
Augmenting Reading Comprehension Skills Through Catch-Up Fridays Instructional Learning Strategy

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Abstract — This research examined the effectiveness of the Catch-Up Fridays teaching-learning strategy in enhancing reading comprehension skills among Grade V learners in selected schools within the Toledo City Division, Cebu, during the School Year 2024–2025. Questionnaires were emailed thru online or in paper-pencil test in 3rd week of July 2025. This research employs a descriptive-quantitative research method adopting the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) toolkit to evaluate learners' proficiency in decoding, fluency, vocabulary, phonemic awareness, and comprehension. Data were collected from 220 respondents (75 teachers and 145 learners) across five schools, and analyzed using weighted mean, standard deviation, and chi-square tests. Findings revealed that while learners showed instructional-level proficiency in decoding, phonemic awareness, and sentence structure and coherence, they struggled significantly with fluency, vocabulary, noting details, and identifying the main idea, which were rated at the frustration level. These results indicated that students were not yet autonomous readers and require

continued instructional support. Teacher respondents strongly agreed on the effectiveness of Catch-Up Fridays, rating its objectives, design, strategies, activities, and outcomes highly. Activities such as teacher read-a-louds, partner reading, and DEAR were particularly impactful. However, several barriers to implementation were identified, including limited time, lack of teaching resources, emotional stress, low parental involvement, and student disengagement. These challenges hindered the full realization of the program's potential. The study concluded that Catch-Up Fridays is a promising intervention for literacy recovery, but its success depends on sustained support, professional development, and stakeholder collaboration. A fortified instructional reading program was therefore recommended to address identified gaps and promote inclusive, effective reading instruction.

Keywords: Development Education, Augmenting Academic Achievement Catch-up Fridays Instructional Learning Strategy, Descriptive- Quantitative Research Method, Cebu, Philippines

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is essential for future learning and understanding; without it, learners struggled academically (Acedillo, 2023). In connection, the Department of Education (DepEd) is greatly responsive in providing quality, relevant, inclusive, and responsive basic education for all. This commitment is stipulated in the MATATAG Education Agenda, aiming to produce competent individuals who are job-ready, active, and responsible citizens with essential competencies and skills for lifelong learning (DepEd Memorandum No. 54, series of 2023). The Department's current initiatives provide opportunities that enhanced learners' academic performance, addressing issues such as low proficiency levels in reading based on national and international large-scale assessments. In the PISA results of 2022 (Program for International Student Assessment), the Philippines ranked among the lowest in the completed assessment, with Science scoring 24.00%, English (Reading) scoring 23.00%, and Mathematics scoring 16.00%, indicating that learners have only achieved basic proficiency in these major subjects. Notably, reading scored only 23.00%, indicating a need for prompt attention to address learning gaps and strengthen the reading proficiency of every learner.

Inadequate reading comprehension severely impairs one's capacity to comprehend the context. This is one of the most common challenges in basic education, affecting both students and teachers. Understanding what you read establishes the foundation for future education and anxiety in all subject areas. Without this foundation, students would struggle to achieve academically, particularly in reading and writing, as well as in science, math, social sciences, and English (Requiso-Jimenez & Bascos-Ocampo, 2022). Reading involves decoding written symbols. Reading is a core skill that must be acquired before any of the others. Reading, however, requires more than just understanding letters and symbols when it comes to teaching and learning. It is a sophisticated operation that incorporates text processing, meaning comprehension, and word recognition (Deluao et al., 2022). Reading is critical to a child's learning process because it is the most crucial language skill and one of the fundamental skills required in the classroom (Sadiku, 2015). However, Helarde (2021) claims that it is the mother of all study skills. Nonetheless, reading comprehension has long been acknowledged as an important aspect of the learning process, and it remains a serious issue in Philippine classrooms. Reading provides readers with a new set of skills and access to a variety of knowledge that will benefit them in their academic aspirations. Reading is necessary in all learning areas (Tomas et al., 2021). Today's world is intended to be a reading world. A person should read in order to fully appreciate life because it is believed that reading is the source of the majority of knowledge. Reading is vital for everyone's mental and cultural development. People read for 80% of the jobs they accomplish daily. As a result, reading is viewed as one of the most important activities in school and everyday life (Requiso-Jimenez and Bascos-Ocampo, 2022).

