

Foundational Reading Instruction and Early Literacy Support Practices of Key Stage 1 Teachers in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya

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Abstract

This study examined foundational reading instruction and early literacy support practices among Key Stage 1 teachers in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, focusing on instructional strengths, support gaps, predictive relationships, and priority areas for improvement. Anchored in the Simple View of Reading, Active View of Reading, and Orthographic Mapping Theory, the study employed a predictive-priority instructional mapping design. Using simple random sampling, 84 Key Stage 1 teachers were selected, and data were collected through the researcher-made Foundational Reading Instruction and Early Literacy Support Practices Questionnaire. Weighted mean, standard deviation, instructional strength and support gap mapping, multiple regression, and relative weight analysis were used. Foundational reading instruction ($M = 3.96$) and early literacy support ($M = 3.76$) were implemented to a Great Extent. Letter knowledge and sound-symbol correspondence was the strongest instructional dimension, while reading fluency received the lowest rating. Classroom-based assessment was the strongest literacy-support practice, whereas parent and home literacy coordination ranked lowest. Foundational reading instruction significantly predicted early literacy support, $R = 0.768$, $R^2 = 0.590$, $F = 21.34$, $p < 0.001$, explaining 59.0% of its variation. Beginning reading comprehension was the strongest significant predictor, followed by decoding and word recognition, vocabulary and oral language, and reading fluency. The findings support an integrated Evidence-Based Reading Support Framework and recommend strengthening fluency, progress monitoring, differentiated support, and home-school literacy coordination while sustaining established instructional strengths. The study directly supports SDG 4—Quality Education by promoting stronger early learning foundations and responsive literacy instruction. Its sustainability impact lies in supporting educational, institutional, community, and socio-economic sustainability through evidence-based literacy improvement, professional development, systematic assessment, appropriate resources, and home-school coordination.

Keywords: Early Literacy Support, Evidence-Based Reading Support Framework, Foundational Reading Instruction, Instructional Strengths, Key Stage 1 Teachers, Reading Fluency, SDG 4—Quality Education, Support Gaps

1. Introduction

Reading is a fundamental component of basic education because it enables learners to understand instructions, engage with texts, participate in classroom activities, and acquire knowledge across learning areas. During Key Stage 1, from Kindergarten to Grade 3, reading development involves interconnected skills in oral language, phonological and phonemic awareness, alphabet and letter-sound knowledge, decoding, vocabulary, fluency, and

comprehension. These skills require explicit, systematic, developmentally sequenced instruction and responsive support from teachers. In the Philippine context, national literacy initiatives and curriculum reforms emphasize the importance of developing these competencies during the early grades. However, persistent concerns regarding reading performance indicate the need to examine not only the foundational reading instruction delivered by teachers but also the support mechanisms used to address differences in learner readiness and reading difficulties. This study therefore examines the foundational reading instruction and early literacy support practices of Key Stage 1 teachers in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, with attention to instructional strengths, support gaps, and the relationship between these two dimensions of literacy practice.

Early reading development depends substantially on the quality and sequencing of classroom instruction. In Philippine basic education, the Department of Education (2016) emphasized literacy and numeracy development among Kindergarten to Grade 3 learners through strengthened classroom instruction and sustained professional development for teachers. The Department of Education (2023) similarly identified Key Stage 1 as a critical literacy period progressing from emergent literacy in Kindergarten to beginning reading in Grade 1 and rapid literacy development in Grades 2 and 3. Despite these initiatives, early literacy remains a significant concern. The National Early Grade Reading Assessment indicated continuing difficulties in foundational skills, fluency, and comprehension among Filipino learners (Pouezevara, Pressley, & Cumiskey, 2019). Internationally, the World Bank (2022) emphasized reading as a gateway to subsequent learning because inadequate reading comprehension restricts learners' ability to access content across academic areas. Foundational reading instruction consequently requires coordinated development of code-based and meaning-based competencies. Foorman et al. (2016) recommended instruction in academic language, speech sounds and letter-sound relationships, decoding and word analysis, and daily connected-text reading to develop accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. Castles et al. (2018) likewise emphasized phonics as central to learning how written symbols represent spoken language while recognizing that successful reading also requires vocabulary, oral language, comprehension, motivation, and meaningful engagement with texts. Ehri (2020) further emphasized systematic phonics and orthographic mapping, through which learners connect spellings, pronunciations, and meanings and gradually develop automatic word recognition. Teacher knowledge is therefore important in translating reading principles into effective instruction. Wang (2026) reported continuing gaps in teachers' knowledge of reading components and pedagogy, underscoring the importance of professional learning for accurate diagnosis and targeted intervention. Early literacy support must likewise respond to differences in learners' development through assessment, differentiated instruction, guided practice, progress monitoring, and home-school coordination. The Department of Education (2020) emphasized the development of teachers' and instructional leaders' literacy and numeracy knowledge through mentoring, learning partnerships, and continuing professional development. Within Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, Key Stage 1 teachers implement these expectations amid differences in learners' language backgrounds, home literacy exposure, readiness, attendance, parental support, and access to reading resources. Examining foundational instruction together with literacy support is therefore necessary because effective instruction establishes essential reading skills, while responsive support enables teachers to identify and address individual learning needs.

