



# READING ERRORS AND READING PROFICIENCY OF GRADE 3 LEARNERS

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**Abstract :** Reading is an essential ingredient of success in most societies where so much information is transmitted. Developing strong reading skills is one of the key goal of education. Proficiency in reading should be established by determining and providing immediate response and remediation to the reading errors of the learners. While many proficiency and reading errors have used similar coding frameworks and demonstrated similar rhetorical organizations, their findings have not yet been aggregated to show the overall picture. The present study aimed to assess the significant relationship of Grade 3 learners' reading errors and proficiency level. The present study showed that there are only 27.3% of the learners who can read with thorough understanding of the materials without any assistance. 40.9% of them need assistance in order to understand the material and 31.8% are struggling readers who needs full and rigid work and monitoring to be able to come up with the required comprehension level to process information. Also, there is no significant relationship between learners' errors and proficiency level. Thus, these findings suggest that for further research to come up with solutions it could be better if the next researchers will add more respondents.

**Keywords:** Reading Proficiency Level, Word Reading Errors

## INTRODUCTION

Literacy is described as the skills and knowledge that are necessary to unravel learning. Phonological awareness, listening, speaking and writing are the common factors that show literacy. The ability to read proficiently is "a foundation skill that affects the learning experiences and student's performance on reading test." This test measures the reading comprehension test in a particular language (Stoffelma, 2014).

Being proficient in reading requires some underlying cognitive skills. A reader should have a room of working memory that remembers what is being read, good attentional skills that attend carefully to the sounds to each letter it represents, the ability to sequence letters into words and grammatical endings and words into sentences and the ability to process speed and accuracy or the ability to process meaning to information. This idea was reinforced by Burns (2012) that students with the aforementioned skills are not born good readers, which they are to be taught. Therefore, teachers should identify the present or the lacking skills of the students and help him or her meet the desires skills to be called proficient.

Reading in any language plays an essential role in our educational system and social lives. The reading process is the avenue for other English functions such as writing, vocabulary identification, use, grammar advancement, and excellent spelling (Chandran & Shah, 2019, p.3372). Reading skill differs from listening and speaking. It is the most essential skill among the four language skills: listening, speaking, writing, and reading as it can improve the overall language proficiency (Krashen & Brown, 2007). It is also associated with an individual's success as it helps them comprehend written or printed materials that help them in their professional engagements and interactions.

Countries that use English as a second language (ESL) sometimes have difficulties reading and comprehension. Reading comprehension is not just realizing or understanding of individual words when our eyes pass over them. Instead, all comprehension models emphasize the need for readers to build up a mental

representation of text, a process that requires integration across a range of sources of information from lexical features to knowledge concerning events in the world (Garnham, 2001).

Reading, understanding, and comprehension of the second language, especially English, pose a great challenge to the learners, teachers, and parents since young learners may lack required exposure to the proper enabling environment, social milieu, and peers well-versed in linguistic abilities. Nature and nurture play their part in creating reading and other linguistic skills in young learners with English as a second language (ESL). Nurture and socialization play a predominant role in overcoming ESL learning barriers in young children. Across the world, a second language (other than mother tongue) is acquired through Reading in classrooms, often without any exposure to English outside it.

In India also, a child acquires efficiency in ESL, the second language, generally through socialization and in classrooms. Therefore, oral proficiency may not be a good predictor of reading comprehension, and speech ability in the ESL context in India, where students learn a second language through reading rather than speaking. Most of the students start speaking English only after five years of exposure to English, whereas they start reading and writing their mother tongue fluently by this time. "These children thus confront with the task of learning to read in a language that they have yet to master orally. Because reading instruction strongly builds on oral language proficiency, second-language speaking children may therefore experience a considerable gap." (Droop and Verhoeven, 2003).

There are some factors that affect the student's proficiency found by Strategic Marketing & Research, Inc (2013), these are the engagement of the students towards the text and students' attitudes about their capabilities and their interpretation of success and failure. These barriers are mainly intrinsic factors that will affect the motivation of the students in reading. Similarly, Andermay (2013) mentioned that development factors and students' reading perceptions about their abilities play greater role in the willingness to engage themselves in the learning process especially at the very young age of the students. Teachers should emphasize the importance of reading and teach the students the basic skills before reaching middle age.

