



Received: 18-12-2023  
Accepted: 28-01-2024

## International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

ISSN: 2583-049X

### Reading Proficiency of Grade Two Learners Using Big Books with Historical Content

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62225/2583049X.2024.4.1.2316>

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#### Abstract

This experimental research entitled “Reading Proficiency of Grade Two Learners Using Big Books with Historical Content” is a scientific study on the reading proficiency of grade two learners in Banago Elementary School I when using Big Books with Historical Content during the teaching-learning process especially in reading. It mainly utilized mother tongue language, Hiligaynon, as medium of instruction. Forty (40) grade two learners who were equally distributed into two groups, the control group and experimental group with twenty (20) learners, made up the subject-respondents of the study. Data were collected through experimental procedure where the experimental group was exposed to the use of big books with historical content while the control group used the regular big books. Mean, Frequency and Percentage, T-test and Spearman rho were used as statistical tools.

Based on the scientific results of this study, a proposed reading enhancement program was crafted to further enhance reading performance of learners benefiting the implementers, teachers, and learners of the program. Findings of the study recommends on the use of big books with historical content to improve reading proficiency levels of primary learners when using Hiligaynon as medium of instruction in assessments and reading remediation. Results further suggested the development of additional localized and indigenized big books with historical content as well as big books across disciplines as supplementary learning materials in the delivery of instruction in Elementary Social Studies and reading remediation in Hiligaynon for Key Stage 1. Implementation of the proposed program in school and division level will be beneficial to the stakeholders, administrators, teachers, and learners in the primary level.

**Keywords:** Reading Proficiency, Big Books, Historical Content

#### 1. Introduction

Reading is a gateway to learning various disciplines. It is essential to children to improve education, social and cognitive development, well-being, and mental health. (Collier, 2019) <sup>[1]</sup>. However, present circumstances brought by the two-year COVID-19 pandemic affected the reading proficiency and stalled the reading growth of learners (Spector, 2021).

The grade two learners were unable to attend face-to-face instruction during their kinder to grade one levels. The mode of instruction was a mixture of the alternative delivery modalities: Modular print, Radio-based instruction, and blended learning so there was no in-depth teacher to learner reading sessions and remediation. For this reason, the current grade two learners' reading level is below average which means, they do not meet the grade level reading standards (Soland *et al.*, 2022).

Furthermore, the previous year's reading assessment results showed that only 25.93% grade one learners and 37.55% grade two learners in the Schools Division of Bacolod City are grade ready and are proficient readers. According to Gatchalian, chairman of senate committee on education, even before the pandemic, Filipino learners were already struggling in keeping up with the minimum required reading proficiency. It is high time to address the problem, particularly in the propagation and enrichment of literacy education. Such problems cannot be ignored since, without literacy, all other learning is impossible (Joelippo, 2012).

Reading in English is one of the many options; however, using Mother-Tongue will positively affect test-taking performance, whether in Mathematics, Science, or Reading (Luz, 2022).

Along with this premise, the researcher intends to determine the reading proficiency of Grade Two learners using Big Books with Historical Content. Results of this scientific investigation shall serve as feedback, gauge for assessment, and basis for

crafting Reading Enhancement Programs, Projects, and Activities with emphasis on Local History and Culture as taught in Grade Two Araling Panlipunan: Ang Aking Komunidad, Ngayon at Noon so teachers and DepEd officials can provide the needed assistance to learners, specifically in literacy education.

### 1.1 Research questions

The purpose of the study was to determine the reading proficiency of grade two learners using big books with historical content in Banago Elementary School I as basis for an enhancement plan for School Year 2022-2023.

The following questions were especially addressed by this research:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of the following variables?
  - a) Sex
  - b) Average Monthly Family Income
  - c) Parents' Highest Educational Attainment
2. What is the reading proficiency level of Grade Two learners during the pre-test of control and experimental group when grouped according to the aforementioned variables?
3. What is the reading proficiency level of Grade Two learners during the post-test of control and experimental group when grouped according to the aforementioned variables?
4. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test of control and experimental group?
5. Is there a significant relationship between the pre-test and post-test of control and experimental group?
6. What Programs/Projects/Activities can be crafted to improve the Reading Program with an emphasis on local history and culture?

### 2. Literature review

Reading is a gateway to learn various disciplines. It is a skill that makes a huge difference in learners' performance in school. Reading is essential to children for it improves education, social and cognitive development, well-being, and mental health. With these benefits, reading can be considered a life skill, which entails that good readers not only perform better in reading assessments but also increase broader vocabulary, knowledge and develop an understanding of other cultures (Collier, 2019)<sup>[1]</sup>.

Based on the study of Tolentino, 2018 on "Reading skills in relation to pupils' performance: An assessment" there is no significant relationship between proficiency level of grade 7 learners in phrasing, fluency, and pronunciation and their academic performance. After conducting the study, the researchers recommended to have an educative session for learners to improve their fluency as it has the lower proficiency level on the results of learners (Tolentino, 2018).

