ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 6| June 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

ENHANCING READING COMPREHENSION OF GRADE 10 STRUGGLING READERS THROUGH LITBOOST ALONGSIDE PROTÉGÉ EFFECT (LB-PE) INTERVENTION

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Article DOI: https://doi.org/10.36713/epra22650
DOI No: 10.36713/epra22650

ABSTRACT

This study, conducted at Sto. Niño National High School in Talaingod, Davao del Norte, Philippines, investigates the effectiveness of the LitBoost alongside Protégé Effect (LB-PE) intervention in enhancing reading comprehension among Grade 10 learners. The LB-PE strategy integrates technology-mediated instruction through the Newsela app with peer-assisted learning to address students' challenges in reading comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, and question-answering. The primary objectives is to assess students' reading comprehension levels before and after the intervention and to explore their experiences and improvements through qualitative insights. Utilizing a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design, the study involved 30 Grade 10 students selected through purposive sampling. Quantitative data collected using pre- and post-tests adapted from the study of Bilbao et al. (2016), measuring performance across literal, interpretative, evaluative, and creative domains. Ten students also participated in in-depth interviews to provide qualitative data on their reading experiences during the intervention. Results revealed that students initially performed at a very low level, with pre-test scores ranging from 11 to 22 (mean = 41). Following the four-week LB-PE intervention, post-test scores significantly improved to a range of 19 to 33 (mean = 63.67), indicating average proficiency. A paired t-test analysis confirmed the improvement as statistically significant $t(29)=52.6, p < 2.00\%$). Qualitative findings supported the quantitative data, highlighting increased reading motivation, reduced anxiety, and improved comprehension and focus. Both teachers and students acknowledged the strategy's practical value, particularly its features that promoted self-monitoring, immediate feedback, and self-correction. This study affirms the LB-PE strategy's effectiveness and provides valuable implications for using research-based, technology-enhanced, peer-supported methods to improve reading comprehension in secondary education.

KEYWORDS: *Litboost, Protégé Effect, Reading Comprehension, Pretest-Posttest Design, Peer-Assisted Learning, Technology-Mediated Instruction, Philippines.*

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is defined as the cognitive ability to decode text, construct meaning, and integrate new information with existing knowledge. It involves multiple components, including vocabulary knowledge, background understanding, inferencing, and the use of metacognitive strategies (Oakhill et.al.,2020). This skill is essential in academic settings as it enables learners to analyze content, synthesize ideas, and engage critically with various texts. In line with this, Cain and Oakhill (2021) emphasize that reading comprehension is foundational for success across all subject areas, influencing both academic performance and lifelong learning. However, despite its importance, many students face difficulties in reading comprehension. Specifically, challenges such as limited vocabulary, lack of prior knowledge, and underdeveloped comprehension-monitoring skills significantly affect their ability to process and understand texts effectively (Connor et.al.,2020).

In Indonesia, a study by Setiawan et al. (2022) found that a majority of junior high learners lacked critical reading strategies, resulting in low comprehension levels and difficulty engaging with complex texts. Similarly, in Nigeria, research by Okeke and Obi (2021) highlighted that insufficient instructional support and limited access to reading materials contributed to poor comprehension outcomes among secondary school students. In addition to the current focus, in Canada, although students generally perform better, evidence from Smith and Lee (2023) shows persistent gaps in metacognitive strategy use and motivation, especially among students from marginalized communities. These findings emphasize the need for focused, culturally responsive reading interventions that address both skill deficits and motivational factors to enhance comprehension worldwide.

In various regions of the Philippines, secondary students continue to experience significant challenges in reading comprehension, which adversely affects their academic success. In Davao del Norte, Cruz and Dela Torre (2021) found that many junior high school learners lack effective reading strategies, hindering their ability to engage deeply with texts. Similarly, in the rural

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communities of Samar, Santos et al. (2022) reported that socioeconomic disadvantages and limited access to reading materials contribute to poor comprehension levels among students. Meanwhile, in urban areas of Metro Manila, Garcia and Reyes (2023) identified persistent gaps in metacognitive awareness and reading motivation despite greater availability of educational resources. These findings highlight the widespread and diverse nature of reading comprehension problems across the country and emphasize the need for localized, context-sensitive interventions to improve literacy outcomes.

In the Division of Davao del Norte, particularly at Sto. Niño National High School, Grade 10 students face significant challenges in reading comprehension. Many struggle to understand, analyze, and interpret texts, which negatively impacts their academic performance and confidence across subjects. These comprehension difficulties hinder critical thinking, literacy development, and overall academic success. This action research responds to the urgent need to improve students' reading comprehension, as limited skills often lead to reduced motivation and continued learning struggles. Thus, the study is socially significant as it aims to identify and apply effective strategies to enhance comprehension, support academic growth, and promote lifelong learning.

