

Improving Reading Comprehension Level of Grade 6 Through the Implementation of Reading Response Journals

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Abstract — The objectives of this research were to find out the effectiveness of implementing reading response journals on the reading comprehension of Grade 6 – Filipino students. It uses the one-group experimental research method. Further, it involves (13) Grade 6- learners comprising of (7) males and (6) females of Concepcion Elementary School, Gregorio del Pilar, Ilocos Sur for the School Year 2023-2024. To analyze the data, researcher gathered test scores (pre-test and post-test). Mean, Percentage, standard deviation, and t-test were used as the statistical tools. In analyzing the data, the researcher classified students' ability based on the score list then interpreted the same. The test results of the post-test are much higher than that of the second quarter, and the computed p-value (0.01) is less than the standard significance level of 0.05, the researcher can reject the null hypothesis (it comes from the fact is that 0.05 is greater than 0.01). Therefore, there is no significant difference that exists between the results of the two given tests. Implementing the reading response journals is effective in improving the reading comprehension of Grade 6 – Filipino students as evidenced by the increased scores in the post-test versus the scores in pre-test.

Keywords — *Reading Response Journals, Reading Comprehension, Grade 6 Learners, Filipino Students, One-Group Experimental Method, Pre-test and Post-test, Statistical Analysis, t-test, Concepcion Elementary School, Ilocos Sur, Effectiveness of Intervention*

I. Introduction

Context and Rationale

The development of the reading comprehension among the primary school students is one of the most crucial for the academic success for the lifelong learning. Reading Comprehension is particular fundamental that enables the students to understand and analyze the text effectively however despite the importance of the reading many students specifically in the third world counties like Philippines struggle to attain the proficiency to the reading levels and according to the World Bank significant percentage of the Children in the low income countries struggle in reading which is hindering their educational progress and even to the future opportunities (Thulla et al., 2022).

The Philippine effort to promote literacy are evident to the government and to the various organizations that prioritize the initiatives to improve the reading proficiency of the students however the challenge persist by the reports indicate that a large portion of the Filipino children are lack f Reading comprehension hence this learning crisis are high in the times of pandemic which is also disrupted to the traditional educational methods and to further widened the existing gaps in the reading abilities of the students. (Oseña-Paez, 2022). One significant issue affecting reading comprehension levels is the lack of proper reading habits among students. Despite access to reading materials, many students exhibit limited interest in reading books, magazines, or journals, primarily due to the influence of mass media . Additionally, research suggests that a relatively small percentage of students worldwide demonstrate enthusiasm for reading which highlight the need for the means of interventions to foster a culture of reading and to develop the students in reading comprehension effectively.

In response to these challenges, action research was conducted to address the reading levels of Grade 6 pupils in a public elementary school in the Division of Panabo City, Davao del Norte, Philippines. The study identified 16 Grade 6 pupils who were struggling with reading, characterized by low word recognition levels and comprehension rates below 70% (Ibo & Mangarin, 2023). These students were selected for intervention using the TaTiToRe (Take Time to Read) program, aimed at enhancing their reading comprehension over a three-week period. The TaTiToRe program employed a multifaceted approach, including free reading, forced reading, and watching educational videos. During free reading sessions, students had the freedom to choose reading materials from a designated reading center, encouraging autonomy and interest in reading. Forced reading sessions involved teachers guiding students through selected materials, providing structured support and guidance.

The study of Elleman and Oslund (2019) emphasizing collaboration between researchers, educators, students, and parents. This approach ensured that stakeholders were actively involved in the research process, fostering a sense of ownership and commitment to the intervention. Data collection methods included observation, frequency counting, and interviews with participants, allowing for a comprehensive assessment of the program's effectiveness. Results from the intervention were promising, with 12 out of 16 students progressing to the instructional level, demonstrating improved word recognition accuracy and comprehension rates. Four students advanced to the independent level, indicating significant growth in their reading abilities. These outcomes underscore the importance of targeted interventions, such program, in addressing reading challenges among students.

The implementation of the reading comprehension in response to the journals holds significant promise to enhance reading comprehension of the Grade 6 students by providing a structure opportunities. This intervention aims to empower the students to become more proficient and critical to the readers through a comprehensive assessment of the intervention impact on its various dimensions of the reading comprehension and even to the consideration of the factors such

as the students prior proficiency levels and to the demographic characteristics additionally the potential policies and practices will provide and further enhance the critical thinking comprehension within the broader context that can contribute to creating more robust and effective learning environment to the students.

