Reading Modules Using Marungko Approach of Grade One Pupils in the Elementary Schools of Zambales, Philippines

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Authors' contributions

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ABSTRACT

The study determined the effectiveness of reading modules using the Marungko approach for grade one pupils in selected elementary schools in Zambales, Philippines, during the school year 2020-2021. The study revealed that the pupil-participant is a typical male young pre-schooler, whose parent is a housekeeper and living in the inner town proper. The pupils in the controlled and experimental groups were assessed under frustration level in decoding of words, reading speed and reading comprehension in the first pre-test assessment. The pupils-participant in the controlled and experimental groups were assessed under frustration level in decoding of words, reading speed and reading comprehension in the second pre-test assessment. The pupil-participant in the first post-test assessment, the controlled group were assessed "Instructional level" in decoding of words, slow in reading speed and frustration in the reading comprehension. For the experimental groups assessed independent is decoding of words, fast in speed of reading and independent in reading comprehension. The pupil-participant in the second post-test assessment, the controlled group were assessed "Instructional level" in decoding of words, slow in reading speed and frustration in the reading comprehension. For the experimental groups assessed independent is decoding of

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words, average in speed of reading and independent in the reading comprehension. The academic performance of the pupil-participants was "Satisfactory". There is significant difference on the results between pre-test and post-test assessment in the experimental group after being expose to Marungko Approach. No significant difference was found out in the use of the traditional approach. There is moderate relationship between the academic performance and the post-test assessment. The researcher recommended that for better reading competence and academic performance, Marungko approach is high recommended as intervention program; that the use of Marungko approach is best intervention for decoding of words, develop speed in reading and enhance reading comprehension; that an in-service training for teachers to be familiarized with the application and integratio of Marungko Approach in the teaching and learning process is highly encouraged; and finally to conduct a parallel study with in-depth and wider in scope so as to validate the findings obtained in the study.

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is the mother of all study skills. It is one of the most valuable skills a person can acquire. Reading is a complex process. Thus, it cannot be taught in isolation. Moreover, reading is not merely an ability to recognize written or printed words, but it also refers to putting meaning to what you read and drawing a unified thought of what is read [1].

Teachers always find means and ways to help their pupils in improving their reading abilities. They render services with a heart that simply means that they give more attention to the needs of their pupils under their care. The whole world needs teachers who are dedicated with their work [2]. With the pressing problem that the school is now facing, Department of Education (DepEd) looks for these teachers with high respect because they are the one who can help in attaining zero non-readers in the whole nation [3]. Moreover, it is a fact that most pupils learn how to read through the help and assistance of their teachers most especially those who are assigned in first graders [4].

Teachers are known to be innovative in the performance of their task. At the start of the school year, they immediately assess the reading abilities of their pupils in order for them to come up with programs, projects, or activities that address the identified reading difficulties of the pupils [5]. It is a fact that an approach in reading does not fit with all types of pupils because of their differences. Usually, in a classroom setting, teachers group the pupils according to their reading difficulties [6]. This is done in order to apply the same approach in teaching them how to read. By using applicable approach for every reading difficulty of the pupils, it is an effective tool to help them improve their reading abilities [7].

The researcher of this study was a Grade I teacher and at the same time, the school reading coordinator of an elementary school in Zambales, Philippines. She believed that reading teachers had significant influence in improving the reading abilities of the pupils. As a matter of fact, most of the pupils today put more trust and more believe to their teachers. They considered teachers as an epitome of human knowledge and the best of everything.

A scenario caught the attention of the researcher during the national lockdown because of COVID-19 pandemic. This happened during the reading time of her nephews and nieces. She noticed that these children were fond of reading a teacher-made reading module. She noted that they loved reading the modules. They even asked the assistance of their older siblings and even their parents once they found difficulty in reading the printed words in the modules. As the days went by, they progressed gradually in reading; that was, from slow or frustrated reader to instructional one. Truly, the habit of reading helped the children to improve their reading abilities.

On the other hand, the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results became a big issue and a problem in the DepEd. This showed that Philippines scored the lowest in reading comprehension [8]. This served as a call to every teacher to reflect on the things that they were doing to help their pupils improve in reading. They needed to see the effectiveness of the approaches that they were using in teaching reading among their pupils. Likewise, they must strictly follow the 'No Read, No Move Policy' of the organization in order to have assurance that

the pupils acquired the necessary reading skills intended for their grade levels. It was emphasized that the reading proficiency was essential for a wide variety of human activities – from following instructions in a manual; to finding out the who, what, when, where, and why of an event; communicating with others for a specific purpose or transaction.