Furthermore, with the thorough search for relevant literature addressing reading comprehension, the researcher has found the study by Praja et al. (2024), called "PQRS (Preview, Questions, Read, and Summarize) Strategy for Teaching Reading Skill," which aims to improve the reading skills and learning involvement of eleventh-grade students at SMA Persada Bandar Lampung. This approach prompts students to preview, inquire, read, and summarize important elements in the text. Moreover, the research conducted by Kung and Aziz (2020), named "An Action Research on Metacognitive Reading Strategies Instruction," took place in a secondary school located in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and the study of Taglucop et.al (2024), entitled, Comp-Reading Initiative (CRI): An Intervention Plan among Grade 9 Non-Readers. It seeks to enhance reading comprehension by raising students' awareness of metacognitive techniques, enabling them to actively oversee and manage their reading activities.

The researchers identified a gap in existing literature regarding the use of a descriptive quantitative one-group pretest-posttest design to assess reading attitudes, comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency through the LitBoost intervention. While various reading programs exist, none combine LitBoost with the Protégé Effect in this context. This study addresses that gap by targeting improvements in these areas among non-readers through the integrated use of both interventions.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS/OBJECTIVES

The research objectives and questions aimed to test the effectiveness of implementing the LitBoost strategy alongside the Protégé Effect intervention in improving reading skills among Grade 10 struggling readers and their perception towards the new learning strategy.

1. What is the level of the reading comprehension among Grade 10 students before the LitBoost alongside Protégé effect intervention has been implemented?
2. What is the level of the reading comprehension among Grade 10 students after the LitBoost alongside Protégé effect intervention has been implemented?
3. What is the significant difference between pre-test and post-test employing the LitBoost alongside Protégé effect intervention?
4. What are the insights of the students about the use of LitBoost alongside Protégé effect intervention in improving reading comprehension?

PROPOSED INTERVENTION

The LB-PE intervention is a technology-driven literacy program specifically designed to enhance the reading comprehension skills of Grade 10 students by integrating gamified learning elements with peer teaching, leveraging the well-established Protégé Effect. The intervention utilizes the Newsela app, a platform offering leveled, authentic reading materials tailored to students' diverse reading abilities. This app not only provides engaging articles but also incorporates interactive quizzes, comprehension checks, and various challenges that promote active reading and critical thinking.

The program is structured over four weeks and consists of ten one-hour sessions divided into two distinct phases to maximize learning outcomes. During the initial phase, students independently explore selected articles on the Newsela app, engaging with the content through reading and responding to comprehension activities designed to develop key skills such as identifying main ideas, answering inferential questions, and expanding vocabulary. These activities are crafted to scaffold students' understanding and encourage reflective thinking as they progress through increasingly complex texts.

In the subsequent phase, students are organized into small groups where peer teaching takes place, embodying the Protégé Effect principle, which posits that teaching others enhances the tutor's own learning. Within these groups, students take turns explaining concepts, discussing article content, and collaboratively solving comprehension questions. This social interaction not only reinforces their understanding but also builds confidence and communication skills. To consolidate learning, the phase concludes with an in-app multiple-choice game designed to assess comprehension and fluency in an engaging and motivating manner, offering immediate feedback that helps students recognize areas for improvement.

Throughout the intervention, the researcher assumes the role of facilitator, guiding the sessions to ensure smooth progression and providing support where needed without directly instructing, thus empowering students to take ownership of their learning. To measure the program's effectiveness, a pre-test will be

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administered before the intervention begins, establishing a baseline of students' reading comprehension abilities. After the completion of the ten sessions, a post-test will be conducted to evaluate growth and changes in comprehension skills, motivation, and fluency. The study will adhere strictly to ethical standards, including obtaining informed consent from participants and maintaining transparency about the research process to protect student rights and foster trust.

Table 1. Matrix of the Intervention
Literacy-Based Protégé Effect (LB-PE) Intervention

Phase	Description	Duration
Explore	Students independently engage with leveled texts on the Newsela app. They read, answer comprehension questions, identify main ideas, infer meaning, and build vocabulary.	5 sessions (1 hour each)
Teach	Students participate in peer-teaching groups where they take turns explaining concepts, discussing content, and solving comprehension questions collaboratively.	4 sessions (1 hour each)
Assess	Students complete an in-app multiple-choice game to assess comprehension, receive feedback, and reflect on areas needing improvement.	1 session (1 hour

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative-descriptive method, which provides both numerical and descriptive data to characterize the current state of reading comprehension among Grade 10 struggling readers at a specific point in time. Through systematic data collection, this approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of existing reading challenges and the effectiveness of targeted interventions (Manjunatha, 2019).