Reading comprehension was a key component of academic accomplishment and lifelong learning because it allows people to generate meaning from text, engage in critical thinking, and apply information across disciplines. The demand for effective reading comprehension teaching has increased significantly in the twenty-first century, motivating educators and academics to investigate a variety of instructional strategies that can assist students in navigating increasingly complex texts. These tactics span from metacognitive approaches and tailored instruction to collaborative and inquiry-based learning, all of which attempt to improve students' abilities to comprehend, interpret, and apply information.

Shea and Ceprano (2017), in their study published in the *Journal of Inquiry and Action in Education* at Buffalo State College, New York, USA, highlight the cognitive complexity of reading comprehension. They claim that effective training should cover both micro-level abilities like decoding and vocabulary, as well as macro-level processes like inference, synthesis, and critical thinking. The findings support the use of close reading, rereading, and reflective questioning to enhance textual engagement. However, they identified a persisting gap between theoretical frameworks and classroom practices, pointing out that many instructors struggle to apply solutions that completely match the cognitive demands of reading. Furthermore, while reading comprehension is a worldwide concern, local factors such as curriculum design, teacher preparation, and sociocultural contexts have a substantial impact on instructional effectiveness.

Numerous studies have investigated the use of teaching tactics in local classrooms in the Philippine environment. De Ocampo and Tosino (2023) investigated reading strategies among junior high school teachers in Iloilo and discovered that, while teachers frequently connect texts to students' experiences and establish clear reading goals, they face challenges such as limited resources and students' weak foundational skills. Similarly, Suson et al. (2020) researched differentiated instruction in various Philippine schools and discovered a strong relationship between students' multiple intelligences and their reading comprehension score. Another nationwide study that evaluated the reading curriculum before and after the COVID-19 outbreak discovered a discrepancy between intended and implemented instructional approaches, emphasizing the need for more cohesive and context-sensitive strategies.

Local research in Cebu City has provided useful insights into how instructional tactics are tailored to the needs of learners. Suson et al. (2020) did a study at Cebu Technological University to demonstrate the efficacy of tailored instruction in enhancing reading comprehension among diverse students. Potot et al. (2023) conducted a quasi-experimental study in Lapu-Lapu City and the University of Cebu, finding that students who received differentiated instruction outperformed those who were taught using standard methods. Furthermore, a 2022 study published in the *International Journal of English Language Studies* looked at bilingual reading comprehension among Cebuano students, emphasizing the significance of inference, evaluation, and vocabulary growth in both English and Cebuano settings.

These global, national, and local studies highlight the value of contextually grounded, cognitively rich instructional strategies in improving reading comprehension. They also emphasize the continual problems that educators have in closing the gap between theory and practice, as well as the importance of ongoing professional development and curricular support to enable effective implementation.

Addressing Catch-Up Fridays' challenges is critical to ensure its efficacy in closing learning gaps among students. Teachers are empowered to implement engaging and meaningful student learning activities by offering clear guidelines, assistance, and resources. Collaboration among educational stakeholders, such as teachers, administrators, parents, and, eventually, legislators, is critical for overcoming obstacles and maximizing the benefits of catch-up Fridays. Through coordinated efforts and a shared commitment to education, an inclusive and supportive learning environment may be built to suit the different needs of all learners via the Catch-Up Friday project, which highlights the issues within the K-12 framework and discusses potential solutions.

