

**Effectiveness of evidence-based strategies to enhance
the reading comprehension skills among grade 11 learners**

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the effectiveness of evidence-based teaching strategies in improving the reading comprehension of Grade 11 students at Pedro G. Bañez National High School during the school year 2025–2026. Anchored on the Interactive Reading Theory and the Direct and Indirect Effects Model of Reading, the study employed a mixed-methods quasi-experimental design that combined pretest–posttest analysis with qualitative inquiry. The respondents were 31 Grade 11 learners. Data were collected through pretest and posttest comprehension assessments based on 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World competencies, complemented by interviews and open-ended questionnaires. Quantitative results revealed significant improvements in the learners' ability to (1) identify the geographic, linguistic, and ethnic dimensions of Philippine literary history, (2) recognize representative texts and authors from various regions, and (3) value the contributions of local writers to regional literary traditions. Paired t-test results confirmed statistically significant differences between pretest and posttest scores, with large effect sizes. Qualitative findings further highlighted learners' progression from initial struggles with vocabulary and comprehension to increased confidence, motivation, and critical engagement through the use of reciprocal teaching strategies. The study concludes that evidence-based teaching strategies are highly effective in enhancing both reading comprehension skills and cultural appreciation. As an output, the researcher developed enhanced lesson guides for teaching 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World to support teachers and learners in fostering deeper comprehension and cultural literacy.

Keywords: English Teaching, Reading Comprehension, Evidence-Based Strategies, 21st Century Literature, Mixed Method, Philippines.

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INTRODUCTION

Enhancing reading comprehension skills is crucial because reading comprehension serves as the foundation for all academic learning and lifelong success. It enables learners to build vocabulary, understand complex concepts, and develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills essential for academic and professional achievements

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(Escar, 2023). Reading comprehension not only supports academic performance across disciplines but also fosters cognitive development and emotional intelligence, allowing individuals to connect with diverse perspectives and navigate the world effectively (Mishra, 2022).

Reciprocal Teaching, which involves students in predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing texts, has been shown in recent studies to significantly improve comprehension skills among secondary learners (Johnson & Lee, 2021; Martinez, 2023). Similarly, Graphic Organizers—visual tools that help learners organize and represent knowledge are supported by recent research for their effectiveness in enhancing reading comprehension by structuring information and facilitating critical thinking (Nguyen & Patel, 2022; Smith, 2024).

Recent international studies reveal persistent gaps in reading comprehension among secondary learners, highlighting the need for targeted interventions. For instance, the 2022 PISA results showed that many students worldwide struggle with understanding and interpreting texts, despite improvements in basic literacy skills (OECD, 2022). Research from 2020 onward emphasizes that while digital reading environments have expanded access, they also pose challenges for comprehension due to distractions and variable reading strategies among learners (Smith & Jones, 2021; Lee et al., 2023). These findings underscore the importance of instructional methods like evidence-based teaching strategies to support deeper engagement and comprehension in diverse learning contexts.

Moreover, international literature points to disparities in reading comprehension linked to socio-economic status and language background, which affect learners' ability to engage with academic texts critically (Garcia & Kim, 2021; Patel, 2022). These studies advocate for differentiated instructional approaches that include metacognitive questioning to bridge comprehension gaps and promote equity in learning outcomes (Garcia & Kim, 2021; Patel, 2022).

In the Philippine context, reading comprehension remains a significant educational challenge. The 2018 and 2022 PISA results indicated that Filipino students perform below the OECD average in reading literacy, with many struggling to interpret and analyze texts effectively (DepEd, 2023; OECD, 2022). Recent studies from 2020 onwards highlight factors such as limited reading materials, insufficient teacher training in comprehension strategies, and socio-economic barriers that contribute to these challenges (Santos & Cruz, 2021; Reyes, 2023). These gaps call for focused interventions that enhance comprehension skills through evidence-based instructional techniques like reciprocal teaching and graphic organizers.

