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HEART ME: A Reading Intervention for Struggling Readers

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Abstract

Aim: This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of the Project HEART ME (Harnessing and Expanding the Allotted Reading Time with Monitoring and Evaluation) in developing the oral reading performance in English and in Filipino of elementary pupils in Binulasan Integrated School for School Year 2022-2023.

Methodology: This study used Pre-experimental One Group Pre-test Post-test Design. The study's respondents were chosen using purposive sampling. Meanwhile, the data gathered were statistically treated using percentage and frequency.

Results: Results showed that elementary pupils performed poorly in their pre-test which depicts that out of 1,079 pupils, 347 or 32% fall to frustration level in Filipino and out of 895 pupils, 433 or 48% fall to frustration level in English. Meanwhile, after the implementation of Project HEART ME, the findings showed that the numbers of pupils under the frustration level in Filipino dropped from 32% to 3% while, the numbers of non-readers in English dropped from 48% to 8%. This denotes that significant difference in the oral reading performance of elementary pupils before and after the implementation of project HEART ME was clearly shown.

Conclusion: The implementation of the project HEART ME impacted a positive difference which definitely improved the oral reading performance of elementary pupils in Binulasan Integrated School. Likewise, there is a significant difference before and after the implementation of project HEART ME which proved that that even though the learners struggle to read, the implementation of an intervention like Project HEART ME can help/aid the situation.

Keywords: Project HEART ME, Reading Performance, Reading Difficulties

INTRODUCTION

The global COVID-19 pandemic has caused an unprecedented change in all walks of life. It has clutched different sectors and overthrown people around the world to a new social and economic crisis. Unfortunately, education is one of the fields affected since around 1.52 billion students remain out of school and over 60.2 million teachers are stranded at home. (UN Secretary General as cited by Sarif, 2020).

Having said this, Domingue (2021) notes that there is a grave concern about "learning loss" among students given the scope of these disruptions. He said that "learning loss" refers to the discrepancy between a student's real abilities after the disruptions caused by COVID-19 and the abilities the student would have developed in the context of conventional educational practice. He continued by stating that in order to track the development of reading abilities both before and after the COVID-19 pandemic, his team regularly gathered measures of oral reading fluency. According to their research, there were disparities in the progress of the same kids in the spring and fall of 2020 and their growth in prior years. Likewise, he said that If nothing is done, the pandemic's effects on pupils' reading development will likely have a long-term negative effect. Nevertheless, he asserted that this issue may still be resolved by figuring out what is taking place in specific schools so that practical solutions can be widely disseminated. Meanwhile, the two Master Teachers in Binulasan Integrated School conducted an oral reading assessment on the first week of the opening of classes for the School Year 2022-2023 to Grades One to Six pupils. Specifically, out of 1,079 elementary pupils, 347 pupils or 32% fall from frustration level in Filipino. On the other hand, out of 895 elementary pupils (Grades Two to Five), 433 pupils or 48% fall from frustration level in English. The results of the



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pre-assessment in reading is very alarming in terms of the reading status of the said school on the opening and full implementation of face to face classes.

To address the aforementioned issue, the researcher intended to develop and improve the Oral Reading performance of elementary pupils particularly those pupils who fall under Frustration level in Binulasan Integrated School through "Project HEART ME" (Harnessing and Expanding the Allotted Reading Time with Monitoring and Evaluation)

Research Questions

This research investigation aimed to develop and improve the oral reading performance of Elementary Pupils particularly those who fall under frustration level in Binulasan Integrated School through "Project HEART ME" (Harnessing and Expanding the Allotted Reading Time with Monitoring and Evaluation).

Specifically, this action research sought to answer the following specific questions:

1. What is the oral reading performance of the elementary pupils in Binulasan Integrated School before implementing the project HEART ME?
2. What is the oral reading performance of the elementary pupils in Binulasan Integrated School after implementing the project HEART ME?
3. Is there a significant difference in the oral reading performance of the elementary pupils in Binulasan Integrated School before and after the implementation of project HEART ME?
4. What are the implications of the findings of this research investigation for the improvement of the oral reading performance of elementary pupils of Binulasan Integrated School?

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the oral reading performance of the elementary pupils in Binulasan Integrated School before and after the implementation of project HEART ME.

