IJAMS

Effectiveness of Illustrative Stories in Improving the Reading Performance of Grade 2 Pupils

MA. ALLEN ROSE G. VIRAY
Teacher III
Western Leyte College
Master of Arts in Education
Major in School Administration and Supervision
maallenrose.gil@deped.gov.ph

Abstract —This study evaluates the effectiveness of illustrative stories in improving the reading performance of Grade 2 pupils. Utilizing the quasi-experimental research design for an in-depth analysis of the study employing the pre-test and post-test in reading, the researcher used the researcher-made reading test which covers the 1st quarter Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) in Mother Tongue-Based (MTB) Multilingual Education (MLE). Simple Percentage and t-Test of Mean Difference were the statistical tools used. Results of the study shows no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the Grade 2 pupils in reading before and after the utilization of illustrative materials. This does not show that the illustrative stories provided to the pupils as intervention to improve their reading performance is not effective. There are Grade 2 pupils with difficulty in recognizing words and understanding the meaning of the selection read the fact that their reading performance is fair. Thus, teachers need to develop other learning materials which helps the pupils address their learning gaps in literacy and consider other hindering factors in achieving literacy goals in the formulation of intervention activities.

Keywords — Effectiveness, Illustrative Stories, Reading Performance, Grade 2 Pupils

I. Introduction

Every elementary school teacher is a reading teacher and is essential in helping each child on his or her reading journey. When teachers provide the resources to meet the literacy needs of the pupils, beginning as early as prekindergarten, pupils and teachers will feel both confident and competent in teaching and learning to read.

While helping pupils learn to read, it is also important to create a love of reading. Students who read voluntarily report less negativity about reading than those who are required to read. Motivation is the key in promoting a love of literacy in children. One of the best resources for creating motivation is a shelf filled with books that match students' interest level and reading level. They should be surrounded by titles that reflect the lives of themselves as well as their classmates. When students find titles with characters that look like them and families that resemble their own

or their neighbors, their interest level increases. Making these connections also increases pupil's comprehension.

Poornima and Adithya (2015) pose that reading is like an electronic device that cultivates the mind of reader with the software of knowledge and it is a long-term habit. Initially, it develops with students' interest in early ages. It is the prominent source to open the gateway of knowledge library in mind. This activity of reading is observed as interest of distance learners in book reading when it is carried out again and again. Reading interest is often measured in rapports of the amount of how much material is being read. The regularity rate of reading and the time consumed on reading is another measure. The main preferences of distance education are to provide knowledge and skill. It is inculcated by reading books. To maintain interest in reading among distance learners is not an easy task.

In the implementation of modular distance learning, most of the pupils lacks interest in reading. This is shown on the result of the activities given in the modules that most of them do not read the modules, they immediately answer the activities. And during the limited face-to-face, it was proven by the teachers that most of them especially the Grade 2 pupils find difficulty in learning to read. Reading interest among these pupils are compromised because not all learning facilitators can guide them in learning to read.

According to the latest survey in education, it was revealed that 4 out of 5 Filipino students may find difficulty to understand, reflect on or interpret what they read and most of them especially the Key Stage 1 pupils find difficulty in recognizing the words. In fact, it is revealed that the average Filipino student has a learning gap of 5.5 years. This reflects the difference in expected years of schooling and the learning achieved for the years students spend in school. This means that the two years of implementing distance learning due to COVID-19 pandemic, literacy performance of the pupils are affected. This shows that, in times of crisis, the digital divide may further widen learning gaps. Children from poorer households are more likely to have large learning losses under remote schooling and these are the clientele mostly in the public schools. Thus, teachers during this era have to create intervention strategies to address the learning gaps of the pupils.

