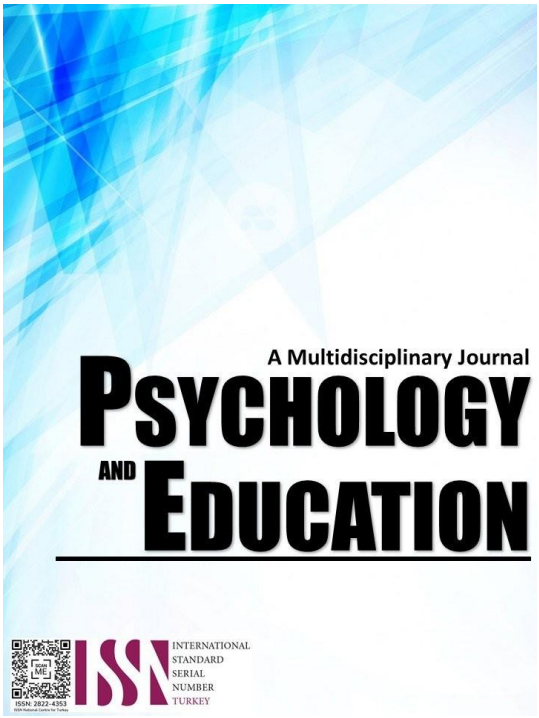
ENHANCING READING COMPREHENSION OF JUNIOR HIGH STUDENTS OF BATU-BATU NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL THRU 4Rs STRATEGY



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Research Article

Enhancing Reading Comprehension of Junior High Students of Batu-Batu National High School Thru 4rs Strategy

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Abstract

This study aimed to enhance the reading comprehension level of Grade 10 students using the 4R Strategy. Framed after Richard Sagor's Four –Stage Model, this action research is designed to determine if there is an improvement in students' reading comprehension after implementing the 4R Strategy. Through purposive sampling method, a total of forty students who belonged to frustration level readers participated in the study. They were then randomly assigned into control group and experimental group. 4R Strategy (Read, Retell, React & Reflect) was employed, and a reading instrument from PHIL-IRI was used to collect the data. There was a Pre Test done before implementing the intervention and a Post Test was conducted after the 15-day session. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to determine the students' comprehension level during Pre-Test and Post Test and to determine how dispersed the scores were. Paired T-Test was also employed to determine the significant difference between the Pre-Test and Post Test Scores. Findings revealed that the 4R Strategy helped improve the reading comprehension level of students as proven by the results of their pre-test and post test scores. This study found out that the 4R strategy was an effective approach in enhancing students' comprehension. Thus, this study recommends adopting 4R Strategy to improve the reading comprehension skills of students.

Keywords: *comprehension, strategies, reading, enhancing*

Introduction

One of the basic skills required in the classroom is reading as it is considered the mother of all study skills. Reading takes a significant role in a child's learning process as it is the most prominent language skill (Sadiku, 2015). In teaching and learning, reading is more than just making sense from letters and symbols. It is a complex process that involves not only word recognition but encompasses the ability to process text and understand meaning. Reading entails understanding of the underlying meaning from the written text. Comprehension is the main aim of reading. Experts say that reading is not reading unless there is comprehension. According to Helardez (2021), reading is a complex process; it is not solely a process of recognizing written or printed texts but refers to putting meaning to what one read and drawing a unified thought of what is read. Therefore, reading comprehension is the accurate measure of reading literacy.

Comprehension is considered the essence of reading as it accounts for the process that supports the effective extraction of meaning from a written passage (Alghonaim, 2020). A good reader must demonstrate that something gained from the reading activity is the most important by-product of a reading process. However, there are factors that affect Reading comprehension of the learners. First and foremost, it is the teacher factor. Teachers play an essential role in facilitating learners to improve their reading skills. In fact, the challenge of teaching reading comprehension remains a significant issue for teachers as most reading facilitators commonly utilize conventional teaching methods. Low reading performance can sometimes result from ineffective teaching by an ineffective teacher (Casing, 2019). Alyousef (2006) also stressed that it is the responsibility of the teacher to stimulate students to read by selecting appropriate materials, especially for those in the early stages of learning. Another factor that affects Reading comprehension is the student himself. These include his interests, habits and level of intelligence. And the last factor is the reading comprehension strategies employed by the teacher. Some instructional strategies a teacher employed sometimes caused problems in the students' performance. Thus, it is very important for teachers to be equipped with sufficient teaching techniques to address the learners reading learning demands in order to achieve reading competence. Teachers must incorporate multiple active learning strategies to improve every learner's understanding and provide various tasks for better understanding. Teaching children to read with combined reading comprehension strategies has been shown to significantly improve children's reading proficiency (Cooter, 2019). Such strategies include guessing from context, defining expectations, making assumptions about the text, skimming ahead to fill in the context, predicting outcomes, HOTS, 4R Strategy etc. Creating and utilizing multiple reading strategies must be put into consideration.

