Level of Oral Reading Fluency of Learners: Basis for An Intervention Plan

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Abstract
This study aimed to determine the level of oral reading fluency of Grade 4 learners in Culban Elementary School, District 10 in the Division of Himamaylan City during the 3rd grading period of SY 2019-2020. The variables included were sex, parents' highest educational attainment and size of the family. The study covered the following areas: Speed, Accuracy and Prosody. The result of the study showed that the oral reading fluency of learners' according showed the following results: Speed – Frustration level, Accuracy – Independent and for Prosody, Approaching Fluency. The oral reading fluency of learners' when grouped according to aforementioned variables showed these results: Speed – Frustration level, Accuracy – Independent and for Prosody, Approaching Fluency. There was a significant difference in the oral reading fluency of learners when grouped and compared according to sex; there was no-significant difference when grouped according to parent's highest educational attainment and size of the family.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Grade 4 Learners , Reading Fluency

Introduction
Problems in reading can affect performance across several academic content areas, occupational endeavors, and other functional skills that are used in everyday life activities. Among the population of students with learning disabilities, an estimated 80% have reading disabilities. Students with poor reading skills are becoming more apparent to educators and parents due to the results found on criterion-referenced, high stakes mandatory testing that most schools nationwide have incorporated across grade levels (Joseph, 2019).
In this age of technology, learners are expected to possess basic skills in reading and writing. Nobody could translate the national vision of removing illiteracy without these basic skills (Cabardo, 2015).
Along these lines, the researcher wondered why many of her Grade 4 learners are promoted from the third grade despite the fact that majority of them are non-readers. In her own experience, more than half of class have difficulties reading a single line with proper intonation and correct pauses. Most of them, too, are unable to identify basic symbols like commas, exclamation point and at times, even a period.
Based on the researcher's personal experience, the learners were struggling with reading fluency, moreover, their reading comprehension levels were very low and it is evident in their Mathematics and Science subjects as observed during the first grading period of School Year 2019-2020. Based on the Report Card, DepEd Form No. 135 of her own class, the over-all rating could barely reach 84% in key academic subjects.
Banking on the premise that reading fluency is key to unlock learners' potential with other subjects, the researcher took interest in conducting this study to properly document as to what level is the reading fluency of her own students.
The researcher recognizes the potentials of her pupils in reading fluency and beyond, and this is the motivating force that drove her into the conduct of this study. The researcher believed that with proper intervention, the level of oral reading fluency of the pupils will be enormously improved.

Objectives of the Study
This study aimed to determine the level of oral reading fluency of Grade 4 learners in Culban Elementary School, District 10 in the Division of Himamaylan City during the 3rd grading period of SY 2019-2020.

Materials and Methods
Research Design
This research study employed the descriptive research method. Descriptive research is a study of status and is widely used in education, nutrition, epidemiology and the behavioral sciences. Its value is based on the premise that problems can be solved and practices improved through observation, analysis, and description. The most common descriptive research method is the survey, which includes questionnaires, personal interviews, phone surveys, and normative surveys (Kowalczyk, 2015).

A descriptive study such as this one reports the summary data such as the measure of central tendency including mean, median, mode, deviance from the mean, variation, percentage, and correlation between variables. This survey research included that type of measurement but went a little beyond the normal descriptive statistics in order to draw inferences (Bueno, 2016).

There are three ways a researcher can go about doing a descriptive research project, and they are: observational, which is defined as a method of viewing and recording the participants meanwhile a case study is defined as an in-depth study of an individual or group of individuals. Lastly survey defined as a brief interview or discussion with an individual about a specific topic. This research design was appropriate to this study which aimed to determine the level of oral reading fluency of Grade 4 learners in Culban Elementary School during the 3rd grading period of SY 2019-2020.

Respondents of the Study
The respondents of the study were the 36 Grade 4 learners' who were officially enrolled at Culban Elementary School for School Year 2019-2020. The respondents came from one solid section. Since the number of respondents is quite small and very manageable, total enumeration was followed.

Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents according to their sex.

Table 1 : Distribution of Respondents

Respondents	Population (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	19	52.8
Female	17	47.2
Total	36	100.00

Data Gathering Instrument
The research instrument that was used in this study was compose of reading selections culled from Philippines Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) 2018 Manual. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: Part 1 gathered the demographic profile of the respondents; Part 2 was questionnaire proper which contained the reading selections.

The questionnaires were gathered and the results were recorded, analyzed and treated. The respondents were asked to rate each item using the five-point Likert's scale which contains the following scores: 5 – Very High; 4 – High; 3 – Moderate; 2 – Low and 1 – Very Low

Validity
Validity was not conducted for this study since the research instrument contained reading selections from Phil-IRI, thus deemed pre-validated.

Reliability
The reliability test for the research instrument was no longer necessary since the questionnaire has been pre-validated and the currently serves as standard Grade 5 reading material from PHIL-IRI.

Data Gathering Procedure
There was a letter request addressed to the Schools Division Superintendent for the conduct of the study submitted for approval. Upon approval, that letter was attached to the letter addressed to the school principal

of Culban Elementary School. After securing the approval for the second request, questionnaires were administered to target respondents.

The data gathered from the responses of the respondents was tallied and tabulated using the appropriate statistical tools. The raw data was transformed into numerical code guided by a coding manual. This allowed computer processing, statistical derivations and tabular presentation. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in the computer processing of the encoded data.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured that no personal data compromising the respondents' identity was collected in adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012, specifically on accessing the data both by the researcher and the analyst. The researcher was the only person with access to all data gathered. Moreover, their participation was voluntary, and they were free to withdraw without giving any reasons. The respondents were assured that there would be no risks of harm will experience before, during, or after participating in the research. The data and information used in the study were treated with strict confidentiality.

Analytical Schemes

The analytical schemes were employed to achieve the objectives of the study will be determined by the nature of the research of the problems. Based on the concerns of this investigation, the following schemes were employed.

Objective No. 1 which aimed to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of sex, parent's highest educational attainment and size of the family, descriptive analytical scheme was used.

Objective No. 2 which aimed to determine the level of oral reading fluency of learners' according to the following variable such as: speed, accuracy and prosody, descriptive analytical scheme was used.

Objective No. 3 which aimed to determine the level of oral reading fluency of learners' when grouped according to the aforementioned variables, descriptive analytical scheme was used.

Objective No. 4 which aimed to determine the significant difference between the levels of oral reading fluency of learners' when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables, comparative analytical scheme was used.

Statistical Tools

In the analysis of the data, various statistical tools were employed depending on the objectives of the study.

Objective No. 1 which aimed to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of sex, parent's highest educational attainment and size of the family, frequency count and percentage was used.

Objective No. 2 which aimed to determine the level of oral reading fluency of learners' according to the following variable such as: speed, accuracy and prosody, mean were used.

The mean range scores were interpreted as follows:

For Speed:

$$\text{Reading Speed} = \frac{\text{No. of Words read}}{\text{Reading time in Seconds}} \times 60$$

Results Interpretation:

Independent: 97 – 100
Instructional: 90 – 96
Frustration: 89 and below

For Accuracy:

$$\frac{\text{Number of Words} - \text{Number of Miscues}}{\text{Number of Words}} \times 100$$

Results Interpretation:
Independent: 80-100%
Instructional: 59-79%
Frustration: 58% and below

For Prosody:
     Result Interpretation
     No: 5-7 Fluent
     No: 3-4   Approaching Fluency
     No: 0-2   Non-Fluent

Objective No. 3 which aimed to determine the level of oral reading fluency of learners' when grouped according to the aforementioned variables, mean was used.

Objective No. 4 which aimed to determine the significant difference between the levels of oral reading fluency of learners' when grouped and compared according to the aforementioned variables, z-test and F-test were used.

A z-test is a statistical test used to determine whether two population means are different when the variances are known and the sample size is large. A z-statistic, or z-score, is a number representing how many standard deviations above or below the mean population a score derived from a z-test is (Warwick, 2017).

