



EFFECTS OF PHRASAL READING ENHANCEMENT TO THE PERFORMANCE OF ELEMENTARY LEARNERS IN ENGLISH

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Abstract : This study focused on the Phrasal Reading Enrichment Program of elementary learners in Urdaneta City Division during the school year 2023-2024 and used it as a basis in identifying reading deficiency and formulating a plan of action to which the phrasal reading remediation most effective. It considered the reading level of the learners in a pretest in terms of Phonological deficiency, Language comprehension and, Speed and fluency. Likewise, this study took scope on the reading level of the students in post-test after undergoing the phrasal reading remediation. It delimits that the study may not be generalized to other populations or youth who are not attending the school. Since the study focused on the current learning curriculum and exclusively for the students under Urdaneta City Division anyone who is not taking the curriculum or attending the school is not allowed to participate in the research. This study considered only elementary learners in Urdaneta City Division. This may have an effect on the generalizability of the research and its findings. However, its findings, at least some segment and degree may still hold true to other schools having similar qualities or adhering to the same curricula of the studies of Urdaneta City Division.

Keywords: Phrasal Reading, Performance

INTRODUCTION

Literacy is one of the most fundamental skills a child can learn. Beyond its conventional concept as a set of reading, writing and counting skills, literacy is now understood as a means of identification, understanding, interpretation, creation, and communication in an increasingly digital, text-mediated, information-rich and fast-changing world. Reading is the foundation for all academic learning. Learning to read, write and count is crucial to a child's success in school and in later life. Literacy improvement is one of the priorities of the Department of Education (DepEd). It is anchored on the flagship program of the Department: "Every Child A Reader Program," which aims to make every Filipino child a reader and a writer at his/her grade level.

In support of the implementation of the K to 12 Basic Education Program, the Department of Education (DepEd) is continuously fulfilling its mandate to produce productive and responsible citizens equipped with essential competencies and skills for lifelong learning. To make every learner a proficient reader, schools across the country are tasked to help learners develop their reading skills.

Reading is a cornerstone of a learner's success in school and, indeed, throughout life. Without the ability to read well, opportunities for personal fulfillment and job success inevitably will be lost. In order to enhance the reading skill of every learner, Schools Division Office of Pangasinan has initiated the Reading Brigade with the aim of assessing the reading ability of the learners and aiding them in their reading scantiness. In particular, the Division Memorandum No. 285 series of 2020 enjoined schools to come up with a reading program including strategies and innovation in aid of improving the reading abilities of the students. The underlying assumption is that an approximation of a student's literacy abilities is best shown through his/her performance in actual reading and writing tasks. This is in contrast to formal reading tests that are standardized and often conducted for the purpose of comparing a student's performance with that of others (Weaver, 2014). It is in this context that this study will be conducted.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to determine the effects of phrasal reading enrichment to the performance of the elementary learners in their remedial reading classes in Urdaneta City Division.

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?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The researcher used experimental research design employing Pre-Test and Post-Test to assess the phonological deficiency, language comprehension and speed and fluency in English of the elementary learners. Moreover, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted to the learners asking the positive and negative experiences they have encountered during the phrasal reading remediation.

The use of experimental of research enables the research to assess the Grade 6 learners struggling readers of Urdaneta City Division in terms of their phonological deficiency, language comprehension and speed and fluency. The result of the Post-Test including interview/ FGD with the learners served as a determining factor whether if there is a significance difference in their reading level and serve as now the recommendation of the researcher in which of the identified reading deficiency is the phrasal reading remediation most effective.

Sources of Data

The subjects of this study were the identified struggling elementary learners of Urdaneta City Division based on the Oral Reading Survey Test from the during the school year 2023-2024.

Total population sampling was applied in the conduct of the study. It is a type of purposive sampling technique that involves examining the entire population that have a particular set of characteristics (e.g., specific attributes/traits, experience, knowledge, skills, exposure to an event, etc.). Since total population sampling involves all members within the population of interest, it is possible to get deep insights into the phenomenon you are interested in. With such wide coverage of the population of interest, there is also a reduced risk of missing potential insights from members that are not included.

