

PHRASAL READING-BASED INTERVENTION: A PATHWAY TO IMPROVED ENGLISH LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR GRADE 6 LEARNERS

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Abstract :

Literacy improvement remains a priority of the Department of Education (DepEd), anchored on its flagship initiative, the *ARAL Program*, which seeks to ensure that every Filipino learner achieves grade-level reading proficiency. In support of this goal, this study investigated the effects of a phrasal reading enrichment program on the English performance of Grade 6 learners enrolled in the ARAL Program in Capas Central District, Schools Division of Tarlac Province. An experimental research design utilizing a pre-test and post-test approach was employed to measure learners' progress in three key areas: phonological processing, language comprehension, and reading speed and fluency. The intervention focused on developing learners' ability to read in meaningful phrases rather than word-by-word, thereby improving reading fluency and comprehension. Results revealed significant improvements in learners' post-test performance across all measured components compared to their pre-test results. Findings indicate that phrasal reading enrichment effectively enhances reading proficiency by strengthening decoding skills, comprehension, and fluency. Based on the results, the study recommends that teachers assess learners' comprehension levels using varied reading assessments to capture different dimensions of understanding. Such assessments will inform instructional planning and enable teachers to design targeted interventions aligned with learners' needs and the competencies required in national assessments.

Keywords: *Phrasal reading, Reading fluency, Literacy intervention*

INTRODUCTION

The "Every Child A Reader Program" is a comprehensive approach to improve literacy skills among Filipino children. The program is designed to provide support to teachers and parents in their efforts to enhance the reading, writing, and counting abilities of young learners. The program includes various initiatives such as the provision of quality learning materials, teacher training programs, and community-based activities that promote reading and writing. In addition, the DepEd also works closely with local government units, civil society organizations, and private sector partners to ensure that all children have access to quality education. Through these efforts, the Department aims to equip every child with the necessary literacy skills that will enable them to succeed in school and beyond.

To achieve this goal, the DepEd has implemented various programs and initiatives to improve the reading proficiency of learners. One such program is the National Reading Month, which is celebrated every November. During this month, schools conduct various activities and events that promote reading, such as book fairs, storytelling sessions, and reading challenges.

In addition to the National Reading Month, the DepEd also provides training for teachers on effective reading instruction strategies. This helps ensure that learners receive quality instruction that caters to their individual needs and learning styles.

Moreover, the DepEd has developed a comprehensive set of learning materials that are designed to enhance learners' reading skills. These materials include textbooks, workbooks, and supplementary reading materials that are aligned with the K to 12 Curriculum.

Through these initiatives, the DepEd endeavors to furnish learners with robust foundational reading competencies that will empower them to flourish academically and in their post-school pursuits.

The ability to read well is a fundamental aspect of success for students, not only in school but also in their personal and professional lives. An individual's inability to read proficiently can result in missed opportunities for growth and achievement. To promote literacy among learners, the Schools Division Office of Tarlac Province has launched the Reading Brigade initiative. The goal of this program is to evaluate the reading proficiency of students and provide assistance to those who need it. As part of this effort, a Division Memorandum was issued that encouraged schools to develop custom reading programs that include innovative strategies to aid students in improving their reading abilities.

It is believed that a student's true literacy skills are best demonstrated through their performance on actual reading and writing tasks, rather than standardized tests that compare their performance with others. This approach will be used throughout the Reading Brigade program. With this context in mind, a study will be conducted to assess the effectiveness of this initiative in promoting literacy among learners. By focusing on enhancing reading skills, the Reading Brigade aims to help students succeed both academically and professionally, ensuring they have access to all available opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success.

An Early Literacy Program that aims to teach learners how to read should encompass the six crucial elements known as "The Big Six". In order for learners to become proficient readers, they must be able to effectively utilize all six components in conjunction with one another. Thus, an integrated approach towards explicit reading instruction is vital in providing relevant learning experiences that are connected to other aspects of their education. While teachers may choose to emphasize individual

elements at different intervals, it's important to note that these skills aren't isolated and ought to be incorporated throughout various reading opportunities available during the day. For instance, while systematic phonics instruction is a significant component, on its own it's inadequate for achieving literacy proficiency.

Oral Language

Comprehension of written language is unattainable without an extensive lexicon and a grasp of linguistic frameworks, both of which are typically honed prior to formal education (Reese, Sparks & Leyva, 2010; Skeat et al., 2010). Consequently, spoken language serves as the bedrock for acquiring literacy skills and correlates with overall reading proficiency. As learners participate in progressively intricate dialogues within their environments, they:

- expand their vocabulary;
- increase the complexity of the language structures they use;
- become language risk-takers;
- develop confidence in the way they communicate;
- clarify their thinking and deepen their understanding of their world; and
- tune into the sounds of the standard language.

