

# SAJAAS



## Southeast Asian Journal of Agriculture and Allied Sciences

Volume 4 Issue 1

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pp. 58-68

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<https://doi.org/10.63943/sajaas.vol4iss1art36pp56-68>

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### Article History:

Received: Aug. 01, 2024

Accepted: Dec. 03, 2024

Published: Feb. 04, 2025

### Abstract

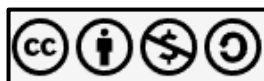
The ability to read fluently and effectively is one of the keys to opening doors to educational success. Although the importance of fluent reading has been taught to learners at school, there are still many students who are having difficulty reading fluently. To address the problem stated, researchers of this study used four (4) researcher-made localized materials, which are repeatedly taught. This study utilized the multiphase mixed method research design to determine the effect of the intervention program on the reading fluency of the students. It was conducted to determine the struggling readers of 11th-grade HUMSS students at John J. Russell Memorial High School. The researchers conducted pre-assessment reading and determined 35 readers who subsequently served as the participants. After the intervention program, it was observed that the participants attained higher Word Correct Per Minute (WCPM) in their post-test. The pre-test recorded mean score was 116.97 WCPM, while the post-test recorded mean was 139.66 WCPM. The p-value of the data set is ( $p < 0.001$ ), which denotes that the difference between the results of the pretest and posttest is highly significant. This was also further strengthened by the feedback obtained from the students through a guided interview. Based on the participants' statements, repeated reading of researcher-made localized materials has improved their reading speed and their reading accuracy.

**Keywords:** *Contextualization, Intervention Program, Philippine Context, Reading fluency, Repeated Reading, Researcher-Made-Localized materials, Struggling Readers, Word Correct per Minute*

### Introduction

Reading is a fundamental skill. The ability to read fluently and effectively has the potential to open doors to educational success. As reading fluency ought to be an important skill to understand and decipher the meaning of the text, students lack the ability to understand passages critically. The acquisition of language proficiency is both a means and an end to educational achievement. However, fluency in reading is always dealing with a complex interaction of factors that results in students' poor reading, learning, and achievement. Although the importance of fluent reading has been taught to learners at school, there are still many students who have difficulty reading fluently.

Among all the countries that took part in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Philippines had a notable percentage of low scorers. Eighty percent of Filipino students fell



short of the required reading proficiency. The pupils' deficiency in fundamental reading and comprehension skills is the reason for their low performance in the subjects of Science, Math, and English (OECD, 2016). Numerous scholars debate why the Philippines, one of the world's best English-speaking nations, comes in last in the poll. They claim that the basic word definition is the main emphasis of reading instruction here; while this is true, it poses issues for reading comprehension and fluency. Essays should be all around Filipino students, who should then attempt to relate to and think about them to improve their comprehension. They added that mastering the mother tongue by heart will help one comprehend the second language correctly. Prioritizing the study of the second language, English, comes after the first language is mastered. They claim that when pupils learn both their mother languages and English at the same time, they become confused (Caraig & Quimbo, 2022).

Among all the countries that took part in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), the Philippines had a notable percentage of low scorers. Eighty percent of Filipino students fell short of the required reading proficiency. The pupils' deficiency in fundamental reading and comprehension skills is the reason for their low performance in the subjects of Science, Math, and English (OECD, 2016). Numerous scholars debate why the Philippines, one of the world's best English-speaking nations, comes in last in the poll. They claim that the basic word definition is the main emphasis of reading instruction here; while this is true, it poses issues for reading comprehension and fluency. Essays should be all around Filipino students, who should then attempt to relate to and think about them to improve their comprehension. They added that mastering the mother tongue by heart will help one comprehend the second language correctly. Prioritizing the study of the second language, English, comes after the first language is mastered. They claim that when pupils learn both their mother languages and English at the same time, they become confused (Caraig & Quimbo, 2022).

To give and aid on poor reading fluency of the students, Rafel and Tamban (2022) discovered that Localized reading resources assist learners in understanding words and sounds while also allowing teachers to make direct connections with students' cognitive and emotive domains. This improves students' academic performance in terms of their English subject test outcomes. Moreover, Saquido and Velasco (2024) pointed out that Teachers as curriculum makers and implementers should craft and provide the supplemental materials applicable to address the needs of the learners. Students' reading fluency, comprehension skills, and growth as proficient readers all improve as they use local materials. Additionally, this may assist them in appropriately pronouncing the words they have learned. Because they frequently attempt to create connections between what they already know and their surroundings, the students can improve their critical thinking skills and will be able to communicate their newly acquired knowledge from the literature included in the materials with friends and family.