Moreover, Christie et al. (2012) emphasized that reading words and enhancing vocabularies are crucial part of reading proficiency. The research further stated that reading at the basic knowledge in acquiring knowledge and grasping meaning must be practiced for in the present time, the ability to read will affect the whole being of a person especially in the day to day activity. That is why reading is one of the necessary skills that should be accomplished at an early age of the student.

Treptow et al. (2013) examined the effects of reading activities of students towards their reading proficiency level. She further explained that it is important to examine the level of the readers to help the teachers in providing intervention plans. These intervention plans will help the students' involvement in reading, to provide mediation and will improve their current level.

Additionally, Tschirner (2016) relate his study by also examining the relationship of the proficiency level of the students. He added that if there is an immobility of the development of students it will become a contributory factor that will become a barrier in the automaticity of the students. It was noted by Townsend (2017) that automaticity is the automatic recognition of words without any attention or effort at sounding out letters. Furthermore, this can be used to explain the development of fluency using the three components of the reading process: decoding, comprehension and attention.

According to Araim (2016), automaticity is associated to reading proficiency in determining the student's growth or development. Teachers will be able to identify the automaticity when students are going to read. Thus, the way they recognize sounds, letters and words, accuracy and fluency is the representation of automaticity in reading.

Reading competence in a second language (L2) has been a matter of concern among scholars because of the observed tendency among L2 and foreign language (FL) readers across the globe to manifest profound reading difficulties. Wuit (2012) explains the situation by pointing out that second language reading may place additional demands on the reader due to second language and cultural proficiency as well as previous literacy experience and belief.

Unoh (2012), writing about the Nigerian L2 reading situation, points out the existence of reading problems such as slow reading, low comprehension, inability to distinguish between main idea from subordinate details, ineffective recall, difficulty in creative reading, and many others. Some scholars like Onochie (2012) and Tswanya (2005) have emphasized the experiential factor which they argue deprives an L2 reader of schemata required for comprehending texts written in a second language. This view, which is hinged on the schema theory, is viewed by Landry (2002) as an untenable explanation of poor L2 reading. Wallace (2014), in his own submission, observes that readers in second language situations often do not have the minimum threshold of general L2 ability required to read well.

Obviously, there are divergent positions regarding the source of reading difficulties among L2 readers. Yet, appropriate pedagogical responses would depend on a clear picture of the causes of reading problems. In view of this, this researcher embarked on this study to contribute to the establishment of a clear position regarding the issue and to recommend solutions to reading problems. The study was conducted in Nigeria within the Lokoja metropolis among two groups of school pupils. One group had completed primary education while the other group had completed secondary education.

The goal of the research was to find out their level of competence in reading materials that are deemed (based on appropriate readability tests) to be suitable for their level of literacy training. The objective was to establish the nature of the reading errors with a view to recommending an appropriate remedy to reading deficiencies. Lokoja is a cosmopolitan town in the central part of Nigeria with people of diverse ethnic background. Its cosmopolitan nature is further enhanced by the fact that it is a state capital which is host to many Federal Government establishments. The town also is host to two tertiary educational institutions (a university and a polytechnic). Within a 30-km radius around the town are two of the biggest factories in Africa (the huge cement factory in Obajana and the large but struggling steel plant at Ajaokuta).

It was further explained by Burns (2013) that reading has different levels that determines the proficiency of a reader. These are frustration, instructional and independent level. When a student reached less than 85% of the words are recognized or comprehension falls below 50%, the student is in the level of frustration. The reader belongs to instructional level if he or she will be able recognize 85% correct word with at least 75% comprehension. Independent reading level is the level at which students can read 99% of the words correctly with 90% comprehension.

Similarly, according to the Educational Research (2012) a reader who reads expressively at a comfortable pace and provides meaningful reading practice has been shown to be more effective in school's performance. Thus, it is a challenge of a teacher to identify the students at the frustration level or instructional level and to provide proper scaffolding or support until he or she is an independent reader.

