

IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT READ TO FRUSTRATED READERS: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This study intended to find out the effectiveness of the Project READ (Read to Eliminate Academic Deficiencies) as an intervention program. It aimed to help the Grade seven (7) students read through word recognition and to help achieve simple comprehension from reading. Using quasi-experimental method in gathering data for the research, the study found out that Project READ was effective in enhancing the reading comprehension skills of the Grade 7 students. The manifestation of the pre-test and post-test increase is a good sign of developing reading readiness skills through the strategies came from the improvised approach by other materials such as reading intervention of Ulip National High School. Thus, the problem on the reading readiness of the Grade 7 students have been gradually diminishing and it was recommended that it should be sustained by enhancing the program.

Keywords: Reading, Project READ, reading level, word recognition, simple comprehension, pretest-posttest research design

1. INTRODUCTION

The ability to read is the key to knowledge; it is the key to knowing the world around us and ourselves. Without the ability to read, life can be quite difficult. The future of today's students depends on how well they understand and use a wide range of texts. It also relies on their ability to use reading skills to think critically and pass on orally and in writing their thoughts and opinions (Department of Education, 2013). Thus, it is very alarming of the increase number of Frustrated Readers or non-readers in Grade 7 because of the two years gap of teaching reading to the learners especially in Ulip National High School brought by the pandemic. The love and fun for reading decreases and it must be addressed by the school to plan and implement strategies to indulge the students in active reading activities.

In China, the love for reading started to diminish especially to the children. Only 10% of primary school students in China read for more than half an hour a day, and 65% of primary and middle school students read less than 30 minutes per day. One reason is that they lack reading materials and books to read. It affects the reading skill of the children particularly their word recognition and comprehension. As a result, "The Stone Soup Happy Reading Alliance" (SSHRA), a reading program, was created. It focuses on both the acquisition of reading abilities and the elusive reading passion. Furthermore, the program stresses the emotional and personal dimensions of reading which is awesome, because emotional, personal reasons are why we people tend to love to read (Lambert, 2022).

On the other hand, Remedial Reading program has been established for a long time in Philippines basic education system. In fact, Genero's study revealed how the nation's elementary and secondary schools built their remedial reading programs to help struggling readers (as reported in Gatho & Bautista, 2009). Hence, principals should encourage their teachers to evaluate their learners' reading levels so they could provide appropriate interventions for them. In the study conducted by Adapon (2020), it was found that around 20% of elementary students in the region could not read or write in the local language, Chavacano. For this reason, she focused on the

implementation of the Care for the Non-Readers (CNR) Program in Dumingig II District, Dumingig, Zamboaga Del Sur which was launched in 2019. It is the division wide reading initiative that features beginning and developmental reading that aimed to at giving the students who lag in reading and writing the opportunity to catch up through specialized one-on-one reading assistance from a reading teacher.

Moreover, Project READ (Read to Eliminate Academic Deficiencies) is the school main reading intervention program in Ulip National High School, Monkayo, Davao de Oro which was launched to help eliminate frustration readers in the school. After the conduct of the Group Screening Test based from the Phil-IRI assessment tool, the school reported a huge number of frustrated readers particularly in the Grade 7 which accounted 2.12 % non-readers and 27.10 % Frustration level readers. They are having a difficult time in recognizing words while reading a passage from the Phil-IRI tool. The teachers and the school head want to address this problem immediately to help the frustrated readers to cope and get along with their classmates academically inside the classroom. Such reasons prompted the researcher to conduct a study on the Implementation of Project READ (Read to Eliminate Academic Deficiencies) program on the reading performance of struggling readers in Ulip National High School, Monkayo East District, Division of Davao de Oro. In particular, it identifies the efficacy of the Project READ (Read to Eliminate Academic Deficiencies) in improving the reading performance of students as assessed by the teachers and parents. This also described the issues that teachers face when implementing the program and their proposed responses, and the major disparity between the ratings of the two groups of respondents on the program's effectiveness.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

The study used quasi-experimental method in gathering data for the research. Quasi-experimental design was proposed by Donald T. Campbell in 1963 to generalize casual inference. The research design was a pretest-posttest group design wherein the group was given pretests in the beginning and posttests at the end of every period under consideration (Padua, 2000). The data gathered were sourced out from the results of the pretests and posttests of every topic programmed to be discussed in the class, for the duration of the experiment period.

The researcher conducted Phil-IRI Pre-test to assess the level of word recognition among Grade 7 students at Ulip National High School. With the aid of Project READ (Read to Eliminate Academic Deficiencies) implementation, the study hoped to have a significant impact towards the improvement of students' level of word recognition. After the intervention, the respondents had undergone Phil-IRI post-test to determine if there was any change brought by the intervention.