Further, Philippine educational research stresses the need for culturally relevant and context-specific approaches to improve reading comprehension. Studies have shown that integrating evidence-based teaching strategies tailored to Filipino learners' experiences can foster better engagement and understanding of texts (Garcia et al., 2022; Mendoza, 2024). The Department of Education's recent initiatives also emphasize the role of active reading strategies, including reciprocal teaching and graphic organizers to address the persistent low reading proficiency among Filipino students (DepEd, 2023).

Locally, at Pedro G. Bañez National High School in Ormoc City, preliminary assessments and teacher observations reveal that Grade 11 learners exhibit difficulties in comprehending complex texts, which affects their academic performance across subjects (Ormoc City Division Report, 2023). Despite efforts to improve literacy, there is a lack of systematic implementation of evidence-based teaching strategies as an intervention to enhance reading comprehension (Ormoc City Education Office, 2024). This gap highlights the need for research-based interventions to develop learners' critical reading skills.

Additionally, local studies conducted between 2020 and 2024 indicate that students at Pedro G. Bañez National High School benefit from interactive and inquiry-based learning approaches, yet these are not consistently applied in reading instruction (Delgado & Ramos, 2022; Ormoc City Education Office, 2024). Addressing this gap by integrating structured evidence-based teaching strategies could significantly improve reading comprehension outcomes and prepare students for higher academic demands.

Statement of the problem

This study examined the effectiveness of evidence-based strategies to enhance the reading comprehension skills of Grade 11 English students at Pedro G. Bañez National High School during the school year 2025–2026. The findings of the study served as the basis for a proposed enhanced lesson guide for the teaching of 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following sub-problems:

1. What is the pretest level of reading comprehension among Grade 11 learners before evidence-based teaching strategies in the following competencies: identifying the geographic, linguistic, and ethnic dimensions of Philippine literary history from pre-colonial to the contemporary; identifying representative texts and authors from each region (e.g. engage in oral history research with focus on key personalities from the students' region/province/town); and valuing the contributions of local writers to the development of regional literary traditions?
2. What is the posttest level of reading comprehension among Grade 11 learners after evidence-based teaching strategies in the following competencies: identifying the geographic, linguistic, and ethnic dimensions of Philippine literary history from pre-colonial to the contemporary; identifying representative texts and authors from each region (e.g. engage in oral history research with focus on key personalities from the students' region/province/town); and valuing the contributions of local writers to the development of regional literary traditions?
3. Is there a significant difference between the pretest and posttest level of reading comprehension among Grade 11 learners in evidence-based teaching strategies?
4. What learning experiences do Grade 11 learners face in the use of evidence-based strategies for reading comprehension?
5. Based on the findings, what proposed enhanced lesson guides can be crafted?

METHODOLOGY

This mixed-methods quasi-experimental study used pretest–posttest quantitative analysis to measure the impact of evidence-based teaching strategies on students' reading comprehension, alongside qualitative data from interviews, surveys, or focus groups to explore learner challenges. This combined approach assessed performance improvements and informed the development of an enhanced lesson guide by explaining how and why the intervention worked.

This study was conducted at Pedro G. Bañez National High School in the Philippines, a public school with limited resources and mixed-ability Grade 11 learners. The school's bilingual instruction in Filipino and English provided a realistic context for examining reading comprehension processes. The respondents were 31 Grade 11 students from one intact class (Section Harmony) during the 2024–2025 school year, purposively selected for accessibility

and feasibility of the intervention. The sample, consisting of 17 males and 14 females, represented the entire class enrollment, minimizing sampling bias and ensuring reliable, complete data on the effectiveness of evidence-based teaching strategies.

This study used two main instruments: a 30-item multiple-choice reading comprehension pretest and posttest, adapted from Department of Education modules, featuring three passages with literal, inferential, and critical questions; and a structured questionnaire gathering demographic data, reading attitudes, challenges, and preferred strategies. Both instruments were content-validated by English teachers and research advisers to ensure alignment with learning competencies, clarity, and appropriateness for Grade 11 students.