However, despite a long-standing awareness of reading comprehension as an integral component of the learning process, it remains a critical concern for the teachers in Philippine public education. In the 2018 global survey called Program for International Assessment (PISA) reported by The Manila Times, among the 600, 000 students worldwide, Filipino students got an average reading score of 340 points which deficits to 147 points than the average of 487 falling into the last rank among 79 countries. With these figures, it could be inferred that the reading comprehension of Filipino learners is indeed very alarming. The current status of reading comprehension of Filipino students demands proactive efforts and measures that would elevate the present reading literacy rate of Filipino learners. Low academic performances of the students due to low levels of reading comprehension has been a critical problem of schools in the Philippines for a long time now, particularly in the remote provinces like Tawi-Tawi.

The researchers have been teaching for more than ten years in the public elementary and secondary schools here in the province. They have personally witnessed how poor the comprehension levels of their students are as reflected in the results of their daily quizzes, performance tasks and finally in their overall grade in all subject areas across all grade levels. One of the researchers, who personally conducted the intervention in this study, is an English teacher for almost 20 years in Batu-Batu-National High School teaching Grade-10 English and English for Academic and Professional Purposes for Grade 11. She admitted that she has been exerting a lot of efforts in teaching literature to students using all strategies she know but it still turns out to be ineffective when reading comprehension is to be measured. She said she always ended at retelling the story in Tagalog for better understanding of the topic or story. And in fact, this happened during face to face classes yet before pandemic.

Now, after two years of modular learning, the issues on reading comprehension have even gone worse as her colleagues complain about the same problem not only with language subjects but also with the rest of the subject areas. Despite the tedious efforts of teachers to elevate the learners' reading status, reading comprehension has remained a critical concern for schools as it seems to be a unique problem that keeps unresolved no matter how much efforts were exerted. Hence, to help address the problem in reading comprehension of learners, the researcher of this study implemented a new strategy called 4Rs Strategy in order to improve the reading comprehension of learners.

Research Questions

The study aims to enhance the reading comprehension level of Grade 10 students of BATU-BATU NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL during the 2nd Quarter of SY 2022-2023 through 4R Strategy. This study aims to answer the following specific questions:

1. What is the pretest performance of the students in the control and experimental groups?
2. Is there a significant difference in the pretest performance between the control and experimental groups?
3. What is the posttest performance of the students in the control and experimental groups?
4. Is there a significant difference in the posttest performance between the control and experimental groups?
5. Is there a significant difference between the pretest and posttest performance of the students in the control group?
6. Is there a significant difference between the pretest and posttest performance of the students in the experimental group?
7. Is there a significant difference in the mean gain performance obtained between the control and experimental groups?

Methodology

Research Design

This action research study utilized a quantitative quasi-experimental design. Action research is an iterative process in which researchers collaborate on a set of tasks, such as problem assessment, active intervention, and reflective learning (Davin et al., 1999). This research is used to determine if there is an improvement in students' reading comprehension after implementing 4R Strategy.

Respondents

The respondents in this study are 40 Grade 10 students from BBNHS in Panglima Sugala, who were identified at the frustration level of comprehension during the 2nd quarter of the SY 2022-2023. These students were selected through purposive sampling, targeting only those who had received a final grade of 74 in English for the 1st quarter. Subsequently, simple random sampling was employed to assign the students into control and experimental groups.

Instrument

The researchers used the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) Tool to assess students' reading comprehension levels before and after the implementation of 4R Strategy. The test was comprised of three (3) literal-level questions, two (2) interpretive questions, and two (2) applied questions for a total of seven (7) questions.

Procedure

Prior to the conduct of the study, the researchers sent a request to the principal of the target school where the participants are from. Then researchers conducted a pretest using the Phil-IRI tool to assess the entry reading comprehension level of the participants both in control and experimental group. After the pretest, the 4Rs strategy was introduced to the experimental group and was then followed by a two-week intervention implementation while the control group was also taught the same lesson but with the traditional method.

