

# THE IMPACT OF CAR PROGRAM IN MOTIVATING STUDENTS TO READ: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

Rhoda Mae A. Dinopol<sup>1</sup> and Dhan Timothy M. Ibojo<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Faculty member, Tubo-Tubo National High School, DepEd-Division of Davao de Oro, Philippines

<sup>2</sup> Professor, Graduate School, Assumption College of Nabunturan, Davao de Oro, Philippines

## ABSTRACT

*The CAR Program (Competency, Autonomy and Relatedness) is a reading approach to motivate students to read. This study is anchored by Self-Determination Theory (SDT) which composed of three components: Competency, Autonomy and Relatedness. In the context of education, the need for autonomy refers to an individual's understanding of having option and a platform (or agency) in an educational activity; the desire for competence indicates that someone is able to effectively utilize a skill or recognize materials within an area of study; and the need for relatedness refers to the someone's feeling of being appreciated, valued, and linked to other people. These three are needed to work together to achieved reading motivation. The study utilized a Quasi-Experimental quantitative research design. A pretest and posttest was administered to 48 frustrated Grade 8 students of Tubo-Tubo National High School. Findings indicated that there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest results. This suggests that this program had potentially enhanced the word recognition of struggling students.*

**Keywords:** - Reading, Word Recognition, Motivation, Competency, Autonomy, Relatedness, Self Determination Theory

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Proficiency in reading is a crucial skill for learners learning the English language. In contemporary culture, it amplifies general proficiency and provides access to crucial information in both professional and educational settings. Students who have a limited understanding of grammar, vocabulary, and subject may find reading challenging. Encountering frustration when reading might lead to less motivation. The negative result of not reading is a significant concern for many of our children, highlighting the vital need of reading. Efficiently motivating students can swiftly overcome the obstacles to reading. The concepts of competence, autonomy, and relatedness, known as the "CAR" principles, are essential for promoting independent motivation.

Therefore, it seems that the percentage of readers who are experiencing difficulties is increasing. The PIRLS study conducted in Germany showed a rise in the percentage of impoverished fourth-grade German pupils from 2011 to 2016. Specifically, the rate of children facing difficulties increased from 16.9% to 18.9%. Profound reading disabilities have extensive detrimental consequences. These factors lead to a widespread absence of academic achievement and sometimes a significant decrease in desire for all core subjects.

Furthermore, reading motivation remains an area of concern in literacy training, especially at higher education institutions. Tertiary education students at Leyte Normal University are required to read complex academic works in both print and digital formats. These writings are sometimes lengthy and difficult to understand. Educators can drive students to read by using inter textual resources that align with their schemata, interests, and future consequences. Implementing instructional changes, such as inter textual methods, can alleviate the discouragement of dealing with pupils who lack motivation to read ( Navarrete 2019).

In Davao de Oro particularly in Tubo-Tubo National High School in Monkayo, a lot of students tend to be unmotivated to read and belongs to the frustrated readers or worst nonreaders that perhaps one of the effect of the gap that Pandemic brought to our educational system. Students' reading and comprehension skills are only restricted to the

modules they must complete in order to pass; they didn't comprehend the context, which leads to poor comprehension and struggling readers. This issue is prevalent in other schools as well, and one of the main concerns is how to motivate learners to read given that their attention spans are getting shorter and shorter.

Thus, based on the preceding literature it appeared urgent to conduct this study on the Impact of CAR Program (Competency, Autonomy and Relatedness) in motivating students to read for the grade 8 students. It is crucial to offer support in reading that inspires kids to read, since this is essential for them to make substantial improvements in their reading skills above their usual pace of learning. When learners are strongly driven, they are more likely to learn proficiently and enjoy the process as well. This study held a strategic position as a foundation for future research development and could be used practically as a knowledge reference in delivering ideas orally or in writing.

### 1.1 Review of Related Literature

The purpose of this part was to review the relevant literature and research connected to the studies. It was provided and established a strong foundation for the study and provided readers with sufficient information about the variables under consideration. It focuses on the topic being investigated.

