

Effectiveness of Teacher-Made Story Books in Improving the Comprehension Skills of Grade 5 Learners

MONETTE B. LAGADO

Teacher III

Western Leyte College

Master of Arts in Education

Major in School Administration and Supervision

monette.beronilla@deped.gov.ph

Abstract —The study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher-made story books in improving the comprehension skills of the Grade 5 learners. Utilizing the quasi-experimental research design employing the pre-test and post-test comprehension skills for an in-depth analysis of the study, the researcher used the Phil-IRI passages for Grade 5 in English. Simple Percentage, Weighted Mean and t-Test of Mean Difference were the statistical tools used. The study revealed a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the Grade 5 learners in comprehension skills. The teacher-made story books provided to the learners as intervention helps in improving their reading performance. Thus, the utilization of the teacher-made story books is an effective supplementary reading material in improving the comprehension skills of the learners.

Keywords — *Effectiveness, Teacher-Made Story Books, Comprehension Skills, Grade 5 Learners*

I. Introduction

With the emergence of new normal in every aspect known, its effect on education is evident. Learners of today are forced to adapt despite unpreparedness for distance learning. Teachers are put in situations where we must continue doing daily duties amidst the complexities that the pandemic brings. There is no doubt that the educative process struggled.

The Philippines, in response to the need for the teaching and learning process during the early months of the pandemic, implemented DepEd Order No. 012 s. 2020 “*Adoption of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan for School Year 2020-2021 in Light of the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency.*” This covers interventions that grapple with the challenges brought by the pandemic. The Department of Education through this order ensured the continuity of learning even during this season.

As learning pushes through, several problems arose. One of which revolves around the literacy skills of learners. Over the past couple of years, literacy scores among Filipino learners were significantly low. In 2018, the Philippines joined the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) where under reading literacy assessment, 1 out of 5 Filipino learners (19.4%) only achieved at least the minimum proficiency level overall. This result posed a challenge to the Department of Education.

Since then, the department carried out programs, interventions, and projects that are set to eradicate factors that hinder students in improving their reading comprehension skills. The pandemic did not make it easy for students and teachers alike. Learning is disrupted due to a series of lockdowns, so learners are expected to continue their academic tasks at home.

Learning in blended modality during this time of the pandemic poses challenges to both the learners and their families. This is consistent with existing literature, which identifies family background variables as significant predictors of educational achievement (Calica, 2020). The decline in reading comprehension skills among learners is explicit. Teachers are even more encouraged to come up with ways to address such a pressing matter.

Still, it is much observable that schools, here in our country are trying their best to connect with stakeholders who directly impact the learning of these students, especially those in need of assistance. Teachers directly communicate with parents or guardians to ensure that learning is encouraged at home during school hours especially when they are not scheduled on limited face-to-face modality. Teachers and school administrators ensure that there is awareness as to each student's class standing specifically targeting basic skills such as reading comprehension.

Reading comprehension is a complex interaction among automatic and strategic cognitive processes that enables the reader to create a mental representation of the text (van den Brock & Espin, 2012). Comprehension depends not only on characteristics of the reader, such as a prior knowledge and working memory, but also on language processes, such as basic reading skills, decoding, vocabulary, sensitivity to text structure, inferencing and motivation. Comprehension also requires effective use of strategic processes such as metacognition and comprehension monitoring. As readers mature in their comprehension skills, they are able to progress efficiently from the stage of learning to read to the ultimate goal of reading to learn (Yovanoff, Duesbery, Alonzo & Tindal, 2005).

Reading activities are focus to improve students' comprehension in reading the passage. Reading is one of the essential skills in language teaching which should be taught to learners. Despite reading plays a main role in teaching process and it can help the students in many aspects of their life, but they still face many problems in reading comprehension. There were research findings from Gunning (2002) & Medjahdi (2015) where they investigated the problems of reading comprehension of English foreign language learners are the lack of vocabularies, limited background knowledge of the students, the text given to the students was not appropriate with the

level competence. Therefore, it can be concluded that the students' reading problems are about lack of vocabularies, the limitation of students' background knowledge, and the appropriate materials are needed.

