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The Art of Digital Storytelling Towards Students Reading Comprehension

Yvette June Real Estanislao

Tubay National High School, Division of Agusan Del Norte, Caraga Administrative Region, Philippines

Corresponding Author e-mail: junereal45@gmail.com

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Abstract

Aim: The study attempted to determine the impact of digital storytelling on the reading comprehension of grade seven students of Tubay National High School, Tubay District 1, Division of Agusan del Norte during the school year 2019 - 2020. It measured the reading comprehension level of the 40 grade seven Chrysanthemum students using the standardized tool which is the Phil-IRI. The tool was used two times in a school year, the pretest which was conducted prior to the application of digital storytelling and the post-test applying the digital storytelling innovation.

Methodology: The study used a descriptive research design which aims to systematically obtain information to describe the reading comprehension level of the grade seven students. A correlational research design was adopted to investigate the difference in the reading comprehension level before and after the application of digital story telling. Pre-test was administered last August 2019 while the posttest applying the Art of Digital Storytelling as an intervention was conducted every Friday from September 2019 to February 2020.

Results: Findings of the study showed that before applying the intervention, 100 percent of the participants belonged to the frustration level performance in reading comprehension. However, after the intervention the post-test result showed that there were only 8 students on the frustration level, 16 students on Instructional level and 16 students on the Independent level. The result further indicated that there was a significant difference in their performance in reading comprehension when Digital Storytelling was introduced leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis.

Conclusion: It can be stated that Digital Storytelling proved to be a commendable intervention to improve reading comprehension skills.

Keywords: Art, Digital Storytelling, Reading Comprehension, Intervention

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is the ability to read, understand, process, and recall what was read. Without proper comprehension skills, students lack the ability to understand what they read. Comprehension is crucial for basic survival in the educational system (Dizon & Sanchez, 2020; Salendab & Akmad, 2023; Salendab & Laguda, 2023; Sanchez & Sarmiento, 2020). Through passages and word problems, the requirement to comprehend what one reads is omnipresent in every student's life (Rutzler, 2020). As such, it has been a practice in the division that every school year, learners are being assessed or tested on their reading word recognition and comprehension level twice in a school year using the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) Pre - test and Post-test. Pre- test is being conducted in July while Post -test in February by the reading coordinators of every school. The test materials were obtained from Phil-IRI, Pre and Post Test. The participants were asked to listen to the selection read by the reading coordinator and answer the comprehension questions. The teacher checks and records the responses of students. The total number of correct responses and the equivalent percentage will be interpreted to describe students' reading performance

Apparently, Tubay National High School Phil-IRI (Pre-test) result for School Year 2019-2020, Grade VII section Chrysanthemum had an alarming result, considering that one hundred percent (100%) of the actual participants belonged to the frustration level in reading comprehension. Being the English Department Head of Tubay

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National High School, the researcher got challenged and had to find ways and means to improve students' reading comprehension. An intervention was proposed - the Art of Digital Storytelling. This device aimed to enhance the reading comprehension of the learners. The participants were given storytelling videos or audio-visual materials with subtitles or self-created digital stories in power point that stimulates student's interest in paying attention and concentrating on the videoclips that is being played. This is to enhance student's comprehension skill that would enable them to grasp the whole story presented. Research has shown that the use of multimedia in teaching helps students retain new information as well as aids in the comprehension of difficult material (Amihan & Sanchez, 2023; Carvajal & Sanchez, 2023; Muñoz & Sanchez, 2023; Salendab & Dapitan, 2021a; Salendab & Cogo, 2022). In today's digitized world, visual storytelling is a favorite classroom tool, and the affordability and accessibility of technology provides opportunities not imagined twenty years ago (New, 2005; Salendab & Dapitan, 2021b; Sanchez, 2023b). The medium of digital storytelling offers tremendous opportunities for teachers to engage and assess students. By integrating visual images with written text, digital stories can be used to enhance and accelerate student comprehension (Burmark, 2004; Robin, 2008). Combining the tools of today's electronic media with great teaching methods has given educators a whole new way to give wings to a student's learning (Standley, 2003). Digital stories helped struggling readers envision text and offered a platform for visually communicating meaning (Kajder & Swenson, 2004). It has become a modern incarnation of the traditional art of oral storytelling. It allows almost anyone to use off-the-shelf hardware and software to weave personal stories with the help of still/moving images, music, and sound, combined with the author's creativity and innovation.