In the Philippines, it was mentioned by Cabasan (2011) that reading, as one of the basic skills should be emphasized since "nobody could translate one's vision of a nation free from illiteracy without the basic skill". His assessment on the reading proficiency levels of the pupils found out that if students belong to frustration level, children in the public schools is found to be weak to withstand the challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Also, Estrada (2016) said that if the students belong to the frustration level, the academic achievement will be affected and will surely affect the teachers and the school which denotes that learners who have low reading proficiency if not prevented or given attention will become a contributory factor that will affect the education in the Philippines. For this reason, teachers and other person involve in this matter should think of strategies, teaching techniques and activities to be more creative in order to develop these lacking skills in the reading proficiency to help the students in the future by identifying their proficiency level and from frustration and instructional to proficient level.

Goodman (as cited by Huszti, (2009) mentioned that students who mispronounce and misread some words and usually commit errors during oral reading are likely belong to lower levels. These students should have additional support since reading is not just error free production of text but also to understand what is being read.

In Philippines, Baas (2017) asserts that students learn in different ways and have different needs pertaining to receive information upon reading. Struggling readers is believed to have instructional and additional needs that are different among other peers who are reading at or above grade level (Hall et al., 2011). In addition, the reading errors of readers during oral reading will help the teachers in determining proper techniques and strategies that will meet the needs in improving the students.

On the other hand, according to Fujita (2014), reading proficiently has become a popular topic in reading research and teaching. In education, the automatic activation of mental processes during reading is one of the representation that a reader is proficient in reading.

Currently, in the primary educational system, there are three levels of reading: frustrated, instructional and independent level. Teachers use these levels to guide instruction in the classroom (Betts, 1946, as cited in Halladay, 2012). These three levels are attained through observation and assessment on the students. It was further discussed that Bett's framework criteria for the three levels of reading have been critiqued over the years.

Gickling and Armstrong (2008) further operationalized the study, frustration, instructional and independent level. When a student reached less than 85% of the words are recognized or comprehension falls below 50%, the student is in the level of frustration. The reader belongs to instructional level if he or she will be able recognize 85% correct word with at least 75% comprehension. Independent reading level is the level at which students can read 99% of the words correctly with 90% comprehension.

## Statement of the Problem

This study sought to assess the reading errors and reading proficiency of Grade 3 learners of Pangasinan State University, Bayambang Campus during the school year 2023-2024.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following sub-problems:

1. What are the reading errors found among Grade 3 learners?
2. What are the reading proficiency level of Grade 3 learners?
3. Is there a significant relationship between Grade 3 learners' reading errors and their proficiency level?

## METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research design, sources of data, instrumentation and data collection and the tools for data analysis.

### Research Design

This study is a descriptive-correlational research. According to Waters (2017) a correlational study is a quantitative method of research in which two or more quantitative variables from the same group of participants and tries to determine if there is a relationship (or variation) between the 2 variables. The researchers sought to assess if there is a significant relationship between students reading errors and their reading proficiency level. In this study, one reading material is used to determine the learners' error and proficiency level. The research design was chosen by the researcher since the study delved with two variables and it is necessary to look into their relationship.

### Sources of Data

The study made use of the questionnaire checklist as the main data gathering instrument. This study used Grade 3 learners of Pangasinan State University, Bayambang Campus.

### Instrumentation and Data Collection

To identify the word reading errors and proficiency level of grade 4 learners, the researcher adapted an instrument from Valencia National High school entitled, the life of Julius Caesar with 10 item questions provided. The same text where used by the researcher to identify their errors in oral reading. Additionally, Jaua (2017) said that the ability to read, understand, and comprehend and to distinguish needed information are vital in reading. With this., learners are expected to read and answer the text.

Moreover, Goodman's categories of word reading errors were used to specify the errors committed by the learners and the reading proficiency test result was used to identify their reading proficiency level.

