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“Let us Read Amidst the Pandemic Campaign” Improving Reading Comprehension Among Grade Five Pupils

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ABSTRACT

This Practical Action Research aimed at determining the effectiveness of the reading campaign among the Grade V pupils. It employed the narrative. Action research methods was applied where multiple choice questions were deployed for pre-evaluation. There were 10 pupils who participated in this study. The result showed that they performed very poor in all dimensions of reading comprehension. However, the intervention was done after 8 weeks through interviews, there was a significant increase in their performance. Thus, the reading program changed the lives of the pupils. It was an effective approach based on the different activities provided by the teacher. Aside from that, her presence made a difference because they were able to ask questions that are difficult to be done just by themselves. Therefore, teachers played a crucial role during the time of the uncertainties in helping their learners enhance their reading skills in language.

INTRODUCTION

In a global survey of reading comprehension performed by the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2018, Filipino students came in last out of 79 countries. This is due to their preference for story over informational text items. The difficulty for kids, according to DepEd Secretary Leonor Briones, is not literacy but reading comprehension.

Reading aptitude is acquired via practice, according to Frederick Sotto Perez, president of the Philippine Reading Association. We can only become fluent readers if we give them with text, print, and digital materials, as well as practice them with instructor modeling and shared practice leading to autonomous practice. Other causes are ascribed to poor connectivity in remote locations, as well as a lack of reading resources in the country. The results of Manubuan Elementary School Self-Learning Modules (SLM) test in the school year 2021-2022 were rather alarming (Gueta & Janer, 2021). The literacy rate is below average, and a comprehension difficulty has been observed.

Conversely, lockdowns brought by the pandemic caused a detrimental effect to students with special needs especially in reading. With the absence of the face-to-face classes this made a gargantuan impact on their abilities to easily grasp the contexts of their lessons (Sepulveda-Escobar & Morrison, 2020). Generally, it affected the learning process. Added to this is the lack of available gadgets which they could use in communicating with their teachers considering that they belonged to the low socioeconomic status (Asri et al., 2021).

This study builds a gap in the contexts of the teaching of reading during the health crisis brought by the COVID-19 on the teaching of reading among the elementary pupils. Also, this is timely and relevant since it listened into the challenges experienced by the students on the reading activities given to them by their teachers. This situation

prompted the research design and at the same time evaluate how this reading campaign could help develop the reading comprehension of the pupils.

Action Research Questions

This action research aimed to determine if the Reading Campaign can improve the reading comprehension of Grade 5 pupils of Manubuan Elementary School for the school year 2021-2022.

Specifically, it sought to find answers for the following questions:

1. What is the level of reading comprehension of Grade V pupils before the reading Campaign?
2. What is the level of reading comprehension of Grade V pupils after the reading Campaign?
3. What suggestions can Grade V pupils provide to further enhance their reading skills?

Innovation, Intervention, Strategy

Let us Read Amidst the Pandemic Campaign

This campaign aims to give the students the room of opportunities to continue learning even in the midst of the pandemic. It was observed that there are students who unwilling to learn because of they felt that their teachers do not care for them anymore. Also, it will be an aid with the Self-Learning Modules which are given to them every week. As observed, the contents are not answered. This can be associated with the poor reading skills of the pupils especially in comprehension. More so, this will be done in order to enhance the reading skills especially in comprehension by the students through home visitation where researcher will spend an hour or two for each of the learners to help them on their problems in reading.

Action Research Methods

This study used an Action Research Method specifically the Practical Action Research Method. It entails that it

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is a separate method from qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. They are of equal footing. However, the Practical Action Research aims at determining the culprit of the problems faced by teachers in their respective classes. Hence, this can be done in a short span of time. It looked forward to finding solutions an innovation in teaching.

Respondents and other sources of Data and Information

There were 10 pupils who were chosen as the participants of the study. They were chosen based on their scores during the implementation of the reading Campaign. There were series of tests were given to them before intervention was done.

Data Gathering Procedure

I adhered to the following research protocols. It was my duty to write a letter to the District Supervisor and School Principal. Upon approval, another set of letters was sent to the respective informants. On the contrary, the Consent-to-Participate form was given to them where their rights to participate and withdraw were articulated. They were asked to affix their signature affirming their full participation in the study.

The proponents prepared a reading selection and a pretest of a 20-item multiple-choice test for the pupils. The researchers personally administered and collected the questionnaire and identified the 10 students who got below-average scores. They were then subjected to the reading campaign by giving them activity sheets with

corresponding audio-video reading materials every week. After 8 weeks, they were subjected to a post-test. The researchers likewise facilitated an interview to facilitate the improvement of the reading program among the respondents.