However, Ismail and Karim (2019) examined gender, socioeconomic status (SES), and ethnicity as predictors of ESL learners' reading age and determinants of ESL learners' reading comprehension. The findings suggested that gender and SES were not substantial predictors of learners' reading age; however, ethnicity was influential in this regard.

Furthermore, Thomas, Hopwood, and Hatisaru (2022)<sup>[2]</sup> highlighted links between writing development (Thomas, 2020) and reading development, in that male

students appear to find the transition from primary to secondary school particularly challenging. It was found out that on average, males outperform females in numeracy and females outperform males in literacy (i.e. reading and writing) tests, it also shows that the gaps are not equal. The literacy gaps are considerably wider, particularly for writing. Female literacy performance does not appear to be affected in the transition from primary to secondary school, while many more males struggle to meet the increased literacy demands of the secondary years (Christie & Derewianka, 2008).

Aranda (2023)<sup>[3]</sup> determined the effects of parental engagement and nurturance on the reading performance of intermediate pupils. They were described in terms of their age, sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, monthly family income and parents' educational attainment. Sex, sibling position, number of children in the family, monthly family income, father's educational attainment and mother's educational attainment are not significant on the effects of parental engagement and nurturance on the reading performance of pupils. However, when grouped by mother's educational attainment with respect to comprehension is significant. Pupils have a satisfactory reading performance as revealed by the results of their Reading test.

Results on the study of Dariagan and Laureto (2022)<sup>[4]</sup> also stated that the higher the monthly family income the higher the tendency of a student to have the skills in reading. This may be due to the availability of reading resources and exposure to technology which help develop their interest and reading skills. The results imply that the higher the educational attainment of parents, the higher is the chance of a student to have the needed reading skill. This may be because of the encouragement of the parents to value education and setting as an example to their children. Also, students may be challenged to perform well because of their parents' expectations.

The study was further supported by Magtagad, Gimarangan, and Abellar (2019)<sup>[5]</sup>, that the highest educational attainment of parents of the educational grantees in mother side is elementary level with 37.21 percent, Followed by High School Graduates with 32.56 percent. High school undergraduate with 18.60%, college undergraduate has 2.33 % while nobody from the mother side graduated from college. The highest educational attainment of the fathers of the educational grantees is elementary level with 32.56%, followed with High School Graduates with 25.58 % respectively. Approximately 21% were high school undergraduate while 12 % obtained elementary education. Only two out of 43 or 4.65 obtained college level and college undergraduate respectively. Majority of the respondents' parents, both mother and father have only attained elementary level of education. Parents have a big role in forming the behavior of their children and to their performance in school.

Moreover, Nurani and Mahendra (2019)<sup>[6]</sup> studies the use of big book learning media to improve students' beginning reading skills. In their study, results showed that by using big book learning media, the students learned to read through a series of letters. Students were also able to improve and learn to read through images. In conclusion, big books learning media can be utilized to improve learners beginning reading skills.

Landas (2020) studied the effects of localized lesson plan on the performance of students in a certain subject area. He compared the results of using localized lesson plans and ready-made lesson plans. The findings stated that there was an increase in level of performance of learners when using localized lesson plans. The academic performance of learners, specifically the grade six students increased or improved three times from its pre test. The results of this study also showed that there was an increase in the interest and level of performance of learners after using localized lesson plans.

### 3. Research methodology

This study aimed to determine the reading proficiency of grade two learners using big books with historical content thus, the experimental method of research was used for this study.

#### 3.1 Participants

The grade two learners, composed of two groups with twenty (20) learners for the experimental and twenty (20) learners for control group had a total of forty (40) respondents. The learners were officially enrolled during School Year 2022-2023 at Banago Elementary School 1 and were the subjects and respondents of the study. The learners were divided into two groups, of which, their reading proficiency level and profile including sex and grade one general average during School Year 2021-2022 were matched.

#### 3.2 Instruments of the study

To gather data on the reading proficiency of Grade Two learners, the researcher made use of the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment tool, a standardized tool from the Department of Education. The tool was comprised three different parts: The schools' profile, the learner's profile, and the reading assessment scoresheet. The school's profile consists the school ID, name of the school, language used, name of teacher, class enrollment, number of students assessed, grade and section. The learner's profile consists of their name, sex, date the learners were assessed and the modality used in assessing the learner. The reading assessment scoresheet was comprised by the Task 1 Score, Task 2 (Words) Score, and Task 2 (Sentences) Score, total score, reading profile and remarks. The CRLA Tool was used in all DepEd Public Schools in the region to measure the learners' reading proficiency in Mother-Tongue, Filipino, and English.

The reading material used for assessing was derived from both the big books with historical content and regular big books which used Mother-Tongue as medium of instruction. It consists of two sentences to pre-assess the number of correct words read by the learners, twenty (20) words for moderate refresher to proceed into, and another two sentences with 10 words to assess Light Refresher and Grade Ready learners.

The big books with historical content were large-print learning materials developed by the Social Studies Department and were utilized in the assessment of reading proficiency level of the Grade Two learners. The big books used were entitled: Pinasahi nga Pantalan, Amazing Grace, Sitio Calaparan, and Amazing Grace. These Big Books with Historical Content were checked, undergone quality assurance, and were approved by the Division Education

Program Supervisor in Social Studies and the Division Level Quality Assurance Team.

