



OPEN ACCESS

Studies in Technology and Education

Volume 5, Issue 3, 2026 | <https://www.azalpub.com/index.php/ste>

RESEARCH ARTICLE

DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECT READING INTERVENTION FOR KNOWLEDGE NAVIGATION AND ANXIETY MANAGEMENT (RIKNA) FOR JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

This study assessed the level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) among Junior High School students at Pudtol Vocational High School and developed Project RIKNA (Reading Intervention for Knowledge Navigation and Anxiety Management) as an intervention program. Specifically, the study examined students' anxiety in terms of reading comprehension difficulty, negative self-perception, and other anxiety-related indicators. A descriptive-developmental research design was employed involving Grade 8 students from four sections during School Year 2025–2026 using total enumeration sampling. Data were gathered through the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) developed by Saito, Garza, and Horwitz. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data. Findings revealed that students experienced a moderate level of anxiety across all dimensions, particularly in unfamiliar vocabulary, fear of negative evaluation, and performance-related reading situations. Based on the findings, Project RIKNA was developed to address both cognitive and affective aspects of reading anxiety through vocabulary support, confidence-building activities, anxiety-reduction techniques, flexible assessment practices, and metacognitive reading strategies. The study highlights the importance of anxiety-responsive interventions in improving learners' reading engagement, confidence, and comprehension performance.

Keywords: Anxiety management, foreign language reading anxiety, metacognitive strategies, Project RIKNA, reading comprehension, reading intervention, self-perception, vocabulary support.

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Reading plays a critical role in second language learning, particularly for learners studying English as a foreign or second language. Through reading, students are exposed to vocabulary development, grammatical structures, and various forms of knowledge that contribute to overall language proficiency (Grabe & Stoller, 2011). Reading also supports the development of comprehension skills and facilitates access to academic content across disciplines. However, despite its importance, many learners encounter emotional barriers when engaging with texts written in a second language. One of the most significant affective barriers is reading anxiety, which may negatively influence learners' motivation, engagement, and comprehension.

Reading anxiety refers to the feeling of tension, apprehension, or fear experienced by learners when they are required to read in a language that is not their first language (Saito et al., 1999). Studies in second language acquisition have shown that anxiety can interfere with students' ability to process written information effectively. According to Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, learners with high levels of anxiety tend to develop psychological barriers that limit their ability to process linguistic input (Krashen, 1982). When learners experience anxiety during reading activities, they may avoid reading tasks, lose concentration, and encounter difficulty understanding texts.

Globally, research has demonstrated that reading anxiety is a common concern among learners of English as a foreign language. Previous studies have reported that learners who experience high levels of reading anxiety often demonstrate reduced participation in reading activities and lower levels of reading comprehension (Zhao et al., 2013). Learners may feel overwhelmed by unfamiliar vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and the fear of making mistakes when interpreting texts. Consequently, negative emotional responses toward reading tasks may hinder language development and reduce students' confidence in reading.

In the Philippine context, concerns regarding reading proficiency have been widely documented. Results from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 revealed that Filipino students ranked among the lowest in reading literacy among participating countries, with a significant proportion of learners unable to reach the minimum proficiency level expected for their age (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2019). While various educational interventions have focused on improving reading skills and instructional strategies, affective factors that influence reading performance, such as reading anxiety, often receive less attention.

To address the national reading challenge, the Department of Education implemented several literacy programs, including the Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP) and Brigada Pagbasa, which aim to improve learners' reading skills and promote reading engagement in schools (Department of Education, 2019). Although these programs primarily focus on strengthening reading competencies, affective factors such as anxiety, confidence, and motivation also play a crucial role in learners' reading experiences. Learners who experience high levels of anxiety may find it difficult to participate actively in reading tasks despite the availability of instructional interventions.

Within the Cordillera Administrative Region, teachers have observed that many secondary school students continue to experience difficulties when reading English texts. Diagnostic assessments conducted in several schools in the region indicate that a considerable number of learners demonstrate limited reading comprehension skills. Classroom observations further suggest that some students hesitate to participate in reading activities due to fear of making mistakes or being evaluated negatively by their peers.

At Pudtol Vocational High School, similar concerns were observed among Junior High School students. Teachers noted signs of anxiety when learners were required to read English passages, including hesitation, avoidance of reading tasks, and limited confidence when answering comprehension questions. These classroom observations suggest that reading anxiety may be a contributing factor affecting students' engagement in reading activities.

Despite these observations, localized research examining the level of reading anxiety among students in the school remains limited. Understanding the extent of students' reading anxiety is essential for developing appropriate interventions that can support learners in

managing their emotional responses to reading tasks.

Therefore, this study assessed the level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) among Junior High School students at Pudtol Vocational High School using the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) and used the findings as the basis for developing Project RIKNA (Reading Intervention for Knowledge Navigation and Anxiety Management) as a targeted intervention for reading anxiety management.

Statement of the Problem

This study aimed to assess the level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) among Junior High School students and develop a targeted intervention to manage reading anxiety based on the findings.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) among Junior High School students, as measured by the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS), categorized by the following dimensions:
 - 1.1 Reading comprehension difficulty
 - 1.2 Negative self-perception or beliefs
 - 1.3 Other related anxiety indicators identified in the scale
2. What reading intervention program for managing reading anxiety can be developed based on the assessed levels of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA)?

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on three established psychological and linguistic theories that explain the influence of affective variables, particularly anxiety, on reading performance in a second or foreign language. These theories include Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory, and Schema Theory, which collectively explain how emotional, cognitive, and psychological factors influence learners' engagement and comprehension during reading activities.

Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis posits that language acquisition is influenced by affective variables such as motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety. When learners experience high levels of anxiety, their affective filter becomes elevated, preventing linguistic input from being fully processed and internalized (Krashen, 1982). In reading contexts, heightened anxiety may reduce learners' ability to engage with texts effectively, particularly when they encounter unfamiliar vocabulary and complex syntactic structures. This suggests that reading anxiety may serve as a psychological barrier that limits students' comprehension and ability to process written language efficiently.

In addition, Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory emphasizes that learners' beliefs in their ability to perform specific tasks influence their motivation, persistence, and academic performance. Self-efficacy refers to individuals' judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute actions required to achieve particular goals (Bandura, 1997). When students perceive reading tasks in English as difficult or believe that they lack the ability to comprehend texts, their self-efficacy decreases, which may lead to avoidance behaviors, reduced effort, and increased anxiety. Learners with low reading self-efficacy are more likely to interpret reading activities as threatening experiences, thereby intensifying anxiety and negatively affecting reading performance.

Furthermore, Schema Theory explains reading comprehension as an interactive process in which readers integrate new information with previously acquired knowledge structures, referred to as schemas (Anderson, 1984). These schemas enable readers to interpret meaning by linking textual information with their prior knowledge and experiences. When learners possess limited background knowledge or weak linguistic schemas in the target language, they may encounter difficulty interpreting texts. This lack of familiarity may increase uncertainty and anxiety during reading activities. In the context of this study, Schema Theory suggests that unfamiliar vocabulary, concepts, or cultural references may heighten learners' reading anxiety by limiting their ability to connect new information with existing knowledge structures.

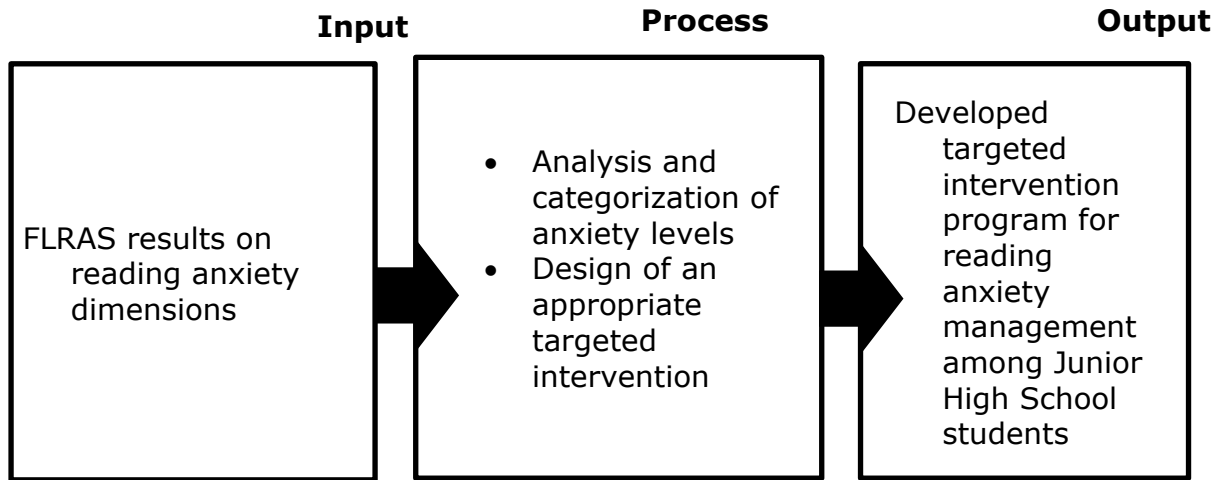


Figure 1. Research Paradigm

The study adopts the Input–Process–Output (IPO) model to illustrate the systematic flow of the research. In the Input stage, the primary data consist of the results of the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS), categorized into three key dimensions: (1) reading comprehension difficulty, (2) negative self-perception or beliefs, and (3) other related anxiety indicators. These dimensions serve as the basis for determining the level and nature of reading anxiety among junior high school students. The Process stage involves the analysis and interpretation of the gathered data. This includes the computation of statistical measures such as mean and standard deviation to determine anxiety levels, as well as the categorization of students’ responses according to the identified dimensions. The results of the analysis are then used as a foundation for designing a targeted intervention, specifically the Project RIKNA (Reading Intervention for Knowledge Navigation and Anxiety Management) Program, which aims to address the identified anxiety factors. The Output stage is the development of the Project RIKNA Program. This program is designed based on the empirical findings of the study and focuses on reducing reading anxiety and improving students’ reading comprehension skills through structured and targeted strategies.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This presents the research methods and procedures utilized in the study. It includes research design, locale of the study, respondents of the study, research instrument, data gathering procedure, and statistical treatment of data.

Research Design

This study employed a descriptive–developmental research design. The descriptive component assessed the level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety among the respondents, while the developmental component utilized the findings as the basis for developing a targeted reading anxiety management intervention. Descriptive research is used to systematically describe characteristics, conditions, or phenomena as they naturally occur (Creswell, 2014). Meanwhile, developmental research focuses on the design and development of instructional interventions or educational materials based on identified learning needs (Richey & Klein, 2007).

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at Pudtol Vocational High School located at San Luis, Pudtol, Apayao.



Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study consisted of all Grade 8 students of Pudtol Vocational High School during the School Year 2025–2026, specifically those enrolled in Sections Newton, Chrysanthemum, Daisy, and Jasmine. The study employed total enumeration sampling, wherein all students from the identified sections were included to ensure a comprehensive and accurate representation of the Grade 8 population. These respondents were considered appropriate for the study as they are actively engaged in English reading activities and may experience challenges related to reading in a second language. Participation in the study was voluntary and subject to informed consent, with ethical considerations such as confidentiality and anonymity strictly observed. The inclusion of all students from these sections allowed the researcher to gather reliable data on the level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) among the learners.

Research Instruments

This study utilized the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) developed by Saito, Garza, and Horwitz to measure learners' level of anxiety when reading in a foreign language (Saito et al., 1999). The FLRAS is a standardized instrument designed to assess various sources of reading anxiety experienced by language learners.

The instrument consists of 20 statements that represent different dimensions of reading anxiety, including difficulty in comprehension, unfamiliar vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, and lack of confidence while reading. Each item is rated using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). The responses allow the researcher to quantify the respondents' level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA).

The FLRAS was administered to the Grade 8 student respondents to determine their level of reading anxiety in English. The results obtained from the instrument served as the basis for identifying anxiety levels and for developing a targeted intervention program on reading anxiety management.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering procedure began after the researcher secured formal approval from the school administration of Pudtol Vocational High School. Coordination was made with the Grade 8 advisers for the schedule of questionnaire administration. An orientation was conducted to explain the purpose of the study and to ensure voluntary participation. Informed consent from parents and assent from students were obtained prior to data collection. The Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) was administered to the respondents during class hours under the supervision of the researcher. Clear instructions were provided to ensure accurate and honest responses. All completed questionnaires were collected, checked, scored, and encoded for statistical treatment. Data were handled with strict confidentiality and used solely for academic research purposes.

Statistical Treatment of Data

The data gathered from the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) were

analyzed using appropriate descriptive statistical techniques. The mean was computed to determine the level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) among the respondents. The standard deviation was also computed to measure the variability of the respondents' scores, indicating the extent to which individual responses deviate from the mean.

Since the FLRAS utilized a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), the computed mean scores were interpreted to determine the respondents' level of reading anxiety. Higher mean scores indicate higher levels of reading anxiety, as agreement with the statements reflects stronger anxiety experiences during reading tasks.

The interpretation of the computed mean scores was based on the following scale:

Scale	Mean Range	Interpretation
5	4.20 - 5.00	Very High Anxiety
4	3.40 - 4.19	High Anxiety
3	2.60 - 3.39	Moderate Anxiety
2	1.80 - 2.59	Low Anxiety
1	1.00 - 1.79	Very Low Anxiety

This scale was used to determine the level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety of the respondents across the different dimensions measured in the study. The interpretation of the mean scores served as the basis for identifying the dominant sources of reading anxiety and for developing the targeted intervention program on reading anxiety management.

Ethical Consideration

The researcher strictly adhered to ethical standards by securing formal approval from the school and the school administration of Pudtol Vocational High School prior to data collection. Written parental or guardian consent was obtained for all student participants, along with student assent to ensure that participation was fully informed and voluntary. The respondents were clearly informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and their right to withdraw from participation at any time without any academic penalty or consequence.

The confidentiality and anonymity of all participants were ensured by assigning numerical codes to each respondent instead of using their names in all data records and reports. All collected data, including responses from the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) were treated with strict confidentiality and used solely for academic research purposes. In compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, all data were securely stored and access was limited only to the researcher and authorized personnel involved in the study.

The study upheld the principle of non-maleficence by ensuring that the procedures posed minimal or no risk to the participants. The administration of the FLRAS questionnaire was conducted in a non-threatening and supportive classroom environment to avoid causing discomfort or anxiety among students. The proposed intervention program was designed to support and improve students' reading experiences without interfering with their regular academic activities or affecting their academic performance.

The researcher ensured fairness and equity by including all Grade 8 students from the identified sections in the study through total enumeration sampling. The proposed intervention program will be made accessible to all learners to support their reading development. Furthermore, the researcher declares that there is no conflict of interest that could influence the conduct, analysis, or reporting of the study, thereby maintaining the integrity and objectivity of the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This presents the results obtained from the data gathered, along with the corresponding discussion and thorough analysis. The findings focus on the level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) among Junior High School students and the identified dimensions of reading anxiety.

Table 1: Level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) among Junior High School Students

1.1 Reading Comprehension Difficulty		
Statements	Mean	Anxiety Level
I get upset when I cannot understand what I am reading in English.	2.86	Moderate Anxiety
I fear that I might misunderstand the meaning of the text.	2.97	Moderate Anxiety
I get anxious when I cannot guess the meaning of unfamiliar words.	3.07	Moderate Anxiety
I panic when I see a lot of unfamiliar vocabulary.	2.97	Moderate Anxiety
I get nervous when reading passages that seem difficult.	2.95	Moderate Anxiety
Category Mean	2.96	Moderate Anxiety
1.2 Negative Self – Perception or Beliefs		
Statements	Mean	Anxiety Level
I feel afraid that others will judge me when I read incorrectly	3.27	Moderate Anxiety
I feel embarrassed when I cannot answer reading questions.	3.26	Moderate Anxiety
English reading materials make me lose confidence.	2.58	Low Anxiety
I worry that I am not good at reading English.	2.86	Moderate Anxiety
Category Mean	2.99	Moderate Anxiety
1.3 Other Related Anxiety Indicators		
Statements	Mean	Anxiety Level
I feel nervous when I read texts written in English.	2.39	Low Anxiety
I worry about making mistakes when reading aloud.	3.22	Moderate Anxiety
Reading English stories or articles makes me feel tense.	2.90	Moderate Anxiety
I feel uncomfortable when I have to read long English texts.	2.76	Moderate Anxiety
I feel pressured when the teacher asks questions about an English reading.	2.84	Moderate Anxiety
I usually feel worried before starting to read an English text.	2.54	Low Anxiety
I feel nervous when the reading activity is timed.	2.87	Moderate Anxiety
English reading tests make me feel anxious	2.60	Low Anxiety
I feel tense when I cannot finish reading on time	2.89	Moderate Anxiety
My mind often goes blank during English reading tasks.	2.88	Moderate Anxiety
Reading English makes me feel stressed.	2.64	Moderate Anxiety