Phonological awareness

Phonological awareness pertains to the capacity to concentrate on speech sounds. It encompasses an understanding of melody, rhyme, phonemes, and syllables. Awareness typically commences with rhythm; for instance, children clapping out the beats in their name. The subsequent step involves rhyming: producing patterns like king, wing and sing demonstrates early phonemic awareness which is crucial in developing reading and spelling skills. It enables kids to recognize and focus on distinct sounds in words: phonemes. Next comes learning how to break down syllables into individual sounds and manipulating them to create different words. Letter-sound associations can then be introduced while simultaneously teaching phonemic and phonics abilities from that point onward.

Phonics

Phonics entails the recognition of the correlation between letters and sounds, which is commonly referred to as the "alphabetic principle." Presently, empirical evidence advocates for teaching early and struggling readers through a synthetic phonics approach (Johnson & Watson, 2003; Rose, 2006). This method teaches individual letters and frequent letter combinations in a discrete, systematic, and explicit manner. The sequence in which these elements are taught facilitates their integration into simple words so that children can immediately put their new skills into practice while developing automaticity and confidence. Additionally, research suggests that it is essential to reinforce these newfound abilities as soon as possible by having children listen to high-quality texts while also reading connected text themselves.

Vocabulary

When children possess a profound comprehension of a word, they are more inclined to competently read and comprehend its significance within a text. It is imperative for children to consistently augment their lexicon with words that can be comprehended and employed in context. The growth of one's vocabulary is the result of comprehensive understanding as well as an antecedent to it, given that word meanings constitute up to 70-90% of comprehension (Bromley, 2007).

The acquisition of vocabulary is primarily facilitated by continuous exposure to novel lexicons through various mediums, such as verbal exchanges, narrations, literary pieces and diverse forms of media (Senechal, 1997). The comprehension of new words within a meaningful context clarifies their connotations and enables learners to incorporate them effortlessly into their personal word reservoir. This form of indirect vocabulary enrichment proves especially efficacious for youngsters who commence schooling with an extensive and affluent vernacular repertoire. Conversely, children with limited vocabularies (Biemuller, 2009) and restricted access to literary works necessitate the explicit instruction on lexis acquisition (Beck & McKeown, 2007).

Fluency

Fluency is not solely measured by reading speed. Rather, it encompasses the art of transforming written words into spoken language with ease. It involves skillfully incorporating appropriate phrasing, expression, and pace to convey meaning accurately. Proficient readers possess a deep understanding of the text as they read. The key elements that contribute to fluency are precision in pronunciation, cadence and intonation, vocal projection and modulation. Notably, there exists a compelling link between fluency and comprehension abilities.

Even proficient readers may struggle with fluency when encountering technical or unfamiliar vocabulary in a text that exceeds their independent reading level. To achieve fluency, the text must align with the reader's skill level. For this reason, novice and struggling readers require simplified texts at their independent level to enhance speed and confidence. In times of pandemic, learners who receive modules beyond their current reading ability can develop appropriate expression, practice chunking and pausing techniques, and most importantly, build self-assurance through gradual progress. However, rapid reading without proper attention to punctuation marks, expression of emotions conveyed by written words or comprehension is not true fluency as it sacrifices understanding for pace.

Comprehension

Proficient readers comprehend the objective of their reading and adapt their reading strategies (perusing, glancing, or scrutinizing for particulars) in accordance with that goal. They acquire knowledge that texts manifest distinct appearances based on their specified purpose, context, and audience. Readers' comprehension of the attributes of various text genres enables them to derive significance.

Competent readers regulate their comprehension while perusing, amalgamating novel information with pre-existing knowledge and familiarity. They center on pertinent portions of the text to differentiate significant substance from trivial minutiae. They formulate and scrutinize prognostications, and assess content as they read. To achieve this feat, they acquire proficiency in altering their reading strategies, tempo, lexicon expertise, along with tactics for deciphering and grouping to comprehend the unfamiliar material.

Diamond (2006) posits that a successful reading program fosters reading proficiency in all students and is founded upon established methodologies. The design, execution, and longevity of impactful reading instruction relies heavily on three key elements: comprehensive professional development that endows educators with a sound foundation of knowledge; efficacious instructional resources that are congruent with said knowledge base; and educational systems that endorse and cultivate implementation. These components are explicitly articulated in the Framework for “Phrasal Reading Remediation Program” which mandates the involvement and backing of schools, communities, parents, and pupils alike.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to determine the Phrasal Reading-Based Intervention: A Pathway to Improved English Learning Outcomes for Grade 6 Learners in Capas Central District, Tarlac Province Division during the SY 2025-2026.