The data analysis procedure consisted of three stages: preliminary (securing approval from the school principal, coordinating with teachers, and obtaining informed consent), data gathering (administering the Phil-IRI reading comprehension pretest, implementing the intervention using reciprocal teaching and graphic organizers, then conducting the posttest), and post-gathering (organizing responses and analyzing quantitative data using mean, standard deviation, and paired t-test to determine significant differences between pretest and posttest scores, alongside thematic analysis of qualitative data on reading challenges). These analyses informed the development of an enhanced lesson guide based on evidence-based teaching strategies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the gathered data, statistical analyses, and interpretations derived from a study on the level of reading comprehension among Grade 11 learners before and after the implementation of evidence-based teaching strategies, specifically reciprocal teaching and graphic organizers, in the context of Philippine literature. A total of 31 Grade 11 learners served as respondents in the study. Data were collected using a pretest and posttest instrument organized around three competencies: identifying the geographic, linguistic, and ethnic dimensions of Philippine literary history from pre-colonial to the contemporary period; identifying representative texts and authors from each region, including engagement in oral history research with focus on key personalities from the students' region, province, or town; and valuing the contributions of local writers to the development of regional literary traditions. Scores were interpreted according to established category equivalents ranging from Did Not Meet Expectations to Outstanding. Descriptive statistics including frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations were used to describe the distribution of pretest and posttest performance across categories. A paired samples t-test was employed to determine the significance of the difference between pretest and posttest scores, with effect sizes computed to measure the practical magnitude of observed gains. In addition, a thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework was applied to interview data gathered from learners to provide qualitative depth to the quantitative findings. All results are interpreted in direct relation to the objectives of the study, and the discussion that follows is grounded entirely in the data gathered from the respondents.

Pretest level of reading comprehension among Grade 11 learners before evidence-based teaching strategies

Competency 1: Identifying the geographic, linguistic, and ethnic dimensions of Philippine literary history from pre-colonial to the contemporary

Prior to the implementation of evidence-based teaching strategies, the pretest performance of the 31 Grade 11 learners on Competency 1, which concerns identifying the geographic, linguistic, and ethnic dimensions of Philippine literary history from pre-colonial to the contemporary period, revealed a moderate and uneven distribution of comprehension levels. None of the respondents, representing 0.00%, achieved scores within the Outstanding category of 9 to 10. A total of 5 learners, comprising 16.13% of the group, were classified under Very Satisfactory with scores of 7 to 8. The largest proportion of learners, 15 students or 48.39%, fell within the Satisfactory category corresponding to scores of 5 to 6. Nine learners, representing 29.03%, were placed in the Fairly Satisfactory range with scores of 3 to 4, while 2 learners, constituting 6.45%, did not meet expectations with scores of 1 to 2. The overall mean score for this competency was 5.10, which corresponds to a Satisfactory level of performance, with a standard deviation of 1.70 indicating moderate variation in performance across the group.

These figures collectively suggest that while the majority of learners possessed a basic grasp of the geographic, linguistic, and ethnic contexts embedded in Philippine literary history, mastery of the more complex conceptual dimensions of this competency remained underdeveloped. The range of readiness levels evident in the distribution underscores the necessity of differentiated, evidence-based instructional strategies capable of addressing the varying comprehension needs of the learners. Cruz and Tan (2021) found that culturally responsive teaching enhances student engagement with regional literatures, suggesting that contextualized instructional approaches can bridge the comprehension gaps reflected in this pretest data. Morales (2023) similarly highlighted the value of oral history research in deepening students' connections to local literary and cultural traditions, a finding that points to the instructional potential of rooting comprehension tasks in learners' own cultural contexts. Reyes and Delos Santos (2020) further demonstrated that evidence-based interventions produce measurable improvements in reading comprehension and critical analysis in literary contexts, reinforcing the appropriateness of the intervention employed in this study. The pretest data therefore establish a clear empirical baseline from which the impact of the evidence-based strategies can be meaningfully evaluated.

Competency 2: Identifying representative texts and authors from each region

The pretest results for Competency 2, which focuses on identifying representative texts and authors from each region with particular emphasis on engaging in oral history research centered on key personalities from the students' region, province, or town, revealed a notably wide spread of performance levels among the 31 Grade 11 respondents. Two learners, representing 6.45%, scored within the Outstanding category of 9 to 10. Six learners, comprising 19.35%, were classified under Very Satisfactory with scores of 7 to 8. Seven students, or 22.58%, fell within the Satisfactory range corresponding to scores of 5 to 6. The largest single group consisted of 10 learners, representing 32.26%, who scored in the Fairly Satisfactory range of 3 to 4. Six learners, constituting 19.35%, did not meet expectations with scores of 1 to 2. The mean score for this competency was 4.58, placing the group at a Fairly Satisfactory level overall, with a high standard deviation of 2.29 reflecting considerable variation in individual learners' prior knowledge and comprehension of regional literary content.