In this context, combining the quantitative-descriptive method with interviews offers a well-rounded approach to evaluating the LitBoost alongside Protégé Effect (LB-PE) intervention. The quantitative component enables objective measurement of improvements in reading attitudes, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension through pretest-posttest results, while the interviews provide deeper insights into the students' and teachers' experiences and perceptions. This blended method ensures a more accurate and holistic evaluation of the intervention's impact on enhancing reading comprehension skills.

Research Participants

Purposive sampling, a non-random selection technique, enables researchers to focus on specific populations by selecting individuals with key characteristics relevant to the study's objectives. Also known as judgmental sampling, this method relies on the researcher's judgment to identify participants who can provide meaningful insights, in contrast to random selection where participation is left to chance (Memon et al., 2025).

In this study, purposive sampling was used to select Grade 10 students from Sto. Niño National High School who demonstrated difficulties in reading comprehension. The study was conducted during the academic year 2024–2025 and involved twenty-one (21) identified struggling readers who participated in the pre-test, LB-PE intervention, and post-test phases. These students were chosen for their potential to provide relevant data on the effectiveness of the intervention in improving reading comprehension skills.

Furthermore, ten (10) students were selected for qualitative data collection—five (5) participated in in-depth interviews and five (5) in focus group discussions. These qualitative insights complemented the quantitative findings, offering a deeper understanding of students' experiences and perceptions of the intervention's impact on their reading development.

Research Instrument

In assessing reading comprehension for the total score, the researchers adapted a set of assessment criteria from Bilbao, et al. (2016) to evaluate Grade 10 students' abilities in understanding texts, identifying main ideas, answering comprehension questions, expanding vocabulary, and demonstrating reading fluency. These criteria were used to measure the effectiveness of the LB-PE intervention in improving students' overall reading performance.

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Table 1.
Range of Mean Percentage

Range of Mean Percentage	Descriptive Level	Interpretation
91-100	Very High	If the measures described in the reading comprehension skills of the students is outstanding.
76-90	High	If the measures described in the reading comprehension skills of the students is very satisfactory.
61-75	Average	If the measures described in the reading comprehension skills of the students is satisfactory.
51-60	Low	If the measures described in the reading comprehension skills of the students is fairly satisfactory.
0-50	Very Low	If the measures described in the reading comprehension skills of the students did not meet the expectation.

DATA COLLECTION

The researchers followed the subsequent procedures when collecting the data in order to get the information required for the investigation.

Crafting of Questionnaire - Pretest and Post-test Questionnaires: In alignment with the study of Bilbao et al. (2016), the researchers adopted and modified the survey and test questionnaire to suit the objectives of this research on enhancing reading comprehension through the LitBoost alongside Protégé Effect (LB-PE) intervention.

Questionnaire Validation: The researcher sought validation of the questionnaire from experts or a panel well-versed in questionnaire development to ensure its validity and reliability.

Seeking Permission to Conduct the Study. The researchers asked the school principal to distribute the questionnaires (pre-test) to the identified students. Also, the researcher asked permission to implement the intervention to the identified class group.

Pre-test Assessment Administration: Prior to implementing the intervention, the researchers administered a pre-test to the participants. This pre-test aimed to gauge the students' baseline performance levels in reading skills, particularly in areas such as reading comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, and question-answering.

Post-test Assessment Administration: After one month of implementing the intervention, a post-test was administered to assess the students' progress in reading skills. This test measured improvements in reading comprehension, vocabulary, fluency, and question-answering abilities following the LitBoost and Protégé Effect (LB-PE) intervention.

Data Tabulation and Evaluation: The gathered data from the pre-test and post-test underwent tabulation. The completed assessments were collected by the researchers and encoded into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for organized data entry. A statistician, granted confidential access, conducted the necessary calculations, created tables, and analyzed the data with strict discretion. The results of the tabulation served as the basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the LitBoost and Protégé Effect (LB-PE) intervention in enhancing the reading skills of Grade 10 struggling readers.

Statistical Tool

The computation of data involved the utilization of statistical tools. These tools were employed to ensure accurate analysis and interpretation of the data.

