

Effect of the ARAL Program on the Reading Ability and Reading Comprehension of Grade IV-VI (Intermediate) Learners of AETA Integrated School SY 2025–2026

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Abstract: This study looked at the impact of the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program on the reading ability and reading comprehension of the Grade IV-VI learners of Banag Ayta Integrated School during School Year 2025-2026. Believing that reading ability is an important life skill, this study focuses on readers, specifically those under the frustration level as assessed through the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI). A quantitative research design, this pretest-posttest quasi-experimental study was conducted with seven (7) intermediate learners in a quasi-experimental setup. Seven intermediate learners were included in an eight-week-long ARAL intervention where they experienced guided reading sessions, phonics instruction and activities and remediation of decoding and comprehension skills. The data were collected through formal reading assessments given before and after the intervention and analyzed using descriptive statistical tool like mean and standard deviation, and inferential tool like Wilcoxon Signed- Rank test. Results showed that both the reading ability and reading comprehension of the readers failed to improve significantly in the both English and Filipino subjects after receiving eight-week intervention from the ARAL Program. Most learners were found to have not moved from the frustration level as evidenced by the few changes that had occurred between the pretest and posttest, despite there were some readers who had some minor improvements in decoding and able to read words, the level of their comprehension, however, remained a great issue. The lack of significant improvement may be attributed to the small sample size, limited duration of intervention, language differences and issues such as external challenges faced by the students, such as absenteeism, as well as some limitations of instructional materials, assessment sensitivity and suitability of materials for indigenous learners. Despite that the ARAL Program offered structured intervention to the learners with struggling reading ability, it may not provide effective and statistically significant improvement of readers in their reading ability and reading comprehension within a limited duration of time. More strategies on implementing programs need to be enhanced to cater for more children who are struggling readers in indigenous school settings.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Children should be recognized, not just as objects of socialization, but also as actors in their lives with their own ways of constructing meaning and interpreting their world (James, Jenks, & Prout, 1997). The recognition of children's agencies enables them to create their personal identity through the identity process, which serves as essential knowledge for understanding their challenges in learning and teaching Mathematics (Lange, 2007).

Reading is a basic skill that forms the foundation for learning in all subjects. It enables students to acquire knowledge, think critically, and engage meaningfully in both academic and social contexts. In the Philippine basic education system, improving students' reading skills and

comprehension has long been a top priority for the Department of Education (Philippines). This focus aims to address learning gaps caused by socioeconomic issues, limited resources, and the long-term effects of interruptions on education, particularly those intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since reading is the cornerstone of all learning, students must possess both high reading comprehension abilities and good reading comprehension. Students can follow lessons more readily, do better on tests, and study on their own when they can comprehend what they read. These abilities foster critical thinking since students learn to evaluate data, contrast concepts, and make wise opinions—all of which are consistent with Benjamin Bloom's educational tenets. Strong reading abilities also improve communication and

vocabulary, allowing students to articulate themselves clearly both orally and in writing. Since comprehension of texts, issues, and directions is essential for all subject areas, reading comprehension likewise promotes learning in all subject areas. Additionally, proficient readers become more self-assured and driven, which results in a more optimistic outlook on education. Strong reading abilities encourage self-directed and lifelong learning, as supported by Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky's learning theories. All things considered, proficient reading skills and comprehension equip students for success in the classroom, clear communication, and responsible social engagement.

The greatest explanations of primary school students' reading proficiency and comprehension come from a number of significant learning theories that describe how children acquire knowledge. Since primary school students learn best via tangible, purposeful experiences, reading materials should be appropriate for their developmental stage, according to Jean Piaget. Lev Vygotsky, on the other hand, highlighted the importance of social contact and assistance, demonstrating how peer conversation, teacher support, and guided reading exercises help students become more proficient readers.

Furthermore, Frederic Bartlett clarified that students comprehend texts more effectively when they are able to relate new material to what they already know and have experienced. This emphasizes how crucial it is to use prior information before reading. The Benjamin Bloom paradigm encourages students to go from basic comprehension to more complex thinking skills like text analysis and evaluation, which further aids reading development.

Likewise, Albert Bandura claimed that since kids pick up knowledge through watching others, understanding can be improved by teachers imitating effective reading techniques. Jeanne Chall concluded by outlining the phases of reading skill development, which help teachers deliver appropriate teaching. These phases range from acquiring basic sounds to reading for meaning.

All things considered, these ideas demonstrate how cognitive development, social interaction, prior knowledge, guided practice, and developmental preparation all contribute to the development of primary school students' reading comprehension. When combined, they offer a solid theoretical framework for creating reading programs that improve students' comprehension, self-esteem, and academic performance.

