

Enhancing Pupils' Narrative Text Reading Comprehension in Mother Tongue through Directed Reading Thinking Activity

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Abstracts: The study aimed to determine the effectiveness of the directed reading thinking activity strategy as a reading intervention strategy to enhance the reading performance of Grade 2 pupils. It utilized the one-group pretest-post-test design. The researcher employed the Early Grade Reading Assessment Tool (Pretest and Post-test) to identify whether the intervention strategy used was effective. There were 55 participants in the study who were given reading intervention. The researchers conducted the reading intervention for the pupils during their MTB-MLE class for three days every week. The results showed that there was an increase in the reading performance of the pupils after conducting the reading intervention. It was also revealed that in the study there were significant differences in the t-test result in all reading components. This further highlighted that the reading intervention which is a directed reading thinking activity strategy was effective. Thus, it is recommended that a reading intervention program that highlights the use of a directed reading thinking activity strategy will be used by teachers to improve the reading performance of their pupils.

Keywords: Early Grade Reading Assessment Tool, Reading Level, Directed Reading Thinking Activity Strategy, Reading Intervention Program, Comprehension.

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is essential for learners to master [1]. It becomes crucial because learners need it to grasp what they read, understand the material's substance, and respond effectively to questions about it [2]. Reading comprehension is a dynamic and complicated process in which the reader develops a mental image of the meaning of the material read [3]. Thus, it is critical to determine the child's academic success.

Some children continue to struggle with reading comprehension; as a result, teachers must broaden and develop their knowledge and abilities in this area. Based on the World Bank's study "Education in Indonesia-From Crisis to Recovery," reading comprehension among Indonesian pupils is severely low [4]. Based on their observations at school, the researchers determined that the pupil's reading comprehension is still below average. The reason for this was the teacher's monotonous approach to teaching reading and the child's lack of interest in reading the book. As a result of this condition, the youngsters were unable to grasp the reading materials, thus, they were unable to comprehend the reading content.

Based on the National Report of the Philippines on the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) results in 2018, Filipino students achieved an average of 340 points in Reading Literacy. This is significantly lower than the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average of 487 points. Only 0.05% of Filipino students are expected to comprehend lengthy texts and to infer which information in the text is relevant. CARAGA Region where the research was also one of the regions that did not achieve a mean score higher than the national average which is 340 points.

Furthermore, the result of Butuan City Division in the Regional Inventory of Reading Proficiency, only 10% or 53 out of 519 Grade 2 pupils in East Butuan District II were able to reach the Story Comprehension Level in Mother Tongue. A lot of pupils can read a story but cannot comprehend what they are reading. With this result, it is important to focus on its causes and find solutions to develop the student's proficiency in reading.

Some strategies for improving pupils' reading comprehension include the Herringbone approach, the Jigsaw technique, and the Directed Reading Thinking Activity [5]. Nevertheless, the researcher is interested in the DRTA. DRTA is a technique that assists pupils in making predictions while they read [7, 8]. Learners pause after finishing

part of a text, review or change their past predictions, and then make new ones about what they will read next. Russell Stauffer developed this method in 1969 [8].

Hence, the problem in reading comprehension urged the researchers to undergo this study to determine the effect of using the Directed Reading Thinking Activity Strategy in enhancing the narrative text reading comprehension of the Grade 2 pupils.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Research Design

This study utilized the one-group pretest-posttest design. The researchers conducted a reading intervention for the Grade 2 classes. The EGRA Grade 2 Pre-Test was employed on the pupils first to ascertain their reading level. After this, they used the DRTA as a reading intervention during the Mother Tongue class. Then, the EGRA Grade 2 Post-Test was administered to determine the effectiveness of DRTA as a reading intervention strategy.

2.2. Research Instrument

The study utilized the EGRA (Early Grade Reading Assessment) Tool. The instrument that was used is the Grade 2 EGRA Tool in Sinugbuanong Bisaya. The same instrument was used for the pre-test and post-test. It consists of 6 tasks namely: Task 1 - Letter Name Knowledge, Task 2 - Letter Sound Knowledge, Task 3 - Initial Sound Identification, Task 4 - Familiar Word Reading, Task 5 - Non-word Reading, and Task 6 - Oral Reading Fluency Passage and Oral Reading Comprehension.