Thus, in this study, the researcher conducted Phil-IRI pre-test and post-test on the students' level of word recognition to establish comparability on the improvement.

2.2 Research Locale

This research study was conducted in Ulip National High School, Upper Ulip, Monkayo, Davao de Oro Province. The school is a public high school located at Purok 2, Barangay Upper Ulip, Monkayo, Davao de Oro Province. Upper Ulip is one of the Barangays of Monkayo and is accessible by any form of transportation. See figure 1 showing the location of Ulip National High School in the Map of Barangay Upper Ulip, Monkayo, Compostela Valley Province.

Monkayo is a first-class municipality located in the Philippine province of Davao de Oro.. According to the 2007 census, it has a population of 90, 971 people. It has 21 barangays, with Mt. Diwata, with its 16, 965 inhabitants, has the largest population. Rice and bananas are planted on large tracts of land in the agricultural village of Monkayo. Barangay Poblacion, a highly developed rural town center, is 120 kilometers from Davao city, the regional capital of Mindanao, where Monkayo's seat of government is situated. One of the barangays of Monkayo is the Upper Ulip.

The Ulip National High School was once a piece of land with nothing but tall grasses and trees. No one ever thought that the concerted efforts of the stakeholders could turn into a wonderful place of hopes and dreams as the years pass by. As an annex, the school begins to spread hope and build young dreams with only 88 students at inconvenient shelters as temporary classrooms in the year 2000. From 88 into almost 500 students enrolled at present and Ulip NHS is already categorized now as medium school with 18 teachers who are supervised by one Head Teacher. The inconvenience in terms of classrooms felt by the teachers and students before has been replaced with

spacious classrooms and laboratories housed in 3-storey and 2-storey buildings. Ulip National High School was no longer a piece of grassy land but it has become now a place of building young dreams.

2.3 Research Respondents

Ulip National High School had two (2) Grade 7 sections namely Gold and Silver. Based on the Phil-IRI Oral Reading Test result, which were personally conducted by the advisers, researcher and school reading coordinator last October 2022, all sections had number of students who were classified as frustrated readers and some were marked as non-readers. This indicates that for these sections, the problems related to oral reading were proliferating. Hence, the respondents of this study were included the identified frustrated students enrolled in the two sections: Gold with the population of 38 had percentage/number 84% or 32; Silver with the population of 39 had percentage/number frustration level, 87% or 34. All of these sections undergo intervention activities using Project READ Program with the assistance of the school principal, researcher and the teachers, classmates, and parents of the said respondents. Moreover, Table 1 below shown the actual distribution of the respondents of study.

Table 1
Distribution of the Participants of the Study

Section	Frustration
Grade 7 Gold	32(84%)
Grade 7 Silver	34 (87%)
Total	66 (89%)

2.4 Research Instruments

The researcher adopted the pre-test and post-test from the Phil-IRI Oral Reading Test, standardized test used in the Department of Education in measuring the students' level of word recognition.

All sections of Grade 7 students were the receivers of the treatment (READ Program). The Phil-IRI Oral Reading pre-test of the groups was already administered last October 2022. However, implementation of the READ Program started after the approval of the proposal, which consumed forty days or eight (8) weeks. Then, the post-test was given immediately after the implementation of the program for four (4) hours.

The researcher applied the Project (Read to Eliminate Academic Deficiencies) Program. The implementation procedure started with the teacher-parent orientation. The pre-test and post-test results of the classified frustrated readers were processed and subjected for statistical treatment. The results were analyzed and interpreted to see if READ Program was an effective tool or not in teaching English specialized on word recognition.

The detailed steps on how to conduct this research study were provided in four steps. Step 1, written permission that was approved by the Schools' Division Superintendent of Davao de Oro and then to the School Head of Ulip National High School, Upper Ulip, Monkayo, Davao de Oro. Step 2, coordination of the researcher to the School Reading coordinator and to other English teachers for the implementation of the program, concerning the Learning Plan. Step 3, validation of the reading materials adapted from the DepEd Phil-IRI and FLAT. Step 4, on the session, teacher's role was to circulate among the groups the materials, to redirect students to remain on-task, and to provide assistance. In the whole duration of reading, the students were encouraged to converse using solely the English language.

SPSS on Statistical Treatment of Data

To test the hypothesis formulated, the following statistical tools were used in the research:

Frequency distribution. This was used for the listing of the scores of the respondents.

Comparison coefficient. This was used to test the significant difference between the results of the pre-test and post-test mean scores of the word recognition. The use of frequency distribution for the listing of the scores of the respondents.

Mean. This was used to provide a concise numerical value that represents the average performance of the respondents in taking the pre-test and post-test for word recognition.