To tackle these challenges, the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program was launched by the Department of Education, which is mandated in the Republic Act 12028, s 2024 to assist struggling learners through structured tutorial sessions and below the minimum proficiency level in English, Math, and Science subjects, remedial teaching, and student-centered methods. The program aims to improve basic literacy skills, especially in reading fluency and comprehension, which are crucial for academic success. By offering organized learning support, ARAL helps students catch up with essential competencies

and grade-level skills, and boosts their confidence in learning. In 1)Reading, that focused on improving literacy skills among students, especially those who are struggling, 2)Mathematics, which aimed at enhancing mathematical understanding and skills, and 3)Science, targeting foundational knowledge in scientific concepts for better comprehension.

For indigenous students, such as those in the ADBSA AETA Integrated School, developing reading skills is particularly important. Many of these students face extra barriers, such as language differences, a lack of learning materials, and cultural or environmental factors that can impact their academic performance. The use of unfamiliar or infrequent vocabulary and passive voice constructions hampered understanding for certain groups of students. Similarly, Abedi and Jejri (2004) found that the gap in difficulty. Therefore, effective programs like ARAL are vital for promoting inclusive and fair education for everyone.

Even with the ARAL Program in place, few studies have investigated its specific impact on the reading skills and comprehension of indigenous and marginalized learners. It is important to find out if the program truly enhances students' literacy skills and supports their overall academic growth.

This study aims to determine the effect of the ARAL Program on the reading skills and comprehension of grade school students at Banag Ayta Integrated School (Formerly known as ADBSA AETA Integrated School) during the school year 2025–2026. By assessing the program's outcomes, this research seeks to provide insights based on evidence that could help school administrators, teachers, and policymakers improve literacy interventions and educational practices. Ultimately, this study's findings should support the ongoing improvement of reading programs and the promotion of quality education for indigenous learners.

➤ *Significance of the Study*

This study is expected to contribute new knowledge by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of the ARAL Program in progressing the reading ability and reading comprehension of Grade School learners in an AETA indigenous school context. The study may show that the ARAL Program helps improve learners' reading capability, fluency, and comprehension. This can support the program's effectiveness in enhancing academic performance. This may also reveal which parts of the ARAL Program are most effective and which need improvement. This can help teachers and school administrators enhance implementation strategies. Significantly, this study aims to benefit the following:

- *To the Students*

The study may show that the ARAL Program helps improve learners' reading ability, fluency, and comprehension. This can support the program's effectiveness in enhancing academic performance. Improved reading skills can lead to higher self-confidence, better classroom participation, and increased interest in learning.

- *To Educators*

Findings may provide scientific evidence that can be used by DepEd and school leaders in planning, strengthening, or expanding intervention programs for struggling readers. The research may serve as a basis for future policies, funding decisions, and program revisions related to literacy development.

- *To Teachers*

The study may result in the development of better teaching methods and instructional materials aligned with learners' needs, especially for those with reading difficulties.

- *To the Parents*

Results may encourage parents to become more involved in their children's reading development at home, strengthening school-home partnerships.

- *To the Future Researcher*

The study may open opportunities for further research on reading interventions, learning support programs, and inclusive education.

- *To the Community*

Since the study focuses on AETA learners, the results may help in designing culturally responsive and inclusive literacy programs.

- *To the School*

As reading skills improve, overall academic achievement and school performance may also improve, benefiting the entire learning community.

➤ *Statement of the Problem:*

The purpose of this research is to investigate the Effect of the ARAL program to the reading skills and reading comprehension of grade school pupils in Banag Ayta Integrated School (Formerly ADBSA Aeta Integrated School) in S.Y 2025-2026. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

- What is the level of reading ability of Grade School learners of Banag Ayta Integrated School (Formerly ADBSA Aeta Integrated School) before the implementation of the ARAL Program?
- What is the level of reading ability of Grade School learners of Banag Ayta Integrated School (Formerly ADBSA Aeta Integrated School) after the implementation of the ARAL Program?
- What is the level of reading comprehension of Grade School learners of Banag Ayta Integrated School (Formerly ADBSA Aeta Integrated School) before the implementation of the ARAL Program?
- What is the level of reading comprehension of Grade School learners of Banag Ayta Integrated School (Formerly ADBSA Aeta Integrated School) after the implementation of the ARAL Program?
- Is there a significant improvement in the reading ability of Grade School learners after their exposure to the ARAL Program?

- Is there a significant improvement in the reading comprehension of Grade School learners after their exposure to the ARAL Program?

➤ *Hypothesis*

- The reading ability of Grade School learners of the Asian Development Bank Spouses Association AETA Integrated School significantly increases after the implementation of the ARAL Program.
- The reading comprehension of Grade School learners of the Asian Development Bank Spouses Association AETA Integrated School significantly improves after the implementation of the ARAL Program.

