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Pagbasa . . .
Pag-asa!

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From the Editor

This issue of The RAP Journal marks a milestone—it’s the first issue to go online!

Being in cyberspace notwithstanding, the issue still contains articles in these categories: perspective papers, reading research reports, theory-to-practice articles, and a feature on a children’s literature author.

Nemah N. Hermosa describes frameworks and standards for the preparation of reading professionals. These will serve as models in both pré-service and in-service teaching and training of reading teachers.

Various research studies on literacy and reading instruction are reported in this issue. They include Eduardo A. Bolanos’ metaresearch on “What research says about reading hypertext: Implications for comprehension”, and Buenavida A. Tupe’s and Portia P. Padilla’s study on “Metacognitive strategy instruction and bilingual readers’ comprehension of expository texts”. Research on literature-based reading programs include the one done by Jinky Basan Firman and Dina Ocampo on “The effects of a literature-based reading program on pupils’ reading attitude and comprehension” complemented by Marie Grace C. Reoperez’s “Bridging story world gap through response journals”.

Rachel Red Amparo shares her experiences in establishing a remedial reading clinic and hopes that her model can help others who want to set up a similar program. The special children’s literature feature for this issue is very timely. Lina Diaz de River’s piece on Rizal’s retelling of The Monkey and the Turtle highlights the national hero as children’s story writer on his 150th birth anniversary.

HAPPY READING!

PANEL OF EXTERNAL REVIEWERS

Marie Yvette C. Alcazar, College of Education, University of the Philippines; Merlene Alon, Alpha Angelicum Academy; Ma. Theresa de Villa, University of the Philippines Integrated School; Lina Diaz de Rivera, De La Salle University Manila; Leonor Ercillo-Diaz, College of Education, University of the Philippines; Jose Lalas, University of Redlands; Romylyn Metila, College of Education, University of the Philippines; Dina Ocampo, College of Education, University of the Philippines Melissa Alma Orencia, Philippine Normal University; Portia P. Padilla, College of Education, University of the Philippines; Felicitas E. Pado, College of Education, University of the Philippines; Ma. Hazelle Preclaro, College of Education, University of the Philippines; Neil Armstrong Satoquia, College of Education, University of Santo Tomas; Victor A. Villanueva, Builders School/Read-Ability Clinic; Camilla Vizconde, College of Education, University of Santo Tomas; Lalaine Yanilla-Aquino, College of Arts and Letters, University of the Philippines.
This paper describes several frameworks for the professional development of reading teachers, from a generic model like the National Competency-Based Teacher Standards developed for Filipino teachers to models that are more specific to the teaching of reading. The latter includes the Standards for Reading professionals developed by the International Reading Association and the report of a sub-committee of National Academy of Education’s Committee on Teacher Education that focused on knowledge to support the teaching of reading. Some recommendations for teacher educators are given.

Introduction

In an article about the teaching/training of teachers of reading, Hoffman & Pearson (2000) posed this question: “What should your granddaughter’s teacher know about teaching reading that your grandmother’s teacher didn’t?” (p. 42). As an answer, they point out that our grandmother’s teacher was prepared to teach in a classroom very much like the one she attended as a student. The preparation for teaching was straightforward. On the other hand, our granddaughter’s teacher will teach in a classroom quite different from the one she or he attended. Clearly, the underlying idea here is that “to be fit for teaching is to be able to handle change.” (Van Manen, 1996, p. 29, as cited by Hoffman & Pearson (2000).

Within the context of preparing teachers for a changing world, this paper looks at some frameworks for teacher professional development (TPD), such as standards for reading professionals, and the knowledge base expected for reading teachers. Since the purpose of this paper is essentially to describe the models, descriptions are liberally quoted from the references.

The National Competency-Based Teacher’s Standards (NCBTS)

Today, no discussion on teacher professional development in the Philippines can proceed without consideration of the National Competency-Based Teacher Standards. Emanating from the Philippine Education for All (EFA) Plan 2015 and the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA), the NCBTS is “an integrated theoretical framework that defines the different dimensions of effective teaching in all aspects of a teacher’s professional life and in all phases of teacher development” (Department of Education, 2008, p. 7). It is proposed to be used as the guide for all teacher development programs and projects from the school level up to the national level. It is intended for use by Teacher Education Institutions in designing teacher education curricula, the Philippine Regulatory Commission in designing the Licensure...
Examination for Teachers, various organizations and agencies engaged in in-service training of teachers, award-giving bodies, and the DepEd itself, to guide it in formulating policies related to recruitment and hiring, promotion, and supervision, among others. Most importantly, the NCBTS is envisioned to be used by teachers themselves to guide them in their professional development activities.

What is the teaching paradigm that underpins the NCBTS? Its basic assumptions about teaching include (DepEd, 2008, p. 6):

- Teaching is facilitating learning, and the qualities of good teaching are defined in terms of whether students learn or not.
- Teacher knowledge is essentially complex and problematic; applicability varies across learners and contexts.
- Teaching involves reflective and flexible application of technical knowledge that best bring about student learning.
- Effective teaching is determined within the limits and opportunities found in the learning environment.

The NCBTS operationalizes this definition of good teaching in terms of **domains, strands, and indicators** (DepEd, 2008, p. 13):

- **Domains.** A distinctive sphere of the teaching-learning process, and is also a well-defined arena for demonstrating positive teacher practices.
- **Strands.** Specific dimensions of positive teacher practices under the broad conceptual domain.
- **Indicators.** Concrete, observable, and measurable teacher behaviors, actions, habits, actions, routines, and practices known to create, facilitate, and support enhanced student learning.

The NCBTS covers seven domains, as shown in Figure 1:

![Figure 1. Seven domains of the NCBTS (DepEd, 2008, p. 15)](image)

Hermosa... *TPD: Frameworks and standards for the preparation of reading teachers*
1. Social regard for learning
2. The learning environment
3. The diversity of learners
4. Curriculum
5. Planning, assessing and reporting
6. Community linkages
7. Personal growth and Professional development

The examples shown in Figure 2, in keeping with the topic of the paper, are from Domain 7, Personal Growth and Professional Development.

**Excellent Reading Teachers: A position statement of the International Reading Association**

Another framework that can serve as a good set of principles to consider in the preparation of reading teachers is the International Reading Association’s position statement on Excellent Reading Teachers (2000).

This position statement provides a research-based description of the distinguishing qualities of excellent classroom reading teachers. Excellent reading teachers share several critical qualities of knowledge and practice:

- They understand reading and writing development, and believe all children can read and write.
- They continually assess children’s individual progress and relate reading instruction to children’s previous experiences.
- They know a variety of ways to teach reading, when to use each method, and how to combine the methods into an effective instructional program.
- They offer a variety of materials and texts for children to read.
- They use flexible grouping strategies to tailor instruction to individual students.
- They are good reading “coaches” (that is, they provide help strategically).

In addition, excellent reading teachers share many of the characteristics of good teachers in general. They have strong content and pedagogical...
knowledge, manage classrooms so that there is a high rate of engagement, use strong motivation strategies that encourage independent learning, have high expectations for children’s achievement, and help children who are having difficulty.

The NCBTS is a generic framework, applicable to all subject disciplines. The IRA position statement is specific to reading teachers, but is still generic in that it encompasses reading teachers of all kinds.

**IRA’s Standards for Reading Professionals (2010)**

An even more helpful guide for the TPD of reading teachers is IRA’s *Standards for Reading Professionals—Revised 2010* (2010), which is an updated version of Standards 2003. The Standards set forth the criteria for developing and evaluating preparation programs for reading professionals. The Standards describe what candidates for the reading profession should know and be able to do in professional settings. The Standards are performance based, focusing on the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary for effective educational practice in a specific role. Also, the Standards are the result of a deliberative process that drew from professional expertise and research in the reading field.

**Standard 1: Foundational Knowledge**

Foundational knowledge is at the core of preparing individuals for roles in the reading profession and encompasses the major theories, research, and best practices that share a consensus of acceptance in the reading field. Individuals who enter the reading profession should understand the historically shared knowledge of the profession and develop the capacity to act on that knowledge responsibly. Elements of the Foundational Knowledge Standard set expectations in the domains of theoretical and practical knowledge, and in developing dispositions for the active, ethical use of professional knowledge. Expectations are founded on the concept of a profession as both a technical and moral enterprise, that is, competent performance for the betterment of society.

