

Effectiveness of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good Readers in Early Grades (Project BRIDGE) in Improving the Literacy Performance of Kindergarten Learners

GECILLE ELIDO

Teacher II

Western Leyte College

Master of Arts in Education

Major in School Administration and Supervision

gecille.elido@deped.gov.ph

Abstract—Long-term reading success depends on two sets of skills-decoding and language comprehension skills. Decoding skills or learning letters, letter sounds, and phonological awareness help children learn to read print in the early grades. Moreover, comprehension skills or understanding the meaning of texts, vocabulary and background knowledge help children understand what they read. Teaching these skills is crucial among kindergarten learners thus, teachers must create and initiate intervention activities and programs to assist teachers in providing the learning that learners need to achieve in a particular grade level. This study was formulated to evaluate the effectiveness of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE) in improving the literacy performance of kindergarten learners. A quasi-experimental research design employing pre-test and post-test Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) tool to evaluate the reading ability of learners in the early grades is the tool used in evaluating the literacy performance of the learners which is based on DepEd Order No. 57 s. 2015. These materials were the tools used by the researcher to measure their pre-test and post-test performances. Moreover, lesson plans were crafted highlighting the utilization of digital short stories and activities provided in the implementation of Project BRIDGE. Simple percentage and t-test of mean difference were the statistical tools used to interpret the result of the study. The study revealed a significant difference in the literacy performance of the kindergarten learners before and after the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE). Involving the learners in the teaching-learning activities and exposing them to variety and appropriate learning resources and with constant practice and exercises, learners really learn to read with understanding and fluency.

***Keywords* — Effectiveness, Project BRIDGE, Literacy Performance, Kindergarten Learners**

I. Introduction

Early literacy begins to develop the moment the child is born. Parents and caregivers lay the foundation for children's reading success in infancy, as babies learn to recognize the sounds in their language and identify words within the speech stream. Practices such as reading books with babies, singing songs, drawing, and pointing out letters are important beginning steps in literacy development.

Formal early literacy instruction typically begins in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten. Early literacy instruction includes teaching decoding (working with letters and sounds), comprehension (understanding stories and informational texts, background knowledge), and oral language (vocabulary and sentence structure).

Some believe that pre-kindergarten or kindergarten should be purely child-led and play-focused, without explicit attention paid to literacy skills. However, failing to plan and intentionally teach literacy skills in pre-kindergarten can widen achievement gaps between children living in poverty and their economical advantaged peers. Literacy instruction should always be developmentally appropriate, engaging, and implemented in meaningful contexts like shared book-reading and play. As an educator has said, "kindergarten classes are noisy, classroom is full of reading materials, toys and other manipulative materials where they can interact with it and learn new things from it". On the other hand, if kindergarten classroom is so silent, the teacher is not doing something or not teaching at all.

Capacitating teachers in teaching early literacy is the most important in this study. Moreso, providing differentiated and varied learning materials in the classroom is significant so that learners will be able to learn to read and love the habit of reading. Project BRIDGE which refers to Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades has come into realization to provide intervention activities and knowledge to our teachers and other stakeholders. Developing good readers in an early grade is one of the objectives of this intervention. Teachers were trained on the teaching strategies, approaches and methods in beginning reading and on the construction of interactive, varied and differentiated learning materials suited to the needs of the learners. Monitoring tools, guidelines, and procedures in the implementation of the project has also been crafted. Giving emphasis on decoding and language comprehension skills is a part of the project.

This innovative project came into being when the result of the reading assessment conducting revealed an alarming data. Showing the greatest number of frustration and non-readers in the school, motivates the researcher in conducting this intervention. She believes that the ability to read is the foundation for a successful education. Thus, implementing the project in early grades is helpful in attaining success in reading among the learners.

Reading is important because if a child can read, he can easily learn anything about everything and everything about anything (Tomie de Paola). A child who fails to develop his

reading skills at a certain level of his education finds reading boring and difficult to achieve. If children are not independent readers by the end of the third grade, most likely they will not be able to succeed in the middle grades and beyond and will not be able to "catch up" with their peers. This phenomenon of reading failure makes the child inattentive, irritable, and passive. Therefore, his failure in this area hampers him to achieve academically in other content area subjects. Based on observation, this may even lead to a negative attitude towards schooling and are more likely to be retained and drop out of school. Thus, preventing reading difficulties early in children's school careers is very important to make them well-developed and successful learners.

