

READING ACROSS LEVELS (READ AL) PROGRAM AND PROFICIENCY OF BANGSAMORO LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

The READ AL Module is a compilation of the essential components of reading lessons made and modified by the researcher to address the reading deficit of the pupils across levels in Mileb Elementary School. This module focuses on alphabet knowledge and phonics, vocabulary and word recognition, fluency, and comprehension. The study utilized the module as the main instrument to measure its efficacy in the reading proficiency of Bangsamoro learners of Mileb Elementary School who were diagnosed under frustration level in the Phil-IRI pretest. The design involved the experimental and control groups, which were carefully chosen through a random sampling procedure. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential tools such as mean, standard deviation, and t-test. The study simply conveys that there is substantial difference between the reading proficiency of the non-supplemented and treatment group in the posttest. The findings revealed that pupils in the experimental group improved their reading proficiency due to the intervention of the READ AL Module. This result clearly showed that the READ AL module's introduction, implementation, and application have offered a high quality and standard of effectiveness in teaching reading to early elementary grade pupils.

Keywords: Reading module, reading proficiency, reading comprehension, reading vocabulary, Bangsamoro learners.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Reading in 21st-century learners has become more difficult. If trying to compare learners' reading proficiency decades ago to learners today, they are far different. Before, learners could easily learn to read in the early stage from grade one onwards, but today, grades V and VI pupils still have difficulty in reading. Some could not recognize letters of the alphabet and their sounds. How much more difficult to comprehend the text? As a part of educational evolution, the researcher has keenly observed that learners nowadays are hooked more on technological amusement.

Children's most fundamental skill to be developed is reading. They read to learn, to participate in the environment of readers in the school, at home, in their everyday lives, and for enjoyment (Mullis et al., 2007). When they learn to read and grasp the meaning of every single word in their daily communication, the door of hope and eagerness opens for them to fully appreciate

the meaning of life. Meanwhile, results of the 2019 Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) showed that 27% of Filipino learners in grade 5 could only recognize single words, while only 10% developed enough reading skills to properly transition to high school. It is why, teachers of language subjects are worried and have been trying their best to give what they need, DepEd, SEAMEO, and UNICEF (2021). However, with this frustration level kind of pupils, it can be a hard task and a burden for teachers and pupils to go back to the basic learning of reading, such as introducing the letter sounds. Basic Education Assistance for Mindanao was an Australian Government program partnership with the Philippine government designed to cater to the islands of Mindanao, most likely in the provinces of Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. One of the learner-centered reading programs brought by BEAM in our locality was the Reading Across Levels (READ AL) Program, (BEAM-ARMM, 2017). This program could answer the call of the Ministry of Basic, Higher, and Technical Education in the BARMM region to focus on the Learning Recovery Program (LRP) to cope with the three-year gap in non-face-to-face classes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Mileb Elementary School, one of the alarming and perennial problems that caught the researcher's attention was the increasing number of non-readers and struggling readers (MES Guidance Office Report, 2020). The Philippines ranked 79th in PISA in reading, indicating a growing issue with the quality of elementary education. Despite various DepEd interventions, the problem persists, with 60.77 percent of elementary-grade pupils experiencing frustration levels in reading, according to the Phil-IRI results, (OECD, 2019).

With this problem, the researchers believed that with the advent of the READ AL Module, the pupils' reading proficiency can be improved and hopefully later reduce the number of pupils in the frustration level in the years to come. This study was prompted by the desire to improve pupils' reading proficiency to become fluent readers and reduce the numbers of frustration level and non-readers through the help of the Reading Across Levels (READ AL) Module, which was tested and proven in this study and its effect on the reading proficiency of the Bangsamoro learners.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The study identified the effect of the developed READ AL Module in teaching English to the pupils' reading proficiency. It answered the following inquiries:

1. What is the quality level of the READ AL Module in terms of content; organization; mechanics; and, overall package?
2. What is the level of pupils' reading proficiency of the control and experimental groups in the pretest and posttest in terms of alphabet knowledge and phonics; word recognition and vocabulary; fluency; and, comprehension?
3. Is there a significant difference in the reading proficiency level of the control and experimental groups in their pretest and posttest?
4. Is the quality of the READ AL Module contributing to the reading proficiency level of the pupils?