**Standard 2: Curriculum and Instruction**

The Curriculum and Instruction Standard recognizes the need to prepare educators who have a deep understanding and knowledge of the elements of a balanced, integrated, and comprehensive literacy curriculum and have developed expertise in enacting that curriculum. The elements focus on the use of effective practices in a well-articulated curriculum, using traditional print, digital, and online resources.

**Standard 3: Assessment and Evaluation**

The Assessment and Evaluation Standard recognizes the need to prepare teachers for using a variety of assessment tools and practices to plan and evaluate effective reading and writing instruction. The elements featured in this standard relate to the systematic monitoring of student performance at individual, classroom, school, and systemwide levels. Teacher educators who specialize in literacy play a critical role in preparing teachers for multifaceted assessment responsibilities.

**Standard 4: Diversity**

The Diversity Standard focuses on the need to prepare teachers to build and engage their students in a curriculum that places value on the diversity that exists in our society, as featured in elements such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, religion, and language. This standard is grounded in a set of principles and understandings that reflect a vision for a democratic and just society and inform the effective preparation of reading professionals.

**Standard 5: Literate Environment**

The Literate Environment Standard focuses on the need for candidates to synthesize their foundational knowledge about content, pedagogy, the effective use of physical space, instructional materials and technology, and the impact of the social environment to create an environment that fosters and supports students’ traditional print, digital, and online reading and writing achievement. This standard recognizes that candidates must create a literate environment that meets the diverse needs of students and facilitates
connections across content areas as well as with the world outside the school.

**Standard 6: Professional Learning and Leadership**

The Professional Learning and Leadership Standard is based on a commitment by all reading professionals to lifelong learning. Professionals learn in many different ways, for example, individual learning through activities such as reading, pursuing advanced degrees, and attending professional meetings. The elements featured in this standard include an emphasis on positive dispositions, individual and collaborative learning, the ability to design and evaluate professional learning experiences, the importance of advocacy, and a need for knowledge about adult learning and school leadership. Also, learning is often collaborative and occurs in the workplace through grade-level meetings, academic team meetings, workshops, study groups, and so forth.

The number of professional role categories was increased from five in Standards 2003 to seven in Standards 2010. The seven types of reading professionals include:

- Education Support Personnel (paraprofessionals)
- Pre-K and Elementary Classroom Teacher
- Middle/High School Content Classroom Teacher
- Middle/High School Reading Classroom Teacher
- Reading Specialist/Literacy Coach
- Teacher Educator
- Administrator

The two additional roles are (1) the Middle and High School Content Classroom Teacher and (2) the Middle and High School Reading Classroom Teacher. Thus, there are three categories of classroom teachers: pre-K and elementary, middle and high school content, and middle and high school reading. These three categories allow for specificity that captures the differences in the various classroom teacher roles.

Each standard is defined by elements that provide more specificity as to the content of that standard. Standards 2010 lists each role individually with the accompanying elements of each of the standards, which allows readers to look either at a specific standard’s element and its description across all roles, or at a role, such as Reading Specialist/Literacy Coach, to see what the Standards require for that specific role.

Table 1 gives examples of an element from each of the six standards listed for each of the three teaching roles: Pre-K and Elementary Classroom Teacher, Middle/High School Content Classroom Teacher, and Middle/High School Reading Classroom Teacher. For every one of the roles, there are usually more than one element for each standard as well as performance indicators for each element but they cannot all be indicated here. A copy of Standards 2010 can be downloaded from the IRA website. The specific URL is: http://www.reading.org/General/CurrentResearch/Standards/ProfessionalStandards2010.aspx

**Knowledge to Support the Teaching of Reading: Preparing Teachers for a Changing World**

In terms of the knowledge base for the professional development of reading professionals, a definitive reference would be *Knowledge to Support the Teaching of Reading: Preparing Teachers for a Changing World* (2005). This report was put together by a subcommittee of the National Academy of Education’s Committee on Teacher Education. Catherine Snow of Harvard University chaired this committee, which had as members P. David Pearson, Dorothy S. Strickland, and MaryEllen Vogt, among others.

This book targets the essential knowledge teachers need about the development, acquisition, and teaching of language and literacy skills to K–12 students, what Hoffman & Pearson (2000) might refer to with the statement “What your grandmother’s teacher didn’t know that your granddaughter’s teacher should.”

The book stresses the importance of using the relevant information on teacher education that is currently available as a foundation for preparing effective teachers of reading. The authors urge teacher educators to model the ways exemplary teachers work by engaging in a cycle of reflection of their own teaching.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STANDARDS AND ELEMENTS (excerpts)</th>
<th>SAMPLE INDICATORS Pre-K to Elementary Reading Teacher</th>
<th>SAMPLE INDICATORS Middle/High School Content Classroom Teacher</th>
<th>SAMPLE INDICATORS Middle/High School Reading Classroom Teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 1: FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE</strong> 1.1: Understand major theories and empirical research that describe the cognitive, linguistic, motivational, and socio-cultural foundations of reading and writing development, processes, and components, including word recognition, language comprehension, strategic knowledge, and reading–writing connections.</td>
<td>Recognize major theories of reading and writing processes and development, including first and second literacy acquisition and the role of native language in learning to read and write in a second language. Explain language and reading development across elementary years (e.g., word recognition, language comprehension, etc.) using supporting evidence from theory and research.</td>
<td>Identify and explain the specific reading and writing expectations of their content areas as described in national and state standards. Understand the process of identifying and differentiating the range of literacy needs of adolescent readers.</td>
<td>Explain major theories of reading and writing processes and development in adolescents using supporting research evidence, including the relationship between culture and the native language of English learners as a support system in their learning to read and write in English. Explain the research and theory of learning environments that support individual motivation to read and write. Use multiple sources of information to guide instructional planning to improve reading achievement of all students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3: Understand the role of professional judgment and practical knowledge for improving all students’ reading development and achievement.</td>
<td>Show fair-mindedness, empathy, and ethical behavior in literacy instruction and when working with other professionals.</td>
<td>Use multiple sources of information to guide instructional planning to improve reading achievement of all students.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 2: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION</strong> 2.1: Use foundational knowledge to design or implement an integrated, comprehensive, and balanced curriculum. 2.2: Use appropriate and varied instructional approaches, including those that develop word recognition, language comprehension, strategic knowledge, and reading–writing connections 2.3: Use a wide range of texts (e.g., narrative, expository, and poetry) from traditional print, digital, and online resources.</td>
<td>Explain how the reading and writing curriculum is related to local, state, and professional standards. Select and implement instructional approaches based on evidence-based rationale, student needs, and purposes for instruction. Guided by evidence-based rationale, select and use quality traditional print, digital, and online resources.</td>
<td>Evaluate the curriculum to ensure that instructional goals and objectives meet the reading and writing demands of the content areas. Differentiate instructional approaches to meet students’ reading and writing needs in the content areas. Demonstrate knowledge about various materials and their uses.</td>
<td>Work with the team or department to help ensure interdisciplinary connections in traditional print, digital, and online contexts. Differentiate instructional approaches to meet students’ reading and writing needs in the content areas. [Literacy development is an ongoing process and requires as much attention for adolescents as for beginning readers.] Build an accessible, multilevel, and diverse classroom library that contains traditional print, digital, and online resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 3: ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION</strong> 3.2: Select, develop, administer, and interpret assessments, both traditional print and electronic, for specific purposes. 3.3: Use assessment information to plan and evaluate instruction.</td>
<td>Select or develop appropriate assessment tools to monitor student progress and to analyze instructional effectiveness. [standardized or more subjective measures, such as rubrics, etc.] Interpret patterns in classroom and individual students’ data.</td>
<td>Select or develop assessment tools to analyze instructional effectiveness within the content areas. Analyze and use assessment data to evaluate students’ responses to instruction and to develop relevant next steps for teaching.</td>
<td>Administer classroom and school-based assessments using consistent, fair, and equitable assessment procedures. Collaborate with content area teachers to use assessment data to modify instruction, evaluate the effectiveness of instruction, and plan content literacy initiatives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STANDARDS AND ELEMENTS (excerpts)</td>
<td>SAMPLE INDICATORS Pre-K to Elementary Reading Teacher</td>
<td>SAMPLE INDICATORS Middle/High School Content Classroom Teacher</td>
<td>SAMPLE INDICATORS Middle/High School Reading Classroom Teacher</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 4: DIVERSITY</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which diversity can be used to strengthen a literate society, making it more productive, more adaptable to change, and more equitable.</td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which various forms of diversity interact with adolescent literacy development and content area learning.</td>
<td>Demonstrate an understanding of the relationship between first- and second-language acquisition and literacy development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1: Recognize, understand, and value the forms of diversity that exist in society and their importance in learning to read and write.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 5: LITERATE ENVIRONMENT</strong></td>
<td>Arrange their classrooms to provide easy access to books, other materials, and specific areas designed for a variety of individual, small-group, and whole-class activities.</td>
<td>Arrange their classrooms to provide easy access to books, other instructional materials, and specific areas designed for a variety of individual, small-group, and whole-class activities.</td>
<td>Modify the arrangements to accommodate students’ changing needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1: Design the physical environment to optimize students’ use of traditional print, digital, and online resources in reading and writing instruction.</td>
<td>Demonstrate a respectful attitude toward all learners and understand the roles of choice, motivation, and scaffolded support in creating low-risk and positive social environments.</td>
<td>Model and teach students appropriate ways to interact with each other and adults.</td>
<td>Model and teach students routines necessary for establishing and maintaining positive social environments (e.g., appropriate ways to interact with each other and adults).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2: Design a social environment that is low risk and includes choice, motivation, and scaffolded support to optimize students’ opportunities for learning to read and write.</td>
<td>Model and scaffold procedures, so students learn to work effectively in a variety of classroom configurations and activities.</td>
<td>Use evidence-based rationale to make and monitor flexible instructional grouping options for students.</td>
<td>Use various practices to differentiate instruction (e.g., cooperative learning, literature circles, partner work, and research/ investigation groups).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4: Use a variety of classroom configurations (i.e., whole class, small group, and individual) to differentiate instruction.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 6: PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrate an awareness of the factors that influence adult learning, organizational change, professional development, and school culture.</td>
<td>Demonstrate awareness of the factors that influence adult learning, organizational change, professional development, and school culture.</td>
<td>Demonstrate an awareness of the factors that influence adult learning, organizational change, professional development, and school culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1: Demonstrate foundational knowledge of adult learning theories and related research about organizational change, professional development, and school culture.</td>
<td>Apply learning from professional development to instructional practices.</td>
<td>Recognize the importance of professional development for improving academic learning through reading and writing in schools.</td>
<td>Participate individually and with colleagues in professional development programs at the school and district levels.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3: Participate in, design, facilitate, lead, and evaluate effective and differentiated professional development programs.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The different types of knowledge that reading teachers should possess are then discussed.

