

Effectiveness of Teaching Context Clues to Grade IV Pupils in Improving the Reading Performance

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Abstract — Reading is a habit where students learn, gain knowledge, and develop new skills (Olivar, 2014). Understanding the significance of Reading and in line with the implementation of the K to 12 Basic Education Program, the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented "Every Child A Reader Program" (ECARP) through DepEd Memorandum No.402. s.2004 and Administrative Order No. 324. This aims to teach public elementary pupils with planned Reading and to write to make them independent young readers and writers. As Baleghizadeh and Golbin (2010) reported, one of the common beliefs about reading comprehension is using reading strategies and adequate knowledge of grammar and how they can help learner's understanding of the text to a great degree, and there is no need to know too much vocabulary. One of these strategies is the context clues and the effects that they may have on reading comprehension in learners.

On this premise, the researcher decided to conduct this study to evaluate the effectiveness of context clues in improving the reading performance of Grade IV pupils. It was revealed on the table that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test performance of the Grade IV pupils in the control and experimental group. Likewise, the data also showed a significant difference between the post-test performance in the control and experimental groups. It is recommended to implement the formulated Reading Intervention Plan using context clues in getting the meaning of unfamiliar words to improve the reading performance of the pupils.

Keywords — *Effectiveness, Teaching Context Clues, Grade IV Pupils, Improving, Reading Performance*

I. Introduction

It is common knowledge that knowing how to read and write is an indicator that one is educated. It is also an accepted phenomenon that Reading is a very relevant part of developing an individual's whole being. Reading is said to be the training of the mind and the means to attain a deeper meaning of reality.

Reading is a habit where students learn, gain knowledge, and develop new skills (Olivar, 2014). Understanding the significance of Reading and in line with the implementation of the K to 12 Basic Education Program, the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented the "Every Child A Reader Program" (ECARP) through DepEd Memorandum No.402. s.2004 and Administrative Order No. 324. This aims to teach public elementary pupils with planned Reading and to write to make them independent young readers and writers.

Learning a foreign language involves acquiring four types of skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Jahangard et al. (2011) believed that Reading is the most important of all. Without a doubt, Reading is known as the most prominent academic skill for university students in any academic or higher learning (Noor, 2006). According to reading specialists, Reading is not actually a skill but a process that consists of many different skills. During the past decades, reading comprehension strategies were on the increase. These strategies were defined as cognitive and metacognitive actions that a learner uses when trying to go through a text (Macaro, 2003).

Promoting independent reading comprehension skills for students with diverse abilities is a major concern of teachers (Clark & Graves, 2005). Although reading comprehension is an essential part of exams, students usually do not receive any instruction on the reading skills necessary to read some complicated texts in their educational life. As Baleghizadeh and Golbin (2010) reported, one of the common beliefs about reading comprehension is using reading strategies and adequate knowledge of grammar and how they can help learner's understanding of the text to a great degree, and there is no need to know too much vocabulary. One of these strategies is the context clues and the effects that they may have on reading comprehension in learners.

While in the Philippine setting, a need to know the meaning of unfamiliar words found in the text will help the readers understand what he/she is reading. With these, since some teachers had no focus in teaching vocabulary using context clues, most of our learners lag in comprehension skills. It was found out during the conduct of the Group Screening Test (GST) of the Phil-IRI that our school had a greater number of pupils who were not able to reach the required number of correct responses of 14 points out of 20 comprehension questions. This speaks that most of them had fewer comprehension skills. These pupils will undergo series of oral reading tests to identify their reading level. They are the readers below their grade level.

On the other hand, good readers distribute their attention unequally, in which they pay more attention to some of the text more than others (Pressley and Harris, 2006). Shokoohi and Askari (2010) believed that a contextual guessing strategy is a useful tool in learning and teaching

reading comprehension. Native speakers of a language infer the meaning of unknown words from the context. Thus, second language learners can infer from the context while reading.

Clues have an important role in dealing with reading comprehension, and they are the important factors for comprehending a text broadly and learning new words specifically. They are significant since there is a small chance of learning a new word from a context. Further, Kiani (2011) stipulated that context clues have a powerful effect on students' comprehension of words and sentences. Knowledge and skill of using words in different contexts play an important role in the comprehension of new concepts, ideas, and principles.

It is on the hope of this study that the effectiveness of teaching context clues to the learners will help improve their reading comprehension level, thus also improving their reading levels. The result of this study was used as the basis for the proposed reading intervention plan of the researcher.