Category Mean	2.75	Moderate Anxiety
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Table 1 presents the level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) among Junior High School students across three dimensions: reading comprehension difficulty, negative self-perception or beliefs, and other anxiety-related indicators. The results indicate that students experience moderate levels of anxiety across all dimensions, suggesting that reading anxiety is present among learners and may influence their reading engagement and performance.

1.1 Reading Comprehension Difficulty

The category mean of 2.96, interpreted as Moderate Anxiety, indicates that students experience noticeable difficulty when processing English texts. This suggests that comprehension-related challenges contribute to learners’ anxiety when engaging with reading tasks.

Among the indicators, the highest mean (3.07) corresponds to the statement *"I get anxious when I cannot guess the meaning of unfamiliar words."* This finding highlights that limited vocabulary knowledge is a significant contributor to reading anxiety. Similarly, students reported fear of misunderstanding the meaning of texts (2.97) and panic when encountering many unfamiliar words (2.97). These results suggest that lexical and semantic challenges significantly influence students’ anxiety during reading.

The relatively consistent means across all indicators (2.86–3.07) further indicate that anxiety is not confined to a single aspect of comprehension but is systemic across the reading process, including vocabulary recognition, meaning interpretation, and comprehension monitoring.

These findings align with previous studies which indicate that unfamiliar vocabulary and limited lexical knowledge are major sources of anxiety in foreign language reading. Learners often experience difficulty interpreting texts when they encounter unfamiliar words, leading to frustration and reduced comprehension (Horwitz et al., 1986). Similarly, language anxiety research has shown that cognitive challenges during reading may interfere with learners’ ability to process linguistic input effectively, thereby increasing anxiety levels (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1994).

The results therefore suggest that although students possess basic reading abilities, they may lack sufficient confidence and vocabulary knowledge to effectively manage complex English texts. Without appropriate instructional support, such difficulties may hinder comprehension, slow reading pace, and reduce learners’ engagement in reading activities.

1.2 Negative Self-Perception or Beliefs

The category mean of 2.99, interpreted as Moderate Anxiety, indicates that students’ emotional and psychological perceptions of their reading abilities also contribute to reading anxiety.

The highest-rated indicators include *fear of being judged when reading incorrectly* (3.27) and *feeling embarrassed when unable to answer reading questions* (3.26). These findings suggest that fear of negative evaluation significantly influences students’ emotional responses to reading tasks. Learners may become anxious when they anticipate criticism or judgment from teachers or peers during reading activities.

Meanwhile, the statement *"English reading materials make me lose confidence"* obtained a mean of 2.58, interpreted as Low Anxiety, suggesting that not all students consistently experience loss of confidence when engaging with English reading materials. However, the mean score of 2.86 for worrying about reading ability indicates that self-doubt remains present among many learners.

These findings emphasize that reading anxiety is not solely a cognitive phenomenon but also involves affective and psychological dimensions, including learners’ beliefs about their capabilities and their fear of negative evaluation. Previous research has shown that learners with low self-confidence in language tasks tend to experience higher levels of anxiety, which may reduce participation and willingness to engage in reading activities (Bandura, 1982).

Consequently, students who perceive themselves as weak readers may avoid reading tasks, participate less during class discussions, and experience reduced motivation to develop their reading skills.

1.3 Other Anxiety-Related Indicators

The category mean of 2.75, interpreted as Moderate Anxiety, indicates that situational and performance-related factors moderately influence students' reading anxiety.

The highest mean (3.22) corresponds to the statement "*I worry about making mistakes when reading aloud.*" This reinforces earlier findings that performance situations, particularly oral reading, can significantly increase learners' anxiety. Other notable indicators include feeling tense when unable to finish reading tasks on time (2.89) and experiencing mental blocks during reading activities (2.88). These results suggest that time pressure and cognitive overload are additional contributors to reading anxiety.

Interestingly, some indicators such as *feeling nervous when reading English texts* (2.39) and *feeling worried before starting to read an English text* (2.54) were interpreted as Low Anxiety, indicating that students generally experience lower anxiety before engaging in reading activities. However, higher mean scores in indicators related to oral reading, time pressure, and classroom performance suggest that anxiety becomes more apparent during the actual performance of reading tasks rather than prior to the activity itself.

These findings indicate that reading anxiety is situational and context-dependent, often intensifying in situations involving oral performance, time constraints, and teacher questioning. Previous studies have similarly reported that performance-based classroom tasks can trigger language anxiety, particularly when learners fear making mistakes in front of others (Young, 1991).