The Reading Knowledge Base

Five opportunities to learn from PRD. This includes the five opportunities to learn from *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children* (Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998), which was a report of the Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children, a subcommittee of the Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education and the National Research Council. These five opportunities are:

1. Motivation to read
2. Functions of print
3. Alphabetic principle
4. Language and metacognition
5. Assessment to guide prevention and instruction

Five specific pedagogical practices from NRP. Another set of reading knowledge includes the five specific pedagogical practices identified by the National Reading Panel in *Teaching children to read: An Evidence-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading and Its Implications for Reading Instruction* (2000). The five areas of reading instruction are:

1. Phonemic awareness
2. Phonics
3. Fluency
4. Vocabulary
5. Comprehension

Developmental changes in student reading. A model of developmental changes in the student’s reading system is also presented. Figure 3 shows an interesting graphic that should be on the radar of every reading teacher. You see how language comprehension strands (which gradually become strategic) and word recognition strands (which gradually become automatic) become tightly and even more tightly interwoven to produce the kind of reading characterized by fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.

![Figure 3. One representation of developmental changes in the reading system. (Scarborough, 2001, in Snow et al, 2005)](image-url)
Table 2 shows a summary of the changes that occur in reading development across the grades. These changes are shown on four major areas: 1) the nature/role of texts; 2) language comprehension; 3) word recognition; and 4) fluency.

Assessment. In order to use assessments wisely, the following areas of concern are identified:

1. A wide range of assessment tools and practices
2. Using assessment in designing instruction
3. Communicating assessment results
4. Understanding the different forms of and purposes for assessment

Addressing needs of various students. The report stresses that almost every classroom includes variations on developmental, linguistic, and cultural dimensions. Thus, the reading teacher needs to address many widely-held myths about second-language acquisition, about poverty, and about low status dialects, and about students with difficulties. Some of the myths mentioned are:

- Younger students learn languages faster than older students.
- Students need to learn standard English so they can benefit from reading instruction.
- Children with poor kindergarten skills will have poor reading outcomes.
- Students with reading problems need completely different reading instruction.

To address the needs of students experiencing difficulties, specialized teacher knowledge includes confronting the myths, recognizing one’s own limitations, recruiting special advice and consultation, and learning to collaborate and work systemically.

The Disciplinary Knowledge Base

The disciplinary base needed by a reading teacher includes linguistics, psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, historical linguistics. But what is needed is usable knowledge, not just declarative knowledge. Figure 4 shows the disciplinary knowledge base needed for effective reading instruction.

The Adult Development Knowledge Base: The Learning, Enactment, Assessment, Reflection Cycle

The knowledge base of reading professionals as they go through different stages of professional development have been categorized by Snow et al into the following:

Declarative knowledge. The student pursuing an education major or certification program is primarily engaged in acquiring declarative knowledge (learning, from books or lectures, about child development, about instructional approaches, about text analysis, and so on) and in acquiring a declarative version of procedural knowledge.

### Figure 4. The disciplinary knowledge base for reading teachers (Snow et al, 2005)

- Phonemic Awareness
- Word attack, Phonics
- Word meaning (vocabulary)
- Comprehension, Strategy use
- Fluency
- Phonology
- Morphology
- Etymology
- Orthography
- Semantics
- Syntax
- Pragmatics
- Discourse
- Metacognition
knowledge—the capacity to answer questions about what one should do in various situations. This stage of knowledge development is when a solid foundation of disciplinary knowledge relevant to success as a teacher will typically be acquired.

**Situated, can-do procedural knowledge.** Procedural knowledge is complex—situated procedural knowledge is needed to function effectively in a relatively simple situation, for example, as a teacher of a small homogeneous group of children or in a highly scaffolded situation (for example, with support from an excellent mentor teacher) and the level needed for independent functioning in a typical classroom.

**Stable procedural knowledge.** The well-prepared first-year teacher should have a level of declarative and procedural knowledge stable enough to support functioning under “normal circumstances”—she or he can plan instruction that will work for the majority of the class, can maintain order and implement the planned