This study evaluated the effectiveness of teaching context clues to Grade IV pupils in improving their reading performance in Cacao Elementary School, Kananga II District, Leyte Division. The findings of the study were the basis for the proposed Reading Intervention Plan.

Further, it sought to answer the following sub-problems:

1. What is the pre-test performance of the experimental and control group before the teaching of context clues in improving the reading performance of the grade IV pupils?
2. What is the post-test performance of the experimental and control group after the teaching of context clues in improving the reading performance of the grade IV pupils?
3. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test performance of the experimental and control group before and after the teaching of context clues in improving the reading performance of the grade IV pupils?
4. What intervention plan in Reading be proposed based on the result of this study?

II. Methodology

Design. This study utilized the Quasi-Experimental research design to assess the effectiveness of teaching context clues to Grade IV pupils in improving reading performance of Cacao Elementary School, Kananga II District, Leyte Division is the main locale of the study. The 27 Grade 4 pupils enrolled in the said locale are the main respondents of the study. The researcher used a modified reading comprehension passage with comprehension questions focusing on getting unfamiliar words using context clues. These tests were used to measure the reading performance of the learners before and after the intervention. This test was given as pre-test and post-test to control and experimental group. The researcher formulated lesson plans without (for the control group) and with (for experimental group) intervention on using context clues to unlock the meaning of difficult words in the text.

Sampling. There are 27 Grade 4 pupils involved in this study. A modified reading comprehension passage with comprehension questions focusing on getting unfamiliar words using context clues were used to measure the reading performance of the pupils before and after the intervention.

Research Procedure. The researcher prepared the research design and tools to be utilized in the study. After the research was approved, data gathering followed. Letter request to conduct the study was submitted to proper authorities for approval. First, a letter request was submitted to the Schools Division Superintendent for approval to proceed on data gathering among the identified respondents. After the approval of the SDS, a permission letter was also submitted to the Public Schools District Supervisor of the district and School Principal of the school. After approval, the researcher proceeded into data gathering. An orientation was conducted on how the respondents go into the process. First, the researcher conducted the pre-test for the learners. The result of the pre-test was the data for the pre-test of both groups; hence the same learners were included in the experimental and control group. Learners were taught unlocking of words using the traditional method for two (2) weeks (control) then post-test was conducted. On the succeeding two (2), learners were taught to unlock words using context clues (experimental). After which post-test was conducted. Data were tabulated and submitted for treatment. Matrix of activities formulated.

Ethical Issues. The right to conduct the study strictly adhered through the approval of the Schools Division Superintendent of the Division, District Supervisor of the District, and school principal. Orientation of the respondents was done. In the orientation, issues and concerns were addressed, and consent to be included in the study was signed.

Treatment of Data. The Simple Percentage and Weighted Mean was to determine the test performance of the learners in reading comprehension before and after the intervention. Additionally, the T-test for Mean difference was used to test the significant difference between the test performance before and after the intervention implementation.

III. Results and Discussion

Table 1
Pre-Test Performance of Control and Experimental Groups

DATA	TEST PERFORMANCE			
	Experimen tal Group	Interpretation	Control Group	Interpretation
No. of Pupils	24	Low Mastery	24	Low Mastery
No. of Items	30		30	
Total Score	163		163	
Mean	5.43		5.43	
MPS	22.63		22.63	

Table 1 presents the pre-test performance of the control and experimental group. It was revealed on the table that among the 24 pupil-respondents, they got a total score of 163 with a mean of 5.43 and the mean percentage score of 22.63, which is interpreted as low mastery. This means that most of the Grade IV pupils in Cacao Elementary School has a very low vocabulary. This implies that with that very low level of vocabulary, it is expected that most of them were frustrated readers for they had a hard time understanding the meaning of the words.

Table 2
Post-Test Performance of Control and Experimental Groups

DATA	TEST PERFORMANCE			
	Experimental Group	Interpretation	Control Group	Interpretation
No. of Pupils	24	Moving Towards Mastery	24	Average Mastery
No. of Items	30		30	
Total Score	529		258	
Mean	17.63		8.60	
MPS	73.46		35.83	

Table 2 presents the post-test performance of the control and experimental group. It was revealed on the table that the post-test performance of the pupils in the experimental group has a mean of 17.63 and a mean percentage score of 73.46, which is interpreted as moving towards mastery. This means that with the implementation of using context clues to unlock the difficult words in the text, pupils were able to understand the unfamiliar words. The mastery level has

increased. This implies that with the daily practice of unlocking of difficult words, understanding of the text will enhance and pupils reading performance improved.