METHODS

Research Design

This research investigation employed a pre-experimental one-group pre-test post-test research method. According to Campbell and Stanley (2001), this research method happens before the true experiment and determines how the researcher's intervention will affect the experiment. This research method was chosen by the researcher because of its appropriateness and relationship with the research objectives since it is after the effect and impact of the project HEART ME.

Population and Sampling

The respondents of this study were the elementary pupils from Grades One to Six, particularly 347 pupils who fall under frustration level in Filipino and 433 pupils who fall under frustration level in English in Binulasan Integrated School, Infanta, Quezon, School Year 2022-2023. Purposive sampling technique was used since the intended respondents were those who fall from frustration level in reading. Purposive sampling (also known as judgment, selective or subjective sampling) is a sampling technique in which researcher relies on his or her own judgment when choosing members of population to participate in the study. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method and it occurs when "elements" selected for the sample are chosen by the judgment of the researcher. Also, researchers often believe that they can obtain a representative sample by using a sound judgment (Business Research Methodology, 2014)

Instrument

The Phil-IRI as an evaluation tool was used particularly the stories for oral reading assessment. Meanwhile, to monitor the performance of the elementary pupils, the researcher used the researcher-made monitoring toll as his innovation as part of the research investigation.

Data Collection

The researcher sought permission from the school principal to conduct the study in improving the reading



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performance elementary pupils who fall under frustration level through "Project HEART ME" (Harnessing and Expanding the Allotted Reading Time with Monitoring and Evaluation)

In this study, the researcher gathered the necessary data through the pretest and posttest. The class advisers were oriented regarding the intervention used to improve the pupils' oral reading performance by extending the allotted reading time (30 minutes before the class starts and another 30 minutes after class). Moreover, the reading performance of the learners were monitored and evaluated by the researcher at the end of the study period using the researcher-made monitoring tool while the evaluation tool was adopted from the Phil-IRI. It was conducted in almost Four Quarters of School Year 2022-2023.

After the "HEART ME" technique was implemented, the posttest was conducted. The researcher compared the pretest and post test to determine if there is significant difference on the reading performance of elementary pupils in Binulasan Integrated School.

Treatment of Data

Percentage and Frequency was used in analyzing the level of oral reading performance of the pupils. The number of pupils who fall in Instructional and Independent level were considered readers which was divided by the total number of learners and multiplied by 100 to get its percentage.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher ensured that all research protocols involving ethics in research were complied with for the protection of all elementary pupils and institutions involved in the conduct of the study.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

This chapter shows the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data discussing the reading intervention for struggling readers. The order of the discussion follows the arrangement of the Statement of the Problem.

Question No. 1. What is the oral reading performance of elementary pupils in Binulasan Integrated School before implementing the project HEART ME?

Results of the Pre-test conducted in Filipino and English

Subject Area	Total No. of Pupils	No. of Readers under Frustration Level	Percentage
Filipino	1097	347	32%
English	895	433	48%

Table number 1 shows the pre test results of the research investigation. As shown, out of 1097 elementary pupils, roughly 32% or 347 pupils fall from frustration level in Filipino while out of 895, 48% or 433 pupils fall from frustration level in English. Thus, this table describes how many pupils struggled in reading which is caused by the pandemic that gave them a break from academic related tasks such as the aforementioned action. This phenomenon however is congruent to the study conducted by Domingue, which in turn, urges the implementation of an intervention program that can help aid in the situation.

According to Domingue (2021), there is a significant concern regarding the occurrence of "learning loss" among students due to the extensive disruptions caused by events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, he emphasized that without intervention, the impact of the pandemic on students' reading development may have long-lasting negative consequences. However, he expressed optimism that by identifying the specific challenges faced by individual schools, practical solutions can be identified and widely shared to address this issue.



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Question No. 2. What is the oral reading performance of elementary pupils after implementing the project HEART ME?

Results of the Post-test conducted in Filipino and English

Subject Area	Total no. of pupils	No. of Pupils under Frustration level	Percentage
Filipino	1097	35	3%
English	895	75	8%

Table 2 covers the results of the post-test after the implementation of the project HEART ME. The results revealed that there is a visible improvement after the implementation of the Project HEART ME. Thus, indicating the effectivity and efficiency of the project HEART ME.

The findings of the study is supported by Gutierrez (2020), who conducted a study on the impact of the monthly monitoring and evaluation on the reading performance of students in grades 1 and 2. The findings showed that pupils in Grades 1 and 2 had considerably become better readers after the intervention. She came to the conclusion that monitoring and evaluation and giving an extra time in reading helped the students' abilities improve their reading abilities.