Looking back, reading is bringing meaning to the printed page. It is the most important skill a learner should possess since it is a gateway to the development of academic skills across all disciplines. If a child cannot read, he will not be able to access the content in his other learning areas. The COVID-19 pandemic brought about great effect on the learners reading performance and creating a language-rich and print-rich environment online was impossible for the teachers. Even developing love for reading among students was impossible to do since there were no teachers who could guide the learners. In order to address the concerns of the teachers, capacity building and upskilling is needed. Producing appropriate learning materials to the pupils is a must during this time of learning crisis. Teachers need to assess the reading level and capability of the pupils to prepare for activities to be given to them.

Illustrative story books are suited to be given to the pupils during reading lessons. The use of illustrated books is an effective way to give children experience of reading. The illustrated books have less vocabularies which stimulate the children to love reading. The striking color of the books can improve children's beginning reading skill, motivate them to read, and arouse their curiosity. The other benefit of using illustrated books is gaining the students' attention to keep focus reading the story. Besides, in education, generally the illustrated books are applied to students of kindergarten and first grade to improve their beginning reading skill. Students who read illustrated books will feel easy to understand the meaning of the words.

Illustrated story books are the result of printing technology which contains the message of written text and illustration. These are the important elements of the story. Levey & Polirstok (2011) states that illustrated story books give information by using the verbal language (symbol) and picture (icon). The delivered information is different according to the intended age level.

Illustration and text are the important elements of the illustrated story books and they become the source of information which conveys message to readers through stories and pictures. Therefore, the illustrated story books can stimulate children to have strong desire to read.

Illustrated story books have some advantages as stated by Mitchell, Waterbury, & Casement (2002): (1) illustrated story books can help children's cognitive and emotional development. Children feel facilitated and helped to understand themselves and other and they can express their various emotions, (2) illustrated story books help children to learn about the world. Through illustrated story books, children can learn about the life of society in the past and present, the geographical condition, the nature, the plants and animals. The books will help children to add their life experience during their growth, (3) illustrated story books facilitate children to get fun. Children feel fun and happy by seeing the good, interesting, and funny pictures which can make them laugh, (4) illustrated story books help children to appreciate the beauty. The beauty can be seen both in the verbal and illustration. The verbal beauty is from the interesting plot and character while the beauty of the illustration can be seen in the accuracy of the object depiction, color composition, and various interesting action, (5) illustrated story books can stimulate children's imagination. Through stories, their imagination has developed and the illustration complete the concrete and strong stories. Therefore, the illustrated story books can improve children's understanding of stories and stimulate their imagination.

The illustrated story books can also improve other language skills (reading and listening). Faizah (2009) states that by using illustrated story books, it will be easier for students to understand the content of the books since the books contain interesting pictures.

Thus, pupils should be provided with books that represent all genres so that they can determine what they most enjoy reading. Unless a child is given the opportunity to read poetry, mysteries, historical fiction, biographies, autobiographies, and science fiction, he or she may not know all of the types of stories that are created for readers of all ages. Student book choice is the

first step in getting children hooked on reading. When students have ownership of their reading, successful, independent readers begin to bloom.

Teachers can be the best book matchmakers for their students. While teachers are building relationships with their students in the beginning of the year, they can also conduct one-on-one interviews or give interest surveys to each child. This practice will help teachers learn the strengths, challenges, likes, and dislikes of their students. This information helps teachers select the best book to spark a child's interest in reading. And it is in this premise that the researcher interested to conduct this study to evaluate the effectiveness of illustrative stories in improving the reading performance of the Grade 2 pupils. A proposed improvement plan was formulated based on the findings of the study.

It is in the above premise that the researcher who is currently a Grade 2 teacher in Tanauan II Central School, would like to delve worthy research undertaking that will benefit the school she is currently teaching and that of her Graduate Program she is enrolled at.

This study evaluates the effectiveness of illustrative stories in improving the reading performance of Grade 2 pupils in Tanauan II Central School, Tanauan II District, Leyte Division for School Year 2022-2023. The findings of the study were bases for the proposed improvement plan.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of reading performance of Grade 2 pupils before the utilization of illustrative stories?
2. What is the level of reading performance of Grade 2 pupils after the utilization of illustrative stories?
3. Is there a significant difference in the level of reading performance of Grade 2 pupils before and after the utilization of illustrative stories?
4. What improvement plan can be proposed based on the findings of this study?