Instrumentation and Data Collection

For the purposes of this research study, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) through Oral Reading Survey Test, online interviews and web-based survey questionnaires made with Google Forms were utilized due to the covid-19 pandemic which made the traditional data collection method to be discontinued. This research made use of elementary learner-respondents from Urdaneta City Division during the school year 2023-2024.

As far as data collection tools were concerned, the conduct of the research used an Oral Reading Survey Test to the elementary 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 Students

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

It can be seen in Table 1 that out of 150 learners who served as respondents, there were 67 or 44.67% who belong to frustration level, 83 or 55.33% were under instructional level in phonological deficiency. For the Language Comprehension, it is noticeable that there were 87 or 58% while 63 or 42% belong to instructional level. For Speed and Fluency, 79 or 52.67% were under Frustration level and the remaining 71 or 47.33% belong to instructional level.

One of the most important findings in the area of developmental reading research is that it has demonstrated a relation between deficits in phonological processing and reading failure in a large number of otherwise normally developing learners. Phonological processing involves various linguistic operations that make use of information about the speech sound (i.e., phonological) structure of the language. As mentioned earlier, this ability appears to be largely independent of general cognitive ability, but highly related to reading development. The various aspects of language processing that have been examined and where a relation has been found between phonological processing and reading achievement include; the explicit awareness of the phonological structure of the language, the encoding of phonological information in long-term memory, the retrieval of phonological information from long-term memory, the use of speech sound information in short-term memory, the production of speech.

Reading failure thus seems to be associated with both a metaphonological ability, and several other subtle phonological abilities. Whether these subtle phonological abilities are closely interrelated or represent distinct cognitive abilities still needs more careful examination, but a growing number of studies point to a general phonological deficit. This general phonological deficit has been attributed to weak phonological representations and generated the phonological representation hypothesis. Theoretically it seems plausible that efficient storing in long-term memory, resulting in 'high-quality' phonological representations, improves accuracy and speed of retrieval, and speed of retrieval in turn influences how automatically and accurately this information can be coded in working memory. Further, well specified phonological representations might facilitate the development of explicit awareness of this information.

Table 2
Post-Test Reading Level of Elementary Learners

Post-Test	Phonological Deficiency		Language Comprehension		Speed and Fluency	
	F	p	f	p	f	p
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

It is reflected in Table 2 that in post-test conducted in Phonological Deficiency, to determine the reading level of the students, there were 23 or 15.33% who belong to frustration level, 38 or 25.33 under instructional level and 89 or 59.34% became independent readers. On Language Comprehension, 32 or 21.33% belong to frustration level, 45 or 30% were under instructional level, and 73 or 48.67 became independent readers. For the Speed and Fluency, 21 or 14% belong to frustration, 41 or 27.33% were under instructional level, and 88 or 58.67% were under independent level.

It was found that the relationship between the speed of reading and especially in-depth meaning linking was low. However, the literature clearly indicates that one of the specific characteristics for competency in reading is reading the text at an appropriate speed. One could speculate from this finding that it is necessary to reach a reading speed parallel to speaking speed; readers who reach this speed cannot be thought as comprehending faster; even speed reading may influence comprehension negatively and students who read slowly may have problem in comprehending.

A significant relationship was found between prosody skill and generally comprehension, especially in-depth meaning linking. Baştuğ (2012) also determined that prosody was the most significant one both on the comprehension and writing skills. It can be said that prosody is the better predictor of reading comprehension in all of the reading skills. Accurate reading is especially has an effect on both memory and recognizing skills. LaBerge and Samuels's ideas also confirm this finding.

According to the results of the study, fluent reading can be used while measuring the students' reading comprehension, comparing their measurement results or in diversifying the measures. This result can also be interpreted that by helping students to acquire fluent reading skills, you also help them to develop skills regarding reading comprehension.