One such alternative approach that holds promise is the implementation of reading response journals. This method encourages students to interact actively with texts, reflect on their understanding, and articulate their thoughts and reactions. Studies, such as the one conducted by Khellab et al. (2022), have demonstrated that students who engage in reflective reading practices, like maintaining reading journals, exhibit improved comprehension and metacognitive awareness. Additionally, the work of Chang (2019) emphasizes the value of collaborative dialogue and reflection in enhancing comprehension.

By undertaking this action research study, we aim to explore whether the incorporation of reading response journals into our curriculum can lead to measurable improvements in reading comprehension. Such findings would provide valuable insights for educators and curriculum designers, potentially informing the development of more effective instructional strategies.

Furthermore, poor reading comprehension is also a pressing issue at Concepcion Elementary School. Findings from the Phil.IRI, administered by the researcher to grade six pupils, revealed that 12 out of 13 students did not attain the requisite reading proficiency expected for their grade level. Faced with these obstacles and the urgent need to address this prevalent problem, the researcher is compelled to employ a Reading Response Journal as an intervention.

With this approach, the researcher aims to confront the prevalent concern of inadequate reading proficiency among their students, with a particular focus on reading comprehension skills. The intervention seeks to equip students with the necessary resources essential for their academic advancement.

Innovation, Intervention, and Strategy

Reading comprehension is defined as the ability to understand, interpret and even analyze the words which is a foundational comprehension that is essential for academic success of the students and to the lifelong learning (Teng & Zhang, 2021) however in recent years literature has emphasize that the importance of fostering the reading comprehension among the students in particular in primary education setting (National Assessment of Educational Progress [NAEP], 2017), throughout this indicate that the proficiency in reading comprehension is not correlated to the academic achievement but also to the critical thinking abilities and to the overall cognitive development despite the significance that many students struggle to attain to the proficiency reading levels leading to concerns about the educational equity and even the opportunities of the students in particular in the low income countries specifically in the Philippines (Thulla et al., 2022), in response to these challenges the innovative interventions provide and aimed to improve

the reading comprehension level which will be gained attention to the educational research and practice (Takaloo & Ahmadi, 2017).

One such innovative intervention proposed for enhancing reading comprehension levels among Grade 6 students is the implementation of reading response journals (Balinbin, 2020). Reading response journals are structured tools designed to facilitate students' engagement with texts through written reflections, analyses, and responses (Srisang & Everatt, 2021). By providing students with a dedicated journal to record their thoughts and reactions to the reading materials the intervention seeks to promote active reading practices and deeper comprehension to students specifically to the students who are not good at reading comprehension thus this will enhance their reading comprehension through reading often (Oseña-Paez, 2022). The use of the reading response journal is an effective strategy for fostering critical thinking comprehension of metacognitive awareness and an even deeper understanding of the words moreover this suggests that the integration of the reflective practices in journaling into the curriculum can provide a positive impact on the students in the reading comprehension abilities (Elleman & Oslund, 2019).

The proposed intervention involves the systematic implementation of the reading response journals with the aims of cultivating the student's readiness for reading comprehension and even fostering the culture of reflective reading practices central to the intervention is the provision of structured prompts within the reading response journal that will guide the students in the reflecting on and analyzing the word they read (Khellab, Demirel, & Mohammadzadeh, 2022). These prompts are designed to target various dimensions of reading comprehension, including literal comprehension (e.g., summarizing main ideas), inferential comprehension (e.g., making predictions or drawing conclusions), evaluative comprehension (e.g., assessing the credibility of information), and metacognitive comprehension (e.g., reflecting on reading strategies). By engaging students in thoughtful responses to reading materials, the intervention aims to promote deeper understanding and critical thinking (Chang, 2019).

The integration of reading response journals into the existing curriculum ensures that students have regular opportunities to engage with texts in a reflective manner (Patton, 2008). Teachers play a pivotal role in facilitating this process, incorporating journaling activities into their lesson plans, and providing guidance and support as needed (Department of Education, 2018). Through structured journaling assignments, teachers can scaffold students' comprehension development, gradually increasing the complexity of prompts and tasks to meet students' evolving needs. Additionally, teachers can use journal entries as formative assessment tools to monitor students' progress and identify areas for further instruction or intervention (Baum, MacDougall, & Smith, 2006).

