READING COMPREHENSION ABILITY OF GRADE VI PUPILS
OF KINANGAY SUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
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ABSTRACT
This descriptive study was confined only at determining the levels of the pupils’ reading comprehension ability and in designing a lesson model to enhance pupils’ reading comprehension skills. The respondents were the 21 Grade VI pupils enrolled in the school year 2010 – 2011 at Kinangay Sur Elementary School. A 42 – item test composed of 3 selections having 14 questions for each representing the four levels – literal, interpretative, evaluative, and creative was administered. The test took the students 45 minutes to answer. The questionnaires were checked and the scores were tallied using frequency and percentage and were interpreted accordingly by levels. It was found out that more than the majority of the Grade VI pupils were average in their overall level of reading comprehension ability. Majority of the pupils had average literal ability; however, their higher level of thinking/comprehension was very low as reflected in their lowest creative ability, and lower interpretative and evaluative skills. Thus, their higher level of thinking/comprehension must be enhanced. It is then recommended that teachers should use methodologies, strategies and activities that will develop their pupils reading ability most particularly their higher comprehension skill. Moreover, DepEd administrators should include in the curriculum in all grade levels the development of students’ thinking abilities by incorporating some reading materials in the all lessons even in grammar. The designed lesson model should also be used to help improve students’ higher order thinking skills.

Keywords: reading, comprehension, ability

1. Introduction

“Every man who knows how to read has it in his power to magnify himself, to multiply the ways in which he exists, to make his life full, significant and interesting”

(Aldous Huxley).

Reading is the mother of all study skills. It is one of the most complex and valuable skills a person can acquire. It is not merely an ability to recognize written or printed words, but it also refers to putting meaning to what a person reads and drawing a unified thought of what is read. Thus, it cannot be taught in isolation.

In addition, reading as a field of teaching is considered one of the important areas of teaching if not actually the most important ever. It is said to be one of the most necessary academic skills. Besides, it is a major pillar upon which the teaching/learning process is built. The reading ability plays a central role in the teaching and learning success at all educational stages. Having any difficulty in this skill will result in variety of consequences on all subjects of study, since reading includes a variety of sub-skills.
Ozdemir (2009) stressed that reading is fundamental in getting knowledge as all the lessons and learning activities are mostly based on the power of comprehensive reading; indeed, it is really necessary to read comprehensively. Also, reading comprehensively really affects a learner’s education and his life as a whole. Learning in any lesson depends on understanding of the learning instrument of that lesson; thus, a learner who cannot read comprehensively finds it difficult for him/her to be successful in his/her lessons.

Furthermore, Ono (2004) emphasized that reading has the potential to help English language learners become better readers and make improvements in other aspects of their English skills. According to Al-Khateeb (2010: 5) “reading comprehension is considered the real core for the reading process; and a big process around which all other processes are centered. Comprehension is the peak of the reading skills and the bases for all reading processes. It is viewed by some researchers as the ultimate objective of the reading process, since he who does not comprehend what he reads is considered as if he has not read”.

Importantly, the skills such as acquiring the correct meaning, analyzing the author’s point of view and applying what one learns from reading to real-life situations are what constitute reading comprehension which must be the basic consideration of all readers.

Moreover, the ability of the readers to understand what they are reading; interpret ideas and inject meaning to printed words is comprehension. Thus, reading alone is not enough; there must be comprehension so that learners may not only focus on the text but also on the interpretation of its deeper meanings.

The importance of reading comprehension is emphasized in the education community; however, everyone may not realize how important reading actually is. Although strong reading skills can help students do well in language arts and reading class, that is only the beginning. Students have to use reading skills in every single subject they ever study and in almost every aspect of life. It is so sad to note that students who struggle with reading comprehension may fall so far behind in school that they have limited opportunities as an adult.

Nowadays, students are exposed to different ideas, people and products and viewpoints increase as rapidly as the changes in the society. Just about everyone in the Philippines knows how to read. As a nation, almost everybody enjoys a high rate of literacy. Unfortunately however, not every Filipino is a good reader who can derive meaning from a written material and go on to analyze and apply that meaning. Thus, readers who can only read facts and nothing more can never be called good readers.

Indeed, a student, who can read comprehensively, can also be successful in all his/her lessons. It is known that in the Philippines, the university and high school entrance examinations have mostly questions based on testing learners’ ability whether they can read comprehensively and can come up with new interpretations by making analysis and synthesis on the given data in the many research tasks.

