

Effectiveness of DRTA Strategy in Improving the Reading Skills

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to evaluate the reading level of the grade 7 learners before and after the conduct of intervention and to determine the effectiveness of Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA). The reading level was measured using the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) tool where word recognition and comprehension are the variables used. On word recognition, mispronunciation, repetition, substitution, omission, insertion, reversal and transposition are considered miscues while the comprehension level was determined by the scores in the comprehension questions. Reading level is determined by their level in word recognition and comprehension taken from the Phil-IRI formula. The researcher used experimental group of respondents in teaching reading using the DRTA. The respondents are the grade 7 learners of Mindanao State University-Maguindanao who experienced modular learning for the last two school years in elementary, 2020 – 2022. The study was conducted in September to October 2022. The instruments are the reading selection consisting of 134 words and the 10 comprehension questions. Results revealed that there is a significant difference on respondents' reading level in terms of word recognition with the t-value -8.388 and comprehension with t-value -14.357 after the use of Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA). It is therefore concluded that DRTA has a positive effect in improving the reading skills of the grade VII.

KEYWORDS

Directed Reading-Thinking Activity; word recognition; comprehension; reading level

INTRODUCTION

Learning to read is the top priority of elementary education. A pupil upon reaching intermediate level is expected to be an independent reader. This happens because the whole point of all reading instruction is comprehension and consequently, the development of a love for reading. Much of the poor performance of learners in achievement tests and the inability to cope with academic demands is due to failure to comprehend test items and reading materials. It can be concluded that if a child is an independent reader, there could also be a better result in the standardized test. It is because the aim of teaching reading is to develop learners with holistic skills in reading who are not merely equipped with reading skills and strategies but have the enthusiasm to keep reading and the will to read.

Reading is the main skill the students need to interact with the environment but this became the most common problem among the high school teachers. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 results found out that in reading, fifteen-year-old Filipino students scored lower than other countries participating in PISA 2018

event. Philippines reading score was at the average of 340 points being the lowest along with the Dominican Republic.

The Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) Functional Literacy, Education and Mass Media Survey (FLEMMS) defined “basic literacy,” as those who can decode the written symbol, write and comprehend simple messages in any language or dialect. The survey found out that the Filipinos aged 10 to 64 years old were functional literate up to 91.6% in 2019 (PSA, 2019). This number is around 73 million Filipinos in the said age group were considered functional literate.

One of the thrusts of the Department of Education (DepEd) is “every child must be a reader”. The policy “no read, no move” was implemented to support the Department’s thrust. Educators aim to produce graduates who excel in their chosen endeavor. However, in the study of Tomas, et. al (2021) in Schools Division of Aurora revealed that 64.31% of Grade 1 pupils belong to frustration level and 13.55% are nonreaders. In the same study, the perceived causes were learners’ lack mastery of the reading elements, learners are at risk of dropping out and no reading culture.

This conformed to the result of reading proficiency level studied by Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) 2019 which showed that only 29% of Grade 5 learners in the Philippines has the ability to decode and comprehend a range of everyday text like the simple stories and personal accounts or opinions. The reading proficiency level of those learners is on the level of the first year of the primary grade of basic education.

In the report released by United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) in April 2022 in the Philippine setting, there are fewer than 15% of the school children or there are only three in a group of 20 learners were able to decode and comprehend simple texts due to the longest school observance of restriction protocols of above 70 weeks (De Vera, 2022) where classes shifted to modular distance learning. This made Senator Gatchalian urged that reading must be strengthened among learners especially that pandemic has worsened the problem in education sector (Felipe, 2022).

The Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) is a reading strategy to aid learners’ understanding that is used during reading. The strategy guides students to ask questions about the text read and to make predictions. The learners then will continue reading to determine whether their prediction was correct or not. This strategy can be done by an individual reader, in a fewer group of learners or as a whole class. The DRTA strategy motivates the learners to get engaged and be skillful readers to enhance their understanding of the text they are reading (Reading Rockets, 2015). Typically, the teacher does the reading of the passage and the learners analyze and make predictions on the later part. The predictions, verifications and authentications or the revisions guide the learners in comprehension of the reading material (Jennings, Caldwell, and Lerner, 2014).

According to Ruddell (2022), DRTA is an activity which gives clear purpose for reading. It involves students in active comprehension by the use of schema. It also develops their higher order thinking skills by using prediction and speculations and teaches the learners to make conclusions. Thus, it will help the learners increase motivation, engagement and understanding of the test they are reading.