#### 3.3 Procedures

The experimental procedure were carried out into three phases. The pre-intervention phase, intervention phase, and post-intervention phase.

**Pre-Intervention Phase:** Before conducting the pre-test, the participants were distributed in two groups, wherein their End of School Year (EoS) reading profile for S.Y. 2021-2022 and Beginning of School Year 2022-2023 (BoSY) reading profile, general average grade for S.Y. 2021-2022, and sex were considered and matched. The researcher assessed both groups to determine their pre-test results using the CRLA tool. The researcher used the same classroom for the two groups. The time frame in conducting the assessment was three hours for the control and the experimental group. The control group was assessed first, followed by the experimental group.

**Intervention Phase:** The researcher taught the same topics and had remedial reading sessions. The experimental group were exposed to the use of Big Books with Historical Content while the control group had their lesson and reading sessions using the Regular Big Books already available in school.

**Post-Intervention Phase:** After twenty days, a post test was conducted for both groups using the same assessment tool utilized during the pre-test.

#### 3.4 Ethical Considerations

The following moral standards were established for the research period:

1. The wellbeing and dignity of the students were always upheld.
2. The researcher acquired the students' consent to use their true identities in the research report, and the research data were kept private throughout the study.

#### 4. Results

Based on the foregoing data of this research study, the findings were as follows:

1. The learners under control group were divided equally with 50% female and 50% male learners each group. Half or 50% of the respondents belong to households with an average monthly family income of 10,000 to 19,999 PhP. Most learners were raised by parents who are high school undergraduates, 55% high school level mothers and 45% high school level fathers.
2. The learners under experimental group were divided equally with 50% female and 50% male learners each group. Majority of the respondents at 55% belong to households with an average monthly family income of 10,001 to 19,999 PhP. Most have parents who graduated high school in mothers' side at 65% and are high school undergraduates in their father's side at 45%.
3. For control group, an overall mean score of the group was 13.9 (full refresher) in terms of sex. A mean score of 15.35 interpreted as Moderate refresher when grouped according to average monthly family income. The average mean score in terms of parents' highest educational attainment of their mother and father is 14.1 interpreted as full refresher, and 15.57 interpreted as moderate refresher, respectively. For experimental

- group, an overall mean score of the group was 14.9 (full refresher) in terms of sex. A mean score of 15.02 interpreted as Moderate refresher when grouped according to average monthly family income. And mean score in terms of parents' highest educational attainment of their mother and father are 11.42 interpreted as full refresher, and 14.92 interpreted as moderate refresher, respectively.
4. The reading proficiency level of the Grade Two learners between the pre-test of control and experimental group has a mean score of 15.05 for the control group while the mean score of the experimental group is 14.90, and were both interpreted as moderate refresher to light refresher. The reading proficiency level of the Grade Two learners between the post test of control and experimental group has a mean score of 16.70 for the control group while the mean score of the experimental group is 17.80.
  5. The computed value of significant difference in the pre-test of both groups was 0.099 while the t-value was 0.921. The decision is to accept the hypothesis which was interpreted as not significant at 0.05 level of significance. While the computed value for significant difference between the post-test of both groups was 2.711 while the t-value was 0.108. The decision is to accept the hypothesis which was interpreted as not significant at 0.05 level of significance.
  6. There was a significant relationship between the pre-test and post-test scores of the control group. With the r-value of 0.662; p-value of 0.001, the result showed that the significant correlation of the pre-test and post-test results when using regular big books. There was also a significant relationship between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group. With the r-value of 0.448; p-value of 0.047, the result showed that the significant correlation of the pre-test and post-test results when using big books with historical content.

## 5. Discussion

The research's principal goal is to determine the reading proficiency level of grade two learners using big books with historical content. Thus, this analysis used the experimental method of approach to compare the respondents' reading level in terms of their sex, average family income, and the parents highest educational attainment.

The study also determined that using big books with historical content improved the learners' reading proficiency level. Specifically, it established a development in their reading readiness and their ability to decode words when reading.

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the study conducted, the researcher concluded the following ideas:

1. Female learners outperformed male and has higher reading proficiency level. Most learners belong to families who earn an average monthly family income of 10,001 to 19,999 PhP monthly. Majority of the learners' parents were able to study in high school and graduate. Learners came from different demographics.
2. The reading proficiency level of learners is influenced by the parents' educational attainment and the families average monthly income.

3. The number of Grade Ready learners under big books with historical content is higher by compared to the number of Grade Ready learners under regular big books. Using big books with historical content positively influenced the learner's reading proficiency level.
4. The number of Full Refresher and Moderate Refresher decreased after utilizing big books with historical content. These materials relatively improved the proficiency level of full and moderate refreshers.
5. The reading proficiency level of grade two learners improved from its pre-test.
6. The reading proficiency level of grade two learners is higher when using big books with historical content than using regular big books.

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