➤ *Scope and Limitation of the Study*

This research is a part of a greater whole the objectives is to discover the impact of the ARAL Program on the intermediate pupils' ability and comprehension level of reading after 32 days of administration of the selected ARAL Tutors. The respondents of the study are the pupils in the Grades 4 up to grade 6 (Intermediate) who are slow readers and categorized as frustration learners under the reading ability and comprehension level after the administration of Phil-IRI.

II. FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The chapter in this study is information and materials, which are related from studies/references, which was of great influence to the study.

➤ *Review of the Related Literature*

Comprehension is held as the very essence of reading as it is accountable for the process that enables effective extraction of meaning from a written message (Alghonaim 2020). The common belief about reading comprehension states that proficient readers achieve their main reading goal through reading comprehension. (William 2019 Kasmawati et al. 2019). In facilitating learners to improve their reading skills, teachers indeed do play an essential role. (Deluao et al. 2022)

The teaching methods and current educational trends provide teachers with fundamental knowledge of classroom operations, which establishes student learning expectations and creates a classroom atmosphere of shared student responsibility and comprehension about their learning activities. Most parents and students, together with educators, hold the view that the optimal method for rehabilitating future generations needs to start with their development through basic computer science training. (Saro et al, 2022). Even though the problem is worse in rural regions because there was a lack of technological resources, which caused students to lose interest in their studies during the COVID-19 pandemic (Helardez, 2021)

In two years of testing periods of Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in the years 2022 and 2023, the Philippines has maintained its position as the second-lowest nation among 74 countries (Saro et al., 2022).

In the study of Luz (2007), it was found that one-third of students who completed elementary school and advanced to high school were designated as 'frustrated readers' while another one-third were classified as 'instructional readers'.

In line with this problem, the Department of Education is continuously finding its way to lessen the gap if not totally eradicate the gap of learners' reading ability and reading comprehension brought by the COVID 19 pandemic, and strengthen the Literacy of the learners. At present, the department is utilizing the ARAL Program as one of its initiatives to lessen the number of low emergent learners (who can only decode three out of ten simple words and a limited number of letter sounds). The program goal is to help these learners achieve grade-level reading proficiency in English and Filipino. The program also gives additional support and learning materials to high emergent learners to help them develop to their grade-level competencies (Manila Bulletin, Sept 13, 2025).

The Department of Education issued the Department Order 16, s. 2012, Guidelines in the implementation of the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTTB-MLE) and implemented Mother Tongue (L1) as a Medium of Instruction in all domains/learning areas from Kindergarten to grade 3, except Filipino (L2) and English (L3), to improve reading ability and reading recognition of the Filipino learners

When we learn to read in a language, it is not as simple as it is in the language we grew up with. Reading in a language, or what people call a second language, does not come as naturally. The process of reading in a language is really complicated. Some people, like Grabe and Stoller, who studied this in 2002, have thoughts on this matter.

Kindergarten up to grade 3 teachers used Big Books to tell stories and emphasize the importance of books that contain pictures and stories that motivate children to read. Thus should the language in children's picture books should always be simple, yet not over-simplified (Novianto and Mustadi, 2015). For the Students to have multiple opportunities to read on their own, which will help them develop reading skills through metacognitive reading techniques, according to Kung and Aziz 2020. The main goal of reading is to understand the message that the writer wanted to communicate through the text, according to Pourhosein Gilakjani in 2016.

Thus, each region will organize its training team that is responsible for the division and school-based training for teachers on the MTB-MLE for the K to 12 Basic Education Program (DO 16, s. 2012). Despite the effort of the DepEd, teachers face difficulties with mother tongue-based instruction because they need books that are not available in their native language. The study found that the approach required additional resources and effort to reach its complete potential. Lartec, Jane K. et al., (2014).

Some research shows that their reading programs consistently provide positive feedback on the performance of

elementary and High school learners. In one of the studies in Pines Central Elementary School, an eight-week oral reading and reading comprehension program with their 39 Grade 6 learners yielded positive results. Learners fell in the "Frustration level" in the pretest and increased after the post-test from "frustration" to "Instructional Level". Showing that learners' ability will still improve upon the collaboration and support of all the teachers, principal, and the parents of the learners, Gagno, A. (2022). The researcher also recommends that, before proceeding to classroom instruction, educational institutions inspect the level of reading ability of learners.

Silagan et al (2025) suggested that integrating reading interventions with numeracy and problem-solving activities can be a promising approach to improving student outcomes. Effectiveness of ARAL-aligned Programs: ARAL-aligned reading programs appear to have a small to moderate positive effect on Filipino students' numeracy and problem-solving skills. The findings suggest that integrating reading interventions with numeracy and problem-solving activities can be a promising approach to improving student outcomes.

The early breakdown of those 2025-2026 MOSY assessments already picks out some of the country's top improving schools. It shows how they made real progress in student skills and getting kids ready for their grade levels, and this spread out over different parts of the nation, mostly thanks to the ARAL Program. That program focuses on academic recovery and making learning more accessible. I think it helped push those changes along.