**Definition of Reading.** Reading is the process of extracting significance from documents, and it is crucial to emphasize that reading is a complex skill that requires understanding several interconnected bits of data. As a partial theory that places an emphasis on the reader's participation in the reading process, the explanation that was presented before is still as accurate as it has always been. Alternatively, it is advisable to expand the original statement to include recent advancements in the area that highlight the importance of texts and locations in the process of creating meaning (Pearson and Cervetti, 2015).

Purcell-Gates, Duke, and Stouffer (2016) argued that comprehending terms should extend beyond their traditional definition by considering the process within the context of "sociocultural constructed literacy practices." On the other hand, it is advisable to expand the original statement by including recent advancements in the area that highlight the importance of texts and locations in the procedure of creating meaning (Pearson and Cervetti, 2015).

**Importance of Reading.** Reading enhances the mind in a number of methods. To get started, comprehending whatever you receive is necessary. Reading phrases off a paper may assist you develop your capacity for analysis, recall recollections, and expand your imagination. The internet's interactive character may facilitate the development of young brains' capacity to engage in conversation, collaboration, and creative endeavors in distinctive ways. Given the intrinsically deceptive attributes of technology (Leu, Kinzer, Coiro, & Cammack, 2004), it has the capacity to foster creative thinking and continuous learning in individuals. Nevertheless, a wide array of decision-making, attention-monitoring, and cognitive capabilities are need to effectively use the potential of digital reading, including skills like choosing suitable search terms and obtaining and assessing information. Some of these talents have shown a tendency to seek additional investigation.

**Reading Motivation.** The enthusiasm of learners is a critical factor in attaining achievement in reading, as it results in a higher frequency of reading, hence improving essential literacy abilities (Brandt et al., 2021). Studies have demonstrated a noteworthy association between enthusiasm and the quantity of reading, as well as a robust connection among interest and the ability to read (Bates et al., 2016; Schiefele et al., 2016). Literacy instructors, including all educators, must maintain constant awareness of the imperative to not only deliver reading instruction but also foster activities that stimulate children's desire to read and cultivate students' enjoyment of reading (Brandt et al., 2021).

Schunk and Pajares (2009) state that individuals use their educational understanding of reading proficiency to enhance their self-esteem. Learners who have elevated confidence have higher trust in them and might view challenging reading tasks as difficulties that they may resolve, while learners who have poor self-confidence see studying challenges as limitations that can't conquer. Reading achievement does not mean that all young people will be competent, but it encourages self-worth. Because reading is a complicated job, children with poor self-efficacy frequently avoid more difficult reading activities, restricting progress. Students can identify as readers when they develop self-efficacy one's experience identity (Friedman et al., 2021).

**Reading Problems.** There are surely several impediments to reading. The results from the interviews and focus group interviews, as well as their conversations are presented for each variable. Although these characteristics cannot be considered in solitude, the division enabled me to examine the various perspectives in order to identify the perceived reading problems. According to Alexander (2005), reading must be approached from a new perspective in order to open

up new paths for learning assistance. Alexander recommends a lifetime progressive approach to reading. Alexander (2005) states that reading comprehension is a lifelong process that progress through clearly defined phases. She believes that readers can never achieve perfect reading proficiency. Throughout every phase of their cognitive growth, all individuals have difficulties while engaging with written language.

Even qualified investigators are regularly presented with literature requiring an alternative interpretation style or the use of specific resources. Similarly, all students are practicing their reading abilities. As learners begin and finish their time in school, they will meet a continuum. Alexander (2005) argues that the usage of contrasting words like 'struggling' and 'successful' fails to sufficiently account for the intricacies of continuous reading growth. She showcases a wide range of reader profiles, such as both instances of success and failure. Based on these perspectives, every student has the capacity to develop into a proficient reader who can achieve the reading requirements of college. They only need to be provided the appropriate support and attention.