The distribution of scores indicates that while a small segment of the class demonstrated strong comprehension, the majority of learners fell into the lower performance categories, reflecting limited prior exposure to and familiarity with regional literary texts and their authors. This pattern points directly to the need for focused, differentiated teaching strategies grounded

in evidence-based approaches that integrate oral history, local author studies, and the study of regional texts. Alviar (2020) found that incorporating regional literary texts into instruction enhances cultural awareness and student motivation, reinforcing the pedagogical rationale for the approach adopted in this study. De Vera (2022) highlighted the particular role of oral history in deepening learners' sense of community connection through literature, which is especially relevant given that this competency explicitly involves oral history research as a learning mode. Santos and Lim (2024) demonstrated that evidence-based approaches improve comprehension and critical appreciation of regional literatures among Filipino secondary students, affirming that the intervention under study held strong potential to address the gaps identified in this pretest. The Fairly Satisfactory mean of 4.58 and the wide standard deviation of 2.29 together establish a compelling empirical case for the targeted instructional intervention that followed.

Competency 3: Valuing the contributions of local writers to the development of regional literary traditions

The pretest data for Competency 3, which addresses the valuing of the contributions of local writers to the development of regional literary traditions, revealed a more favorable distribution of performance relative to the two preceding competencies, though considerable variability remained. Among the 31 respondents, 6 learners, representing 19.35%, scored in the Outstanding range of 9 to 10. The largest group, comprising 13 learners or 41.94% of the class, was classified under Very Satisfactory with scores of 7 to 8. Five learners, constituting 16.13%, were placed in the Satisfactory category corresponding to scores of 5 to 6. Three students, representing 9.68%, fell within the Fairly Satisfactory range of 3 to 4, while 4 learners, comprising 12.90%, did not meet expectations with scores of 1 to 2. The mean score for this competency was 6.45, corresponding to a Very Satisfactory level of performance, with a standard deviation of 2.53 indicating notable variability in learners' appreciation of local writers' roles in shaping regional literary traditions.

The higher mean relative to Competencies 1 and 2 suggests that many learners already possessed a meaningful degree of recognition for regional authors and their cultural contributions prior to the intervention. Nevertheless, the presence of 12.90% who did not meet expectations and 9.68% in the Fairly Satisfactory range, alongside the wide standard deviation of 2.53, indicates that significant gaps in depth of understanding and critical appreciation persisted across the group. Garcia and Rivera (2023) found that formally recognizing regional authors within the curriculum promotes student identity formation and cultural relevance, underscoring the importance of institutionalizing local literary authorship as a core curricular focus. Cruz and Mendoza (2021) demonstrated that evidence-based strategies specifically targeting local literary contributions improve both student engagement and comprehension, lending support to the instructional approach adopted in this study. Santos et al. (2024) further highlighted that integrating local literary history into instruction fosters appreciation for diverse cultural heritages and contributes to their preservation within educational settings. The Very Satisfactory pretest mean of 6.45 thus provides a relatively higher but still improvable baseline from which the posttest gains for this competency may be meaningfully interpreted.

Posttest level of reading comprehension among Grade 11 learners after evidence-based teaching strategies

Competency 1: Identifying the geographic, linguistic, and ethnic dimensions of Philippine literary history from pre-colonial to the contemporary

Following the implementation of evidence-based teaching strategies, the posttest results for Competency 1 revealed substantial improvement across all performance categories relative to the pretest. Among the 31 Grade 11 respondents, 10 learners, representing 32.26%, achieved scores in the Outstanding range of 9 to 10, compared to none during the pretest. The largest group, consisting of 14 learners or 45.16% of the class, was classified under Very Satisfactory with scores of 7 to 8. Five students, comprising 16.13%, remained in the Satisfactory range of 5 to 6, and 2 learners, constituting 6.45%, were placed in the Fairly Satisfactory category of 3 to 4. Notably, none of the 31 respondents, representing 0.00%, scored in the Did Not Meet Expectations range, a marked contrast to the 6.45% who occupied that category in the pretest. The posttest mean for this competency was 7.52, corresponding to a Very Satisfactory level of performance, with a standard deviation of 1.61 indicating less variation in performance compared to the pretest standard deviation of 1.70.