During the classroom observation, they discovered a similar problem of reading fluency with the students at John J. Russell Memorial High School. As language proficiency is both a means and an end to educational achievement, the acquisition of its proficiency requires fluent reading nonetheless fluency in reading is always met with a complex interaction of factors resulting in students' poor reading, learning, and achievement.

Even though the secondary level has a variety of reading issues many of which are more serious than those at the primary level, reading instruction and remediation are often only provided in the elementary-level school environment. Due to this, children in the secondary level who suffer from limited reading abilities frequently exhibit reading-related flaws, such as inadequate comprehension techniques, little foundation knowledge, and a limited vocabulary. Moreover, according to Lee (2018), learners who struggle with reading have a higher risk of dropping out of school, becoming unemployed, and having poorer incomes. Finding a good reading intervention program while pupils are still in high school is so

essential.

To address the problem stated, researchers referred to various studies and one of these is repeated reading. According to Veenendaal, et al. (2014), repeated reading is a process of dividing a piece into manageable sections that may be read and reread several times in a minute. Before reading the following section, students concentrate on reading the first section of the story quickly and precisely. This model's repetition can help readers understand the story more thoroughly and more fluently. Moreover, for students to easily relate themselves and understand the materials, the use of contextualization and localization of reading passages may also be used.

Moreover, for students to easily relate themselves and understand the materials, the use of contextualization and localization of reading passages may be used. Both localization and contextualization adhere to the principles of making the lesson flexible, imaginative, pertinent, meaningful, and adaptable to students' cognitive levels and instructional requirements. Teachers must be adaptable and imaginative while utilizing localization and contextualization in the classroom. Henriksen (2021) recommended that instructors in charge of developing localized teaching resources attend seminars and training courses on the steps involved in developing effective learning resources.

Common issues about reading fluency have been observed by the researchers at John J. Russell Memorial High School. In fact, in the Regional Mid-Year Assessment for the subject Oral Communication of grade 11, only 165 out of 479 students, or 34.45% who took the exam achieved or exceeded the Minimum Proficiency Level. To determine the participants of the study, the researchers used the universal screening tool by DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills). The DIBELS assessment uses one-minute timed readings, letter naming, nonsense word reading, and sight word identification. Adults, usually teachers, administer the assessment. Teachers give subtests to determine a score/rating for each topic listed above. Each of these components has its own score/rating scale (Deeney, & Shim, 2016). There are 35 students out of the whole population of 60 who were not able to attain the benchmark for their grade level. With that, the researchers used the repeated reading strategy of Researcher-made-localized material as the intervention for this study.

### **Materials and Methods**

This study utilized the multiphase mixed method research design by Creswell (2013). It includes the descriptive quantitative research design, one group pre-test-post-test research design, and sequential explanatory mixed method research design.

Multiphase is a mixed-method approach in which researchers conduct several mixed-method projects, which may include mixed-method convergent or sequential approaches that may only include the quantitative or qualitative design in a longitudinal study with a focus on a common objective for multiple projects (Creswell, 2013).

In the first phase of the study or the identification of the participants, the researchers determined participants using a universal screening tool to measure the learner's reading rate in words per minute. According to Brysbaert (2019), teens read at a rate of 195 to 204 words per minute when reading silently and 150 to 183 when reading aloud. With that, students who were unable to read 150 words per minute were determined as struggling readers or below-average readers and became the participants of the study. The researchers only chose those students below the benchmark level, as they need more assistance in reading. Furthermore, this also allows the researchers to become more focused on the implementation of the intervention program in the small group.

The researchers employed a purposive sampling technique by selecting students who did not achieve the required word correct per minute for their grade level. Purposive sampling is a non-probability

sampling technique in which units are chosen because they possess traits that are required in the sample. Participants are selected based on their fluency rates, and those participants who are reading below the 11th-grade benchmark become the participants of the study.

After the conduct of the pre-assessment reading, the researchers selected the students who were reading below the average rate. Therefore, out of the total population, 35 students received the intervention program.

