

The Impact of the Utilization of the Instructional Approaches in Enhancing the Foundational Reading Skills of the Grade 1 Learners in the Public Elementary Schools in Ragay Districts I And II, Division of Camarines Sur

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
Article history: Published: October 2026	The study described Grade 1 teachers' utilization of four reading approaches and their appraisals of five foundational-reading domains in 33 public elementary schools of Ragay Districts I and II, Division of Camarines Sur, during school year 2025–2026. A descriptive–evaluative–inferential survey included 53 teachers through total enumeration. A 100-item questionnaire, weighted means, and reported Mann–Whitney district rank comparisons were used. Overall instructional approach utilization was 4.78 (Very Much Utilized), led by explicit and systematic phonics (4.84). The perceived foundational-reading profile averaged 4.39 (Much Evident), highest in phonemic awareness (4.60) and lowest in reading fluency (4.24). Two of four approach domains and three of five reading domains were labeled significant in rank comparisons. The tests list item counts, rather than teacher counts, as samples and do not use independently scored pupil assessments. The results identify a need to examine fluency and comprehension using learner work; they do not establish that instructional approaches caused reading gains.
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1. Introduction

Foundational reading includes awareness of speech sounds, knowledge of letter–sound relationships, decoding, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. These skills interact but do not develop identically. Castles et al. (2018) describe how early code learning and later meaning-making both matter for reading acquisition. The study examined teachers' reported use of explicit phonics, guided reading, shared read-alouds, and differentiated literacy activities in Ragay Districts I and II.

The U.S. Institute of Education Sciences (2016) recommends explicit foundational skill instruction and opportunities to read connected text, while recognizing that teachers need to respond to pupil performance. In the present study, one part of a teacher questionnaire rated approach utilization and another rated how evident foundational reading skills were. Neither part supplies baseline and follow-up assessments, so “impact” in the title is a perceived construct, not an independently estimated effect.

The study asked how strongly each approach was used, whether district indicator rankings differed, how teachers appraised five reading domains, whether their district rankings differed, and what policies could follow. A survey can identify areas worth observing, but a rank contrast across item means cannot demonstrate learner improvement. The study follows the detailed results tables for numerical presentation and marks conflicts with the study abstract.

2. Methods

2.1 Design and participants

The study used a descriptive–evaluative–inferential survey for school year 2025–2026 in 33 public elementary schools. The two Ragay districts were purposively selected, and the identified Grade 1 teachers were enumerated. The respondent table lists 26 teachers from 17 District I schools and 27 from 16 District II schools, totaling 53. No pupil-level sample, baseline reading test, posttest, or comparison instruction was presented in the analysis.

Teachers were the survey respondents, and the district was the group label in inferential tables. School size, class composition, teaching experience, and response rate were not modeled. The school clusters may share resources and leadership practices; teacher-level observations would not be independent of school context without further analysis.

2.2 Instrument and procedure

The researcher-made questionnaire specified 100 items. Part I had 44 approach-use items: 10 phonics, 11 guided/structured reading, 12 shared read-alouds, and 11 differentiated rotational literacy activities. Part II had 56 items: 11 phonemic awareness, 12 phonics/decoding, 10 vocabulary, 11 fluency, and 12 comprehension. Five-category scales placed 4.50–5.00 in Very Much Utilized or Very Much Evident, and 3.50–4.49 in Much Utilized or Much Evident. The latter is an appraisal category, not a change score.

The methods described expert review and a pilot, reporting KR-21 reliability of 0.80 for the five-category questionnaire. Pilot size, raw items, and domain reliability were not provided, and the applicability of KR-21 to these responses is not explained. After permissions, questionnaires were administered, retrieved, and tabulated. Exact administration dates, missing-response treatment, and the link from a teacher rating to a pupil's assessed skill were not documented.

2.3 Statistical analysis

Frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and rank summarized ratings. The reported Wilcoxon–Mann–Whitney U test compared district rankings at .05, with z and probability values. The test tables treat the number of questionnaire indicators per district (10–12) as sample counts rather than 26 and 27 teachers. They do not specify whether probabilities are one-sided or how tied ranks were handled. The numerical values and decisions are presented as reported rather than validated against unavailable respondent-level data.

3. Results

3.1 Respondent distribution and approach use

Table 1. Grade 1 teachers by Ragay district

District	Schools	Teachers	Printed %
Ragay District I	17	26	50
Ragay District II	16	27	50
Grand total	33	53	100

Note. Totals follow the respondent table. The district percentage labels are printed as 50 each, although 26 and 27 do not divide 53 equally. The teacher counts are nearly balanced across districts, while the number of schools differs by one. The reported percentages are rounded to identical values; taken literally, they obscure the one-teacher difference. The table documents the teacher respondent frame but not the number of Grade 1 pupils taught or the proportion whose reading work was reviewed.