Learning how to read is the main concern of the teachers in the elementary grade, particularly the primary teachers. It is in their hands that lies the responsibility of making every learner a reader. They are the ones responsible for opening the child's mind to give value and importance to reading. If there is one important thing that teachers can do to help a child become successful in school and life, it is to encourage him to be a reader and love reading. If a child becomes a good reader, it would be easy for him to learn the lessons in other subjects. Learning tasks and activities in school would be easier and enjoyable because the learners can read and follow instructions and can perform what is required of them. Thus, making every learner motivated, inspired, and active in schooling.

The foundation of equipping the reading capacity of a child is being done during the primary grade of schooling (Manolito Basilio, 2018). According to him, it is in this period that the learners should learn and acquire the knowledge and skills in reading. Thus, it is in this premise that the researcher conducted this study to evaluate the effectiveness of Project BRIDGE (Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades) in improving the literacy performance of kindergarten learners of Margen Elementary School, Ormoc City District 9, Ormoc City Division. The findings of the study will be the basis for the proposed improvement plan.

It is in the rationale that the researcher who is currently a kindergarten 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 Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE) in improving the literacy performance of kindergarten learners of Margen Elementary School, Ormoc City District 9, Ormoc City 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 literacy performance of kindergarten learners before the implementation of Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (Project BRIDGE)?

2. What is the literacy performance of kindergarten learners after the implementation of Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (Project BRIDGE)?
3. Is there a significant difference in the literacy performances of the kindergarten learners before and after the implementation of Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (Project BRIDGE)?
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 Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE) in improving the literacy performance of kindergarten learners for School Year 2022-2023. Margen Elementary School, Ormoc City District 9, Ormoc City Division is the main locale of the study. The 41 kindergarten learners enrolled in the said locale for School Year 2022-2023 are the main respondents of the study. The Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) tool to evaluate the reading ability of learners in the early grades is the tool used in evaluating the literacy performance of the learners. This instrument is based on DepEd Order No. 57, series 2015, Utilization of Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and Early Grade Math Assessment (EGMA) Tools for System Assessment. This material is used to measure the pre-test and post-test literacy performance of the kindergarten pupils. A lesson plan for teaching literacy skills and learning materials were crafted and used during the data gathering as intervention for the study. The learning materials were listed in the lesson plans highlighting the utilization of digital interactive short stories and activities which is the focus of Project BRIDGE. A matrix of activities was crafted to guide the teacher-researcher the flow of her study. This research focused on evaluating the effectiveness of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE) in improving the literacy performance of kindergarten learners 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 41 kindergarten learners involved in this study. The research instruments were administered face-to-face with consent from the Local IATF and strictly following the prescribed Health Protocol during the 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. After accomplishing the pre-test, intervention was given within four weeks. The utilization of digital interactive short stories and activities to improve the literacy performance of kindergarten learners was emphasized in the study. 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. Simple Percentage was employed to evaluate the pre-test and post-test literacy performance of the kindergarten learners before and after the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE) in improving the literacy performance of kindergarten learners. **t-Test of Mean Difference** was used to determine the significant difference in the pre-test and post-test literacy performances of the kindergarten learners.

III. Results and Discussion

Table 1
Pre-Test Performance of Kindergarten Learners in Literacy

Score Range	Description	PRETEST	
		Frequency	%
90-100	Independent	2	5
75-89	Transitional	16	39
74 & below	Emergent	23	56
Total		41	100
Weighted Mean		71.34	Emergent