The various observations directed the researcher to be aware of the important role of the teachers in improving the reading abilities of the pupils. These observations cannot be proven helpful and effective unless a research was done. So, it was in this context that the researcher conducted this study to contribute in improving the reading ability of the grade one pupils through the utilization of reading modules using Marungko approach in Zambales, Philippines for school year 2020-2021.

The Marungko approach is intended to provide first-grade students with the required reading abilities to increase their reading proficiency. Similarly, it attempts to build a training program to improve teachers' reading instruction skills in the elementary grades, particularly in Grade 1. The objective of this reading method is to allow first-grade students to develop an appreciation for the songs and poetry intended for Filipino children and, ultimately, to communicate effectively in written and spoken forms via effective reading teaching [9].

The Marungko method offers tools for successful reading instruction. It begins with letter sounds as opposed to a name. Several humorous anecdotes about a letter's sound are provided. Instead of the typical layout (order) of alphabet letters, it begins with m, s, a, I, and o. [9].

This study served as a basis of the researcher in crafting reading modules to improve the reading abilities of the pupils.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

This study utilized the experimental method of research particularly the quasi-experimental. This design [10] design use to identify differences between two or more groups to explain possible improvement in their performance. It allows researchers more control to make assumptions about the implication of findings in the reading test of the pupils and the difference between the reading ability of the pupils.

2.2 Respondents and Location

This study utilized the grade one pupils in selected elementary school in Zambales, Philippines during the School Year 2020-2021. Table 1 shows the distribution of pupils in the selected public elementary schools in the division. As can be seen from the table, there were 16 grade one pupils who served as respondents in this study. These pupils represented 100% of the total grade one pupils. These respondents came from two elementary schools. The pupils were enrolled for the School Year 2020-2021. The sample size in this study may not provide generalizability of the results but may provide a prelude to further validate the findings of the study.

This study was conducted in the Schools Division of Zambales which is managed by the public schools district supervisor.

Sta. Cruz is one of the 13 towns in the Province of Zambales, Central Luzon, Philippines. It is agricultural in nature. Rice is the main crop and vegetables are raised throughout the year. The language is quite distinct but not uniform. It is Zambal and Filipino as the unifying medium of communication among the people in this area. It is composed of 14 public elementary schools in the northern part and another 14 in the southern part.

2.3 Research Instruments

This study used a validated questionnaire as the main instrument in gathering data. Statements were based from the various instruments about reading abilities which were collated. Data provides a quantitative methods which encompasses the evidence, data or information the researcher found was expressed in numerical forms [10].

Prior to the preparation of the questionnaire, dialogues were conducted to the teachers in the chosen elementary school in Zambales. They were asked regarding their strategies and approaches in improving the reading abilities of their pupils. Furthermore, some school heads in the school district were consulted in the formulation of the questionnaire.

Table 1. Distribution of Grade One Pupils from Public Elementary Schools in Sta. Cruz District, Schools Division of Zambales

School	Number of Pupils	Percentage
School A	8	50.00
School B	8	50.00
Total:	**16**	**100.00**

Researcher-made questionnaire is a result of the reading, stock knowledge, and information gathered by researchers about their topic. Usually, they fuse everything they know about the topic in able for them to craft the suited research question for their study. The statements have connection with one another in order to maintain its alignment [11].

The validated questionnaire was composed of three (3) parts. Part I focused on the profile of the pupils such as age, gender, occupation of parents, place of residence, available reading materials at home. Part II covered the pre-test and post-test reading test results of the pupils in terms of decoding words, reading speed, and reading comprehension. Part III dealt with the academic performance for first grading period of the pupils.

Marungko approach in reading was used after analyzing the pre-test results in reading of the pupils. For those non-readers, the lessons started with the recognition and sounding of the first letter of the sequence of Marungko. After gaining familiarity with the name and sound of the first-three letters of the sequence of Marungko, they proceeded immediately to the combining two sounds to produce a syllable. It was important to follow the step-by-step processes in teaching reading through Marungko. For those who were already readers, the teachers enhanced their reading levels through giving them higher-level passages.

The pre-test in reading was administered by the researcher during the first week of classes. The pupils in School B under control group received the regular or traditional approach in improving their reading performance while the School A pupils who were under experimental group used reading modules using Marungko approach. Before the administration of the first periodical test, the researcher conducted the post-test. Significant changes were recorded to both groups of learners.

To generate additional data and validate the data gathered, personal interviews, observations, and documentary analyses were executed on selected pupils.