So the first look at those 2025-2026 middle-of-school-year assessments, the MOSY ones, already points out the country's most improved schools. It feels like they've made some real progress in student skills and getting kids ready for their grade levels, especially in various parts of the nation. And that seems tied to the ARAL program, you know, the one for academic recovery and easier access to learning. I might be missing some details there, but it's clear it helped a lot. (edcom2.gov.ph)

Second Congressional Commission on Education (EDCOM 2) states that student performance from the Beginning of School Year (BOSY) against the recent MOSY results, highlighting institutions that have successfully transitioned students from emerging or lower-level proficiency into grade-ready status. (edcom2.gov.ph)

The ARAL program will make sure that learners master the important skills and catch up on what they missed. The National Learning Recovery Program and other similar programs, by DepEd, can be part of the ARAL Program. (IRR of RA 12028).

➤ *Theoretical Framework:*

The research described in this chapter is based on several theories that are applicable to learning, specifically focusing on the ways in which students develop their reading ability and comprehension during intervention programs such as that by the Department of Education, the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program. These

theories explain the mechanisms through which additional learning support can improve students' reading ability. The Theory of Constructivist Learning, as proposed by Jean Piaget, suggests that learners actively build their knowledge by linking new information to what they already know and have experienced. In the context of reading instruction, this means that learners enhance their comprehension by engaging with texts, interpreting their meanings, and connecting them to their previous knowledge. The ARAL Program offers structured remediation activities, guided reading sessions, and interactive learning experiences that encourage learners to dive into reading materials, ultimately boosting their reading skills and understanding.

Another interesting perspective on reading development comes from Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, especially his idea of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This theory highlights that learners can reach greater levels of understanding when they receive guidance from teachers or more knowledgeable peers. In the ARAL Program, educators use scaffolding techniques like guided reading, modeling, and feedback to assist those who are struggling. These supportive interventions help students progress from their current reading level to a more advanced level of proficiency.

Philip B. Gough and William E. Tunmer also emphasize that reading comprehension is a combination of decoding skills and language understanding. Their model suggests that for learners to effectively comprehend texts, they need to accurately recognize words (decoding) and grasp the meaning of the language. The ARAL Program tackles both of these aspects by reinforcing foundational reading skills while also boosting comprehension through focused reading activities.

Among the various theories, the Simple View of Reading stands out as the most fitting theoretical framework for this study because it clearly outlines how reading ability and comprehension develop. This model stresses that enhancing decoding skills and language comprehension will lead to improved reading comprehension outcomes.

Since the ARAL Program is dedicated to enhancing learners' reading skills through structured instruction, remediation, and guided practice, it aligns perfectly with the principles of this model. In this study, the ARAL Program acts as the intervention aimed at improving learners' decoding and comprehension skills, which are the two essential components of reading according to the Simple View of Reading. By offering extra instructional support to students in Grades IV–VI, the program seeks to bolster their reading abilities and enhance their overall comprehension performance.

➤ *Conceptual Framework:*

This research is to find out whether the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program implemented by the Department of Education influences the reading abilities and understanding level of the Grade IV-VI students of the Aeta Integrated School for the School Year 2025-2026. The study is created on the idea that tutorial intervention programs aimed at boosting reading skills can really enhance learners' literacy performance. In this research, the ARAL Program acts as the independent variable, while the learners' reading ability and comprehension are the dependent variables.

The ARAL Program is designed to provide structured support for learners who find foundational reading skills challenging. It includes guided reading sessions and various learning activities aimed at helping these learners enhance their ability to decode words, grasp vocabulary, and make sense of texts. As a result, participants can expect to see improvements in their overall reading skills and comprehension.

The framework suggests that when students engage in structured literacy programs like the ARAL Program, they benefit from extra instructional support that boosts their reading skills. As a result, these enhancements in reading ability are expected to improve reading comprehension outcomes for intermediate learners.

This study looks into whether the ARAL Program has a meaningful impact on how well learners perform in reading.