Across the three dimensions, the results indicate a moderate level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety among Junior High School students, suggesting that anxiety remains a persistent factor influencing learners' reading engagement and performance. The primary sources of anxiety include limited vocabulary and comprehension difficulties, fear of negative evaluation, and performance pressure during reading activities. Although the anxiety levels are not severe, the findings highlight the need for targeted instructional support that addresses both cognitive aspects of reading and affective factors such as confidence and fear of evaluation. Based on these results, the development of a targeted reading anxiety management intervention program is recommended to enhance students' reading confidence, comprehension strategies, and classroom participation.

Proposed Reading Intervention Program

Project "RIKNA": "Reading Intervention for Knowledge Navigation and Anxiety Management"

(A Reading Intervention Program Proposal)

I. RATIONALE

Reading is a fundamental skill that significantly contributes to learners' academic success, particularly in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). However, reading is not purely a cognitive process; it is also influenced by affective factors such as anxiety. Based on the findings of this study, Junior High School students exhibit moderate levels of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) across dimensions including reading comprehension difficulty, negative self-perception, and performance-related anxiety. This suggests that learners' reading difficulties are not only due to limited skills but are also shaped by emotional barriers that affect comprehension and participation. One of the primary sources of anxiety identified in this study is learners' difficulty in understanding unfamiliar vocabulary and complex texts. This supports the need for Vocabulary and Comprehension Support, which includes pre-teaching difficult words, use of context clues, scaffolded reading materials, and think-aloud strategies. Research shows that vocabulary knowledge plays a crucial role in reading comprehension, and insufficient lexical knowledge can lead to increased anxiety and reduced understanding of texts (Saito et al., 1999).

Furthermore, the findings reveal that learners experience anxiety due to fear of negative evaluation, embarrassment, and low confidence, particularly when reading aloud or responding to questions. This highlights the importance of Confidence-Building and Positive Self-Perception strategies, such as creating a non-judgmental learning environment, providing positive

reinforcement, and promoting peer collaboration (Horwitz et al., 1986). Fear of negative evaluation is a central component of language anxiety, which can hinder participation and learning. In addition, students demonstrate anxiety during actual reading performance, particularly in oral reading and challenging tasks, which necessitates the use of Anxiety Management Techniques. Strategies such as relaxation exercises, silent reading prior to oral reading, and gradual exposure to reading tasks help learners manage their emotional and physiological responses. These approaches are supported by the theory that lowering learners' anxiety can facilitate better language acquisition and performance, particularly through the concept of the affective filter, which suggests that high anxiety can block language input (Krashen, 1982).

Moreover, the study indicates that anxiety increases in situations involving time pressure and formal evaluation, underscoring the importance of Flexible and Supportive Assessment Practices. Reducing emphasis on timed tasks and incorporating alternative assessments such as discussions and collaborative reading can minimize performance pressure. This aligns with learner-centered instructional approaches that emphasize supportive assessment environments to enhance student participation and reduce stress and learners' beliefs about their abilities and their emotional experiences significantly influence their motivation, engagement, and overall language performance (Dörnyei, 2005). Finally, learners' anxiety is also linked to their lack of control over reading tasks, which highlights the need for Strategy Training and Metacognitive Development. Teaching reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, summarizing, and monitoring comprehension enables learners to regulate their learning and develop independence. [20] Equipping learners with effective strategies enhances their self-efficacy and reduces anxiety by increasing their sense of control over learning tasks.

In response to these findings, Project RIKNA (Reading Intervention for Knowledge Navigation and Anxiety Management) is proposed as a structured, multi-component intervention program that integrates both cognitive and affective dimensions of reading. By addressing vocabulary limitations, negative self-perceptions, emotional responses, assessment-related pressures, and lack of strategic skills, the program directly responds to the moderate but consistent levels of anxiety observed in the study. Ultimately, this intervention aims to create a supportive, learner-centered, and anxiety-free reading environment, where students can improve their reading competence, build confidence, and develop a more positive attitude toward English reading. The implementation of a comprehensive and evidence-based intervention such as Project RIKNA is essential in reducing reading anxiety and enhancing overall language learning outcomes.

II. OBJECTIVES

Project "RIKNA": *Reading Intervention for Knowledge Navigation and Anxiety Management*" aims to:

- Enhance learners' vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension skills;
- Develop learners' confidence and positive self-perception in reading English;
- Equip learners with effective anxiety-reduction techniques;
- Promote flexible and supportive assessment practices;
- Strengthen learners' strategic and metacognitive reading skills; and
- Reduce the overall level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA).

III. STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

PHASE I: (Pre-Implementation) APPROVAL, IDENTIFICATION AND ORIENTATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Calendar Activities	of	Persons Involved	Time Frame	Proposed Materials	Source of Fund	Performance Indicator/Output
Finalization of Project RIKNA integrating the 5		Proponent	June 2026	Laptop, Bond paper	MOOE	Program aligned with FLRA findings finalized

intervention components (vocabulary, confidence, anxiety reduction, assessment, strategies)					
Securing approval from DepEd authorities (School Head, PSDS, SDS)	Proponent/ School Head	July 2026	Approval Documents	MOOE	Program approved
Orientation of stakeholders on reading anxiety and its impact on learners	School Head / Teachers	July 2026	AVP, Handouts	MOOE	Stakeholders understand FLRA and program goals
Training of teachers/facilitators on 5 intervention components (vocabulary scaffolding, confidence-building, anxiety-reduction, flexible assessment, strategy instruction)	School Head / Proponent	August 2026	Training modules	MOOE	Teachers equipped with anxiety-sensitive strategies
Identification of learners using FLRAS and reading assessment (moderate FLRA focus group)	Teachers	August 2026	FLRAS Tool	-	Target learners identified
Baseline emotional profiling (fear, confidence, anxiety triggers)	Guidance counselor	August 2026	Interview Guide	-	Learners' anxiety sources identified
Scheduling of intervention sessions aligned with gradual and low-pressure exposure	School Head / Teachers	August 2026	Schedule Plan	-	Structured intervention schedule ready

