A Critical Review of the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) Assessment

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Abstract

One of the most important skills a youngster can learn is literacy. All academic learning is built on reading. To succeed in school and in life, a kid must learn to read, write, and count. The Department of Education's top priority is to enhance literacy (DepEd). This review analysis was developed to give the teachers a background of the PHIL-IRI utilization. The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) Assessment Tool was developed with the intention of being used as a classroom-based assessment instrument to gauge and describe students' reading proficiency. Classroom teachers may create and provide effective reading teaching for their pupils with the use of information gleaned from the evaluation. To assess their students' reading abilities in both word recognition and reading comprehension, public school instructors used the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (PHIL-IRI) at the school level. A proven assessment tool for determining a learner's level of reading comprehension and competency is the Phil-IRI. Reading passages are used in the evaluation process to assess a learner's word recognition and comprehension in a number of arbitrary ways. Both silent testing and oral reading assessments employ the instruments in one of two scenarios. A learner's reading fluency is measured by the instrument in terms of oral evaluation, reading speed, and understanding within a predetermined time frame. These applications make use of crucial measures that educators use to evaluate the reading ability of each pupil.

1. Main text

1.1 Introduction

The act of reading is the process of understanding written or printed material (Alvermann & Montero, 2003). The Every Child a Reader Program, which seeks to develop reading and writing skills in every Filipino child at the grade level, is supported by the Department of Education (DepEd). As a result, beginning with the 2018–2019 school year, the DepEd will continue to administer the Revised Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) exam to students in public elementary schools across the country (DepEd, 2018).

One of the most important skills a youngster can learn is literacy. All academic learning is built on reading. To succeed in school and in life, a kid must learn to read, write, and count. The Department of Education's top priority is to enhance literacy (DepEd). It is based on the Department's flagship initiative, the "Every Child A Reader Program," which seeks to develop reading and writing skills in every Filipino child at the grade level appropriate for their age. One of the main issues in education has been the low reading achievement of students in elementary schools. With the use of several reading interventions, students showed some gains in reading, reading pace, and reading comprehension (Horca et al., 2018).

The children' subpar reading comprehension is one of the issues facing our nation. According to the PISA Report, high school students in the Philippines performed worse on reading comprehension tests than the majority of students worldwide. According to the results, more than 80% of the Filipino students in the 15–19 age group scored 340 points in reading comprehension, which is below the national average of 487 points. As a result, out of 79 nations included in the survey, the Philippines came in last (San Juan, 2019).

The Filipino first-graders had problems mixing sounds. They were unaware of the technique for reading words by grouping phonemes together. For instance, one of the students was instructed to combine the speech sounds /m/, /a/, and /s/, or (/m/ + /a + /s/). He mispronounced it, not appropriately combining /m/, /a/, and /s/. His /mas/ transcription wasn't what he meant to say (Tomas et al., 2021).

Research of students who struggled with reading in primary school found that while they could pass their classes, they couldn't read at the standard level for their grade (Merto, 2019). They are frequently labeled as reading performance failure students. Expectations about students' reading abilities are initially maintained modest and gradually raised over time (Adapon & Mangila, 2020). Unfortunately, only a small amount of material has been referenced that focuses on enhancing reading proficiency utilizing a localized reading program.

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Implementing Guidelines on the Administration of the Revised Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (PHIL-IRI)

The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) Assessment Tool was developed with the intention of being used as a classroom-based assessment instrument to gauge and describe students' reading proficiency. Classroom teachers may create and provide effective reading teaching for their pupils with the use of information gleaned from the evaluation. This diagnostic method of analyzing how kids read includes inclusionary ideas that stress the need of learner-centered, flexible, and culturally sensitive education. The data from the Phil-IRI exam will assist school administrators in planning suitable school reading initiatives or programs for better student learning results. Llego, 2021).

Informal reading inventories are made to give teachers more information about each student's reading proficiency in relation to a particular passage so that they may tailor their education to meet their

requirements. The basic premise is that a student's performance on actual reading and writing activities is the greatest indication of his or her approximate literacy abilities. This contrasts with formal, standardized reading assessments that are frequently used to compare one student's performance to that of other students (Weaver, 2014).

The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (PHIL-IRI) is designed to create a profile of the reading abilities of students enrolled in public elementary schools. To achieve this, exams are given twice a year (pre-test and post-test) to evaluate students' oral and silent reading comprehension and reading speed in both English and Filipino. Although tests have previously been created for this purpose and given in recent years, there have been issues with accurately determining a reading profile from the data produced. Moreover, the Every Child a Reader Program (ECARPinitiatives)'s and projects to enhance students' reading abilities have not been reported. As a result, there is a lack of knowledge on what approaches to reading instruction for schoolchildren are effective and the most effective (Deped, 2018).