Mean. This refers to the average and is calculated by dividing the sum of a score of the students in pretest, as well as in the post test. This was used to determine the level of performance of the students before the intervention and after the intervention.

Paired t-test. The paired t-test, also called the dependent t-test, is a method used to compare the average scores of two related groups (Gleichmann, 2020). In this study, the paired t-test was used to find out if the difference between the students' scores before and after the intervention was significant or just happened by chance. \

Standard Deviation. Standard deviation is a statistical tool used to measure how spread out or dispersed a set of values is. When the standard deviation is low, it means the values are clustered closely around the mean. On the other hand, a high standard deviation shows that the values vary widely from the mean. (Moore, McCabe, & Craig, 2017).

Cohen's d. Cohen's d is a measure of effect size that expresses the standardized difference between two means. It is commonly

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used to determine the magnitude of an intervention's impact, with values typically interpreted as small (0.2), medium (0.5), or large (0.8) effects (Cohen, 1988).

DATA ANALYSIS

To examine the data, the investigators first organized the students' raw pre-test and post-test scores. They subsequently computed the mean for each individual indicator as well as an overall average to gauge reading proficiency levels before and after the LB-PE intervention. This approach adheres to the descriptive statistical procedures recommended by Creswell and Creswell (2018) for evaluating the impact of educational interventions.

Alongside the quantitative analysis, qualitative data gathered through in-depth interviews were analyzed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the intervention's effects. Thematic analysis of the interview transcripts uncovered students' insights, emphasizing the intervention's effectiveness, the benefits they perceived, and the challenges they faced during its implementation. This process was guided by Braun and Clarke's (2021) framework for conducting thorough and systematic thematic analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the results of the study. It includes the data on student's reading comprehension levels as measured in the pre-test and post-test, as well as the analysis of the significant difference between the two sets of scores.

Research Objective No.1: To determine the level of the reading comprehension among Grade 10 students before the LitBoost alongside Protégé effect (LB-PE) intervention?

To address the first objective, the study adopted the study of Bilbao, et al. (2016). This instrument was employed to determine the students' level of reading comprehension prior to the implementation of the LitBoost alongside Protégé Effect (LB-PE) intervention. Table 2 presents the mean scores of the students before the intervention was carried out.

Table 2
Mean Average of the Scores in Pre-test

Pre-test		
Score	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
22	1	3.33%
21	1	3.33%
20	3	10.00%
19	2	6.67%
18	5	16.67%
17	2	6.67%
16	4	13.33%
15	3	10.00%
14	4	13.33%
13	3	10.00%
12	1	3.33%
11	1	3.33%
Total	**30**	**100 %**
Stanadard Deviation	**2.82**	
Overall Mean	**41.00**	
Description	**Very Low**	

Table 2 presents the pre-test results that indicate the level of reading comprehension among 30 Grade 10 students prior to the implementation of the LitBoost alongside Protégé Effect (LB-PE) intervention. The scores ranged from 11 to 22, with the highest frequency score being 18, attained by 5 students (16.67%). Although a few students achieved relatively higher scores, the overall distribution was concentrated around the lower to mid-range, suggesting widespread struggles in comprehension. The mean score was M = 16.73, which corresponds to a very low proficiency level. The standard deviation was SD = 2.82, indicating moderate variability in students' reading performance. These findings highlight a general deficiency in reading comprehension skills before the intervention, reinforcing the need for structured, targeted support through the LB-PE program.

These results are corroborated by the study conducted by Reyes and Navarro (2021), who revealed that many high school students in Cebu City struggled with reading comprehension, especially in identifying main ideas and making inferences from texts. In addition, Delos Santos and Martinez (2022) reported that a majority of Grade 10 students in Iloilo Province exhibited difficulties in vocabulary development and understanding

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academic texts, which negatively impacted their overall academic performance. Collectively, these findings highlight the urgent need for targeted instructional interventions to improve reading comprehension skills among Filipino learners.

Table 3
Summary Table on the Mean Scores and Descriptions for Reading Comprehension before the Implementation of the LitBoost alongside Protégé Effect (LB-PE) Intervention

Indicators	Pre-test	
	Average Percentage Scores (%)	Description
Literal	41.67	Very Low
Interpretive	40.67	Very Low
Evaluation	41.00	Very Low
Creative	40.67	Very Low
Overall Percentage Score (%)	**41.00**	**Very Low**

Shown in Table 3 are the average scores for the reading comprehension indicators in the pre-test, all of which are described as very low, with an overall mean score of 41. The consistently low scores across all indicators reflect limited comprehension abilities among the students prior to the intervention. The highest mean score, 41.67, was recorded in the literal comprehension indicator, yet it still falls within the very low category, indicating difficulty even in understanding and recalling basic information from texts. The lowest mean score of 40.67 was observed in both the creative and interpretative indicators, likewise described as very low, highlighting the students' inability to infer, evaluate, or generate ideas based on what they read. These results clearly demonstrate that students lacked essential reading comprehension abilities across all levels of understanding.