Furthermore, digital storytelling would be a great help for the teachers to improve students reading comprehension and listening comprehension (Salendab & Dapitan, 2020; Salendab, 2023; Sanchez, 2020a; Sanchez, et al., 2022). It is one of the strategies that can engage the students, and facilitated discussion which will result in the opportunity of students speaking practice. In addition, it can attract students' attention, and entertain them. When teaching and learning process is fun, the learning objectives will be easily achieved (Muhammad, 2017; Salendab, 2021; Sanchez, 2020b; Sanchez, Sanchez & Sanchez, 2023). Digital stories helped struggling readers envision text and offered a platform for visually communicating meaning (Kajder & Swenson, 2004). Hence, the study was conducted and applied the innovation on the art of digital story telling to improve the reading comprehension level of the grade seven students of Tubay National High School in the Division of Agusan del Norte.

Action Research Questions

This study aimed to measure the impact of digital storytelling to the reading comprehension level of Grade VII students of Tubay National High School. Specifically, the researcher sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the reading comprehension level of Grade VII students of Tubay National High School before the conduct of digital story-telling?
2. What is the reading comprehension level of Grade VII students of Tubay National High School after the conduct of digital story-telling?
3. Is there a significant difference on the reading comprehension level of the Grade VII students before and after the conduct of digital story telling?

Hypothesis

The study is guided by a single null hypothesis.

Ho: There is no significant difference on the reading comprehension level of the Grade VII students before and after the conduct of digital story telling.

Innovation, Intervention and Strategy

This research had undergone processes on how to improve the comprehension reading levels of Grade VII students. The first step conducted by the researcher was an orientation to the 40 Grade VII Chrysanthemum students on how digital storytelling be administered and where to get digital reading resources online. They were given free digital reading websites like youtube.com in which Philippine Literature stories, American Literature stories and other stories be browsed. Tutorial on how to create their own digital stories using a power point presentation were also introduced wherein teachers as well as students can used easy method of creating animation scene to tell a story.

The Art of Digital Storytelling was conducted every Friday from September 2019 until February 2020 during their interest hour from 3 to 5 in the afternoon at the Information Communication and Technology (ICT) room. The



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researcher supplied a self created and downloaded digital stories for them to read and watch. After viewing, the strategic intervention materials developed by the researcher, activities would follow such as; a few questions were asked after viewing time to assess participants' comprehension abilities. Observations on how the participants respond and interact were also utilized to appraise the efficacy of the strategy applied. Test scores of the Phil-IRI pre-test and post-test of the same participants with the same reading passage were utilized to investigate the significant difference on the comprehension level of Grade VII Chrysanthemum before and after the conduct of Digital Storytelling, hence this strategy is applied most often.

METHODS

Research Design

The study used the descriptive research design which aims to systematically obtain information to describe a phenomenon, situation or population. It also adapted a correlational research which aims to discover if changes in one variable cause the changes in another as it presented on the significant difference on the reading comprehension level of Grade VII Chrysanthemum students before and after the conduct of the intervention applied, the Art of Digital Storytelling.

Participants

The main participants of the study were the 40 Grade 7 students of section Chrysanthemum of Tubay National High School. Results were obtained from the reading inventory from the Phil-IRI was the basis of identifying their reading comprehension level taken as the pre-test. Participants were coming from the different strata, 21 consists of male and 19 were females. Complete enumeration was applied considering that all of the participants took the pre-test and the post-test.

Instrument

The Phil-IRI was the instrument utilized in this study. This was the revised assessment tool used to assess silent and oral reading. It is composed of graded passages designed to determine the individual reading performance of student. It aims to find the student's level of reading performance as to; independent, instructional and frustration. Silent reading comprehension is measured by asking the student to answer five to eight questions of varying difficulty after a passage has been read. The data from these measures could be used to design or adjust classroom, small group or individualized instruction to fit the students' needs and abilities. The Phil-IRI is not the sole assessment tool that provides the holistic reading performance of the students; it only provides an approximation of the students' abilities and could be used in combination with other reliable tools of assessment. The data shall also serve as one of the bases in planning, designing/redesigning the reading programs or activities in the school to improve the overall school reading performance.

Data Collection

The researcher sent a letter to the School Principal of Tubay National High School, Division of Agusan del Norte asking permission to conduct the study. After the letter was approved, the researcher arranged the schedule for the orientation of the participants. With the supervision of the school principal, the proposed action plan was presented during the orientation. Before the conduct of the study Phil -IRI pre- test result was gathered and analyzed. During the conduct of the study, the participants were given reading passages presented in digital art or presented in digital technology. This includes sounds and images or multimedia presentation. After each session, the respondents were given few questions to assess their comprehension. The researcher checked and record the responses of students. After the intervention, post -test was conducted by the reading coordinator with the presence of the researcher. The responses of the test were checked, analyzed and interpreted.