Task 1 and 2 consists of 100 letters each which the pupils need to identify the name and sound. Task 3 consists of 10 words. Task 4 and 5 consists of 50 words each. Task 6 consists of a 60-word narrative text and 5 reading comprehension questions.

2.3. Data Gathering Procedure

In the initial phase of the study, the researchers asked permission from the Public Schools District Supervisor of District, School principal, and Head Teacher to conduct the study. After the permission was granted, they conducted the EGRA Pre-test in the two sections of Grade 2 pupils. The test was done orally and individually.

Then, the researchers conducted the reading intervention for the pupils during their MTB-MLE class for three days every week. The DRTA was used in reading narrative texts to improve the reading comprehension of the pupils. The narrative texts used were from the DepEd textbooks, Quality-assured modules, and DepEd Learning Resource Portal. After the intervention, the EGRA Post-test was conducted on each pupil. The results were analyzed and interpreted to assess the pupils' progress in terms of reading comprehension.

2.4. Scoring and Quantification

Since the study has utilized the results of the EGRA Pre-Test and Post-test, the pupils' scores were identified based on the EGRA criteria reflected below.

A. Task 1 scores (Letter Name Knowledge)

Letter Name Knowledge Score = Total Number of Letters - Total Miscues

B. Task 2 scores (Letter Sound Knowledge)

Letter Sound Knowledge Score = Total Number of Letters - Total Miscues

C. Task 3 scores (Initial Sound Identification)

$$\text{Initial Sound Identification Score} = \frac{\text{Total Number of Words} - \text{Total Miscues}}{\text{Total Number of Words}} \times 100$$

D. Task 4 scores (Familiar Word Reading)

$$\text{Familiar Word Reading Scores} = \frac{\text{Total Number of Words} - \text{Total Miscues}}{\text{Total Number of Words}} \times 100$$

E. Task 5 scores (Non-Word Reading)

$$\text{Non-Word Reading Scores} = \frac{\text{Total Number of Words} - \text{Total Miscues}}{\text{Total Number of Words}} \times 100$$

F. Task 6 scores (Oral Reading Fluency Passage and Reading Comprehension)

$$\text{Oral Reading Fluency} = \frac{\text{Total Number of Words in a Minute} - \text{Total Miscues}}{\text{Total Number of Words}} \times 100$$

$$\text{Reading Comprehension Scores} = \frac{\text{Total Number of Correct Responses}}{\text{Total Number of Questions}} \times 100$$

G. Scaling Percentage:

75 and above - Independent Level

60 - 74 - Instructional Level

59 and below - Frustration Level

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Level of Pupils' Narrative Text Reading Comprehension before the Employment of the Strategy

It revealed in Figure 1 that the letter name knowledge was the highest in the independent level with 47 pupils which means that the participants had a high level of letter name knowledge but the oral reading fluency with 7 pupils got the lowest among the 6 components of reading in the pre-test result. It also showed that in the frustration level, oral reading fluency got the highest with 37 pupils while the lowest number of pupils was the letter name knowledge with only 3 pupils. This means that a lot of pupils need to improve their skills in oral reading fluency such as reading connected text quickly, accurately, and with expression.