The increase from a pretest mean of 5.10 to a posttest mean of 7.52 reflects a meaningful and directionally clear improvement in learners' comprehension of the geographic, linguistic, and ethnic dimensions of Philippine literary history. This enhancement can be attributed to the implementation of reciprocal teaching, which engaged students through the structured roles of predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing, and the use of graphic organizers, which provided visual frameworks for organizing complex literary and historical information. Together, these strategies supported differentiated instruction, developed metacognitive awareness, promoted learner autonomy, and reinforced academic confidence. The reduction in standard deviation from 1.70 to 1.61 further suggests that the intervention not only raised the average performance level but also contributed to greater consistency among learners. Reyes and Delos Santos (2020) documented measurable gains in reading comprehension and critical analysis of cultural content attributable to evidence-based interventions, a finding directly corroborated by the posttest data. Cruz and Tan (2021) emphasized that integrating geographic and ethnic contexts into instruction promotes student engagement and comprehension, validating the cultural grounding of the strategies used. Morales (2023) stressed the importance of including indigenous and regional narratives to broaden students' cultural perspectives and literary knowledge, affirming the curricular orientation that shaped the intervention.

Competency 2: Identifying representative texts and authors from each region

The posttest results for Competency 2 reflected notable improvement following the evidence-based intervention. Among the 31 respondents, 10 learners, representing 32.26%, scored in the Outstanding range of 9 to 10, a substantial increase from the 6.45% who reached that category in the pretest. Eleven students, comprising 35.48% of the group, were classified under Very Satisfactory with scores of 7 to 8, compared to 19.35% in the pretest. Five learners, constituting 16.13%, were placed in the Satisfactory range of 5 to 6, while another 5 students, also 16.13%, remained in the Fairly Satisfactory category of 3 to 4. None of the 31 learners, representing 0.00%, scored in the Did Not Meet Expectations range, in contrast to the 19.35% who had occupied that category in the pretest. The posttest mean for this competency was 7.06, corresponding to a Very Satisfactory level, with a standard deviation of 2.16, indicating some remaining variability in performance across the group.

The improvement from a pretest mean of 4.58 to a posttest mean of 7.06 represents a meaningful shift in learners' ability to identify representative texts and authors from Philippine regions, a competency that had yielded the lowest pretest mean among the three. This progress can be attributed to the structured implementation of reciprocal teaching, wherein students engaged in the roles of predictor, questioner, clarifier, and summarizer within collaborative

literary inquiry, and the use of graphic organizers that enabled learners to visually map connections among regional authors, their works, and their cultural contexts. These approaches fostered deeper comprehension, critical thinking, differentiated learning pathways, and heightened cultural awareness. The persistence of some variability, reflected in a standard deviation of 2.16, nonetheless indicates that a segment of learners continues to require further instructional support in this competency. Smith and Garcia (2022) emphasized that centering regional authors in instruction enhances student motivation and cultural relevance, supporting the approach taken in this study. Lee and Cruz (2023) highlighted the specific role of oral history inquiry in fostering students' sense of community connection through literary engagement. Thompson et al. (2024) reported significant gains in comprehension and critical appreciation when students engaged with diverse regional texts within an evidence-based instructional framework, a finding closely mirrored by the posttest outcomes documented here.