For the conduct of the intervention, the researchers used the DIBELS instrument. The DIBELS assessment uses one-minute timed readings, letter naming, nonsense word reading, and sight word identification. Adults, usually teachers, administer the assessment. Teachers give subtests to determine a score or rating for each topic listed above. Each of these components has its own score/rating scale (Deeney & Shim, 2016). In this study, the researchers used Philippine English as the standard or the basis for giving scores to the students' fluency rate. The Philippine variety of English has acquired specific traits of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and discourse determined by the local languages and culture of its Filipino speakers (Anderson, 2017).

The researchers created four localized reading materials for the research participants. Each material is divided into parts for each working session. These materials were validated by the Language, and Research Master Teachers to ensure their accuracy and alignment with the needed competencies of the grade 11 curriculum. They also ensured that the materials were based on the students' local environment and knowledge for them to have a more meaningful reading experience.

The researchers gave the students a copy of Researchers-Made-Localized Reading Materials and instructed them to read it out loud three times during the work sessions. They corrected any errors the student had made while reading the material. Words that were mispronounced, omitted, inserted, substituted, or improperly spoken during the first three seconds of speech were referred to as miscues. Repetition and self-corrections done within 3 seconds were not counted as errors (Conolly & Westwood, 2021). After the third read-aloud by the students, the researchers gave the participants a minute to finish the passage, marked any errors without speaking to them, and recorded their fluency rate. After implementing the whole intervention program, the researchers conducted a guided interview for the students to assess their improvement throughout the working sessions and to know their perception towards the repeated reading of researcher-made localized materials.

The researchers utilized the experimental quantitative research design, specifically the one-group pretest-posttest design. A one-group pretest-posttest design is a kind of study methodology that behavioral researchers commonly use to examine the effect of a treatment or intervention on a specific population (Moskal, 2022). Participants have been given the same assessment measures before and after receiving treatment or being exposed to a condition, with such measurements used to ascertain if any changes might be attributable to the treatment or condition.

Moreover, the researchers also adopted and modified the social validity interview guide used by Alotaibi (2022) to assess the students' perceptions of the intervention program that will be implemented by the researchers. The guide consists of an open-ended question that is used to determine the effectiveness of the research intervention.

Lastly, the study was conducted following the office order from the committee for research at Bulacan Agricultural State College. All data supporting this research were reported by the researchers. Other people's contributions were acknowledged. In relation to the study, the researchers did not engage in any dishonest behavior. Even if concealing identities could have made the study less accurate, they have complied with protocols to safeguard participants' privacy. The goal, technique, methods, and

conclusions of the study were openly disclosed by the researchers to the participants. Moreover, the researchers gave the students an assent form that indicated their willingness to be part of the study and what they expected to do as participants. All the student participants have the right to withdraw if they don't feel comfortable with the conduct of the study. Lastly, the researchers of this study strictly adhere to the DO 16, s. 2017 or the Research Management Guidelines (RMG). This law provides guidelines on how to manage research projects at the national, regional, school division, and school levels. This policy also enhances the support mechanisms for research, such as funding, capacity building, and partnerships.

## Results and Discussion

### Students' Reading Fluency Prior to the Implementation of Intervention Program.

The researchers have conducted a pre-assessment reading to determine the struggling readers among the 11th-grade HUMSS students. The scores are recorded and those students who are not able to reach the benchmark become the participants of the study.

**Table 1**

*Descriptive measures of students' scores before the Intervention*

Benchmark Cut-Scores	Frequency (f)	Percentage
<b>Above Benchmark</b> (184 words and above)	4	6.67 %
<b>At Benchmark</b> (150 – 183 words)	21	35.00 %
<b>Below Benchmark</b> (0 – 149 words)	35	58.33 %
<b>Total:</b>	<b>60</b>	

Based on the results of the pre-assessment reading, there are 35 students, or 58.33% of the participants, who were reading below the benchmark. The mean score of their WCPM falls between 0-149 words with an average of 116.97. This result indicates that the majority of the learners from grade 11-HUMSS were reading below the average level. Therefore, out of the total population, these 35 students were identified to be the recipients of the intervention program.

### Students' Reading Fluency after the Intervention Program.

**Table 2**

*Descriptive measures of students' scores after the Intervention*

Benchmark Cut-Scores	Frequency (f)	Percentage
<b>Above Benchmark</b> (184 words and above)	0	0 %
<b>At Benchmark</b> (150 – 183 words)	23	65.71 %
<b>Below Benchmark</b> (0 – 149 words)	12	34.29 %
<b>Total:</b>	<b>35</b>	

In the first phase of the study, the researchers selected 35 students to become the participants of this research. These students are chosen based on their WCPM. Before the conduct of the study, they are reading below the average level for their grade level. After weeks of implementation of repeated reading of researcher-made localized materials, the researchers conducted post-assessment reading.