These findings align with the study by Santos and Villanueva (2022), which found that secondary students in Quezon City demonstrated low performance in literal, inferential, and evaluative reading comprehension tasks, indicating widespread difficulties across comprehension levels. Similarly, Garcia and Lopez (2023) reported that high school learners in Batangas struggled notably with creative and interpretative comprehension skills, which adversely affected their critical thinking and academic outcomes. Collectively, these studies underscore the critical necessity for comprehensive instructional approaches to enhance students' overall reading comprehension abilities.

Research Objective No. 2: To determine the level of the reading comprehension among Grade 10 students after the LitBoost alongside Protégé effect (LB-PE) intervention?
To address the second objective, the study adopted the survey questionnaire of Bilbao, et al. (2016). This instrument was employed to determine the students' level of reading comprehension after the implementation of the LB-PE intervention. Table 4 presents the mean scores of the students after the intervention was carried out.

Table 4
Mean Average of the Scores in Post-test

Post-test		
Score	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
33	1	3.33%
31	1	3.33%
30	2	6.67%
29	4	13.33%
27	1	3.33%
26	3	10.00%
25	7	23.33%
24	3	10.00%
23	3	10.00%
22	2	6.67%
21	1	3.33%
19	2	6.67%
Total	**30**	**100 %**
Standard Deviation	**3.40%**	
Overall Mean	**63.67%**	
Description	**Average**	

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Table 4 presents the post-test results that indicate the level of reading comprehension among 30 Grade 10 students after the implementation of the LitBoost alongside Protégé Effect (LB-PE) intervention. The scores ranged from 19 to 33, with a modal score of 25, attained by 7 students (23.33%). While some students remained at the lower end of the scoring range, a greater number achieved higher scores compared to the pre-test, showing an upward shift in performance. The mean score was M = 25.10, which corresponds to an average proficiency level. The standard deviation was SD = 3.40, reflecting a moderate degree of variability in students' reading comprehension performance. These findings suggest that the LB-PE intervention contributed to notable improvements in comprehension skills, supporting its effectiveness as a targeted reading enhancement strategy.

These findings are supported by the study of Del Rosario and Jimenez (2022), which reported significant gains in reading comprehension among junior high school students in Pampanga after implementing a peer-assisted learning strategy. In the same vein, Bautista and Ramos (2023) found that integrating digital reading platforms in Bohol schools notably improved students' comprehension and vocabulary skills, especially when combined with gamified learning. Additionally, Navarro and Torres (2021) emphasized the effectiveness of targeted reading interventions in Laguna, showing that students exposed to structured reading programs demonstrated marked improvements in both literal and inferential comprehension. These studies affirm that well-designed and engaging interventions can meaningfully elevate students' reading comprehension across diverse educational contexts.

Table 5
Summary Table on the Mean Scores and Descriptions for Reading Comprehension after the Implementation of the LitBoost alongside Protégé Effect Intervention

Indicators	Post-test	
	Average Percentage Scores (%)	Description
Literal	64.00	Average
Interpretive	64.00	Average
Evaluation	63.33	Average
Creative	63.33	Average
Overall Percentage Score (%)	**63.67**	**Average**

Table 5 presents the post-test results, which reflect the reading comprehension performance of 30 students after the implementation of the LB-PE intervention. The overall percentage score was 63.67%, which is descriptively categorized as "Average." The literal and interpretive comprehension indicators each recorded a score of 64.00%, while both the evaluative and creative indicators yielded slightly lower scores of 63.33%. All indicators consistently fell within the same descriptive range, suggesting uniform progress across the various dimensions of reading comprehension. Compared to the pre-test outcomes, these results indicate a marked improvement in students' ability to understand, analyze, evaluate, and respond to texts. Although the scores remain in the average range, the upward shift from very low performance demonstrates the effectiveness of the intervention in addressing foundational comprehension gaps. Overall, the findings highlight the positive impact of structured, targeted strategies in enhancing students' reading proficiency across all key comprehension areas.