Foundational reading instruction is a systematic and developmentally sequenced process through which learners progress from oral-language awareness toward independent reading. It requires explicit and cumulative connections among sounds, print, words, meanings, and connected texts (Foorman et al., 2016). Within this process, phonological awareness enables learners to recognize and manipulate larger sound structures in spoken language (Kilpatrick, 2016), while phonemic awareness develops the ability to identify and manipulate individual phonemes needed for decoding and spelling (Ehri, 2020). Letter knowledge supports recognition and recall of alphabetic symbols (Ehri, 2022), while sound-symbol correspondence establishes the relationship between spoken sounds and written representations (Ehri, 2022). These competencies support systematic phonics instruction, through which learners acquire grapheme-phoneme relationships for reading and spelling (Exley et al., 2026). Decoding then enables learners to translate print into spoken language through sound-symbol and spelling knowledge (Ehri, 2022), while blending allows separate sounds to be synthesized into recognizable words (Ehri, 2022). With practice, learners develop increasingly accurate and automatic word recognition (Kilpatrick, 2019). Orthographic mapping facilitates this development by connecting spelling, pronunciation, and meaning in long-term memory (Ehri, 2017). These code-based processes must operate alongside language development. Vocabulary provides the word knowledge required for comprehension (Cervetti et al., 2023), while oral language develops listening, speaking, narrative, vocabulary, and expressive abilities that support literacy acquisition (Hogan et al., 2022). Reading fluency integrates accuracy, appropriate rate, phrasing, expression, and attention to meaning rather than speed alone (van der Velde et al., 2024). Accuracy reflects reliable decoding and word recognition and can reveal specific instructional needs through learner miscues (van der Velde et al., 2024). Automaticity reduces the cognitive effort required for word identification, allowing greater attention to comprehension (van der Velde et al., 2024). Beginning reading comprehension consequently depends on learners' ability to construct meaning from increasingly complex words, sentences, and texts (Duke & Cartwright, 2021), supported by listening comprehension and understanding of spoken language (Hogan et al., 2022). Other literacy foundations complement these skills. Print awareness develops understanding of print conventions and the

relationship between written and spoken language (Hoffmann et al., 2023), while morphological awareness supports recognition of meaningful word parts and relationships among words (Liu et al., 2024). Connected text reading enables learners to integrate decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension in meaningful contexts (Exley et al., 2026). Accordingly, effective foundational instruction should be systematically sequenced (Exley et al., 2026), explicitly modeled and guided (Archer & Hughes, 2016), and scaffolded according to learners' emerging independence (Vygotsky as interpreted in Daniels, 2016). Early literacy support complements foundational instruction by addressing variation in learners' readiness and progress (Foorman et al., 2016). Classroom-based assessment provides immediate evidence of learners' strengths and difficulties (International Literacy Association, 2018), while diagnostic assessment identifies the specific sources of reading problems (van der Velde et al., 2024). Such information supports differentiated reading instruction responsive to learner readiness, needs, and performance (Langelaan et al., 2024), including flexible grouping that changes according to current instructional needs (Tomlinson, 2017). Supported and independent reading experiences are likewise essential. Guided reading provides appropriately matched teacher assistance (Merke et al., 2024), while independent reading provides opportunities to develop engagement, confidence, stamina, and reading habits (Merke et al., 2024). Frequent and purposeful reading opportunities strengthen literacy through repeated interaction with language and print (Campbell et al., 2025). Materials must also correspond to learners' developmental and contextual needs. Developmentally appropriate resources should reflect learners' age, abilities, language development, and literacy stage (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2020). Localized materials connect literacy instruction with familiar community experiences and contexts (Shih, 2022), while culturally responsive materials recognize learners' identities, languages, traditions, and family knowledge (Shih, 2022). Effective support also requires sustained monitoring. Progress monitoring provides repeated evidence of learner growth and instructional effectiveness (Bogaert et al., 2023), while curriculum-based measurement provides brief and systematic indicators of reading performance (Bogaert et al., 2023). Feedback clarifies current performance and needed improvement (Grønli et al., 2026), and corrective feedback addresses reading errors while maintaining learner participation and confidence (Grønli et al., 2026). Literacy development extends beyond the classroom. Parent and home literacy coordination creates continuity between classroom instruction and family literacy experiences (Nag et al., 2024). The home literacy environment influences children's opportunities to encounter books, print, conversations, and literacy routines (Nag et al., 2024), while shared reading provides interactive opportunities for adults and children to engage meaningfully with texts (Baron et al., 2025). Teachers can strengthen these experiences through manageable family literacy guidance aligned with children's needs (Forte, 2022). Within schools, a literacy-rich classroom environment increases meaningful access to print and language (Campbell et al., 2025). Learners requiring additional support may benefit from multitiered literacy systems that increase instructional intensity according to need (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2017) and targeted interventions addressing identified reading difficulties (Hall et al., 2023). Across these practices, teacher responsiveness remains central because effective support depends on noticing learner behavior, interpreting difficulties, and adjusting instruction accordingly (Langelaan et al., 2024).

The Philippine context places early literacy within continuing curriculum reform and teacher-development efforts. National initiatives recognize that reading development depends on both learner readiness and instructional quality, while assessment evidence demonstrates continuing challenges in foundational reading, fluency, and comprehension (Pouezevara, Pressley, & Cummiskey, 2019). These challenges acquire particular importance in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, where Key Stage 1 teachers must respond to differences in learner readiness, language background, home literacy exposure, available resources, and parental support while meeting national expectations for early literacy. International research reinforces the importance of examining teacher knowledge and implementation. Wang and Daniel (2026) showed that foundational-reading knowledge must be sensitive to the language and writing system being taught rather than treated as a universally identical construct. Exley et al. (2026) found that the contribution of phonics to reading outcomes depends on instructional design, teacher learning, learner age, intervention duration, and implementation fidelity. Lane et al. (2025) further demonstrated benefits from systematic instruction in phonemic awareness and phonics, particularly when implementation was supported by adherence, coaching, and monitoring. Equitable literacy instruction also requires attention to learners needing additional support. Lindström et al. (2025) emphasized explicit, multicomponent reading instruction for learners with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Kamanzi and Seni (2024) similarly demonstrated that curriculum adoption alone does not ensure effective phonics implementation when teachers lack adequate pedagogical knowledge and classroom support. Adejumo et al. (2025) likewise identified gaps in teachers' early-literacy knowledge, particularly in phonemic awareness and phonics, demonstrating the need for diagnostic and sustained professional development. Teacher preparation can integrate explicit foundational instruction with meaningful literacy experiences. Campbell et al. (2025) demonstrated that phonics and vocabulary instruction can be intentionally incorporated into children's literature rather than separated from rich literacy activities. Parrila et al. (2023) linked teacher language knowledge with instructional quality and found that differentiated instruction supported later decoding development. Dilgard et al. (2022) similarly emphasized professional learning, instructional resources, and intervention intensity as conditions for effective phonics implementation. Evidence also indicates that teacher learning is strongest when knowledge is connected to practice. Wang (2026) found that preparation and training can improve teachers' foundational literacy knowledge, particularly when application

