

Effectiveness on the Utilization of Teacher-Made Reading Activities in Improving the Comprehension Skills of Grade 6 Pupils

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Abstract — Reading is a tool for learning all other areas. It provides us with information about the world and the universe. It played a very important role in the development of the country, and we cannot ignore the fact that it has an impact on the people as well. Therefore, teachers must do something to let the pupil read and teach them the reading skills needed for the grade. We cannot deny the fact that during this pandemic, many of the pupils suffer from learning loss. Some of them are struggling to read. Thus, it is in this premise that the researcher conducted this study to evaluate the effectiveness on the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in improving the comprehension skills of the Grade 6 pupils. Employing the quasi-experimental research design using the pre-test and post-test, the researcher utilized the researcher-made reading passages and stories with comprehension questions to determine their comprehension level before and after the 4-week intervention. Moreover, the researcher crafted differentiated, varied, interactive and relevant teacher-made reading activities to be used during the data gathering process and this becomes the intervention of the study. In addition, the researcher also crafted lessons plans for 4 weeks highlighting the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in the teaching-learning process in her English lessons. The 2nd quarter Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) in English Grade 6 were the basis on the competencies used by the researcher. After a series of tests and interventions provided by the researcher to the respondents of the study, the result found out that these materials are effective in improving the reading comprehension skills of the Grade 6 pupils. Hence, this study revealed a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the Grade 6 pupils before and after the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in teaching comprehension skills among the pupils. Thus, utilizing the teacher-made reading activities which are contextualized, experienced-based, relevant and interactive is effective in improving the comprehension skills of the pupils.

Keywords — *Effectiveness, Utilization, Teacher-Made Reading Activities, Comprehension Skills, Grade 6 Pupils*

I. Introduction

The ability to read and comprehend are essential skills for students to survive and understand how society works because most information is presented through text. Prior research shows that reading helps mental development (Van, 2009; Yaseen, 2013). Seminal contributions have been made by Ogbodo (2002), Bhan & Gupta (2010), and Singh (2011) have done work on reading and it shows a promising effect on the overall development of the students, especially for their academic journey. A series of recent studies has indicated that the ability to comprehend helps the academic performance of the students. Cimmiyotti (2013) stated that reading is fundamental at all levels of the educational system because all subjects in the course involve reading and this will lead to better academic performance.

Reading comprehension is a critical learning skill for all students (Clarke, Truelove, Hulme, & Snowling, 2013; Wong, 2011), as it is “the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language” (The Rand Reading Study Group, 2002). Understanding words’ meaning, analyzing the authors points of view and aim for writing and gaining knowledge of new words are all very important reading skills that support reading comprehension (Ruiz, 2015). Students need reading comprehension skills to successfully accomplish the educational goals and expectations, which are required in the classroom settings. For example, having the ability to understand textual information play a critical role in helping learners to quickly locate information that is pertinent to the text, exclude information that is irrelevant to the text, and identify the important information to focus on. Academic success also requires students to be able to understand, analyze, and apply information they gathered through their reading (Clarke, Truelove, Hulme, & Snowling, 2013). The importance of being able to understand written materials increases significantly in all academic areas as students move from one grade to another (Clarke, Truelove, Hulme, & Snowling, 2013; Wong, 2011).

In contrast, not being able to successfully comprehend can prevent students from learning, retaining information that they read, and graduating from school, which will negatively impact different aspects of their lives later (Hoeh, 2015; Mason, 2004). Reading difficulties negatively impact different aspects of students, including their educational progress, self-esteem, attitudes about reading and learning, motivation to read, career choices, social-economic status and expectation for future reading success (Sloat, Beswick, and Willms, 2007; Woolley, 2011).