The Phil-IRI Group Screening Exam (GST) in either English or Filipino will be administered to all pupils. Pupils who have fallen short of expectations (those with a total Raw Score in the Phil-IRI GST below 14) should be assessed further using the privately administered Phil-IRI Graded Passages (DepEd, 2018).

The PHIL-IRI was put into place to provide public elementary school students with structured training in reading and writing to help them become young, independent readers and writers. Thereafter, the PHIL IRI is enhanced by being introduced in all public elementary schools countrywide. Its objective is to provide every kid with adequate reading training so they can communicate in both English and Filipino. In a more comprehensive sense, the PHIL IRI is an assessment tool that rates elementary school students' levels of reading competence. It is the first verified tool designed to measure students' reading comprehension abilities. Using tales and passages, the teacher formally evaluates the student's word identification and comprehension skills as well as his reading speed. Both the Oral Reading Test and the Silent Reading Test are available as tools. The tool primarily aims to gauge the student's fluency in understanding within the framework of oral evaluation, whereas speed and comprehension gauges the student's understanding within a time period (Pado et al., 2018).

The technique used to assess individual students' reading abilities categorizes students' reading abilities into four levels: frustration level, instructional level, autonomous level, and non-reader. The lowest level, known as the frustration level, is when a student withdraws from reading circumstances by refusing to read. Although independent level refers to the greatest level at which a student can read freely and comfortably without the support or direction of a teacher, instructional level is the level at which the student may benefit from teaching. Moreover, non-reader refers to a student's inability to perceive and create the letter-sound links for single consonants, consonant blends, and other sounds in keywords. Both technologies make use of a suitable criterion that the instructor may use to evaluate each student's performance on an individual basis. A "pre-test" is given in the months of July and August, and a "post-test" is given in the month of February. The Phil IRI is a tool that is used to determine a student's strengths and weaknesses in reading (Recamara, 2018).

1.2.2. Experiences and Challenges

Bastug (2015) stated that teachers' split reading into two topics. It is a cycle of pleasant and bad feelings and experiences. Stress, fear, living or surviving, handicap, exhaustion, and living alone and everywhere were considered when interpreting teachers' sentiments and experiences.

Happiness, self-confidence, and socialization shaped teachers' experiences. My instructors encounter various problems within and beyond the classroom. Learners have little core language classroom chances. Several teachers keep switching from English to their home tongue (Decker, 2017). As many kids as readers struggle. Contemporary learning ability, home environment and parental participation, school attendance, and

other things affect reading ability. The unacceptable reading difficulty rate is the key factor. They don't learn sound-based science reading. These findings show that struggling readers have trouble detecting, distinguishing, and isolating voices—basic abilities for proficient reading (Hervey, 2020).

Besides, other connected difficulties They include lack of awareness of the target culture, difficulties getting the words down to the instructors, too much focus, student disinterest in reading, improper lesson planning, etc. These issues make reading difficult and dull for pupils. Teachers appear ignorant that kids read. Instead of teaching reading, they practice it in class (Mumpuniarti, 2017).

Inadequate instructor reading teaching, resulting in restricted reading ability. Some students can't read, write, or do simple math, depending on their parents' education and teaching style. Home and school reading and parental and teacher assistance help kids read (Carroll, 2017). It was thought that beginning reading with instructor examples or mother tongue would help non-readers become better readers. One strategy to increase their reading skills is through teacher training, particularly focused on teaching non-readers to read, as educated and competent instructors outperform their rivals (Tandika, 2018).

Learners who possess their own books like reading more than those who do not. Nevertheless, unlike learning to write, learning to rearrange is a fundamental talent that is learned differently across the world, despite the fact that it is a necessary skill for all students (Gundogmus, 2018). The amount of time learners and instructors spend in the classroom affects the development of reading vocabulary in general and early reading abilities in particular. It was discovered that the amount of extra time spent studying to help second-graders improve their reading depends on their environment (rural or urban) and kind of school (public or private), which would have a beneficial impact on test results (Mwoma, 2017).

Weak backgrounds and foundational knowledge in English language studies are obstacles that instructors of reading skills must overcome; this is why the English language is emphasized in preschool and primary education. Lack of interest on the part of students in studying both general and specialised reading abilities in the English language, packed lecture halls, attendance of students and class absences, lack of role models among adult readers and inadequate library resources. Moreover, it includes the lack of language laboratories, insufficient resources for teaching and learning, and other issues (Abu et al, 2017).