Despite decades of study identifying successful reading comprehension strategies, there is still a considerable gap between what is known and what is performed in the classroom. Shea and Ceprano (2017) argue that reading comprehension is a cognitively complex process that necessitates both micro and macro-level instructional strategies, but these are not consistently employed in daily teaching, resulting in poor performance on international exams. Similarly, Harvard University's Capin et al. (2025) discovered that comprehension accounts for only 23% of instructional time in K-12 schools, and that teacher-led discussions frequently fail to engage students in deeper textual analysis, reinforcing the disconnect between research-based practices and classroom realities. In the Philippines, the Department of Education implemented Catch-Up Fridays in response to plummeting literacy rates, with the goal of providing structured time for remedial reading. Basali (2024) and Rominimbang et al. (2024) demonstrate that Catch-Up Fridays have the potential to improve reading proficiency; nonetheless, their effectiveness is dependent on proper assistance, clear instructions, and good teaching techniques. Learner perspectives in areas such as Ozamiz and Iligan City show that Catch-Up Fridays can be engaging and effective when done imaginatively. These findings highlight the need of bridging the gap between theory and practice through initiatives such as Catch-Up Fridays, which provide an

organized, research-based approach to tackling the continuing issues in reading comprehension among Filipino students.

It addresses time limits, teacher workload, and resource availability by recommending flexible learning options, community collaboration, and technological integration. The Catch-Up Friday initiative provides a strategic opportunity to overcome persistent learning gaps in reading and writing among Toledo City students. This program strives to improve literacy skills, encourage academic performance, and instill a real love of reading by allocating targeted teaching time each week. However, its effectiveness is contingent on the resolution of critical implementation issues like as time restrictions, teacher workload, and resource limitations. Maximizing its impact requires empowering educators through clear instructions, proper support, and collaborative involvement with stakeholders such as teachers, administrators, parents, and politicians. The study's findings not only illustrate Catch-Up Friday's potential within the K-12 framework, but also provide a theoretical foundation for future research and field deployment, paving the way for more inclusive, responsive, and effective educational practices.

Literature Review

Reading is an essential skill that underpins education, communication, and personal development. It is an active process of meaning-making, concept engagement, and knowledge growth, not just a passive translation of words. From childhood to adulthood, reading is vital for the development of critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and cognitive capacities. Reading enables people to manage challenging material and make sound decisions by expanding their vocabulary and deepening their understanding. It boosts brain activity by stimulating neural pathways involved in memory and linguistic proficiency. Reading also promotes social awareness by exposing people to a diverse range of perspectives, cultures, and experiences. Reading increases empathy and broadens one's understanding of the world, whether through novels, factual writing, or internet information.

Reading comprehension, according to Kintsch and van Dijk (2024), is the process of extracting meaning from text. The idea is to understand the text rather than to derive meaning

from individual words or sentences. Reading comprehension is the consequence of combining the reader's mental image of a text's meaning with prior knowledge. According to Keenan, Betjemann, and Olson (2008), reading comprehension necessitates the effective development and organization of a variety of lower- and higher-level processes and skills. As a result, there are numerous probable causes of comprehension gaps, which vary depending on the age and skill level of the readers. Throughout history, a range of teaching methodologies have been tested to improve pupils' ability to comprehend and interpret texts.

Learners must understand the underlying idea. When learners can identify the major theme, they are better equipped to understand the text's purpose and significance. Learners that have this competence read more efficiently and with better meaning. Strong main concept identification helps in summary by allowing students to reduce complex information into short, understandable words. Learners must develop conclusions from a multitude of previous information. If learners lack the necessary background knowledge, they may fail to comprehend the content. The time signature teaches students how to better understand the flow of the text. Readers who are naturally familiar with the syntax of the language should be able to understand a book accurately.

Reading calls for good sentence structure and coherence to provide clarity, logical flow, and comprehension (Traga & Zoi, 2019). Well-structured sentences allow students to assimilate information more rapidly, making tough materials easier to understand. Cohesion allows readers to easily follow the evolution of ideas by creating smooth connections between them. According to research, sentence form impacts reading comprehension by teaching children to notice grammatical patterns and word links. If sentences are badly formed, students may fail to comprehend complex ideas, resulting in irritation and misunderstanding. Cohesion teaches pupils how to efficiently organize their thoughts, which improves their writing skills.