### Table 2. Developmental Changes in the Reading System (Snow et al, 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Levels</th>
<th>Nature/Role of Texts</th>
<th>Language Comprehension</th>
<th>Word Recognition</th>
<th>Fluency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRE-PRIMARY GRADES</strong></td>
<td>Mostly narrative</td>
<td>• Listening comprehension</td>
<td>• Phonological/phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Not an issue</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sense of narrative</td>
<td>• Letter/sound recognition</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>PRIMARY GRADES</strong></td>
<td>Still mostly narrative</td>
<td>More complex/academic</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Decodable and/or leveled texts</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Repeated readings</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MIDDLE GRADES</strong></td>
<td>• Reading subordinated to disciplines (math, science, literature, social studies); mostly expository, even narratives read for analysis, not plot; Learning from texts</td>
<td>Specialized vocabulary</td>
<td>Discipline-specific reading practices and instruction</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Specific genres</td>
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<td>• Specific tasks</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Specialized vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SECONDARY GRADES</strong></td>
<td>• Reading subordinated to disciplines (math, science, literature, social studies); mostly expository, even narratives read for analysis, not plot; Expertise in learning from texts; Expertise in producing discipline-specific texts</td>
<td>Specialized vocabulary</td>
<td>Discipline-specific reading practices and instruction</td>
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<td>• Specific genres</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Specialized vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 2. Developmental Changes in the Reading System (Snow et al, 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Levels</th>
<th>Nature/Role of Texts</th>
<th>Language Comprehension</th>
<th>Word Recognition</th>
<th>Fluency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRE-PRIMARY GRADES</td>
<td>Mostly narrative</td>
<td>• Listening comprehension</td>
<td>• Phonological/phonemic awareness</td>
<td>Not an issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Sense of narrative</td>
<td>• Letter/sound recognition</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRIMARY GRADES</td>
<td>Still mostly narrative</td>
<td>More complex/academic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Decodable and/or leveled texts</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Repeated readings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MIDDLE GRADES</td>
<td>• Reading subordinated to disciplines (math, science, literature, social studies); mostly expository, even narratives read for analysis, not plot; Learning from texts</td>
<td>Specialized vocabulary</td>
<td>Discipline-specific reading practices and instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Specific genres</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Specific tasks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Specialized vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECONDARY GRADES</td>
<td>• Reading subordinated to disciplines (math, science, literature, social studies); mostly expository, even narratives read for analysis, not plot; Expertise in learning from texts; Expertise in producing discipline-specific texts</td>
<td>Specialized vocabulary</td>
<td>Discipline-specific reading practices and instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Specific genres</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Specific tasks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Specialized vocabulary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
instruction, can assess child progress, and can adapt instruction within the limits of “normal practice.” Such a beginning teacher might well be expected, though, to need help in designing and delivering instruction for some percentage of children in the class—those who come from an unfamiliar linguistic or cultural background, those who don’t respond to the standard instruction, and those encountering particular difficulties learning to read.

Expert, adaptive knowledge. The experienced teacher is expected to be able to deal with a full array of instructional challenges, to identify problems for which the current knowledge base offers inadequate guidance, to seek new relevant research-based knowledge, and to incorporate that knowledge into his or her knowledge structures. The experienced teacher should have a role in the school that acknowledges and uses his or her experience—supervising student teachers, of course, but also mentoring novice teachers, taking a leadership role in teacher learning groups, and serving as a consultant for students who present particular challenges.

Reflective, organized, analyzed knowledge. The master teacher has enough experience to analyze what she or he has learned in courses, read in books, or heard at professional conferences and evaluate it as useful or not, well-founded or not. The master teacher is, ideally, responsible for leading professional development activities within a school or department, is available as a consultant teacher to less experienced colleagues, and is, perhaps, even collaborating with faculty members in pre-service programs to design and deliver teacher-education courses.

Snow et al (2005) distinguish five levels of increasing progressive differentiation roughly correlated with five points in the teacher’s career progression (See Figure 5):

1. Pre-service
2. Apprentice
3. Novice
4. Experienced teacher
5. Master teacher

Teachers at each of these points on their developmental and career trajectories should be engaged in cycles of learning, enactment, assessment, and reflection, though the weight placed on each of these activities shifts with experience. Clearly, pre-service, apprentice, and novice teachers are most heavily involved in new learning, whereas experienced and master teachers are placing more emphasis on assessment and reflection. But each of the steps in the cycle is crucial for all.

Also, these five levels should not be thought of as “stages” separated from one another by sharp discontinuities in knowledge. Rather, they represent points on a trajectory during which knowledge becomes increasingly differentiated and subject to analysis.

Figure 6 is a representation of how those different types of knowledge might be distributed at various points in a teacher’s career. Remember, though, that the total knowledge available grows.

Snow et al (2005) argue that the quantity and complexity of the declarative and practical knowledge teachers need to be successful teachers of reading is so great that it simply cannot be mastered adequately in the brief time available during a pre-service program. At the same time, pre-service teachers can learn enough about teaching reading to do it adequately for many child learners, if provided with a decent curriculum and a reasonable level of support. With the help and consultation of a more experienced teacher, novices should be able to address the needs of most of the children in any classroom. Thus, it is crucial to conceptualize what teachers need to know to teach reading within a developmental framework.

Snow et al (2005) have proposed that to become a model of professional growth in reading, programs need to:

- Address teacher beliefs to foster lasting change
- Create expectations for continuous learning
- Ensure development of comprehensive and usable knowledge base
- Help teachers apply new knowledge to particular contexts
Further, they suggest that the system needs to recognize:

- That novice teachers can at best be expected to do no harm
- The need for stages of teacher careers, associated with changes in knowledge, experience, responsibilities, and rewards
- That ongoing learning is as important for teachers as for MDs or car mechanics
- That school-site support for teacher functioning is as important as what teachers bring
- That delivering pre-service education is only a part of universities’ responsibilities.
Conclusion

Based on the frameworks presented above, teacher educators have three important tasks that require immediate attention.

First, we must ensure that our programs provide the necessary content in teacher preparation so that new teachers can succeed. We should not do this revision alone, but enlist the help of teachers to create teacher-education programs that address the ideal as well as the day-to-day realities of classrooms.

Second, we must continue to build bridges with the Department of Education and public school personnel to support teachers through continuing professional development opportunities.

Finally, we need research agendas that explicitly tackle the issues of teacher quality and preparation programs, relating teacher preparation to student literacy achievement.

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References


What research says about reading hypertext: Implications for comprehension instruction

This paper explains what hypertext is and presents a synthesis of various studies involving hypertext. Basing on the findings of the studies cited, implications and recommendations for literacy instruction are put forward, including the call for the use of blended environments in the reading classroom and the teaching of strategic and metacognitive reading.

Introduction

With the rapidly changing times brought about by immense technological breakthroughs, the academe, being the agency in charge of preparing the citizens for a competitive future, has to find ways to ensure that every student is afforded the best education. This means that every school must be responsive to the call of the time since, more than ever, technology has become the name of the game. Technology is so invasive that it has infiltrated every aspect of human life in varying degrees. The intellectual aspect of a person is indeed one of those. Lenhart, Simon, and Graziano (2001) reported that 94% of children aged 12-17 expressed that they used the Internet for school-related matters. This must have an effect on their intellectual gains. A decade later, the picture has perhaps changed to mean almost 100% considering that the Internet continues to be the most powerful tool available to every learner. As Leu (2002) pointed out, “the Internet has entered our classrooms faster than books, television, computers, the telephone, or any other technology for information and communication” (p. 311).

Given the above context, the questions are, “How do schools, especially the less affluent ones, cope with the demands of the time? If they have Internet resources available, how then do they maximize the use? How do they utilize the tool in relation to reading and comprehension?” It is true that there are many good things technology can do in school. Hermosa (2006, p. 15), for instance, states that “technology opens doors to teaching literacy skills in ways not available to us from only books and other traditional print sources.” From the said statement alone, we can just deduce how big disservice it is not to make use of technologies in the classroom, more so, not teaching students how to read or read from them properly given that we are in the technology mediated age. It is also important to keep in mind the argument of Leu, Kinzer, Coiro, and Cammack (2004) regarding new literacies being one of the important recent literacy theories. The aforementioned scholars (as cited in Coiro & Dobler, 2007, pp. 217-218), posit that “traditional
reading skills are necessary, but not sufficient, to read and learn from information on the Internet.” The same line of argument is supported by Anderson (2003) who believes that there are differences in processing print and non-print materials. With the nature of hypertext, he is convinced that nonprint and oftentimes nonlinear texts present more challenges. He states, “We cannot assume a simple transfer of L2 reading skills and strategies from the hardcopy environment to the online environment” (p. 5). This then calls for more research investigations knowing that hypertext and hypermedia environments are relatively young compared with other areas in literacy (Bolaños, 2008).

This paper was conceptualized to discuss what hypertext is, then present a synthesis of different studies involving hypertext, and as corollary, point out implications these studies have for comprehension instruction particularly in the country.

What is hypertext?