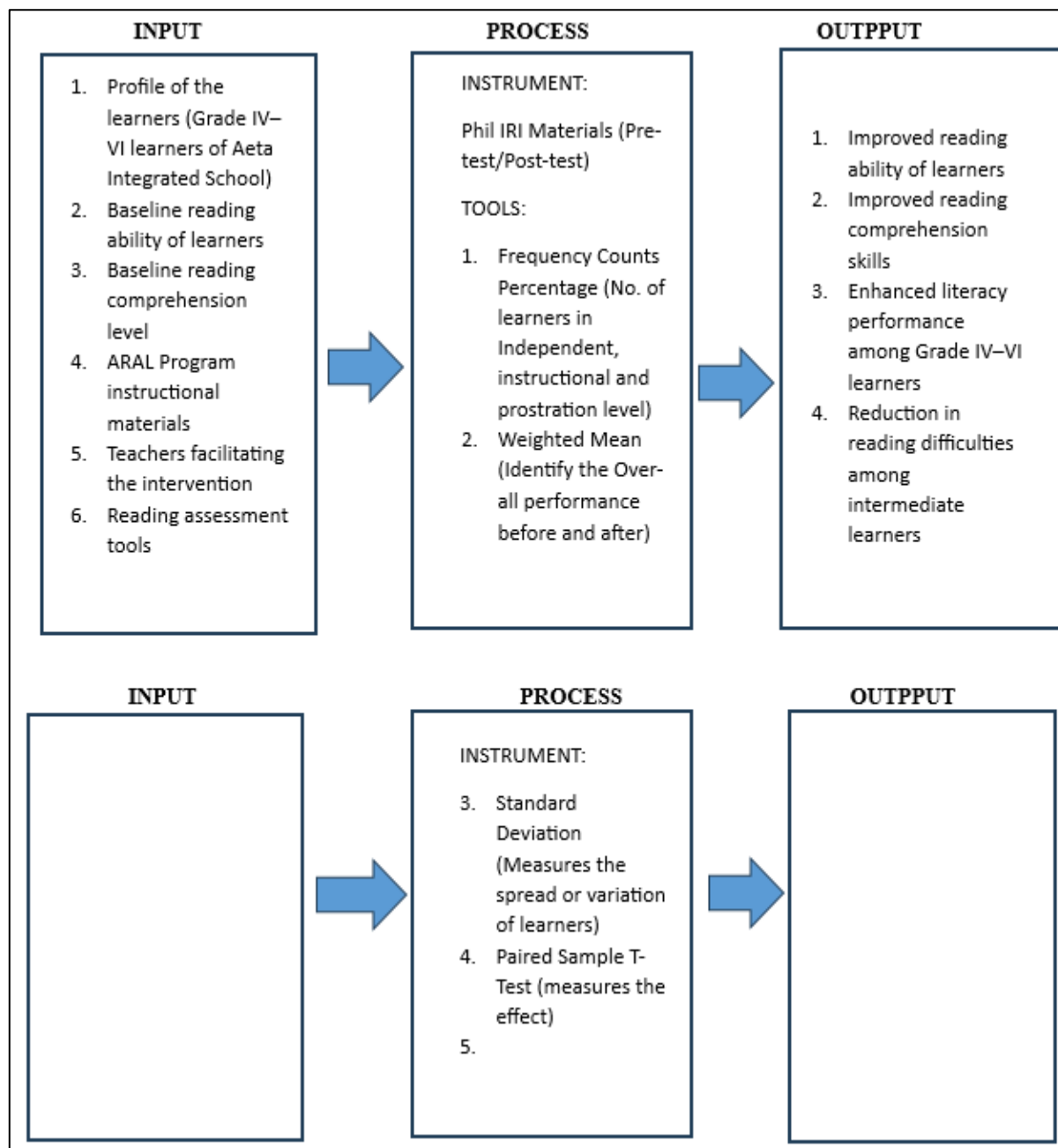


Fig 1 Conceptual Framework

➤ *Statement of the Problem:*

The main purpose of the problem is to determine the Effect of the ARAL Program on the Reading Ability and Reading Comprehension of Grade IV-VI (Intermediate) Learners of Aeta Integrated School SY 2025–2026.

• *Specifically, it Sought to Answer the Following Questions:*✓ *Profile of the Learners*

- Sex
- Age
- Grade
- Status of reading ability and comprehension of the learners

- ✓ What is the level of reading ability of Grade School learners of ADBSA AETA IS before the implementation of the ARAL Program?
- ✓ What is the level of reading ability of Grade School learners of ADBSA AETA IS after the implementation of the ARAL Program?
- ✓ What is the level of reading comprehension of Grade School learners of ADBSA AETA IS before the implementation of the ARAL Program?
- ✓ What is the level of reading comprehension of Grade School learners of ADBSA AETA IS after the implementation of the ARAL Program?
- ✓ Is there a significant improvement in the reading ability of Grade School learners after their exposure to the ARAL Program?

- ✓ Is there a significant improvement in the reading comprehension of Grade School learners after their exposure to the ARAL Program?

➤ *Null Hypothesis:*

There is no significant improvement after the ARAL Program on the Reading Ability and Reading Comprehension of Grade IV-VI (Intermediate) Learners of Aeta Integrated School SY 2025–2026.