Specifically, it sought answer to the following sub-problems:

1. What is the reading level of the learners in a pretest in terms of:
 - a. Phonological deficiency;
 - b. Language comprehension; and,
 - c. Speed and fluency?
2. What is the reading level of the learners in post-test after undergoing the phrasal reading remediation in terms of:
 - a. Phonological deficiency;
 - b. Language comprehension; and,
 - c. Speed and fluency?
3. Is there a significant difference before and after the phrasal reading remediation given to the identified learners?
4. Based on the findings, what phrasal reading-based intervention can be proposed to improve the reading levels of the Grade 6 learners?

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the process to be done by the researcher in the collection of data and the statistical procedure for the interpretation of the data gathered.

Research Design

The researcher utilized an experimental research design that incorporated Pre-Test and Post Test methodologies to evaluate the phonological deficit, language comprehension, as well as speed and fluency in English among sixth-grade learners. Furthermore, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted with these learners to elicit their positive and negative experiences during phrasal reading remediation.

The utilization of experimental research allows for the evaluation of phonological deficits, language comprehension, speed, and fluency in Grade 6 learners who struggle with reading. The outcomes of the Post Test, coupled with interviews and focus group discussions with these learners, serve as decisive factors in determining whether there exists any significant difference in their reading levels. These results also inform the researcher's recommendation regarding which identified reading deficiency requires phrasal reading remediation to be most effective.

Sources of Data

The subjects of this study were the identified struggling Grade 6 learners of Capas Central District based on the Oral Reading Survey Test from the during the school year 2025-2026.

In addition, total population sampling can also increase the generalizability of the study findings. This is because the sample size is equal to the population size, making it easier to make inferences about the entire population. However, this technique may not be feasible or practical for populations with large sizes or limited resources. In such cases, other sampling techniques may be more appropriate. Overall, total population sampling can provide valuable insights and enhance the validity of research studies when used appropriately.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

In this research study, the conventional method of data collection was replaced by Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) alongside Oral Reading Survey Tests, online interviews and web-based survey questionnaires developed with Google Forms. The Grade 6 learner-respondents were utilized during the school year 2025-2026.

As far as data collection tools were concerned, the conduct of the research used an Oral Reading Survey Test to the Grade 6 learner-participants to identify the readers who will undergo reading remediation. Some comprehension questions were prepared, so as for the researcher to guide the interview towards the satisfaction of research objectives, but additional questions were encountered during the interviews.

Tools for Data Analysis

As for the Phrasal Reading Remediation, the collected data were analyzed by arithmetic mean (\bar{x}), standard deviation (S.D.) and z-test by using Microsoft Excel 2010. In order to evaluate the progress of identified readers, the researcher used arithmetic mean, standard deviation (S.D.) and z-test to compare the result of pretest and post-test. The mean (\bar{x}) was used to examine the performance of the identified readers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter delineates the gathered data, the interpretation and analysis of the findings, and the narrative explanation of the tabulated results providing answers to the problems presented earlier in Chapter 1.

Table 1. Pre-Test Reading Level of the Grade 6 Learners

Pre-Test	Phonological Deficiency		Language Comprehension		Speed and Fluency	
	F	p	f	p	f	p
Frustration	67	44.67	87	58.00	79	52.67
Instructional	83	55.33	63	42.00	71	47.33
Total	150	100	150	100	150	100

Table 1 illustrates that of the 150 learners surveyed, 67 or 44.67% were categorized as experiencing frustration in phonological deficiency, while 83 or 55.33% fell under the instructional level. In terms of Language Comprehension, it was observed that 87 or 58% demonstrated proficiency, whereas the remaining respondents (63 or 42%) required further instruction. Regarding Speed and Fluency, the majority (79 or 52.67%) displayed frustration levels while a minority (71 or 47.33%) were deemed to have an instructional level of skill in this area.