occurs with expert guidance. Lane et al. (2025) found that teachers may possess knowledge of major reading components while remaining less prepared to teach struggling readers, highlighting the need for explicit modeling, guided practice, feedback, and tiered intervention. At the same time, comprehensive literacy instruction should not reduce foundational reading to phonics alone; code-based skills should be developed together with oral language, vocabulary, comprehension, background knowledge, and meaningful literacy engagement (Exley et al., 2026). Teacher education systems consequently have a central role in literacy outcomes. Wang (2026) identified insufficient explicit attention to phonics, phonemic awareness, and the alphabetic principle in some teacher-preparation programs. Hall et al. (2023) showed that systematic multisensory phonics intervention can support struggling readers, reinforcing the importance of addressing foundational difficulties before they become persistent. Kamanzi and Seni (2024) likewise found that reported use of phonics does not necessarily indicate adequate teacher knowledge, particularly when instructional prompts direct learners toward contextual guessing rather than word-level information. Foundational instruction can nevertheless remain developmentally appropriate and compatible with rich early-childhood pedagogy. Campbell et al. (2025) demonstrated the need to integrate intentional phonics instruction with play, literature, and child-centered experiences. In additional-language settings, explicit knowledge of sound structures is similarly important; Adejumo et al. (2025) found weaknesses in teachers' phonological-awareness knowledge despite more favorable beliefs and reported practices. Inclusive literacy provision also requires comprehensive instruction for learners with extensive support needs rather than fragmented or segregated literacy experiences (Hunt, 2019). At the policy level, Exley et al. (2026) showed that mandated systematic phonics reforms depend on teachers' professional subject knowledge for effective implementation. Dilgard et al. (2022) similarly demonstrated that one-time professional development is insufficient and that sustainable improvement requires continuing training, assessment, intervention, and school-wide consistency. Taken together, international and national evidence indicates that strong early literacy systems depend not simply on the adoption of particular programs but on teacher knowledge, instructional coherence, implementation quality, differentiated support, assessment, and sustained professional learning.

The study is anchored in the Simple View of Reading, the Active View of Reading, and Orthographic Mapping Theory. Collectively, these perspectives explain early reading through the interaction of word recognition, language comprehension, active cognitive processes, and durable connections among sounds, spellings, and meanings. The Simple View of Reading identifies decoding and language comprehension as essential components of reading comprehension. Hoover and Tunmer (2018) affirmed its continuing usefulness for understanding how word recognition and spoken-language comprehension jointly support successful reading. Catts (2018), while recognizing the greater complexity of reading development, likewise identified the model as useful for locating broad sources of reading difficulty. For the present study, this framework supports examination of phonological awareness, phonics, blending, word recognition, and fluency alongside vocabulary, oral language, listening comprehension, and meaning-making. The Active View of Reading proposed by Duke and Cartwright (2021) extends this perspective by incorporating bridging processes and active self-regulation. Learners coordinate background knowledge, vocabulary, fluency, print concepts, word recognition, comprehension strategies, motivation, and executive processes while constructing meaning. Duke and Cartwright (2021) therefore provide a basis for viewing reading difficulties as potentially arising from multiple interacting sources and for understanding literacy support as diagnostic and responsive rather than uniform. Orthographic Mapping Theory explains the development of automatic word recognition through stable connections among sounds, letters, spelling patterns, and meanings. Ehri (2020, 2022) explains this process as fundamental to storing written words in memory. Ehri (2020) further emphasizes systematic phonics as a means of strengthening these connections, while Ehri (2022) highlights the integration of phonemic awareness, letter sounds, phonics, and word reading in developing sight-word memory. Conceptually, the study examines two connected areas. Foundational reading instruction encompasses phonological and phonemic awareness; letter knowledge and sound-symbol correspondence; decoding, blending, and word recognition; vocabulary and oral language; reading fluency; and beginning reading comprehension. Early literacy support encompasses classroom-based assessment, differentiated support, guided and independent reading opportunities, localized and developmentally appropriate materials, progress monitoring and feedback, and parent and home literacy coordination. The relationship between these areas can be understood through instructional strength and support-gap analysis. Instructional strength reflects consistently effective pedagogical practice (Archer & Hughes, 2016), whereas a support gap represents a mismatch between learner needs and available instructional or support provision (Cuiccio & Husby-Slater, 2018). Systematic gap analysis can identify dimensions requiring continuation, strengthening, or redesign (Kaufman et al., 2019). Data-based instructional decision-making connects learner evidence with responsive teaching (Nag et al., 2024), while instructional patterning identifies recurring strengths and weaknesses across related practices (Senge et al., 2019). Formative assessment enables teachers to use evidence while learning is occurring (Wiliam, 2018), but effective use of such evidence also depends on assessment literacy (Pastore, 2023). These practices are strengthened when curriculum, instruction, assessment, resources, and support systems operate coherently (Ventista & Brown, 2023), when interventions are implemented with sufficient fidelity (Fixsen et al., 2019), and when instructional activities and assessments remain aligned with intended learning outcomes (Biggs & Tang, 2022). Differentiated instruction allows adjustments according to learner readiness and need (Tomlinson, 2017), while scaffolding provides temporary support until learners achieve greater independence (Langelaan et al., 2024).

Continuous literacy support additionally requires systematic progress monitoring (Bogaert et al., 2023), actionable feedback (Grønli et al., 2026), and layered intervention within a multitiered system of supports (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2017). Intervention intensity should increase according to learners' demonstrated needs (Hall et al., 2023). At the organizational level, professional learning communities can support collective instructional improvement (Ventista & Brown, 2023), while reflective teaching enables teachers to examine and refine their instructional decisions (Ventista & Brown, 2023). The framework also recognizes instructional equity, which requires meaningful access to learning opportunities and support according to learner needs (Shih, 2022). Adequate and appropriate resources are necessary for implementing effective literacy practices (Merke et al., 2024), while continuous instructional improvement requires repeated cycles of identifying needs, implementing responses, examining results, and refining practice (Bryk et al., 2017).