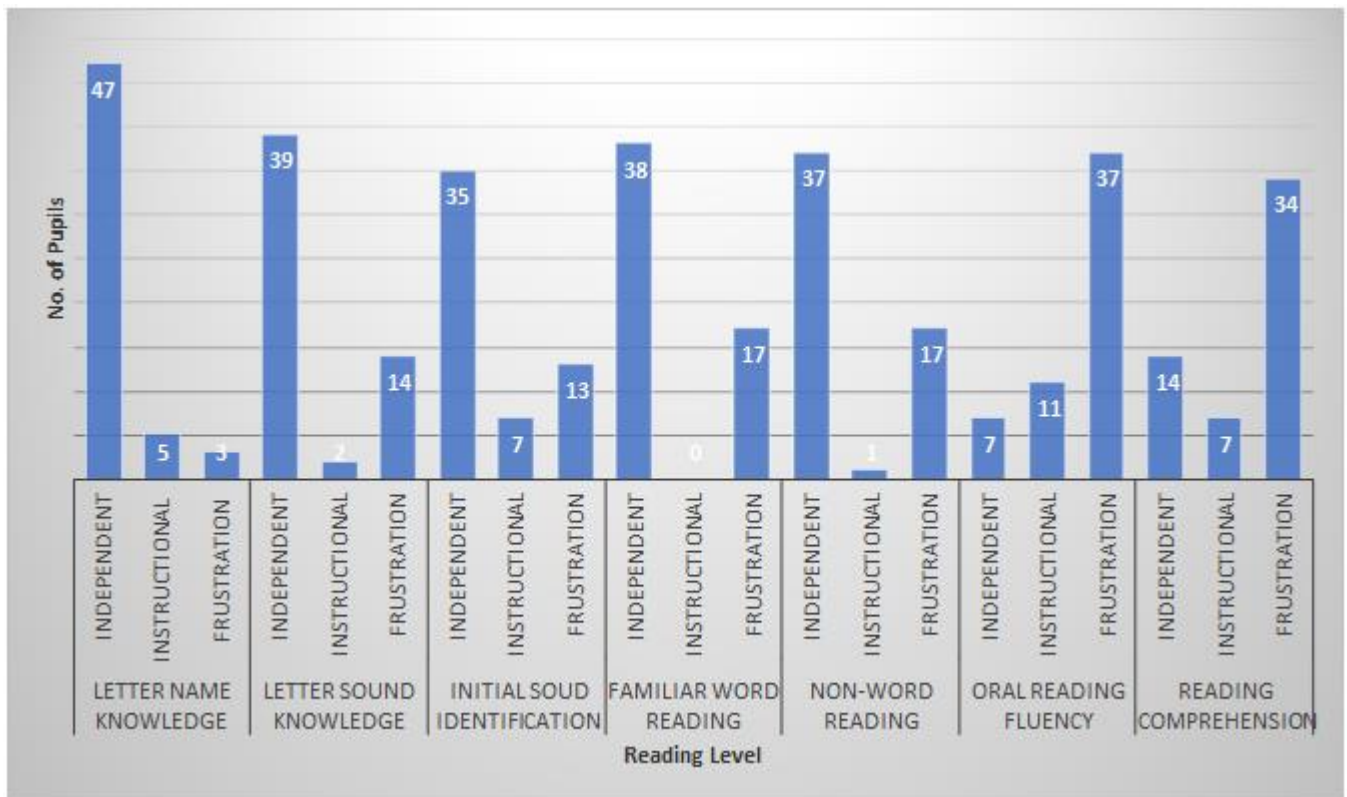


Figure 1. The Level of Pupils' Narrative Text Reading Comprehension before the Employment of Directed Reading Thinking Activity Strategy.

Legend: 1-59 Frustration Level; 60-75 Instructional Level; 75-100 Independent Level (n=55).

It implies that while most pupils had acquired letter name knowledge, they lacked expertise in terms of oral reading fluency. Pupils who read with appropriate speed, accuracy, and emotion are more likely to comprehend the content because they can focus on the meaning of the text. If pupils do not master oral fluency, they will be unable to go to the next level of reading, which requires the capacity to comprehend. However, their level of oral reading fluency will improve through constant practice in reading, parents' involvement in the study habits of the children, and teachers' strategy in helping the reading skills of the learners.

The findings are supported by a study entitled Syllable-first rather than letter-first to improve phonemic awareness which investigates the nature of the spelling-to-sound correspondences taught to enhance phonemic awareness in prereaders [8]. The main assumption is that learning the alphabetic code through letter-to-phoneme correspondences is the best way to improve phonemic awareness. The alternative syllabic bridge hypothesis, based on the saliency and early availability of syllables, assumes that learning to associate letters to phonological syllables enables phoneme units to be the mirror of the letters and to become accessible, thereby developing phonemic awareness of prereaders [8].

3.2. The Level of Pupils' Narrative Text Reading Comprehension after the Employment of The Strategy

The figure revealed that, at the independent level, the letter name knowledge increased and was the highest with a total of 50 pupils. This means that the participants had a high level of letter name knowledge but the oral reading fluency with 10 pupils got the lowest among the 6 components of reading in the post-test result.