Competency 3: Valuing the contributions of local writers to the development of regional literary traditions

The posttest results for Competency 3 demonstrated the most pronounced improvement among the three competencies assessed in this study. Among the 31 respondents, 21 learners, representing 67.74% of the class, scored in the Outstanding range of 9 to 10, a dramatic increase from the 19.35% who reached that level during the pretest. Six students, comprising 19.35%, were classified under Very Satisfactory with scores of 7 to 8, and 4 learners, constituting 12.90%, were placed in the Satisfactory range of 5 to 6. None of the 31 respondents, representing 0.00%, scored in either the Fairly Satisfactory or the Did Not Meet Expectations categories, compared to the combined 22.58% who occupied those two categories during the pretest. The posttest mean was 8.81, corresponding to an Outstanding level of performance, with a low standard deviation of 1.47 indicating a high degree of consistency in performance across the group.

The advancement from a pretest mean of 6.45 to a posttest mean of 8.81, with the performance category rising from Very Satisfactory to Outstanding, represents the strongest measurable gain among the three competencies and reflects the powerful impact of culturally embedded, evidence-based instruction on learners' capacity to recognize and value the contributions of local writers to Philippine regional literary traditions. The low standard deviation of 1.47 further confirms that this improvement was not confined to a subset of high-performing students but was distributed broadly across the class. The effectiveness of reciprocal teaching in this context is evidenced by the structured dialogue it created for clarifying ideas, questioning literary meaning, and summarizing authorial contributions, while graphic organizers enabled learners to visually map the relationships among individual writers, their works, and the broader cultural heritage they represent. These strategies deepened understanding of how local authors shape cultural identity and contribute to the preservation of regional heritage, fostering both cultural pride and academic confidence among learners. Johnson and Lee (2023) found that incorporating local authors into curricula enhances both students' cultural connection and overall academic performance, a conclusion strongly supported by the posttest data. Martinez et al. (2022) highlighted that evidence-informed strategies prioritizing regional literature foster community engagement and identity formation among learners. Sanchez and Ocampo (2024) reported measurable gains in reading comprehension and cultural appreciation when students were given structured opportunities to study and value local literary traditions, findings that align precisely with the posttest outcomes recorded for Competency 3.

Significant difference between the pretest and posttest level of reading comprehension

To determine whether the observed improvements in learners' reading comprehension were statistically significant, a paired samples t-test was conducted for each of the three competencies. The results consistently confirmed that the implementation of evidence-based teaching strategies produced statistically significant and practically meaningful gains across all three areas of assessment.

For Competency 1, identifying the geographic, linguistic, and ethnic dimensions of Philippine literary history from pre-colonial to the contemporary, the pretest mean of 5.10 increased to a posttest mean of 7.52, yielding a mean difference of 2.42. The t-test produced a value of 5.95 with a p-value of less than .001, which is below the 0.05 alpha level, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and the interpretation that the difference is statistically significant. The effect size for this competency was 1.069, indicating a large practical effect of the intervention on learner performance.

For Competency 2, identifying representative texts and authors from each region including engagement in oral history research with focus on key personalities from the students' region, province, or town, the pretest mean of 4.58 rose to a posttest mean of 7.06, producing a mean difference of 2.48. The t-test yielded a value of 5.06 with a p-value of less than 0.001, again falling below the 0.05 significance level, resulting in the rejection of the null hypothesis and a determination that the difference is statistically significant. The effect size was 0.910, reflecting a large practical impact of the intervention.

For Competency 3, valuing the contributions of local writers to the development of regional literary traditions, the pretest mean of 6.45 increased to a posttest mean of 8.81, with a mean difference of 2.36. The t-test produced a value of 4.79 and a p-value of less than 0.001, which is below the 0.05 threshold, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis and the conclusion that the difference is statistically significant. The effect size was 0.860, again reflecting a large practical effect.

Across all three competencies, p-values were less than .001, all null hypotheses were rejected, all mean differences were positive and substantial, and effect sizes ranged from 0.860 to 1.069, uniformly classified as large. These results provide strong and consistent statistical evidence that the evidence-based teaching strategies employed in this study, namely reciprocal teaching and graphic organizers, produced significant and practically meaningful improvements in Grade 11 learners' reading comprehension of Philippine literature. The findings affirm that targeted, research-supported instructional interventions are effective in elevating academic performance, strengthening cultural literacy, fostering identity awareness, and closing the prior knowledge gaps identified at the pretest stage. Hernandez and Lopez (2022) demonstrated that culturally anchored teaching improves both student motivation and reading skills, a finding closely corroborated by the significant gains documented across all three competencies. Patel and Nguyen (2023) found significant improvements in critical thinking and cultural awareness through the use of evidence-based strategies in multicultural literature education, reinforcing the dual academic and cultural impact of the intervention. Kim and Santos (2024) reported that interventions centering on local literary heritage enhance both academic performance and learners' sense of cultural belonging, a conclusion that is empirically validated by the large effect sizes and significant t-test results across all three competencies in this study.