Moreover, reading has played a very important role in the development of countries, and we cannot ignore the fact that it has an impact on the people as well. It is just right that schools especially in our country are focusing on improving the learners' reading skills and that we see programs and interventions are being implemented to aid and guide students. It gives teachers hope that sooner or later learners will recover from the loss of learning when it comes to reading comprehension or they will improve their reading comprehension skills because schools are promoting activities that will build on the learners' most important foundation. This movement will be of great effect as it aims to produce learners who are competent enough to read, analyze, and comprehend. With this, we are building a future filled with critical and intelligent people.

The last two remaining quarters in school year 2021-2022, limited face-to-face has been implemented. During the first two weeks, the researcher conducted oral reading test. As expected, of the 28 pupils enrolled in the previous school year, 14 or 50% of them can hardly read and cannot comprehend what they are reading. This pushes the researcher to prepare intervention materials which will help address the problem of underdeveloped comprehension skills. With this result, no one is to be blame but to do some extra efforts to let them learn the lessons in reading that they are supposed to avail during pandemic.

By looking on the above situation where learning losses are evident in all schools in the country, a roll-out of seminars in every region of the country that tackles the learning recovery plan focusing on the basic skills of learners—literacy, numeracy, and science was conducted. Literacy was the first to be discussed in these learning recovery program (LRP) trainings because it is the most basic yet most essential in learning. Reading is a skill that makes up the foundation of every learning. And we can say that over the past years up until the present, reading in every part of the world had become harder and harder for learners to acquire and this is why such mentioned trainings are relevant, for we see a need to address these things in a way that teachers, as well as other stakeholders, are fully aware of what is currently happening to the learners.

Teachers have to prepare intervention materials to address the learning loss of the learners. One the interventions that the researcher has crafted is a teacher-made story books with comic strips that creates messages through the words and images. The comic strip has the different characteristics by a comic book. Butler (2008) reveals that the comic strip is formed into one or three panels that appear daily in newspapers or magazine and it is more concise than a book whereas comic book is a short novel contains story. Meanwhile, Liu (2004) emphasizes that comic strip can be defined as a series of pictures inside boxes that tell a story. It means comic strip is a kind of comic which is made by putting the pictures and the words in the right order.

Csabay (2006) asserts that comics are usually funny, applying them to methodological purposes will have the same effect as using games in teaching English and it brings a good atmosphere into the class. Meanwhile, Mahir, et al. (2016) claim that comic strip spark laughter or amusement that will have a great influence to attract students' attention in learning activities. It has been used excessively as one of the media to entertain students' learning session. One way to arouse students' interest in reading activity can be achieved by giving something extraordinary into the language class to cope the boredom and the complex language which is not found in an ordinary book.

Thus, the intervention materials crafted aims at helping the teachers in providing activities to the learners. One of the instructional materials in improving the vocabulary skills is by using story books in teaching reading. The teacher-made story books were utilized by the teacher in the last quarter of the school year. As she observed, improvement of the comprehension level of some pupils is evident. Thus, the researcher decided to come up with a study to evaluate the effectiveness of teacher-made story books as instructional materials in improving the comprehension skills of the learners. A proposed improvement plan was formulated based on the result of the study.

Thus, it is in the rationale that the researcher who is currently a Grade 5 teacher in the above mentioned local, 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 teacher-made story books in improving the comprehension skills of Grade 5 learners in Mahayag Elementary School of Albuera South 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 comprehension of the Grade 5 learners before the integration of the teacher-made story books in teaching?
2. What is the level of comprehension of the Grade 5 learners after the integration of the teacher-made story books in teaching?
3. Is there a significant difference in the level of comprehension of the Grade 5 learners before and after the integration of the teacher-made story books?
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 teacher-made story books in improving the comprehension skills of Grade 5 learners for School Year 2022-2023. Mahayag Elementary School, Albuera South District, Leyte Division is the main locale of the study. The 21 Grade 5 learners enrolled in the said locale for School Year 2022-2023 are the main respondents of the study and Phil-IRI passages for Grade 5 was used. Likewise, the researcher crafted a teacher-made story books with comic strips that will boast the interest of the learners to read and are quality assured by the District Quality Assurance Team for utilization by the learners during the intervention period. Lesson plans also were crafted which uses the teacher-made story books as part of the developmental activities. This research is focused in evaluating the effectiveness of teacher-made story books and performance of Grade 5 learners in comprehension skills through the pre-test and post-test and its significant difference. A Proposed Improvement Plan based on the findings of the study is the output.