➤ *Definition of Terms:*

- Children- an individual below 18 years of age who needs the support of their parents and teachers.
- Comprehension- the ability of the learners to understand the passage/ context he/she is reading
- Intermediate- a group of learners who belong to grades 4 to 6
- Junior High School (JHS)- learners enrolled in grades 7 to 10
- Key Stage 1 (KS1)- grouping level of Kindergarten to grade 3 pupils
- Key Stage 1 (KS2)- grouping level of grade 4 to grade 6 pupils
- Key Stage 1 (KS1)- grouping level of grade 7 to grade 10 pupils
- Parents- the persons responsible for the upbringing the child and following up on the learning of their children
- Primary- learners belong to KS1

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the methodology and process employed by the researcher, including the research design, respondents and location, research instrument, data collection, and data analysis.

➤ *Research Design*

The study will apply quantitative research methods through a pretest-posttest quasi-experimental design to assess how the ARAL Program impacts reading skills and comprehension abilities of Grade IV-VI students at Aeta Integrated School during the 2025-2026 academic year.

The quasi-experimental design is suitable for this study since the researcher can measure the changes in the performance of the learners in reading before and after the implementation of the intervention. In this design, the same group of learners will be given a pretest to assess their level of reading performance and reading comprehension. After the administration of the pretest, the learners will be given the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program, an initiative of the Department of Education to address learning gaps in the performance of the learners.

After the period of intervention, a posttest will be given to the same group of learners using the same reading assessment tools. The results obtained from both the pretest and posttest will be compared to establish whether there is an

improvement in the reading abilities and comprehension of the learners after being exposed to the ARAL Program.

The suitability of this research design lies in the evaluation of the effectiveness of the intervention programs since it assesses the performance gap between the pre-test and the post-test to ascertain whether the programs are helpful to the learners.

➤ *Respondents:*

The respondents of the research will be the seven (7) pupils coming from Grade IV-VI (Intermediate) students of Aeta Integrated School for the School Year 2025-2026. They are the students who belong to the low emergent or frustration level of reading comprehension. Learners who are identified as having difficulties in reading based on their results in the school's assessment on reading, such as the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI). These learners will be part of the ARAL intervention program aimed at enhancing their reading skills. Below is the distribution list of pupils per grade identified as participants in the ARAL Program

Table 1 Respondents

Grade Level	No. of Participants
Grade IV	3
Grade V	2
Grade VI	2
Total	7

➤ *Research Instruments:*

The primary instruments that will be used in this study are the reading assessment tools that will be used to determine the learners' reading ability and reading comprehension.

- Reading Ability Test - This instrument will be used to determine the learners' ability to read by measuring their decoding skills, word recognition, and fluency. This instrument may be adapted from the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI), which is used in most public schools to determine the learners' reading level.
- Reading Comprehension Test – A reading comprehension passage adapted from Phil-IRI will be used to assess their comprehension skills in reading a given text. The test is designed to include 5 to 8 questions based on the grade level of the learners, which will determine the learners' literal and inferential skills.

These tests will be used as pre-test and post-test measures to evaluate the improvement in the learners' skills in reading after the implementation of the ARAL Program.

➤ *Data Gathering Procedure:*

The data collection process will follow a number of steps. First and foremost, permission to conduct the study will be sought from the school head of Aeta Integrated School. Once permission is granted, the participants of the study will be identified using the data collected in the pre-test.

Secondly, a pretest will be given to the learners to assess their skill level in reading and reading comprehension.

Thirdly, the ARAL Program intervention will be conducted in 8 weeks through reading activities, guided reading, and remediation to enhance the learners' reading skills with the help of ARAL Tutor.

Lastly, a post-test will be given to the same learners after the intervention period to assess their reading skills. Data will be collected and analyzed to interpret the findings using the most suitable statistical tools.

➤ *Data Analysis:*

The data collected from the study will be analyzed by the following statistical methods:

- Frequency and Percentage for describing the reading levels of the learners.
- Mean for finding the average scores for the pretest and posttest.
- Standard Deviation for finding the variation in the scores of the learners.
- Paired Sample t-test for finding if there is a significant difference between the results of the pretest and posttest after the implementation of the ARAL Program.

The above-mentioned statistical methods will help us determine if the ARAL Program has a significant impact on improving the reading ability and reading comprehension skills of the learners.

Table 2 Statistical Analysis of Reading Ability and Comprehension

Subject	N	Mean Rank	Z-score	Asymptotic Significant (2-tailed)	Interpretation
English	7	1.50	0.000	1.000	Not Significant
Filipino	7	0.00	0.000	1.000	Not Significant

➤ *Interpretation of English Result:*

With English, one (1) student improved their rank, one (1) student decreased their rank, and (5) students had no change. As a result, the p-value was 1.000 that is more than the 0.05 alpha level. Therefore, the ARAL Program did not have a statistically significant difference in the ability of the English reading skill of the participants during the study.

- *The Table with the Test Statistics Shows that the Critical Value(s) are:*

Z-score for difference is 0.000^b . Asymptotic Significance (2-tailed p-value) is 1.000. Since the p-value (1.000) is far greater than the usual alpha level of 0.05 ($1.000 > 0.05$), we do not reject the null hypothesis.