Teachers therefore have a very important role to play in helping their students get most out of reading and become good readers. They need to introduce to them extensive reading and provide them essential guidance as they read comprehensively. While teaching reading comprehension, teachers must always keep in mind that the goal is to let the students understand what the author meant.

Moreover, teachers must help students do well in their subject and pass the required examination. At the same time, they can increase their students’ competency in English and help them become fluent readers in English by engaging them in extensive
reading. Thus, teachers in Kinangay Elementary School must be able to identify the level of their students' comprehension skills so that they could plan for effective strategies or programs that will eventually enhance their learners' critical thinking skills.

It is in the above premise that the researcher was encouraged to determine the reading comprehension ability of the Grade VI pupils of Kinangay Sur Elementary School during the school year 2010 – 2011.

2. Theoretical Framework

Acquiring reading skills is dependent upon the mastery of a wide variety of reading skills such as the following levels or dimensions of comprehension – literal, interpretative, evaluative and creative. The theoretical framework below was developed.

![Reading Comprehension Framework]

3. The Problem

This study aimed to determine the levels of the reading comprehension ability of the 21 (9 boys and 12 girls) grade VI pupils officially enrolled during the school year 2010 – 2011 at Kinangay Sur Elementary School, Clarin, Misamis Occidental. Specifically this study sought to answer the following questions (1) What is the level of the students' reading comprehension ability in terms of: literal level, interpretative level, evaluative level and creative level? (2) What lesson model can be designed to help improve students' reading comprehension ability?

4. Significance of the Study

Reading comprehension is the crucial link to effective reading - a strong factor in the students' educational and professional lives. This study is deemed beneficial to the following:

(1) Students may be able to determine their reading performance and may evaluate their strengths and weaknesses on reading. (2) Teachers may be guided on their teaching methodologies of teaching reading which should not stress on accuracy of reading aloud but which fit to students' abilities and skills; they may be helped in promoting reading as a process of acquiring meaning from text and may foster a flexible response to difficulties that their learners might encounter in reading. (3) Parents may be able to help their children develop reading skills by constant monitoring of their ability and spending time to have reading discussion at home and helping the teachers in enhancing their children with intellectual development. (4) The findings may serve as the bases of DepEd (Department of Education) for designing a lesson model in enhancing reading instruction that will benefit the students and it may also suggest good books appropriate for the students. (5) The results of the study may encourage more the department to enrich its community outreach programs by sharing some
materials such as books, magazines and other library resources that will be very useful for the students to develop their interest in reading.

5. Methodology

5.1 Sample and Treatment of Collection of Data

This descriptive study aimed to determine the levels of the 21 (9 boys and 12 girls) Grade VI pupils of Kinangay Sur Elementary School at Kinangay, Clarin, Misamis Occidental. Frequency and Percentage distribution were used to determine the four levels of the pupils’ reading comprehension ability. The research instrument used in the study was a 42 – item reading comprehension questionnaire composed of three literary selections. Each selection has four sets of questions of different levels namely: literal, interpretative, evaluative and creative. All questions in each selection were encircled by the respondents and their scores were interpreted as:

6. Results and Discussion

The data pertained to the level of reading comprehension abilities of the students of Kinangay Sur Elementary School at Kinangay, Clarin, Misamis Occidental.

Reading Comprehension Abilities of Students

Literal level shows the students ability to identify ideas and answer questions based on knowledge category. Table 1 reflects the literal level of comprehension of the students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literal Level</th>
<th>Interpretative Level</th>
<th>Evaluative Level</th>
<th>Creative Level</th>
<th>Over – all Reading Ability Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scores</td>
<td>Equivalent Scores</td>
<td>Equivalent Score</td>
<td>Equivalent Scores</td>
<td>Equivalent Scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 14</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>6 – 7 High</td>
<td>7 – 9 High</td>
<td>29 – 42 High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 9</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>4 – 5 Average</td>
<td>4 – 6 Average</td>
<td>15 – 28 Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 – 4</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>2 – 3 Low</td>
<td>1 – 3 Low</td>
<td>1 – 14 Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown, 11 pupils or 52.4% achieved an average literal level of comprehension. This finding is similar to Redondo (2004) who find out that majority of
the students got average scores in literal level. This result implies that the pupils really
do well in their literal ability as questions asked in this level are eliciting basic
information, ideas or meanings directly stated in the selection.

Interpretative level enables the students give judgment, inference and implications on some indirectly or implicitly stated ideas. Table 2 depicts the students’ ability in the interpretative level.

