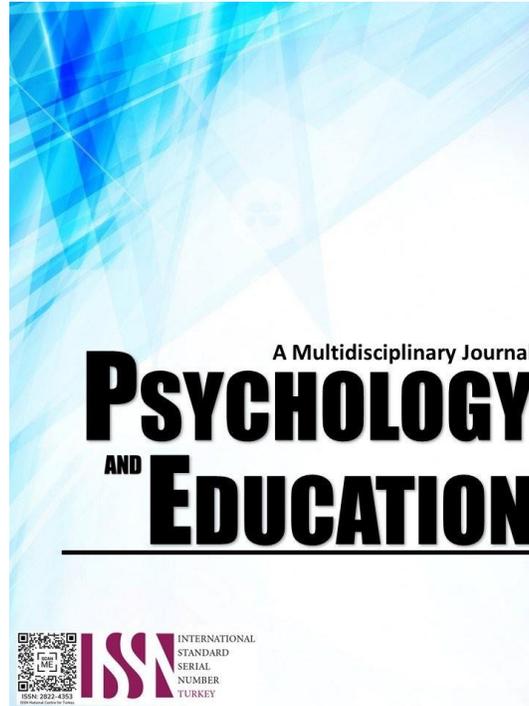


**IMPROVING SPELLING ABILITY AMONG GRADE 2 LEARNERS
THROUGH DRILL-BASED INTERVENTION ON
BASIC SIGHT WORDS**



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Improving Spelling Ability Among Grade 2 Learners Through Drill-Based Intervention on Basic Sight Words

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Abstract

Spelling is a foundational skill in literacy development, serving as a precursor to writing and effective communication. Grade 2 learners transitioning from learning to reading to learn must master basic skills like spelling to support their academic growth. This action research evaluates the effectiveness of drill-based interventions in enhancing the spelling ability of Grade 2 learners at Parayao Centro Elementary School. The study employed a single-group pretest-posttest design to measure the learners' spelling performance before and after a two-week intervention period. The intervention consisted of structured drill-based activities focused on basic sight words. Pretest results revealed that the learners faced significant challenges in spelling, as indicated by their low mean scores. Post test results demonstrated a statistically significant improvement in their spelling performance, confirming the efficacy of the intervention. Based on the findings, drill-based interventions are recommended for integration into regular classroom instruction and teacher professional development programs in the Binmaley District I. This approach not only improves spelling ability but also strengthens foundational literacy skills essential for learners' academic success.

Keywords: *drill-based interventions, spelling ability, basic sight words, literacy development, pretest-posttest design*

Introduction

One of the most important skills in developing overall literacy is spelling. Spelling is the first step towards writing, which is a crucial part of communication. We communicate our thoughts, ideas, and feelings to others through writing. The 2nd graders I work with are at a stage where they are switching from learning to reading to learning to learn. This means they must be proficient in basic skills like spelling for them to really take off in the learning process. Words are the building blocks of all texts. If a child does not have a good grasp of the foundational words at the early stages of development, they will never progress to writing or reading at more advanced levels.

10 out of 24 learners in Grade 2 find it difficult to spell because they are not being instructed in effective strategies. Traditional methods tend to use rote memorization for spelling, which is not an engaging way to learn or a reliable way to ensure that students will remember what they have learned for the long term (Graham & Santangelo, 2014). Even more common is the sight word intervention, where students are asked to use words, they can read easily as the basis of their learning how to spell better (Graham & Santangelo, 2014; Hollis & McNaughton, 2019).

There are various techniques used in drill-based interventions—such as flashcards and timed drills—that can effectively reinforce sight word recognition. The drills push students to participate actively in their own learning and, to a large extent, can be tailored to meet a nearly infinite variety of learning needs that students may present. The authors of these interventions posit that such push towards participation can be strengthened even more if multisensory strategies are used. That is, students might do even better if they not only see and hear the words but also perform actions that have them spell the words (Nist & Olejnik, 2020). With the Philippine education system suffering from declining competency in English (Huang & Shimizu, 2016), the need for effective interventions that can increase students' spelling ability has never been more pressing. This is the impetus for the current study.

Recent studies have shown the role of sight words in fluency and comprehension. For instance, Rasinski and Padak (2018) mentioned that fluency in reading sight words is directly connected to better comprehension skills. Moreover, Topping and Paul (2021) in their research show how literacy skills can be enhanced in students by creating a setting of teams where they learn to practice sight words.

Furthermore, effective teaching of spelling is associated not only with short-term school success but also with long-term learning outcomes. Bowers and Bowers (2017) indicated that learning sight words at an early age is related to better outcomes in subsequent grades as reading becomes more challenging. It thus emphasizes the need for early support that focuses on enhancing spelling through targeted practice using sight words.