Nelson (1987) described hypertext as a series of text chunks connected by links that offer the readers different pathways. He further defined it as non-linear or multi-linear, non-sequential, nodal, and allows for the readers’ navigation control. Burbules and Callister (2000) looked at hypertext as “a kind of informational environment in which textual materials and ideas are linked to one another in multiple ways” (p. 43). They acknowledge that, at present, there are a variety of hypertext learning environments and they all share these common characteristics: a) association of ideas through links; b) a choice of paths for readers, and not all readers follow the same path; c) immediate access to reference documents; d) movement through hypertext by browsing or navigating; e) focus of thought is always shifting in a hypertext environment; and f) hypertext supports constructivism. They stress that, with this nature of information presentation, readers must take a much more active role in determining the quality and coherence of the texts they read. Snyder (1998) further described hypertext by saying that it provides a means of arranging information in a non-linear manner with the computer automating the process of connecting one piece of information to another.

To further understand the reading environments today’s learners read in, Coiro and Dobler (2007, pp. 219-220) identified four main differences between print and hypertext. They agree with other scholars that, first, hypertext prompts readers to employ unique cognitive processes and strategies (Landow, 1994; Reinking, 2000; Snyder, 1996); second, that though both print and hypertext environments typically provide supportive navigational features such as table of contents or network map, the actual content of hypertext is hidden beneath multiple layers of information not viewable with traditional previewing procedures such as rapidly leafing through the pages of a book (Foltz, 1996; Otter & Johnson, 2000); third, contemporary hypertexts often incorporate “hyperlinked icons” like navigation buttons and dynamic image maps to provide a visual representation of a hyperlink, rather than a textual one (Kinzer & Leander, 2003); and fourth, the authors’ intertextual connections are more obvious and immediately accessible in hypertext compared with printed text (Caney, 1999).

In addition, Sutherland-Smith (2002, pp. 664-665) laid the differences between web text reading and print text reading in terms of additional features the former have, which according to her, would mean that alternative reading strategies are required to decode meaning. Among other characteristics, Sutherland-Smith claim that web-based text a) permits nonlinear strategies of thinking; b) allows nonhierarchical strategies; c) offers non-sequential strategies; d) requires visual literacy skills to understand multimedia components; e) is interactive, with the reader able to add, change, or move text; and f) enables a blurring of the relationship between reader and writer.

Studies involving hypertext

For easy and quick reference, synthesis of studies on hypertext is presented in Table 1 noting the investigators, the participants, the independent and dependent variables, and the findings.

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Table 1. Summary of studies on hypertext

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigators</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Retterer, O. J.</td>
<td>36 readers</td>
<td>Hypertext and non-hypertext materials</td>
<td>• Level of comprehension</td>
<td>• Reading hypertext appears to enhance comprehension as compared to reading non-hypertext.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reaction to reading hypertext</td>
<td>• Computer anxiety does not appear to affect comprehension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chen, D. T.</td>
<td>Middle school students</td>
<td>Instructional interventions</td>
<td>• Comprehension of hypertext</td>
<td>• Instructional expectations and software design had stronger effects on students’ processing patterns than differences in the experimental treatments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Attitudes toward the learning of hypertext processing skills</td>
<td>• Students enjoyed reading in the hypertext environment; felt good about themselves, and experienced little anxiety using the new materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foltz, P. W.</td>
<td>Adolescent readers</td>
<td>• Text comprehension theory</td>
<td>Comprehension and strategies in linear text and hypertext</td>
<td>• Despite the different text formats, subjects used similar reading strategies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Text formats: linear text, hypertext, or coherent text</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Subjects tried to maintain a coherent path through the text, which resulted in subjects seeing a similar coherent representation of the text.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Subjects indicated that they used reading heuristics and signals in the text to guide them through the text in a coherent manner.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Even when subjects jumped to different places to find specific information, they still made these jumps coherently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayden, S.B.</td>
<td>114 college students</td>
<td>• Helps and glosses</td>
<td>Reading comprehension behaviors of subjects</td>
<td>• There was no significant difference in comprehension whether helps were presented in print or by computer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Computer-mediated text</td>
<td></td>
<td>• There was no correlation between the number of helps selected and the number of correct idea units.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Subjects with lower levels of target language experience selected the English definitions helps almost exclusively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hsu, C.Y.</td>
<td>Adult readers</td>
<td>• Literate programming</td>
<td>Effects of the flexible discourse structuring of text segments on discourse coherence</td>
<td>• The presentation strategy based on an intersegment text cohesion similarity metric does show an effect on learning speed (effect on time) for a novice group whereas it is not statistically significant on learning accuracy (effect on score) for the same group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Discourse coherence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigators</td>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Independent Variables</td>
<td>Dependent Variables</td>
<td>Findings</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hoffman, S.Q. (1998)</td>
<td>14 subjects</td>
<td>• Reading in a hypertext environment</td>
<td>Comprehension frequency of errors</td>
<td>• Subjects reading print outperformed those reading hypertext marginally on one story, but difference was not statistically significant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reading print or hypertext</td>
<td>L2 readers make</td>
<td>• Analysis of the number of errors for each factor in Bemhardt’s model for those reading print and those reading hypertext found only the difference for word recognition to be statistically significant, with those reading print making more errors on this factor than those reading hypertext.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• A particularly salient secondary finding was that hypertext appears to enable L2 readers to read more quickly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacNeal, L.G. (2000)</td>
<td>18 subjects</td>
<td>Epistemic belief in Quick Learning</td>
<td>Reading comprehension and meta-comprehension in an information retrieval hypertext system</td>
<td>• A strong positive relationship between comprehension and metacomprehension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Moderate inverse relationship between time to complete the hypertext activity and Quick Learning; moderate inverse relationship between GPA and Quick Learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Moderate positive relationship between GPA, comprehension, and metacomprehension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiappone, L.L. (2003)</td>
<td>42 Spanish-speaking 2nd Grade ELLs (43% female, 57% male)</td>
<td>• Reading of a book in CD-ROM vs traditional print formats</td>
<td>Independent reading practice</td>
<td>• No statistically significant difference in performance among the three reading conditions; however, when data were analyzed by ability, findings have practical significance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reading condition: (Reading a storybook with or without teacher support; reading storybook in CD-ROM)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Hypertext functions that support reading skills, including decoding and vocabulary, appeared to improve automaticity and also provided collateral benefits for ELLs of low reading ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reading ability (low and high)</td>
<td></td>
<td>• For student of high reading ability, the hypertext function appeared to distract the readers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Overall, a CD-ROM appears to be a valuable tool for struggling readers during independent reading.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-Seghayer, K. (2003)</td>
<td>40 ESL students</td>
<td>• Construction and organization of</td>
<td>• Efficacy embedding micro-structural devices</td>
<td>• Well-structured hypertext aided ESL readers in developing a more coherent mental representation of the hyper-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 1. Summary of studies on hypertext

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investigators</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stylianou, A. (2003)</td>
<td>6th grade students</td>
<td>Reading from hypertext</td>
<td>Navigation behavior</td>
<td>• Providing metanavigation support enabled the groups to make coherent transitions among text units.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Reading comprehension, presence of metanavigation support and prior domain knowledge significantly predicted students’ individual understanding of science.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dail, J.S. (2004)</td>
<td>10th grade English language arts class</td>
<td>The environment of a 10th grade classroom using computers regularly</td>
<td>The processes 10th grade students use when reading online hypertext</td>
<td>• In a classroom environment where computers are an ongoing component of instruction, there exists a social dimension to working in that context. Other components of this environment included students searching for information via the Internet and using the computer for a variety of purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Students utilize a variety of strategies when reading hypertext via the Internet: scrolling the document, skimming the text, note-taking by hand, summarizing information, and relying on prior knowledge.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Despite employing traditional reading strategies, students scored low in comprehension.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacDonald, E.C. (2005)</td>
<td>41 middle school students in a private school</td>
<td>Linear text and hypertext</td>
<td>Use of surveying, predicting, and setting purposes for reading as a reading comprehension strategy</td>
<td>• Some indication that students may find reading hypertext more difficult that reading linear text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• General reading comprehension and some aspects of scaffolded learning are factors influencing comprehension of both types of texts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 1. Summary of studies on hypertext