Question No. 3. Is there a significant difference in the oral reading performance of elementary pupils before and after the implementation of the project HEART ME?

Subject Area	Results		Difference between the percentage of the results
	Pretest	Post-test	
Filipino	32%	3%	29%
English	48%	8%	40%

The difference between the percentage shows that there is a significant difference in the oral reading performance of elementary pupils before and after the implementation of the project HEART ME. Hence, the findings rejected the null hypothesis

The results above showed that the elementary pupils significantly improved their oral reading performance in both Filipino and English subjects, as the percentage of pupils under frustration level in Filipino decreased from 32% in the pre-test to 3% in the post-test, and as for the English subject, it decreased from 48% in the pre-test to 8% in the post-test. On the same note, The Florida Center for Reading Research as cited by Kafle (2017) advises ninety (90) minutes of literacy instruction for schools with a high percentage of students at risk for reading challenges; this time should be altered as necessary to accommodate the changing requirements of students. Therefore, the more reading exercises and activities that kids who have reading challenges are exposed to over time, the better their reading skills will be strengthened.

Question No. 4. What are the implications of the findings of this research investigation for the improvement of the oral reading performance of elementary pupils of Binulasan Integrated School?

The following were the significant implications of the research study:

1. The findings indicated that all of the pupils who participated in the pre-test reading assessment experienced a high level of frustration when it comes to their oral reading performance.
2. The findings disclosed that after the implementation of project HEART ME, the oral reading performance of the respondents was intensified. This implied that the more the students with reading difficulties are exposed to reading drills and activities for a longer period of time, the better the students' performance to oral reading will be developed.



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3. The study revealed that there was a significant difference and development in the oral reading performance of elementary pupils before and after the implementation of Project HEART ME. This implied that the implementation of project HEART ME was efficient and effective.

Summary of Findings

1. The result of the Pre-test before the implementation of Project HEART ME shows that out of the 1,079 pupils, 347 or 32% fall to frustration level in Filipino and out of 895 pupils, 433 or 48% fall to frustration level in English.
2. The results of the post-test after the implementation Project HEART ME shows that the numbers of pupils under frustration level in Filipino dropped from 32% to 3% while, the numbers of pupils under frustration level in English dropped from 48% to 4%.
3. Significant difference in the oral reading performance of Elementary Pupils before and after the implementation of project HEART ME was clearly shown.

Conclusions

Based on the foregoing findings, the following conclusions had been derived:

1. Elementary pupils were struggling in reading both in English and Filipino as shown before the conduct of the intervention.
2. The implementation of the project HEART ME impacted a positive difference which definitely improved the oral reading performance of elementary pupils in Binulasan Integrated School.
3. There is a significant difference before and after the implementation of project HEART ME.. Therefore, one can determine that even though the students struggles to read, the implementation of an intervention like Project HEART ME can help/aid the situation.

Recommendations

In light of the aforementioned findings and conclusions, the following are hereby recommended:

1. To the Teachers:
 - a. Plan and implement programs such as remedial classes and other interventions /innovations that would further enhance the reading ability of the pupils.
 - b. Implement tutorial sessions that assess the reading capability of pupils.
 - c. Establish a mini library in each classroom which will attract more pupils to spend their vacant time as to intensify their reading ability.
 - d. Conduct more intensive reading remediation activities on the latter part of the Fourth Quarter to the remaining/few pupils who were still fall from frustration level.
2. To the Parents:
 - a. Communicate with their children regarding the problems and difficulties they encountered in school so that they can guide and provide follow up activities at home.
 - b. Initiate dialogues with the classroom adviser regarding their children's school performance particularly on their child's status in reading.
 - c. Allow pupils to explore and engage themselves to some reading activities at home.
3. To the Pupils:
 - a. Ask for the guidance of their guardian and adviser in reading unfamiliar words in different reading materials to enhance their reading skills.
 - b. Test themselves once in a while by engaging different reading activities starting from the basics to improve their reading capability.
4. To the Principal:
 - a. Encourage the teachers to attend trainings/seminars that will hone their knowledge in teaching reading.
 - b. Intensify the reading programs of the school by inspiring the teachers in conducting interventions and innovations in promoting the reading proficiency among learners.
5. To the future researchers:



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- a. They could replicate this study and further explore on the reading comprehension of learners through the use of monitoring and evaluation tools.

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