**Table 2**

**Reading Comprehension Ability of the Students in Interpretative Level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Level of Achievement</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 – 12</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 – 8</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 4</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated in Table 2, a big percentage (66.7) of the students performed low in their interpretative ability. This suggests that the students have the difficulty to comprehend ideas or meanings which are embedded between or among the lines. Thus, they lack the ability to interpret the meanings implied in the selection.

In evaluative level, the students give reaction, judgment and evaluation of what is written. Table 3 discloses the students reading comprehension ability in the evaluative level.

**Table 3**

**Reading Comprehension Ability of the Students in Evaluative Level**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Level of Achievement</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 – 7</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 5</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 – 3</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As depicted in Table 3, majority of the students achieved low in their ability to evaluate and think critically as reflected in a high percentage of 66.7. This result shows that students’ ability to make sound judgment and to give correct evaluation is really poor. They really could not make judgments and realize the worth of ideas and meanings the way they are presented in the selection.

Creative level allows the reader to create new ideas or new ways of expression with the use of whatever understanding he got of the text. The students’ evaluative reading ability is shown in Table 4 below.
Table 4
Reading Comprehension Ability of the Students in Creative Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Level of Achievement</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 – 9</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 6</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 3</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated in Table 4, more than the majority of the students achieved very poorly in their creative ability as evidently supported with the very high percentage (81.0). This is similar to Redondo’s study (2004) showing that the students’ evaluative level was also poor. They lack the ability to create new ideas and to use what they have comprehended from the text. They could not read well beyond the printed lines and going further as to exceed the limits of knowledge and find new methods of demonstrating their thoughts and explaining them. This very great number of students who perform poorly simply implies that students’ higher order thinking is not well enhanced.

Reading comprehension is a dynamic interactive process between the reader and the reading material. It is a complex process which aims to demonstrate and correlate thoughts to prior experiences.

Table 5
Over-all Level of Reading Comprehension Ability of the Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Level of Achievement</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29 – 42</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 – 28</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>90.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 14</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 5, a very great percentage of 90.5 is achieved by the students in their over-all level. It means that they have an average reading comprehension capacity. Although students’ over-all average level is high, it still should be noticed that only their scores in literal level is high but the rest of the levels are very low. This further implies that their knowledge ability is great but critical thinking skill is low. This impression is best supported in Table 6 showing the summary of the students’ levels of reading comprehension.
Table 6
Summary of the Reading Comprehension Ability of the Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Achievement Level</th>
<th>Literal Level</th>
<th>Interpretative Level</th>
<th>Evaluative Level</th>
<th>Creative Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As clearly manifested in Table 6, the low creative ability of the students ranked the first with the percentage of 81.0 and both low evaluative and creative abilities got the second gathering same percentage of 66.7. This implies that the students have not developed their higher order thinking. Their high comprehension ability needs to be reinforced. They do not perform well in answering the questions elicited by how and why. They do not have much skill in giving judgment and they could not generate ideas implicitly stated in the selections. Their critical thinking should be improved.

It was found out that the Grade VI pupils perform poorly in their evaluative and creative abilities. Thus, there is a need of some effective strategies or a lesson plan/model that leads to student’s higher comprehension skills.

News media such as newspapers, magazines, television, and radio in the class help promote critical reading and thinking and can encourage students to enhance critical listening and reading skills.

Certainly, the researcher deems that designing a lesson model using reading text from the newspaper will be beneficial to both the English teacher and the students to enhance their higher comprehension/thinking skills.

7. Summary of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

This study aimed to determine the levels of reading comprehension ability of the 21 Grade VI pupils enrolled during the school year 2010 – 2011 at Kinangay Sur Elementary School, Kinangay, Clarin, Misamis Occidental. The research instrument used in the study was the 42-item reading comprehension test composed of 3 selections that determine the ability of the respondents to comprehend by answering the literal, interpretative, evaluative and creative questions provided. The data gathered were statistically treated using the frequency and percentage distribution.

The findings revealed that more than the majority of the grade VI pupils are average in their reading comprehension ability. Majority of the pupils have average literal ability. Also, the pupils’ higher level of thinking/comprehension is very low as reflected in their lowest creative ability, and lower interpretative and evaluative skills.
7.1 Conclusion

After having analyzed the gathered data, the researcher concludes that the grade VI pupils could do well using their literal ability but they perform very low in both creative and evaluative abilities; thus, their higher level of thinking/comprehension must be enhanced by employing the lesson model designed in this study as it geared toward the maximum use of students higher order thinking skills through its various activities.