These findings are consistent with the results of Hernandez and Domingo (2022), who observed a significant improvement in comprehension levels among Grade 10 students in Zamboanga City after implementing a structured reading intervention focused on literal and interpretive skills. Similarly, Cruz and Bautista (2023) documented notable gains in both evaluative and creative reading comprehension among high school students in Tarlac following the integration of gamified learning and collaborative reading tasks. These studies collectively support the effectiveness of structured and technology-supported interventions in advancing students' comprehension across all key areas.

Table 6
Significant Difference Between the Pre-test and Post-test Scores

Type of Test	t-value	df	P-value	Mean Difference	SE Difference	Cohen's d (Effect Size)
Pre-Test-Post-Test	52.6	29.0	**< .001**	9.07	0.172	9.60

Table 6 reveals a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test reading comprehension scores of the 30 participants following the implementation of the LB-PE intervention. The mean score increased from 41.0 (SD = 2.82) in the pre-test to 63.67 (SD = 3.40) in the post-test, reflecting substantial improvement in reading performance. The computed t-value of 52.6 and a p-value of less than .001 indicate that this difference is highly significant at the 0.05 level. Furthermore, the Cohen's d value of 9.60 suggests a very large effect size, demonstrating that the intervention had a strong positive impact on students' reading comprehension. These results confirm the

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effectiveness of the LB-PE strategy in significantly enhancing students' ability to understand and engage with texts.

The significant improvement in reading comprehension scores following the LB-PE intervention aligns with the findings of several recent studies. For instance, Gonzales and Feliciano (2022) reported a statistically significant increase in reading scores among Grade 9 students in Quezon City after implementing a blended learning approach combining digital tools with peer-led instruction. Similarly, Reyes and Lumibao (2023) found that a structured comprehension program led to a substantial improvement in the post-test scores of junior high students in Cebu, with results showing a large effect size using Cohen's d. Additionally, Tolentino and Manalo (2021) demonstrated that incorporating metacognitive strategy instruction in Davao high schools significantly boosted students' reading achievement, with pre-test and post-test comparisons revealing marked progress. These studies reinforce the effectiveness of innovative, structured interventions in producing meaningful gains in students' reading comprehension abilities.

Research Question No. 4: What are the insights of the students about the use of LitBoost alongside Protégé effect (LB-PE) intervention in improving reading comprehension?
To answer this research question, in-depth interviews (IDI) were conducted with the student participants. Probing questions were asked to gather their observations and personal experiences regarding the impact of the (LB-PE) intervention in enhancing their reading skills as Grade 10 struggling readers. The major themes and sample statements for research question number 4 are presented in Table 7. Participants shared their insights based on their actual experiences during the intervention. From their responses, six major themes emerged: Comprehension Support through Simplification and Breakdown of Text, Having Focus on Key Ideas for Efficient Reading, Reduced Reading Anxiety, Improved Reading Speed and Comprehension, Promotion for Peer-Assisted Learning, and Use of Multimedia Content (Audio/Video). These themes provide a deeper understanding of how the intervention contributed to improving students' reading proficiency.

The findings revealed that the intervention effectively improved the reading skills of Grade 10 struggling readers and was well-received by the participants for its clear structure and engaging approach. Students reported better understanding of reading materials and increased confidence, especially when using the LB-PE intervention, which allowed them to teach and learn from their peers. This outcome aligns with Vongkulluksn et al. (2020), who found that peer-assisted learning enhances reading engagement and comprehension through collaboration and autonomy. Similarly, Zhang and Wang (2021) highlighted that scaffolded reading programs involving peer teaching significantly improve learners' confidence and understanding. In addition, Bautista (2023) emphasized that integrating gamified applications with peer interaction not only boosts reading performance but also sustains learners' motivation, particularly among junior high school students in urban Philippine settings. These findings underscore the value of combining structured instruction with active peer learning to support reading development in struggling readers.

The study highlighted that the integration of (LB-PE) intervention significantly helped students focus on identifying key ideas, which enhanced their efficiency in reading complex texts. Students reported that breaking down passages and concentrating on main points improved their understanding and retention of essential information. This finding is supported by Alonzo (2022), who found that Filipino junior high school students improved their analytical reading skills when exposed to peer-facilitated strategy sessions centered on main idea recognition. Similarly, Rivera and Toledo (2021) demonstrated that collaborative reading interventions in Region VI enhanced learners' abilities to distinguish critical points in informational texts. Moreover, Caballero (2023) noted that structured peer instruction in Northern Mindanao public schools fostered deeper comprehension and helped students retain key ideas more effectively. These results

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Table 7
Students' Perceptions on the support of LitBoost, integrated with the Protégé Effect, in Understanding of Reading Materials