Not only is reading comprehension a valuable skill for learning in school, but to successfully interact in everyday life, individuals need reading skills to read and understand labels, directions, job application forms, and newspapers (Chatman, 2015). Also, individuals need reading skills to be able to have and maintain a job and successfully engage in different daily activities (Hoeh, 2015; Mahdavi, & Tensfeldt, 2013), and live independently (Hoeh, 2015). The need for reading comprehension becomes very critical when thinking about the negative consequences of not being able to read in critical situations. For instance, not being able to read and comprehend

dosage directions on a bottle of medicine or caution on a container of dangerous chemicals may put the individuals in a very dangerous situation that threatens their safety and lives (Marshall, n.d.). Those who do not possess the ability to understand what they are reading are put at a disadvantage in every educational and personal life situation (Blair, Rupley, & Nichols, 2007). That is why reading comprehension is an important skill which pupils must acquire in an early year of schooling. But how can this be achieved where most of the pupils were unable to understand what they were reading. Apparently, some of the pupils have difficulty in recognizing the words. In fact, during the pre-reading assessment, it was found out that among the 19 pupils tested, 2 are identified independent readers, 4 are instructional readers and 13 are frustration readers. This means that these pupils need intervention to address their learning gaps. Thus, providing teacher-made reading activities will help improve their comprehension skills. And this study evaluates the effectiveness of teacher-made reading activities in improving the comprehension skills of Grade 6 pupils. A proposed improvement plan will be formulated based on the findings of the study. Moreso, it is also in the above rationale that the researcher who is currently a Grade 6 teacher in the above mentioned local, would like to delve worthy research undertaking that will benefit herself, the school she is currently teaching and that of her Graduate Program she is enrolled at.

This study evaluates the effectiveness of the utilization of teacher-made reading activities in improving the comprehension skills of Grade 6 pupils in Casilda Elementary School of Merida District, Leyte Division for School Year 2022-2023. The findings of the study were the basis for the proposed improvement plan.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the pre-test performance of the Grade 6 pupils before the utilization of teacher-made reading activities in teaching reading comprehension skills?
2. What is the post-test performance of Grade 6 pupils after the utilization of teacher-made reading activities in teaching reading comprehension skills?
3. Is there a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the Grade 6 pupils before and after the utilization of teacher-made reading activities in teaching reading comprehension skills?
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 conducted before and after the intervention to evaluate the effectiveness of the utilization of teacher-made reading activities in improving the comprehension skills of Grade 6 pupils for School Year 2022-2023. Casilda Elementary School, Merida District, Leyte Division is the main locale of the study. There are 19 Grade 6 pupils involved in this study. They are enrolled in the said locale for School Year 2022-2023. They underwent a series of evaluations prior to the implementation of the intervention. A researcher-made reading test was formulated and administered to the pupil-respondents. The competencies used in the formulation of reading test were taken from the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) for Grade 6 English. The reading comprehension skills is the focused reading skills for this study. This material was checked and validated by the District Kindergarten Coordinator and School Heads. Further, lesson plans were crafted by the researcher highlighting the utilization of teacher-made reading activities as learning resources in teaching comprehension skills. The competencies used in the formulation of the lesson plans were taken from the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) for Grade 6 English. Finally, teacher-made reading activities were crafted and provided to the Grade 6 pupils as intervention for 4 weeks. These teacher-made reading activities were included in the lesson plan for English. These are the learning resources used by the teacher in teaching comprehension skills. These materials were submitted to the District Quality Assurance Team for validation and adjustments if there is any before it will be given to the Grade 6 pupils. All activities underwent by the researcher in the duration of data gathering procedures were recorded and followed in the Matrix of Activities prepared by the researcher. This matrix was the basis for monitoring by the school head and adviser of the researcher on the progress of the paper and that of the respondents and guide by the researcher on the flow of her study. After a series of interventions provided to the Grade 6 pupils, a post-test was given. This research is focused on evaluating the effectiveness of the utilization of teacher-made reading activities in improving the comprehension skills of Grade 6 pupils. A Proposed Improvement Plan based on the findings of the study is the output.

Sampling. There are 19 Grade 6 pupils involved in this study. Universal sampling technique is used in choosing the respondents of the study. Hence, face-to-face classes has already been implemented during the data gathering process, the research instruments were administered face-to-face with consent from the parents and Local IATF and strictly following the prescribed Health Protocol during the limited face-to-face classes.