Table 1 presents the pre-test performance of kindergarten learners in literacy before the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE) in improving the literacy performance of kindergarten learners. It was revealed on the table that among the 41 kindergarten learners there are 2 or 5% got a score of 90-100 which is

interpreted as independent. This means that these pupils can read independently the sounds of the alphabet, words, phrases and even sentences. This implies that these learners have advanced knowledge in literacy. They were exposed to literacy skills when they are at home or before they attend classes in school. Moreover, among the 41 kindergarten learners, 16 or 39% got a score of 75-89 which is interpreted as transitional. This means that this is the stage of literacy development where individuals have acquired basic reading skills and transitioning to most advanced levels of literacy. This implies that learners in this stage can read and understand simple text with support and guidance of the learning facilitators or teachers. Further, there are 23 or 56% got a score of 74 and below which is interpreted as emergent. This means that these are the learners who need immediate intervention because they lack knowledge of reading skills most especially the pre-requisite skills in reading. This implies that teachers must make intervention activities and programs which will help improve the literacy skills of the learners. Finally, the pre-test performance of kindergarten learners in literacy before the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE) in improving the literacy performance of kindergarten learners got an average mean of 71.34 which is interpreted as emergent. This means that these are the learners who are in the early stages of developing literacy skills. They are at the very beginning of their reading journey and are just starting to recognize letters, sounds, understand that print carries meaning, and make connections between spoken and written words.

Table 2
Post-Test Performance of Kindergarten Learners in Literacy

Score Range	Description	PRETEST	
		Frequency	%
90-100	Independent	21	51
75-89	Transitional	20	49
74 & below	Emergent	0	0
Total		41	100
Weighted Mean		89.85	Independent

Table 2 presents the post-test performance of kindergarten learners in literacy after the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE) in improving the literacy performance of kindergarten learners. It was revealed on the table that among the 41 kindergarten learners tested, 21 or 51% got a score of 90-100 which is interpreted as independent. This means that after the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE) employing the researcher-made digital interactive short stories and activities, the literacy performance of the kindergarten learners has improved. This implies that the project or program has helped in making the learners independent in their reading activities. It also helped them in developing sufficient level of reading

fluency, improve their vocabulary skills and comprehension strategies by allowing them to understand the text they are reading through the materials and activities provided by the teacher in the implementation of Project BRIDGE. Moreover, the table shows that there are 20 or 49% kindergarten learners who got the score of 75-89 which is interpreted as transitional after the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE). This means that these learners possess an advanced beyond the beginning stages of learning to read but have not yet reach to independent reading stage. This implies that after the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE), these group of learners had developed an improved skills in fluency, gained knowledge in understanding what they read but with the support and guidance in decoding unfamiliar words, clarifying the meaning of the text and discussing the content of the story with the guidance of the teachers or learning facilitators. Finally, the table shows an average weighted mean of 89.85 which is interpreted as independent after the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE). This means that the activities and learning materials provided in the program has typically aid the learners in improving their literacy performance. This implies that Project BRIDGE is effective in improving the literacy performance of the kindergarten learners making them ready to face the regular face-to-face classes in the next grades.

Table 3
Test of Difference Between the Scores in the Pre-Test and Post-Test
of Kindergarten Learners in Literacy

Aspects	Test Scores		Computed T	Critical T	Decision	Interpretation
Kindergarten Learners	Pre	71.34	1.053	0.334	Reject H_0	Significant
	Post	89.85				

Table 3 presents the test of difference between the scores in the pre-test and post-test literacy performance of the kindergarten pupils before and after the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE). It was revealed on the table that based on statistics statistical and analysis of which degrees of freedom were composed of 41 with level of significance is 5% or the rejection level while the t-critical value is 0.334 from t-distribution. Based on the data presented the computed value is 1.053 which means null hypothesis is being rejected. Since the computed value is higher than the critical value it means that there is a significant difference in the literacy performance of the kindergarten learners before and after the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE). It means that the intervention used by the researcher is effective and it is efficiently implemented by the kindergarten learners. The decision indicated that there is a significant difference in the literacy performance of the kindergarten learners before and

after the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE) utilizing the appropriate learning materials and activities equipped in the project. The literacy performance before the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE) of 71.34 has increased to 89.85. This implies that kindergarten learners exhibit sufficient and improved literacy performance from the intervention provided to them. Involving the learners in the teaching-learning activities and exposing them to variety and appropriate learning resources and with constant practice and exercises, learners really learn to read with understanding and fluency.

