

The Effect of Reading Fluency and Comprehension Remediation in Learning English as Second Language (ESL)

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Abstract: Reading comprehension is an intricate undertaking that includes many levels of processing and every learner of English as Second Language (ESL) should know. One of the most crucial aspects is to decode unfamiliar words encountered in text. This school-based action research proposal will address the effect of reading fluency and comprehension remediation in learning ESL. The researcher will further determine if the reading program of Kimagango High School has significant impact on the reading comprehension skills of the students. The participants in the study are the 34 students of Grade 7 Amethyst of Kimagango High School, Kimagango, Midsayap, Cotabato, Philippines.

Keywords: Reading Fluency, Reading Comprehension, Reading Remediation, ESL.

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading means many things to many people. It also plays a vital role in one's success in school. It is one of the most important skills in English an individual must need to master. It is a prerequisite of all learning areas. It serves as a gateway to every student to learn the different subjects because when a student has a difficulty in reading, he may encounter also difficulties in all subject areas.

Researches have shown that there are many reasons in the difference in the achievement level of the students. For instance, often those are factors beyond school influence, such as the income level and education of parents, which correlates with the academic achievements of students, but there are reasons for it (Goodwin, 2000, cited in Geske & Ozola, 2008).

Academic achievement is crucial in any educational institution. Stipek and US Department of Education (2006, 2002) cited in Cayubit (2012) believe that the decline in the achievement among students has been the concern of experts and educators are increasingly held accountable for it.

In the Philippine context wherein English is considered the second language, reading and comprehension level does not match with the figures released in the press. Luz (2007) stresses that despite the supposedly high literacy rate; many Filipinos can barely read and write. Many Filipinos do not have the reading habit required in learning. As she noted;

The problem of nonreading lies at the heart of why the Philippines is so uncompetitive in the world economy and why so many of our people continue to live in poverty or barely escape it.

There are many foreign and local researches done about reading and comprehension remediation in learning English as Second Language (ESL), but the researcher cannot find any study conducted in the classroom setting especially in Midsayap, Cotabato. Thus, the researcher will take the first step to study the effect of reading and comprehension remediation in learning English as Second Language (ESL) to slow readers. The study will aim to find out whether the remediation has an impact to Grade 7-Amethyst students of Kimagango High School S.Y. 2015-2016.

Statement of the Problem:

This research will be conducted to look into The Effect of Reading Fluency and Comprehension Remediation in Learning English as Second Language (ESL) to Grade 7 Amethyst Students of Kimagango High School S.Y. 2015-2016. This research aims to answer the following questions:

1. Determine the socio-demographic profile of the Grade 7-Amethyst students in terms of
 - a. gender,
 - b. age,
 - c. educational attainment of parents, and
 - d. parental involvement in reading
2. What is the reading and comprehension level of students based on the results of Reading Fluency Test (RFT) of Kimagango High School and results of Pre-test & Post-test in the Read Theory reading passages?
3. Is there a relationship between the socio-demographic profile of the respondents and their reading and comprehension performance?
4. Is there a relationship between reading and comprehension remediation and the results of RFT Pre-test & Post-test in the Read Theory reading passages?

Hypothesis of the Study:

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between reading and comprehension level to gender.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between reading and comprehension level to age.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between reading and comprehension level to educational attainment of parents.

Ho4: There is no significant relationship between reading and comprehension level to parental involvement in reading.

Ho5: There is no significant relationship between students' reading and comprehension level to the RFT.

Scope and Limitation:

This study was limited to Grade 7 students of Kimagango High School, Kimagango, Midsayap, Cotabato, Philippines to find out the relationship between students' reading and comprehension remediation and fluency in reading and comprehension.

Significance of the Study:

The findings of the study may be useful to the following:

Students. The students will benefit from this study since they are at the receiving end of the approaches used by the teachers e.i. remediation.

Teachers. The result of the study will enable the teachers to reflect on the importance of reading and comprehension remediation to struggling students. It will make them more evaluative to recognize factors which will help students' fluency. This study will make them aware of their practices and teaching styles.

Administrators. The administrators/principals can use the result of the study as a basis for motivating teachers to introspect on the reading and comprehension fluency of students and how to further enhance it.