1.3 Discussion and Reflection

1.3.1 Utilization of Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (PHIL-IRI) in the School Level

The PHILI-IRI was used to assess students' reading proficiency at the school level and as a tool for remedial sessions. Casingal (2022) found that the rise in independent-level students makes Phil-IRI and remedial classes useful. Of 767 students, 117 go on to become independent readers, and there are just seven remaining non-readers. Also, in order to get accurate findings and successfully address kids' reading issues, instructors should take the Phil-IRI exam seriously. Well executed remedial lessons must concentrate on students' reading comprehension challenges, recognized least-mastered abilities, and math challenges.

Other platforms inside the classroom that may be utilized to improve learners' chances who are at danger of failing their subjects include the Phil IRI and end-of-year remedial classes. According to Hardy et al. (2006), there are two components to instructional support: encouraging student reflection on their results within scientific reasoning and designing activities to keep students' attention on key components. They are intended to support effective teaching and learning while tracking and evaluating students' progress.

The instructors in public schools use informal reading inventories as reading assessments to identify the students' grade level of competency, to identify and address reading difficulties, and to simply and

consistently track students' development. Baldevarona (2020) noted that the reason Phil-IRI is successful is because it gradually raises the performance of struggling readers by exposing them to texts that are more difficult to understand. IRIs are conducted on a regular basis in schools to help teachers keep assessment and instruction in sync throughout the year. Reading assessments or informal reading inventories are designed to provide instructors a preliminary impression of the learner's level of reading toward a certain text. From there, teachers may build specialized reading teaching that is tailored to the requirements of the learners.

To gauge the students' level of reading proficiency and establish their reading profiles, schools began administering reading tests to elementary and junior high schools. It has a strong belief that these struggling readers may still be helped by an appropriate reading environment, an effective teaching strategy, and family support. The shape of the environment, program, and assistance that should be implemented is the crucial problem that must be addressed in this case (Tomas et al., 2021). Students' reading challenges must be removed from the reading surroundings for them to feel at ease and ready to express themselves. Also, with help from the instructor and the kids' families, children' learning must be reinforced with resources appropriate to their interests and skills. According to study (Baydak, 2011; Torgesen, 2000; Westwood, 2008), "informing kids about the obstacles they confront and strategy-based programs implemented with the participation of the teacher and family" are beneficial.

1.4.1 Reading Performance of Learners

A child learns to create new words in the early stages of their development through letter-sound identification and letter mixing. As kids become older and begin to spell larger, more complicated statements, they use their understanding of spelling to apply root words and affixes, such as prefixes and suffixes. Decoding skills are the main emphasis of reading teaching for young children. At this stage, printed letters and words are translated into language. Surprisingly, some pupils struggle with reading and don't read at all (Casingal, 2022).

As learning is essential to knowledge acquisition, it is critical to first have an understanding of the learners' reading performance, which may be accomplished by conducting reading inventories in schools. The administration of the Filipino Informal Reading Inventory aids in identifying a learner's areas of strength and weakness (Inding, 2020).

According to Maranan (2021), the kids' reading proficiency was at an instructional level. Additionally, the reading comprehension improvement programs received strong support from administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders. The issues the teachers faced were poor study habits and a lack of lexical proficiency. With the purpose of improving the pupils' performance, reading exercises were created.

The majority of the students, according to Tomas et al. (2021), were experiencing dissatisfaction. The absence of a reading culture, the presence of learners-at-risk, and non-mastery of the reading elements were other recognized causes, sources, and attendant factors of the students' reading level. The reading initiatives and programs can be employed in schools as reading literacy efforts and as a component of contextualized reading curriculum. These programs are divided into three categories: individual reading recovery programs, enrichment/enhancement programs, and literacy programs.

The phrase "reading problems" was invented by Claessen et al. in 2020. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 results showed that reading was one of the subjects in which fifteen-year-old pupils in the Philippines performed worse than those in the majority of the participating nations and economies. The average reading score for the nation was 340, which put it on level with the Dominican Republic. The Dominican Republic and the Philippines had the lowest scores of any nation. Students in the Philippines achieved 353 and 357 points in math and science, respectively, matching Panama's results. In science and mathematics, the Philippines did better than the Dominican Republic.

1.4 Conclusion

To assess their students' reading abilities in both word recognition and reading comprehension, public school instructors used the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (PHIL-IRI) at the school level. A proven assessment tool for determining a learner's level of reading comprehension and competency is the Phil-IRI. Reading passages are used in the evaluation process to assess a learner's word recognition and comprehension in a number of arbitrary ways. Both silent testing and oral reading assessments employ the instruments in one of two scenarios. A learner's reading fluency is measured by the instrument in terms of oral evaluation, reading speed, and understanding within a predetermined time frame. These applications make use of crucial measures that educators use to evaluate the reading ability of each pupil.

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