The reviewed literature consistently supports systematic instruction in phonological awareness, phonics, decoding, vocabulary, oral language, fluency, and comprehension, together with assessment-based differentiation, progress monitoring, appropriate materials, guided reading, feedback, and home-school coordination. However, several gaps justify the present investigation. First, knowledge of effective early literacy components does not necessarily establish the extent to which teachers implement them consistently in actual classrooms. Evidence indicates continuing variation in teacher knowledge, implementation fidelity, differentiated instruction, assessment use, and support for struggling readers. Second, foundational instruction and literacy support are often considered as related but distinct aspects of practice. Examining them together can clarify whether stronger foundational instruction is associated with stronger assessment, differentiation, progress monitoring, reading opportunities, appropriate materials, and family coordination. Third, the literature demonstrates the importance of context. Effective reading practices must be responsive to language systems, learner characteristics, instructional resources, and school conditions rather than transferred uncritically across settings. This creates a need for evidence specifically concerning Key Stage 1 teachers in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya. Finally, descriptive evidence alone cannot establish which instructional dimensions represent relative strengths, where support gaps are concentrated, or which dimensions of foundational reading instruction contribute most strongly to early literacy support. The study therefore examines the extent of both sets of practices, identifies patterns of instructional strength and support gaps, investigates the predictive relationship between foundational reading instruction and early literacy support, and determines the relative contributions of the foundational reading dimensions. The resulting evidence provides the basis for an Evidence-Based Reading Support Framework responsive to Key Stage 1 literacy instruction in the local context.

The study is most directly aligned with SDG 4 – Quality Education. Its focus on foundational reading instruction, teacher capacity, differentiated literacy support, appropriate learning materials, assessment, and early intervention corresponds with the broader goal of improving equitable access to effective learning opportunities. Foundational literacy is particularly important because reading enables learners to participate more effectively across other areas of the curriculum. The study's emphasis on learners with different readiness levels and reading needs also supports the inclusive dimension of quality education. Examining differentiated instruction, assessment, intervention, localized and developmentally appropriate materials, and learner progress provides a basis for strengthening instructional responses to learners who might otherwise experience persistent reading difficulties. The study further recognizes that sustainable improvement in literacy cannot depend exclusively on isolated classroom activities. Teacher professional development, school-based mentoring, systematic assessment, instructional monitoring, appropriate resources, and home-school coordination represent interconnected mechanisms through which improvements in early literacy can be sustained. Thus, the study contributes primarily to SDG 4 through its focus on stronger early learning foundations and more responsive literacy instruction.

The study contributes principally to educational, socio-economic, community, and institutional sustainability. Educational sustainability is supported by strengthening foundational competencies that enable children to continue learning across subjects and later grade levels. Because early reading provides access to written instructions, informational texts, classroom activities, and increasingly independent learning, sustainable literacy development has implications beyond language instruction. The study also has socio-economic relevance because foundational literacy establishes competencies necessary for continued education and future participation in social and economic life. Its immediate contribution, however, lies in identifying instructional and support practices that schools can strengthen during the earliest stages of formal reading development. Community sustainability is reflected in the study's recognition of parent and home literacy coordination and localized reading materials. Literacy development is strengthened when school instruction connects appropriately with learners' home and community experiences rather than functioning solely within classroom boundaries. Institutional sustainability is supported through the study's emphasis on evidence-based improvement. Identifying instructional strengths and support gaps can inform teacher mentoring, professional development, instructional supervision, Learning Action Cell activities, localized literacy interventions, assessment practices, and resource planning. The proposed Evidence-Based Reading Support Framework therefore positions early literacy improvement as an ongoing system of instruction, assessment, intervention, monitoring, professional learning, and family coordination rather than a one-time remedial response. Overall, the study treats foundational reading instruction and early literacy

support as interdependent components of sustainable early education. By examining how Key Stage 1 teachers teach beginning reading skills and how they respond to learner differences and difficulties, the research provides locally grounded evidence for strengthening literacy practice in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya while contributing to the broader objective of equitable and sustainable quality education.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a predictive-priority instructional mapping design. This design enabled the researcher to describe the extent of foundational reading instruction and early literacy support practices, identify instructional strengths and support gaps, determine whether foundational reading instruction predicted early literacy support practices, and establish the relative contributions of specific instructional dimensions. It therefore extended beyond simple description by integrating descriptive, predictive, and priority-setting analyses to generate evidence for the development of an evidence-based reading support framework.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya, among schools with Key Stage 1 teachers handling early-grade learners. The locale provided an appropriate setting for examining actual classroom practices related to sound awareness, letter knowledge, word recognition, vocabulary, fluency, and beginning comprehension. It also allowed the study to generate localized evidence concerning early reading instruction and literacy support in relation to learner readiness, available materials, classroom assessment, and home-school coordination.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents were 84 Key Stage 1 teachers in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya who were directly involved in providing foundational reading instruction and early literacy support. Their classroom experiences, instructional decisions, reading routines, assessment practices, and learner support strategies constituted the primary data for the study. Respondent profile variables were excluded because the investigation focused on instructional and support practices rather than teachers' personal or demographic characteristics.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study used simple random sampling to select the 84 respondents. A complete list of qualified Key Stage 1 teachers was obtained from the appropriate office, after which the participants were randomly selected. This procedure gave every qualified teacher an equal opportunity for inclusion and helped minimize selection bias.

2.5 Research Instrument

Data were collected using a researcher-made survey instrument titled Foundational Reading Instruction and Early Literacy Support Practices Questionnaire. The first part assessed foundational reading instruction in terms of phonological and phonemic awareness, letter knowledge and sound-symbol correspondence, decoding, blending and word recognition, vocabulary and oral language, reading fluency, and beginning reading comprehension. The second part assessed early literacy support through classroom-based reading assessment, differentiated reading support, guided and independent reading opportunities, localized and developmentally appropriate materials, learner progress monitoring and feedback, and parent and home literacy coordination. Experts in early-grade literacy, educational research, language education, and educational measurement evaluated the instrument for clarity, relevance, alignment with the research questions, language appropriateness, and construct coverage. Their recommendations were incorporated into the revised questionnaire. Content validation produced an S-CVI/Ave of 0.97, with retained items obtaining Item-Level Content Validity Index values from 0.83 to 1.00, indicating excellent content validity. The instrument was subsequently pilot tested among Key Stage 1 teachers who were not included in the actual study but had comparable teaching assignments. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The six foundational reading instruction dimensions yielded coefficients ranging from 0.90 to 0.93, with an overall coefficient of 0.96. The six early literacy support dimensions yielded coefficients ranging from 0.89 to 0.93, with an overall coefficient of 0.95. The complete questionnaire obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.97, indicating excellent overall internal consistency. A five-point Likert scale measured the extent of teachers' practices. Scores from 4.21–5.00 represented Very Great Extent, 3.41–4.20 Great Extent, 2.61–3.40 Moderate Extent, 1.81–2.60 Low Extent, and 1.00–1.80 Very Low Extent. These categories represented progressively lower levels of consistency in the observed practices and enabled the researcher to determine implementation levels and areas requiring strengthening.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Before collecting data, the researcher obtained permission from the appropriate school and division authorities and coordinated with school heads or authorized representatives regarding questionnaire administration. Respondents were informed of the study's purpose, voluntary nature, confidentiality provisions, and academic use of the information before completing the questionnaire. Completed questionnaires were retrieved and checked for completeness before encoding. Responses were organized according to the foundational reading instruction and