The research instrument underwent content validity which chiefly targeting on the usefulness, originality, and representativeness of the items of the test to assess the characteristics to look for. This is usually done when a group of experts in the field of interest has inspected rigorously the test items. Suggestions from the experts were considered for the final draft of the instrument [12].

2.4 Data Collection

The researcher sought permission from the school principals of the target schools in Sta. Cruz District, Schools Division of Zambales. After permission was granted, the researcher personally administered the questionnaire while the pupils answered it.

In the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher met the pupils. She acted as the reading teacher for the moment. This was done after classes to avoid disruption of classes and to comply with the policy of the DepEd regarding time-on-task.

After all questionnaires were answered, the researcher immediately retrieved the questionnaire for the processing of data. It was personally processed the data gathered by preparing the frequency counts. For the statistical treatment, the researcher personally asked the assistance of the statistician who processed the data. The interpretations of the results were done thereafter.

2.5 Data Analysis

After the questionnaires were collected and the responses were tallied, the frequency counts, percentages, and means were applied in the needed data for the study. For the statistical treatment of data, the following were utilized through the aid of MS-Excel program and SPSS version 20. Frequency count and percentage were used to determine the profile of the pupils,

the reading test results, and the academic performance for first grading period of the pupils. Mean was used to determine the average scores of the profile of the pupils, the reading test results, and academic performance for first grading period of the pupils. To enhance better understanding of the quantitative form of the description used in the analysis towards the reading abilities of the pupils, these codes were used:

For decoding words, 31 words and above is considered Independent Reader, 16 – 30 words as Instructional Reader, and 1 – 15 words as Frustration Reader. In terms of Reading Speed, 60 seconds and below is Fast Reader, 61 – 120 seconds as Average Reader and 121 seconds and above as Slow Reader. For reading comprehension, 4 – 5 correct answers is Independent Reader, 2-3 correct answers as Instructional Reader, and 0 – 1 correct answers as Frustration Reader. T-test was used to determine the difference of the reading ability of the pupils in terms of the pre-test results, post-test results, and pre-test and post-test results.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Profile of the Participants

Majority of the pupil-participants are six (6) years old with 9 or equivalent to 56.30%; 6 or 37.50% are from seven (7) years old; and only 1 or 6.30% from 8 years old and above. The computed mean age of the pupil-participant is 6.5 years old. The data clearly demonstrate that the respondents are very young pre-schoolers. Preschool children have a very concrete and literal thinking capacity. They do not think figuratively as older kids or adults do. They also do not have reasoning capabilities yet. At this age, kids love to explore and touch, feel, smell, taste, watch and wonder about everything around them. Majority of the pupil-participant are males with 9 or 46.25% while 43.75% are females. Majority of the pupil-participant parents are housekeeper with 9 or equivalent to 56.30% while 7 or 43.80% are self-employed parents occupation. All of the pupil-participants are living inner town proper with 16 or 100.00% and nobody living in coastal area, outer town proper and mountain area. The data clearly manifest that the respondents are living around the town proper.

All of the pupil-participants have available books as reading material at home with 16 or equivalent to 100.00%. Nobody has digital reading materials, magazines, modules, and newspaper and story books at home. Based on the occupation of parents with meagre and ample income, they cannot afford to buy newspapers, digital reading materials and magazines. Their income is only good for food and other household expenditures and buying reading materials is not their priority.

3.2 Decoding of Words

In the aspect of decoding of word, for the controlled group, majority got scores of 1-15 equivalent to Frustration with 6 or 75.00% and scores of 16-30 equivalent to Instructional level with 2 or 25.00%. Overall, the computed mean scores on the performance in the pre-test assessment for the controlled group in the decoding of words was 1.25 with descriptive equivalent of "Frustration. For the experimental group, majority of the student got the scores of 1-15 equivalent to Frustration level with 8 or 100.00%. The computed overall mean on the performance in the pre-test assessment for the controlled group in the decoding of words was 1.00 with descriptive equivalent of "Frustration". The data clearly demonstrate on the equal performance of both groups. The data reflects on the difficulty of the pupils in decoding of words in reading the paragraph "Bawal ang Lumabas" (translated in English as Going Out is Prohibited) as an assessment for pre-test 1. This is a reading paragraph written in Filipino. Decoding of words is the ability to apply your knowledge of letter-sound relationships, including knowledge of letter patterns, to correctly pronounce written words. Understanding these relationships gives children the ability to recognize familiar words quickly and to figure out words they have not seen before [13].

3.3 Reading Speed

In the aspect of reading speed, for the controlled and experimental groups, majority got scores of 1-15 equivalent to Frustration with 8 or 100.00%. Overall, the computed mean scores on the performance in the pre-test and post-test assessment for the controlled and experimental group in the reading speed was 1.00 with descriptive equivalent of "Frustration.