Research Procedure. The researcher prepared the research design and tools 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 face-to-face after the approval of the permit from the parents of the

respondents. The tools used in the study were teacher-made reading activities, lesson plans, researcher-made reading tests and matrix of activities. These tools underwent a series of validation by the experts like the District English Coordinator, School and District Head before it was given to the pupils. After the approval of the tools, these were reproduced as to the number of pupil-respondents. In the conduct of the pre-test, the researcher requested her fellow Grade 6 teacher to do the administration of the pre-test. After accomplishing the pre-test, intervention was given within four weeks. The implementation of the approved and checked lesson plans highlighting the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities was done in the duration of the data gathering process. After the four-week intervention, the 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 researcher properly secured the permission to conduct the study from the authorities through written communication. In the formulation of the intervention materials that was used in the study, the use of offensive, discriminatory or other unacceptable language was avoided. The respondents' names and other personal data were not included in this study to protect their privacy. Participation of the respondents was also voluntary. Orientation was conducted for the respondents with their parents. In the orientation, issues and concerns were addressed and consent to be included in the study were signed. The researcher-maintained objectivity in analyzing and discussing the results. All authors whose works were mentioned in this study were properly quoted and were acknowledged in the reference.

Treatment of Data. The Simple Percentage was employed to evaluate result of the pre-test and post-test conducted before and after the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in teaching comprehension skills. **t-Test of Mean Difference** was used to determine the significant difference in the pre-test and post-test conducted to the Grade 6 pupils before and after the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in teaching comprehension skills.

III. Results and Discussion

Table 1
Pre-Test Performance of Grade 6 Pupils in Reading

Score Range	Description	PRETEST	
		Frequency	%
17-20	Excellent	0	0
13-16	Very Good	0	0
9-12	Good	17	89
5-8	Fair	2	11
0-4	Poor	0	0
Total		19	100
Weighted Mean		9.95	Good

Table 1 presents the pre-test performance of the Grade 6 pupils before the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in teaching comprehension skills. It was revealed on the table that among the 19 Grade 6 pupils tested, 17 or 89% got a score of 9-12 which is interpreted as good. This means that these pupils got almost one-half of the total number of items correct. This implies that there is a need for learning assistance and intervention because most of them have found out to have difficulty in understanding what he/she is reading using the usual instructional materials used by the teacher in the development of the lesson. Moreover, it was also revealed on the table that there are 2 Grade 6 pupils or 39% got a score of 5-8 which is interpreted as fair. This means that these pupils are struggling to read. Meaning focus on learning comprehension skills should be emphasized and no one should be left behind. This implies that intervention should be given evidently to awaken the interest of the pupils in learning to love reading and learn how to understand the text he/she is reading.

Finally, the table shows the test performance of the Grade 6 pupils before the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in teaching reading, and it was shown that it has an average weighted mean of 9.95 which is interpreted as good. This means that these pupils really need interventions and additional reading activities which will boost their interest to participate in the lesson and be attentive to the discussion of the teacher most especially in the comprehension skills needed by the pupils. This implies that the teacher should think of alternative or additional learning activities which will allow pupils to know the meaning of the words used in the story and be able to understand the passage or story read. Since these have difficulty in getting the meaning of the story conveyed, teachers have to prepare learning support materials and reading activities which will help the pupils achieve comprehension in the story or passages read. As pupils shift from learning to read to reading to learn, incorporating interactive games and activities gives them a chance to practice and strengthen their reading comprehension skills. Reading comprehension games and activities can be used in many ways: activities for small group practice and using interactive games and activities. Aside from this, teachers have to contextualize reading activities which will help improve the comprehension skills of the pupils.

Table 2
Post-Test Performance of Grade 6 Pupils in Reading

Score Range	Description	POST-TEST	
		Frequency	%
17-20	Excellent	12	63
13-16	Very Good	7	37
9-12	Good	0	0
5-8	Fair	0	0
0-4	Poor	0	0
Total		19	100
Weighted Mean		17.47	Excellent

Table 2 presents the post-test performance of the Grade 6 pupils after the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in teaching comprehension skills. It was revealed on the table that after the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in teaching comprehension skills, 12 Grade 6 pupils out of 19 or 63% got a score of 17-20 which is interpreted as excellent. This means that the teacher-made reading activities have helped them improve their reading performance. This implies that the reading performance of the Grade 6 pupils has improved taking into consideration the learning support materials provided to them which are contextualized and suited to the level of the pupils. These materials have guide words in the passage which lead the pupils' understanding of what has been read. Moreover, it was shown on the table that among the 19 kindergarten pupils, 7 or 37% got a score of 13-16 which is interpreted as very good. This means that after the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in teaching comprehension skills, the reading performance of the Grade 6 pupils has improved, and mastery of the lessons was attained. This implies effectiveness in the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in teaching reading. Why effective? Because most of the materials have illustrations and guide words or phrases which lead to the understanding of the text read. Moreover, teacher-made reading activities have follow up questions on every page for further understanding of the lessons conveyed in the text. This implies further that through the exposure of the teacher-made reading activities, pupils were guided to find technique and strategies on the process of knowing and understanding thoroughly the comprehension skills needed for each of the story presented.