Participants were given the same assessment pre-assessment and post-assessment tool to ascertain if any changes might be attributable to the treatment or Intervention.

Table 2 shows the frequency and descriptive statistics of student scores following the intervention program. Out of the total number of students, 12 learners (or 34.29% of participants) remain below the benchmark level. Meanwhile, 23 learners, or 65.71% of participants, are now reading at an average level. However, none of the participants can attain scores above the benchmark for their grade level.

**Figure 1**

*Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Reading*

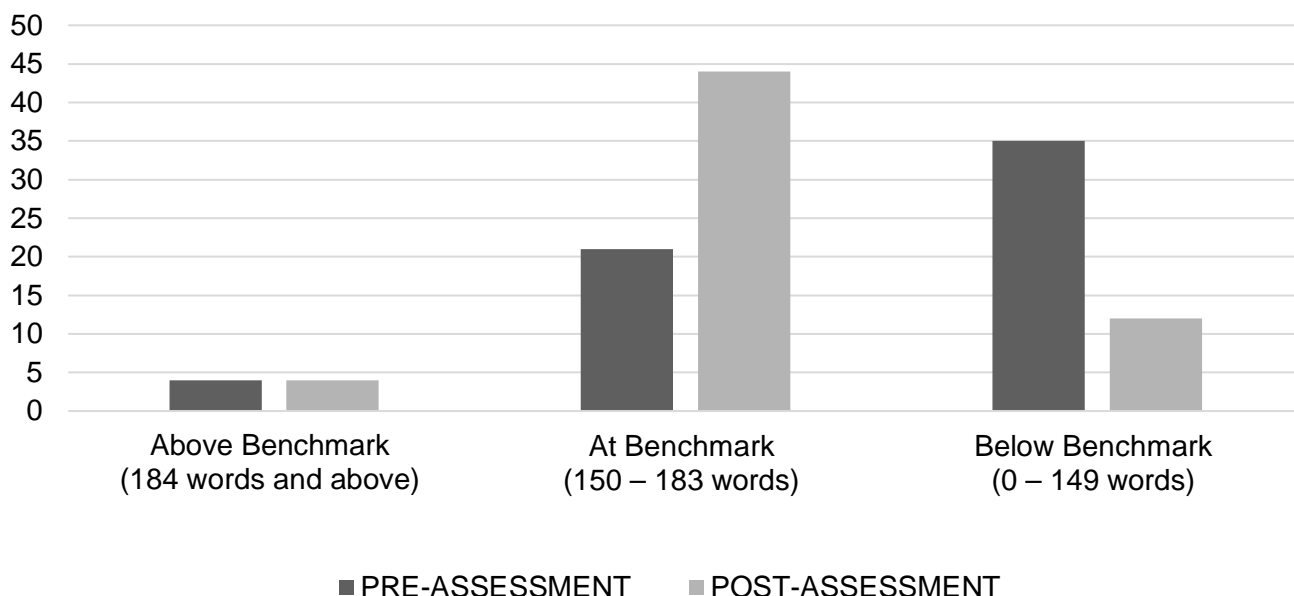


Figure 1 shows the overall performance of the learners after the implementation of the intervention program. Despite the fact that the majority of struggling readers have improved their WCPM, some learners remain below average. These results were affected by some of the challenges of the study. The implementation of the program is only a supplement; it would be much better if the students were also reading in their homes. Moreover, during the implementation, there are cases of absenteeism among the participants of the study; this may also hinder the development of their reading fluency.

Jacob and Kaufman, (2017) found that repeated reading is recognized as a teaching strategy for adolescent readers who are having difficulty reading. For two of the three children, fluency improved as a result of the repeated reading intervention. The number of words each student correctly read in a minute was recorded to monitor their progress. Two of the students' words correct per minute (WCPM) increased towards the end of the study (from 41 WCPM to 64 WCPM and from 103 WCPM to 111 WCPM, respectively), whereas the third student's word accuracy decreased by more than 20 words (94 WCPM to 70 WCPM). Researchers contend that this can be explained by the student's increased precision. These results show that the intervention was effective in increasing reading fluency.

As this study utilized the use of sequential explanatory research design, the collection and analysis of quantitative data was followed by the analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data. After the conduct of the intervention, the researchers interviewed the participants to determine their perception of the program.