Learning experiences of Grade 11 learners in the use of evidence-based strategies for reading comprehension

To complement the quantitative findings with a deeper understanding of learners' subjective experiences during the intervention, a thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework was applied to interview data gathered from the 31 Grade 11 respondents. Through this systematic process, four key themes emerged from the data: Initial Challenges in Reading, Effective Use of Reciprocal Teaching Strategies, Overcoming Learning Barriers, and Enhanced Confidence and Motivation. These themes collectively trace a coherent developmental arc from foundational difficulty to meaningful growth, capturing not only the academic but also the emotional and motivational dimensions of the learners' engagement with the intervention.

The first theme, Initial Challenges in Reading, reveals that prior to the intervention, many learners experienced significant difficulties in comprehending academic and literary texts. Struggles were concentrated in three primary areas: understanding the overall meaning of texts, decoding unfamiliar vocabulary, and summarizing key ideas into coherent expression. Representative voices from the data illustrate these challenges with clarity. One student described the depth of the difficulty by stating that before, he or she could barely understand what was being read (S5). Another learner reflected on becoming disoriented mid-text, noting that he or she often got lost in the middle of the story and did not know what it was about (S11). A third respondent articulated the vocabulary challenge directly, describing the words as too difficult and explaining the inability to explain their meaning (S8). These experiences reveal the foundational comprehension gaps that hindered effective engagement with literary materials prior to the intervention and underscore the critical importance of structured support and targeted strategies for learners navigating complex academic texts.

The second theme, Effective Use of Reciprocal Teaching Strategies, demonstrates that the implementation of predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing as structured reciprocal teaching roles proved transformative for the majority of learners. Students described each strategy with specificity and reported tangible effects on their comprehension. One learner identified predicting as the most helpful strategy, reflecting that the prediction made was later confirmed by the text (S1). Another respondent credited questioning with deepening engagement, noting that it prompted more intensive thinking about the story (S9). A third learner highlighted clarifying as the strategy that most directly addressed the vocabulary and meaning difficulties encountered earlier, explaining that it helped in understanding the meaning of difficult words (S14). These accounts confirm that reciprocal teaching encouraged metacognitive thinking and deeper interaction with literary texts, empowering learners to transition from passive recipients of information to active, strategic participants in the construction of meaning, thereby fostering both autonomy and confidence in reading.

The third theme, Overcoming Learning Barriers, reflects the gradual but tangible progress made by learners who initially struggled with specific aspects of the reciprocal teaching process. Consistent practice and teacher guidance emerged as the two primary enabling factors in this progression. One student acknowledged having difficulty with clarifying and summarizing but attributed improvement to sustained practice and instructional guidance (S1). Another learner described an initial tendency toward distraction, which was mitigated through the structure and social accountability provided by group work (S17). A third respondent credited the teacher's clear explanations as the turning point in developing greater understanding (S22). These insights affirm the central role of perseverance and scaffolded instructional support in building reading comprehension skills and academic resilience. The progression documented in this theme highlights the effectiveness of collaborative and systematically structured learning environments in enabling learners to develop the persistence and academic capability needed to engage with challenging literary materials.

The fourth theme, Enhanced Confidence and Motivation, captures the affective and dispositional changes that accompanied the academic gains documented quantitatively. Learners reported a notable increase in self-efficacy, a greater willingness to engage with challenging texts, and a sense of pride in their academic progress. One student explicitly credited reciprocal teaching with boosting confidence in reading academic texts and enhancing motivation overall (S1). Another respondent described a shift from fear of long texts to genuine enjoyment of reading them (S19). A third learner expressed pride in improved scores and in the progress achieved (S27). These reflections illuminate the emotional and cognitive growth that evidence-based strategies fostered among the respondents, confirming that the benefits of reciprocal teaching extended well beyond skill acquisition to include the shaping of positive attitudes, academic identity, and sustained engagement with learning.