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Dependent Variables</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Lopez, C.G. (2008)     | Novice readers                                                               | • Novice readers                                          | Reading comprehension                                      | • Teacher strategy rating was unique to linear text, while hypertext surveying was primary factor in hypertext; student-rated measure of motivation / persistence also a small factor.  
• Students appeared to use many of the same components of the strategy in both types of text.  
• While many preferred the linear text to the hypertext for both use of the surveying strategy and for reading and remembering, many students would like more experience with hypertext for learning content area materials. |
| Chen, H.Y. (2009)      | 119 upper-elementary and middle school students, with and without learning disabilities in America and Taiwan | Expository text                                            | • Internet navigation strategies and behaviors            | • Enhanced text coherence and structure facilitate construction of a coherent mental representation, which in this study is equivalent to comprehension.  
• Comprehension, and therefore hypertext usability, is improved for novice readers if devices combine enhanced coherence and structure in their design. |
| Bolaños, E. A. (2009)  | 16 female college students                                                   | Print and hypertext environments                          | • Level of comprehension                                 | • Students had opportunities to use computers and use the Internet, but were not taught sufficient online reading and search strategies.  
• Students were easily disoriented by the non-linear nature and unfamiliar structure of online texts, especially when Websites or Web pages lacked appropriate tabs or organizational cues for informational passages.  
• Students did not employ recommended online search strategies.  
• Students had weak before-reading strategies and had difficulty distinguishing before- and during reading strategies, although their after-reading strategies were often advanced.  
• Good L2 readers of expository texts employ a multi-strategic approach to reading when they process texts in either linear or nonlinear environment.  
• Overall, the level of comprehension of the participants is the same regardless of environments, though there is indication that print readers have a |
Table 1. Summary of studies on hypertext

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Srivastava, P.</td>
<td>14 adolescents with language learning disability (LLD) and 25 adolescents with typical language development (TLD)</td>
<td>Computer-based and paper-based conditions</td>
<td>Reading comprehension</td>
<td>• There were no significant differences in reading comprehension, total answering time, or reading time between the computer-based and paper-based conditions in either group; however, the LLD group scored significantly lower than the TLD group in reading comprehension. Neither group was affected by any additional cognitive load imposed by hypertext. Predictors for reading comprehension varied by group and condition.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can generally be observed, studies present hypertext as a positive environment where today’s learners can read in. Among other good trends are hypertext’s potential to enhance comprehension, to provoke a more interesting learning environment, to provide challenges that lead to readers’ discovery of and imperative use of strategies, and to improve metacognition in the readers.

As these studies are still relatively few, more investigations are needed so as to see patterns that would lead to improvements in both theories and practices.
Implications for comprehension instruction

Given the results of the studies presented in this paper and the goal of improving students’ comprehension while reading in a hypertext context, the following implications for comprehension instruction are offered:

1. **The need for the inclusion of hypertext reading in the syllabi.** It can be observed that up to this date, not all tertiary institutions have incorporated reading in ICT (information and communication technology) in their Communication Arts / English syllabi. This must be because of the relatively long-standing assumption that a reader who can read in print can equally and successfully read in the online setting. As some studies reveal (Bolaños, 2009; Chen, 2009; Dail, 2004; MacDonald, 2005), the said assumption may not always be the case. Hence, the need for syllabi that use blended learning environments.

2. **The demand for stressing comprehension strategy instruction.** Given some findings that hypertext requires additional if not distinct comprehension strategies (Bolaños, 2009; Dail, 2004) and the fact that strategies enhance comprehension (Duke & Pearson, 2002; Pressley, 1998), strategy instruction, especially explicit teaching or teacher modeling and direct instruction of comprehension strategies, should be prioritized in the classroom. Examples of these strategies are scrolling the document, skimming the text, note-taking by hand, summarizing information, relying on prior knowledge (Dail, 2004), and rereading, questioning, inferring (Bolaños, 2009). Doing this will help develop independent readers who are not intimidated by the features of multimedia tools which, observably, are getting more and more sophisticated if not complex.

3. **The necessity for a simple yet effective approach to teaching reading.** Oftentimes, the process of reading is discussed in a technical manner that learners do not see the deeper relevance of this mother skill to their overall success as students and as individuals. Teachers then must devise ways that will enable them to approach the idea of reading and its concomitant theories in a simple way that emphasizes its pragmatic application to life. Through this, learners will be able to realize better the value of reading. If learners are informed of the true relevance of reading to their lives, there are bigger chances that they themselves will put premium on it.

4. **The recognition that regardless of discipline, every teacher is a literacy teacher.** Considering that all fields of knowledge are heavily available on the Internet and that teachers are expected to be among the top consumers if not producers of knowledge on the World Wide Web, they are then expected to acknowledge that they can contribute significantly to the literacy development of their students. Every teacher then can lead their students to the proper use of Internet such as reading useful articles, answering good exercises, composing, and submitting – all from there. Furthermore, if students see that their teachers are judicious users of the information on the net, they would be better influenced and this would lead to the learners’ being able to keep pace with the rapid technological developments.

5. **The need to consider coherence in both content and structure.** Teachers who are technology savvy and can design lessons using computer applications must consider logical and consistent presentation of the text. As the study of Lopez Colon (2008) demonstrates, novice readers would rely on coherence and structure of the text for them to gain better comprehension. Thus, every educational software designer should consider the mental representation of the learners with how they create such materials. This can also be an opportune time to embellish the design with appropriate audio and visual effects in right amount that would heighten interest in the learners and increase the potential of the material for comprehension.

6. **The call for emphasizing metacognition.** Since hypertext allows for greater learner
Conclusion

In this paper, I presented the following: the understanding some scholars attribute to hypertext, the different studies on hypertext, and the implications they have for teaching reading comprehension. It should be noted that scholars have substantially defined hypertext; that more studies are still called for in order to understand hypertext more deeply; and lastly, it should be noted that results of different studies have bearing specifically on the teaching of comprehension. As noted, schools, teachers, and learners have important roles to play in this regard.

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References


International Reading Association

Position Statement on
New Literacies and 21st Century Technologies

Summary

To become fully literate in today’s world, students must become proficient in the new literacies of 21st-century technologies. IRA believes that literacy educators have a responsibility to integrate information and communication technologies (ICTs) into the curriculum, to prepare students for the futures they deserve. We believe further that students have the right to

- Teachers who use ICTs skillfully for teaching and learning
- Peers who use ICTs responsibly and who share their knowledge
- A literacy curriculum that offers opportunities for collaboration with peers around the world
- Instruction that embeds critical and culturally sensitive thinking into practice
- Standards and assessments that include new literacies
- Leaders and policymakers who are committed advocates of ICTs for teaching and learning
- Equal access to ICTs


Metacognitive strategy instruction and bilingual readers’ comprehension of expository texts

This study investigated whether or not explicit metacognitive strategy instruction in English expository texts improved 3rd year bilingual high school students’ reading comprehension of English and Filipino expository texts and their awareness and use of metacognitive strategies. It also sought to find out if such instruction would improve their performance in English, Filipino, and World History classes. Qualitative and quantitative measures for data collection and analyses were used. Results showed an improvement in the students’ Filipino reading comprehension, metacognitive awareness of reading strategies, World History grades, and English grades. But there was no improvement in the students’ English reading comprehension and Filipino grades. Results support the research findings that 1) language affects comprehension (Arafat, 1996) and 2) language skills enhance or enable the effectiveness of the use of metacognitive strategies for comprehension (van Gelderen et al, 2007). Implications are drawn and recommendations made for developing vocabulary and language proficiency in both the L1 and L2, studying the advantages of being a bilingual for the acquisition and use of metacognitive strategies, and conducting similar studies using a longer time frame.

Introduction

The complexity of reading is increased by the bilingual nature of the Filipino reader. The 1987 Bilingual Education Policy of the Department of Education, Culture, and Sports (DECS) stipulates: “The policy on Bilingual Education aims at achievement of competence in both Filipino and English, through the teaching of both languages and their use as media of instruction at all levels” (DECS Order No.52, series 1987). Likewise, the Philippine Constitution of 1987 (Article IV Section 7) states: “For purposes of communication and instruction, the official languages of the Philippines are Filipino and, until otherwise provided by law, English.” Furthermore, “Most Filipinos speak more than three languages including their mother tongue. Among these will be Filipino and English. In Metro Manila and nearby provinces the immersion of Filipinos in the two languages begins from the home in early childhood and is extended to community life and school” (Ocampo, 2002, pp.6, 7).