Providing Grade 5 students with individualized attention for their reading issues includes tailoring support to their specific requirements. Working with experienced teachers, implementing a variety of instructional strategies, and providing additional resources can help students overcome their reading issues more successfully and individually. Furthermore, customized attention is critical for learning since it aids in the prioritization and encoding of

relevant information. Reading development, which is dependent on metalinguistic skills such as understanding the phonetic structure of spoken language, may also be affected. Reports of dyslexic readers having difficulty focusing and hearing speech in noisy environments suggest that auditory attention plays an important part in the development of reading skills (Guerra, 2024).

Decoding allow learners to interpret written knowledge into understandable spoken language, which is essential for the development of reading skills. Accurate word decoding helps students discover spelling, pronunciation, and word structure patterns, which improves their reading ability. Proficient decoding skills help children learn new words, expand their vocabulary, and improve their comprehension. Decoding, with constant practice, develops automaticity, allowing pupils to read swiftly and efficiently without having to sound out every word. Effective decoding raises phonemic awareness by teaching pupils how individual sounds contribute to word creation. It also improves the relationship between letters and sounds, which helps with reading memory and word identification.

According to Pham (2020), stated that attentional processes may have a negative influence on both reading fluency and word-level reading accuracy. This can reduce accuracy while increasing distractibility, resulting in fewer words read. Accurate word recognition allows students to read more quickly and fluently. Fluency facilitates comprehension by freeing up cognitive resources for higher-order thinking skills such as summarizing, inferencing, and critical analysis. Instead of focusing on decoding, they may concentrate on understanding. According to research, learners who display outstanding word-level accuracy at a young age are more likely to become proficient readers. Furthermore, because word recognition allows learners to engage with increasingly complicated texts and broaden their linguistic range, it is essential for vocabulary development.

Phonemic awareness refers to the ability to detect and manipulate specific sounds included inside words. Learners who can distinguish between phonemes have a stronger basis for decoding, which makes reading easier and faster. This talent improves people's capacity to break down words into smaller sound units, allowing them to understand and type them correctly. Phonemic awareness helps kids understand word structures and sound patterns, which improves vocabulary development. Strong phonemic awareness is connected to improved reading skills because it

allows students to swiftly and confidently digest new and familiar words. Phoneme problems can lead to decoding issues, which impede reading comprehension and literacy development in general. Blending exercises, rhyming activities, and sound segmentation are examples of teaching practices that help students enhance their phonemic awareness and read more effectively. Students who participate in phonemic-focused activities form better cognitive connections between spoken and written language. Teachers can help learners build phonemic awareness by introducing engaging and interactive tasks into their reading courses. Phonemic awareness is ultimately at the heart of early literacy, ensuring that students lay a solid foundation for lifelong learning and academic achievement.

Furthermore, Masrai (2020) asserts that vocabulary is critical for increasing pupils' reading comprehension. Vocabulary acts as a link between word recognition and meaning creation, making it an essential part of reading comprehension. Learners who lack a vast vocabulary find it more difficult to read and decipher texts, limiting their capacity to interact with complex topics and subjects. According to research, vocabulary knowledge is one of the best predictors of reading achievement because it allows kids to effectively perceive, infer, and process information. Word knowledge improves a learner's ability to understand language nuances, hence promoting and strengthening understanding.

Catch-up Fridays are especially beneficial for learners who have difficulty reading because they provide a specific time for them to work on challenges they may have encountered throughout the week. This is the time to go over reading materials, practice reading skills, and cement knowledge. By focusing on catching up at the end of the week, kids with reading issues may feel more confident and prepared for the reading assignments at school the following week. It enables educators to provide tailored guidance and interventions that help learners improve their reading comprehension and ability. Catch-up Friday is also beneficial to learners who struggle with reading because it provides them with the incentive, support, and targeted instruction they require to build fundamental literacy skills.

The Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) program is incorporated into Catch-Up Friday to help learners improve their literacy and develop a love of reading. The Department of Education (DepEd) launched a project to promote autonomous silent reading in order to improve

fundamental, social, and critical thinking skills. Reading regularly helps kids acquire the vocabulary, comprehension, and critical thinking abilities required to excel in the classroom. DEAR encourages learners to interact with texts in a distraction-free environment by promoting reading as a fun and compelling activity. According to the National Learning Recovery Program, this program ensures that students have solid reading foundations for lifetime learning. Catch-Up Friday offers learners a disciplined strategy to improving their reading comprehension and preparing for more difficult assignments. DEAR helps learner develop self-control, focus, and intellectual curiosity, transforming reading into a routine and pleasant activity. The software also provides teachers with resources to help learners choose acceptable books and use effective reading skills. By integrating DEAR into Catch-Up Friday, DepEd underscores the significance of literacy in building effective, well-rounded persons. Ultimately, this approach develops youngsters to be active learners, critical thinkers, and comfortable readers.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The descriptive-quantitative research method was used in this study. Descriptive research is a type of quantitative study aimed to collect measurable data to do data analysis on a selected population. It is a widely used market intelligence instrument that allowed everyone to gather and define the characteristics of an ethnic category.

Surveys were employed to collect data on a variety of topics in this approach. This information was gathered to determine the extent to which distinct situations can be achieved between these individuals. The term "quantitative" refers something which can be evaluated (Adams, Curt M., Hoy, Waynek 2018). When performing research with the goal of identifying traits, frequency, patterns, connections, and classifications, descriptive-quantitative research is quite valuable.

To collect data, the researcher pulls survey questionnaires from latest research. The study employs a chi-square, which provides empirical being used to see if there is a significant correlation between the scores of two groups that are related in some way.

Sample of the Study

The researcher employed the System Model Approach (SMA) to examine the teaching-learning situations of coping up from the pandemic to come up with a better decision on the appropriate strategies to enhance the quality of education appropriate to the level of learners. SMA comprises the Input, process, and output approach.

Shown under Input were the demographic profile of the respondent groups, perception of the respondent groups as to the plight of Catch-up Fridays among Teachers and Learners under Toledo City Division, level of reading comprehension skill, significant relationship between the status of Catch-up Fridays instructional learning tool and reading comprehension skills.

Reflected under Process were the transmittal letter, questionnaire, data presentation, statistical treatment, summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

Table 1 presents the distribution of the respondent groups.

TABLE 1
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENT GROUPS

Schools	Respondents		Total	%
	Teachers	Learners		
Don Andres Soriano Elementary School	20	35	55	24.40

Cantabaco Elementary School	15	30	45	20.00
Gen. Pantaleon Del Rosario Elementary School	15	30	45	20.00
Apid Elementary School	15	30	45	20.00
Upper Campo 8 Elementary School	10	20	30	15.60
Total	75	145	220	100.00

Measures

These were powerful tools for enhancing reading achievement, eliciting student interest, and meeting varied learner requirements. These literacy program strategies encompass evidence-backed methods like guided reading, vocabulary training, read-alouds, phonics, and comprehension checking. According to the Department of Education's Practitioner's Guide to Improving Literacy Outcomes, literacy program strategies must be selected based on site-specific requirements and implemented using a specified, five-step cycle of continuous improvement: need-finding, selecting components supported by evidence, planning, enactment, and reflection. Similarly, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) strongly recommends teacher-trusted strategies for enhancing language development and reading fluency, such as modeling vocabulary use, extending student responses, and incorporating literacy routines as part of daily classroom inter changes.

Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that incorporating literacy practices within science or social studies curriculum courses increases understanding and fosters academic literacy (Kosanovich, Reed, & Miller, 2010). According to the Institute of Museum and Library Services

(2024), strategies that employ student choice, peer conferencing, and culturally relevant books are just as helpful in sustaining reading enthusiasm as they are in fostering lifelong literacy behavior. These facts attest to the necessity of intentional, adaptable, and evidence-based literacy practices while working with students in a variety of settings and grade levels.

The Strategies were Reading through the dear and Training for teachers on the Implementation of Catch-up Fridays.

