

Effectiveness of 8-Week Learning Recovery Curriculum in Improving the Reading Performance of Pupils

Edna Dollison Dionglay*, Aba Marie Laurence Escarcha Bembo, & Susan Salvador Janer

Department of Education, Sorsogon State University, Philippines

*Corresponding email: edna10.dionglay@gmail.com

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Abstract: Effectiveness of 8-Week Learning Recovery Curriculum in Improving the Reading Performance of Pupils. Objective: This study determined the effectiveness of an 8-week curriculum in improving the reading performance in English of Grade Three Pupils. **Methods:** This employed descriptive and pre-experimental research design. The respondents were the twenty-five (25) Grade Three pupils of a public elementary school in Sorsogon City Division, Philippines. The pre-test and post-test results of the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) were utilized. **Findings:** The study found that most of the Grade Three pupils are Moderate Refreshers. After the post-test 40% of the pupils improved their skills in reading. Intervention through the implementation of the 8-week Learning Recovery Program was effective in improving the reading performance of pupils in English. It was recommended that the 8-Week LRC as an intervention must be implemented, and enhanced.

Keywords: learning recovery program, reading performance, pre-experimental research.

Abstrak: Efektivitas Kurikulum Pemulihan Pembelajaran 8 Minggu dalam Meningkatkan Kinerja Membaca Siswa. Tujuan: Penelitian ini menentukan efektivitas kurikulum 8 minggu dalam meningkatkan kinerja membaca bahasa Inggris siswa kelas tiga. **Metode:** Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian deskriptif dan pra-eksperimental. Respondennya adalah dua puluh lima (25) siswa kelas tiga sebuah sekolah dasar negeri di Divisi Kota Sorsogon, Filipina. **Temuan:** Hasil pre-test dan post-test dari Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) digunakan. Studi ini menemukan bahwa sebagian besar siswa Kelas Tiga adalah Penyegar Sedang. Setelah post-test, 40% siswa meningkatkan keterampilan mereka dalam membaca. Intervensi melalui penerapan Program Pemulihan Pembelajaran selama 8 minggu efektif dalam meningkatkan kemampuan membaca siswa dalam bahasa Inggris. Direkomendasikan agar LRC 8-Minggu sebagai intervensi harus dilaksanakan dan ditingkatkan.

Kata kunci: program pemulihan pembelajaran, kinerja membaca, penelitian pra-eksperimental.

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■ INTRODUCTION

The Philippine educational system was badly affected by the COVID19 Pandemic that hit the entire world. This brought many challenges to the quality of education. With the implementation of face-to-face classes, learning gaps are still evident among learners. The reading performance of the pupils is among the affected educational aspects due to school closures, many upper elementary students are at-risk for reading difficulties and will need targeted support to build and strengthen foundational reading skills (Kuhfeld, Lewis & Peltier, 2022). In addition to this Schult, Mahler, Fauth, and Lindner (2022), stated that the high risk of further substantial learning losses due to school closures may negatively affect the children's future education.

Teachers reported that students presented academic gaps and difficulties in mathematics and reading compared to typical years (Panagouli, Stavridou, Savvidi, Kourti, Psaltopoulou, Sergeantanis, & Tsitsika, 2019). As reading skill is one of the greatest areas that can interfere with skill development across different academic subject areas, vocational skills, and daily living skills (Hale, Henning, & Hawkins, 2011). Readings begin with the recognition of words. In the early years of the child's growth, he is taught phonics and from learning the sounds of individual letters, he progresses to putting the sounds together to form words (Anderson, 2000). Thus, students in primary grades need to focus on phonics and decoding.

Phonemic awareness can also be applied to understand how pupils acquire the ability to read the text (Bishara & Weiss, 2017). Thus, phonemic awareness is vital in learning to read. Once pupils have phonemic awareness, they can recognize that sounds are like building blocks that can be combined to make different words (Kahn-Horwitz, 2016). A reader must be able to decode a word and connect the spelling to its sound and meaning to add it to long-term sight memory.

Thus, orthographic mapping is not possible without some phonics and decoding skills. Decoding ability, in turn, is built upon phonemic awareness. This is why children need some phonemic awareness and phonics and decoding skills before automatically recognizing many words (Kilpatrick, 2016). Moreover, third graders are in a unique stage of reading development, as they transition from reading to decoding to comprehending (Suggate, 2016).