II. Methodology

Design. This study employed the quasi-experimental research design utilizing the pre-test and post-test to evaluate the effectiveness of illustrative stories in improving the reading performance of Grade 2 pupils for School Year 2022-2023. Tanauan II Central School, Tanauan II District, Leyte Division is the main locale of the study. The 23 Grade 2 pupils enrolled in the said locale for School Year 2022-2023 are the main respondents of the study and a researcher-made reading test which covers the 1st quarter Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) in Mother Tongue-Based (MTB) Multilingual Education (MLE) was used. This research is focused in evaluating the effectiveness of illustrative stories in teaching reading in MTB-MLE which is expected to help improve the reading performance of Grade 2 pupils through the pre-test

and post-test and finding the significant difference. A Proposed Improvement Plan based on the findings of the study is the output.

Sampling. There are 23 Grade 2 pupils involved in this study. The reading test were distributed and administered personally in face-to-face modality with consent from the Local IATF and strictly following the prescribed Health Protocol.

Research Procedure. The researcher prepared the research design and tools to be utilized in the study. Approval and recommendation from the Panel of Examiner of the Graduate Studies was sought. A letter request to conduct this study was forwarded to the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent. Upon approval, permission from the District Supervisor and School Head was secured before the actual gathering of data. Orientation of the participants and administration of the pre-test was done through face-to-face after the approval of the permit from the parents of the respondents. After accomplishing the pre-test, intervention was given within four weeks. The utilization of illustrative stories in teaching reading in MTB-MLE was emphasized. Lesson plans are prepared, checked and validated by the School Head and District MTB-MLE Coordinator including that of the illustrative stories used in the lesson. A matrix of activities was provided by the researcher to track the activities given during the data gathering process. After the four-week of intervention, post-test was administered. Results of the tests were collected. Data were tallied and submitted for statistical treatment. Analysis and Interpretation of Data. Making of Proposed Training Plan followed.

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

Treatment of Data. The Simple Percentage was employed to evaluate the pre-test and post-test of the Grade 2 pupils in reading. **t-Test of Mean Difference** was used to determine the significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the Grade 2 pupils in reading.

III. Results and Discussion

Table 1
Pre-Test Performance of Grade 2 Pupils in Reading

Score Range	Description	PRETEST	
		Frequency	%
17-20	Excellent	0	0
13-16	Very Good	0	0
9-12	Good	0	0
5-8	Fair	3	13
0-4	Poor	20	87
Total		23	100
Weighted Mean		**1.48**	**Poor**

Table 1 presents the pre-test performance of Grade 2 pupils in reading. It was revealed on the table that among the 23 Grade 2 pupil-respondents 3 or 13% got the score of 5-8 which is interpreted as fair and 20 or 87% got the score of 0-4 which is poor. The weighted mean of 1.48 shows that the Grade 2 pupils have poor reading performance in the pre-test. This means that most of the pupils have difficulty in recognizing words and understanding the passages they read. This implies that these pupils have learning gaps in their literacy performance. The result of the pre-test provides the teachers information on where to start his or her lesson. Providing appropriate activities and intervention is crucial and teachers have to start where the pupils are. The intervention of exposing the pupils to illustrative stories is somewhat beneficial for it helps in understanding and providing meaning of the words, phrases, sentences and stories read. Understanding how a student's interest and exposure to literacy affects their understanding of literacy, is imperative in order for teachers to teach and assess students appropriately. To understand how a child learns to read and comprehend the information they are reading, teachers need to understand how they interact with print first. Reading is a mental process. This means that successful reading relies on an interaction between decoding linguistic visual inputs and accessing phonological information. Reading begins when the reader unlocks the code of a written language system. However, the neuroscience of reading is much more complex than this simplistic view. Reading is an elaborate process that involves decoding of abstract symbols into sounds, then into words that generate meaning.