Table 2. Post-Test Reading Level of Grade 6 Learners

Post-Test	Phonological Deficiency		Language Comprehension		Speed and Fluency	
	F	p	f	p	f	p
Reading Level						
Frustration	23	15.33	32	21.33	21	14.00
Instructional	38	25.33	45	30.00	41	27.33
Independent	89	59.34	73	48.67	88	58.67
Total	150	100	150	100	150	100

Table 2 reveals the results of the Phonological Deficiency post-test, which aimed to assess students' reading abilities. Of those tested, 23 individuals (15.33%) demonstrated frustration level performance, 38 (25.33%) exhibited instructional level proficiency, and 89 (59.34%) achieved independent reader status. Similarly, in Language Comprehension testing, 32 students (21.33%) struggled at the frustration level while 45 (30%) performed at an instructional level; a majority of participants -73 individuals or 48.67%-successfully reached independent reader status in this domain as well. Finally, with respect to Speed and Fluency measurements, only a small proportion of test-takers -21 or 14%- encountered difficulties at the frustration level; whereas most scored within either an instructional range (41 individuals or 27.33%), or independently proficient category-88 people or approximately 58.67%.

Based on these findings, fluent reading can serve as a reliable measure of students' comprehension levels for comparison or diversification purposes. Additionally, this result suggests that fostering fluency in students will inadvertently help them develop stronger reading comprehension skills as well.

Significant Difference Before and After the Phrasal Reading Enrichment Given to the Grade 6 Learners

The analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) reveals that the velocity at which reading is performed after intervention is contingent upon the initial speed prior to the intervention ($F(1,61)=17.614$; $p<0.0001$; partial $\eta^2=22.4\%$). This indicates that post-test reading speed is the dependent variable. Upon controlling for other variables, it is evident from our findings that there exists a noteworthy difference in post-test reading speeds ($F(1,61)=6.338$; $p=0.014$; partial $\eta^2=9.4\%$).

The model exhibited an R^2 value of 41.6%, denoting that a considerable portion, specifically 41.6%, of the variance in post-test reading speed can be accounted for by pre-test reading speed within the cohort to which the subjects belonged. An R^2 value of 41.6% thus indicates that this study's analytical findings are deemed satisfactory.

The results of the learners' testing demonstrate that the dyslexic individuals scored notably lower on all other measures with the exception of the reading comprehension test, figure chains, sound deletion, and short-term memory span. In regards to word decoding, there was no significant difference in correct responses; however, the control group displayed a more favorable direction of difference between sample means. While dyslexic adults did not significantly differ from controls in their ability to judge items correctly, they made considerably more errors in this task. It is likely that there exists a trade-off between speed and error rate for dyslexics during this test; thus suggesting that they pay for their speed with a higher error rate. The effect sizes indicate that the largest single difference is found within word knowledge and proof-reading variables. However, it can be generally stated that phonological variables exhibit the largest effect sizes overall.

The tasks that impose significant demands on the participants' phonological processing system exhibit substantial group disparities, whereas the tasks involving moderate phonological abilities tend to have less discriminatory power between groups. The word knowledge task is anticipated to be highly sensitive as it necessitates both decoding and comprehension of words that are phonologically and orthographically confusable. It should be noted that effect sizes must only be utilized for inter-variable comparisons within the present sample since their absolute magnitude is also contingent on the original sample selection procedure.

In summary, the outcomes for the subgroup that participated in the testing session indicate that dyslexic individuals still exhibit deficiencies in rudimentary decoding and spelling proficiencies as well as phonological awareness and rapid naming. Moving on to the questionnaire data, which was completed by both dyslexic learners and normal readers, disparities were observed between groups with respect to reading volume. This contrast appears to be attributed to writing and reading in English; however, it is worth noting that there was no statistically significant difference between groups regarding their reading abilities. In terms of leisurely reading habits, there was no discrepancy found in terms of volume; nevertheless, non-disabled participants reported engaging more frequently with literature written in English.

The readers exhibited a marked preference for language-based subjects such as Literature, Writing and English during their academic pursuits. The effect size was particularly pronounced in the case of Literature. While there were no significant differences observed between groups on non-language academic subjects according to Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA), the univariate test yielded significant results.

The findings revealed that dyslexics exhibited markedly lower scores on nearly all measures of reading and phonological decoding. It is noteworthy, however, that the dyslexic group did not exhibit any significant differences from the control group in terms of reading comprehension, visual motor figure chain or SWS repetition task. The effect sizes indicated that the most pronounced difference was observed for the proof-reading variable followed by vocabulary. Success on both these tasks is thought to depend upon well-established and efficiently functioning orthographic representations and processes. Additional indications of poor orthographic skills were evident in results obtained for spelling, orthographic coding and word decoding tests; all of which are believed to place greater demands on readers than a normal reading situation would require - as evidenced by their normal performance on reading comprehension measures.