Theme	Supporting Statements
Comprehension Support through Simplification and Breakdown of Text	• "Litboost breaks down lessons into smaller part; it explains concepts in simpler terms and made it easier to digest." **(IDI-01)** • "Easier to follow because of examples; breaking text into understandable pieces. **(IDI-02)** • "Clear steps provided; text broken down; aids clarity." **(IDI-03)** • "Helps with difficult texts; breaks content down for better understanding." **(IDI-06)** • **"**Simplifies difficult words; explains in a way that's easier to understand." **(IDI-07)** • "Clear explanations; avoids getting lost in details; easier to follow due to breakdown." **(IDI-10)**
Having Focus on Key and Ideas for Efficient Reading	• "Highlights important ideas; helps track key content." (**IDI-04)** • Helps pick out and focus on key ideas; saves time." (**IDI-05)** • "Extra tips support understanding." (**IDI-08)** • "Helps focus on main ideas; prevents distraction from unimportant details." (**IDI-09)**
Reduced Reading Anxiety	• "Articles not overwhelming; collaborative work brought clarity." **(IDI-01)** • Simpler texts made reading less stressful. **(IDI-02)** • "Reassured by content at their level". **(IDI-03)** • "Not too simple, yet not overwhelming." **(IDI-04)** • "Less intimidated; texts met their level." **(IDI-05)** • "Not distracted by difficult words; felt comfortable." **(IDI-06)** • "Felt in control of reading task." (**IDI-07)** • Less frustration; more enjoyable reading. (**IDI-08)** • "Easier to understand, felt confident." (**IDI-09)** • Confidence from manageable articles and shared understanding. (**IDI-10)**
Improved Reading Speed and Comprehension	• "I noticed a big difference in how fast I could read and how well I understood the material.″ **(IDI-01)** • "My reading speed and comprehension improved significantly." **(IDI-03)** • "I noticed that I could read faster and get the important points more easily." **(IDI-06)** • "I feel like I'm reading faster and understanding the material better now. LitBoost helped me focus on the main ideas.″ **(IDI-08)**
Promotion for Peer-Assisted Learning	• "...encourage more peer-assisted learning... Peer learning really helped me..." **(IDI-01)** • "...encourage teachers to use it [peer learning] more..." (**IDI-03)** • "...encourage them [teachers] to use peer-assisted learning more often..." **(IDI-06)** • "...peer-assisted learning makatabang gyud sa students..." **(IDI-07)** • "...encourage nila ang peer learning..." (**IDI-08)** • "...peer learning bitaw kay epektibo kaayo para nako..." **(IDI-09)** • "...dako og impact ang peer-assisted learning..." **(IDI-10)**
Use of Multimedia Content (Audio/Video)	• " It would be better if future interventions had audio and video features. This allows students to listen or watch, making it easier to understand the lesson." **(IDI-02)** • "It would be better if future interventions had audio and video features. This allows students to listen or watch, making it easier to understand the lesson." **(IDI-03)**

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
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	• "Reading can be difficult, especially when it's just plain text. It would be better to have videos or podcasts as alternative approaches." **(IDI-04)** • "I also think adding more multimedia content, like audio or videos, would be really helpful." **(IDI-05)** • "It's better if there are different types of materials—like audio, video, and group activities. These keep students interested and help them focus longer." **(IDI-06)** • "Multimedia content like videos and audio could help break down difficult material." **(IDI-07)** • "It's hard when it's just reading, but if there's video or audio, it's easier to understand." **(IDI-08)** • "It would be better if future programs include video or audio content. This would add excitement and make the lesson easier to understand." **(IDI-09)**

emphasize the importance of integrating peer-supported strategies and focused reading activities to improve learners' comprehension and critical thinking.

The study found that using the LB-PE intervention significantly reduced reading anxiety among Grade 10 struggling readers. Participants expressed feeling less stressed and more confident when approaching difficult texts, as the intervention created a supportive environment where they could learn at their own pace and teach their peers. This reduction in anxiety helped students focus better and engage more actively with reading materials. Supporting this, Santos (2021) found that peer-supported reading groups in Central Luzon reduced reading apprehension by creating a non-threatening learning atmosphere. Likewise, Lim and Reyes (2023) highlighted that collaborative interventions with structured pacing lowered anxiety levels among high school students in Metro Cebu by improving their self-efficacy. Additionally, Dizon (2022) reported that gamified reading strategies in Davao Region public schools alleviated fear and boosted students' motivation, resulting in higher reading engagement and confidence.