After the 2-week intervention, the researchers conducted a post-test still using the same tool to assess whether the reading comprehension level of the participants in the experimental group have improved after using the strategy and to the control group for comparison of the degree of improvement between the two groups. The data gathered from the pretest and post-test scores of control group and experimental group have been collated and tabulated.

Data Analysis

The scores from the pre-test and post-test of control and experimental groups were tabulated and analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviation and Paired sample T-Test.

Mean and Standard Deviation. These tools were used to determine the comprehension level of the students during pretest and posttest, and to determine how dispersed the scores were.

Paired Sample t-test. This tool was used to determine the significance of the difference between the pretest and posttest scores.

Results and Discussion

Table 1. *The Mean Score, Standard Deviation and Standard Error of the Mean of the data*

Paired Samples Statistics					
		Mean	*N*	*Std. Deviation*	*Std. Error Mean*
Pair 1	CtrlGrp_Pre	3.62	26	1.651	.324
	CtrlGrp_Post	4.54	26	1.606	.315
Pair 2	ExptGrp_Pre	4.27	30	1.701	.310
	ExptGrp_Post	6.30	30	.915	.167
Pair 3	CtrlGrp_Pre	3.62	26	1.651	.324
	ExptGrp_Pre	4.50	26	1.655	.325
Pair 4	CtrlGrp_Post	4.54	26	1.606	.315
	ExptGrp_Post	6.31	26	.928	.182

Table 1 shows the Pair 1, the Pre-test of Control Group obtain the mean score of 3.62 while in Post-test of Control Group obtained a mean score of 4.54,this implies that there is an improvement after giving the lessons to the students.

However in Pair 2, the Pre-test of Experimental Group obtained a mean score of 4.27, while in Post-test of Experimental Group obtained a mean score of 6.30; this implies that there is an improvement of Post-test of Experimental Group. In Pair 3, the Pre-test of Control Group obtained the mean score of 3.62 and the Pre-test of Experimental Group obtained the mean score of 4.50, this implies the Pre-test of Experimental Group got the highest mean score.While in Pair 4, the Post-test of Control Group obtained the mean score of 4.54, and the Post-test of Experimental Group obtained the mean score of 6.31. This implies that the Post-test of Experimental Group obtained the highest mean score.

Therefore, to compare the mean score of the two groups, the Control Group and experimental Group and their Pre-test and Post-test, the Post-test test obtained the highest mean score, this implies that after giving lessons to the students there are improvements. Lastly, to compare the Post-test of Control Group and Experimental Group, the Experimental Group obtained the highest mean score of 6.31 respectively. This implies that students learn more and gain new knowledge in reading comprehension.

Table 2. *The Correlation Coefficient of the data*

Paired Samples Correlations				
		N	*Correlation*	*Sig.*
Pair 1	CtrlGrp_Pre&CtrlGrp_Post	26	.126	.538
Pair 2	ExptGrp_Pre&ExptGrp_Post	30	-.031	.871
Pair 3	CtrlGrp_Pre&ExptGrp_Pre	26	-.029	.887
Pair 4	CtrlGrp_Post&ExptGrp_Post	26	-.142	.488

Table 2 presents the paired samples correlations. As shown, the Pair 1 Control Group Pre-test and Control Group Post-Test obtained the value of correlation 0.126 and significant value of 0.538. In Pair 2, the Experimental Group Pre-test and Experimental Group Post-test obtained the value of correlation -0.031 and significant value of 0.871. However, In Pair 3, the Control Group Pre-test and Experimental Group Pre-test obtained the value of correlation -0.029 and significant value of 0.887. In addition, in the Pair 4, the Control Group Post-test and Experimental Group Post –test obtained the value of correlation -0.142 and significant value of 0.488. Therefore, there are no significant correlations for the 4 pairs.

Table 3. *The Correlation Coefficient of the data*

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					*t*	*df*	*Sig. (2-tailed)*
		Mean	*Std. Deviation*	*Std. Error Mean*	*95% Confidence Interval of the Difference*				
					Lower	*Upper*			
Pair 1	CtrlGrp_Pre - CtrlGrp_Post	-.923	2.153	.422	-1.793	-.054	-2.187	25	.038
Pair 2	ExptGrp_Pre - ExptGrp_Post	-2.033	1.956	.357	-2.764	-1.303	-5.693	29	.000
Pair 3	CtrlGrp_Pre - ExptGrp_Pre	-.885	2.372	.465	-1.843	.073	-1.902	25	.069
Pair 4	CtrlGrp_Post - ExptGrp_Post	-1.769	1.966	.386	-2.563	-.975	-4.589	25	.000