The decision rule is a statement that tells under what circumstances to reject the null hypothesis. The decision rule is based on specific values of the test statistic (e.g., reject H0 if $Z > 1.645$). The decision rule for a specific test depends on 3 factors: the research or alternative hypothesis, the test statistic and the level of significance.

F-test is any statistical test in which the test statistic has an F-distribution under the null hypothesis. It is most often used when comparing statistical models that have been fitted to a data set, in order to identify the model that best fits the population from which the data were sampled (Carballo, 2017).

The decision rule for the F test in ANOVA is set up in a similar way to decision rules we established for t tests. If the null hypothesis is true, the between treatment variation (numerator) will not exceed the residual or error variation (denominator) and the F statistic will small.

Results and Discussion

This section deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of data gathered to carry out the objectives of this study. All these were made possible by following certain appropriate procedures so as to give the exact data and solution to each specific problem.

Profile of the Respondents according to Sex, Parent's Highest Educational Attainment and Size of the Family

Table 2 shows the profile of the respondents in terms of the following variables.

Table 2: Profile of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	male	19	52.8
	female	17	47.2
	Total	**36**	**100.0**
Parents' Highest Educational Attainment	primary	9	25.0
	secondary	24	66.7
	tertiary	3	8.3
	Total	**36**	**100.0**
Size of the Family	small (below 6 members)	11	30.6
	big (6 members and above)	25	69.4
	Total	**36**	**100.0**

In terms of sex, 19 or 52.8 were male respondents and 17 or 47.2% were female respondents. In terms of parents' highest educational attainment. 9 or 25.0% were primary level respondents; 24 or 66.7% were secondary level and 3 or 8.3% were tertiary level respondents. In terms of size of the family, 11 or 30.6% were small (below 6 members) and 25 or 69.4% were big (6 members and above) respondents.

The result of the study showed that majority of the respondents were male. Majority of the respondents' parents were high school level and most of them came from big sized families.

Level of Oral Reading Fluency of Learners according to Speed, Accuracy and Prosody

Table 3 shows the level of oral reading fluency of learners.

Table 3: Level of Oral Reading Fluency of Learners

Areas	Mean	Interpretation
Speed	41.32	Frustration
Accuracy	90.49	Independent
Prosody	3.42	Approaching Fluency

In the area of speed got a mean score of 41.32, interpreted as "frustration". In the area of accuracy got a mean score of 90.94, interpreted as "independent". In the area of prosody got a mean score of 3.42, interpreted as "approaching fluency".

The result of the study indicated that the reading speed of the learners did not match their own grade level. Their reading accuracy was the highest but because most likely, the students read slowly, that's why their tendency to have an error is lower. In terms of prosody, there is a bigger chance for them to be more fluent.

According to Nordquist (2019), reading speed is the rate at which a person reads written text (printed or electronic) in a specific unit of time. Reading speed is generally calculated by the number of words read per minute. Reading speed is determined by a number of factors, including a reader's purpose and level of expertise as well as the relative difficulty of the text.

Level of Oral Reading Fluency of Learners According to Sex, Parents' Highest Educational Attainment and Size of the Family

Table 4-6 shows the level of oral reading fluency of learners according to aforementioned variables.
Table 4
Level of Oral Reading Fluency of Learners According to Sex

Areas	Male		Female	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
Speed	36.16	Frustration	47.10	Frustration
Accuracy	88.34	Independent	92.89	Independent
Prosody	2.32	Non-Fluent	4.65	Approaching Fluency

Table 4 shows the level of oral reading fluency of learners according to sex.
In the area of Speed, male group has a mean score of 36.16 and 47.10 for female, both were interpreted as "frustration". In the area of accuracy, male group has a mean score of 88.34 and 92.89 for female group, both were interpreted as "independent". In the area of prosody, male group has a mean score of 2.32, interpreted as "non-fluent" and 4.65 for female group, interpreted as "approaching fluency".
The results show that the Male respondents did not meet speed and prosody standards. Whereas the female group was able to pass accuracy and prosody tests.