**Competency.** It refers to a person's willingness to effectively use a skill or comprehend information within a subject (Ryan & Deci 2017). Every year, more schools use competency-based instruction at a higher level. It is a substantial shift in school society, organizations, and instruction that aims to ensure the success of all children while correcting the root causes of the old system. Sturgis, Patrick, and Pittenger (2011) were the first to establish a concept of learning that focuses only on skills. This innovative idea was presented at the National Summit for K-12 Competency-Based Education.

Moreover, there are illustrations, charts, tables, and graphic organizers can all be used to supplement texts and improve understanding. For example, utilizing visualizations has been found to assist learners understand how texts work (Jiang & Grabe 2007). Provide reading materials to improve comprehension and involvement. Incorporate summary essays (which highlight themes, narratives, and characters), comprehension concerns, and post-reading activities. To make reading easier, include definitions for crucial terminology. It is crucial for educating learners on the right and effective use of dictionaries. This can have long-term benefits because children who understand how to use a dictionary are more inclined to maintain their views as proficient throughout a variety of reading endeavors in the years to come.

**Autonomy.** It relates to someone's perception that they have option and power (or agency) in an educational process. (Ryan & Deci 2017). Learners' requirements for autonomy are met when they believe they have control over their own actions. Opportunities to pick subjects and assignments, as well as elements such as incentives and punishments, may all affect their feeling of autonomy feedback. Establishing the idea of "learner independence," which is seen as a complex and diverse framework, is a significant difficulty due to the enormous amount of written material available.

The structured explanations of which may be tackled from several angles (Knapp & Seidlhofer & Widdowson 2009). Autonomy is referred to as the capacity to steer the method of learning: "to assert that a student is autonomous is that indicates that he has the capacity of implementing oversight of one's own acquiring knowledge and absolutely nothing more...to take responsible for one's education is to carry duty to every choice related to all fields of this learning, according to Benson (2003).

**Relatedness.** It relates to the the individual's feeling of being loved, cherished, and linked to others (Ryan & Deci 2017). Relatedness allows students to connect with one another and their peers and instructors. The need for relatedness is equated with the desire for interpersonal connection. Human beings' social character and connectivity with others are referred to as relatedness. It is conceivable to declare that the individual meets the criteria for being linked with sensibility, affection, compassion, and societal acceptance. Individuals must form social connections with other individuals.

The self-determination hypothesis regards this urge as necessary for people to feel psychologically well. The self-determination hypothesis specifies three basic psychological demands that are critical to people's psychological wellbeing. These are the criteria for autonomy, competency, and relatedness. When these expectations are satisfied, people feel psychologically good. In other words, these are people who recognize themselves, value themselves, can make free decisions, are aware of their desires and what they can do, have effective relationships with their environment, and feel a sense of being connected to the society in which they live (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

**Self Determination Theory.** Academic success, resilience, and achievement are associated with students who demonstrate self-driven motivation, marked by their curiosity, passion, and steadfast principles. As per the theory of self-determination, when individuals are motivated by their own choices, it hinges on meeting three essential psychological

needs: a sense of connection, capability, and independence. These needs are addressed through the supportive actions of influential figures who cater to each other's requirements.

The drive and enthusiasm of students has a substantial influence on the quality of their learning experiences (Pintrich & De Groot, 2003). The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is a comprehensive framework used to elucidate the factors that lead to individuals' attainment in many domains of life (Ryan & Deci, 2017).SDT has shown efficacy in precisely characterizing and measuring various forms of motivation and their potential influence on academic achievement and other favorable academic outcomes (Howard et al., 2021).

**Word Recognition.** Visual word recognition is the fundamental process of retrieving word representations from memory, and it plays an essential role in reading and learning in educational settings. The first step in teaching a youngster to read a string of letters is to translate them into spoken language. A word can be quickly identified as familiar (having been heard or seen previously) if it has been effectively decoded. Even in the absence of explicit word identification, word recognition remains possible. This can occur through the recall of meaning and past encounters with words (Perfetti, 2017). Word recognition may also happen via the ability to recognize taught pseudo-words as recognizable, or by a general sense of connection upon meeting a word a few times.

