

Pupils' reading comprehension: Basis for the development of reading instructional material

¹Kendra I. Tabanera & ²Rebecca T. Barrios

Abstract

This study was conducted to assess the reading comprehension among the grade 4 pupils in an integrated school in the District of Tangalan, Philippines. The result of the study was the basis on the development of an instructional reading material during the School Year 2023-2024. The design based research was used in this study using IPO model. The participants were the 66 grade 4 pupils and 10 teacher experts. Reading Comprehension Test and Learning Material Evaluation Tool were the data gathering instruments. The data were analyzed and interpreted using descriptive and inferential data analysis. The reading comprehension in English of grade 4 pupils is “low”. Based on the result of the study, an instructional material was developed offering a variety of engaging activities, including word boxes, missing letter challenges, collaborative group activities, reading experiences, interactive games, and visual aids for descriptive analysis. The level of acceptability of the developed instructional material for grade 4 was “very highly acceptable” as to content, instructional quality, prints, design and layouts. The level of reading comprehension of grade 4 pupils before the intervention were “low” and after using the developed instructional material, it became “moderate”. Hence, there is a significant difference on the reading comprehension of grade 4 pupils before and after using the instructional material.

Keywords: *reading instructional material, pupil's reading comprehension, level of acceptability, learning competency*

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About the authors:

¹Corresponding author. Master of Arts in Education Major in Educational Management, Teacher III, Northwestern Visayan Colleges. Email: kendra.tabanera@deped.gov.ph

²Doctor of Education, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Northwestern Visayan Colleges.

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Introduction

Reading is an indispensable competence. The ability to read is an important prerequisite for learning; deficits in reading ability have considerable consequences for acquiring other necessary skills. Some factors facilitate the development of reading competence that are very important to both teachers and learners (De Naeghel et al., 2012 as cited by Wang, 2020). Alternatively, students may find motivation to read from external factors like aiming for good grades or seeking recognition.

According to the results of grade 4 pupils' Phil-IRI Test in English in the whole Division of Aklan, S.Y. 2023-2024, out of 10,579 pupils who took the test, 7,092 got 13 and below score. In an Integrated School in the District of Tangalan, out of 73 Grade 4 pupils who took the test, 59 pupils got 13 and below scores. The pupils who garnered lower than 14 (74%) need to undergo further assessment as this may be an indication that they are experiencing difficulty reading at level text. This indicates that pupils with low test scores need improvement in their reading and comprehension skills. Learners need thorough intervention to read at or above their grade level.

According to Tuimur and Chemwei (2015), instructional materials bring life to learning by stimulating students to learn. Hence, this study determines the learners' reading comprehension skills to develop reading instructional material that meets the needs of grade 4 learners. Hence, this study assessed the reading comprehension of grade 4 pupils in an Integrated School in the District of Tangalan. The results of the study were used to develop instructional reading material. Specifically, this seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What was the reading comprehension level on the different learning competencies in English of Grade 4 pupils before the intervention?
2. What instructional material can be created based on the result of the study?
3. What is the level of acceptability of the developed instructional material for Grade 4 pupils as to content, instructional quality, prints and design and layout?
4. What is the reading comprehension level after introducing developed instructional material?
5. Is there a significant difference in the reading comprehension level of Grade 4 pupils before and after using the instructional material?

Methodology

This study used the design-based research using IPO model as the research design. According to Christensen and West (2013), it allows for the potential knowledge gained through the intimate connections designs with their work to be combined with the knowledge derived from research. These two sources of knowledge can inform each other, leading to improved design interventions and improved local and generalizable theory. The researcher used the IPO Model in three steps: input, process, and output.

The participants were the 66 Grade 4 pupils and 10 teacher experts in an Integrated School in the District of Tangalan in the Philippines. Reading Comprehension Test and Learning Material Evaluation were the data gathering instruments. The data were analyzed and interpreted using descriptive and inferential data analysis.

The researcher took into consideration the ethical issues in the conduct of this study. The researcher protected the participants in the research study by obtaining informed consent, explaining the nature of the study, assuring parents that their participation was voluntary, that they could withdraw at any time without penalty, and that they had the option not to answer any question. Honest disclosure about the purpose and intent of the research was provided. Furthermore, the researcher respected the participants' and their communities' privacy, confidentiality, and cultural sensitivities. All collected data were kept confidential and/or de-identified unless there was a legal requirement to report this data (Standards for Ethical Practice, 2018).

Findings

The reading comprehension level of grade 4 pupils in English is “low”. Based on the study's results, instructional material was created. The material offered a variety of engaging activities, including word boxes, missing letter challenges, collaborative group activities, reading experiences, interactive games, and visual aids for descriptive analysis. The developed instructional material for Grade 4 was “highly acceptable” regarding content, instructional quality, prints, design, and layouts. The reading comprehension of Grade 4 pupils before the intervention was “low,” after using the developed instructional material; it became “moderate.” There is a significant difference in the reading comprehension of Grade 4 pupils before and after using the instructional material.

Conclusion

The Grade 4 pupils' low level of reading comprehension which includes phonics, vocabulary, and fluency is due to their lack of basic reading abilities. The instructional material crafted by the researcher serves as a valuable resource, offering significant assistance to Grade 4 pupils in enhancing their proficiency in English reading comprehension. The study found that developed instructional material improved the reading comprehension skills of Grade 4 pupils by targeting specific skills and encouraging connections within a broader context, enhancing inclusivity. This high level of acceptability suggests that the instructional material is well-aligned with educational standards and is likely to support the learning needs of Grade 4 pupils effectively.

The pupils are advised to make reading a habit to improve their reading comprehension skills. They should also focus on activities related to the least learned competencies to learn more about sentence construction, personal pronoun usage, and verb present tense application. This can be achieved through instructional materials with exercises, interactive activities, and peer collaboration. Reading teachers can enhance their lessons by using instructional material in their classes, including more games and activities, to motivate students to read and learn more. It is also recommended that more instructional materials be added to improve the pupils' reading comprehension. In-service workshops for teachers in DepEd should focus on effectively using instructional materials in language education and addressing competency gaps. Resource dissemination should be facilitated, ensuring teachers can easily access both digital and print formats. A monitoring and evaluation system should be established to assess the material's impact on reading comprehension levels, refining and updating it based on evolving educational needs.

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