early literacy support domains and examined for missing data, consistency, and readiness for statistical analysis. The analyzed data were subsequently interpreted according to the research questions and used as the basis for developing the Evidence-Based Reading Support Framework.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

Weighted mean and standard deviation were used to determine the extent and variability of foundational reading instruction across phonological and phonemic awareness, letter knowledge and sound-symbol correspondence, decoding, blending and word recognition, vocabulary and oral language, reading fluency, and beginning reading comprehension. The same statistics were applied to classroom-based reading assessment, differentiated reading support, guided and independent reading opportunities, localized and developmentally appropriate materials, learner progress monitoring and feedback, and parent and home literacy coordination. Instructional Strength and Support Gap Mapping classified domains according to their relative mean scores, with comparatively higher-rated domains considered instructional strengths and lower-rated domains identified as support gaps requiring further attention. Multiple regression analysis determined whether foundational reading instruction practices significantly predicted early literacy support practices, while relative weight analysis identified the foundational reading dimensions that contributed most strongly to the explained variation in literacy support. Relative weight analysis was particularly appropriate because the instructional domains could overlap conceptually. The descriptive results, instructional strength and support gap mapping, multiple regression analysis, and relative weight analysis were synthesized to develop the proposed Evidence-Based Reading Support Framework. Inferential analyses used a 0.05 significance level; a p-value below 0.05 indicated statistical significance and rejection of the corresponding null hypothesis, whereas a p-value equal to or greater than 0.05 indicated insufficient evidence to reject it.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were observed throughout the research process. Permission was secured from the appropriate authorities, and respondents were informed about the purpose and nature of the study, their voluntary participation, and their right to decline or withdraw without penalty. No respondent was pressured to participate. Confidentiality and privacy were maintained by withholding the identities of respondents and schools unless official permission for disclosure was granted. Responses were presented only in summarized or aggregated form, and the data were securely stored and used exclusively for academic purposes. The instrument and research procedures were designed to avoid harm, embarrassment, or professional disadvantage. Findings were interpreted fairly and objectively and were framed as evidence for instructional improvement, professional growth, and literacy support development rather than as evaluations of individual teacher performance.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Foundational Reading Instruction Practices

3.1.1 Phonological and Phonemic Awareness Instruction

Phonological and phonemic awareness instruction was practiced to a Great Extent, with an overall weighted mean of 3.93 and SD = 0.54. Songs, chants, poems, and oral games received the highest mean of 4.31, followed by clapping, tapping, or counting syllables at 4.24. In contrast, comparing sounds before introducing or reinforcing printed letters received the lowest mean of 3.52, while sound segmentation obtained 3.66. These results indicate stronger implementation of engaging sound-awareness activities than more analytically demanding phonemic tasks. The pattern shows that oral sound awareness is well established but that precise phonemic analysis requires further instructional attention. The literature reviewed in the study similarly identifies rhyming, syllable work, beginning-sound identification, blending, and segmentation as foundations for later phonics and decoding. Adejumo et al. (2025) likewise emphasized explicit oral sound games, segmentation, blending, and rhyming rather than assuming that sound awareness develops through exposure alone. Thus, engaging oral activities constitute a strength, while more precise manipulation of individual phonemes remains an area for strengthening.

3.1.2 Letter Knowledge and Sound-Symbol Correspondence

Letter knowledge and sound-symbol correspondence obtained an overall mean of 4.15 and SD = 0.49, representing a Great Extent and the highest rating among the six foundational reading dimensions. Recognition of uppercase and lowercase letters received the highest mean of 4.38, followed by visual materials at 4.34 and multisensory letter-sound activities at 4.26. Checking mastery of letter names and sounds before advancing to more difficult tasks received the lowest mean of 3.87, while distinguishing visually similar letters obtained 3.91. The findings indicate that teachers consistently use visual, auditory, and multisensory approaches to establish alphabet knowledge and letter-sound relationships. The literature reviewed in the study emphasizes that letter knowledge involves recognizing, distinguishing, recalling, and connecting letters with sounds in meaningful print contexts. Sound-symbol correspondence also serves as a foundation for phonics, decoding, and early word recognition. The comparatively lower rating for mastery checks suggests the importance of ensuring that learners establish stable letter-sound knowledge before progressing to more demanding reading tasks.

3.1.3 Decoding, Blending, and Word Recognition Instruction

Decoding, blending, and word recognition instruction was demonstrated to a Great Extent, with an overall mean of 3.86 and $SD = 0.56$. Regular practice with simple consonant-vowel-consonant words received the highest mean of 4.12, followed by decoding through letter-sound relationships at 4.05 and blending at 3.97. Teaching learners to avoid guessing words from pictures or the first letter received the lowest mean of 3.46, while rereading familiar words for automatic recognition obtained 3.68. These findings show that basic decoding and blending are established but that full-word analysis and automaticity require greater consistency. The literature describes decoding as translating print into spoken language through sound-symbol knowledge and emphasizes repeated practice for increasingly effortless word recognition. Dilgard et al. similarly stressed explicit and systematic phonics supported by cumulative review, corrective feedback, and connected reading. Thus, stronger attention to complete word analysis, rereading, and reduced reliance on guessing strategies could strengthen the transition from basic decoding to automatic word recognition.