Research has shown that semantic knowledge greatly contributes to improving the ability to recognize words. An example of this may be seen in phenomena such as linguistic diversity benefits (Yap, Pexman, Wellsby, Hargreaves, & Huff, 2012), where the degree of semantic information associated with a phrase influences its recognition. Additionally, semantic priming (Hoedemaker & Gordon, 2017) demonstrates how the activation of semantic networks can facilitate the recognition of related words. This suggests that word recognition serves as a stand-in for more intricate word knowledge. It has been demonstrated that specific characteristics of words can predict both the accuracy and speed of word recognition (Yap & Balota, 2009). Furthermore, word recognition proficiency tends to improve gradually with increased exposure to words over time (Reichle & Perfetti, 2003).

## 1.2 Research Questions

1. What level of competency do the students demonstrate in word recognition based on their pre-test scores?
2. What level of competency do the students demonstrate in word recognition based on their post-test scores?
3. Is there a notable difference between the scores of the respondents on the pre-test and post-test?

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Research Design

The present research used a quasi-experimental methodology, with a primary focus on analyzing the outcomes of the pre-test and post-test. Dinardo (2008) defined a quasi-experiment as an empirical intervention research used to assess the causal influence of an intervention on a specific population. In most cases, the researcher was able to control which participants were assigned to which particular treatment by using a criterion other than selection at random. The variances resulting from the application of the experimental therapy are evaluated by contrasting the pretest and posttest findings (Ary et al., 2010).

The researcher administered a Phil-IRI Pre-test to Grade 8 learners at Tubo-Tubo National High School in order to evaluate their proficiency in recognizing words. The study aimed to significantly enhance students' reading motivation through the CAR Program. Subsequent to the intervention, participants underwent the Phil-IRI post-test to gauge the intervention's effect. As an outcome, the researcher conducted both initial and final evaluations of students' reading motivation to guarantee that they could be compared and to quantify any progress. Research Participants

Tubo-Tubo National High School comprises three Grade 8 sections: Ash, Birch, and Cedar. An assessment conducted in December 2023 by counselors, researchers, and the school reading coordinator using the Phil-IRI Oral Reading Test revealed that each section harbored students classified as frustrated readers and non-readers. This indicates a growing prevalence of reading difficulties in these classes. Consequently, this study's respondents were drawn from the identified frustrated students across the three sections: Ash, with 34 students, exhibited a frustration level of 50%, equating to 17 students; Birch, with 33 students, showed a frustration level of 44.45%, or 15 students; and Cedar, with 38 students, displayed a frustration level of 42.11%, corresponding to 16 students.

### 2.3 Research Instrument

The researcher adopted the Phil-IRI Oral Reading Test, a standardized assessment instrument approved by the Department of Education, to evaluate students' word recognition competence. The evaluation consisted of a pre-test and



post-test. The treatment (CAR Program) provided to all sections of Grade 8 students. The groups' Phil-IRI Oral Reading pre-test was previously conducted in February 2023. The research tool that was adapted from the DepEd Phil-IRI and other reading resources was validated. The CAR Program was implemented after receiving permission, a procedure that usually takes forty days or eight weeks. The post-test was administered four hours after the execution of the program.

The researcher used the Program (Competency, Autonomy, and Relatedness) as a means of stimulating students' motivation to engage in reading activities. The teacher-parent orientation has begun and is now moving on to the actualization phase. The pre-test and post-test outcomes of the identified dissatisfied readers were methodically processed and statistically examined. The study instrument and supplementary reading materials underwent validation. The data were evaluated and interpreted to ascertain the effectiveness of the CAR Program in motivating students to engage in reading and improve word recognition skills.