A study revealed that despite of rigid implementation of Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa (3Bs Initiative) through the DepEd Memorandum 173 series of 2019, a reading program to strengthen the reading proficiency of every learner, still showed that 32% of the total population of the learners failed on the reading assessment given. This is merely because of their poor skills in terms of recognizing words (Dorado and Medina, 2022). This is done to monitor progress, detect and diagnose reading difficulties and test psychological theories of the cognitive skills that underpin reading development and disorders. (Cain and Oakhill, 2006). DepEd Order No. 34, s. 2022, entitled School Calendar and Activities for the School Year 2022 – 2023 stipulates that Regional Offices were encouraged to ensure that learning gaps are identified and addressed among all learners. They are also encouraged to implement a contextualized set of strategies and interventions as part of the Learning Recovery and Continuity Plan.

As stipulated in the Regional Memorandum No. 104, s. 2022, the results of the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) conducted for Grades 1, 2 and 3 revealed that out of 405,161 total learners assessed, 65.5% of Grade I learners in Mother Tongue, 52.12% of Grade 2 learners in Filipino, and 18.95% of Grade 3 learners are in Full Refresher Group at the beginning of the School Year 2021-2022.

Hence, teachers and the whole institution must take certain steps to address this arising challenge in education. Region V responded to this challenge through the implementation of the 8-Week Learning Recovery Curriculum.

Regional Memorandum No. 104, s. 2022, stated the policy guidelines in the implementation of the said curriculum. It is a learning remediation and intervention for Grades 1, 2, and 3 learners to ensure the development of their foundational skills in literacy and numeracy. One of the objectives of this contextualized curriculum was to ensure the holistic development of early-grade learners by providing them with opportunities that will enable them to acquire foundational and readiness skills in school. The target domains in Languages were alphabet knowledge / phonological awareness, word recognition and phonics, reading comprehension and fluency, listening comprehension, and vocabulary.

In addition, Region 5- Learning Recovery Program developed a contextualized curriculum that is designed as a learning remediation and intervention program on teaching literacy and numeracy to Grades 1, 2 and 3. All public elementary schools deviated from covering the competencies specified in the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELC) for quarter 1 and implemented the 8-Week Learning Recovery Curriculum, it has the following features: grouping by ability based on the literacy (CRLA) and numeracy (ALNAT) results; conduct of pre-test to determine where instruction will start; balance between structured and unstructured activities and implementation of differentiated instruction (Lagata, 2022).

Learners were grouped according to their ability based on the result of the CRLA. The four ability groups were Full Intervention, Moderate Intervention, Light Intervention, and Grade Ready. Week 1 served as the time to conduct the pre-test, and Week 10 for the post-test. For Weeks 2-8, literacy and numeracy lessons intended to

the needs and weaknesses of the learners were taught, via face-to-face modality. In the study of (Pocaa et.al, 2022) determining the student's present reading ability is beneficial to develop effective intervention materials. It was suggested that school leaders and program specialists develop faculty and student support programs to uplift the student's literacy.

Studies also disclosed that intervention accelerated children's ability to use improved phonological awareness skills when the teachers implemented the intervention at the class or large group level for 20 hours (four 30-minute sessions per week for 10 weeks) (Gilon, 2019). Intensive reading intervention in middle school can produce gains on multiple dimensions of reading skill and motivation and foster continuing growth of higher-order reading skills (Lovett, Frijters, Steinbach, Sevcik, & Morris, 2021). The Evaluation of the implementation of the 8-Week Learning Recovery Curriculum (LRC) in numeracy of grade 3 learners of Legazpi City found out that the implementation of LRC in Numeracy under the Learning Recovery Plan of the Schools Division of Legazpi City significantly improved the numeracy skills level of the Grade 3 learners. It is concluded that intervention programs with similar features as that of the 8-Week LRC can be sustained to continuously address learning gaps until the learners become grade ready in a reasonable time (Miña and Caballes,2023)

For the above reasons, the researchers deemed to determine the effectiveness of an 8-week curriculum in improving the reading performance in English of Grade Three Pupils. Specifically, it aimed to generate the following information: the performance of the pupils during the pre-test; the performance of the pupils during the post-test and if there is any significant difference between the pre-test and post-test results along the implementation of the 8-week curriculum; and the actions that could be proposed along Leadership for Learning.

■ METHODS

Participants

The researchers employed total enumerations because the school has a single section wherein the respondents were twenty-five (25), Grade 3 pupils of one public elementary school in Sorsogon City, Philippines. All the participants showed willingness to join in the research.