Paired t-test. This was used to calculate the t-value by comparing the mean difference between the pre- and post-intervention scores to the variability or standard error of the differences.

The average performance rating of the students in each criterion for their level of word recognition were interpreted as follows.

Rating	Interpretation	Range of Mean
C	Frustrated Reader	0 - 89
B	Instructional Reader	90 - 96
A	Independent Reader	97 - 100

2.5 Data Collection Procedure

After the approval of the panel members, the researcher underwent the following procedures:

The questionnaires were validated by identified validators from the Assumption College of Nabunturan. After this a letter request was submitted to the office of the division for permission to carry out the study in Ulip National High School located within the Monkayo East District, Davao de Oro Division. After approval had been given, the researcher submitted a letter of request to the School Head of Ulip National High School to conduct this study. After the approval, the researcher conducted the survey questionnaire to the respondents of this study. The questionnaire was personally delivered by the researcher, who also provided explanations about the research instrument and its purpose.

The researcher retrieved the survey questionnaire once all of the items have been completely answered by the respondents. In the end, the researcher conducted statistical analysis on all of the data obtained from the respondents. The statistical data were analyzed, and then interpretations were drawn from them. Following the analysis of the data and consideration of the findings of the research project, a conclusion and set of recommendations were developed.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results of the study following the statement of the problem.

Competence level of the students' pre-test scores in word recognition.

This section presents the results to the first statement of the problem that examines the competence level of the students' pre-test scores in word recognition Table 2 presents the results of the pre-test performance of the Grade 7 students.

Table 2
Pre-test Performance of the Grade 7 Students

Skills	No. of Students	Mean	Class Proficiency	Competency Level
Word Recognition	66	6.67	55.58	Did not meet expectation

As shown in table 2, word recognition skills of the Grade 7 students in the pre-test has a mean of 6.67 which has a class proficiency of 55.58. Based on the Phil IRI standard, the competency level of the students in pre-test did not meet expectation.

This implied that the Grade 7 students have difficulty in word recognition skills as they may experience in accurately and efficiently recognizing and decoding printed words. These problems can impact reading fluency and comprehension.

Competence level of the students' post-test scores in word recognition. This section presents the results to the second statement of the problem that examines the competence level of the students' post-test scores in word recognition. Table 3 presents the results of the post-test performance of the Grade 7 students.

Table 3
Post-test Performance of the Grade 7 Students

Skills	No. of Students	Mean	Class Proficiency	Competency Level
Word Recognition	66	15.29	80.47	Satisfactory

As shown in table 3, word recognition skills of the Grade 7 students in the post-test has a mean of 15.29 which has a class proficiency of 80.47. Based on the Phil IRI standard, the competency level of the students in post-test is satisfactory.

This implied that increased in word recognition performance of the students in the post-test is substantial, this further showed that Project READ platform would substantially support the reading skills development as observed by the researcher.

Test of Null Hypothesis

Table 4 presents the test of difference of means in Pre-test and Post-test performances of the Grade 7 students.

Table 4
Test of Difference of means in Pre-test and Post-test Performances of the Grade 7 Students

	Mean	p-value	t-value	Remarks
Pre-test	6.67	0.000	-25.18	Significant
Post-test	15.29			

Table 4 presents the test of difference of means in pre-test and post-test of the performances of the students under the Project READ. Students performance in the pre-test has a mean of 6.67 while they garnered 15.29 as a mean for the post-test. The results gave a p-value of 0.000 and t-value of - 25.18 which indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected and accept the alternate hypothesis that there is a significant difference between the pre-test scores and post-test scores of the respondents.

4. DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This segment presents a further discussion of the findings of the study as well as the conclusions being drawn and the relevant and valuable recommendations offered.

4.1 Discussion

Competence level of the students' pre-test scores in word recognition. Word recognition skills of the Grade 7 students in the pre-test has a mean of 6.67 which has a class proficiency of 55.58. Based on the Phil IRI standard, the competency level of the students in pre-test did not meet expectation.

This implied that the Grade 7 students have difficulty in word recognition skills as they may experience in accurately and efficiently recognizing and decoding printed words. These problems can impact reading fluency and comprehension. The identification of word recognition skills problems is crucial for understanding and addressing reading difficulties in individuals, especially in the context of literacy development (Stanovich, 2016).

Perfetti's (2007) study delves into the relationship between word recognition skills and reading comprehension. He argues that accurate and efficient word recognition is a crucial component of reading ability and

can impact reading comprehension. Perfetti emphasizes the importance of developing lexical quality, which encompasses factors such as phonological decoding skills, vocabulary knowledge, and orthographic processing, to enhance word recognition and overall reading comprehension.