Table 3
Test of Difference Between the Scores in the Pre-Test
and Post-Test of Grade 6 Pupils in Reading

Aspects	Test Scores		Computed T	Critical T	Decision	Interpretation
Grade 6 Pupils	Pre Post	9.95 17.47	2.993	0.465	Reject H ₀	Significant

Table 3 presents the test of difference between the scores in the pre-test and post-test of the Grade 6 pupils before and after the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in teaching comprehension skills. It was revealed on the table that the computed value of t of 2.993 is greater than the critical value of t of 0.465, so null hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the Grade 6 pupils before and after the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in teaching comprehension skills. This implies that through the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities, pupils had mastered the comprehension skills and they were able to comprehend and respond effectively to the lessons given to them. Further, the teacher-made reading activities given to the pupils have shifted from learning to read to reading to learn, which helps them practice and strengthen their reading habits and later on develop the love for reading.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the results of the test conducted before and after the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities, it was found out that these materials are effective in improving the reading comprehension skills of the Grade 6 pupils. Hence, this study revealed a significant difference in the pre-test and post-test performances of the Grade 6 pupils before and after the utilization of the teacher-made reading activities in teaching comprehension skills among the pupils. Thus, utilizing the teacher-made reading activities which are contextualized, experienced-based, relevant and interactive is effective in improving the comprehension skills of the pupils.

V. Recommendations

1. The proposed improvement plan formulated should be utilized by the teachers to further test whether the intervention is effective to improve the reading performance of the kindergarten pupils.
2. To find the usability of the materials as well as to maintain or increase the performance of the pupils, teachers should utilize the teacher-made reading activities in teaching comprehension skills.
3. Teachers should utilize the teacher-made reading activities in teaching comprehension skills for it has proven to be effective.
4. Teachers should learn to craft differentiated and varied teacher-made reading activities to be utilized by the pupils during the teaching-learning process.
5. Teachers should integrate play or games using the teacher-made reading activities to help them understand the concept correctly and be able to apply the knowledge gained.
6. Teachers must attend training or LAC sessions on the production of teacher-made reading activities and their utilization in the classroom.
7. Teachers must attend training on the formulation of technology-based teacher-made reading activities in teaching reading.
8. School Heads should find time to conduct regular reading activities within a week to develop reading habits among pupils and teachers.
9. School Heads should implement reading programs in school.
10. School Heads should spearhead in the crafting of training design and LAC plan for trainings and LAC sessions for the improvement of teaching-learning process of teachers most especially in the improvement of learning resource materials in reading.
11. School Heads should conduct LAC sessions on the importance of conducting and providing intervention activities to the pupils to address the learning gaps that school children and experiencing right now.
12. School Heads should provide technical assistance to teachers in terms of teaching comprehension skills using differentiated and varied learning support materials and resources.
13. School Heads should regularly monitor the teaching-learning process of teachers.

14. School Heads should maximize the time in providing appropriate technical assistance based on the needs of the teachers in teaching comprehension skills.
15. School Heads should encourage or require the teachers to submit the teacher-made reading activities and other learning resources to the Quality Assurance Team for validation, evaluation, and quality assurance of the materials before it will be used in the teaching-learning process.
16. School Heads should encourage and provide technical assistance for the crafting of innovations and research based on the intervention provided to improve the performance of the pupils; and
17. Future researchers should replicate this study to include different locales and include different variables aside from the mentioned in this study.

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AUTHOR'S PROFILE



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She was a kindergarten volunteer teacher for one (1) year at Casilda Elementary School in the year 2007-2008 and five (5) years in Merida Central School in the year 2009-2015. In the year 2015 she was hired in the DepEd teaching combination Grade 4 & 5 pupils for two (2) years at Minesite Elementary School, Masumbang, Merida, Leyte and transferred to Casilda Elementary School in the year 2017 until present handling grade 6 pupils. She also attended series of webinars/seminars and trainings to increase his professional growth as a teacher.