IV. Conclusion

The study revealed a significant difference in the literacy performance of the kindergarten learners before and after the implementation of Project Boosting Reading Initiative in Developing Good readers in Early grades (BRIDGE) utilizing the digitized short stories and reading activities. Involving the learners in the teaching-learning activities and exposing them to variety and appropriate learning resources and with constant practice and exercises, learners really learn to read with understanding and fluency. Thus, making the intervention an effective program in improving the performance of the kindergarten learners in literacy.

V. Recommendations

1. The proposed improvement plan formulated should be utilized.
2. Involving the learners in the teaching-learning process with attractive, differentiated, and digitized learning materials helped in improving the performance of learners in literacy thus, it is a must to be included and implemented in the classroom.
3. Equipped the teachers with pedagogical and technical skills in the crafting of intervention programs or projects is essential to help them in teaching.
4. School administrators must encourage teachers to craft intervention strategies and materials to assist them in the teaching.
5. Monitoring the progress and improvement of the learners in their literacy performance is a must and be given priority to track their progress.
6. Teachers should be oriented with the new trends and strategies in teaching literacy and on how to prepare the learners in reading lessons.
7. Equipped the learners with the pre-requisite skills in reading so that learning will be easy and achieving the educational goals and objectives will be attainable; and

8. Future researchers should replicate this study to include different locales and include different variables aside from the mentioned in this study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to thank all the people who provided a great deal of support and assistance for the completion of this study. First and foremost, praises and thanks to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for His presence, provision, protection, and endless showers of blessings throughout my research work to complete the study successfully. To my husband, my best friend, Ervin B. Gasatan, I am profoundly grateful for your unwavering love and support throughout this journey. I know I can make my own way through, but this journey wouldn't be as meaningful and fulfilling as it is now without you. Thank you for being the “push” and “rest” when I need it, and for always believing that I am bound for great things. I love you so much, bebu! To my ever amazing, and cutie parents, Mamshie Celay and Papshie Gory, thank you for your constant prayers, love and support which inspire me to achieve my educational goal. Also, thank you for providing me with the best weekends every time I come home to you. I forget about my worries and exhaustion, and instead, I laugh and enjoy the good food and stories we share. I love you both so much. To my sisters and brothers, my “OKOYS”, I can't thank you enough for all the guidance you have provided me while growing up. Thank you so much for helping me become the person I am now. To my second family, Mama Alma, and Papa Salde, thank you so much for all the things you do for Ervin and me. This journey wouldn't be as smooth sailing as it is without your constant support and helping hands. Also, to my sisters and brothers-in-laws, thank you so much for the encouragement and reinforcements. To Dr. Jasmine B. Misa, my thesis adviser, my sincere thanks for the steadfast encouragements, reminders, and expertise which was invaluable in the formulating of the research topic and methodology in particular. Without your guidance and persistent help this study would not have been successful. To the esteemed members of my Thesis Committee and Panel Examiners headed by Dr. Bryant C. Acar, Chairman and Scribe of the Pre and Oral Examination panel, together with Dr. Annabelle A. Wenceslao and Dr. Elvin H. Wenceslao for the smooth sailing of things behind frails in the laborious toil of my study. To the Dean of the Graduate Department of Western Leyte College, Dr. Sabina B. Con-ui, for your understanding and consideration in all my requests. To my DepEd Ormoc City Division Family, thank you for allowing me to conduct this study in our school. To my Margen Elementary School colleagues, dear parents, and pupils, thank you for having been instrumental in the realization of this endeavor. To my Madamdamins, Ate Melodina R. Laraño, Ter Jovie V. Panta, and Damz Janette L. Cabillo, thank you for your words of kindness and motivation. Also, Mamshie April Jae G. Custodio, and Cristy B. Paglinawan, thank you for the inspiration. And to all the people who believed that I can and continue to believe in what I am capable of, thank you so much. Every contribution made for this research study will forever be etched and cherished from the bottom of my heart. Thank You for taking part of this study. To God be All the glory.