Further, Stanovich (2016) seminal work focuses on the Matthew effects in reading, referring to the cumulative advantage or disadvantage experienced by individuals in reading proficiency. He discusses how individual differences in word recognition skills can lead to a widening gap between skilled and struggling readers. Stanovich emphasizes the importance of early intervention and instruction to prevent and address word recognition difficulties, as these difficulties can impact overall reading development.

Competence level of the students' post-test scores in word recognition. Word recognition skills of the Grade 7 students in the post-test has a mean of 15.29 which has a class proficiency of 80.47. Based on the Phil IRI standard, the competency level of the students in post-test is satisfactory.

This implied that increased in word recognition performance of the students in the post-test is substantial, this further showed that Project READ platform would substantially support the reading skills development as observed by the researcher.

According to the study conducted by Torgesen et al. (2001) which examine the effectiveness of intensive remedial instruction on word recognition skills in children with severe reading disabilities, they compared two instructional approaches: a phonics-based intervention and a strategy-focused intervention. The study found that both interventions resulted in significant improvements in word recognition skills, with some variations in outcomes based on specific measures and student characteristics.

Further, in South Africa, Hattie, Clarke, and Nelson (2016) conducted a meta-analysis that examined the effectiveness of different educational interventions, including reading interventions. The authors synthesized findings from various studies and found that interventions focused on providing feedback and explicit instruction in reading skills had positive effects on word recognition skills. The study emphasizes the importance of evidence-based practices in reading interventions to enhance word recognition abilities.

In Pangasinan, the study of Tizon and Orale (2019) evaluated the impact of Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) programs on school readiness, which includes early literacy skills. The study examines the effectiveness of various ECCD interventions, including those that target word recognition skills, to improve children's readiness for formal schooling.

Difference between the pre-test scores and post-test scores of the respondents. Students performance in the pre-test has a mean of 6.67 while they garnered 15.29 as a mean for the post-test. The results gave a p-value of 0.000 and t-value of - 25.18 which indicates that the null hypothesis was rejected and accept the alternate hypothesis that there is a significant difference between the pre-test scores and post-test scores of the respondents.

One study that highlights the importance of interventions for improving word recognition skills was conducted by Torgesen, Wagner, and Rashotte (2014), they explore the relationship between early phonological processing skills and later reading achievement. The study emphasizes that interventions focused on phonological processing, including word recognition skills, are vital for preventing reading difficulties and enhancing reading outcomes in students.

Another study by Foorman, Francis, Fletcher, Schatschneider, and Mehta (2018) highlights the importance of early intervention for improving word recognition skills. In their research article titled "The Role of Instruction in Learning to Read: Preventing Reading Failure in At-Risk Children," they emphasize that targeted and explicit instruction focusing on phonics, decoding strategies, and sight word recognition is crucial for supporting students with word recognition difficulties and preventing reading failure.

On the other hand, interventions aimed at improving word recognition skills in students are of significant importance for promoting literacy development and overall academic success. These interventions target specific difficulties that students may encounter in accurately and efficiently recognizing and decoding printed words (Stanovich, 2016).

Word recognition skills serve as a foundation for reading proficiency and comprehension. When students struggle with word recognition, it can hinder their ability to comprehend texts, leading to difficulties in academic achievement across various subject areas. Interventions targeting word recognition skills play a crucial role in addressing these difficulties and supporting students' reading development (Perfetti, 2007).

4.2 Conclusion

The view of foregoing findings, the researcher concluded that in word recognition, the respondents have a satisfactory competency level. There is a significant difference in pre- test and post- test scores which means, the students have improved their word recognition skills.

The performance level of respondents in pre-test and post-test using the Project Read improvised traditional methods and approaches in delivering the reading readiness skills of students at Ulip National High School in terms of word recognition have a satisfactory competency level. The manifestation of the pre-test and post-test increase is good sign of developing reading readiness skills. Through the strategies came from the improvised approach by other materials such as reading intervention of Ulip National High School. Thus, the problem on the reading readiness of the Grade 7 students have been gradually diminishing but should be sustained. This implied that if there was an intervention to be employed there is always good response.

4.3 Recommendations

The researcher believed that Project READ program and learning materials facilitated and encouraged the learners especially the Grade 7 students to learn. It was because there was something unique in it, and something that would tickle their minds at exploring things around them.

In view of the foregoing research, the following recommendations were formulated:


1. At least two types of evaluation tools should be used to get the authentic output of the intervention, these are; portfolio and paper and pencil test and passages with simple comprehension questions.
2. Pre-test and post-test for experimental and control group should be employed.
3. Further exploration and experimentation on this line of research to cope up with the global standard.

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BIOGRAPHIES

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