Sunarti and Fatma Mernawati (2022) studied the use of DRTA among grade IV learners in Yogyakarta in September to October 2020 and revealed that DRTA has positive effect in teaching reading comprehension. Agustiani (2016) also found out that DRTA along with literature circles were effective in improving the reading comprehension achievement of narrative texts of the Grade 10 learners of Baturaja University in Indonesia. Another study on the effectiveness of DRTA among grade VII learners revealed that DRTA strategy has positive effect in improving the students’ reading skills (Panjaitan, N. B., & Siagan, Y.L.,

2020). Similarly, Satriani, et. al. (2022) concluded that DRTA strategy helps students' reading comprehension of the texts they are reading.

In the study of Suico (2022), she found out that there was a positive result brought about by the Directed Reading Thinking Skills (DRTA) in the delivery of the learning competencies in reading among the multi-grade pupils of Masaba II Elementary School in Leyte, Philippines. The result further explained that integrating the Directed Reading thinking materials in assessing the reading skills of the learners could help them improved and enhanced their skills. Learners are processing the passages they are reading and make refinement to the words or phrases they found difficult to understand.

Educators believe that acquiring reading skills enhances the performance of the students in school. Thus, the schools struggle to produce efficient readers to compete with the world's globalization. The researcher, as an educator is concerned with the problems in reading. She also aims to produce efficient readers who can easily recognize the text and grasp its meaning. Through this study, the effect of Directed Reading – Thinking Activity (DRTA) towards learners' reading skills is determined.

Statement of the Problems

This study sought to determine the effectiveness of Directed Reading-Thinking Activity in improving the reading skills of students. Specifically, it aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the common miscues of the respondents in word recognition in terms of
2. mispronunciation, repetition, substitution, omission, insertion, transposition and reversal?
3. What is the students' reading level before the use of Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy in terms of word recognition and comprehension?
4. What is the students' reading level after the use of Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy in terms of word recognition and comprehension?
5. Is there a significant difference between the students' reading level before and after the use of Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy in terms of word recognition and comprehension?

RESEARCH METHODS

This study is quantitative design specifically experimental in nature. It is one group Pretest-Posttest Research Design involving the grade VII learners in complete enumeration. The 55 learners in two classes were subjected to the study. In the pretest, the respondents' reading level were measured through oral reading test and comprehension questions. Mispronunciation, repetition, substitution, omission, insertion, reversal and transposition were considered miscues based on the Phil-IRI reading test. Intervention with the use of DRTA strategy in teaching reading were conducted and the posttest was administered to determine the effect of DRTA. Data gathered were analyzed and interpreted based on the criteria adapted form Phil-IRI.

The following formula were used to measure the reading level adapted from Phil-IRI oral reading test

$$\text{Word Recognition (WR): } \frac{\text{No. of major miscue (M)}}{\text{No. of words in the passage (N)}} \times 100 = \% \text{ of M}$$

$$\text{Comprehension (C): } \frac{\text{No. of correct answers}}{\text{No. of questions}} \times 100 = \% \text{ of CR}$$

The Phil-IRI Oral Test adapted these criteria for the reading levels proposed by Johnson, Kress and Pikulski (1987)

Table 1. The Phil-IRI Oral Test

Level	Word Recognition (WR)	Comprehension
Independent	97-100%	80-100%
Instructional	90-96%	59-79%
Frustration	89% below	58% below

To identify the overall reading ability of students, another table is used that labeled them.

Table 2. Reading Ability of Students

Word Recognition	Comprehension	Reading Level
Independent	Independent	Independent
Independent	Instructional	Instructional
Independent	Frustration	Frustration
Instructional	Independent	Independent
Instructional	Instructional	Instructional
Instructional	Frustration	Frustration
Frustration	Independent	Frustration
Frustration	Instructional	Frustration
Frustration	Frustration	Frustration
Non-reader	Listening Capacity	Non-reader

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, central tendency and correlation.

Common Reading Miscues of The Respondents

Table 3 showed the miscues of the respondents as determiner of their reading level in terms of word recognition. The results revealed that the respondents have 5.31 % pretest and 2.327% posttest errors in pronunciation. Mispronunciation has the highest percentage of miscues among the identified indicators in the pretest and posttest.