Summary

The study aims to ascertain the impact of phrasal reading remediation on the academic performance of Grade 6 learners enrolled in remedial reading classes in Capas Central District, during the period of better normal. The investigation centers around evaluating the learners' pre-test and post-test scores with regard to phonological insufficiency, language comprehension, as well as speed and fluency. Moreover, a critical analysis was conducted to compare the significant difference between pre-remediation and post-remediation test results for identified students who underwent phrasal reading intervention.

Conclusion

This study presented the possible impact of timed reading intervention on learners' reading speed and comprehension proficiency. The analyses unveiled significant alterations in both domains, attributed to the implementation of timed reading practices. Comparative analysis demonstrated that every participant exhibited marked improvements in their reading speed and fluency.

On the contrary, a notable contrast in descriptive analysis was observed, indicating a heightened level of comprehension among each learner. The outcomes illustrated that timed reading exercises had a constructive impact on the participants' reading velocity and understanding, which can inspire language instructors to incorporate fluency-based reading instruction and foster an affirmative transformation in learners' reading abilities. This research's findings are consistent with prior studies investigating the effects of timed reading interventions on learners' speed and comprehension levels. Despite their diverse natures, all known studies have established that timed reading intervention is beneficial for enhancing both speed and comprehension or at least without hampering comprehension. The advantages of timed reading practices were unequivocally demonstrated through this study.

The learners demonstrated substantial progress in both their reading speed and comprehension following the intervention. Upon reviewing revised language school instructions, a conspicuous absence of fluency-based activities was revealed, despite fluency being listed as an explicit lesson objective. While additional research is necessary to fully understand the effects of timed reading practices on reading speed and comprehension, it can be inferred that incorporating such practices into reading sessions can significantly enhance learners' fluency, particularly with regard to speed.

Further research on timed reading practices is needed to confirm and compare the findings of this study. In addition, exploring the impact of timed reading on other aspects of reading such as vocabulary acquisition and critical thinking skills can provide a more comprehensive understanding of its effectiveness in reading instruction. Moreover, it is important for teachers to consider individual differences among learners and adjust their instructional approach accordingly. Timed reading may not be suitable for all learners, and alternative strategies should be implemented for those who struggle with fluency. Overall, integrating timed reading practices in reading classrooms can be a valuable tool for improving reading fluency without sacrificing comprehension.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Understanding the varying levels of comprehension across different test types provides insight into distinct facets of reading comprehension. This knowledge can inform educators' instructional planning, tailored to meet the diverse needs of learners in the classroom and align with the requirements of Filipino national exams.
2. It is imperative to prioritize a thorough analysis of the results obtained from the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil. IRI) pretest in order to identify areas of weakness in the learners' reading abilities. These deficiencies must then be transformed into cohesive and effective teaching and learning lessons. Adequate support through remedial reading should be provided to those who struggle with slow reading skills.
3. Teachers can create reading exercises tailored to the learners' identified weaknesses in order to accomplish specific learning objectives.
4. Undertaking an investigation that delves into the optimal approaches to augment the bond between teachers in special and general education, with the aim of establishing uniformity in their methodologies when instructing learners with learning impairments across various settings, including resource rooms and traditional classrooms.
5. Undertaking a quantitative study aimed at exploring the efficacious reading tactics that seasoned special education instructors employ to enhance their pupils' comprehension of written material. Drawing upon the feedback provided by specialized educators in this present investigation, an exclusive questionnaire could be fashioned as a tool for gathering information from respondents. The pool of participants may encompass special education teachers from diverse states or various locales within a single state.
6. Replicating the present investigation while incorporating a more expansive sample size sourced from multiple regions could potentially bolster the findings of this study.
7. An additional qualitative inquiry delving into the research questions of this study through incorporation of supplementary data collection methods, such as observation, would be highly intriguing.
8. Despite being a widely recognized assessment technique for evaluating students' reading comprehension, one educator has adopted the use of Cloze procedure as a means of instructing her pupils in this area. As such, it is worth delving into further research regarding the viability of utilizing Cloze procedure as an effective strategy for enhancing reading comprehension skills.
9. Conducting additional research to explore the influence of learners' socioeconomic status on their prior knowledge and life experiences would be a compelling endeavor.
10. Undertaking additional research to examine the efficacy of implementing Fast Forward and Raze kids as tactics for enhancing reading comprehension among students with learning disabilities.
11. Conducting a study that explores the most effective methods that encourage students with learning disabilities to increase their reading practice outside the school setting.
12. It is strongly advised that further investigation be undertaken to assess the ramifications of implementing the suggested pedagogical resources in Reading across other educational institutions..

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