Recognizing the diverse needs and backgrounds of students, the intervention prioritizes differentiation to ensure that all learners are appropriately challenged and supported in their reading comprehension development (Almutairi, 2018). Teachers tailor the journal prompts and support strategies to accommodate varying proficiency levels, learning styles, and interests,

thereby promoting inclusivity and equity in the classroom (Pain, Whitman, Milledge, & Lune Rivers Trust, 2011). By providing differentiated instruction, the intervention strives to empower every student to succeed in their reading journey and develop lifelong literacy comprehension (Akbasli, Sahin, & Yaykiran, 2016).

The proposed intervention of implementing reading response journals represents an innovative approach to improving reading comprehension levels among Grade 6 students. Grounded in research-based practices and supported by literature on effective instructional strategies, this intervention offers a structured framework for fostering critical thinking, metacognitive awareness, and a deeper understanding of texts. By systematically integrating reading response journals into the curriculum and prioritizing differentiation to meet students' diverse needs, the intervention seeks to empower students to become active, engaged readers who can comprehend and analyze texts with confidence and proficiency. Through collaborative efforts between educators, researchers, and policymakers, this intervention has the potential to contribute to meaningful improvements in students' reading comprehension abilities and overall academic success.

Action Research Questions

The study aims to find out the effectiveness of implementing reading response journals on the reading comprehension of Grade 6 – Filipino students.

1. What is the level of reading comprehension of grade 6 pupils before and after the exposure to the reading response journal?
2. What are the significant differences in reading comprehension in pretest and post-test?

II. Methodology

Action Research Methods

This study employed a one-group experimental research method. This was used to one group of grade 6 learners with low level of comprehension. The one-group experimental research method is a type of experimental research design in which a single group of participants is exposed to an experimental treatment or intervention, and their outcomes are measured and compared before and after the treatment (Yang et al., 2023). This method is often used when it is not possible or practical to have a control group for comparison, such as in situations where the intervention is applied to a unique or specific group of individuals (Vadasy, 2023).

Participants and/or other Sources of Information. The research involved (13) Grade 6-learners comprising of (7) males and (6) females of Concepcion Elementary School, Gregorio del Pilar, Ilocos Sur for the School Year 2023-2024.

Data Gathering Methods. In the conduct of this action research, the researcher asked permission from the Schools Division of Ilocos Sur through channels. After permission is granted to the researcher, the planned intervention will be implemented. The pre-test of this study will be a 50-item multiple choice to determine the reading level of the learners. After the learners undergone the intervention for 3 months, a post-test will be administered to the learners to determine the effectiveness and effect of the intervention.

Mean, Percentage, standard deviation, and t-test was the statistical tools used in measuring the results of the tests.

Data Analysis Plan. In conducted research, the researcher submitted his/her proposal to the Schools Division of Ilocos Sur. Upon the granting of approval, the researcher will be informed by the Public Schools District Supervisor and the concerned Principal for conducting action research. To interpret the scores of the respondents, a 50-item pre-test and post-test will be administered. Scores and percentages will be recorded, and descriptive ratings will be analyzed. A comparison of the results of the pre-test and post-test will be made. Based on the findings, the researcher will record conclusions and recommendations for the study.

III. Results and Discussion

This sub-part is the discussion and interpretation of the findings of this study with regards to the effectiveness of implementing reading response journals on the reading comprehension of Grade 6 – Filipino students during the School Year 2023-2024. The ordering of the discussion of data results follows the research questions of the study.

1. Level of reading comprehension of grade 6 pupils before and after the exposure to the reading response journal

This study is concerned on determining the performance level of the thirteen (13) Grade 6 learners before and after being exposed with the use of the teaching strategy called as reading response journal. The performance is assessed through the Mean Percentage Score (MPS).

Table 1
Performance Level of the Grade 6 – learners before and after exposure with reading response journal

	Total Number of Students	Total Number of Items	Total Score	MPS	Level of Students Performance
Pre-test	13	50	446	70.0	Nearly Mastered
Post-test	13	50	468	72.0	Nearly Mastered
LEGEND:					
75% - 100% - Mastered					
51% - 74% - Nearly Mastered					
50% and Below - No Mastery/Least Learned Skill					

Table 1 shows Performance Level on reading comprehension in Filipino of grade 6 pupils before and after the exposure to the reading response journal using pre-test and post-test.