## 2.4 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher followed these steps and procedures that gathered data for this study: Step 1: Secured official approval from the Davao de Oro Schools' Division Superintendent, and then submitted it to the School Principal of Tubo-Tubo National High School, located at Purok 4-Pilian, Tubo-Tubo, Monkayo, Davao de Oro. Step 2: Coordinated with the School Reading Coordinator and other English teachers to implement the program, as outlined in the Learning Plan. Step 3: The test questionnaire and other reading material adapted from the DepEd Phil-IRI had validated by the Assumption College of Nabunturan validators. Step 4 :The teacher conducted a remedial reading session every 3:00pm-4:00pm. Before entering and exiting the classroom, each of the students had to read a reading material, it was considered as their entry and exit pass. Afterwards, each student was given a Reading Bingo Card and was assigned a peer tutor. Each Reading Bingo cards consists sight words form each columns of the card. After the students successfully read the sight words they marked each column until it was done. The teacher supervised the reading session and assists the student's learning process.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1 Level of students' Word Recognition in English during pre-test.

The section presents the examination of students' word recognition ability in English during the pre-test phase. It displays the outcomes associated with the initial problem statement, which evaluates students' proficiency in word recognition through their pre-test performance. Table 2 illustrates the pre-test scores of Grade 8 students.

**Table 1**  
**Pre-test Performance of the Grade 8 Students**

Skills	No. of Students	Mean	Class Proficiency	Competency Level
Word Recognition	48	6.92	35	Did not meet Expectation

Table 1 indicates that among 45 Grade 8 students, the mean word recognition score is 6.92, corresponding to a proficiency level of 35. This suggests that the students' word recognition proficiency, as assessed in the pre-test, falls below the expected level according to the Phil IRI standard. This suggested that although the students in Grade 8 may be capable of breaking the alphabetic code by translating the letters into spoken form, acquire the understanding that sounds and written symbols correlate, and then use phonological recoding properly and quickly, they may struggle with word recognition abilities.

### 3.2 Level of students' word recognition in English during post-test.

In this section, the results pertaining to the second problem statement, which evaluates students' post-test Word recognition proficiency, are presented. The performance scores of Grade 8 students in the post-test are displayed in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
**Post-test Performance of the Grade 8 Students**

Skills	No. of Students	Mean	Class Proficiency	Competency Level
Word Recognition	48	15.63	78	Outstanding

Table 2 reveals that the post-test results for Grade 8 students' word recognition skills exhibit a mean score of 15.63, reflecting a class proficiency level of 78. According to DepEd Memo Number 8, Series of 2015, a class proficiency of 78%, such as the one demonstrated here, is regarded as outstanding. Table 3 further demonstrates the increase of reading development skills as depicted on the posttest and how the Project CAR challenged exercises helped and influenced the students' word recognition and reading motivation. This indicates that there is a mastery of reading skills, development and motivation in the students.

### 3.3 Test of Null Hypothesis

Table 3 presents the test of difference of means in Pre-test and Post-test performances of the Grade 8 students.

**Table 3**  
**Test of Difference between Means in Grade 8 Students' Pre- and Post-Test Performances**

	Mean	p-value	t-value	Remarks
Pre-test	6.92	0.001	-32.62	Significant
Post-test	15.63			

Table 3 presents the findings regarding the test of difference of means in the pre-test and post-test performances of students participating in Project CAR. The pre-test performance exhibited a mean of 6.92, while the post-test mean was 15.63. The analysis yielded a p-value of 0.001 and a t-value of -32.62. Consequently, this suggests the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, indicating a significant difference between the respondents' pre-test and post-test scores.

### 3.4 Competency level of the students' pre-test results in Word Recognition.

The average word recognition score for Grade 8 pupils is 6.92, which indicates a competency level of 35. However, it is noted that the students' pre-test proficiency level falls short of expectations according to the Phil IRI standard. This suggested that Grade 8 children had problems with word recognition abilities, as they struggled to properly and effectively recognize and decode printed words.