The researcher adapted an instrument from Valencia National High School reading text. The title of the story is "The life of Julius Caesar" and let it run through readability test to check if the text is appropriate and valid to the chosen respondents. The researcher conducted the study by recording the oral reading activity of each students and letting them answer questions that will help the researcher determine their proficiency level. After the recording, the researcher then transcribes and tally the number of errors committed by the learners in accordance to the word reading errors of Goodman (2009).

Furthermore, the researcher also identifies the proficiency level of the Grade 3 learners based on their answers on the questions given after the reading activity. The researcher then used Chi-square statistical tool to determine the significant relationship between learners reading errors and their reading proficiency level.

### Tools for Data Analysis

To derive valid and accurate results, appropriate statistical tools were employed.

The data collected were tallied and summarized using descriptive statistics specifically mean and analyzed it with the used of SPSS Software. In addition, the researcher used chi-square test to get the significant relationship between the learners' reading errors and their reading proficiency level.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

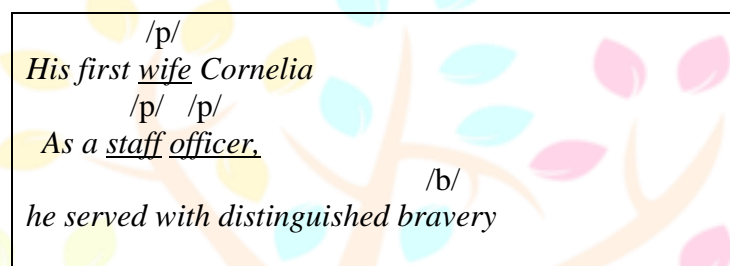
This chapter deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data gathered relative to sub-problems in the study.

Table 1.  
*Students' Errors in Oral Reading Activity*

### Descriptive Analysis

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Rank
Repetition	22	.00	8.00	2.90	2
Substitution	22	.00	4.00	1.18	6
Omission	22	.00	8.00	2.81	3
Self-correction	22	.00	8.00	2.63	4
Mispronunciation	22	.00	8.00	3.36	1
Insertion	22	.00	8.00	2.27	5
Valid N (listwise)	22				

Any errors made by the readers during the oral reading activity were noted. The result shows that the dominant error committed by Grade 3 learner is mispronunciation with the mean of 3.36. No reversals oral reading errors were committed. Frame 1 below represents an example of mispronunciation.

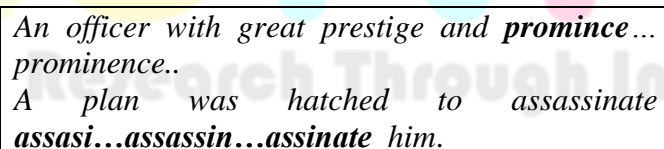


Frame 1

The researcher observed that the mispronunciation errors involved the sounding out of /f/ as /p/ in the word wife, first, officer and staff. Other errors include pronouncing the /v/ sound as /b/ in bravery and many others.

The process of learning to read words orally in English is a complicated process for non-native speakers of English. The participants of this study were Pangasinense learners of English and their first language is Pangasinan which does not contain the sounds / f/, and /v/. The absence of these sounds may be one of the reasons for their inability to produce these sounds in English. Another possible reason is the lack of phonemic awareness. Joseph (n.d) explained that phonemic awareness problem happens when readers demonstrate difficulty with decoding words. This result is similar to the findings of Abosnan (2016) readers who have limited information in the semantic process, the orthography and analyzing the grammatical units in context that includes understanding the meaning will have instances to miscue or to correct the reading mistakes immediately without waiting until the end of the sentence.

Repetition is the second highest error committed with the mean of 2.90 an example of this error is shown in frame 2.



Frame 2

This repetition error is frequently observed during the oral reading. Repetition is when a reader repeats a word or a portion of a text without rectifying its proper pronunciation. When readers are uncertain about the word, they usually repeat the word without fixing its accurate pronunciation, thus they are committing repetition error.