Table 3
Test of Difference Between the Scores
in the Pre-test and Post-test

Aspects	Test Scores		Computed T	Critical T	Decision	Interpretation
Control	Pre Post	5.43 8.60	2.324	1.221	Reject H ₀	Significant
Experimental	Pre Post	5.43 17.63	6.351	1.221	Reject H ₀	Significant

Table 3 presents the test of the difference between the scores in the pre-test and post-test. It was revealed on the table that the computed t of 2.324 of the control group is greater than the critical value or t of 1.221 at a .05 level of significance, so the null hypothesis rejected. This means that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test performance of the Grade IV pupils. The mean score of the pre-test of 5.43 and post-test of 8.60 shows that there is a significant difference.

Moreover, this table also shows the test of the difference between the scores in the pre-test and post-test of the Grade IV pupils under the experimental group. It was revealed on the table that the computed t of 6.351 is greater than the critical value or t at a .05 level of significance, so null hypothesis was rejected. This means that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test performance of the Grade IV pupils under the experimental group. The mean pre-test of 5.43 and post-test of 17.63 implied that there is a significant difference on the pre-test and post-test performance.

Table 4
Test of Difference Between the Scores in the Post-tests

Test	Groups		Computed T	Critical T	Decision	Interpretation
Post Test	Control	8.60	5.372	1.221	Reject H ₀	Significant
	Experimental	17.63				

Table 4 presents the test of difference between the scores in the post-test under the control and experimental group. It was revealed on the table that the computed value of t of 5.372 is greater than the critical value or t of 1.221, so the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant difference between the post-test performance of the control and experimental group. The mean for the control group of 8.60 and experimental group of 17.63 shows that there is a significant difference between the implementation of context clues in teaching comprehension, especially on the unlocking of difficult words with that of the traditional method.

IV. Conclusion

The data revealed that there is a significant difference between the pre-test ad post-test performance of the control and experimental group. Moreover, it was also shown that there is a significant difference between the post-test performance under the experimental group. This implies that teaching context clues as a strategy to unlock difficult words in the text is effective to that of the traditional strategy.

V. Recommendations

1. The Reading intervention plan formulated should be utilized;
2. Teachers should find ways on how to make use of context clues in the lesson;
3. Teachers should prepare varied and differentiated instructional materials in teaching reading comprehension skills;
4. Teachers should give extra time to non-readers and frustration readers in the class;
5. Teachers should decorate the classroom with colorful and differentiated displays with captions so that pupils will encourage to read;
6. Teachers should always guide the pupils towards achieving their goals of zero non-readers; and
7. Future researchers should replicate this study to include different locale, and include different variables aside from the mentioned in this study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This study is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree Master of Arts in Education major in School Administration and Supervision. Special thanks are extended: To Dr. Jasmine B. Misa, thesis adviser; Dr. Bryant C. Acar, Dr. Annabelle A. Wenceslao, Dr. Elvin H. Wenceslao, panel of examiners; Garde 4 teachers and pupils of Cacao Elementary School, Kindergarten; her parents, siblings, relatives, and friends, and To God, her deepest and sincerest gratitude.

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AUTHOR'S PROFILE



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The author is born on September 16, 1974 at Ormoc City, Philippines. She is presently residing at 294 Real Street, Poblacion, Kananga, Leyte. She finished her elementary education at Kananga Central School, Kananga Leyte in the year 1986 and continue her Secondary Education at Kananga Municipal High School, Kananga Leyte and graduated in the year 1990. During her college days, She enrolled at the University of Cebu took up Bachelor of Science in Information and Computer Science, and graduated in the year 1996. She landed a job as Customer Service Representative at Bayantel Company in Tacloban City. She decided to pursue her dream to become a teacher. She enrolled and finished her bachelor's degree in Education at Western Leyte College. She finished her Master of Arts in Education major in School Administration and Supervision at Western Leyte College of Ormoc City, Philippines in October 2019.

She is currently assigned as School Head of Cacao Elementary School, Kananga II District, Leyte Division, Region VIII, Philippines. She is an active school head of Kananga II District. Her assigned school was a regional qualifier on Gawad Kalasag 2019. Just recently she is awarded as the Most Outstanding School Head in the District during the JASMINE Award.