According to Nordquist (2019), reading speed is the rate at which a person reads written text (printed or electronic) in a specific unit of time. Reading speed is generally calculated by the number of words read per minute. Reading speed is determined by a number of factors, including a reader's purpose and level of expertise as well as the relative difficulty of the text.

Table 5 : Level of Oral Reading Fluency of Learners According to Parents' Highest Educational Attainment

Areas	Primary		Secondary		Tertiary	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
Speed	40.21	Frustration	42.09	Frustration	38.57	Frustration
Accuracy	90.07	Independent	90.82	Independent	89.03	Independent
Prosody	3.67	Approaching Fluency	3.33	Approaching Fluency	3.33	Approaching Fluency

Table 5 shows the level of oral reading fluency of learners according to parents' highest educational attainment.

In the area of speed, primary group has a mean score of 40.21; for secondary group was 42.09 and 38.57 for tertiary group, all were interpreted as "frustration". In the area of accuracy primary group has a mean score of 90.07; for secondary group was 90.82 and 89.03 for tertiary group, all were interpreted as "independent". In the area of prosody, primary group has a mean score of 3.67; for secondary group was 3.33 and 3.33 also for tertiary group, all were interpreted as "approaching fluency".

Across all groups of respondents, the results were almost the same, ranging from Frustration to Independent in accuracy.

A student's current level of performance is measured by the number of words read correctly in one minute and also typically includes the accuracy of the reading expressed as a percentage. When CBM-R is used as a screening tool, it is most commonly administered to students at three different time points during the school year. To facilitate fluency with connected text, students should read text that is at their independent completion level (i.e., materials in which students can read highly accurately, 99% accuracy or better, when asked to read on their own). Even in very early grades, when students are just learning to decode, it is important that they have sufficient opportunities for independent, deliberate practice reading connected text (Ericsson, et al., 2016).

Table 6 : Level of Oral Reading Fluency of Learners According to Size of the Family

Areas	Small		Big	
	Mean	Interpretation	Mean	Interpretation
Speed	36.96	Frustration	43.24	Frustration
Accuracy	90.46	Independent	90.50	Independent
Prosody	3.36	Approaching Fluency	3.44	Approaching Fluency

Table 6 shows the level of oral reading fluency of learners according to size of the family.

In the area of speed, small group has a mean score of 36.96 and 43.24 for big group, both were interpreted as "frustration". In the area of accuracy, small group has a mean score of 90.46 and 90.50 for big group, both were interpreted as "independent". In the area of prosody, small group has a mean score of 3.36 and 3.44 for big group, both were interpreted as "approaching fluency".

According to Gillan (2019), Filipino students ranked last among 79 countries in a global survey of reading comprehension because they are more used to narrative instead of informative text materials. The texts (in the exam) are mainly informational and the evaluation of the text and understanding revolved on informational text and not narrative, to which our students are used to in the Philippines. Reading ability is developed through practice. We can only develop fluent readers if we provide them with text, print and digital, and we practice them through teacher modeling, shared practice towards independent practice.

Another reason for Filipino students ranking last in the exam is poor connectivity in far-flung areas noting that the country "lacks reading materials."

Difference in the Level of Oral Reading of Learners in the area of Speed, Accuracy and Prosody According to Variables

Table 7-9 shows the comparative analysis in the level of oral reading of learners in the area of speed, accuracy and prosody according to variables.

Table 7: Difference in the Level of Oral Reading of Learners in the area of Speed According to Variables

Variable	Category	Mean	Z	F	p-value	Sig level	Interpretation
Sex	male	36.16	-3.670	-	0.001	0.05	Significant
	female	47.10					
Parents' Highest Educational Attainment	primary	40.21	-	0.212	0.810		Not Significant
	secondary	42.09					
	tertiary	38.57					
Size of the Family	small	36.96	-1.715	-	0.096		Not Significant
	big	43.24					

Table 7 shows the comparative analysis in the level of oral reading of learners in the area of speed according to variables.