✓ *English Conclusion:*

There is no statistically significant change between the pre-test and post-test English scores. They did not significantly increase or decrease.

➤ *Interpretation of Filipino Result:*

In Filipino, all 7 (100%) respondents got the same scores in their post and pre test (Ties = 7), hence p-value = 1.000, which shows that there was no statistically significant difference. This represents the "stagnation" in terms of the

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results and discussion of the data gathered of the pre-test and post-test assessments in English and Filipino reading for IV-VI learners in the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program of the Department of Education. The results were based on post-test and pretest results of the Phil IRI starting from the Beginning of the school year (BOSY) and End of School Year (EOSY) assessment. Phil IRI (Philippine Informal Reading Inventory) is a National Assessment Tool used by the Department of Education to measure the reading ability and reading comprehension in oral reading, silent reading, and listening, strengths and weaknesses of the learners to guide teachers in planning appropriate reading instruction and intervention.

Detailed interpretation of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank test results based on the statistical output given: The non-parametric test, the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, was probably used here because there are only 7 data points ($n=7$) to consider. For parametric tests such as the paired samples t-test, we need sufficiently large numbers of data points to make an assumption about the data normality.

➤ *Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Scores*

The ARAL Program was tested using the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test.

quantifiable reading ability under the time period of the assessment.

This can be confirmed by the "Test Statistics" table. The Z-score is 0.000^b . The Asymptotic Significance (2-tailed p-value) is 1.000. As $1.000 > 0.05$, we do not reject the null hypothesis.

• *Conclusion:*

No significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results for Filipino. There was no change in any of the students.

➤ *Discussion of Findings*

Despite the apparent non-difference, it does not mean that the ARAL Program failed. It could also be because of the peculiarities of the Aeta Integrated School:

- Small sample size ($N=7$): Only seven students were involved in the intervention; therefore, the "power" of the statistics used was so low that despite having a few students who showed improvement, it was not enough to achieve statistical significance.
- The sensitivity to assessment: The tests received the same scores, indicating either that tests were too difficult (floor effect) or too easy (ceiling effect) or that test materials

were not adequately adapted for the learners and their mother tongue (Indigenization of tests).

- External Factors: External factors, including temporary withdrawal of children from school to undertake work on

farms due to seasonal agriculture or the school's geographical distance from the student, may have been obstructing the seamless implementation of the ARAL Program.

Table 3 ARAL Program Thematic Analysis

Main Theme	Sub-Theme	Participant Responses
Reading Performance of the Pupil	Decoding - Reading Levels	* "Learners' reading level in Filipino and English before and after the ARAL Program is at the frustration level." * "They are all under the decoding of basic sight words." * "Dati hirap akong makabasa, pero ngayon nakakabasa na po ako kahit pakunti-kunti at mabagal"
	Challenges with understanding	* "They have challenges in understanding because of the language barriers... cannot describe what it is." * "In other words, there is no understanding established during the ARAL Program." * "Nababasa ko ang salita pero nahihirapan ako nae explain kong ano ang ibig niyang sabihin"
Implementation of Program and Methodology	Teaching Strategies	* "They were trained how to decode phonetics (sounding) using Marungko in weeks 1-4 and MSA MATSELI in weeks 5-8..." * "Teachers were able to give letter recognition (names and sounds), sounding first the letter and combining them to form words."
	Logistics & Scheduling	* "Aral Program for KS2 is planned every Tuesday and Thursday at 3:15 to 4:15 in the afternoon." * "Simulator is the device used in naming ARAL Tutor." * "ARAL Tutors are the underload teachers who were the ones given the task..."
Obstacles to success	Absenteeism and Discipline	* "...pupils' reading level does not change due to some considerations like absenteeism, they sometimes escape during the time of ARAL Program..." * "... pupils go to school in the morning, and in the afternoon they do not come back." * "They are one (the pupils) deciding whether to attend or not."
	Psychological and Social Factors	* "Pupils think that others left them because others go home while they are still in the school..." * "Dahil iilan na lng kaming naiiwan sa school eh, kaya Minsan umuuwi ako" * "yan, Ayaw po kasi niyang Pumasok eh" nanay said
Comparison Program Evaluation	ARAL versus NLRP	* "...NLRP (National Learning Remediation Program) and unique Reading Program was administered during vacation that is why it is better than ARAL Program..." * "The parent is definitely committed, no interference with the concentration on the side of the students." * "It's quite annoying for the teacher (NLRP) when others are on holidays and they still need to work..."
Recommendations of Teacher	Recommended Approaches	* "Teachers recommend the Withdrawal approach of the pupil to give more focus on the comprehension..." * "...if I explain to them orally, some show comprehension on the passage being read"

V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter shows the summary of the findings and conclusions made based on the statistical analysis and also makes some suggestions to improve the reading and comprehension of the intermediate learners.