Educators are faced with three challenges: the diverse language backgrounds of the students, the complexity of reading, and the variety of reading situations. Since students are faced with a variety of reading situations, educational institutions should aim to prepare them to be self-directed readers such that they are able to use the appropriate strategy for the reading situation in which they find themselves. An important strategy to equip them with is metacomprehension (Literacy Now!, 2005), an aspect of metacognition applied to reading. Metacognition refers to one’s knowledge and control over one’s own cognition. It involves knowledge of one’s own learning ability, awareness of the nature of a task and what it requires, the use of the appropriate strategies for a given task, and monitoring if one’s cognitive objectives have been met (Flavell 1979, 1987, in Livingston, 1997).
Diverse language backgrounds yield some bilingual readers who have not mastered Filipino, lessening the possibility of the transfer of language and comprehension skills from Filipino to English. Other bilinguals may take advantage of their knowledge of two languages by shifting back and forth between the languages—especially if they know the relationship between the two languages—to try to find meaning in a text (Gunning, 2003). The use of metacognitive strategies could be the key to crossing the language barrier for comprehension of expository text. In a study conducted by Maghsudi and Talebi (2009), bilinguals had significantly higher scores than monolinguals in their metacognitive scores. A “rich body of empirical studies has investigated the relationships between learners’ L2 proficiency and strategy use with the majority indicating that conscious, ‘tailored’ use of strategies is related to language achievement and proficiency, and successful learners employ a wider variety of strategies to improve their language skills and performance” (Oxford 1996, p. xi in Maghsudi and Talebi, 2009).

Many who have reached secondary education do not have the reading skills for appropriately handling the level of text difficulty in their textbooks and reading materials (Gonzalez-Intal, 1996). Teaching students metacognitive strategies will enable them to approach various types of text, retain important information, and analyze historical events and people. Metacognitive strategies will also provide these students with a variety of assessment tools for better monitoring of their comprehension, thus giving them the means for achieving their goals in reading.

Failure of readers to cross the cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) threshold level in their L1 (Filipino) before they are introduced to their L2 (English) may cause low reading comprehension in higher levels (Baetiong, 2004). Sibayan (1985) claimed that secondary Filipino learners have not reached the threshold level skills necessary for comprehending secondary material.

In second language (L2) reading, the lack of automaticity in lower-level processing skills affects the higher-level processing skill of comprehension (Stanovich, 1980, 1984 in Van Gelderen, A., Schoonen, R., Stoel, R.D., de Glopper, K., & Hulstijn, J., 2007). To describe the relationship of L1 and L2 reading, the threshold hypothesis postulates that before readers are able to transfer their reading skills to the L2, they must cross a threshold of vocabulary and grammar ability in the L2. Hence, the processing efficiency hypothesis presumes that if there is a lack of automaticity in lower order processing, higher order processing for comprehension suffers (Van Gelderen et al, 2007).

Metacognitive ability has been found to be the most important determinant of reading comprehension in both the L1 and L2 of high school students (Van Gelderen et al, 2007). However, processing efficiency is crucial for adolescents’ L2 reading (Van Gelderen et al, 2007). Fluency in the L2 is necessary before one can focus on higher thinking skills since vocabulary and grammar in the L2 facilitate comprehension. Moreover, vocabulary in the L1 and the L2 increases the effects of metacognitive strategies on reading comprehension (Van Gelderen et al, 2007). Although van Gelderen et al (2007) have found that processing efficiency does not affect the use of reading skills and the transfer of these skills to the L2, there may still be a language threshold to cross before such a transfer can take place.

Although the threshold level in the L1 may have to be reached before the learner should be introduced to his/her L2 (Baetiong, 2004), there is a possibility that having knowledge of two languages helps the readers in their comprehension. Students’ bilingual nature may actually enable them to be more metacognitively aware. Since they are already learning a second language, they become more aware of the difficulties involved in comprehending text and may go back and forth between their L1 and L2 in order to try to understand text (Jimenez, 1997 in Gunning, 2003).

Whether in the L1 or the L2, reading, including content area reading, should take the three levels of reading comprehension into account – the literal, interpretative, and the applied – so that
the reader eventually processes new knowledge from what he/she has read (Vacca & Vacca, 1986). Since reading to learn is the goal of reading in the content area classroom, it is pertinent that the teacher help the learner become more content literate and independent by equipping him/her with strategies for dealing with expository or content area text. Reading to learn is complex and not only requires recognizing and focusing on important information, but also being able to use the right strategies to recall that information, monitor one’s comprehension and learning, and apply fix-up strategies—all aspects of metacognition (Baker & Brown, 1984 in Wade & Reynolds, 1989). Content area teachers should then equip their students with metacognitive strategies for comprehending content area material or expository text and help them become confident and independent readers and learners who read purposefully (Vacca & Vacca, 1986).

Explicit and direct instruction takes time and is very detailed, but research has shown that it is an effective means for teaching metacognitive strategies. Most studies on metacognition such as those of Ante-Borromeo (1998) and Abello (2003) show that metacognitive strategies have a positive effect on reading comprehension. In the studies of Cequena (1999), Padilla (2002), and Reynoso-Reyes (2001), it was recommended that metacognitive strategy instruction be implemented though it was not evident in the results for all the subjects tested that metacognitive strategies have a positive effect on reading comprehension. However, studies do not converge on the matter of time allotment or length of intervention necessary for positive effects to take place. One study asserts that greater improvement will take place given a longer period of instruction, i.e., longer than 20 hours (“Middle school study with developing metacognitive skills”, 2005); on the other hand, another study posits that time is not a factor in determining the effects of intervention (Cequena, 1999). Finally, some studies assert that the effects of metacognitive instruction are local, not global, i.e., improvement is shown only in the comprehension of the texts used in the intervention, but not in the reading of other texts outside and beyond the intervention program (Carver, 1987 in Padilla, 2002).

THE STUDY

AIM

This research primarily aimed to study the effects of explicit metacognitive strategy instruction on the reading comprehension of third year bilingual high school students. Particularly, it investigated whether or not the teaching of metacognitive strategies in English improved the students’ reading comprehension of English and Filipino expository texts and their awareness and use of metacognitive strategies. Additionally, it also sought to find out if such instruction improved their performance in their English, Filipino, and World History classes.

The framework is patterned after van Gelderen et al’s (2007) study in which it was found that metacognitive ability significantly affects reading comprehension; however, it was also concluded in their study that grammar and vocabulary ability in the L2 further enables or enhances the use of metacognitive strategies for reading comprehension in the said language.

METHOD

To achieve the aforementioned research aims, the following actions were made in relation to the different aspects of the methodology, namely: sample, materials, data collection, and data analyses.

Sample

A class of seventeen third year high school students (seven male and ten female) in a small private Christian school (227 students) in Quezon City, Metro Manila (Philippines) was chosen as the sample for this study. The students’ ages ranged from 14 to 18 years old (ten were 14, four were 15, two were 16, and one was 18). The students were of different language, ethnic, and social backgrounds but were generally exposed to and generally use two languages, English and Filipino, especially in
school. The choice of subjects was primarily due to their bilingual nature, and secondarily, their willingness and availability to participate in the study.

This junior high school class had two American-born Filipinos, one of whom was raised in a province in the Philippines and the other was raised abroad until she reached 4th grade. A few other students are pure Filipinos who also went to school in the province until it was time to go to high school in Manila. One is a special student who is being mainstreamed, while another is a Philippine-born Filipino-American. The rest of the students were raised in Metro Manila or near Metro Manila and are of Filipino descent.