Table 2. Summary of reading-approach utilization

Approach	District I Wx	District II Wx	Overall Wx	Printed category
Explicit and Systematic Phonics	4.76	4.91	4.84	VMU
Guided and Structured Reading	4.77	4.80	4.79	VMU
Interactive and Shared Read-Alouds	4.77	4.76	4.76	VMU
Differentiated Rotational Literacy Activities	4.66	4.75	4.71	VMU
Average	4.74	4.81	4.78	VMU

Note. Values and labels reproduce detailed Table 7. VMU = Very Much Utilized.

All four approaches were rated Very Much Utilized, with a narrow overall range of 4.71–4.84. Explicit phonics led the profile, while differentiated rotational activities were lowest. The high values indicate favorable teacher reports and may also reflect ceiling effects: the scale leaves little room to distinguish implementation quality. Frequency of use, lesson duration, and how a teacher responds to individual errors were not independently observed.

Table 3. Reported district rank comparisons for reading approaches

Approach	Items per district	z	Printed p	Decision
Explicit and Systematic Phonics	10	–3.74	0.00011	Rejected
Guided and Structured Reading	11	–1.58	0.0571	Accepted
Interactive and Shared Read-Alouds	12	–0.66	0.2546	Accepted
Differentiated Rotational Literacy Activities	11	–1.97	0.0244	Rejected

Note. Numbers and decisions reproduce detailed Table 8. The abstract prints 0.2545 rather than 0.2546 for read-alouds. The item counts are the printed “No. of Samples,” not teacher counts.

Explicit phonics and differentiated rotations were labeled significant, while guided reading and shared read-alouds were not. These are comparisons of ranked indicators under the reported procedure and do not establish that District II pupils gained more reading skill. The district phonics mean was higher in District II, but a mean difference and a rank test based on items are not interchangeable. The exact tested unit, tail, and tie handling need verification.

3.2 Perceived foundational-reading skills

Table 4. Summary of perceived foundational-reading domains

Domain	District I Wx	District II Wx	Overall Wx	Printed category
Phonemic Awareness	4.51	4.68	4.60	VME
Phonics and Decoding	4.39	4.62	4.51	VME
Vocabulary Development	4.31	4.38	4.35	ME
Reading Fluency	4.21	4.27	4.24	ME
Reading Comprehension	4.14	4.37	4.26	ME
Average	4.31	4.47	4.39	ME

Note. Values and category labels follow detailed Table 14. VME = Very Much Evident; ME = Much Evident.

Phonemic awareness and phonics/decoding were the two highest domains. Fluency and comprehension were lower, although both remained Much Evident. This ordering supports a practical question about what pupils can do with connected text after mastering word-level skills. It cannot demonstrate gains, since the instrument records teachers’ judgments rather than timed reading, decoding accuracy, comprehension answers, or repeated observations for the same child.

Table 5. Reported district rank comparisons for perceived reading skills

Domain	Items per district	z	Printed p	Decision
Phonemic Awareness	11	–3.61	0.00012	Rejected
Phonics and Decoding	12	–2.74	0.0031	Rejected

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Domain	Items per district	z	Printed p	Decision
Vocabulary Development	10	-1.32	0.0934	Accepted
Reading Fluency	11	-0.66	0.2546	Accepted
Reading Comprehension	12	-3.44	0.0003	Rejected

Note. Values and decisions follow detailed Table 15. Probabilities are as printed; the test tail and analytic unit need confirmation. Three domains were labeled significant in district rank comparisons, while vocabulary and fluency were not. A nonsignificant item-rank contrast does not mean the districts' pupils had identical vocabulary or reading speed. The tests do not use direct child-level performance and cannot determine the size of a skill gap. The descriptive means nonetheless identify fluency and comprehension for closer, independently scored assessment.

3.3 Selected reading-skill pattern

Table 6. Selected domains indicating the code-to-text transition

Domain	Overall Wx	Printed rank
Phonemic Awareness	4.60	1
Phonics and Decoding	4.51	2
Vocabulary Development	4.35	3
Reading Comprehension	4.26	4
Reading Fluency	4.24	5

Note. The five domain means and ranks reproduce detailed Table 14; the ordering is included to support the analytic comparison in the text. The descending profile from phonemic awareness to fluency could indicate different opportunities to observe each skill, different instructional emphasis, or a real challenge for connected reading. The questionnaire cannot distinguish among these explanations. A follow-up would use a common set of Grade 1 tasks—sound identification, decoding, oral text reading, vocabulary in context, and comprehension—so that teacher reports and pupil evidence can be compared without conflating them.