Procedures

The researcher personally discussed with their respective school heads about the observations they had gathered inside their respective schools about the Catch-up Fridays conducted as a learning aid towards strategic education at the same time giving the hard time and difficulties to the teachers and learners in the new normal. The researcher explained about the topic and how the process was done, the interventions, and tools to be used, the benefits that the schools gain from this research, and some clarifications and recommendations. After the validation of the instrument, necessary permission was secured by the researcher to gain approval from the school head/principal, parents, teachers, and learners. The researcher prepared a letter to the school head/principal, teachers, and learners of Cantabaco Elementary School, Apid Elementary School, Don Andres Soriano Elementary School, Gen. Pantaleon Del Rosario Elementary School and Upper Campo 8 Elementary School respectively asking permission to conduct the research.

For selection of respondents, a random sampling technique was employed that would result to 220 respondents consisting of teachers and learners. Selection was based on the inclusive criteria mentioned in the research respondents. The respondent groups were given a set of questionnaires which can be distributed in a paper-pencil test that relates to the research topic, augmenting reading comprehension skills through the catch-up Fridays teaching learning strategy.

With the available information and help from the respondents, the researcher gathered and analyzed the data and draw conclusions and recommendations based on the results from the questionnaires. The method of assessing the instrument were explained in detail prior to the

administration of the instruments. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to the selected respondents for the purpose of clarification in the study conducted.

Data Processing

Data were collected, tabulated and computed using appropriate statistical tools. The data were analyzed and interpreted. The result was served as basis for the formulation of the summary, conclusion and recommendations. The findings of this study served as the basis for preparing a systematic examination for the presentation of data and conceptualizing a reading program and training for Catch-Up Friday.

Ethical Considerations

In research, a set of principles that guide one's research designs and practices. Researchers must always adhere to a certain code of conduct when collecting data from people. The goals of human research often include understanding real-life phenomena, studying effective treatments, investigating behaviors, and improving lives in other ways. What you decide to research and how you conduct that research involve key ethical considerations. These considerations work to protect the rights of research participants, enhance research validity, and maintain scientific integrity. Thus, it is a fact that ethical concerns should be given priority especially in matters respect to learners, parents, teachers, and administrators of the school.

In adherence to this principle, parameters for ethical consideration were defined and discussed to ensure the primary rights of every person. The researcher sought approval from the Schools Division Superintendent prior to the conduct of the study. A letter was sent to the Division Office to formally ask approval to conduct the study. The researcher coordinated with the school principal upon the conduct of the study. The respondents was given leeway whether to participate in the research or not.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This refers to the measurable improvements in learners' reading comprehension, motivation, reading skills, and general academic performance brought about by focused interventions. In order to ascertain the efficacy of instructional strategies and program implementation, outcomes are usually evaluated using both formative and summative assessments. The Practitioner's Guide to Improving Literacy Outcomes. The Department of Education stipulated that outcomes must align with SMART goals, which stand for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. A cycle of continuous improvement that includes identifying needs, implementing evidence-based methods, and taking performance data into account should also be used to evaluate them. Furthermore, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (2024) emphasizes that literacy outcomes encompass more than simply academic benefits for improved self-efficacy and increased community participation when programs are inclusive and learner-centered. These findings are critical to sustaining long-term literacy development and ensuring that pupils possess the core skills needed for lifelong learning. Therefore, high-quality literacy programs assign equal weight to cognitive and affective outcomes in order to achieve meaningful and long-lasting educational impact.

Table 25 shows the status of catch-up Fridays instructional learning tool as to Result/Outcome.