PHASE II: ON-PROCESS-IMPLEMENTATION

Program Component	Activities (Integrated Weekly Sessions)	Persons Involved	Time Frame	Materials	Performance Indicator/Output
Vocabulary and Comprehension Support	Pre-teaching vocabulary, context clue	Teachers	Weekly	Modules, worksheets	Improved comprehension;

	activities, scaffolded reading texts, think-aloud modeling				reduced confusion
Confidence-Building & Positive Self-Perception	Non-judgmental environment, peer reading, positive feedback, reflection journals	Teachers	Weekly	Journals	Increased participation and confidence
Anxiety-Reduction Techniques	Breathing exercises, silent reading before oral reading, gradual task difficulty	Teachers / Guidance Counselor	Weekly	Relaxation guides	Reduced nervousness during reading
Flexible & Supportive Assessment Practices	Untimed reading, practice before graded tasks, alternative assessments (group work, discussion)	Teachers	Weekly	Assessment tools	Reduced pressure and improved engagement
Strategy Training & Metacognitive Development	Teaching skimming, scanning, summarizing, self-monitoring, GRR Model (I Do-We Do-You Do)	Teachers	Weekly	Strategy Guides	Improved independent reading skills

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

Activity	Persons involved	Time Frame	Output
Pre-test (FLRAS + Reading Assessment)	Teachers	September 2026	Baseline data
Counseling sessions (confidence + anxiety management)	Guidance counselor	Weekly	Emotional improvement
Reflection activities (journals, check-ins)	Teachers	Weekly	Reduced fear, increased awareness
Monitoring of progress	Teachers / Counselor	Monthly	Documented improvement

(academic + emotional)			
Post-test (FLRAS + Reading Assessment)	Teachers	December 2026	Measured effectiveness

PHASE III: REVISION FOR IMPROVEMENT

Calendar of Activities	Persons Involved	Time Frame	Materials	Performance Indicator/Output
Analysis of pre-test and post-test results (focus on reduction of FLRA and improved reading)	Proponent / Teachers	January 2027	Data sheets	Anxiety reduction measured
Evaluation of each program component effectiveness	School Head/ Teachers	January 2027	Evaluation tools	Strong/weak components identified
Assessment of learners' emotional development (confidence, fear reduction)	Guidance counselor	January 2027	Counselling reports	Emotional progress validated
Revision of intervention strategies based on results	Proponent / School Head	February 2027	Revised Plan	Improved intervention design
Submission of enhanced Project RIKNA	Proponent	March 2027	Documents	Final improved plan

IV. TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

COMPOSITION OF TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

CHAIRMAN: MILMAR L. BUNNAO

VICE-CHAIRMAN: MARIENE V. CALUMPIT

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEES

1. COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATION AND STAKEHOLDER LINKAGES

Chairman: April Love Joy Rillo

Members: Visitacion Illustrado

Julie Adriano

2. COMMITTEE ON RECORDS AND DOCUMENTATION

Chairman: Marry Jane Ulep
Member: Leslie Jane Rosqueta

3. COMMITTEE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF READING INTERVENTION (**PROJECT RIKNA SESSIONS**)

Chairman: April Love Joy Rillo
Members: Julie Adriano
Florlyn Reparejo

4. COMMITTEE ON GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING INTERVENTION

Chairman: Visitacion Illustrado
Members: April Love Joy Rillo
Julie Adriano
Florlyn Reparejo
Mariene Calumpit
Gaiscel Sanchez
Sarah Jane Inay
Karen Caluducan

5. COMMITTEE ON MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Chairman: Milmar L. Bunnao
Members: Mariene Calumpit
Gilbert Abulencia
Visitacion Illustrado
April Love Joy Rillo
Julie Adriano
Florlyn Reparejo

6. COMMITTEE ON LAUNCHING, ADVOCACY, AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Chairman: April Love Joy Rillo
Members: Julie Adriano
Florlyn Reparejo
Marry Jane Ulep
Mariene Calumpit

V. RESOURCE INVENTORY AND BUDGETING

PROJECT "RIKNA" (Reading Intervention for Knowledge Navigation and Anxiety Mangement) PROGRAM							
Resource	Target Population	Projected Needs (Year-Round)		Current Resource		Gaps (Projected-Current)	Sources to Fill the Gaps
	Grade 8 Learners (98 students)	Qty.	Unit Cost (Php)	Qty.	Cost (Php)	Qty.	Cost (Php)
Bond Paper	Teachers / Learners	50	reams 220.00/ream	-		50 reams	11,000.00 (MOOE)
Ink / Toner Set	Teachers / Facilitators	20	sets 1,200.00/set	-		20 sets	24,000.00 (MOOE)
LED TV	Intervention Sessions	4	units 20,000.00/unit	-		4 units	80,000.00 (MOOE)