The data clearly demonstrate on the difficulty of the participants in reading manifested by the reading speed which incurred so much time before recognizing the words and paragraphs.

Reading speed is the rate at which a person reads written text (printed or electronic) in a specific unit of time. Reading speed is generally calculated by the number of words read per minute. Reading speed is determined by a number of factors, including a reader's purpose and level of expertise as well as the relative difficulty of the text. Stanley D. Frank has estimated that a "rate close to . . . 250 words-per-minute [is the average] reading speed of most people, including junior high and high school students" [14].

3.4 Reading Comprehension

In the aspect of reading comprehension, for the controlled and experimental groups, majority got scores of 1-15 equivalent to Frustration level with 8 or 100.00%. Overall, the computed mean scores on the performance in the pre-test and post-test assessment for the controlled and experimental group in the reading comprehension was 1.00 with descriptive equivalent of "Frustration". The data implies on the difficulty of the pupil participants comprehend the reading exercises for "Bawal Pang Lumabas" (translated in English as Going Out is prohibited). The frustration level demonstrate on the difficulty of understanding the important ideas in reading passages · Have trouble with basic reading skills such as word recognition. Just as a lack of vocabulary knowledge can hamper comprehension, so can a lack of knowledge of syntax and sentence structure related to the sequence of words in phrases and sentences. ... Common problems are related to reading sight words, decoding words, reading phases and sentences automatically and with meaning.

3.5 Level of Academic Performance

Most of the pupil-participant obtained a grade ranges from 80-84 (Satisfactory) with 6 or equivalent to 37.50%; 5 or 31.30% from 85-89 (Very Satisfactory); 4 or 25.00% from 75-79 (Fairly Satisfactory) and only 1 or 6.30% with grade range of 90 and above. The computed mean of the academic performance was 82.94 with descriptive equivalent of "Satisfactory" The data simply implies on the satisfactory academic performance of the pupil-respondents and this could be ascribed on their measured abilities and competence. Academic performance means the knowledge and skills that students have mastered in a subject or a course. It is basically a measure of how well students have performed in the various assessment items set for them based on some educational criteria determined by professional educators [15].

3.6 Differences between Control and Experimental Group

There is no significant difference between pre-test and post-test assessment in decoding of words for the controlled group manifested on the computed Significant 2-tailed test value of 0.080 which is greater than 0.05 Alpha Level of Significance., hence the null hypothesis is accepted. On the other hand, there is significant difference between pre-test and post-test assessment in decoding of words for the experimental group manifested on the computed Significant 2-tailed test value of 0.001 which is less than (<) 0.05 Alpha Level of Significance, hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It can be noted that the two classes are parallel based on the Levene's test of homogeneity. Thus, the two classes can be compared for experimental approach.

Early exposure to sounds and letters is critical, even before school begins [16]. Decoding is a key skill for learning to read that involves taking apart the sounds in words and blending sounds together [17]. It is important because it is the foundation on which all other reading instruction builds [18]. It happens when children use their knowledge of letter-sound relationships to correctly pronounce written words. That includes more than just knowing the sounds individual letters make and need to know concepts like letter patterns, too [19].

There is significant difference between pre-test and post-test assessment in reading for the controlled and experimental groups respectively manifested on the computed Significant 2-tailed test value of 0.033 and <0.001 which are less than (<) 0.05 Alpha Level of Significance, hence the null hypothesis is rejected. The ability to focus on the material, to take it in and to retain it is the whole point of increasing reading speed, no matter who the reader might be [20]. . To have a regular practice helps improve the reading speed of the individuals [21]. It is very important to improve one's vocabulary and simply reading more to improve the speed in reading [22]. In some cases, action video games (AVG) increased the speed of words recognition and phonological decoding [23].

Table 2. Paired Samples Test

Class		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Control Group	Pretest1Decoding - Posttest1Decoding	-.37500	.51755	.18298	-.80768	.05768	-2.049	7	.080
Experimental Group	Pretest1Decoding - Posttest1Decoding	-1.75000	.46291	.16366	-2.13700	-1.36300	-10.693	7	.000

Table 3. Paired Samples Test

Class		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Control Group	Pretest Speed Posttest Speed	-.50000	.53452	.18898	-.94687	-.05313	-2.646	7	0.033
Experimental Group	Pretest Speed Posttest Speed	-1.7500	.70711	.25000	-2.3411	-1.1588	-7.000	7	0.001