Sampling. There are 21 Grade 5 learners involved in this study. The research-made reading passages with comprehension questions and giving of intervention were administered personally by the researcher with consent from the Local IATF and strictly following the prescribed Health Protocol. Since, learners are already attending the classes in face-to-face, interventions were provided during their English lessons on a face-to-face learning modality.

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 the teacher-made story books during the English lessons were emphasized and as part of the developmental activities of the lesson. 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 Improvement 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 and Weighted Mean were employed to evaluate the pre-test and post-test of the Grade 5 learners in comprehension skills. **t-Test of Mean**

Difference was used to determine the significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the Grade 5 learners in comprehension skills.

III. Results and Discussion

Table 1
Pre-Test Performance of Grade 5 Pupils in Comprehension Skills

Score Range	Description	PRETEST	
		Frequency	%
17-20	Excellent	0	0
13-16	Very Good	3	14
9-12	Good	10	48
5-8	Fair	8	38
1-4	Poor	0	0
Total		21	100
Weighted Mean		9.62	Good

Table 1 presents the pre-test performance of Grade 5 learners in reading comprehension skills. It was revealed on the table that among the 21 Grade 5 learners, 3 or 14% got the score of 13-16 which is interpreted as very good, while 10 or 48% got a score of 9-12 which is good and 8 or 38% got 5-8 or fair. Moreover, the table also revealed that the pre-test performance of the Grade 5 learners in comprehension skills has an average weighted mean of 9.62 which is interpreted as good. This means that only few of the learners passed the test. This implies that the learners have difficulty in understanding the passages read. These learners need alternative learning materials which will help them learn in understanding the story read. There were research findings from Gunning (2002) & Medjahdi (2015) they investigated the problems of reading comprehension of English foreign language learners are the lack of vocabularies, limited background knowledge of the students, the text given to the students was not appropriate with the level competence. Therefore, it can be concluded that the students' reading problems are about lack of vocabularies, the limitation of students' background knowledge, and the appropriate materials are needed. Thus, teachers have to provide intervention materials to help them achieve their goals.

Table 2
Post-Test Performance of Grade 5 Pupils in Comprehension Skills

Score Range	Description	POST-TEST	
		Frequency	%
17-20	Excellent	16	76
13-16	Very Good	5	24
9-12	Good	0	0
5-8	Fair	0	0
1-4	Poor	0	0
Total		21	100
Weighted Mean		18.14	Excellent

Table 2 presents the post-test performance of Grade 5 learners in comprehension skills. It was revealed on the table that among the 21 Grade 5 learners, 16 or 76% got a score of 17-20 which is interpreted as excellent and 5 or 24% got the score of 13-16 which is interpreted as very good. Moreover, the table also revealed that the post-test performance of Grade 5 learners in comprehension skills has a weighted mean of 18.14 which is interpreted as excellent. This means that after the intervention of utilizing the teacher-made story book, the comprehension skills of the Grade 5 learners have increased. This implies that the intervention has been effective in addressing the needs of the learners to be able to understand the text read. Teachers are the fundamental role in the teaching and learning process, and teachers should stimulate learners in learning process. Meanwhile, teachers often used text book in the classroom without applied some visual media that can improve students' interest. Visual media can be used to help teachers delivering their material easily. Considering the effectiveness of using visual media in teaching and learning process, the utilization of teacher-made story book with comic strips as visual media helps the learners improve their reading performance.