Table 2
Post-Test Performance of Grade 2 Pupils in Reading

Score Range	Description	POST-TEST	
		Frequency	%
17-20	Excellent	0	0
13-16	Very Good	2	9
9-12	Good	6	26
5-8	Fair	5	22
0-4	Poor	10	43
Total		23	100
Weighted Mean		**5.83**	**Fair**

Table 2 presents the post-test performance of Grade 2 pupils in reading. It was revealed on the table that among the 23 pupils tested after the utilization of illustrative stories in teaching reading skills, 2 or 9% got the score of 13-16 which is interpreted as very good while 6 or 26% got the score of 9-12 which is good, 5 or 22% got the score of 5-8 which is fair and 10 or 43% got the score of 0-4 or poor. The weighted mean of 5.83 shows a fair pos-test performance after the utilization of illustrative stories in teaching reading skills. This means that there are still pupils whose difficulty in word recognition and comprehension. The fact that these pupils were not expose to in person teaching and learning because of the pandemic. Issa et al. (2012) found that home environment as the most dominant hindrance factor of reading, while Akanda et al. (2013) demonstrate lack of interesting reading materials as the most dominant factor. The result of the post-test implies that teachers have to exert more efforts in providing assistance to the pupils and create or produce some other intervening activities to hit the needs of the pupils. Knowing the level of interest and motivation of the pupils is important so teachers can create activities which are suited to the needs of the pupils. These various factors are necessary to ponder if teachers and educational practitioners attempt to help their students to build and nurture their reading interest.

Table 3
Test of Difference Between the Scores in the Pre-Test and Post-Test
of Grade 2 Pupils in Reading

Aspects	Test Scores		Computed T	Critical T	Decision	Interpretation
Grade 2 in Reading	Pre Post	1.48 5.83	0.122	0.251	Accept H$_o$	Not Significant

Table 3 presents the test of difference between the scores in the pre-test and post-test of Grade 2 pupils in reading before and after the utilization of illustrative stories in teaching reading skills. It was revealed on the table that the computed value of t of 0.122 is lesser than the critical value of t which is 0.251, so null hypothesis is accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the Grade 2 pupils before and after the utilization of illustrative stories in teaching reading skills. The weighted mean of the pre-test performance of 1.48 had slightly increased to 5.83 in the post-test after the utilization of illustrative stories in reading. This implies that only few of the pupils can read and understand what they read. The use of illustrated books is an effective way to give children experience of reading. The illustrated books have less vocabularies which stimulate the children to love reading. The striking color of the books can improve children's beginning reading skill, motivate them to read, and arouse their curiosity. The other benefit of using illustrated books is gaining the students' attention to keep focus reading the story. Besides, in education, generally the illustrated books are applied to students of kindergarten and first grade to improve their beginning reading skill. Students who read illustrated books will feel easy to understand the meaning of the words. But knowing the fact that there are Grade 2 pupils who have difficulty in word recognition will not appreciate the use of illustrative stories. Thus, the Grade 2 teacher of these pupils have to provide other activities which address the needs of the pupils before exposing them to illustrative stories. Beginning reading activities should be provided first. Beginning reading at elementary school especially to the first and second grade should be stressed on understanding and pronouncing the words correctly. Beginning reading skill becomes the basis for the further reading at the higher level. If students' beginning reading skill is already good, they will not experience any significant difficulties in the future. It aimed at mastering the basic reading skill to make the further reading becomes easier. The purpose of beginning reading is to know each element of the writing and speak the word clearly with the right intonation and pronunciation. Students should be able to read with the right pronunciation and intonation as the basis to continue to the further reading.