**The level of students’ reading fluency before and after the intervention.**

Table 3 presents the result of the paired sample t-test of the pre and post-assessment. This data explains the result of the repeated reading of research-based-localized reading materials.

**Table 3**

*Paired sample T-Test Result of students’ scores*

	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean (<math>\bar{x}</math>) <math>\pm</math></b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>SEM</b>	<b>T Stat</b>	<b>P-value&lt;0.05</b>
Pre-Test	35	116.97 $\pm$	21.25	3.59	-8.059	<0.001
Post-Test		139.66 $\pm$	25.22	4.26		

*\*Computed mean is highly significant at p<0.001*

As shown in the table, it was observed that the participants attained higher WCPM in their post-test after the implementation of the intervention program. The pre-test recorded mean score was 116.97 WCPM while the post-test recorded mean score was 139.66 WCPM. This finding conforms with the study conducted by Brysbaert (2019), where the number of WCPM has been found to increase with continued reading instruction. Analysis of a child's immediate word count per minute increases after fluency interventions revealed that the repeated reading condition outperformed different strategies.

The Standard Error Mean (SEM) of the data set is 3.59 for the pre-test and 4.26 for the post-test. The standard error measures the spread of sample mean estimates around the true population mean. The standard error decreases as the sample size increases, showing that the projected sample mean value better approximates the population mean.

Moreover, the results of the paired-sample t-test show that the post-test scores (Mean=139.66, SD=25.22) is significantly higher than the pre-test scores (Mean=116.97, SD=21.25),  $t(34)= -8.059$ ,  $p<0.001$ . The null hypothesis is rejected which implies that repeated reading intervention of researcher-made-localized material has created a positive influence on the reading fluency of the students. According to Sukhram and Ellen (2017), once repeated reading has been put into practice, teachers can promote fluency by including a feedback element in the intervention. To properly demonstrate how to read the paragraph effectively where mistakes were made, the feedback is concentrated on student errors. Students are given plenty of opportunity to practice each section until they can read it correctly.

**Perceived Influence of the Intervention to the Reading Fluency**

**Table 4**

*Theme Cluster for Qualitative Analysis*

<b>Main Theme(s)</b>	<b>Theme Cluster</b>	<b>Formulated Meanings</b>
A. Reading at a Better Speed	Better Word Recognition	The students asserted that their word recognition has improved throughout the conduct of the study. With this, they became not that hesitant to read a word which led them to become a fluent reader.
B. Reading with Better Accuracy	Improved Pronunciation	According to the participants, their pronunciation has improved. Through this, they are now able to pronounce words more accurately.

To deepen the quantitative results, qualitative analysis was made, and it revealed two main themes for the perception of the students about the repeated reading of researcher-made-localized materials. These themes are “reading at a better speed” and “reading with better accuracy”. Moreover,



using thematic analysis, the researchers found subthemes such as Better Word Recognition and Improved pronunciation. These themes emerged from the participants' answers to the interview guide about their perception of the repeated reading intervention of researcher-made localized reading materials.

Table 4 indicated the themes that were formulated by the researchers upon knowing the perception of the participants about the intervention.

Upon the analysis of the results, it confirms that repeated reading of researcher-made-localized materials has positively affected the students by helping them to read a lot faster and with better accuracy. It can be asserted by their statements:

*“It helped me to read faster than my reading ability before because of practicing regularly” (respondent number 16, sentence number 1).*

*“Natulungan ako ng repeated reading na mas mapabilis ang aking pagbasa at maayos ang aking pronuncitaion at maraming pang iba” [Trans]. “I like repeated reading because it helps me improve my skills in reading such as the speed, pronunciation and more” (respondent no. 27, sentence no. 1).*

*“Gusto ko ang repeated reading dahil sa pamamagitan nito, maipapakita ko ang aking sa pagbabasa at kung paano ko nasasabi ng maayos ang mga salita” [Trans.] “I like repeated reading because through this, I can show my reading skills and how I deliver the words correctly” (respondent no. 3, sentence no. 1).*

*“Isa sa mga gusto ko sa repeated reading ay mas nagkaroon ako ng kaalaman tungkol sa kwento at nalalaman ko kung paano bigkasin ng tama ang mga salita” [Trans.] “One of the things that I like in repeated reading is that I gained more knowledge about the story, and I get to know how to pronounce a word accurately” (respondent no. 1, sentence no. 1).*

After weeks of intervention, repeated reading of researcher-made localized materials created a positive impact on the students. The results indicated that participants of the study have greatly improved their reading speed and accuracy. This result can also be proven by their WCPM which is used as the deciding factor of their fluency rate. Knowing how to read fluently is needed as reading is considered one of the core skills that a person or a student must have. Numerous research concur that repeated reading can increase the speed and the fluency rate of the students. According to De Rycker (2014), repeated reading instruction has been demonstrated to increase reading rates through WCPM. When examining a student's immediate increases in words per minute after fluency interventions, the repeated reading condition performed better than other strategies (Carver et al., 2017).