Reading difficulties usually show up early in the developing process. Students that struggle have a hard time deciphering phonologically regular words and comprehending the links between letters and sounds. Their reading fluency is thus hampered since it takes them a lot longer than their classmates who achieve averagely to build up an adequate sight vocabulary (Kendeou et al., 2009). Sight words are easily identified despite the need to concentrate on specific sounds, which helps in automatically identifying the pronunciation and meaning of familiar phrases (Ehri, 2005). Developing excellent reading ability relies on the crucial skill of automatically identifying words as sight words (Balass et al., 2010).

### 3.5 Competency level of the students' post-test results in Word Recognition.

The average word recognition score for Grade 8 pupils is 15.63, which corresponds to a competency level of 78. The students' post-test proficiency is outstanding based on the Phil IRI standard. This indicates that the students' post-test word recognition ability improved significantly, and it also demonstrated that the Project CAR platform would significantly promote the development of skills in reading, as identified by the researcher.

Word recognition refers to the capacity to effortlessly and automatically identify the pronunciation of a word without the need for conscious attention. Deciphering words usually takes conscious and strenuous decoding, which leaves just a little amount of attention for understanding the text. Given that the primary goal of teaching children to read is to develop their reading comprehension skills, an important first objective is to guarantee that they can quickly and effortlessly identify words (Garnett, 2011).

### 3.6 Difference in competency level of the students' pre-test and post-test results in Word Recognition.

The learner's average pre-test score was 6.92, while their mean post-test score significantly increased to 15.63. The presence of a p-value of 0.001 and a t-value of -32.62 clearly indicates the rejection of the null hypothesis and the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis. This indicates a significant difference between the participants' scores before and after the exam.

It has been demonstrated that early intervention, following the earliest indications of reading difficulty, is especially crucial in preventing persistent difficulties (Volpe et al., 2011). The fact that 74% of reading-impaired nine-year-old children continue to struggle in secondary school without intervention serves as an illustration of this (Lee & Yoon, 2017). Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) define reading engagement as the motivated and strategic exchanges with

the content from the standpoint of participation in reading comprehension. Their research indicates that students tend to comprehend and achieve better reading outcomes when they are interested and engaged in their reading, compared to when they are not. The research revealed that the level of desire to read has a substantial influence on reading comprehension, as it serves as a predictor of students' reading behaviour.

Consequently, it is crucial to address the problem of inadequate reading instruction for these students. However, as students go through the grades, reading practice and instruction become less frequent, practically eliminating secondary word-level instruction for multisyllabic words. Secondary teachers often become the focus of federal and state initiatives that prioritize early literacy. Consequently, publishing companies and school districts tend to adopt similar approaches, leaving teachers ill-equipped and lacking the necessary knowledge, tools, and time to effectively address teenagers' difficulties with word recognition (Lovett et al., 2021).

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

According to the data mentioned earlier, the researcher concluded that after the participants engaged in the CAR program, their word recognition skills progressed significantly, transitioning from a poor level to an outstanding level. These results clearly demonstrated the success of the CAR program's execution, since the statistics showed a considerable increase in average performance. The CAR program significantly improves comprehension for struggling readers by identifying activities, both spontaneous and taught, that can overcome lacking skills. This includes tactics related to reading recovery and other successful interventions for supporting frustrated readers.

Thus, success in reading depends on learners motivation to read, thus regardless of grade level, encouraging them to read books helps them to rediscover or even rekindle their love of learning and reading. There is undoubtedly no "one size fits all" strategy for keeping students interested and discovering several ways to increase motivation. Teaching students to read is just one aspect of the reading process; another crucial element is instilling a love of reading in them.

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	<p>Rhoda Mae A. Dinopol is a teacher at Tubo-Tubo National High School, Tubo-Tubo, Monkayo, Davao de Oro. She finished her Master of Arts in Education major in English Language Teaching at Assumption College of Nabunturan, Nabunturan, Davao de Oro, Philippines.</p>
	<p>Dhan Timothy M. Ibojo, PhD. Professor, Assumption College of Nabunturan, Nabunturan, Davao de Oro, Philippines.</p>