Table 3 showed the correlation relationship between Control Group Pre-test and Post-test, and Experimental Group Pre-test and Post-test. In Pair 1, the Control Grouppre-test and control group Post test obtain the mean of -0.923, the computed t-value of -2.187 and significant (2-tailed) of 0.038. In pair 2, the Experimental group Pre-test and Experimental group Post-test obtain the mean of -2.033, the computed t-value of -5.693 and significance of 0.000. While in Pair 3, Control group Pre-test and Experimental group Pre-test obtain the mean of -0.885, the computed t-value of -1.902 and significance of 0.069. However, in Pair 4, the control group Post test and Experimental group post test obtained the mean of -1.769, the computed t-value of -4.589 and significance of 0.000.

Therefore, under 'mean' column, the negative sign indicates that Post-test mean score is bigger than the mean score of the Pre-test, implied that there is an improvement in the post-test result.In addition, under the "significance (2-tailed)" column, the pair 1, pair 2, and pair 4 indicated the test is significant at 0.05 level of significance.

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The Read-Retell-React-Reflect (4Rs) Strategy was designed to assist learners struggling at the frustration level. The increase in scores from pre-test to post-test, as shown in the tables above, confirms the strategy's effectiveness in enhancing reading comprehension. Participants' scores improved significantly from the pre-test to the post-test. Moreover, the results indicated substantial improvement in students' reading comprehension within the time frame during which the strategy was introduced. Participants practiced the strategy for two weeks under the close supervision of the researchers. Considering the limited time, the improvement in scores is noteworthy,

suggesting that extended use of the strategy could lead to even greater improvements in reading performance, potentially advancing frustration level students to the instructional level or higher. This implies that the duration of the intervention may impact reading comprehension improvement. The Institute of Education Sciences (2009) similarly recommends rigorous, systematic instruction in small groups, delivered three to five times a week throughout the quarter.

The results align with the research by Utami et al. (2016), who implemented the Relating, Experiencing, Applying, Cooperative, Transferring (REACT) strategy, resulting in increased learning motivation and participation. They used diverse activities to create an engaging learning environment, which motivated learners and enriched their learning experiences for better outcomes. Amira (2018) also found that various reading strategies, including the Read, Cover, Remember, Retell (RCRR) Strategy, can address students' reading difficulties and improve their reading comprehension achievements.

Puspita et al. (2020) suggested that learning models should involve active, creative, and engaging processes. The 4Rs strategy , designed to address reading difficulties and improve comprehension, also aims to make reading interactive and enjoyable, fostering a love for reading among students. During the research, participants engaged more deeply with the texts and expressed themselves through retelling, reacting, and reflecting. Active learning features in the strategy encouraged distinctive thinking and effective analysis (Iskandarwassid & Sunendar, 2011). The current study, using reading activities to improve comprehension, aligns with Jiang's (2016) research on oral reading strategies and student comprehension levels, providing further evidence for the efficacy of reading strategies. Finally, this study's finding is just parallel with the recent study of Deluao, C.J., Bernal, D.J., Padillo, J.B. & Lim,R.A.(2022) of which they found out the 4R strategy effective in improving the reading comprehension of grade 8 students.

Overall, this research demonstrates that students achieve better learning outcomes with extensive and intensive interventions. The 4Rs strategy has been proven effective in enhancing Grade 10 students' reading comprehension levels, with significant improvements observed after using the strategy.

Conclusions

Teaching students to read using a combination of reading comprehension strategies has significantly enhanced their reading proficiency. The findings indicate that the employed strategy aids in processing the reading text, leading to improved comprehension. Every step in the 4R strategy has been shown to develop learners' reading skills effectively. According to the study's results, the 4R strategy successfully improves and enhances students' reading comprehension. However, despite the improvement in post-test scores after using the 4Rs strategy, there was no change in the learners' comprehension levels according to the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) Assessment Tool, suggesting that Phil-IRI sets high standards for reading comprehension levels. It is therefore suggested that the strategy be employed religiously to elevate reading comprehension levels of students.

In general, the researchers found that the 4Rs Strategy is effective in improving students' reading comprehension. They recommend this strategy as an intervention for students at the frustration level and as a metacognitive strategy for those at instructional and independent levels. The researchers plan to use this strategy to enhance reading comprehension in their schools, and it may also be adopted by their Schools Division. Additionally, they suggest that future studies should expand the research to other sections of scholarly papers and include a broader sample, including primary pupils who are just beginning to develop reading comprehension skills.

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