Laptop	Teachers Guidance Counselor /	3 units 30,000.00/unit	1 unit 30,000.00	2 units	60,000.00 (MOOE)
Printer	Documentation / Module Printing	2 units 15,000.00/unit	1 unit 15,000.00	1 unit	15,000.00 (MOOE)
Printed RIKNA Reading Modules	98 learners	150 copies 10.00/copy	-	150 copies	1,500.00 (MOOE)
FLRAS & Reading Assessment Tools	98 learners	100 sets 15.00/set	-	100 sets	1,500.00 (MOOE)
Counseling Journals / Reflection Sheets	98 learners	100 sets 10.00/set	-	100 sets	1000.00 (MOOE)
Cartolina / Visual Aids	Reading Activities	30 packs 50.00/pack	-	30 packs	1,500.00 (MOOE)
Manila Paper	Reading Activities	30 packs 40.00/pack	-	30 packs	1,200.00 (MOOE)
Stapler	Teachers	10 pcs 100.00/pc	-	10 pcs	1000.00 (MOOE)
Staple Wire	Teachers	15 boxes 50.00/box	-	15 boxes	750.00 (MOOE)
Snacks (Motivation + Counseling Sessions)	98 learners	150 pax 50.00/pax	-	150 pax	7,500.00 (MOOE)
Hygiene / Comfort Supplies (Stress-free Learning Environment)	98 learners	100 sets 100.00/set	-	50 sets	10,000.00 (MOOE)
TOTAL					215,000.00

VI. METHODOLOGY

The implementation of Project "RIKNA": Reading Intervention for Knowledge Navigation and Anxiety Management shall adopt a quasi-experimental pre-test and post-test design to determine the effectiveness of the intervention in reducing moderate levels of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) and improving the reading performance of Grade 8 learners. The program will be integrated during the school's reading intervention schedule and Friday Catch-Up sessions as part of structured remedial and enrichment activities. It is designed as a non-graded, learner-centered instructional program, where learners' outputs, participation, and performance results will serve as bases for evaluation.

The intervention is anchored on a multi-component framework that directly addresses the identified sources of anxiety in the study. It incorporates Vocabulary and Comprehension Support, Confidence-Building and Positive Self-Perception, Anxiety-Reduction Techniques, Flexible and Supportive Assessment Practices, and Strategy Training and Metacognitive Development. Instructional delivery will involve guided reading strategies, differentiated instruction, and structured activities such as the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model (I Do, We Do, You Do),

vocabulary pre-teaching, scaffolded reading materials, think-aloud modeling, and explicit instruction of reading strategies such as skimming, scanning, summarizing, and comprehension monitoring to enhance learners' understanding and control over reading tasks.

In addition, learners will participate in confidence-building and anxiety-reduction activities, including positive reinforcement, peer-assisted learning, reflection journals, breathing and relaxation exercises, silent reading before oral reading, and gradual exposure to increasingly challenging texts. To further minimize anxiety, flexible and supportive assessment practices will be implemented by reducing time pressure, allowing practice before graded tasks, and utilizing alternative forms of assessment such as group discussions and guided responses.

Guidance counseling sessions will be conducted regularly to address learners' emotional and psychological needs, focusing on anxiety management, confidence-building, and emotional support. These counseling activities will complement classroom-based reading interventions to ensure a holistic approach that addresses both cognitive and affective domains of learning. Data will be gathered through pre-test and post-test assessments using the FLRAS and reading comprehension tools, while qualitative data may be obtained through reflection journals, self-assessment tools, and counseling feedback forms. The results of these assessments will serve as the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of Project RIKNA, ensuring that all sessions remain supportive, responsive, and aligned with the moderate anxiety levels identified in the study.

VII. RECIPIENT

The primary recipients of Project RIKNA are the Grade 8 learners identified with moderate levels of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) based on the results of reading assessments and the FLRAS. These learners represent those who experience consistent but manageable levels of anxiety across cognitive, affective, and situational dimensions of reading. The program prioritizes learners who exhibit: difficulty in vocabulary and reading comprehension, particularly when encountering unfamiliar words and complex texts; fear of negative evaluation, embarrassment, and low confidence when reading aloud or responding to questions; anxiety during timed reading activities, oral performance, and classroom participation. However, learners who are classified under instructional or emerging reading levels may also be included as secondary beneficiaries, depending on classroom needs and teacher recommendations.

The intervention ensures inclusive participation while focusing on learners who require both academic and emotional support, addressing not only reading skill deficiencies but also the anxiety factors that affect learners' engagement and performance.

VIII. PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY

The sustainability of **Project RIKNA** shall be geared with the following activities:

- Conduct of regular monitoring and evaluation on the implementation and effectiveness of the reading intervention program using FLRAS results, reading assessments, and learner feedback to track reductions in anxiety and improvements in reading performance across all dimensions;
- Conduct of capability-building seminars and training for teachers, facilitators, and guidance personnel focusing on the five key intervention components, including vocabulary and comprehension support, confidence-building strategies, anxiety-reduction techniques, flexible assessment practices, and metacognitive strategy instruction;
- Conduct of quarterly evaluation and refinement of the program to assess the effectiveness of each intervention component and to introduce improvements based on learners' academic progress and emotional development;
- Continuous provision of instructional materials, assessment tools, and counseling resources through MOOE and other school-based funding to support the implementation of anxiety-sensitive reading activities;
- Strengthening of partnerships with parents, LGUs, NGOs, and private organizations to support program implementation, promote reading development, and advocate for learners' emotional well-being; and,

- Institutionalization of anxiety-responsive and learner-centered reading practices within the school system to ensure that strategies addressing both cognitive and affective needs become part of regular classroom instruction.