➤ Summary of Findings:

This study measured the effect of the intervention to the two subjects, English and Filipino, with a sample size of seven (N=7) under a pre-test post-test design. The result was analyzed with the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test since the data is non-parametric.

With regards to the results, it was found that the treatment did not bring about a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the students in both English

and Filipino. In English, the scores were exactly the same, as only 1 student improved while another got a lower score, while the other 5 did not have any changes, with a Z score of 0.000 and a p-value of 1.000. As for Filipino, it can be seen that there was no change at all between the pre-test and post-

test of all 7 students. All 7 had the same score for both English and Filipino, and as a result, it is exactly the same Z score and p-value. The null hypothesis stating that there is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test can be accepted for both English and Filipino.

Table 4 Summary of Findings by Sub-Theme

Main Theme	Sub-Theme	Summary of Findings
Pupil Reading Performance	Reading Levels & Decoding	Both pre and post the program, the pupils are still at the "frustration level." The pupils are still unable to recognize common sight words, are unable to blend sounds, etc. However, it is true that the pupils themselves report that their reading has gone from non-existent to slow. Still, the pupils are not reading at grade level.
	Comprehension Struggles	There is also a noticeable difference between decoding and comprehension, as children are sometimes able to say the words but are unable to tell me what the words mean because of a lack of language understanding. The teachers also mentioned that they did not see much development of comprehension over the duration of the program, although children showed better understanding when things were said to them in simpler terms.
Program Implementation	Instructional Techniques	The program uses formal methods like the Marungko method and MSA MATSELI for teaching phonetics and letter recognition. The program tries to weave socio-emotional literacy (SEL) into student tasks.
	Logistics & Scheduling	The programme runs for Key stage 2 every Tuesday & Thursday afternoon (3:15-4:15 pm). Tutors are allocated by the use of a "Simulator" instrument - this is based upon teachers who are underloaded or a 'service-credit' (8 hours = 1 day) assigned to overload teachers with no prior obligation to teach their own advisory class.
Barriers to Success	Absenteeism & Discipline	A significant problem is the lack of attendance, especially by the students who regularly fail to attend the afternoon sessions or leave school during the afternoon. Since it is generally left to the pupil to decide when he would or would not attend the school, there is the issue of unreliability.
	Psychological & Social Factors	Students will feel alone or afraid of missing out because they have to be kept at school while others go home. Some parents also do not make attendance or give their children an opportunity.
Comparative Evaluation	ARAL vs. NLRP	The teachers think that NLRP works better for students because they are having vacation, which increases parental involvement and minimizes distractions for students despite "tasking" for teachers.
Teacher Recommendations	Proposed Strategies	The suggested way to help boost performance is to have a 'Pull-out approach' where the teaching could concentrate more on individual reading comprehension. Another prominent point is that the oral explanation, as the missing link caused by the language barrier, needs to be overcome.

➤ Summary of Findings

The transcript highlights a significant gap between decoding (the ability to sound out words) and comprehension (understanding meaning). While some students feel they are making slow progress, teachers identify the after-school schedule as a primary deterrent, leading to low motivation and high absenteeism compared to vacation-based programs like the NLRP.

➤ Recommendations:

These findings offer a unique chance to re-evaluate both the design of the study and the nature of the intervention. A pre/post-test with identical (in the case of Filipino) or nearly identical (in the case of English) results usually indicates a methodological flaw that is preventing actual learning effects from becoming evident.

The recommendations below will detail how to approach these findings:

➤ Methodological Improvements for Future Research

• Re-Evaluate the Assessment Instruments:

- ✓ Ceiling or floor effects: Rarely do the pre/post-test scores come out exactly the same. Ceiling effects and floor effects can occur where the scores are too high (ceiling) or too low (floor) to be sensitive to the treatment/test effects. The floor/ceiling effects for the Filipino test were problematic. If scores on the pre-test were already too high, you couldn't assess improvement; if the scores on the pre-test were too low, then either the treatment was not received, the material was too hard, or something was not working.

- ✓ Recommendation: The test passages should be reviewed. They should cover the entire span of difficulty in order to be discriminatory of ability. They should correspond closely to the exact purposes of the intervention.

- *Raise the Sample Size*

- ✓ N=7 is far too small for any of the tests performed to have any statistical power to find differences. Only enormous leaps would show statistical p-values with N=7.
- ✓ Recommendation: Repeat the study with a bigger sample size to maximize the statistical power of the test.

- *Validate the Duration and Timing:*

- ✓ It is also possible that the period of the intervention was not long enough for students to learn new ideas.
- ✓ Recommendations: Evaluate if the tests were administered with appropriate spacing of time. Don't administer the posttest too early after the material is presented.

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