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

An experimental research design was used to test the pupils' reading proficiency achievement level. This research design is the process of conducting research in an objective and controlled fashion so that precision is maximized and specific conclusions can be drawn regarding a hypothesis statement (Bell, 2009). Two groups were used in this research. The first one (1) was the control group who underwent conventional teaching of reading. The other group was the experimental in which the newly developed READ AL module was employed. The descriptive-evaluative research design was also applied to validate the range of the module's attributes in its content, organization, mechanics, and overall package.

2.2 Respondents of the Study

The study subjects were 60 grade 5 and grade 6 pupils at Mileb Elementary School who were listed under the frustration level of their Phil-IRI pretest result. There were 30 pupils in the control group and another 30 in the experimental group. These pupils were chosen as subjects of the study to prepare them for the new educational horizons as they have experienced the inevitable transitions from elementary to secondary. Furthermore, five (5) expert validators were also considered respondents of the study where they evaluated the developed module for its validity and reliability in terms of content, organization, mechanics, and the overall package.

2.3 Locale of the Study

This research was implemented at Mileb Elementary School, particularly in Barangay Mileb, Rajah Buayan, Maguindanao del Sur. Mileb E/S is among the eleven (11) elementary schools in the municipality of Rajah Buayan. It has only one (1) section per grade level from Kindergarten to grade 6. Being a small school, it has only a population of 404 pupils, 8 regular permanent teachers, and 3 ISAL teachers as of the school year 2023-2024 based on the (LIS) Learner's Information System website of the school. Mileb ES is under the umbrella of Maguindanao del Sur Division, Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM).

2.4 Sampling Technique

A random sampling methodology was employed considering the identified pupils who belonged to the frustration level during the PHIL-IRI assessment test. The researcher used draw lots to divide the chosen respondents into two (2) groups. The researcher assigned the two groups as Group A and Group B. Group A and Group B were put in a bottle and then randomly picked. The first group to pick was the experimental group; the others were the control group. A sampling technique was employed to select a group of representatives from a pre-defined population to serve as study respondents in conformity with the research objectives (Sharma, 2017).

2.5 Research Instruments and Procedures

The researchers crafted a teacher-made test that experts checked. It comprised 65 items focusing on Alphabet Knowledge and Phonics, Word Recognition and Vocabulary, Reading Fluency, and Reading Comprehension. The teacher-made test items were piloted and went through item analysis. Forty-four (44) items remained after item analysis and these remaining items were utilized and administered to respondents during the pre-assessment and post-

assessment. The developed module was applied to the first 30 respondents and the conventional teaching method for the remaining 30 respondents. The same test was given to both groups during the pretest and posttest. The instrument used in evaluating the Read AL Module and the rating scales were adapted from the SKSU IMDC Evaluation Instrument for Instructional Materials (2022). To determine the level of achievement in both the experimental and control groups in their pretest and posttest, the standardized Classroom Assessment Tool or Rating System of the Department of Education under DepEd Order No. 8, series of 2015 was used and adapted.

2.6 Statistical Treatment

The data gathered was tabulated and analyzed using the appropriate statistical analysis to answer the specific problems of the study. A mean was applied in assessing the quality of the crafted READ AL module regarding content, organization, mechanics, and overall package. Also, the mean was used to evaluate the reading proficiency level of the pupils both in the pre-test and posttest. A t-test was employed to identify the substantial difference in the reading proficiency level of both groups in their pre-test and posttest.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Summary of Results on the Evaluation of READ AL Module as to content, organization, mechanics and the overall package.