IX. CONTINUOUS QUALITY IMPROVEMENT (CQI)

The sustainability of Project RIKNA shall be strengthened through the implementation of a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) approach to ensure the ongoing effectiveness, relevance, and responsiveness of the intervention program in addressing Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) among learners. CQI will focus on the systematic and continuous enhancement of all program components, including Vocabulary and Comprehension Support, Confidence-Building and Positive Self-Perception, Anxiety-Reduction Techniques, Flexible and Supportive Assessment Practices, and Strategy Training and Metacognitive Development. This process ensures that instructional strategies remain responsive to learners' evolving academic and emotional needs.

The CQI process will involve the regular collection and analysis of data from multiple sources, including FLRAS results, reading performance assessments, teacher observations, and learner feedback. These data will serve as the basis for identifying strengths, gaps, and areas for improvement in program implementation. Periodic reflection and evaluation sessions will be conducted among teachers, guidance personnel, and program implementers to assess the effectiveness of instructional strategies and intervention activities. Findings from these evaluations will guide the refinement of teaching approaches, enhancement of learning materials, and improvement of program delivery. Ultimately, CQI ensures that Project RIKNA remains dynamic, evidence-based, and responsive, promoting continuous enhancement of reading instruction while sustaining efforts to reduce reading anxiety and improve learner engagement.

X. MONITORING AND EVALUATION MECHANISM

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanism of Project RIKNA is designed to systematically assess the implementation process, determine program effectiveness, and measure its impact on reducing Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) and improving reading performance among learners. Monitoring activities will be conducted regularly throughout the implementation phase through classroom observations, session monitoring checklists, teacher progress reports, and learner participation tracking. Teachers and guidance personnel will closely observe learners' emotional and behavioral responses during reading activities, particularly in situations involving oral reading, timed tasks, and comprehension exercises.

Evaluation will employ both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data will include pre-test and post-test results using the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS) and reading comprehension assessments. Qualitative data will be gathered through learner reflection journals, interviews, counseling reports, and teacher narrative observations.

A comparative analysis of pre-intervention and post-intervention data will be conducted to determine the effectiveness of Project RIKNA in reducing reading anxiety and enhancing reading performance. The results will serve as the basis for program refinement, policy recommendations, and instructional improvement.

Findings from the monitoring and evaluation process will be used to guide decision-making, strengthen implementation strategies, and support the institutionalization of effective reading intervention practices within the school.

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SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

This study assessed the level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) among Junior High School students at Pudtol Vocational High School using the Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS). The analysis of the data revealed that students experienced a moderate level of reading anxiety across the three identified dimensions. In terms of reading comprehension difficulty, the students obtained a category mean of 2.96, indicating moderate anxiety. This finding suggests that learners experienced anxiety when encountering unfamiliar vocabulary, difficulty interpreting the meaning of texts, and challenges in understanding English reading materials.

Similarly, the dimension of negative self-perception or beliefs yielded a category mean of 2.99, which was also interpreted as moderate anxiety. The results indicate that students experienced emotional and psychological concerns when engaging in reading tasks, particularly in situations involving fear of negative evaluation, embarrassment when answering questions incorrectly, and doubts about their reading ability in English. These findings demonstrate that learners' perceptions of their reading competence contribute to the presence of anxiety during reading activities.

In addition, the dimension of other anxiety-related indicators produced a category mean of 2.75, which likewise corresponds to a moderate level of anxiety. This result suggests that situational and performance-related factors, such as reading aloud, time pressure during reading tasks, and teacher questioning, moderately influence students' reading anxiety. These classroom-related conditions may heighten learners' tension and affect their ability to perform reading tasks effectively.

Based on the identified levels and sources of anxiety, the study developed Project RIKNA (Reading Intervention for Knowledge Navigation and Anxiety Management) as a targeted reading anxiety management program. The intervention was designed to address both the cognitive and affective dimensions of reading anxiety, focusing on improving vocabulary and comprehension skills while also strengthening learners' confidence and reducing fear of negative evaluation during reading activities.

Conclusion

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

1. Junior High School students demonstrated a moderate level of Foreign Language Reading Anxiety (FLRA) in terms of reading comprehension difficulty, indicating that vocabulary limitations and difficulty understanding English texts contribute to learners' anxiety.

2. Students also showed a moderate level of anxiety related to negative self-perception, suggesting that fear of negative evaluation, embarrassment, and low confidence affect their reading engagement.
3. A moderate level of anxiety was also observed in situational and performance-related indicators, particularly during oral reading, timed tasks, and teacher questioning.
4. Overall, FLRA is present among learners and is influenced by both cognitive (comprehension difficulty) and affective (confidence and fear-related) factors.
5. These findings confirm the need for a structured intervention; thus, Project RIKNA (Reading Intervention for Knowledge Navigation and Anxiety Management) was developed to address both reading skill deficits and reading-related anxiety.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Department of Education (DepEd) Officials may support the integration of anxiety-responsive reading interventions in school literacy programs to address both reading skills and learners' emotional barriers.
2. School Administrators may adopt and institutionalize Project RIKNA as a structured reading intervention program and provide support in scheduling, monitoring, and resource allocation.
3. English Teachers are encouraged to implement anxiety-reducing instructional strategies such as vocabulary scaffolding, guided reading, positive reinforcement, and flexible assessment to improve learners' confidence and comprehension.
4. Guidance Counselors may strengthen counseling support focused on reading anxiety management, confidence-building, and emotional regulation strategies for learners experiencing moderate FLRA.
5. Students are encouraged to actively participate in reading intervention activities and practice reading strategies consistently to improve comprehension and gradually reduce reading anxiety.
6. Future Researchers may further validate Project RIKNA and explore related variables such as reading motivation, self-efficacy, and intervention effectiveness using experimental research designs.

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