3.1.4 Vocabulary and Oral Language Development

Vocabulary and oral language development received an overall mean of 4.12 and $SD = 0.50$, representing a Great Extent and the second-highest foundational reading dimension. Using pictures, real objects, actions, and stories to develop vocabulary obtained the highest mean of 4.36, followed by storytelling, conversation, and sharing at 4.31 and encouraging learners to use new words in sentences or oral responses at 4.28. Using context clues to determine word meaning received the lowest mean of 3.71, while reviewing important words after reading obtained 3.89. The findings indicate a strong emphasis on concrete, interactive, and meaningful language experiences. However, relatively lower ratings for context clues and vocabulary review suggest that consolidation and inferential vocabulary learning can be strengthened. The reviewed literature identifies vocabulary as fundamental to oral language, listening comprehension, and later academic literacy because decoding alone does not ensure understanding. Campbell et al. also demonstrated the value of integrating phonics and vocabulary through children's literature, read-alouds, discussion, and meaningful language experiences.

3.1.5 Reading Fluency Development

Reading fluency development was practiced to a Great Extent, with an overall mean of 3.81 and $SD = 0.59$, although it was the lowest-rated foundational reading dimension. Modeling fluent reading with appropriate pacing, expression, and phrasing obtained the highest mean of 4.14. Encouraging smooth phrase- and sentence-level reading instead of word-by-word reading received the lowest mean of 3.48, while multidimensional fluency monitoring and repeated reading obtained 3.59 and 3.72, respectively. The results suggest that teacher modeling is more established than systematic learner practice in phrasing, automaticity, repeated reading, and multidimensional fluency monitoring. The reviewed literature describes fluency as accurate, appropriately paced, and expressive reading that bridges word recognition and comprehension. Foorman et al. (2016) emphasized connected-text reading with appropriate instructional support to develop accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. Thus, fluency development represents an important area for strengthening despite its overall favorable rating.

3.1.6 Beginning Reading Comprehension Instruction

Beginning reading comprehension instruction obtained an overall mean of 3.91 and $SD = 0.57$, indicating a Great Extent. Using pictures, gestures, and discussion to support comprehension received the highest mean of 4.16, followed by questioning before, during, and after reading at 4.11 and connecting texts with prior knowledge at 4.08. Asking learners to explain the meaning of simple sentences or passages received the lowest mean of 3.55, followed by sequencing events at 3.69. These results show that teacher-supported comprehension is well established, although opportunities for learners to independently explain, organize, and express meaning are comparatively less frequent. The theoretical discussion in the study conceptualizes beginning comprehension as meaning construction from words, sentences, stories, and informational texts and emphasizes the combined contribution of decoding and language comprehension. The Simple View of Reading likewise explains why successful decoding alone is insufficient when language comprehension is weak. The findings therefore support continued questioning and discussion while indicating a need for greater learner-generated explanation, sequencing, and retelling.

3.1.7 Overall Foundational Reading Instruction

Overall foundational reading instruction obtained a weighted mean of 3.96 and $SD = 0.48$, indicating a Great Extent. Letter knowledge and sound-symbol correspondence ranked highest at 4.15, followed by vocabulary and oral language at 4.12, phonological and phonemic awareness at 3.93, and beginning comprehension at 3.91. Decoding, blending, and word recognition obtained 3.86, while reading fluency ranked lowest at 3.81. The pattern demonstrates a multicomponent approach to foundational reading rather than reliance on a single skill. The literature reviewed in the study similarly emphasizes systematic integration of phonological and phonemic awareness, letter knowledge, sound-symbol relationships, decoding, word recognition, vocabulary, oral language, fluency, and comprehension. Although all dimensions were favorably rated, the relative rankings identify decoding and especially fluency as areas where greater instructional precision and sustained practice could strengthen the overall reading foundation.

3.2 Early Literacy Support Practices

3.2.1 Classroom-Based Reading Assessment

Classroom-based reading assessment was practiced to a Great Extent, with an overall mean of 3.87 and SD = 0.61. Listening to learners read aloud to identify difficulties in accuracy, fluency, and expression obtained the highest mean of 4.18, followed by comprehension questioning at 4.12 and using assessment results to identify learners requiring additional support at 4.09. Conducting regular assessment rather than waiting for formal testing periods received the lowest mean of 3.58, while recording reading performance for future instruction obtained 3.61. The findings indicate that direct assessment during classroom reading is established, but systematic documentation and continuous monitoring are comparatively less consistent. The literature reviewed in the study describes classroom-based assessment as formal and informal evidence used to determine what learners can do and what they still need to learn. Effective literacy support requires not only early identification and immediate feedback but also documentation and instructional adjustment. Thus, assessment is an existing strength, while systematic recording and continuity require further attention.

3.2.2 Differentiated Reading Support

Differentiated reading support obtained an overall mean of 3.65 and SD = 0.66, indicating a Great Extent but ranking among the lower literacy-support dimensions. Using varied strategies for different reading difficulties received the highest mean of 3.88, followed by ability- and confidence-appropriate practice at 3.83. Providing enrichment for learners who could already read more independently received 3.29, the only Moderate Extent rating in this domain. Grouping according to specific reading needs obtained 3.44, while revising support according to learner response received 3.47. The results indicate that differentiation is more strongly directed toward remediation than enrichment and that flexible grouping and continuous instructional adjustment are less established. The literature conceptualizes differentiated reading support as the deliberate adjustment of instruction, grouping, pacing, materials, tasks, and assistance according to learner needs. Parrila et al. further found that differentiated instruction was associated with later decoding growth and emphasized assessment-informed regrouping for targeted instruction. These findings support strengthening differentiation for both struggling and more advanced readers.

3.2.3 Guided and Independent Reading Opportunities

Guided and independent reading opportunities obtained an overall mean of 3.86 and SD = 0.60, representing a Great Extent. Making reading a regular classroom routine received the highest mean of 4.21, followed by teacher prompts, questions, and corrective feedback at 4.11 and partner, shared, or small-group reading at 4.08. Independent selection of books or reading materials received the lowest mean of 3.48, while independent reading or browsing time obtained 3.62. The results indicate that frequent teacher-supported reading is more established than independent reading choice and practice. The reviewed literature explains that independent reading among young learners requires accessible and appropriate materials rather than unsupported exposure to texts beyond their abilities. Hunt likewise recommends repeated modeling, prompting, systematic feedback, and meaningful shared reading for learners requiring substantial assistance. The findings therefore support maintaining strong guided reading while gradually expanding purposeful and appropriately scaffolded independent reading.