Scoring and Quantification of Data

$$\frac{\text{No. of Correct Responses}}{\text{No. Of Question}} \times 100 = \% \text{ of comprehension}$$

Range of Score
0 - 4

Scores in Percentage
58 % and Below

Reading Level
Frustration level



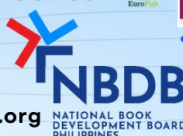
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5 - 6
7 - 8

59 % - 79 %
80 % - 100 %

Instructional Level
Independent Level

Ethical Considerations

In the conduct of the study, the researcher was guided by the following ethical considerations to ensure respect to student's privacy and confidentiality.

1. Respect the privacy of the students of Tubay National High School, they were informed of the purpose of the study.
2. At any rate during the conduct of the pre-test and post test they are free from any form of harm and or risk involved.
3. The identity of the students should always be treated with strict confidentiality at all times.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

On the reading comprehension level of grade VII Chrysanthemum students of Tubay National High School before the conduct of Digital Storytelling, (Pre-test).

Table 1
Pre -Test Reading Comprehension Level
of the Participants

Number of Students Tested	Independent Level	Instructional Level	Frustration level
40	0	0	40

Table 1 shows the result of the reading comprehension level of grade seven Chrysanthemum Students of Tubay National High School on the conduct of the Phil-IRI, pre-test. All of the 40 students belong to the frustration level, hence the researcher applied an intervention which is the art of digital story telling.

On the reading comprehension level of grade VII section Chrysanthemum students of Tubay National High School after the conduct of digital storytelling, (Post-test)

Table 2
Post-Test Reading Comprehension Level of the Participants

Number of Students Tested	Independent Level		Instructional Level		Frustration Level	
40	16	40%	16	40%	8	20%

Table 2 shows the result of the reading comprehension level of grade seven Chrysanthemum students of Tubay National High School after the conduct of Digital Storytelling. Of the 40 participants, 16 or 40% of the participants belong to the independent level which means that reading comprehension level is high. Out of the eight questions given to the participants were able to answer seven to eight correct responses. Sixteen or 40% of the participants belong to the instructional level. The participants who belong to this level got five to six correct responses out of the eight questions. And there were eight or 20% of the participants belong the frustration level. The frustration level got one to four correct responses out of the eight questions given.

On the significant difference on the reading comprehension level of the Grade VII students before and after the conduct of digital storytelling.

The significant difference between the performance of the participants before and after the utilization of the digital storytelling is indicated in Table 3.



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Table 3

Significant Difference Between the Pre-Test and the Post-Test Result of the Participants

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	interpretation	Decision
Pair 1 Pre-test – Post-test	-15.540	24	.000	significant	Reject null hypothesis

It can be observed that there is a statistical difference between the pre-test and post- test results of the reading comprehension level of the participants as evidenced by its significant value of .000 which is less than .05 level of significance set for data analysis. Further result indicates a highly positive correlation as shown by the correlation box which can be deduced that the pretest is strongly associated with post-test. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that "there is no significant difference between the pre-test and post-test result of the participants " is rejected.

Conclusion

Digital storytelling is an effective intervention strategy to enhance the reading comprehension level of the grade seven students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that teachers handling English classes should incorporate digital storytelling as a teaching strategy to improve students' reading comprehension skills. Schools should invest in training of teachers in the art of digital storytelling and provide the necessary resources to facilitate the implementation of this intervention. Furthermore, future studies can explore the effectiveness of digital storytelling across various grade levels and subject areas.

Action Research Work Plan and Timelines

Table 4. Action Plan

ACTIVITY	OBJECTIVE	TIME FRAME	PERSON'S INVOLVED	RESOURCES
Orientation of Grade VII Chrysanthemum students.	Orient the parents and students on the conduct of the project.	July 2019	Researcher Grade 7 Respondents Reading Coordinator principal	Sound System
Conduct Phil-IRI Pre-Test	Measure and describe the learner's reading performance	July 2019	Reading Coordinator Grade 7 Student	Phil-IRI Tool
Identification of Students who belong to the frustration level under reading comprehension	Identify students Who belong to the frustration level under reading comprehension	First Week of August	Reading Coordinator, Resource Persons	Phil-IRI Result



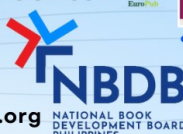
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Field Testing	Implement digital storytelling tools	September-February (Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday)	Researcher 40 Respondents, Reading Coordinator	Digital Tools - powerpoint or overhead projector -laptop with stories downloaded - sound system -internet connection
Conduct of Phil-IRI Post-test	Measure and describe the learner's reading performance	First Week of February, 2020	Reading Coordinator, Researcher (English Department Head) Grade VII Students	Phil-IRI tool
Evaluation and Assessment	Evaluate and assess the effectiveness of the whole project	February 2020	Researcher (English Department Head) Reading Coordinator, Principal	

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