3.4 Item-level reading instruction and comprehension

Table 7. Selected explicit-phonics teaching items

Statement in findings	Overall Wx	Printed category
Drills reinforce phonics skills	4.87	VMU
Phonics instruction integrated in daily reading lessons	4.87	VMU
Letter-sound relationships explicitly taught	4.85	VMU
Learners' phonics errors corrected immediately	4.85	VMU
Blending sounds practiced repeatedly	4.83	VMU
Decoding simple words included in instruction	4.81	VMU

Note. Selected means and labels follow explicit-phonics findings. Wording is condensed; VMU = Very Much Utilized.

The selected phonics items are tightly clustered near the top of the five-point scale. Such ratings suggest that teachers saw explicit phonics as a routine part of their reading lessons. They do not establish that instruction was sequential, responsive to individual errors, or equally effective for all pupils. An independent observation could identify which correspondences were modeled, how corrective feedback was delivered, and whether a learner could decode untaught words with the same pattern. That would separate presence from instructional quality.

The questionnaire includes both teacher actions and an implied opportunity for pupil practice, but it does not record the amount of practice or the pupil's response. A child may participate in sound blending yet struggle to read words accurately in a connected sentence. The high phonics ratings and lower fluency appraisal should prompt collection of both word-level and text-level evidence. Castles et al. (2018) provide a framework for interpreting this progression without treating the local ratings as an experimentally verified sequence.

Table 8. Selected reading-comprehension indicators

Statement in detailed findings	Overall Wx	Printed category
Learners relate stories to real-life experiences	4.43	ME
Learners answer questions about texts	4.41	ME
Learners infer meaning from context	4.21	ME
Learners answer "why" and "how" questions	4.19	ME
Learners identify a story's main idea	4.15	ME
Learners summarize simple stories	4.13	ME
Learners distinguish facts and simple opinions	4.09	ME

Note. Selected item values and categories follow the detailed Reading Comprehension findings. ME = Much Evident; item wording is condensed. The comprehension items show a wider gap than the overall domain mean of 4.26. Relating a story to experience and answering general questions received higher appraisals than inference, explanation, identifying a main idea, and summarizing. The exact questions and scoring criteria were not supplied; answering a literal question may differ greatly from explaining a reason. The pattern supports a targeted assessment of inferential and integrative understanding, with examples of pupils' actual answers and a shared rubric. The high utilization of several approaches and the lower ratings for selected comprehension acts should not be interpreted as an approach failing to work. The study did not connect a particular child's exposure to a specific activity or establish reading level at baseline. A next phase might use comparable passages, assess decoding and vocabulary alongside comprehension, and document instruction before comparing results. Such evidence would permit a more precise discussion of why the current teacher appraisals are uneven.

4. Discussion

The first research question yielded very high reported use of all four approaches. Castles et al. (2018) explain why the alphabetic code and language comprehension both matter. The study's strong phonics rating is consistent with an emphasis on the code, while the relatively lower fluency and comprehension appraisals suggest where teachers may need more evidence from connected text. A 4.84 utilization mean is not itself a measure of correct phonics instruction or pupil mastery.

The second and fourth questions concern district item-rank comparisons. The reported significance for phonics, differentiation, awareness, decoding, and comprehension may reflect different orders of indicators, but the sample counts in the tests match the questionnaire item counts, not the 26 and 27 teachers. Reanalysis of raw teacher responses would be needed before translating these results into district-level differences. Neither the test nor the descriptive table establishes an instructional approach's causal impact. A useful interpretation of the third question is that word-level appraisals exceeded fluency and comprehension. The IES (2016) foundational skills guide recommends that pupils read connected text, and explicit practice can link decoding to accuracy and fluency. In Ragay, a teacher could document which children can apply a taught spelling pattern in a passage and explain meaning, rather than judging every reading domain from general classroom participation. Such a record would directly test the instructional concern raised by the survey. The study recommended sustaining phonics, guided reading, read-alouds, and differentiation while strengthening vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. These are planning priorities, not interventions tested here. A follow-up could set a clear baseline, record approach exposure, use comparable pupil assessments before and after a defined instructional period, and document concurrent instruction. If schools or classes differ, the analysis should account for that structure and prior attainment.

The single-year, two-district survey is limited by teacher self-report, a five-point scale with high approach ratings, absent learner-level outcomes, and unclear inferential units. KR-21 reliability for five-category items is not transparently justified, and no raw item matrix is available. The read-aloud p value differs by one in the fourth decimal place between abstract and detailed table. These limitations do not erase the descriptive profile, but they constrain its interpretation to perceived practice and reading competence.

