COLLABORATIVE READING PRACTICES OF TEACHERS AND DECODING SKILLS OF GRADE TWO LEARNERS

Apple Mae A. Salarda[1]

[1] *Student, Graduate School, The Rizal Memorial Colleges, Inc.*

ABSTRACT

This study sought to answer the level of the reading practices of teachers and the level of decoding skills of grade two learners. Further, it sought to determine the significant relationship between the collaborative reading practices of teachers and the decoding skills of grade two pupils. This study employed the non-experimental descriptive survey research design in investigating the research problem. It is descriptive because the data are presented in quantitative descriptions on the "Collaborative reading approach and Decoding skills of grade six pupils. According to Good (2005), this method of research shows merely a description of tasks presenting the conditions regarding the nature of the group of persons or class of events that involved the procedure of analysis, classification, and measurement. It involves varied information regarding the current or present condition (Deauna, 2005). This study was conducted in selected 10 schools of Matanao II district. The respondents in this study are 150 grade two learners and 30 grade two teachers. The respondents answered a researcher made assessment test on their oral and written communication skills. This study made use of the single random sampling procedure. This study revealed that teachers in reading are skilled in establishing and implementing a reading program to address the reading needs of struggling readers.

KEYWORDS: *Collaborative reading approach, Decoding skills, grade six pupils*

INTRODUCTION

People share their personal experiences and knowledge of a book to compare notes. It can also take on any form, from a cozy group meeting with friends to online discussion forums. The gist of the idea is to get thoughts interpretations, and reactions about a similar source of material. It even just seems more deeply enjoyable than watching sports in an arena like that reading with comrades who enjoy literature as much as you do.

While engaging in communal reading serves as a literary gathering where various viewpoints converge, distinctive voices also diverge. Whether congregating conversationally with coffee in hand or interfacing in an online interchange, collaborative reading cultivates a symbiotic space where diverse dreams and meditations emerge from a shared tale. Beyond a brief synopsis, blossoming interpretations bloom as thoughts unfold. United through the act of imaginative immersion yet individuals in inference, readers resonate in the revelry of reading while retaining unconventional perspectives.

Early literacy lays the groundwork for lifelong learning, enabling individuals to continually acquire new knowledge and skills. Those who lack this fundamental ability often face economic and social disadvantages. Globally, there are 774 million illiterate individuals, despite the 86% global literacy rate. Illiteracy remains one of the most pressing societal challenges of our time, with millions of children and adolescents struggling to read or never receiving the opportunity to learn. UNESCO estimated in 2022 that 258 million young people lack basic literacy skills, with one in four children in underdeveloped countries unable to read. Regions with the lowest rates of adult and child literacy include South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa (EnglishHelper, 2022).

There is a global reading crisis, and traditional brick and mortar approaches often come too late for many people and reach too few. Technology has a significant impact on our lives, offering speed and scale advantages that can be harnessed to address the reading challenges effectively (EnglishHelper, 2022)

The primary challenges facing reading comprehension in the Philippines include low reading proficiency among students, limited resources, socioeconomic factors, and a decrease in English proficiency. These difficulties have resulted in challenges related to vocabulary development, critical thinking skills, and understanding of reading materials. Moreover, struggling readers often encounter social issues, and existing reading programs require enhancements to meet the evolving needs of learners. Teaching strategies employed by teachers and students' interests in reading also significantly impact learning outcomes. Additionally, obstacles to reading comprehension encompass difficulties in comprehending texts and a lack of personalized discussions between teachers and students. To address these challenges, potential areas for improvement include promoting early literacy programs, investing in teacher training, creating culturally relevant and captivating reading materials, and adopting innovative strategies to improve comprehension skills.

However, learning to decode entails segmenting words based on their sound components and coherently combining sounds. To correctly recognize written words and decipher their meaning, one must possess both an understanding of the connections between letters and sounds and the capacity to use that knowledge. Reading requires the ability to decode. It enables children to sound out unfamiliar words and decipher the majority of words they have heard but never seen in print. The basis for all other reading teaching, including vocabulary, reading comprehension, and fluency, is the ability to decode.

Decoding skills are the solution to significant reading challenges faced by students. This report explores various methods through which decoding words can significantly enhance a student's reading comprehension. It also evaluates specific decoding strategies that teachers can apply in their classrooms to help students improve their understanding of texts. Furthermore, the report compares two teaching approaches: one that employs decoding strategies and another that uses a whole language approach, focusing solely on words within their context.

Decoding, also known as word identification, is the skill of translating printed words into speech, often by using knowledge of sound-symbol relationships or by sounding out unfamiliar words. Phonemic awareness and phonics are two essential components of decoding or word identification. Phonemic awareness involves recognizing that spoken words consist of individual sound units called phonemes.