Future Researchers. The result of the study may serve as the basis for future studies regarding reading and comprehension remediation leading to fluency.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This chapter surveys literature pertinent to this study. It includes reading comprehension remediation, gender and age and its influences in reading comprehension skills and parental reading.

Reading comprehension is a complex process that includes the reader, the text, and factors associated with the activity of reading. High literacy skills are prerequisite for success in contemporary society. Reading fluency involves the comprehension of written text at a high level (Lipka & Siegel, 2011).

Comprehension is the prime goal of reading and comprehension failures can lead to school failures. Despite the Philippines supposedly high literacy rate of 88.6 %, many Filipinos can barely read and write (Juan Miguel Cruz , 2007, cited in Selangan, 2015). He noted;

This is true especially of those living in remote areas as well as the slum areas of the country. Someone once remarked that we are not a nation of readers; we are a nation of storytellers. Ours is a culture of oral history passed on by word of mouth not through the written word. According to the results of the 2003 Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey. (par. 5)

(FLEMMS) conducted by the National Statistics Office (NSO), about one in 10 of the population 10 to 64 years old cannot read and write or basically illiterate. With low-level literacy comes poor reading skill. The alarming performance of the students in reading and comprehension in ESL necessitates urgent decisions and actions from all education sectors.

Blickenstaff, Hallquist and Kopel (2013) stress that every teacher dreams for students to succeed in all areas of their life through literacy. In order for them to be literate they must know how to read and comprehend to be globally competitive. Students learn reading and comprehension at varying rates. As educators, we are given the challenge to help them succeed.

Reading Comprehension Remediation:

The definition of reading comprehension remains a widely debated topic (Leslie & Caldwell, 2000; Paris and Hamilton, 2009, cited in Middleton, 2011). It includes decoding meaning from complex processes e.i. word reading and word knowledge.

Orencia (2006) questions why the Philippines continue to be poor despite of its high literacy rate and found out that Filipinos are not a reading populace. The consumption of reading materials is way behind the Asian neighbors (Ople 1993; Locsin 1992; Nemenzo 1992, cited in Orencia, 2006).

Many studies conducted and many surveys commissioned support the fact that many students have difficulty comprehending what they read. All schools need to have some sort of remedial reading program to help struggling students. Through the program it will make the students create reading as a habit. Orencia (2006) noted;

Children only learn only half of what they are supposed to learn in school. The small percentage of readership in the [Philippines] and the dismal performance of pupils in tests on reading demonstrate the failure of many local schools to effectively foster the aims of reading education. People's survival and satisfaction in today's age of information explosion depend largely on their ability to read and write proficiently and critically. (p. 3, 4)

Reading is a fundamental skill and the early the students will receive the interventions the better the impact on their studies and they will be able to cope. Reading alone is of little value if the students cannot draw out the meaning of what they are reading. If the schools will address the issue it will be a win-win solution. Through remediation, the students will be able to read and comprehend and the schools will be able to serve its purpose — to teach.

Gender and Age and its Influences in Reading Comprehension Skills:

According to Salehi, Lari, and Rezaneja (2014) the most important reader variable that affects reading comprehension is gender. Males and females have different perspective about reading. This difference is also evident in reading comprehension. The males are more analytic compared to females (Oxford , 1994, as cited in Salehi et. Al, 2014). Males are much engaged in many extra-curricular activities that lessen their time to practice reading. On the other hand, females are less active and have ample time to read and make it as a habit. Although both males and females use the same strategies, but females apply them more qualitatively. In addition, gender difference can affect reading motivation.

Males and females can have different outlook towards reading. The more the person is persistent and have end goal, the more he is likely to be successful in reading. A person, who has positive view towards reading will find reading enjoyable and can see progress in his reading performance (Baker & Wigfield, 1999, as cited in Salehi et. Al, 2014).

There are also researches that support the idea those children who read more frequent at an early age enter school with broad lexicons and more advanced comprehension skills (Mol & Bus, 2011, cited in , Kalb & van Ours, 2012).

Several researches stress that reading story books to children at early age is very essential in developing knowledge. Carroll (2013) points out that young children's book exposure predicts oral language development. It was found to be related to language growth, emergent literacy and reading achievement (Bus et al., 1995, cited in, Kalb & van Ours, 2012).

It was also noted that poor readers are also at great risk in academic and social failure. They have lesser chances to graduate from high school and less likely to be employed (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998, cited in, Carroll, 2013).