From the table, one can gleaned that in both tests, there are fifty (50) items was given. Also, before exposure to the reading response journal, the total score obtained by the participants is 446. The computed Mean Percentage Score from pre-test which measures the level of performance of the same before being exposed with the reading response journal is 70.0 which is interpreted as Nearly Mastered.

Moreover, from the same table, one can seen that in post-test which measures the level of performance on reading comprehension of the learners after exposure with the reading response journal, the total score obtained by the participants is 468. The computed Mean Percentage Score from post-test is 72.0 which is interpreted as Nearly Mastered. Although the results had shown that there are differences on the numerical scores (as per MPS comparison) between the two examinations given, however, the level of performance on reading comprehension before versus after the use of intervention are both interpreted as Nearly Mastered.

Based on the table, it can be concluded that there is an increase in the Mean Percentage Score based on the examination or post-test in Filipino after the utilization of the the reading response journal among Grade 6 learners.

This finding aligns with the study by **Fisher and Frey (2012)**, which emphasized that strategies promoting student engagement, such as reading response journals, can enhance comprehension by encouraging learners to actively process and reflect on texts. Similarly, **Gomez and White (2014)** noted that journaling activities provide students with opportunities to connect personally with reading materials, fostering a deeper understanding.

2. Significant difference between the Level of reading comprehension among Grade 6 Pupils Based on their Pretest and Post-test

Table 2 shows the differences between the level of reading comprehension performance of the Grade 6 learners based on their 2nd and 3rd quarter examination using a t-test.

Table 2 T-Test on the Difference of the Level of Performances of the Grade 6 based on their Pre-test and Post-test					
	Mean	df	t-value	p-value	Remarks
Pre-Test	28	13	-2.68	0.01	Significant
Post-Test	37				

Table 3 shows the t test between pre-test results as well as the post test results in Filipino among the Grade 6 students. As manifested by the table, the test results of the post-test is much higher than that of the second quarter, and the computed p-value (0.01) is less than the standard significance level of 0.05, the researcher can reject the null hypothesis (it comes from the fact is that 0.05 is greater than 0.01). Therefore, there is no significant difference that exists between the results of the two given tests. The null hypothesis of this action research is hereby accepted.

This finding is similar to the analysis made by Elleman and Oslund (2019) in their study which emphasizes the use of effective intervention technique to address the reading challenges among students. There is a need for collaboration between researchers, educators, students, and parents. Results from the intervention were promising since majority of the learners progressed to the instructional level, demonstrating improved word recognition accuracy and comprehension rates, while some students advanced to the independent level, indicating significant impact in their reading abilities.

IV. Conclusion

The implementation of the Reading Response Journal as an intervention to improve the reading comprehension of Grade 6 learners at Concepcion Elementary School proved to be both timely and effective. Faced with the persistent challenge of poor reading comprehension skills—exacerbated by the learning gaps widened during the pandemic—this action research was anchored on the need for innovative, student-centered approaches that foster both engagement and deep comprehension.

The findings of the study revealed significant improvements in the reading performance of the learners after undergoing the three-month intervention. The data showed marked increases in post-test scores, indicating that the use of structured reading response journals facilitated better understanding, critical thinking, and metacognitive awareness. The integration of reflective

reading through journal prompts allowed students to interact meaningfully with texts, enhancing their ability to analyze, summarize, and evaluate reading materials.

Furthermore, the research affirms that consistent, reflective reading practices—supported by teacher guidance—can bridge gaps in reading proficiency even among struggling readers. The progress observed in the participants underscores the potential of reading response journals as a sustainable classroom strategy, especially in low-resource settings. By encouraging learners to become more thoughtful and independent readers, the intervention contributed not only to improved academic outcomes but also to fostering a lifelong love for reading.

In light of these results, it is recommended that the Reading Response Journal strategy be adopted more widely across grade levels, supported with continuous teacher training and contextualized learning materials. With proper implementation and monitoring, such interventions can make a substantial impact on learners' reading competencies, ultimately contributing to the broader goals of educational quality and equity.

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