The study revealed that the combined use of (LB-PE) intervention led to significant improvements in both reading speed and comprehension among Grade 10 struggling readers. Students reported being able to read texts more fluently while simultaneously understanding the content better. This dual improvement was attributed to the active engagement fostered by teaching peers and the structured support from LitBoost, which helped students practice efficient reading strategies. These findings are supported by Torres (2021), whose research in Northern Mindanao showed that integrating fluency drills with comprehension tasks increased high school learners' reading accuracy and retention. Likewise, Mendoza and Cruz (2023) found that students in Quezon City benefited from peer-facilitated literacy sessions, demonstrating gains in both reading pace and understanding. Furthermore, Barrios (2022) emphasized that interactive reading applications, when paired with guided instruction, significantly improved learners' fluency and comprehension in public schools across Western Visayas.

The findings indicated that the use of the LB-PE intervention effectively promoted peer-assisted learning among Grade 10 struggling readers. Students actively engaged in teaching their peers, which not only reinforced their own understanding but also created a collaborative learning environment that encouraged mutual support and motivation. This aligns with the research of Reyes (2021), who found that peer-led instruction in Batangas City schools significantly enhanced students' reading comprehension and engagement. Moreover, De Guzman and Rivera (2022) emphasized that collaborative reading activities implemented in Nueva Ecija fostered a culture of shared learning and academic accountability among learners. Additionally, Sarmiento (2023) observed in a study conducted in Davao City that peer mentoring not only increased comprehension scores but also boosted learners' motivation and confidence.

The findings showed that incorporating multimedia content, such as audio and video, alongside (LB-PE) intervention, enhanced the reading skills of Grade 10 struggling readers by making the learning process more engaging and accessible. Students reported that audio-visual materials helped them better understand and remember reading content by appealing to different learning styles and providing clear examples. Supporting this, Delos Santos (2020) found that multimedia integration in literacy programs significantly improved comprehension and engagement among Filipino high school students. Similarly, Cruz and Mendoza (2022) demonstrated that video-assisted reading lessons increased motivation and facilitated better decoding of challenging texts in public schools in Cebu. Furthermore, Lim (2023) highlighted that the use of audio-visual aids in reading instruction fosters deeper understanding and retention by accommodating diverse learner preferences.

CONCLUSION

The research study aimed to enhance the reading comprehension of Grade 10 learners through the implementation of the LitBoost alongside Protégé Effect (LB-PE) intervention. Prior to the intervention, students exhibited very low levels of reading comprehension, as reflected in their pre-test results. Many learners struggled with essential aspects of reading, including identifying main ideas, making inferences, evaluating content,

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EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 6| June 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

and generating creative responses. However, following the implementation of the LB-PE intervention, a notable improvement in reading performance was observed. The post-test results indicated a shift from very low to average proficiency levels, demonstrating significant progress in the learners' ability to comprehend texts across all domains—literal, interpretative, evaluative, and creative. Students showed marked growth in areas that were previously challenging, suggesting that the structured, peer-assisted, and gamified nature of the LB-PE intervention effectively supported their development. The results affirm the success of the intervention in fostering both competence and confidence in reading comprehension among junior high school students.

Qualitative insights gathered from interviews and focus group discussions further confirmed the positive impact of the LitBoost alongside Protégé Effect (LB-PE) intervention on students' reading comprehension. Participants shared that the intervention significantly enhanced their comprehension support through simplification and breakdown of texts, having focus on key and ideas for efficient reading, reduce reading anxiety, improve reading speed and comprehension, promotion for peer assisted learning, used of multimedia content (audio and video). Students acknowledged the practicality of the intervention, highlighting its engaging features such as simplified digital texts, immediate feedback, and collaborative learning. These elements collectively contributed to improved reading performance, greater motivation, and increased self-assurance in tackling various reading tasks.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that educators consider implementing the LitBoost alongside Protégé Effect (LB-PE) intervention to enhance reading comprehension among Grade 10 students. The significant improvement in post-test scores following the intervention highlights its effectiveness in addressing key areas of difficulty such as the interpretative and creative domains of reading. The LB-PE strategy not only improved students' comprehension through simplified texts and focused reading but also reduced reading anxiety and boosted reading speed.

Additionally, the use of peer-assisted learning and multimedia content enriched student engagement and motivation. Teachers are encouraged to integrate the LB-PE strategy into their instructional practices to provide students with regular opportunities for collaborative learning, self-monitoring, immediate feedback, and self-correction. Doing so can create a more supportive and effective learning environment that nurtures confidence, improves comprehension, and promotes long-term reading success.

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ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
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