Research Design and Procedures

This study used a descriptive pre-experimental research design that used pre-test and post-test as gathering data. Employing this design enabled the researchers to determine the reading performance of the pupils, and the effectiveness of the 8-Week Learning Recovery Curriculum. The curriculum has the following timeline. Pre-test on the CRLA was conducted on Week 1 (August, 2022) to get the pupils performances and Reading Ability Group. CRLA has Task 1 that focused on English Alphabet and Phonemic Knowledge; and Task 2 that focused on Reading English words. For Week 2-8, literacy and numeracy lessons intended to the needs and weaknesses of the learners were taught, via face-to-face modality. Meanwhile, Post-Test was held on Week 10 (October, 2022) that assessed whether the pupils gain from the said intervention.

Instrument of the Study

The researchers utilized the Department of Education's Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) Pre-test and Post-test Results. CRLA is a reading assessment designed to help teachers quickly determine the reading

profiles of their Grade 1 to Grade 3 learners and develop appropriate reading instructional strategies. Its main goal is to identify children who need additional support in reading (RTI International, 2022).

Reading Profile of the learners were grouped as Full Refreshers, those who cannot produce the sounds of the alphabet and cannot read any English Word; Moderate Refreshers, those who can sound out and read 1 to 10 letters and words; Light Refreshers, those who can sound out and read 11 to 16 letters and words; and Grade Ready, those who got scores of 17 to 20. They can produce the sounds of the alphabet correctly and read English words correctly.

Data Analysis

The study used frequency and percentage of the pre-test and post-test to determine the performance of the pupils along reading. At the same time, the researchers used T-test to measure the significant difference in the pupil's score.

■ RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 revealed that during the Pre-test, 6 or 24 percent of the pupils are Full Refreshers, 13 pupils or 52 percent are Moderate Refreshers and only 3 Grade 3 learners are Grade Ready in English with 12 percent. This means that most of the pupils have very poor performance in Reading English. They lack sufficient knowledge and skills for them to fully cope up the teachings and domains to be taught in Grade 3. The learning gap was very evident because of the COVID19 Pandemic that hit the entire world.

Table 1. Pre-test and post test result along the english reading performance

Reading Ability Groups	Pre-test		Post Test	
	No. of Pupils (f)	Percentage (%)	No. of Pupils (f)	Percentage (%)
Full Refresher (FR)				
Moderate Refresher (MR)	6	24	2	8
Light Refresher (LR)	13	52	14	56
Grade Ready (GR)	3	12	3	12
	3	12	6	24
Total	25	100	25	100

However, the Post-test Result showed that 2 pupils, or 8 percent are still Full Refresher, 14 are now Moderate Refresher, 3 or 24 percent are Light Refresher and 6 are now Grade Ready after the conduct of the 8-Week Learning Recovery Plan. Almost 40% of the learners improve after the implementation of the Program.

This means that learners gained something from the intervention. This is due to the individualized and grouped lessons and activities for learners according to their ability, intensified delivery of the lessons, and hands-on activities were done which facilitated the achievement of target competencies to be enhanced. Through these actions, learners' performance in Reading was improved which could affect their performance in other learning areas. Third graders are in a unique stage of reading development, as they transition from reading to decoding to comprehending (Suggate, 2016).

This implies that teachers must give ample time to address the needs of their clientele, especially the slow and struggling learners. Reading skills must be given attention. These skills are needed by the pupils in their daily lives and become foundation skills in the other subject matter. Conducting interventions could be an effective way to address this need. Reading intervention is a very successful approach to enhancing a student's reading abilities since it encourages the development of strong readers and confident writers (Finnegan & Mazin, 2016). This is supported by the study of Lovett, M. et.al (2021) that specified that intensive reading intervention in middle school can

produce gains on multiple dimensions of reading skill and motivation and foster continuing growth of higher-order reading skills.

Moreover, the learning gaps that lead to learning losses brought about by the pandemic must be addressed. Reading must be intensified to pupils, especially those who are in the Key Stage 1, or the pupils from Kindergarten to Grade 3. Phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge, phonemic awareness and the other components of Reading must be enhanced. In the study conducted by Lobaton (2022), word recognition and reading attitude problems must be addressed first in order to improve the reading comprehension of struggling learners. Word recognition is the foundation of reading and is often disregarded in teaching reading among learners. This could be done with the conduct of thorough intervention, most especially to struggling learners. Studies disclosed that intervention accelerated children's ability to use improved phonological awareness skills when the teachers implemented intervention at the class or large group level for 20 h (four 30-min sessions per week for 10 weeks) (Gilon, 2019).