When grouped according to sex, male group has a mean score of 36.16 and 47.10 for female group, the computed Z-test was -3.670 and the *p*-value was 0.001, it is lower than the 0.05 level of significance, interpreted as "significant".

Thus, the hypothesis that states, "there is no significant difference in the level of oral reading of learners in the area of speed according to sex" was therefore "rejected".

The study shows that sex significantly affect the oral reading of learners in the area of speed.

When grouped according to parents' highest educational attainment, primary group has a mean score of 40.21, for secondary group was 42.09 and 38.57 for tertiary group, the computed F-test was 0.212 and the *p*-value was 0.810, it is higher than the 0.05 level of significance, interpreted as "not significant". When grouped according to size of the family, small group has a mean score of 36.96 and 43.24 for big group, the computed Z-test was -1.715 and the *p*-value was 0.096, it is higher than the 0.05 level of significance, interpreted as "not significant".

Thus, the hypothesis that states, "there is no significant difference in the level of oral reading of learners in the area of speed according to parents' highest educational attainment and size of the family" was therefore "accepted".

The study shows that parents' highest educational attainment and size of the family does not significantly affect the oral reading of learners in the area of speed.

According to Gillan (2019), Filipino students ranked last among 79 countries in a global survey of reading comprehension because they are more used to narrative instead of informative text materials. The texts (in the exam) are mainly informational and the evaluation of the text and understanding revolved on informational text and not narrative, to which our students are used to in the Philippines. Reading ability is developed through practice.

Table 8: Difference in the Level of Oral Reading of Learners in the area of Accuracy According to Variables

Variable	Category	Mean	Z	F	p-value	Sig level	Interpretation

Sex	male	88.34	-5.222	-	0.000	0.05	Significant
	female	92.89					
Parents' Highest Educational Attainment	primary	90.07	-	0.433	0.652		Not Significant
	secondary	90.82					
	tertiary	89.03					
Size of the Family	small	90.46	-0.026	-	0.980		Not Significant
	big	90.50					

Table 8 shows the comparative analysis in the level of oral reading of learners in the area of accuracy according to variables.

When grouped according to sex, male group has a mean score of 88.34 and 92.89 for female group, the computed Z-test was -5.222 and the *p*-value was 0.000, it is lower than the 0.05 level of significance, interpreted as "significant".

Thus, the hypothesis that states, "there is no significant difference in the level of oral reading of learners in the area of accuracy according to sex" was therefore "rejected".

The study shows that sex significantly affect the oral reading of learners in the area of accuracy.

When grouped according to parents' highest educational attainment, primary group has a mean score of 90.07, for secondary group was 90.82 and 89.03 for tertiary group, the computed F-test was 0.433 and the *p*-value was 0.652, it is higher than the 0.05 level of significance, interpreted as "not significant". When grouped according to size of the family, small group has a mean score of 90.46 and 90.50 for big group, the computed Z-test was -0.026 and the *p*-value was 0.980, it is higher than the 0.05 level of significance, interpreted as "not significant".

Thus, the hypothesis that states, "there is no significant difference in the level of oral reading of learners in the area of accuracy according to parents' highest educational attainment and size of the family" was therefore "accepted".

The study shows that parents' highest educational attainment and size of the family does not significantly affect the oral reading of learners in the area of accuracy.

According to Gillan (2019), Filipino students ranked last among 79 countries in a global survey of reading comprehension because they are more used to narrative instead of informative text materials. The texts (in the exam) are mainly informational and the evaluation of the text and understanding revolved on informational text and not narrative, to which our students are used to in the Philippines. Reading ability is developed through practice.

Table 9: Difference in the Level of Oral Reading of Learners in the area of Prosody According to Variables

Variable	Category	Mean	*Z*	*F*	p-value	Sig level	Interpretation
Sex	male	2.32	-7.987	-	0.000	0.05	Significant
	female	4.65					
Parents' Highest Educational Attainment	primary	3.67	-	0.167	0.847		Not Significant
	secondary	3.33					
	tertiary	3.33					
Size of the Family	small	3.36	-0.142	-	0.888		Not Significant
	big	3.44					

Table 9 shows the comparative analysis in the level of oral reading of learners in the area of prosody according to variables.

