

RELM Overview

Receptive & Expressive Language Model

February 2024

PURPOSE

The main objective of RELM is to assess pertinent aspects of **receptive and productive language skills** in students in pre-primary and primary grades across low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). RELM examines critical components of students' linguistic abilities and how these relate to reading competency.

RELM is proposed as a module for the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) but can also be used as a stand-alone module. The intent is that RELM will help users to disentangle floor effects (or zero scores) for EGRA and drill down on key components affecting reading comprehension.

RATIONALE

RELM focuses on measuring receptive and expressive language abilities. The need to measure various facets of language for better understanding of reading comprehension is critical in LMICs, where millions of children learn to read in languages they may not speak or use at home. A solid empirical understanding of language abilities in such multilingual contexts can help disentangle the reasons for low literacy rates and work toward solving the learning poverty crisis.

RELM is grounded on the Simple View of Reading (SVR) Framework (adapted by AIR, 2021), illustrated in Figure 1. This model postulates that reading is supported by two pillars: language comprehension, or “the ability to construct meaning from spoken representations of language” and decoding, or “the ability to recognize written representations of words” - and their sub-skills (Hoover and Gough, 1990). While most existing EGRA sub-tasks focus on the decoding pillar of the SVR, RELM focuses primarily on the language comprehension pillar. The RELM operationalizes linguistic comprehension by measuring listening comprehension and vocabulary in its receptive and expressive form.

QUICK STATS

FUNDER: USAID

ACTIVITY: Supporting Holistic and Actionable Research in Education (SHARE)

COLLABORATORS: University of Notre Dame and American Institutes for Research

TIMELINE:

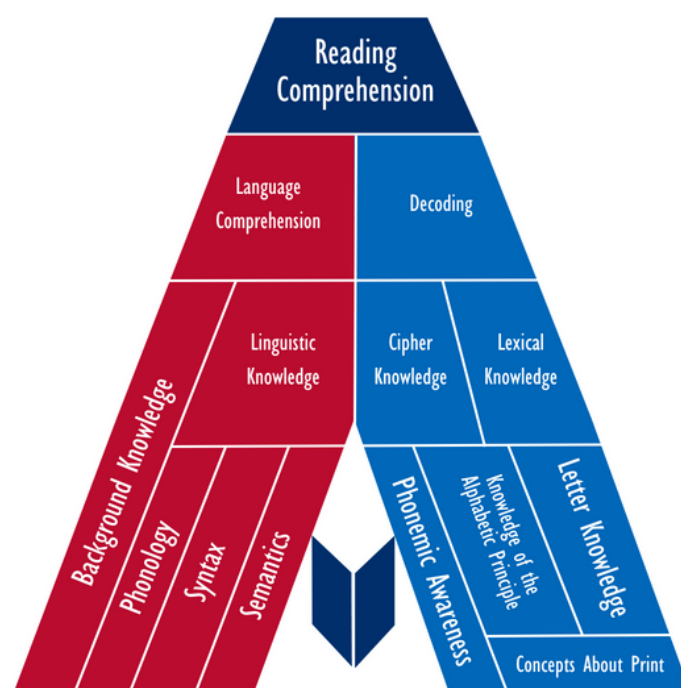
- Data Collection Phase 1: May - Jun 2023
- Data Collection Phase 2: Nov. - Dec. 2023

EXPECTED RESULT: New module under EGRA with associated adaptation guide and training materials

EXPECTED RELEASE: May 2024

RELM pilot testing is embedded in the Language of Instruction Transition in Education Systems (LITES) study.

PILOT COUNTRIES: RELM will be piloted with third- and fourth-grade students, in both their first and second languages in Kenya, Rwanda, Mozambique, and the Philippines.



Adapted by AIR, 2021

CORE SUB-TASKS

Receptive Vocabulary

Focuses on student's ability to **identify nouns** in stimulus sheets of four images, each corresponding to nouns they hear from the assessor in the language of assessment

Expressive Vocabulary

Measures student's ability to **say nouns** or verbs in the language of assessment corresponding to the isolated images shown to them

Listening Comprehension (Two Options)

Multiple Choice: the student **listens to a story** (read to them by an assessor), and answers multiple choice comprehension questions (also presented aurally)

Picture Matching: the student listens to a sentence or a simple story, assessor presents a set of 4 pictures, and **students match which picture** best represents the target sentence / story

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Led by USAID, the University of Notre Dame, and the American Institutes for Research, **this workstream adopts an iterative process for tool development.** Following a build-test-learn-improve approach, the second round of RELM data collection will be informed by learnings from the first round of data collection. It will include Universal Design for Assessment (UDA) considerations. The RELM toolkit, including the adaptation guide and training materials, will be finalized after Phase 2 piloting.

CURRENT PARTNERSHIP LOCATIONS



KENYA



THE PHILIPPINES



RWANDA



MOZAMBIQUE

For more information, contact:

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