Parental Involvement Reading:

Why parental involvement in children's literacy is important? There are many researches that connect parental involvement to child's literacy. Parental involvement affects the child's performance at school both in elementary and secondary leading to academic achievement and competence (Fan & Chen, 2001, Feinstein & Symons, 1999, & Melhuish, Sylva, Sammons et al., 2001 cited in, Clark, 2007).

Parental involvement at an early age is crucial in child's literacy and success in school. Children who have high parental involvement show greater literacy growth compared to those whose parents are not involved in any ways (Leslie & Allen, 1999, cited in Carroll, 2013). She noted;

Although research has shown that there is an achievement gap in average literacy performance between elementary aged students of more and less educated mothers for low family involvement levels, this gap is nonexistent for high family involvement levels (Dearing, Simpkins, Krieder, & Weiss, 2006). Among preschool aged children, minimal caregiver supervision and involvement with children is associated with children's underdeveloped vocabulary and phonemic awareness skills (Rush, 1999). Additionally, children with low levels of caregiver supervision and involvement displayed non-interactive, passive activity free play, such as television watching; these children could not be sustained on a specific activity for a reasonable amount of time (Rush, 1999). (p.3)

Several research have found out that the early the parents are involve in their children's literacy the profound and long-lasting the effects and the parents high involvement is the determinant of language and emergent literacy (Mullis, Mullis, Cornille et al., 2004 & Bus, van Ijzendoorn & Pellegrini, 1995, cited in , Clark, 2007).

Definition of Terms:

Reading Comprehension Skills. The ability of the Grade 7 Amethyst students to decode the meaning of the text they are reading.

Parental Involvement. The approach of the parents to involve themselves in reading during the child's early age.

ESL. English as Second Language

Reading Fluency Test. The reading test of the KHS Reading Program conducted to all students of Kimagango High School to determine their reading levels e.i. frustration, instructional and independent.

FLEMMS. Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey conducted by National Statistics Office (NSO)

III. METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the locale of the SBAR, respondents of the study, sampling procedure, instrument of the study, data gathering procedure and data analysis.

Locale of the Study:

The study will be conducted in Grade 7 Amethyst of Kimagango High School. It is situated at the Northern part of Midsayap which is approximately 7 kilometers from the Midsayap Municipal Town Hall.

Respondents:

The respondents of this research will be the Grade 7- Amethyst students. The section has 34 students enrolled for the S.Y. 2015-2016. Most of students are product of six different feeder schools e.i. Kimagango Central Elementary School, Upper Bulanan Elementary School, Lt. Andres Calungsud Elementary School, Lower Kiwanan Elementary School, Kimagango Central Elementary School-Kimagango Annex and Milaya Elementary School.

Sampling Procedures:

This study will utilize the complete enumeration of the 34 students of Grade 7 Amethyst of Kimagango High School. The section is composed of 17 boys and 17 girls.

Research Instruments:

This study is descriptive correlational research. Questionnaires will be used to obtain data. It will investigate “The Effect of Reading Fluency and Comprehension Remediation in Learning English as Second Language (ESL)”. The data will be gathered using questionnaire adapted based on research by Geske and Ozola (2008) on Factors Influencing Reading Literacy at the Primary School Level. The statements cover three major areas in factors reading comprehension: socioeconomic factors in the family, collaboration of a student and a family, and student’s reading outside the school and students reading at school.

Data Collection Procedure:

A letter of approval to request the Reading Fluency Test S.Y. 2015-2016 will be sent to the school principal. Another letter to conduct the study and to administer the survey to Grade 7 Amethyst will be sent to the school principal. The anonymity of the students’ identities and the confidentiality of the documents requested will be strictly observed by the researcher.

The questionnaires will be answered during their vacant period so as not to disturb the class and will be retrieved immediately. This will be done to ensure 100% retrieval. Data will be gathered, tabulated and summarized.

Statistical Treatment of the Data:

Descriptive statistics such as frequency, weighted mean and standard deviation will be used in this study. A five-point scale will be used to investigate The Effect of Reading Fluency and Comprehension Remediation in Learning English as Second Language (ESL).

Analysis of the data will be done using the frequency of responses to each of the 1-5 scales in the questionnaire. T-test will be used to determine if there is a significant difference in the score of students before and after the reading comprehension remediation. The result will be used to answer the research questions.

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