Drill-based activities help young learners improve their spelling skills, and it's a big part of this study. The teacher-researcher observed firsthand how effective drill methods are as the students tutored at Parayao Centro Elementary School showed marked improvement in their spelling and reading basic sight words after repeated practice. This observation motivated the teacher-researcher to use drill-based methods to help students, strengthening her belief that drills are effective. She also found these methods helpful when she prepared for board exams. The main idea of drills is that they help people learn through practice, which helps students remember spelling patterns and recognize words automatically. Through an active involvement of students in structured practices on sight words, this study will work to improve the spelling challenges that face Grade 2 learners. The overall aim of the research is to assess whether these drill-based interventions will work on the spelling capabilities of students, thus establishing their performance before and after the intervention of the drills. This aims to enhance one's spelling skills as well as making reading easier to comprehend. This, therefore,

helps give essential ideas in the area of good teaching methods which would aid in reading development for the young student.

Research Questions

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of drill-based interventions using basic sight words to improve the spelling ability of Grade 2 learners. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the spelling ability of Grade 2 learners before using drill-based interventions?
2. What is the spelling ability of Grade 2 learners after using drill-based interventions?
3. Is there a significant difference in the spelling ability of Grade 2 learners before and after using drill-based interventions?

Methodology

Research Design

The single group pretest-post test design was used in this action research. This is a study design in which one group of participants is pre-tested on the dependent variable and then post-tested after the treatment condition is given. In this design, the Grade 2 learners were given a pre-test before the research began. After that, there was a two-week intervention phase. The learners were then given a post-test at the conclusion of the study period or after the intervention program was implemented utilizing Drill- Based Intervention.

Participants

The 24 Grade 2 learners in English at Parayao Centro Elementary School, Binmaley District I, Schools Division Office I Pangasinan enrolled for the School Year 2024-2025 were the main respondents of the study. They were from a single social class. As a result, they were all part of the same condition which means they were all getting the same treatment and assessments.

Procedure

A 25-item teacher-made test created by the researcher was the main research instrument utilized in this study. The purpose of employing an achievement test was to determine whether the performance of learners improved after the utilization of intervention activity.

Prior to implementing the intervention, a pre-test was used to assess the learners' prior knowledge. The post-test, on the other hand, was used to assess knowledge following the intervention.

The 25-item teacher-made test was subjected to content validity which was overseen by the school principal and other experts in the school to establish the validity and reliability of the research instrument.

Since the researcher is not a public-school teacher, she approached the Grade 2 Adviser of Parayao Centro Elementary School and oriented they said adviser regarding the proposed action research. The adviser of the students approached the parents for their children's permission to become respondents in this study and also disseminated information concerning the objectives of the action research. In addition, the researcher asked permission from the principal of the school to carry out the study.

Pre-test was administered to the 24 Grade 2 learners who participated in the study. The purpose of the test was to assess the subjects' learning performance prior to receiving the chosen intervention. For a period of two weeks, the treatment was carried out.

Data Analysis

The scores of the respondents were computed and analyzed to answer the problem raised in this study. To provide answers to Problems 1 and 2, frequency count percentage and mean were used.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the data gathered, the details of analysis made, and the interpretation of the findings on the basis of research questions.

Table 1. *Pre-Test Results*

<i>Score Ranges</i>	<i>Descriptions</i>	<i>Number of Learners</i>	<i>%</i>
23-25	Highly Proficient (HP)	8	33.33%
18-22	Proficient (P)	6	25%
11-17	Nearly Proficient (NEP)	7	29.17%
0-10	Not Proficient (NP)	3	12.5%
Total		24	100%

Table 1 answers question number 1 in the Statement of the Problem, to wit: What is the spelling ability of Grade 2 learners before using drill-based interventions?

Table 1 presents the performance of Grade 2 learners in spelling basic sight words during the pre-test. The data shows that 8 out of 24 learners (33%) scored within the range of 23-25, which is described as "highly proficient." Additionally, 6 learners (25%) scored within the range of 18-22, classified as "proficient." However, a significant portion of the learners demonstrated lower levels of proficiency. Seven learners (29%) scored within the range of 11-17, indicating they are "nearly proficient," while 3 learners (13%) scored within the range of 0- 10, categorized as "not proficient."

The results show that even though one-third of the learners are very skilled, many students still need to get better at spelling basic sight words. Almost half (42%) of the participants are in the "nearly proficient" and "not proficient" groups, which means they have weaknesses in their basic spelling skills.

This means a plan, like drills, is required to bridge those gaps and better the spelling of the learners. This drill-based technique seeks to enhance the proficiency of nearly proficient and not proficient, while helping maintain proficiency skills in the case of already proficient learners. This means that the spelling is supposed to improve their spelling as an overall performance, hence expected to be at their best.

Table 2. *Post-Test Results*

Score Ranges	Descriptions	Number of Learners	%
23-25	Highly Proficient (HP)	17	70.83%
18-22	Proficient (P)	5	20.83%
11-17	Nearly Proficient (NEP)	1	4.17%
0-10	Not Proficient (NP)	1	4.17%
Total		24	100%

Table 2 to answer question number 2 in the Statement of the Problem, to wit: What is the spelling ability of Grade 2 learners after using drill-based interventions?