Zavala and Cuevas (2019) investigated how frequently and aloud readings of poetry affect readers' fluency. After the four-week intervention, oral fluency had improved in both groups. Throughout the experiment, the rhyming group's mean score climbed from 30 WCPM to 43.3 WCPM. The repeated reading group started with an average score of 46.6 WCPM and ended up with a score of 57.8 WCPM on average. The difference between the groups was not statistically significant enough to support the findings. Since just fourteen students took part in the study, more investigation is needed to determine the effectiveness of each strategy.

Moreover, through a review of earlier studies, Driggs (2013) examined the effect of repeated reading (RR) on reading fluency for children with reading challenges. In this study, many intervention strategies were investigated. One method in particular is known as systematic error correction (SEC).

Any errors the reader committed while reading are corrected post-reading by the interventionist or teacher throughout this phase. This strategy is frequently used in conjunction with regular reading.

Additionally, at the end of every reading session for each student, the researchers made sure that they knew their errors and mispronounced words for them to have an idea of how to correct themselves. With this, students will have an opportunity to remember or to correct their errors the next time they encounter those words. According to Hussein (2020), feedback is crucial for improving reading accuracy and fluency. A learner must receive feedback right away after making a mistake. In addition, Busso et al. (2017), stated that it is essential to adhere to certain guidelines to improve the effectiveness of fluency-building activities. If improvements are to be expected, education needs to be systematic, consistently offered, and adult-guided. Students who receive prompt feedback are more likely to recall the correction than the mistake. Appropriate feedback is very important in developing reading accuracy and fluency.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

The study revealed that the majority of the whole population of learners failed to attain the expected benchmark or average score for their grade level; therefore, those students who were not able to achieve the needed benchmark became the participants of the study.

The researchers implemented the Repeated Reading of Researcher-Made-Localized Materials due to the given challenges on reading fluency. Results showed that the majority of the participants who were reading below the benchmark level before the conduct of the study had greatly improved their reading fluency. With the aforementioned results, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected.

Although the study created positive outcomes, it would have been better if the intervention program had been implemented for a longer period. Additionally, there must also be enough facilitators because monitoring many learners and ensuring that they are improving is hard, especially if the sample size is large.

Moreover, qualitative data also supported the results by providing the students' perceptions about the impact of the intervention program on their reading fluency. Based on the participants' statements, repeated reading of researcher-made localized materials has improved their reading speed and their reading accuracy.

With the aforementioned claims and results, this study has concluded that the repeated reading strategy of researcher-made localized materials is an effective strategy for enhancing the reading fluency of the students.

### **Recommendations**

In light of the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made:

First, the students and teachers may use repeated reading of researcher-made localized materials as a strategy to enhance reading fluency. Researchers successfully implemented this intervention and saw positive results. From below the benchmark, some students leveled up and attained the average level.

Furthermore, the students and teachers may also implement the research-based intervention over a longer period. This intervention was implemented only in a short period of time, yet the researcher proved that the implementation was effective. Teachers and students may use this strategy for a longer period to determine other positive effects and how helpful repeated reading of researcher-made localized materials is in enhancing reading fluency.

Additionally, it would be beneficial if the facilitators of the program would undergo training first before conducting the study. This will ensure that they will accurately implement the intervention and monitor the progress of the learners.

This research was only focused on identifying the effect of repeated reading of researcher-made localized reading materials on the reading fluency of the students; therefore, the researchers would like to recommend that future researchers also focus on other reading-related problems, specifically reading comprehension.

Since this research is done after the pandemic, where the learning gaps of the students are notable, the researchers also suggest conducting this study with students in similar contexts. With this, the effectiveness of researcher-made localized reading materials will further be validated.

Lastly, since this study is only focused on the side of the students, future researchers should also emphasize the preparation of the moderators (teachers) in using the RMLRM and their perceptions towards the reading program.

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