Table 4. Paired Differences of the Two Classes

Class		Paired Samples Test							
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	SD	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Control Group	Pretest Comprehension - Posttest Comprehension	-.2500	.462	.16366	-.63700	.13700	-1.528	7	0.170
Experimental Group	Pretest Comprehension - Posttest Comprehension	-1.750	.462	.16366	-2.13700	-1.36300	-10.693	7	0.001

There is no significant difference between pre-test and post-test assessment in reading comprehension for the controlled group manifested on the computed Significant 2-tailed test value of 0.170 which is greater than (>) 0.05 Alpha Level of Significance., hence the null hypothesis is accepted. On the other hand, there is significant difference between pre-test and post-test assessment in reading comprehension for the experimental group manifested on the computed Significant 2-tailed test value of <0.001 which is less than (<) 0.05 Alpha Level of Significance, hence the null hypothesis is rejected. It can be noted that there is no academic attrition occurred in the duration of the study.

Modular teaching is one of the most widespread and recognizes teaching learning techniques. An instructional module is a self-contained and self-sufficient unit of instruction for the learner to achieve a set of objectives [24]. In education, the term "module" refers to an instructional unit that focuses on a particular topic. Although the details and activities vary according to the specific context, such as course and student level, most educational modules include information about the topic, focus on student-centered learning activities and culminate in a project for students to demonstrate understanding [25].

Reading modules were created by teachers to facilitate different learning abilities for students effectively in consideration of different skill categories in the development of the material [26]. The modules focused on improving students' reading comprehension skills by providing effective reading strategies, systematic steps, and precise framework for teachers to teach reading comprehension and subsequently help students develop the reading skills for each performance band [27].

3.7 Test of Relationship between Academic Performance and the test assessment results

There is a negligible relationship between academic performance and pre-test assessment manifested on the computed Pearson r value of +0.080. The computed Significant P-value (2-tailed test) of 0.767 which is greater than (>) 0.05 Alpha Level of Significance, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted, hence there is no significant relationship between academic performance and pre-test assessment. There is moderate relationship between academic performance and post-test assessment manifested on the computed Pearson r value of +0.576*. The computed Significant P-value (2-tailed test) of 0.020 which is lower than (<) 0.05 Alpha Level of Significance, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected, hence there is significant relationship between academic performance and post-test assessment.

The data clearly illustrates that the academic performance is influence by the effectiveness of the Marungko approach. This further explains that as the performance in the post-test assessment using Marungko approach increases, the academic performance will also increase. Academic performance has significant relationship with the reading and mathematics performance at the primary level [28]. Reading proficiency was significantly and positively related with children's performance on all standard performance tests [29]. As such, students who read for pleasure scored higher in English, Mathematics, Science, and History [30]. On the other hand, [30] found out that students' non-academic attributes such as forms of engagement, dispositions, and social and emotional skills were associated with the academic performance of the learners.

Table 5. Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation to test relationship Between academic performance and post-test assessment

Sources of Correlations		Academic Performance	Pre-Test Assessment
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	-0.576[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.020
	N	16	16
Pre-test Assessment	Pearson Correlation	-0.576[*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.020	
	N	16	16

4. CONCLUSIONS

The pupil-participant is a typical male young pre-schooler, whose parent is a housekeeper and living in the inner town proper. The pupils in the controlled and experimental groups were assessed under frustration level in decoding of words, reading speed and reading comprehension in the first pre-test assessment. The pupils in the controlled and experimental groups were assessed under frustration level in decoding of words, reading speed and reading comprehension in the second pre-test assessment. The pupil-participant in the first post-test assessment, the controlled group was assessed "Instructional level" in decoding of words, slow in reading speed and frustration in the reading comprehension. For the experimental groups assessed independent is decoding of words, fast in speed of reading and independent in reading comprehension. The pupils in the second post-test assessment, the controlled group were assessed "Instructional level" in decoding of words, slow in reading speed and frustration in the reading comprehension. For the experimental groups assessed independent is decoding of words, average in speed of reading and independent in the reading comprehension. The academic performance of the pupil-participants was "Satisfactory." There is significant difference on the results between pre-test and post-test assessment in the experimental group after being exposed to Marungko Approach as compared to traditional method of instruction which did not yield any significant difference. There is moderate relationship between the academic performance and the post-test assessment.

5. SIGNIFICANT LIMITATIONS

The study may not be generalizable to larger populations since the study only included two intact classes in two elementary schools. Future study may consider applying the Marungko approach to several classes in larger contexts. To reduce Type 1 error in the subgroup analysis, future researchers may consider other factors in the application of the approach in teaching reading. Further studies may be conducted to validate the results of the present study.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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