Data Analysis

Descriptive was used in this study. The level of reading abilities of the pupils was determined using the mean. To answer, the research question number 3, the narrative approach was used whereby the pupils were given an ample time to narrate their experiences and for further improvement of the approach which was used for them. Themes were identified to give the clear picture of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Reading Comprehension of the Pupils before the Reading Campaign

Table 1 shows that before the reading campaign was implemented, majority of the pupils got the lower score. They were considered to be very poor because of their lacked of comprehension. It can be inferred that the need for intervention was needed to improve their capacity as learners. They are poor in all dimensions of reading comprehension.

For, Iranmehr et al. (2010) the poor comprehension skills of the pupils can be associated by the mere fact that they are not given proper care by their teachers. With the absence of the face-to-face classes brought by the COVID-19 pandemic brought a detrimental effect on the

Table 1: Reading Comprehension Level of Grade 5 pupils before the reading campaign.

Skills	Reading Comprehension Level		
	Frustration	Instructional	Independent
Noting Details	2	1	0
Getting the General Significance of a selection	3	0	0
Predicting the out-come of a given events and making Inferences	2	0	0
Reading to Follow Precise Direction	2	0	0
Total	9	1	0

learning capabilities of the pupils. They have no one to ask at home considering that some parents do not even have the proper education.

Level of Reading Comprehension of the Pupils After the Reading Campaign

Table 2 presents the result of the reading comprehension

of the pupils after the reading campaign. It was noted that there was a significant increase. Thus, it can be explained that the reading campaign was effective. It implies, that teachers need to give supplemental activities to their pupils especially that the face-to-face classes are still limited. Even when the restriction will be lifted, there is a dire need for them to further give students intervention.

Table 2: Reading Comprehension Level of Grade 5 pupils after the reading campaign.

Skills	Reading Comprehension Level		
	Frustration	Instructional	Independent
Noting Details	0	3	1
Getting the General Significance of a selection	0	1	1
Predicting the outcome of a given events and making Inferences	0	1	1
Reading to Follow Precise Direction	0	1	1
Total	0	6	4

Tan (2016) reiterated that the giving of intervention specially the home visitation and the provision of different instructional materials made the learners ready to face the next chapter of their lives. Their presence can make a difference because they can suggest and can even provide the most fitted activities.

Suggestions to Further Enhance the Pupils' Reading Skills

Provision of Translated Instructional Materials. It was noted that the pupils want an instructional material which have the translations either in Filipino or in their mother tongue. It can help them determine the meaning of the English terms if these are contextualized using their own language. In the same manner, they need it so that they could be able to apply them in their day-to-day lives.

As shared during the interview:

"I hope that the instructional materials provided have its translations in our language. I want to read but sometimes I have the difficulties of understanding the texts." (Participant 1)

In addition,

"It would be better if texts are translated especially in Filipino or

in our mother tongue." (Participant 3)

In line with this, the study of revealed that translations should not only be done during the face-to-face instruction. It should also be done with the reading materials provided to the pupils. The importance of the mother tongue in teaching reading manifested a great importance for the success of reading programs in school (Megawati, 2017).

Continuity of the Intervention. Because of the efficacy of the intervention, it was mentioned by the pupils that it should be sustained. Thus, its continuity is further needed. They want that their teacher always has the time for them since there are bodies of knowledge which they cannot understand.

It was shared during the interview that:

"I pray that this program will be sustained. We really want our teacher." (Participant 4)

In the same manner,

"I want that this reading campaign will be strengthened. I know that I still have more classmates who need the supervision of my teacher." (Participant 5)

Teachers' supervision in the implementation of the

Table 3: Themes and Core Ideas on the Suggestions to further enhance pupils reading skills

Themes	Frequency of Response	Core Ideas
Provision of Translated Instructional Materials	General	The pupils want that their teacher have to give them activities that are contextualized in their own culture and language.
Continuity of the Intervention	Typical	The pupils aim for the sustainability of the reading program

reading campaign helped the pupils to have the needed skills. For its sustainability, it was suggested that the program should not only end in a month or two but will be done for the whole duration until such learners are independent (Mesbah & Faghani, 2015).

CONCLUSIONS

This study concluded that the campaign helped the pupils in order for them to become readers. More importantly, this study manifested that teachers should always have to prioritize the needs of their learners. Therefore, teachers played a crucial role in during the time of the uncertainties in helping their learners enhance their reading skills in language.

Reflections

The reading program changed the lives of the pupils. It was an effective approach based on the different activities provide to them. Aside from that, my presence made a difference because they were able to ask questions that are difficult to be done just by themselves. Furthermore, it is reiterated that even in the midst of uncertainties learning should not be buried in oblivion. It is the moral obligations of the teachers to reaching out those learners who have difficulties.

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