A coherent reading program can combine explicit code instruction, supported practice in connected text, discussion, and feedback. The survey rated these broad practices favorably, but a valid evaluation would define the sequence of lessons, the exposure each child received, and the assessment's alignment with taught and untaught material. The IES (2016) guide supports connected-text practice in addition to foundational skills. In this study, the ratings indicate a question about transfer from phonics to fluent, meaningful reading rather than a measured transfer effect.

The near-ceiling approach scores may reduce the survey's ability to distinguish meaningful variation across teachers. Reporting item distributions, not only means, would reveal whether responses were uniformly high or a few lower responses were masked. An observer-rated fidelity measure and learner-level outcome could triangulate the teacher questionnaire. District differences should then be tested on appropriately independent units, with schools and teachers accounted for, instead of treating indicator means as if they were separate teacher samples.

Very high approach-utilization ratings report frequency or visibility; they do not indicate intensity, fidelity, or fit to a particular child's reading need. A teacher may use read-aloud regularly while pupils receive different levels of word-reading instruction. No scored decoding, word recognition, fluency, or comprehension assessment is linked to an approach. The study cannot attribute a child's progress to the amount of an approach used.

Selected phonics and comprehension indicators suggest a sequence for closer study. A high sound-activity rating does not guarantee accurate reading in connected text; answering a familiar question does not guarantee independent inference or summarizing. Castles et al. (2018) distinguish aspects of acquisition, and IES (2016) includes connected-text practice. These sources support assessing multiple components but do not validate the local teacher scores. A common passage and rubric would make the pattern more interpretable. The two district groups contain 26 and 27 teachers, while the distribution table prints 50 percent for each. This imprecision needs reconciliation. More importantly, several Mann–Whitney tests treat indicator summaries as compared observations. A nonsignificant read-aloud p value does not demonstrate district equivalence, and its abstract and detailed values differ slightly. A teacher-level comparison would need independent teacher scores, an effect estimate and interval, and attention to schools.

The 100-item instrument covers many behaviors but may mask overlap and response fatigue. The KR-21 value of .80 needs justification for five-point responses, and the study does not report evidence that distinct domains measure separate constructs. A shorter instrument with defined practices, teaching observation, and direct pupil assessments would distinguish reported opportunity from actual delivery and skill demonstration. It could show whether lower fluency and inference ratings reflect a specific group or an assessment challenge.

A practical implication is a diagnostic cycle rather than a proven impact claim. Teachers could measure letter-sound knowledge, word reading, connected-text accuracy and rate, and comprehension, then select instruction for demonstrated needs. Reassessment could document pupil improvement; attributing it to a particular approach would require a stronger comparison. The present study characterizes teacher appraisals during a survey period. Favorable means and limited district comparisons are useful for reflection while effectiveness remains unresolved.

Grade 1 reading is a developmental setting in which pupils may differ greatly in prior exposure to print and oral language. A single teacher rating across a class can obscure those differences. The study did not present individual learner scores, classroom baseline levels, or the frequency with which a pupil received a particular approach. It therefore cannot establish whether a higher utilization rating corresponds to a higher foundational-skill rating for that pupil. Disaggregated assessment would allow teachers to distinguish those needing code instruction from those whose main difficulty lies in connected-text fluency or comprehension, while avoiding a one-size-fits-all inference from the district mean.

The analytic unit should also be explicit when interpreting the tests. If each statement mean is ranked or compared, the inference applies to the chosen set of statements, which are not a random sample of teachers or pupils. Reordering or rewriting statements could change those statistics without any change in classroom practice. A teacher-level dataset could instead compare teacher

responses between districts; a learner-level study would need pupils nested within teachers and schools. Either design should report an effect size and uncertainty, since a significance decision alone says little about practical importance. The current tables are most useful as descriptive maps of perceived strengths and gaps.

The discrepancy between abstract and detailed p values for read-aloud is small, but precision should be consistent in a submission. The author should recover the software output, specify whether the test was one- or two-sided, and explain how ties and item counts were handled. The 50/50 percentages should likewise be checked against 26 and 27 respondents. Correcting these presentation details from the underlying record would not by itself validate an impact interpretation. The study's strongest contribution is the local, item-specific account of teacher-reported instruction and perceived learner skills, which can inform a better measured next phase.

5. Conclusion

Grade 1 teachers rated four reading approaches Very Much Utilized overall (4.78), while foundational-reading skills were Much Evident overall (4.39). Phonemic awareness led the skill ratings (4.60); fluency was lowest (4.24). Selected district item-rank comparisons were labeled significant, subject to verification of the tested unit and probability calculations. The study supports targeted examination of connected-text reading and comprehension but provides no independent evidence that the approaches caused improvement.

References

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