One example of repetition error noted is the word “prominence” and “assassinate” which is read as “prominence...prominence...” the reader kept on repeating the word but did not establish the correct pronunciation of the word. This is also true with the word “assassinate” which is read as “assasi...assassin...assinate”. Furthermore, another error that is an omission is spotted in this given situation where portion of the word “is omitted by the reader upon repeating it.

As substantially observed, the error as mentioned above is frequently identified throughout the reading activity. “Prominence” and “assassinate” are consistently noted under the classification of repetition error. Goodman (1969) stressed out that if the repetition is too frequent it may mean that the text is too hard. Hence “prominence” and “assassinate” are considered as difficult words for grade 9 students, as they incorrectly repeated very often.

Omission is the third most committed error next to Repetition. It has the mean of 2.81. This error is revealed in frame 3.

*the die is cas t into Italian Rome ,  
he served with distinguish ed bravery  
with his consulship was attach ed*

Frame 3

During the oral reading, the researchers encircled the parts of the word that are omitted by the readers. Klein (2013) stated that reading quickly may results in committing an omission error. Additionally, if lines are omitted, it may illustrate that the readers have poor eye tracking skills. It is worth noting where words are left out because this is sometimes the result of the weak sight word vocabulary.

The word “cast” is read as “cas”, /t/ was not sounded out and therefore omitted. Past tense word with *ed* is usually the common omitted sound in words. There are also occurrences where the reader fails to recognize the word “an” in the text. Thus, unmindfully omits the word. From the perspective of Klein (2013), if the omission is of small regular words, it will not alter the meaning of the text. Moreover, this is sometimes the case when the readers are reading too fast. As to the errors identified, it is evident that perspective of Klein (1993) is indeed right.

Self-correction is the fourth committed error. It has a mean of 2.63 this error is revealed in frame 4.

*Pompey Flid. Fled  
Outmost ...utmost importance*

Frame 4

As revealed in Frame 2, self-correction happened. During the oral reading, the learner seemed hesitant to pronounce the word correctly and thus committing the error. However, he happened to self-correct his pronunciation as he realizes that he has mispronounced the word. A portion of the word is repeated: however, it cannot be considered as repetition because the learner was able to self-correct or re-reads the words correctly by himself. If he was not able to self –correct his pronunciation, the error would fall under repetition.

Therefore, the difference of self-correction from repetition is that in self-correction, a portion of the word or text is repeatedly mispronounced by the reader but finally able to read the word with correct pronunciation. While repetition is an error where a reader is just merely repeating a portion of the word or text but did not able to establish the pronunciation of the word correctly.

Insertion is second least committed error during oral learners. It has the mean of 2.27. An example of this error is revealed in frame 5.

*. “He returned to (the ) Rome as a conqueror to  
Rome as a conqueror.  
He served with (the) distinguished bravery*

Frame 5

Another insertion error is detected is the adding of the word “the”. “He served with distinguished bravery that makes it “He served with the distinguished bravery “. This error is commonly observed. However, the insertion did not alter the meaning of the text. It is therefore, evident that the reader may be is drawn by the word “the” to come after the word. From the viewpoints of Goodman (2009), the inserted words are somehow semantically appropriate. They did not alter the meaning represented in the text.

Moreover, there was no change in meaning upon adding the words mentioned above shown in frame 5. Semantic strength, therefore, is high because the original, meaning of the sentence is relatively unchanged.

Substitution is the less committed error during the oral reading activity. This error is shown in frame 6.

*Exemplary writer on (of ) political wars  
To avoid trouble with those who were ( are ) in  
powerful Senate*

Frame 6

As Goodman (2009) proposed, the change or the substituted word is being evaluated based on its semantic and syntactic appropriateness to the context. Furthermore, it tries to consider the comparison of its

printed form to the graphic features of the text. These were the basis of weighing every substitution error committed.

Based on what Goodman (2009) has proposed, the preceded error which “on” is substituted with “of” it is not semantically appropriate in the context. Thus, in relation to the Analysis of Oral reading Miscues by Goodman (2010), the substitution has poor semantic acceptability, “on” and “of” are quite two different words with the same first letter.

