevalent difficulty in this group. Students under instructional level exhibited fewer decoding errors but continued to demonstrate weaknesses in fluency and higher-order comprehension skills.

The findings revealed that literal comprehension was the most developed reading level among both groups. However, progression toward inferential, critical, and application-level comprehension was limited, especially among students under frustration level. This pattern suggests that foundational decoding weaknesses constrained comprehension development. Even among instructional-level learners, higher-order processing skills required further strengthening.

The strategies employed by teachers were primarily general and motivational in nature. While these approaches supported engagement, they were not consistently aligned with specific diagnostic reading gaps. This finding underscored the need for structured, assessment-based intervention rather than generalized reading activities.

The development of the Reading Remediation Program addressed this need by aligning instructional activities with identified reading difficulties. The program emphasized phonemic awareness, decoding accuracy, fluency development, and progressive comprehension tasks. By following a diagnostic-to-intervention framework, the study provided a structured model for addressing reading difficulties at the early secondary level.

Overall, the study highlighted the importance of systematic diagnostic assessment and targeted remediation in improving reading performance among Grade 7 learners. The findings suggest that effective reading intervention must address both word recognition and comprehension processes to achieve meaningful improvement.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, several recommendations are proposed to strengthen reading instruction and remediation at the secondary level.

First, systematic implementation of the proposed Reading Remediation Program is recommended for Grade 7 students identified under frustration and instructional levels. Structured and level-based remediation sessions should be conducted regularly to ensure continuous support for struggling readers.

Second, teachers are encouraged to integrate diagnostic-based instruction into their regular classroom practices. Reading strategies should be aligned with specific learner needs rather than applied uniformly across all students. Emphasis should be placed on strengthening phonemic awareness, decoding accuracy, and oral reading fluency for learners with foundational difficulties.

Third, comprehension instruction should move beyond literal questioning. Teachers should incorporate inferential, critical, and application-level tasks to gradually develop higher-order thinking skills. Scaffolded questioning techniques and guided discussions may support this progression.

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Fourth, periodic reassessment using Phil-IRI or similar diagnostic tools is recommended to monitor learner progress. Continuous assessment allows timely adjustments to instructional strategies and remediation plans.

Fifth, professional development programs may be provided for English teachers to enhance their competence in diagnostic reading assessment and structured intervention design. Training in evidence-based reading strategies may strengthen classroom implementation.

Finally, future research may examine the effectiveness of the proposed remediation program through experimental or quasi-experimental designs. Longitudinal studies may also be conducted to determine sustained improvement in reading performance over time.

These recommendations aim to support sustained improvement in reading proficiency among Grade 7 learners and promote structured, assessment-informed instructional practices.

A. Credit Authorship Contribution Statement
Author: Conceptualization, Methodology, Data Analysis, Writing – Original Draft, Validation, Review & Editing.

B. Ethical Statement

Informed consent was obtained from all participants. Data privacy compliance followed Republic Act 10173 (Data Privacy Act of 2012) and ISO/IEC 27001 standards.

C. Declaration of Competing Interest
The author declares no competing financial interests.

D. Data Availability Statement
Data are available upon reasonable request.

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