Taken together, the four themes portray a holistic developmental progression in which learners moved from confusion, limited vocabulary, and low comprehension to active metacognitive engagement, structured strategy use, and heightened academic confidence and motivation. This trajectory aligns with current educational psychology literature that recognizes evidence-based strategies as central to bridging comprehension gaps among secondary learners. Afflerbach et al. (2020) emphasized that metacognitive strategy instruction empowers learners to become independent readers capable of regulating their own understanding, a finding directly reflected in the learners' qualitative accounts of their strategy use and growing autonomy. In the Philippine context, Bautista and Manalo (2023) found that scaffolded teaching strategies significantly improve Filipino students' academic reading outcomes, corroborating both the quantitative gains and the qualitative narratives of gradual improvement documented in this study. Dela Cruz et al. (2021) further reported that integrating questioning and summarizing techniques enhances students' critical thinking and confidence in engaging with challenging texts, affirming the specific mechanisms through which reciprocal teaching produced the outcomes observed. These studies collectively reinforce that evidence-based reciprocal teaching not only improves reading comprehension but also positively shapes learners' emotional engagement and academic self-efficacy.

The findings presented in this chapter collectively establish a clear and empirically grounded account of how evidence-based teaching strategies, specifically reciprocal teaching and graphic organizers, significantly enhanced the reading comprehension of Grade 11 learners across all three assessed competencies related to Philippine literature. The quantitative data demonstrate consistent and statistically significant improvements from pretest to posttest across all competencies, with mean differences of 2.42, 2.48, and 2.36 respectively, all associated with p-values of less than .001 and large effect sizes ranging from 0.860 to 1.069, resulting in the rejection of all three null hypotheses. These gains reflect not only improvements in academic performance but also deepened cultural literacy, enhanced appreciation of Philippine regional literary traditions, and a stronger sense of cultural identity and pride among learners. The qualitative findings from the thematic analysis enrich these quantitative results by providing learner-centered narratives that trace the experiential journey from initial confusion and comprehension difficulty to metacognitive strategy mastery, barrier resolution, and sustained motivational growth. Together, the quantitative and qualitative strands of evidence affirm the effectiveness and appropriateness of the evidence-based strategies implemented in this study, contribute meaningful empirical insights to the body of literature on reading comprehension instruction in the Philippine secondary school context, and provide a sound empirical foundation for the conclusions and recommendations presented in the succeeding chapter of this manuscript.

CONCLUSION

The pretest revealed that most learners were only at the Satisfactory to Fairly Satisfactory levels in reading comprehension, with evident struggles in identifying regional texts and authors. After the intervention, posttest results showed marked improvement, with many students moving to Very Satisfactory and Outstanding levels across all competencies. Statistical analysis confirmed significant differences between pretest and posttest scores, rejecting the null hypothesis and proving the effectiveness of evidence-based strategies.

Qualitative findings revealed that learners initially faced challenges such as difficulty with vocabulary, comprehension, and summarization. However, reciprocal teaching strategies (predicting, questioning, clarifying, summarizing) enabled them to overcome barriers, boosting their motivation, confidence, and engagement with texts.

The study concludes that evidence-based teaching strategies, specifically reciprocal teaching and the use of graphic organizers, are effective in enhancing the reading comprehension skills of Grade 11 learners. These strategies not only improved academic performance in literature but also fostered cultural awareness and appreciation of Philippine literary heritage. Thus, the main problem—how to enhance Grade 11 learners' reading comprehension skills—was addressed successfully through the intervention.

It is recommended that the proposed Enhanced Lesson Guides for Teaching 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World be adopted and utilized by English teachers, particularly those handling Grade 11 literature. These guides can serve as practical instructional tools to systematically integrate evidence-based teaching strategies, thereby improving learners' reading comprehension, cultural literacy, and academic performance. Future studies may also adapt and expand these lesson guides for other grade levels and contexts to sustain and strengthen reading comprehension across the curriculum.

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