Furthermore, by implementing cooperative learning, small teams with different levels of ability can use a variety of learning activities to improve their understanding of a certain subject. In addition, Richard and Rogers (2021) define collaborative learning as a group of systematic learning activity that depends on the information exchange between the learners in the groups in which each learner is given responsibility for his or her learning and is motivated to increase the learning of others. In other words, collaborative learning is a learning strategy that covers both individual and small group learning in a heterogeneous team, in its process, the learning activities are designed to improve the students' cooperation and independence in comprehending materials. Moreover, students are trained to learn activities because they should be involved in the learning activities. However, this learning strategy emphasizes the role of individual participation to determine group achievement in the learning process.

Collaborative learning in the classroom is intentionally designed by Klingner et al. (2022). Grouping diverse students heterogeneously exposes the students to a variety of ideas and perspectives, generates cognitive disequilibrium stimulating learning and creativity, and engages them in more elaborate thinking deepening their understanding. The strategies associated with collaborative learning such as role assignment, collaborative problem solving, and task and group processing all build the social skills that students need to be successful when working with others. Additionally, these skills are important in preparing students for the world of work, where collaborative working and problem solving are key elements of many careers.

In the Division of Davao Del Sur particularly in Matanao II District, the Government and the schools joined hand in hand to give quality education however, there are some hindrances to be considered disturbing in the learning of the

children. Among these are: absenteeism due to the house location which is too far from the school, and scarcity of food and water, another thing is that during the pandemic time, they were not allowed to go to school and were shifted to modular modality, wherein no one can even teach them at home because their parents also cannot read nor write. And because of this some of these students cannot read and even have difficulty sounding each letter to form a word. These students lacking in decoding skills. Thus, these learners are the focus of this study.

This study sought answers to the level of the reading practices of teachers and the level of decoding skills of grade two learners. Further, it sought to determine the significant relationship between the collaborative reading practices of teachers and the decoding skills of grade two pupils. Specifically, it seeks answers to the following sub-problems:
1. What is the level of collaborative reading practices of teachers in terms of:
    1.1 Reading competency assessment,
    1.2 Intervention Program,
    1.3 Monitoring and Evaluation
2. What is the level of decoding skill of grade two pupils?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the collaborative reading practices of teachers and the decoding skills of grade two learners?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design
This study employed the non-experimental descriptive survey research design in investigating the research problem. It is descriptive because the data are presented in quantitative descriptions on the "Collaborative reading practices and Decoding skills of grade six pupils. According to Good (2005), this method of research shows merely a description of tasks presenting the conditions regarding the nature of the group of persons or class of events that involved the procedure of analysis, classification, and measurement. It involves varied information regarding the current or present condition (Deauna, 2005).

Respondents and Sampling
This study was conducted in the 10 schools of the Matanao II district. The respondents in this study are 150 grade two learners and 30 grade two teachers. The respondents answered a researcher made assessment test on their oral and written communication skills. This study made use of the single random sampling procedure considering the enormous number of respondents.

Distribution of Respondents

Name of School	No of Respondent
Asbang Elementary School	10
Bangkal Elementary School	20
Buri Elementary School	15
Cabasagan Elementary School	15
Donganpekong Elementary School	15
Glot Towak Elementary School	15
M.H del Pilar Elementary School	10
Manga Elementary School	20
Saub Elementary School	15
TFS of Datalfitak	15
TOTAL	150

Research Instruments
This study utilized the researcher developed assessment test which items and indicators are focused on the collaborative reading practices of teachers and decoding skills of grade two learners. The respondents will give their responses on the items in the assessment test. To measure the validity and reliability of the test, a pilot test was conducted in a school that is not a part of the research using Cron Bach alpha.

To determine the level of collaborative reading practices of teachers, the following continuum is used:

Range of Means	Level	Description
4.30 – 5.00	Very High	When the collaborative reading practices of teachers are manifested all the time.
3.30 – 4.29	High	When the collaborative reading practices of teachers are frequently manifested.
2.30 - 3.29	Fair	When the collaborative reading practices of teachers are sometimes manifested.
1.30 – 2.29	Low	When the collaborative reading practices of teachers are rarely manifested.
0 – 1.29	Very Low	When the collaborative reading practices of teachers are never manifested.

Data Gathering Procedure
At the outset of the gathering procedure, the researcher drafted a letter signed by the Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Pablo F Busquit seeking for permission this research study to be conducted and will be sent to the Dr. Lorenzo Mendoza, CESO V, the Schools Division Superintendent in the division of Davao Del Sur.