INDICATORS	MEAN	VERBAL DESCRIPTION
Content	4.58	Very High Extent
Organization	4.54	Very High Extent
Mechanics	4.58	Very High Extent
Overall Package	4.52	Very High Extent
GRAND MEAN	4.55	VERY HIGH EXTENT

Table 1 signifies that the experts considered the READ AL Module useful with a rating of "Very High Extent," which is evident in the result of the grand mean of 4.55. It obtained 91% and above the quality expectations. The developed instructional material is excellent enough to cater to the needs of the pupils. It is manifested in the results that its objectives set were achieved. It is presented, simplified, understandable, and utilizes varied exercises for active learning and is appropriate learning material to the needs of the learners. According to Oni (1992), teaching resources are one of the teachers' learning achievement factors in organizing and providing better education.

Table 2. Level of Reading Proficiency of the Control and Experimental Groups in the Pretest

AREAS	CONTROL GROUP		EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	
	MEAN	VERBAL DESCRIPTION	MEAN	VERBAL DESCRIPTION
Alphabet Knowledge and Phonics	66	Did not meet expectations	67	Did not meet expectations
Vocabulary and Word Recognition	66	Did not meet expectations	65	Did not meet expectations

Fluency	66	Did not meet expectations	65	Did not meet expectations
Comprehension	65	Did not meet expectations	64	Did not meet expectations
GRAND MEAN	65.75	DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS	65.25	DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS

The result of the pupils' reading achievement regarding their pre-test is presented in Table 2. The control group has a grand mean of 65.75, and the experimental group has 65.25. It implies that both groups have almost equal levels of achievement before the conduct of the experiment. They both have the same level of learning regarding reading proficiency. The experimental and control groups did not meet expectations based on the result. The results conforms (DepEd Order No. 8, s. 2015) that teacher should monitor the pupil's learning status and adjust the implemented intervention. The Learners' activity outputs are evidence to trace the pupil's learning achievements, and their parents and guardians should be informed of their child's learning progress.

Table 3. Level of Reading Proficiency of the Control and Experimental Groups in the Posttest

AREAS	CONTROL GROUP		EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	
	MEAN	VERBAL DESCRIPTION	MEAN	VERBAL DESCRIPTION
Alphabet Knowledge and Phonics	69	Did not meet expectations	93	Outstanding
Vocabulary and Word Recognition	68	Did not meet expectations	88	Very Satisfactory
Fluency	68	Did not meet expectations	84	Satisfactory
Comprehension	66	Did not meet expectations	85	Very Satisfactory
GRAND MEAN	67.75	DID NOT MEET EXPECTATIONS	87.5	VERY SATISFACTORY

It can be gleaned that the experimental group gained a mean of 87.50, whereas the control group had 67.75. The results conveyed that the experimental group has achieved "Very Satisfactory" while the control group "failed to meet expectations." It inferred that the intervention group performed better in the posttest than the untreated group. It has also surpassed the previous result of their pre-test where both groups did not meet expectations as it is inclined in the Policy Guidelines on Classroom Assessment for the K to 12 Basic Education Program under DO 8, series of 2015 that states teachers should follow and check learning development of a pupil in order to adjust instructional approach. Classroom assessment is the basis for pupils, parents, and guardians' learning status. It is related to the idea of the National Education Psychological Service (2012), wherein various successful reading interventions in alphabet knowledge and phonics, word recognition, and vocabulary enrichment, including phonemic awareness, reading fluency, and application of various comprehension approaches, creative writing skills, and integration of independent reading, sufficient reading materials available and opportunities for both modelled and independent reading are effective in developing comprehension, Latorza & Ambayon, (2020).

Table 4. Analysis of Pretest Scores of Control Group and Experimental Group

Groups	n	Mean	SD	df	t-Computed	t-tabular	Interpretation
Control	30	11.07	3.14	58	0.47	1.68	Not Significant
Experimental	30	10.40	3.97				

*Not significant at 5% level

In the analysis of pre-test scores of the control and experimental groups, as reflected in this table, learners in the experimental group gained a pre-test result of (Mean = 10.40, SD = 3.97). In contrast, learners in the control group have pre-test results of (Mean = 11.07, SD = 3.14), $t(58) = 0.47$. This statistical result further signifies that before the experimentation started, both groups' proficiency was almost the same. The t-computed value (0.47) is less than the t-tabular value (1.68) at a .05 level of significance at 58 degrees of freedom. Perhaps, there is enough evidence to accept the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the reading proficiency of control and experimental groups in their pre-test. The results conform to the study of Ambayon (2020) who discusses how the use of modules as a medium for remedial reading instruction can enhance higher-order thinking skills and foster independent learning among students. He contrasts this approach with traditional teaching methods that rely solely on textbooks, suggesting that the latter is no longer sufficient to optimize learning outcomes and develop critical problem-solving skills.