When grouped according to sex, male group has a mean score of 2.32 and 4.65 for female group, the computed Z-test was -7.897 and the *p*-value was 0.000, it is lower than the 0.05 level of significance, interpreted as "significant".

Thus, the hypothesis that states, "there is no significant difference in the level of oral reading of learners in the area of prosody according to sex" was therefore "rejected". The study shows that sex significantly affect the oral reading of learners in the area of prosody.

When grouped according to parents' highest educational attainment, primary group has a mean score of 3.67, for secondary group was 3.33 and 3.33 for tertiary group, the computed F-test was 0.167 and the *p*-value was 0.847, it is higher than the 0.05 level of significance, interpreted as "not significant". When grouped according to size of the family, small group has a mean score of 3.36 and 3.44 for big group, the computed Z-test was -0.142 and the *p*-value was 0.888, it is higher than the 0.05 level of significance, interpreted as "not significant".

Thus, the hypothesis that states, "there is no significant difference in the level of oral reading of learners in the area of prosody according to parents' highest educational attainment and size of the family" was therefore "accepted".

The study shows that parents' highest educational attainment and size of the family does not significantly affect the oral reading of learners in the area of prosody.

According Panda (2016), fluent readers have experience. They are able to decipher meaning form a text precisely without human intervention or need for extra resources as a requisite for triggering the conscious mind. According to Samuels, inability to have enough resources for decoding words or reading comprehensions makes the reader to acquire excellent skills for enhancing reading accuracy. Readers are able to facilitate proficiency or accuracy by graduating from the conscious process of decoding to accurate or automatic decoding.

Summary of Findings

To establish the profile of the respondents, the results showed that majority of the respondents were male. Majority of the respondents' parents were high school level and most of them came from big sized families. The oral reading fluency of learners' according showed the following results: Speed – Frustration level, Accuracy – Independent and for Prosody, Approaching Fluency. The oral reading fluency of learners' when grouped according to aforementioned variables showed these results: Speed – Frustration level, Accuracy – Independent and for Prosody, Approaching Fluency. There was a significant difference in the oral reading fluency of learners when grouped and compared according to sex; there was no-significant difference when grouped according to parent's highest educational attainment and size of the family.

Conclusions

The oral reading fluency of learners' according showed the following results: Speed – Frustration level, Accuracy – Independent and for Prosody, Approaching Fluency. This means that the reading speed of the learners is not within their own grade level. The reason why they reached higher accuracy result is due to the fact that their reading speed is very low. Meaning speed was sacrificed for accuracy. It appeared therefore that it was okay for the learners to read slower for as long as they don't commit mistakes. The oral reading fluency of learners' when grouped according to aforementioned variables showed these results: Speed – Frustration level, Accuracy – Independent and for Prosody, Approaching Fluency. It can be concluded that most of the learners have to make good with their reading speed and improve as well with Prosody. There was a significant difference in the oral reading fluency of learners when grouped and compared according to sex; there was no-significant difference when grouped according to parents highest educational attainment and size of the family. This means that the oral reading fluency of learners has a substantial difference when they are grouped according to gender. The results showed that the female group has a higher level of fluency compared to the male groups.

Recommendations

The oral reading fluency of learners' according showed the following results: Speed – Frustration level, Accuracy – Independent and for Prosody, Approaching Fluency. When grouped and compared according to aforementioned variables showed that speed was on frustration level, accuracy on independent level and approaching fluency in prosody. It is recommended by this study that all three areas be properly enforced using various reading exercises. There was a significant difference in the oral reading fluency of learners when grouped and compared according to sex. It is hereby recommended that the Male respondents be given

preferential attention with reading by giving them more reading exercises and subjecting them to Peer-assisted Learning or Peer-tutoring.

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