REFERENCES

- [1] Cassidy, J. Garcia, R., Tejada-Delgado, C., Garrett, S.D., Martinez-Garcia, C. & Hinojosa R.V. (2004). A learner –centered family literacy project for Latino parents and caregivers. *International Reading Association*, (478-488).
- [2] Cunningham, A. E., & Stanovich, K. E. (1997). Early reading acquisition and its relation to reading experience and ability 10 years later. *Developmental Psychology*, 33(6), 934-945.
- [3] Darch, C., Miao, Y., & Shippen, P. (2004). A model for involving parents of children with Learning and behavior problems in the school. *Preventing School Failure*, 48(3), (24-34).
- [4] Darling, S. (2005). Strategies for engaging parents in home support of reading acquisition. *International Reading Association*, (476-479).
- [5] DepEd Order No. 18, s. 2017 which is the “Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP)”
- [6] Dickinson, D. K., & Porche, M. V. (2011). Relation between language experiences in preschool classrooms and children’s kindergarten and fourth-grade language and reading abilities. *Child Development*, 82(3), 870-886. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8624.2011.01576.x
- [7] Gormley Jr, W. T., Gayer, T., Phillips, D., & Dawson, B. (2005). The effects of universal pre-K on cognitive development. *Developmental psychology*, 41(6), 872.
- [8] Hindin, A, & Paratore, J.R. (2007). Supporting young children’s literacy learning through home- School partnerships: The effectiveness of a home repeated-reading intervention. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 39(3), (307-333).
- [9] Howes, C., Burchinal, M., Pianta, R., Bryant, D., Early, D., Clifford, R., et al. (2008). Ready to learn? Children’s pre-academic achievement in pre-kindergarten programs. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 23, 27– 50.
- [10] National Early Literacy Panel. (2008). *Developing early literacy: Report of the National Early Literacy Panel*. Washington, DC: National Institute for Literacy.
- [11] Neuman, S. B., Kaefer, T., & Pinkham, A. M. (2018). A double dose of disadvantage: Language experiences for low-income children in home and school. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 110(1), 102-118. doi:10.1037/edu0000201
- [12] Phillips, D. A., & Meloy, M. E. (2012). High-quality school-based pre-k can boost early learning for children with special needs. *Exceptional Children*, 78(4), 471-490.
- [13] Roberts, Kathleen P. (1976) “The Reading Teacher” A Journal Article Vol. 30, No. 3 (Dec., 1976), pp. 246-250 (5 pages) Published By: International Literacy Association
- [14] Tekin, Ali (2011) “Parent Involvement Revisited: Background, Theories and Models” A Journal Volume 10, *International Journal of Applied Educational Studies*
- [15] Unterman, R., & Weiland, C. (2019). Quantifying and Predicting Variation in the Medium-Term Effects of Oversubscribed Prekindergarten Programs (MDRC Working Paper). Retrieved from MDRC website, https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/BPS_BOOST_Working_Paper.pdf
- [16] Weiland, C., & Yoshikawa, H. (2013). Impacts of a prekindergarten program on children’s mathematics, language, literacy, executive function, and emotional skills. *Child Development*, n/a-n/a. doi:10.1111/ cdev.12099
- [17] Wilson, S. J., Dickinson, D. K., & Rowe, D. W. (2013). Impact of an Early Reading First program on the language and literacy achievement of children from diverse language backgrounds. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 28(3), 578-592. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2013.03.006

[18] Xue, Yang (2019) “The Use of Schema Theory in the Teaching of Reading Comprehension”
International Journal of Liberal Arts of Social Sciences, pp. 60

AUTHOR’S PROFILE



MS. GECILLE ELIDO

The author is Ms. Gecille Elido, Leo, 28 years old. She was born on August 18, 1995, at Brgy. Bantigue, Ormoc City. She is happily married to Mr. Ervin B. Gasatan. She is presently residing at Purok 3, Brgy. Cabulihan, Ormoc City. She finished her elementary education at Ipil Central School (2006-2007) as First Honorable Mention. She completed her secondary education at Ipil National High School (2010-2011) as Class Salutatorian. She finished her degree of Bachelor in Elementary Education at Western Leyte College of Ormoc City Inc. (2014-2015) as Magna Cum Laude.

She is stationed at Margen Elementary School for five (5) years now. She is a kindergarten teacher with forty-one (41) pupils.

She loves reading, and writing about life, love, and hope. She also has a personal blog where she expresses her thoughts and hopes.