Table 2 revealed the significant difference between the pretest and posttest performance of the pupils as indicated by the t- computed value of 6.18 which is beyond the critical value of 2.06 at 0.05 level of significance when the degrees of freedom is 24. The result implied that after the intervention was conducted, the 8-Week LR Program was effective in improving the performance of the Grade Three Pupils in Reading. This is due to the dedication and effort of the teachers, administrators, and other stakeholders in implementing the said program.

Table 2. Difference between the pretest and post-test results

Statistical Bases	Statistical Analyses
Level of Significance	0.05
t- critical value	2.06
Degrees of freedom	24
t- computed value	6.17
p-value	0.00002215
Conclusion	Significant

Since reading is the foundation of other areas, teachers must be faithful and dedicated enough to teach Reading in their respective clientele. Further interventions, if needed, must be made to improve the performance of the pupils. Through this, the skills needed to be developed to them that are not fully attained in regular class hours could be enhanced. The 8-Week Learning Recovery Plan is an effective way in uplifting the skills of the learners. Reading intervention is a vital aspect of systematic learning for struggling students who need additional support in developing skills to improve comprehension and reading at grade level (Boulay et al., 2015).

This implies that the intervention strategy was successful and helped in enhancing the skills and capabilities of the pupils. Phonological, alphabet knowledge and other Reading related skills were improved due to the intervention. Therefore, their skills were uplifted and became sufficient for the enhancement of their performance, especially in Reading English. This also implies that the program could be used and be implemented further to really improve Reading of Key Stage 1 learners. Thus, the 8-Week Learning Recovery Program of the Department of Education- Region V could be adopted by other regions in uplifting the quality of Education for every Filipino learner.

This is supported by DepEd Order No. 25, s. 2022, which stated that the conduct of enrichment and remedial reading is one of the strategies in the Learning Recovery Plan of the department. They are designed to improve learners' level of attainment of the Most Essential Learning Competencies that could help ensure the readiness for transition to the next grade level. Moreover, Bessho, H, et.al. (2019) also indicated the positive effects of a remedial education program in language arts and mathematics for third- and fourth-grade students with low previous academic performance. Hence,

conducting remediation is necessary in addressing the needs and improving the reading skills of the learners.

In the study by Bdeir, et.al (2020) entitled Improving Reading Readiness in kindergarten children through early phonological awareness interventions, they found out that there is a significant development of Phonological awareness and substantial improvement compared to their pre-assessed performance. This concluded that it is essential to put effort and emphasize the importance of Phonological knowledge to improve reading literacy. Moreover, the study of Miña and Caballes (2023) about the Evaluation of the implementation of the 8-Week Learning Recovery Curriculum (LRC) in numeracy of grade 3 learners of Legazpi City. They found out that the implementation of LRC in Numeracy under the Learning Recovery Plan of the Schools Division of Legazpi City significantly improved the numeracy skills level of the Grade 3 learners. They concluded that intervention programs with similar features as that of the 8-Week LRC can be sustained to continuously address learning gaps until the learners become grade ready in a reasonable time.

■ CONCLUSIONS

Most of the Grade Three pupils are moderate refreshers. These pupils were able to obtain a score of 10 and below on the pre-test. After the post-test 40% of the pupils improved their skills in reading. With this data, we can say that the intervention was a success, but the allotted time is not sufficient to attain the highest reading ability.

Intervention through the implementation of the 8-week Learning Recovery Program was effective in improving the reading performance of pupils in English. Thus, this could be a great innovation in improving the quality of English.

It is recommended that the reading abilities of pupils must be assessed at the beginning of

each School Year, which will serve as a basis for the teachers in planning out activities suited to their learners. Learning remediation must be given to learners who have poor Reading performance, and enhancement activities to those who show better performance. The 8-Week Learning Recovery Program as an intervention must be implemented, enhanced, and could be adopted by other regions and divisions, and should be given annually for a longer period to truly improve pupils' Reading performances. Administrators and other stakeholders take the lead in cascading the implementation of the 8-Week Curriculum to lessen and bridge the learners' learning gaps. Lastly, further studies may be conducted to supplement the findings revealed in this study.

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