Table 5. Analysis of Posttest Scores of Control Group and Experimental Group

Groups	n	Mean	SD	df	t-Computed	t-tabular	Interpretation
Control	30	15.03	3.21	58	2.79	1.68	Significant
Experimental	30	36.03	2.87				

$\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance

The table reveals that the mean score of the experimental group is (36.03), meaningfully greater than the control group's mean score (15.03). The t-computed value is (2.79), and the t-tabular value is (1.68) at a (.05) level of significance. Since the t-computed value (2.79) is barely higher than the t-tabular value (1.68) at a .05 level of significance. It implies that the experimental group achieved higher in the posttest than those in control group. Thus, after three months of utilizing the READ AL module, the pupils in the experimental group improved their reading proficiency, while the pupils in the control group engaged with the traditional teaching method showed very little improvement but still insignificant. According to Adeogun, (2021) teachers using various instructional devices are more successful and effective than teachers relying only on single and limited instructional material.

Table 6. Comparison of the Mean Gain Score of the Experimental and Control Groups.

Groups	n	Mean	SD	df	t-	t-	Interpretation
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					Computed	tabular	
Control	30	3.97	2.43	58	4.78	1.68	Significant
Experimental	30	25.63	2.50				

$\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance

The analysis of mean gain scores compares improvement between the control group under the non-supplemented teaching method and the treatment group subjected to the modular approach, READ AL Module. The analysis results show a significant difference between the two groups where the t-computed, 4.78, is larger than the t-tabular, 1.68, at a 0.05 significance level. The standard deviation of the experimental group is 2.50, while the control group is 2.43. That, the comparison of the mean gain scores of the treatment and the non-treated groups is greater than expected by chance. It implies that the difference between the means ($25.63 - 3.97 = 21.66$) of the experimental group and the control group is not only a mathematical difference but statistically substantial. These results signify that the modular approach, with the employment of the READ AL Module, effectively increased pupil's reading proficiency. Moreover, there is a great possibility that the READ AL Module is one of the attributes of modular teaching that affects the pupil's achievement in reading skills. Sejpal (2013) concluded in his study that the more we understand the concept of using the module in teaching our learners, the more we realize its effectiveness in dealing with learners with learning deficiencies.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

The researcher developed the READ AL module as a very high Extent as to its content, organization, mechanics, and overall package as thoroughly evaluated and validated by the panel of experts. The experimental group who utilized the READ AL Module achieved higher mean gain scores than the non-treated group who only taught with the traditional reading method. These findings were observed in the posttest scores of the intervention group, which were higher than the non-treated group. Notably, after all the lessons in the developed module had been taught and the reading intervention classes had been completed, both groups' improvement was monitored. It can be concluded that the pupils performed well in the class and showed more interest in reading after the presentation, integration, and distribution of the developed learning material, "The READ AL Module."

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations had been anchored from the findings and conclusions of the study.

1. The READ AL Module can be used by English language teachers in their reading intervention classes;
2. The developed module can be a learning resource in support of Project M-E-R-I-A-M: 5Bs Reading program in the Division of Maguindanao del Sur;
3. All language teachers may encourage themselves to produce similar learning materials that can surely help them in their teaching and learning activities in their field;

4. Training for language or reading teachers is highly recommended in order to discover other relevant and timely reading materials to improve the quality of instruction and achieve the slogan "No Child Left Behind";
5. Encourage both teachers and learners to enrich using any instructional materials available in their institution for effective and efficient learning to happen;
6. Future studies and related modules can be conducted on other topics in English that can enhance the teaching and learning style in reading.

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