Based on the coding system adapted from Goodman (2009) “analysis of oral reading miscues the error mentioned above has an effective-phonetic similarity. The substituted word has the same length and is almost identical in appearance as to that of the original word. Additionally, this error is considered as an example of analogizing, the term coined by Goswami (n.d).

The word reading errors mentioned above were the errors committed by the second-year automotive students during the oral reading conducted by the researcher.

**Table 1. Proficiency Level**

Proficiency Level	Frequency	Percent
Frustration	7	31.8
Instructional	9	40.9
Independent	6	27.3
Total	22	100.0

Table 1 shows proficiency level of the respondents. The results show 9 (40.9 %) out of 22 grade 4 learner were classified as instructional readers and 7 (31.8 %) are under Frustration and only 6 (27.3%) were independent readers.

The result in this present study implies that that respondents are really heterogeneous in terms of their reading proficiency level. This means that in one section, learners’ level of understanding differs that may affect their performance not only in reading but to other subject matter they are taking. As claimed by DeDios (2015) that if student’s reading literacy level is low, in most cases it automatically implies difficulties in the acquisition of several other subjects.

The results show that majority of the students are under instructional level. Similarly, according to the Educational Research (2012) a reader who reads expressively at a comfortable pace and provides meaningful reading practice has been shown to be more effective in school’s performance. Thus, it is a challenged of a teacher to identify the students at the frustration level or instructional level and to provide proper scaffolding or support until he or she is an independent reader.

This implies that student’s has adequate background knowledge for a topic and can access quickly with few committed errors on reading. According to Utah (2011) instructional level readers only needs small amount assistance from teacher. In addition, in the present study, there are readers under frustration level. These learners are believed to have lack of adequate background knowledge on topic. These readers require extensive or full assistance from an educator while there are only 6 students who can read with thorough understanding of the material presented to them without assistance.

**Table 2. Reading Errors and Proficiency Level of the learners**

Chi- Square Tests					
Proficiency Levels	Errors	Value of test Stat	df	p-value	Interpretation
	Repetition	20.533	14	.114	Not significant
	Substitution	11.632	4	.081	Not Significant
	Omission	12.056	14	.602	Not significant
	Self-correction	11.227	10	.340	Not significant
	Mispronunciation	18.435	14	.188	Not significant
	Insertion	20.952	14	.103	Not significant

Table 2. Shows that the reading errors and proficiency level of the learners has no significant relationship. The result may be greatly affected by the number of participants and the type of sampling used. In the present study, the researcher only have 22 respondents and used the purposive-convenient sampling which means that only those who are willing and available to participate in the study are included in the study.

### Recommendations

In the light of the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations were offered:

To the teachers, whose role is indeed very significant in developing essential skills especially reading ability among learners, it is recommended to give immediate feedback to every reading error committed by the learners during oral reading sessions. Through this, learners are given prompt direction to rectify their errors during reading. Moreover, this is one way of offering remediation to reading errors identified. Furthermore, the teacher must be able to make some intervention to those learners who belong to frustration level learners since they need attention for them to use and produce the language as well.

According to smith (2001) fluent reading and learning to read fluently entail willingness to make mistakes. Therefore, teachers should have high tolerance in accepting them. Teachers should not only be taking them but should provide immediate feedback as to the errors made. Several Studies have put emphasis that the importance of feedback is of great advantage. Every response a child make during reading should be given feedback whether it is right or wrong.

To the administration, as to the error and proficiency level are identified in this study, it is highly recommended that sufficient instruction in English specifically in terms of phonics and phonemic awareness should improve since it is vital for them to be acquainted with phonetics as well as phonics

To the researchers who will have studies similar to this, the result of this study can be a rich source of data. In addition, it is more reliable source in terms of identifying learners' difficulties in reading and their proficiency level. Therefore, it is recommended for further research to come up with solutions to aid the errors identified as to help the learners in understanding and assessing learners who have difficulties in reading. In addition, it could be better if the next researcher will add more respondents since the study only have 21 participants which may be a factor why there is no significant relationship found between reading errors and proficiency level.

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