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

The ANCOVA shows that post-test reading speed after intervention is dependent on the pre-test reading speed ($F(1.61)=17.614$; $p<0.0001$; partial $\eta^2 =22.4\%$), which shows that the dependent variable is post-test reading speed. After controlling the variables, the results show that there is a significant difference in post-test reading speeds ($F(1.61) =6.338$; $p=0.014$; partial $\eta^2=9.4\%$).

The model had an R^2 of 41.6%, indicating that 41.6% of the variation in the post-test reading speed is explained by the pre-test reading speed to the group in which the participants were included. R^2 of 41.6% shows that the implications of the analyses for this study are acceptable.

The results from the learners testing show that the dyslexics scored significantly lower on all the other measures except on the reading comprehension test, the figure chains, sound deletion and on the short term memory span. In the word decoding task the number of correct did not differ significantly, but the direction of the difference between the sample means is in favor of the control group. Although the dyslexic adults did not differ significantly from the controls in the number of items judged correctly, they made significantly more errors in this task. It is likely that there is a trade-off between the errors and speed in this test and a plausible interpretation is that in some sense the dyslexics pay for their speed with a higher error rate. The effect sizes indicate that the largest single difference is found for word knowledge and for the proof reading variable. However, in more general terms it can be said that the largest effect sizes are found for the phonological variables.

The tasks placing high demands on the participants' phonological processing system showed large group differences and the tasks involving more moderate demands on phonological skills tended to discriminate less well between groups. The word knowledge task could be expected to be very sensitive since the task involves both decoding and knowledge of phonologically, and hence also orthographically, confusable words. The effect sizes should only be used in comparisons between the different variables in the present sample because the absolute size of an effect is also dependent on the procedure in the original sample selection.

To summarize, the results for the sub-sample that took part in the testing session showed that the dyslexics still have deficits in low level decoding and spelling skills as well as in phonological awareness and rapid naming. We now turn to the data from the questionnaire, which was answered by learners dyslexics and normal readers. Group differences were found for amount of reading, a difference that seems to be due to writing and reading in English but the difference in reading was not statistically significant. For leisure time reading there was no difference in amount of reading but the non-disabled reported more reading in English.

The readers reported significantly higher preferences for the language subjects in school; Literature, writing and English. The size of the effect was remarkably large for the rating of Literature. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) showed no significant differences between groups on the non-language academic subjects but the univariate test was significant.

Results showed that dyslexics scored significantly lower on almost all reading and phonological decoding measures. Noteworthy is that the dyslexics did not differ from the controls in reading comprehension, visual motor figure chain, or the SWS repetition task. The effects sizes indicated that the largest difference was found for the proof reading variable followed by the vocabulary variable. Success on both these tasks is believed to rely on well-established and effectively functioning orthographic representations and processes. Further indications for poor orthographic skill are the results on spelling, orthographic coding, and word decoding. All these tasks can be assumed to put higher demands on the reader than would a normal reading situation, indicated by the normal performance on reading comprehension.

However, also the tasks that more directly try to measure phonological processing skill differentiated between the two groups. The phonological decoding tasks involved digit naming speed, initial phoneme analysis, phonological coding, and sound deletion. Only sound deletion did not differentiate between groups, perhaps due to inclusion of more high frequent words than in the initial phoneme analysis. This interpretation is however not obvious since it implies that the task was easy and the performance in the two groups should then perhaps reached ceiling levels. Since not both tasks of phonological awareness differentiated between groups no simple conclusion can be drawn regarding differences in phonological awareness.

Results demonstrated that dyslexics' poor reading was not revealed through a simple reading comprehension test but very clearly in almost any reading task that puts high demands on exact and efficient orthographic and phonological processing. When analyzing the results on sine wave speech repetition it turned out that one dyslexic scored extremely well on the sine wave measure compared to both the other dyslexics and controls, especially on the words with one syllable. This participant had the highest score for monosyllabic words, $z = 2.5$ from the dyslexic mean, and the second highest score overall for all participants when summarizing the different scores on sine wave speech repetition and was therefore treated as an outlier and not included in the analysis. Zero scores were obtained by four dyslexics and two controls for monosyllabic words, none in any group for disyllabic words, and by two dyslexics and one control for the sentence. When omitting the outlier in the dyslexic group it can be seen that there was a significant difference between groups on monosyllabic words, $t(20) = 2.17$, $p < .05$, but not for disyllabic words or the sentence.