7.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are presented: (1) Students should spend time to explore any reading materials especially those that will enhance their thinking/comprehension skills. (2) Teachers should use methodologies, strategies and activities that will develop their pupils reading ability most particularly their higher comprehension skill. They should also choose the strategies and good books most appropriate for achieving their own teaching objectives. (3) The DepEd administrators should include in the curriculum in all grade levels the development of students' thinking abilities by incorporating some reading materials in the all lessons even in grammar. They should also see to it that the students are provided with adequate opportunity to read and comprehend the appropriate and varied reading sources. (4) The lessons should be incorporated with good reading selections, effective teaching procedures, reading comprehension activities and techniques that introduce interesting topics, stimulate discussions, excite imaginative responses and become springboard for well rounded, fascinating lessons. (5) The lesson model designed in this study should be used and be modified if it is necessary to fit more on the students' level and capacity as this lesson model is designed to focus on final products or performance and innovative activities that will surely develop students' higher order thinking skills.

References


Lesson Model

**Topic: Active and Passive Voices of the Verbs**

**I. Desired Learning Results:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expected Lasallian Graduate Attributes (ELGA)</th>
<th>Of the module/lesson, the students are enabled to:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Critical/logical thinker</td>
<td>1. Pick out and classify all the verbs in the editorial;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Articulate and effective communicator</td>
<td>2. Scrutinize the editorial by discussing why the Philippines is said to be lack of the innovative cutting-edge on technology;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Socially responsible individual</td>
<td>3. Design their own editorial cartoon illustrating their opinions;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. Final Products/Performances:

1. Design their own version of editorial cartoon in presenting the issue in the editorial
2. Research from the internet or interview your community's head of the Department of Trade and Industry about any new invention, product, medicine, etc. that can be competitive for global economy. Get the necessary data about it. Then design an advertisement to introduce and endorse it. Choose the appropriate verbs that will highlight its features and effectiveness. Present this print ad to the class.

III. Valid Assessment:

Students will be evaluated based on initial journal responses, involvement in class discussions and group editorial cartoon and their print advertisement.

IV. Learning Activities

1. WARM-UP/DO-NOW:
   a. Showing an editorial cartoon, students respond to the following prompt (written on the board prior to class): How does this cartoon impact your understanding of the editorial?
   b. Students then share how they conceive the idea presented in the editorial cartoon.

2. GENRE APPRECIATION: As a class, read and discuss "Focus on Science", let them pick out the verbs in all the independent clauses. Then focus on the following questions for deeper understanding:
   a. What is the weakness among the Filipinos that the editorial pointed out?
   b. How is this weakness given proofs by the editor? Dou you see this weakness as a hindrance? Why or why not?
   c. Do you agree that we Filipinos are dependent to foreign technology?
   d. What do you think is the role of education in making the Filipinos adept to science and technology?
   e. How can our government respond to this challenge on the Filipinos’ lack of innovative cutting-edge on technology?
   f. How do you see yourself responding to this challenge?

3. TOPIC DISCUSSION: The students classify the verbs they listed. Then, as a class, elaborate what are the verbs greatly used in the editorial and why is there a need to vary the verbs to be employed in any composition.
Further Questions for Discussion:
   a. How many verbs are there in the editorial?
   b. How do you classify the verbs used in the editorial?
   c. How do you differentiate active verbs from passive verbs?
   d. Which of the verbs are dominantly used in the editorial?
   e. Why do you think are the reasons of the editor in using active verbs in the editorial?
   f. Why is there a need to use strong and powerful verbs in editorial?
Group the students; let them make their own version of editorial cartoon for the editorial being discussed. Each cartoon should relate to the students’ opinions and feelings about that issue to be written in paragraph below the editorial cartoon.

4. WRAP-UP/HOMEWORK:
Research from the internet or interview your community’s head of the Department of Trade and Industry about any new invention, product, medicine etc. that can be competitive for global economy. Get the necessary data about it. Then design an advertisement to introduce and endorse it. Choose the appropriate verbs that will highlight its features, effectiveness, and quality. Present this print ad to the class.

5. EXTENSION/ SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES:
   a. On a cartolina, create a bulletin board display with the images / pictures of some of the new inventions around the world and a paragraph about why you chose each.
   b. Write a script in which you imagine a scene alluded to in the news coverage of this story.
   c. Create a slogan using powerful verbs to encourage all the students to develop their skills in science and technology.

6. MATERIALS:
   - crayons
   - student journals
   - pens/pencils
   - classroom blackboard / power point presentation
   - paper / cartolina
   - editorial cartoon and copies of the editorial "Focus on Science" (one per student)