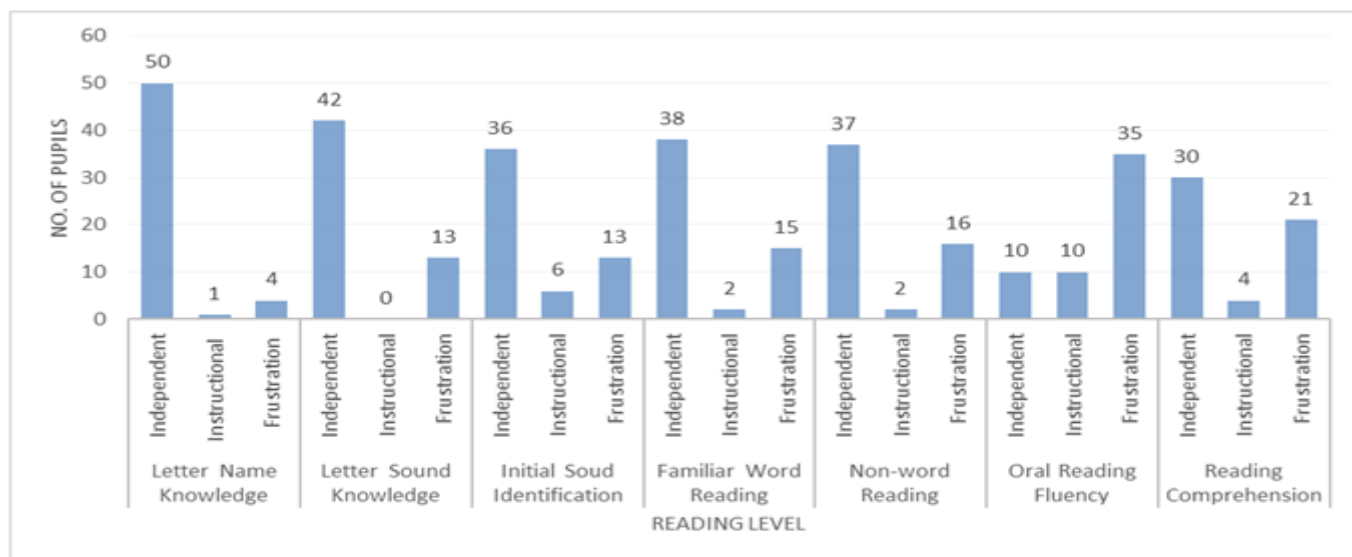


Figure 2. The Level of Pupils' Narrative Text Reading Comprehension After the Employment of Directed Reading Thinking Activity Strategy.

Legend: 1-59 Frustration Level; 60-75 Instructional Level; 75-100 Independent Level (n=55).

It also showed that in the frustration level, the letter name knowledge got the lowest with only 4 pupils which means they improved compared to the pre-test result. While the highest number of pupils was in oral reading fluency with 35 pupils which means that there are still a lot of pupils that need to improve their skills in reading fluency. However, 2 pupils improved and moved to the instructional level.

It implies that most of the pupils already mastered the letter name knowledge based on the findings that many of the pupils had achieved an independent level of reading but lacked knowledge in terms of oral reading fluency. Knowing letter names is essential since it is the first step in learning to read and oral fluency. The meaning will be lost if the reader does not recognize words quickly. Thus, the pupils would be unable to go to the next level of reading unless he or she mastered it. However, their level of oral reading fluency will improve through constant practice in reading and widely used reading interventions for poor readers.

This is supported by the study entitled Enhancing Reading Comprehension Skills of Prospective Teachers Using Suitable Reading Strategies which focused on using appropriate reading strategies to improve the reading comprehension of prospective teachers in two teacher education colleges in the Vellore District of Tamil Nadu, India. The results confirm that the use of appropriate reading strategies enhances the reading comprehension skills of the samples [9].