Table 2 presents the performance of the Grade 2 learners in spelling basic sight words during the post-test. The results show that 17 out of 24 learners (71%) scored within the range of 23-25, which is categorized as "highly proficient." This indicates a significant portion of learners performed well in the post-test. Additionally, 5 learners (21%) scored within the range of 18-22, described as "proficient." These results suggest that the learners are demonstrating a solid grasp of spelling basic sight words.

However, there is still room for improvement, as 1 learner (4%) scored within the range of 11-17, classified as "nearly proficient," and another learner (4%) scored between 0-10, categorized as "not proficient." Although the majority of the learners performed well, a small percentage still struggle with the target skills.

Data also revealed that the learners improved their spelling skills after the intervention. Most of the learners scored in the "highly proficient" and "proficient" ranges, meaning that the intervention, most likely practice or drill activities, was useful in improving their spelling abilities. This would prove that the learners already exist in the "almost proficient" and "not proficient" groups. Such groups of students require special attention and support in mastering skills.

In conclusion, the results imply that the intervention has successfully improved the spelling performance of the learners, but additional attention and support are needed for those who are still struggling. This aligns with the purpose of the intervention, which aimed to address these gaps and enhance the learners' overall spelling proficiency.

Table 3. *Significance of the Difference between the Pre-test and Post-test Results of the Respondents*

Group	Compared Categories	Mean	Computed T-Value	Critical p-value	Decision	Remarks
Group	Pre-Test Vs Post-Test	18.04 22.25	-4.24	0.00029	Reject H ₀	Significant

Table 3 to answer question number 3 shows the difference between the pre-test and post-test results of the targeted Grade 2 learners.

Table 3 presents the results of the paired t-test conducted to determine the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the Grade 2 learners in their spelling ability on basic sight words. The analysis yielded a t-statistic of -4.24 and a p-value of 0.00029. With the p-value being significantly lower than the standard significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis, which posits no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores, is rejected. This indicates that there is a statistically significant improvement in the spelling ability of the learners after the intervention.

The increase in scores for post-tests indicates that these drill-based activities used with the learners in this study were remarkably good at helping them spell such basic sight words. These outcomes parallel earlier research that insists upon the need for reiterated practice and focused help in making for basic reading skills to emerge.

For example, consistent and targeted spelling exercises designed by Jones and Carter in the year 2020 fostered sight word recognition

and spelling skills in young students. In this regard, Lopez et al., in their study conducted in the year 2018, demonstrated proof that well-designed spelling activities not only improve their spelling correctness but also build higher fluency and greater learner confidence in using the sight words in their own writing.

Also, the results agree with what Peterson (2019) said that the repetition of sight words many times helps young children to learn to read better. This way of teaching makes sure that kids learn the important words they need for understanding what they read and for writing.

In conclusion, the significant improvement observed in this study validates the effectiveness of drill-based interventions in teaching spelling. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate such strategies into their classroom practices to enhance young learners' spelling skills, thereby supporting their overall literacy development.

Conclusions

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of drill-based interventions in enhancing the spelling ability of Grade 2 learners on basic sight words at Parayao Centro Elementary School, Binmaley District I, under the Schools Division Office I Pangasinan, during the School Year 2024–2025. A total of 24 Grade 2 learners participated in the study, which utilized a single-group pre-test–post-test design. The pre-test results revealed that only 33% of the learners were categorized as "highly proficient," with the majority falling within the "proficient" to "not proficient" categories. This initial data underscored the need for targeted instructional strategies to address gaps in spelling skills.

Following the implementation of the drill-based interventions, post-test findings showed a notable improvement in the learners' spelling performance. An impressive 71% of the learners reached the "highly proficient" level, with none scoring in the lower categories. Statistical analysis using a paired t-test confirmed a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores ($t = -4.24$, $p = 0.00029$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. These results demonstrate the effectiveness of drill-based activities in improving spelling proficiency among young learners.

From these findings, several conclusions can be drawn. First, Grade 2 learners initially exhibited low spelling performance, suggesting persistent difficulties with basic sight words at this educational level. Second, the application of drill-based interventions proved effective in enhancing the learners' spelling abilities, as reflected in the considerable improvement in post-test scores. Finally, the statistically significant difference between the pre- and post-assessment results confirms the positive impact of the intervention on students' literacy development.

In light of the study's conclusions, the implementation of drill-based interventions is strongly recommended as a strategic approach to enhance the spelling abilities of Grade 2 learners in schools within Binmaley District I, Schools Division Office I Pangasinan. These activities should be integrated into regular classroom instruction and supported through professional development programs such as In-Service Training (INSET) and Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions. Equipping teachers with effective literacy instruction strategies will not only improve spelling performance but also strengthen the foundational reading and writing skills essential for learners' academic growth and long-term literacy success.

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