Table 3. Miscues of the respondents in word recognition before and after the conduct of the DRTA strategy

Miscues	Average Miscues	
	Pretest	Posttest
Mispronunciation	5.31%	2.327%
Repetition	2.60%	0.364%
Substitution	1.98%	0.400%
Omission	1.56%	0.055%
Insertion	1.11%	1.400%
Transposition	0.06%	0.015%
Reversal	0.06%	0.018%
Mean	1.81%	0.65%

Students Reading Level before the DRTA Strategy

Table 4. Students reading level in terms of word recognition before the conduct of DRTA

Range of Scores	Word Recognition		Reading Level
	f	%	
97% - 100%	5	9.09%	Independent
90% - 96%	32	58.18%	Instructional
89% and below	18	32.73%	Frustrated

The table above showed that only 5 or 90.09 % of the respondents can read the words as independently. There are 32 or 58.18% are under instructional and 18 or 32.73% are frustrated. The result implied that most of the respondents can profit from the instruction.

Table 5. Students reading level in terms of comprehension before the conduct of DRTA

Range of Scores	Comprehension		Reading Level
	f	%	
80% - 100%	0	0%	Independent
59% - 79%	5	9.09%	Instructional
58% and below	50	90.91%	Frustrated

Table 5. showed that 90.01% of the respondents are frustration level in terms of comprehension, 5 or 9.01 % are instructional and non among them is independent.

Table 6. Students reading level in terms of word recognition and comprehension before the conduct of DRTA

Word Recognition		Comprehension		Reading Level	
f	Reading Level	f	Reading Level	f	Reading Level
5	Independent	0	Independent	0	Independent
32	Instructional	5	Instructional	5	Instructional
18	Frustrated	50	Frustrated	50	Frustrated

Table 6. showed the reading level of the respondents before the use of DRTA in terms of word recognition and comprehension. The result revealed that 50 or 90.91% of the respondents are frustrated readers in terms of word recognition and comprehension.

Students Reading Level after the DRTA Strategy

Table 7. Students reading level in terms of word recognition after the conduct of DRTA

Range of Scores	Word Recognition		Reading Level
	f	%	
97% – 100%	29	52.73%	Independent
90% - 96%	26	47.27%	Instructional
89% and below	0	0%	Frustrated

The table above showed that 52.73% of the respondents are independent level, 47.27% are instructional and none of them is frustrated reader in terms of word recognition.

Table 8. Students reading level in terms of comprehension after the conduct of DRTA

Range of Scores	Comprehension		Reading Level
	f	%	
80% – 100%	19	34.55%	Independent
59% - 79%	36	65.45%	Instructional
58% and below	0	0%	Frustrated

Table 8 revealed that 34.55% of the respondents are independent reader in word recognition, 65.45% are instructional reader and none of them is frustrated readers in terms of comprehension.

Table 9. Students reading level in terms of word recognition and comprehension after the conduct of DRTA

Word Recognition		Comprehension		Reading Level	
f	Reading Level	f	Reading Level	f	Reading Level
5	Independent	29	Independent	19	Independent
32	Instructional	26	Instructional	36	Instructional
18	Frustrated	0	Frustrated	0	Frustrated

The table above showed the reading level of the respondents in terms of word recognition and comprehension. There are 19 or 34.55% of the respondents are independent readers after the use of DRTA, 36 or 65.45% are instructional and no one is frustrated readers.

The t-test on word recognition and comprehension

Table 10. t-test of DRTA on students reading level

	Mean	SD	t-value	Description
Word Recognition	-.836	.739	-8.388	Significant
Comprehension	.121	.629	-14.357	Significant

Table 10 showed the t-test result on the use of Directed Reading-Thinking Activity on the reading level of the respondents. The result showed that there is a significant difference on the pretest and posttest scores of the respondents. This implies that after the use of DRTA strategy in teaching reading, respondents' reading level improved with the t-value -8.388 on word recognition and -14.357 on comprehension. The results conformed to the study of Sunarti and Fatma Mernawati (2022), Agustiani (2016), Satriani, et. al. (2022), Panjaitan and Siagan (2020) and Suico (2022) that DRTA is effective in improving the reading comprehension skills of the learners.

CONCLUSION

Based on the summary of findings, it is concluded that Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) improves the reading level of the respondents in terms of word recognition and comprehension among the grade VII learners of Mindanao State University-Maguindanao who underwent modular learning during pandemic.

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