TABLE 25
RESULT/OUTCOME

S/N	Dimension	$\bar{X}$	Std Dev	Category
1	Activate learners' prior knowledge to spark their interest and motivate them to read.	3.54	0.50	SA
2	Develop learners various reading skills to improve their vocabulary, learn new words and expression and enhance their creativity and imagination.	3.59	0.49	SA
3	Provide learners the chance to reflect, develop a deeper vocabulary of the text and promote the use of language or newly learned words effectively.	3.58	0.52	SA
4	Learning mechanism intended to strengthen the foundational, social and other relevant skills necessary actualize the intent of the Catch-up Friday.	3.57	0.50	SA

5	The content of the learning area can be used as a springboard for developing the reading skills of learners.	3.54	0.50	SA
	AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN/STANDARD DEVIATION /CATEGORY	3.56	0.50	SA

Legend: 3.26-4.00-Strongly Agree (SA), 2.51-3.25-Agree (A), 1.76-2.50-Disagree(D), and 1.00-1.75-Strongly Disagree(SD).

Table shows that Item No. 1 – “*Activate learners’ prior knowledge to spark their interest and motivate them to read*”, respondent groups rated a **weighted mean** of **3.54** categorized as **Strongly Agree**.

Learners relate new information to their prior knowledge and experiences, activating prior knowledge is a potent technique for igniting interest and encouraging reading. As a cognitive framework, prior knowledge helps students make sense of new material, forecast results, and interact with texts more fully. Hattan, Alexander, and Lupo (2024) stated that there are over 30 scientifically established ways for eliciting prior knowledge, such as visual aids, analogical reasoning, and open-ended prompts, that significantly boost comprehension and involvement. According to Belouiza et al. (2024), when students' schema is active, they can anticipate information and draw conclusions, which increases the significance and engagement of reading. Activating prior knowledge is especially crucial for English language learners since it closes linguistic and cultural barriers, improves academic literacy, and increases confidence in handling complicated texts (Ferralazzo & Sypnieski, 2018). These findings demonstrate that using students' past knowledge not only increases comprehension but also stimulates curiosity and a positive attitude toward reading.

Item No. 2 – “*Develop learners various reading skills to improve their vocabulary, learn new words and expression and enhance their creativity and imagination*”, respondent groups rated a **weighted mean** of **3.59** categorized as **Strongly Agree**.

Improving vocabulary, learning new expressions, and encouraging creativity and imagination all depend on learners' reading abilities. Reading broadens learners' linguistic repertoire and fosters cognitive development by exposing them to a variety of language structures, contexts, and ideas. Reading comprehension and general literacy success are strongly correlated

with vocabulary development, according to research. According to the National Center on Improving Literacy (2024), students are better able to understand and use words when they receive specific vocabulary training in addition to engaging reading activities. This fosters both expressive language and academic success. Shanahan (2023) asserts that teaching vocabulary through rich, contextualized experiences, such as acting out meanings, investigating word relationships, and narrating stories, enhances comprehension and retention. Furthermore, Reppen (2025) highlights that incorporating comprehensive and thorough reading exercises allows children to encounter a range of words and expressions, which not only improves comprehension but also stimulates creativity and imagination. These findings show that a thorough reading program can significantly increase kids' linguistic skills and pique their intellectual curiosity.

Item No. 3 – *“Provide learners the chance to reflect, develop a deeper vocabulary of the text and promote the use of language or newly learned words effectively”*, respondent groups rated a **weighted mean** of **3.58** categorized as **Strongly Agree**.

Encouraging meaningful literacy development requires giving students the chance to think critically about texts, expand their vocabulary, and use newly acquired terms. Reflection promotes metacognition, allowing students to critically evaluate textual themes, word meanings, and language usage. According to Manyak et al. (2023), rich routines for introducing word meanings, review tasks that promote deep processing, and opportunities for students to apply terms in a variety of settings are all crucial elements of effective vocabulary instruction. Additionally, Baker (2025) highlights the value of strategies like word awareness, contextual depth, and spaced repetition in helping children internalize vocabulary and use it creatively in speech and writing. These approaches claim that when students actively engage in self-reflection, conversation, and everyday language use, vocabulary building is most successful.

Item No. 4 – *“Learning mechanism intended to strengthen the foundational, social and other relevant skills necessary actualize the intent of the Catch-up Friday”*, respondent groups rated a **weighted mean** of **3.57** categorized as **Strongly Agree**.