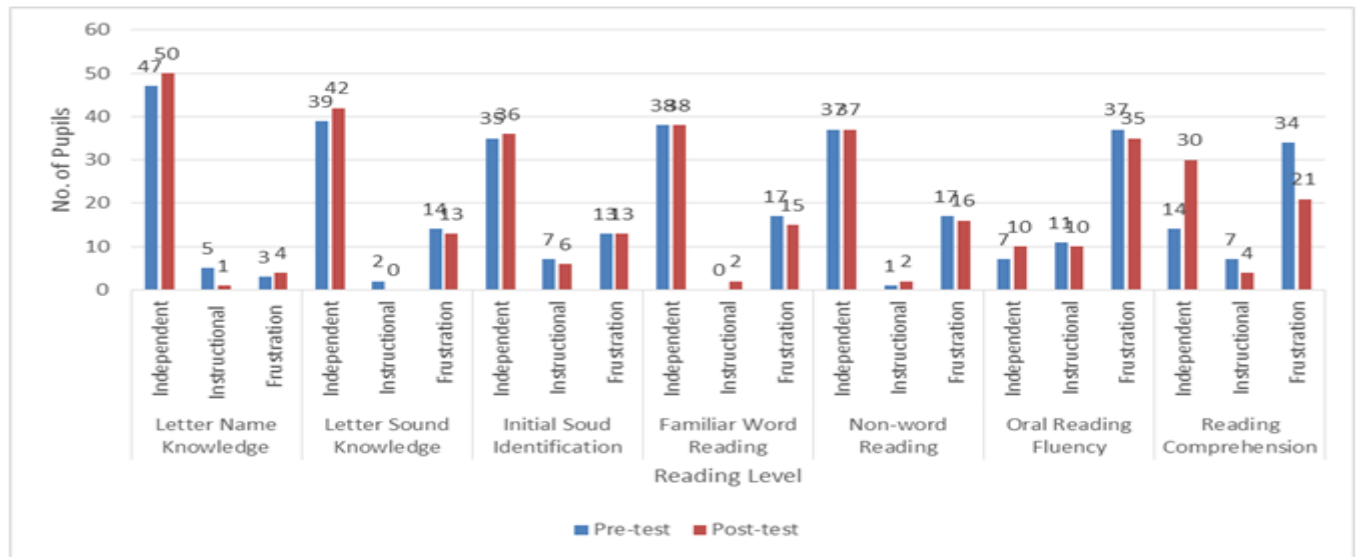


Figure 3. Comparison Between the Level of Narrative Text Reading Comprehension Before and After the Employment of Directed Reading Thinking Activity Strategy

Legend: 1-59 Frustration Level; 60-75 Instructional Level; 75-100 Independent Level (n=55).

3.3. Significant Difference between the Level of Narrative Text Reading Comprehension Before and after the Employment of Strategy

Figure 3 presents the comparison between the pre-test and post-test of pupils' narrative text reading comprehension before and after the employment of the strategy. The results showed that there is an increase in the number of pupils at the independent level in the components of letter name knowledge, letter sound, initial sound identification, oral reading fluency, and reading comprehension. While in the frustration level, there is a significant decrease in the components of letter-sound knowledge, familiar word reading, non-word reading, oral reading fluency, and reading comprehension.

This implies that there is an increase in the reading performance of the grade 2 pupils using the directed reading thinking activity strategy. This highlighted that the strategy is effective as an intervention in teaching reading to the primary grades. DRTA strategy is effective in reading comprehension learning for the elementary school fourth grader [10].

Table 1. Significant Difference between the Level of Narrative Text Reading Comprehension before and after the Employment of Strategy.

Variables (Pre-Test and Post-Test)	Std. Deviation	P Value	Significant	Decision
Pair 1 – Letter Name	4.48191	0.000	Significant	Reject Ho
Pair 2 – Letter Sound	9.96367	0.000	Significant	Reject Ho
Pair 3 – Initial Sound	1.18008	0.015	Significant	Reject Ho
Pair 4 – Familiar Sound	2.81327	0.000	Significant	Reject Ho
Pair 5 – Non-word	3.06001	0.000	Significant	Reject Ho
Pair 6 – Comprehension				
a. Words in minute	5.01291	0.001	Significant	Reject Ho
b. Comprehension	1.27657	0.000	Significant	Reject Ho

Table 1 presents the result of the t-test between the pre-test and post-test of the reading performance of the Grade 2 Pupils. It revealed that all reading components' p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance. This signifies that there are significant differences between the pre-test and post-test results of all reading components. This further concludes that using Directed Reading Thinking Activity is an effective strategy for teaching reading. Directed Reading Thinking Activity is an effective method in improving students' reading skills as emphasized by the "The Use of Directed Reading Thinking Activity Strategy to Enhance Students' Reading Comprehension" [11].

4. CONCLUSION

Using the Directed Reading Thinking Activity strategy for teaching reading, the results showed that there is an increase in the number of pupils at the independent level in the components of letter name knowledge, letter sound, initial sound identification, oral reading fluency, and reading comprehension. While in the frustration level, there is a significant decrease in the components of letter-sound knowledge, familiar word reading, non-word reading, oral reading fluency, and reading comprehension.

Based on the analysis, the Directed Reading Thinking Activity is an effective intervention strategy for enhancing reading skills of the primary grade pupils.

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