I. Conclusion

Results of the study shows no significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the Grade 2 pupils in reading before and after the utilization of illustrative materials. This does not show that the illustrative stories provided to the pupils as intervention to improve their reading performance is not effective. There are Grade 2 pupils with difficulty in recognizing words and understanding the meaning of the selection read the fact that their reading performance is fair. Thus, teachers need to develop other learning materials which helps the pupils address their learning gaps in literacy and consider other hindering factors in achieving literacy goals in the formulation of intervention activities.

II. Recommendations

1. The proposed improvement plan formulated should be utilized;
2. Teachers have to produce illustrative stories to be use in teaching reading skills;
3. Teachers have to provide appropriate learning materials based on the needs of the pupils and suited to their levels;
4. Teachers have to attend capability building on the construction of appropriate learning materials for the pupils;
5. Teachers should submit the crafted learning materials for quality assurance;
6. Encourage teachers to submit innovations and research for the improvement of their teaching so as to improve the performance of the pupils;
7. Teachers should provide developmental activities which are suited to the level of the pupils;
8. School Heads should provide materials for the construction of illustrative story books for the pupils;
9. School Heads should provide technical assistance to the teachers for the improvement of their teaching literacy;
10. School Heads should spearhead in providing appropriate learning materials to the pupils; and
11. Future researchers should replicate this study to include different locale and include different variables aside from the mentioned in this study.

REFERENCES

[1] Akanda, A.K.M.E.A., Hoq, K.M.G., & Hasan, N. (2013). Reading habit of students in social sciences and arts: A case study of Rajshahi University. Chinese Librarianship: an International Electronic Journal, 35, 60-71. Retrieved from http://www.whiteclouds.com/iclc/cliej/cl35AHH.pdf

[2] Cambria, J. & Guthrie, J. T. (2010). Motivating and engaging students in reading. The NERA Journal, 46, (1), 16-29. Retrieved from http://www.literacyconnects.org/img/2013/03/Motivating-and-engaging-students-in-reading-Cambria-Guthrie.pdf

[3] Center for Student Success, Research and Planning Group, & Academic State. (2009). Contextualized teaching & learning: a faculty primer. Retrieved February 6, 2015, from http://www. cccbsi.org/websites/basicskills/ images/ctl.pdf

[4] Du Toit, C.M. (2001). The recreational reading habits of adolescent readers: A case study (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from UPSpace Institutional Repository, Department of Library Services, Univeristy of Pretoria. (//hdl.handle.ney/2263/30417)

[5] Faizah, U. (2009). Keefektivan Cerita Bergambar untuk Pendidikan Nilai dan Ketrampilan Berbahasa dalam Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia. Cakrawala Pendidikan, 28 (3)Hardianto, D. (2011). Studi tentang minat baca mahasiswa Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan UNY. Majalah Ilmiah

Pembelajaran, 7, (1), 108-121. Retrieved from https://journal.uny.ac.id/index.php/mip/article/viewFile/3218/2697

[6] Hidi, S. (2001). Interest, reading, and learning: Theoretical and practical considerations. Educational Psychology Review, 13, (3), 191-209.

[7] Issa, A.O., Aliyu, M.B., Akangbe, R.B. & Adedeji, F. (2012). Reading interests and habits of the Federal Polytechnic, OFFA, Students. International Journal of Learning & Development, 2, (1), 470-486. Retrieved from http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.684.5214&rep=rep1&type=pdf

[8] Krashen, S.D. (1993). The power of reading: Insights from the research. Englewood, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited.