While letters seeking permission were delivered to the DepED Schools Division Superintendent and principal concerned, the researcher constructed a questionnaire and had it validated by the experts preferably the experts of the study.

After permission had been granted, the study was conducted in the 10 schools of Matanao II District, and after the research questionnaire had been thoroughly examined by the expert validators, the researcher launched the questionnaire to the respondents. Responses of the respondents were submitted to the statistician for statistical computation after which the researcher made an analysis and interpretation on the data gathered.

Data Analysis
The following statistical tools are used in the analysis and interpretation of the responses in this study.
Mean was used to describe the extent of collaborative reading practices and the level of decoding skills of the grade six learners.
Pearson-r was used to determine the significant relationship between the collaborative reading practices of teachers and the decoding skills of the grade two learners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter displays the summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations drawn out by the researcher after the analysis and interpretation of the findings had been made.

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Conclusions

Based on the collective findings on this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

The collaborative reading practices of teachers in terms of Competency assessment is High, Intervention program is High, Monitoring and Evaluation are Very High. On the other hand, the decoding skills of grade two learners are at the Approaching Proficiency level, and there is a significant relationship between the reading collaborative practices of teachers and the decoding skills of grade two learners.

In the context of collaborative reading practices, the theory of Nation (2009) suggests that strategies such as systematic phonics instruction, explicit teaching of phonemic awareness, and repeated reading can be particularly beneficial. These strategies align with the collaborative learning environment fostered by teachers, where students engage in cooperative activities aimed at improving their understanding of reading materials. By incorporating collaborative reading practices into their instruction, teachers can provide students with opportunities to strengthen their phonological awareness, orthographic knowledge, and vocabulary through interactive discussions and shared reading experiences.

Therefore, the theory of Nation (2009) underscores the significance of collaborative reading practices as a means to enhance decoding skills among grade two learners. By integrating effective instructional strategies that target the foundational components of decoding, teachers can cultivate a supportive learning environment that promotes reading proficiency and fosters the development of essential literacy skills in their students.

The theory of Nation (2009), which underscores the multifaceted nature of decoding skill acquisition among grade two students, is closely connected to the findings of Gill (2011) regarding the benefits of collaborative reading practices for teachers. Nation's theory highlights that decoding proficiency is influenced by factors such as phonological awareness, orthographic knowledge, and vocabulary. These foundational skills are essential for students to effectively decode written language and comprehend text.

When we consider collaborative reading practices, the theory of Nation (2009) suggests that such practices can provide valuable opportunities for teachers to address these crucial components of decoding. Through collaborative reading sessions, teachers can engage students in activities that target phonological awareness by focusing on sound-symbol relationships, orthographic knowledge by exploring spelling patterns and word structures, and vocabulary through exposure to rich and varied texts. By incorporating these elements into collaborative reading activities, teachers can create a supportive learning environment that fosters the development of decoding skills among grade two students. Additionally, the findings of Gill (2011) highlight that collaborative reading practices offer numerous benefits for teachers, including opportunities for professional development, improved teaching practices, and enhanced teacher efficacy. By engaging in collaborative reading sessions, teachers have the chance to refine their instructional techniques, share best practices with colleagues, and reflect on their teaching strategies. This professional development aspect aligns with the theory of Nation (2009) by emphasizing the importance of effective instruction in promoting the acquisition of decoding skills among students.

In summary, the theory of Nation (2009) and the findings of Gill (2011) converge to underscore the significance of collaborative reading practices for teachers in facilitating the development of decoding skills among grade two students. By leveraging collaborative reading sessions to address the foundational components of decoding, teachers can enhance student learning outcomes while also benefiting from professional growth opportunities.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings drawn out by the researcher in this study, the following recommendations are offered:

It is recommended that teachers teaching reading should have chosen appropriate reading strategies to teach reading effectively to struggling readers. These best practices in teaching reading should be institutionalized in school or the district level to catch early learners with reading difficulty.

The school heads should have given support to the reading program developed by reading teachers. Materials support can be a very good assistance to the teachers so that the reading program will be implemented properly in school.

Students to actively engage in collaborative reading sessions facilitated by their teachers. Take advantage of the opportunities to interact with peers and discuss reading materials.

Parents to stay engaged with their child's education by communicating with their teachers about their progress and any specific areas where they may need additional support. By working together with educators and implementing collaborative reading practices at home, you can help your child develop strong decoding skills and become confident, proficient readers.

Brgy. Officials by actively supporting and promoting collaborative reading practices in local schools, barangay officials can contribute to improving literacy levels and enhancing educational outcomes for learners in the community.

For future researchers, it is strongly recommended that a relative study on the reading practices of teachers alongside other variables will be conducted.

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