3.2.4 Localized and Developmentally Appropriate Reading Materials

The use of localized and developmentally appropriate reading materials was practiced to a Great Extent, with an overall mean of 3.85 and SD = 0.62. Selecting texts with understandable words, sentences, and illustrations received the highest mean of 4.13, followed by matching materials to learners' age and reading level at 4.09. Adapting overly difficult texts received the lowest mean of 3.46, while using materials reflecting familiar experiences and contexts obtained 3.58. The findings indicate that teachers are more consistent in selecting suitable existing resources than in adapting or localizing materials. The literature reviewed in the study explains that resource adequacy depends not simply on availability but also on suitability, accessibility, and instructional usefulness. Resources become educationally effective when they correspond with learner level, language background, developmental stage, and instructional purpose. The findings therefore indicate generally appropriate material selection but comparatively greater need for material adaptation and localization.

3.2.5 Learner Progress Monitoring and Feedback

Learner progress monitoring and feedback obtained an overall mean of 3.69 and SD = 0.65, indicating a Great Extent but ranking relatively low among literacy-support practices. Immediate feedback for reading errors received the highest mean of 4.08, followed by clear suggestions for improvement at 3.92. Adjusting instruction when learners demonstrated little or no progress received the lowest mean of 3.47, while comparing current and previous performance obtained 3.49. The pattern indicates that immediate corrective feedback is more consistently implemented than longitudinal monitoring, documentation, and instructional adjustment. The reviewed literature emphasizes documenting progress, using assessment evidence to modify instruction, and maintaining follow-through rather than waiting for reading failure to become established. It also recognizes that corrective feedback should address the instructional meaning of errors while maintaining learners' willingness to read. Thus,

immediate feedback is an instructional strength, but systematic progress records require greater integration into instructional decision-making.

3.2.6 Parent and Home Literacy Coordination

Parent and home literacy coordination received an overall mean of 3.63 and SD = 0.68. Although interpreted as a Great Extent, it was the lowest-rated of all twelve instructional and support dimensions. Explaining the importance of regular reading practice received the highest mean of 4.02, while promoting positive home-school partnership obtained 3.81. Providing home reading materials or recommendations received 3.21, and encouraging regular home reading routines obtained 3.36; both were interpreted as Moderate Extent. The findings indicate that communication about literacy is more established than concrete mechanisms for maintaining reading practice at home. The literature conceptualizes parent and home literacy coordination as linking classroom instruction with home literacy through communication, guidance, assignments, progress information, and family participation. The Department of Education discussion in the proposal likewise emphasizes shared responsibility among teachers, school leaders, families, and school systems. The relatively lower ratings therefore support strengthening feasible home-reading routines, resources, and coordination mechanisms.

3.2.7 Overall Early Literacy Support Practices

Early literacy support practices obtained an overall weighted mean of 3.76 and SD = 0.57, indicating a Great Extent. Classroom-based assessment ranked highest at 3.87, followed by guided and independent reading opportunities at 3.86 and localized and developmentally appropriate materials at 3.85. Progress monitoring and feedback obtained 3.69, differentiated reading support 3.65, and parent and home literacy coordination 3.63. The overall literacy-support mean was lower than the 3.96 obtained for foundational reading instruction. The pattern indicates that teachers are more consistent in direct classroom instruction and immediate support than in practices requiring sustained documentation, differentiation, follow-through, and family coordination. This is consistent with the reviewed literature, which conceptualizes effective literacy support as assessment-based, differentiated, developmentally appropriate, supported by appropriate materials and reading opportunities, and sustained through progress monitoring, feedback, and home-school coordination. The findings therefore identify continuous differentiation, monitoring, and family coordination as comparatively greater support needs.

3.3 Instructional Strengths and Support Gaps

Across the twelve dimensions, letter knowledge and sound-symbol correspondence ranked first with a mean of 4.15, followed by vocabulary and oral language development at 4.12, phonological and phonemic awareness at 3.93, and beginning reading comprehension at 3.91; these were classified as instructional strengths. Classroom-based assessment at 3.87, decoding and word recognition at 3.86, guided and independent reading at 3.86, and localized and developmentally appropriate materials at 3.85 were classified as established practices. Reading fluency at 3.81, progress monitoring and feedback at 3.69, differentiated support at 3.65, and parent and home literacy coordination at 3.63 constituted the relative support gaps. The pattern distinguishes direct classroom practices from activities requiring sustained adjustment, documentation, or coordination beyond individual lessons. Importantly, the support gaps do not represent weak practices in absolute terms because all four domains remained within the Great Extent category. Instead, they identify areas where improvement efforts may be prioritized. This interpretation is consistent with the conceptual discussion in the study, which treats gap analysis as a means of determining where instructional attention should be sustained, intensified, or redesigned and where professional learning, coaching, materials, and intervention systems can be strengthened.

3.4 Predictive Relationship Between Foundational Reading Instruction and Early Literacy Support

Multiple regression analysis showed a strong collective relationship between foundational reading instruction and early literacy support practices, $R = 0.768$. The model explained 59.0% of the variation in literacy support practices, $R^2 = 0.590$, with adjusted $R^2 = 0.563$, and was statistically significant, $F = 21.34$, $p < 0.001$. Beginning reading comprehension was the strongest significant predictor ($\beta = 0.29$, $p = 0.001$), followed by decoding, blending, and word recognition ($\beta = 0.22$, $p = 0.012$), vocabulary and oral language ($\beta = 0.20$, $p = 0.017$), and reading fluency ($\beta = 0.16$, $p = 0.048$). Phonological and phonemic awareness and letter knowledge and sound-symbol correspondence did not make statistically significant unique contributions after overlap among predictors was considered. The null hypothesis that foundational reading instruction practices do not significantly predict early literacy support practices was therefore rejected. The findings indicate that stronger foundational instruction is associated with more systematic assessment, differentiation, reading opportunities, progress monitoring, appropriate resources, and family coordination. Comprehension, decoding, oral language, and fluency may have stronger unique explanatory value because these areas require teachers to observe and respond to varying learner performance. Parrila et al. found that teacher language knowledge predicted instructional quality and that assessment-informed differentiation supported later decoding development. The proposal likewise emphasizes that teachers' understanding of phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension informs planning, diagnosis, and intervention. Thus, foundational instruction and responsive literacy support function as interconnected components of Key Stage 1 teaching.