There were differences in means between groups also for disyllabic words and the sentence but these differences were far from statistically significant. If we would have included the dyslexic outlier the statistically significant difference between groups on monosyllabic words disappeared, $t(20) = 1.06$, $p = .30$, but the pattern of results still holds: group differences decreased with increasing suprasegmental information in the stimulus and the marked difference between groups was for monosyllabic words. Because the order of the three different kinds of stimuli was not manipulated, that is, monosyllabic words, disyllabic words, and the sentence were presented in the same mixed order for all participants we could not use stimulus type as a factor to perform a repeated measures ANOVA.

The results of this study indicate that performance on tasks of speech repetition in dyslexia is dependent on the amount of suprasegmental cues in speech. Dyslexics were outperformed by controls when listening to and repeating monosyllabic words but not when the stimuli contained disyllabic words or a sentence. These results are consistent with the idea that dyslexic have problems dealing with phonological information at a segmental level but not at a suprasegmental level which we believe is implied by the segmentation hypothesis and which has been discussed by Ramus (2001).

Our results do not support the results by Rosner et al. (2003) because we could not find a group difference for the sentence. The results in Rosner et al. were unclear regarding whether group differences were only due to short-term memory problems or also more general perceptual problems dealing with the analysis of phonetic content in speech.

The reason why Rosner et al. could not show that dyslexics have less problems analyzing speech with sufficient suprasegmental information is because they used sentences so long that the dyslexics were punished due to poorer short-term memory function. Our results are consistent with the original hypothesis by Rosner et al. (2003) which stated that there might not be any group differences for sentences because poor readers might be able to compensate when the stimulus contains more than just segmental information.

Recommendations

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

1. Knowing the comprehension level of levels on different test types shows different dimensions of comprehension as one reads. This will guide the teachers in their instructional planning anchored on the needs of learners in the classroom and on the demands of Filipino national examinations.
2. Priority actions on the intensive analysis of the results of the Phil. IRI pretest should be done to identify the weaknesses in reading of the learners. These weaknesses must be converted into a well-organized teaching – learning lessons. Slow readers must be given appropriate assistance through remedial reading.
3. Reading exercises can easily be developed by teachers based on the identified weaknesses of the learners which can be designed to achieve specific learning objectives.
4. Conducting a study that specifically explores the most beneficial methods to enhance the relationship between special education and general education teachers in order to create a kind of consistency in their strategies while working with students with learning disabilities in both settings, the resource room and the general class room.
5. Conducting a quantitative study that investigates the effective reading strategies that experienced special education teachers utilize to improve the students' reading comprehension. Based on the responses of special education teachers in this current study, a unique survey could be developed as an instrument for collecting the data from participants. The participants could be special education teachers from multiple states or multiple regions within the same state.
6. Replicating the present study and including a larger sample size that would be collected from more than one region. The results of that replication could support the finding of this study.
7. A further qualitative study investigating the research questions of this study through using additional data collection methods, such as observation would be very interesting.
8. Even though Cloze procedure is a well-known assessment technique that is used to assess the students' reading comprehension, one teacher shared that she uses Cloze as a strategy to teach reading comprehension for her students. Therefore, further research exploring the effectiveness of using Cloze procedure as a strategy to teach reading comprehension is worth more investigation.
9. Conducting further research examining the impact of the students' social economic status on their background knowledge and life experience would be very interesting.
10. Conducting further study to investigate the effectiveness of using Fast Forward and Raze kids as strategies to increase reading comprehension of students with learning disabilities.
11. Conducting a study that explores the most effective methods that encourage students with learning disabilities increasing their reading practice outside the school setting.
12. Finally, it is recommended that the follow-up research be conducted to find out the impact of using the proposed instructional materials in Reading in other schools.

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