The Philippine Department of Education (DepEd) established Catch-Up Friday as an organized learning tool to develop social, fundamental, and other relevant skills required to accomplish the objectives of the basic education curriculum. As part of this effort, every Friday

of the academic year is dedicated to certain activities such as reading, health awareness, values formation, and peace education. According to DepEd, the objective of Catch-Up Friday is to enhance learning through dynamic, inclusive, non-graded programs that foster both academic and personal development (Rappler, 2024). The program offers children the opportunity to improve their critical thinking, literacy, and social skills by merging the Homeroom Guidance Program (HGP) and the National Reading Program (NRP) (Manila Bulletin, 2024). Additionally, Catch-Up Friday promotes collaborative learning environments where students engage in group projects and discussions that enhance communication, empathy, and collaboration (Ambrocio, 2024). By addressing learning gaps and integrating with the MATATAG Agenda and the National Learning Recovery Program (NLRP), this all-encompassing approach guarantees that students have the skills required for lifelong learning and responsible citizenship.

Item No. 5 – *“The content of the learning area can be used as a springboard for developing the reading skills of learners”*, respondent groups rated a **weighted mean** of **3.54** categorized as **Strongly Agree**.

Using the material of other subject areas as a springboard toward the enhancement of reading capabilities is an effective method that interweaves literacy throughout the curriculum. Students read real texts that support the development of both literacy and domain knowledge when reading skills are integrated into science, social studies, and math classes. According to Smith and Robinson's (2020) research, students who participate in topic-area literacy programs read more thoroughly, evaluate content, and formulate cohesive arguments that are on par with the Common Core State Standards and help them get ready for college and the workforce. In a similar vein, Murray, Stevens, and Vaughn (2022) noted that when teachers employ both structured reading routines and high-quality texts, their intentional use of texts in middle school classes enhances both vocabulary and comprehension. Reading is incorporated into subject-specific lessons to help students increase their comprehension and fluency as well as their critical thinking and contextual awareness.

The result shows that under **Result/Outcome**, the respondent groups rated an **average weighted mean** of **3.56** categorized as **Strongly Agree**.

This indicated a significant consensus among respondents that the item being reviewed was effective or meaningful. According to a Likert scale interpretation guideline, a mean score between 3.51 and 4.00 often indicates significant agreement, indicating that the respondents agreed with the desired effect and perceived the outcome favorably (Jamieson, 2021). Furthermore, such a result may indicate that the instructional, behavioral, or programmatic intervention or technique being evaluated satisfied the participants' requirements and expectations. It also suggests that its implementation was successful in achieving its goals, that stakeholders—in this case, students, instructors, or administrators—found it beneficial, and that its outcomes were desired. It may serve as justification for reiterating the current strategy, expanding the program, or serving as a model for similar projects. However, even though the outcome is positive, qualitative responses and other indicators should also be taken into account in order to obtain a comprehensive view of the program's strengths and areas for improvement.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, it is apparent that Grade 5 learners are just beginning to develop reading proficiency. Whereas certain components are at instructional levels of performance, others are at the frustration level, meaning that learners cannot yet read independently. This necessitates prolonged instruction support and specific interventions to fill in literacy gaps and enhance reading fluency and comprehension.

Catch-Up Fridays has been a successful intervention in bridging these disparities. Its carefully crafted format, interesting activities, and planned implementation have improved reading achievements among learners. The teacher respondents agreed that the program was appropriate and effective, and that it is well-suited towards the objectives of the National Learning Recovery Program and the MATATAG Education Agenda.

Although successful, the implementation of the program is supported by multiple challenges. Increased workloads, resource deprivation, and insufficient training affect teachers, while motivational challenges and task overloading affect students. These need to be tackled with

increased institutional support, professional training, and resource allocation to facilitate long-term sustainability and efficiency of the program.

In summary, the research emphasizes the value of balanced literacy programs that integrate guided instruction, motivating activities, and targeted support. Catch-Up Fridays is a promising model for literacy recovery, but its effectiveness relies on ongoing refinement, collaboration among stakeholders, and commitment to meeting the varied needs of learners and teachers.

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