3.5 Relative Contributions of Foundational Reading Instruction Dimensions

Relative weight analysis showed that beginning reading comprehension accounted for the largest proportion of explained variance in early literacy support practices at 24.6%, followed by decoding, blending, and word recognition at 20.2%, vocabulary and oral language at 17.3%, and reading fluency at 14.2%. Phonological and phonemic awareness contributed 12.4%, while letter knowledge and sound-symbol correspondence contributed 11.4%. The first four dimensions were statistically significant predictors, whereas phonological awareness and letter knowledge were not significant unique predictors. The prominence of comprehension indicates that meaning-focused instruction is closely associated with teachers' responsiveness to learner needs because comprehension activities reveal misunderstandings and require instructional adjustment. Decoding difficulties similarly generate observable evidence requiring sound-letter practice, corrective feedback, regrouping, or repeated reading, while vocabulary and oral-language limitations require richer contextual support. Fluency, despite being the lowest-rated foundational domain descriptively, remained a significant predictor. The smaller unique contributions of phonological awareness and letter knowledge do not imply that these skills are unimportant; rather, their effects overlap with decoding and later reading processes. The pattern is consistent with the Simple View of Reading and the Active View of Reading, which emphasize the interaction of word recognition, language comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, background knowledge, and other reading processes.

3.6 Evidence-Based Reading Support Framework

The findings provided the basis for an Evidence-Based Reading Support Framework comprising Foundational Core Precision, Meaning-Centered Reading Instruction, Diagnostic Assessment and Progress Cycle, Differentiated Skill Response, Guided-to-Independent Reading Continuum, Localized and Accessible Reading Resources, Home-School Literacy Partnership, and Continuous Literacy Coaching and Review. The framework preserves established strengths while prioritizing decoding and fluency, systematic progress monitoring, differentiation, independent reading, localized resources, and home-school literacy coordination. The framework integrates the descriptive, predictive, and relative-weight findings rather than treating all domains as equally urgent. Foundational Core Precision and Meaning-Centered Reading Instruction address direct instruction, particularly the need to sustain strong letter, sound, oral-language, and comprehension practices while strengthening decoding and fluency. The Diagnostic Assessment and Progress Cycle links assessment with documentation and instructional adjustment, while Differentiated Skill Response emphasizes flexible grouping, remediation, enrichment, and learner-specific support. The Guided-to-Independent Reading Continuum and Localized and Accessible Reading Resources extend supported practice toward independence using appropriate and contextualized materials. Home-School Literacy Partnership addresses the lowest-rated support domain through feasible family participation, while Continuous Literacy Coaching and Review emphasizes mentoring, Learning Action Cell sessions, classroom observation, peer demonstration, reading-record analysis, and periodic review. Collectively, these components translate the findings into an integrated structure for strengthening Key Stage 1 literacy instruction and support in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concludes that Key Stage 1 teachers in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya implement both foundational reading instruction and early literacy support practices to a great extent, although the dimensions vary in strength. Letter knowledge and sound-symbol correspondence, vocabulary and oral language development, phonological and phonemic awareness, and beginning reading comprehension are the most established instructional areas, whereas reading fluency requires greater attention. Early literacy support is strongest in classroom-based assessment, guided reading, and the use of appropriate materials, while differentiated support, systematic progress monitoring, and parent and home literacy coordination are comparatively less established. Foundational reading instruction significantly predicts early literacy support, with beginning reading comprehension contributing most strongly, followed by decoding and word recognition, vocabulary and oral language, and reading fluency. Overall, the findings support an integrated Evidence-Based Reading Support Framework that sustains established instructional strengths while addressing priority gaps through coordinated foundational instruction and literacy support.

Key Stage 1 teachers should sustain effective practices in letter knowledge, sound-symbol correspondence, phonological awareness, vocabulary, oral language, and beginning comprehension while strengthening decoding and reading fluency through systematic word analysis, blending, repeated and connected-text reading, and attention to accuracy, pacing, phrasing, and expression. Teachers, reading coordinators, and school heads should strengthen systematic progress monitoring, differentiated instruction, flexible grouping, remediation, enrichment, and parent and home literacy coordination, while school-based professional learning should prioritize the instructional and support areas identified as needing improvement. The proposed Evidence-Based Reading Support Framework should be considered for school-based implementation, adaptation, and periodic evaluation according to available resources, learner readiness, language background, and classroom conditions. Future research should extend the investigation to broader samples and locations, use complementary methods and

learner performance measures, and examine the effectiveness of the proposed framework and other factors associated with early literacy support.

The study was limited to Key Stage 1 teachers in Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya and focused specifically on their foundational reading instruction and early literacy support practices; therefore, it did not include learner profile variables or directly measure learners' reading achievement as an outcome. The findings were based primarily on teachers' reported practices rather than direct classroom observations, interviews, longitudinal progress data, or parent perspectives, limiting the extent to which reported practices could be compared with actual classroom implementation and learner outcomes. Consequently, the findings and proposed Evidence-Based Reading Support Framework should be interpreted within the specific respondents, setting, variables, and methodological boundaries of the study.

5. Compliance with ethical standards

The study adhered to ethical standards throughout the research process. Permission was secured from the appropriate authorities before data collection, and respondents were informed of the study's purpose and nature, the voluntary nature of their participation, and their right to decline or withdraw without penalty. Confidentiality and privacy were maintained by protecting the identities of respondents and schools and reporting responses only in summarized or aggregated form. The collected data were securely stored and used exclusively for academic purposes. The research procedures were designed to avoid harm, embarrassment, or professional disadvantage, while the findings were interpreted fairly and objectively and used as a basis for instructional improvement, professional growth, and literacy support development rather than individual teacher evaluation.

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