Table 3
Test of Difference Between the Scores in the Pre-Test and Post-Test of
Grade V Pupils in Comprehension Skills

Aspects	Test Scores		Computed T	Critical T	Decision	Interpretation
Grade 5 in Comprehension Skills	Pre Post	9.62 18.14	2.314	0.365	Reject H _o	Significant

Table 3 presents the test of difference between the scores in the pre-test and post-test of Grade 5 learners in comprehension skills. It was revealed on the table that pre-test and post-test performances of the Grade 5 learners in comprehension skills has the computed value of t of 2.314 which is greater than the critical value of t, so null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the Grade 5 learners in comprehension skills. The weighted mean in the pre-test performance of 9.62 has increased to 18.14 in the post-test after utilizing the teacher-made story books. This implies that the teacher-made story books help the learners attain in achieving their goals in reading. The utilization of teacher-made story books has comic strip which plays an essential role to support the teaching and learning process for these motivates the learners to read and provide better understanding of the story read. This media can be the effective media in increasing students' reading comprehension, as are the media which used by the researcher to help students' reading comprehension increase. Rokhayati and Utari (2014) investigated that the use of comic strip in the story books as an English teaching media for Junior High School students was effective. Thus, comic strips in the story books as the media in teaching students' reading comprehension should be implemented in the English classroom. This creates messages through story line and images. Comic strip in the story books have some benefits such as; assisting students comprehending the contents of text, helping the students to improve their ideas, increasing the students' interest in reading. Carry (2004) as cited by Rengur & Sugirin (2018) state that argues that in comics, readability measures are determined not only on words alone, but also on pictures. Here, pictures support the words to make the written text becomes more comprehensible. Thus, making it as an effective instructional support for learning.

IV. Conclusion

The study revealed a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the Grade 5 learners in comprehension skills. The teacher-made story books provided to the learners as intervention helps in improving their reading performance. Thus, the utilization of the teacher-made story books is an effective supplementary reading material in improving the comprehension skills of the learners.

V. Recommendations

1. The proposed improvement plan formulated should be utilized;
2. Teachers have to attend training in the production of teacher-made story books with comic strips as part of the story;
3. Teachers have to learn to produce a teacher-made story books for the learners;
4. Teachers have to be creative in crafting a story books;
5. Teachers must submit the story books made for quality assurance;
6. School heads have to provide the appropriate technical assistance in the production of story books;
7. School head have to provide materials for the construction of story books for the learners;
8. School heads have to monitor the proper utilization of the teacher-made story books in the teaching and learning;
9. School heads and teachers have to provide capability building to parents on the importance of utilizing the teacher-made story books and encourage them to use these materials at home;
10. School heads should encourage the teachers to craft other intervention materials for the learners to use in the classroom;
11. School heads and teachers should help one another in making learning to happen and improve the performance of the learners; and
12. Future researchers should replicate this study to include different locale and include different variables aside from the mentioned in this study.

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AUTHOR'S PROFILE**MRS. MONETTE B. LAGADO**

The author is Mrs. Monette B. Lagado. She was born on July 6, 1995 at Western Leyte Provincial Hospital, Baybay, Leyte. She was married for almost 2 years with Mr. Joemar C. Lagado and has one child. She's presently residing at Brgy. Tabgas, Albuera, Leyte. She finished her elementary education at Antipolo Elementary School, Antipolo, Albuera, Leyte in the year 2000-2006 and continue her quest for education and able to finish her secondary education at Dr. Geronimo B. Zaldivar Memorial School of Fisheries, Poblacion, Albuera, Leyte in the year 2006-2010. She enrolled and finished her Bachelor in Elementary Education at St. Peter's College of Ormoc in the year 2010-2014. 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.

She was teaching for almost six years and a Teacher III at Mahayag Elementary School. Her station was Salvacion Elementary School for one month and was transferred to Mahayag Elementary School for the rest of the year until present. She was teaching as Grade V Adviser since then. She also attended series of webinars/seminars and trainings to increase her professional growth as a teacher.