[9] Levey, S. & Polirstok,S. (2011). Language development: understanding language diversity in the classroom. https://readacademy.moe.edu.sg/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/ENQ/WPAC/BIBENQ?SETLVL=&BRN=70708

[10] Miranda, T., Williams-Ross, D., Johnson, K., & McKenzie, N. (2011). Reluctant readers in middle school: Successful engagement with text using the e-reader. International Journal of Applied Science and Technology, 1, (6), 81-91. Retrieved from http://www.ijastnet.com/journals/Vol_1_No_6_November_2011/9.pdf

[11] Mitchell, D.; Waterbury, P. & Casement, R. (2002). Children's Literature: AN Invitation to the World. Amazon.com. National Bookstore Powerbooks. https://books.google.com.ph/books/about/Children_s_Literature.html?id=1J8LAQAAMAAJ&redir_esc=y

[12] Owusu-Acheaw, M. (2014). Reading habits among students and its effect on academic performance: A study of students of Koforidua Polytechnic. Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal), 1130, 1-22. Retrieved from https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2908&context=libphilprac

[13] Pehlivan, A., Serin, O., & Serin, N.B. (2010). Determining reading interests and habits of candidate teachers (TRNC Sample). Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences, 9, 869– 873. Retrieved from https://ac.els-cdn.com/S1877042810023566/1-s2.0- S1877042810023566-main.pdf?_tid=74872856-6880-472f-b2b1-48d07f145f33&acdnat=1520222404_0b62aa872b8dd554148e4351410863e3

[14] Pittman, P. & Honchell, B. (2014). Literature discussion: Encouraging reading interest and comprehension in struggling middle school readers. Journal of Language and Literacy Education, 10, (2), 119-133.

[15] Rasiah, R.R.V., Kaur, H. & Nagaratnam, S. (2011). Reading habits and interests of generation Y students: Challenges of reflective learning. Journal of Interdisciplinary Research in Education (JIRE), 1, (1), 39-53. Retrieved from http://www.taylors.edu.my/jire/downloads/vol1_04.pdf

[16] Renandya, W. A. (2007). The power of extensive reading. RELC Journal, 38, (2), 133-149.

[17] Squires, S. (2014). The effects of reading interest, reading purpose, and reading maturity on reading comprehension of high school students. Retrieved from https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/7744/d437600541b56678b088d37be6d1401ec5f2.pdf

[18] Thomas, M. M. (2001). Proficient reader characteristics: Relationships among text dependent and higher-order literacy variables with reference to stage theories of intellectual development (Order No. 3010626). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Full Text (304706119) at http://search.proquest.com/docview/304706119?accountid=6143)

[19] Wahyuni, L.D., Listyasari, W.D., & Rangkuti, A.A. (2017). Minat baca dan gaya belajar mahasiswa lptk sebagai calon guru profesional di era digital. PERSPEKTIF Ilmu Pendidikan, 31, (1), 37-42.

[20] Whitten, C. Labby, S. & Sullivan, S.L. (2016). The impact of pleasure reading on academic success. The Journal of Multidisciplinary Graduate Research, 2, (4), 48-64. Retrieved from http://www.shsu.edu/academics/education/journal-of-multidisciplinarygraduate-research/documents/2016/WhittenJournalFinal.pdf

AUTHOR'S PROFILE

MRS. MA. ALLEN ROSE G. VIRAY

The author is Mrs. Ma. Allen Rose G. Viray. She was born on September 14, 1997 at Ormoc City, Leyte. She was married for almost 3 years with Mr. William C. Viray and has one child. She's presently residing at Brgy. Sto. Niño Tanauan, Leyte. She finished her elementary education at Sto. Niño Elementary School, Brgy. Sto. Niño Tanauan, Leyte in the year 2008-2009 and continue her quest for education and able to finish her secondary education at Tanauan School of Craftsmanship and Home Industries, Tanauan, Leyte in the year 2012-2013. She enrolled and finished her Bachelor in Elementary Education at Leyte Normal University in the year 2016-2017. She took up Master of Arts in Education major in Supervision and Administration with complete academic requirements at Western Leyte College of Ormoc City, Inc. and presently pursuing and finishing the degree.

She is teaching for almost four years and a Teacher III at Tanauan II Central School. Her station was Tanauan II Central School for 3 years handling Grade II for 2 years and Grade I for 1 year and ccurrently teaching as Grade 2 Adviser. She also attended series of webinars/seminars and trainings to increase her professional growth as a teacher.