Seven of the students are in homes in which Filipino is spoken most of the time, but all except one speak Filipino, English, and Taglish (a combination of Filipino and English) with friends. (“Taglish” is from “Tagalog” and “English”; Tagalog is a Philippine language on which Filipino, the national language, is predominantly based.) They consider themselves most fluent in Filipino. Four of them live in Ilocano-speaking homes, while one lives in a home in which Taglish and Pangalatok (a major language in Northern Luzon) are spoken. Another lives in a home where Kapampangan (a major language in Central Luzon) and Filipino are spoken, but considers himself most fluent in English. One student finds himself using Filipino, Ilocano (another major language in Northern Luzon), and English when conversing with his friends, while the others use Filipino, Taglish, and English with their friends. Three students are exposed to Filipino and English at home, two converse using English and Filipino, while one sticks to English all the time. One student can also communicate in Spanish (which she has been learning on her own).

The reading choices, habits, and abilities of the students vary. They admitted both their weaknesses and strengths, with some claiming to be patient or persistent depending on the text, and others claiming to be good in both Filipino and English comprehension. However, initial cloze test results revealed limitations in vocabulary, use of prior knowledge and context clues, noting details, subject-verb agreement, tenses, and use of articles (particularly in English).

**Materials**

**INSTRUMENTS**

To determine whether the metacognitive strategy intervention brought about an improvement in the subjects' English and Filipino reading comprehension of expository texts and grades in English, Filipino, and World History, the following quantitative and qualitative measures were used: a Pre-Intervention Questionnaire, Filipino and English versions of the Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory (Marsi), English cloze and multiple choice reading comprehension tests, Filipino cloze and multiple choice reading comprehension tests, the Questionnaire on the Metacognitive Strategy Taught, the Learning Portfolio, Post-Metacognitive Intervention Questionnaire, and the students’ Report Cards.

1. The Pre-Intervention Questionnaire is a researcher-made instrument with open-ended questions to determine the students’ language background, their language use at home, with their friends, and in which language they found themselves most proficient. It has questions on the students’ birthplace, background, interests, their opinions of themselves as students and readers, and what they enjoyed reading most. These were asked for the purpose of putting the study in context and revealing the way in which the participants are bilingual. This tool was content validated by a 3-member panel of experts (one in the field of language teaching and two in the field of reading education).

2. The Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory, or Marsi, is a self-report measure designed by Mokhtari and Richard (2002) to evaluate the awareness of 6th to 12th graders of the strategies they use in reading academic or school-related text. It was designed to evaluate the extent to which a student is aware of the processes necessary when reading and enable the student to
discover objectives and purposes he/she has when dealing with academic reading material or expository texts. A Filipino translation of the MARSI was also developed and administered. This translation was made with the assistance of a language and literacy education expert. Both versions of the MARSI had a translation in Filipino or English beneath each instruction and each item so that the language barrier could not be used as a reason for the students’ scores in the tool. The MARSI contains thirty items and evaluates one’s use of three types of reading strategies: global reading strategies which involve tapping into prior knowledge, making predictions, using context clues and using textual features for reading comprehension; problem-solving strategies, such as reading slowly and carefully, rereading, pausing to reflect on reading, and guessing the meaning of words; and support reading strategies which involve taking notes, paraphrasing, using reference materials as aids, underlining, and discussing what one has read.

3. Cloze Tests based on news articles with every 10th word deleted were administered to give the researcher an idea on the language and comprehension levels of the students in both English and Filipino. These measures were researcher-constructed, field-tested, and expert-validated. The English Cloze Test (18 items) was based on the article “Suicide Bomber Kills Bhutto” (2007, December 28, *The Philippine STAR*, p. A-1,3). The Filipino Cloze Test (17 items) was based on the article “Nakakatuwa, pero...” (2008, Enero 4, *Abante*, p. 4), which is about the financial situation of the Philippines in the new year of 2008. The information that the cloze tests would give on the bilingual students’ general language and comprehension levels was deemed important in the light of the assertion that grammar and vocabulary ability in the L2 further enables or enhances the use of metacognitive strategies for reading comprehension in the said language (van Gelderen et al, 2007). Rather than every 5th word, every 10th word was deleted due to the results of the field testing which experimented on deleting every 7th word and yielded very low scores. Since the material in the intervention was world history material, news articles about a foreign current event were chosen for the English Cloze Test. The Filipino articles were taken from tabloids since there was hardly any quality newspaper in Filipino available at the time of the study; however, these articles were revised to remove grammatical, spelling, and other language errors, and to improve them based on the results of the field testing conducted in two comparable heterogeneous classes in two different schools in Quezon City. Each version of the test was expert-validated.

4. The English and Filipino Reading Comprehension Tests (20 multiple choice items each) were researcher-constructed. They assessed the literal and inferential reading comprehension of the subjects in both English and Filipino and were based on the news articles “Commonwealth suspends Pakistan” (2007, November 24, *The Philippine STAR*, p. A-21); “Bhutto’s murder sparks riots across Pakistan” (2007, December 29, *The Philippine STAR*, p. A-17); “Ba’t takot kayo sa ‘kin? – ERAP” (2008, Enero 4, *Abante*, pp.1,2); and “Lozada marami pang ikakanta” (2008, Febrero 8, *Abante Tonite*, p.2) The reasons for the choice of articles were the same as those given for the cloze tests: subject matter of intervention and availability of Filipino articles. Similar to the said cloze tests, these multiple choice reading comprehension tests also underwent the same expert validation, field testing, and revision processes.

5. The Questionnaire on the Metacognitive Strategy Taught (QMST) was another researcher-made and expert-validated instrument for monitoring the subjects’ response to each strategy during the intervention. The instrument asked the students what their performance in the History class was during the teaching of the strategy, what they thought of the particular
strategy, what they found most challenging or enjoyable about it, whether or not they found the strategy helpful in the identification of their strengths and weaknesses as readers of expository text, whether or not they already used the strategy elsewhere, and whether or not they found it helpful in their comprehension of the history material covered and retention of important facts. Most questions required an explanation for the response. The QMST was designed as an interview, but due to time constraints, the interview was only conducted after the first strategy was taught. The students had to write their responses after the next two strategies were taught. This activity also enabled them to monitor their own response to how the strategies affected their reading and learning, enabling them to be more metacognitively aware.

6. For the Learning Portfolio, the students compiled exercises completed in class in a folder. The exercises were the K-W-L charts, SQ4R charts, text annotation charts they filled in, and map projects. An assessment was made for the portfolio as a whole based on a researcher-constructed and expert-validated rubric. The portfolio reflected the students’ reactions to the entire Metacognitive Intervention, their interest in the activities, and their sense of responsibility through the inclusion of all the guided practice and independent practice activities. It also reflected their understanding of the intervention through the inclusion of an introduction to the portfolio.

7. The Post-Metacognitive Intervention Questionnaire was also researcher-developed and expert-validated. It included questions on the subjects’ response to all the metacognitive strategies. It also asked if they preferred the traditional over the new way of teaching as modeled in the intervention and why; if they enjoyed the fact that they had to discuss the output for each application of the strategies covered; and if they found learning metacognitive strategies helpful for them to become better students and readers of expository text. The instrument also included questions on which strategy they preferred, found most beneficial, and found to be pointless or too difficult. In addition, questions were included on whether or not they found that their knowledge of the English and Filipino languages affected their comprehension of world history material. Each answer in the Post-Metacognitive Intervention Questionnaire had to be explained in writing.

8. Students’ Report Cards were used to obtain the participants’ grades in English, Filipino, and World History for all the four quarters of the school year. This was done to determine the effects of the intervention on their grades in the said subjects. English was chosen because it was the language of the material and the medium of instruction in the metacognitive intervention. World History was chosen because it was in this subject where the intervention was conducted. Finally, Filipino was chosen because aside from English, it is the bilingual students’ other dominant language of use (especially in school). Looking at the cross-lingual transfer of skills and the local and/or global effects of the metacognitive intervention was considered to be pertinent in light of what literature and past studies have asserted in connection to such matters.

METACOGNITIVE INTERVENTION LESSON PLANS

The lesson plans in the Metacognitive Intervention used explicit teaching of metacognitive strategies for the students’ reading and understanding of their world history texts. The contents of the lesson plans were Chapters 21-23 of *History of the World in Christian Perspective* (Combee, J. & Grussendorf, K.A., 1995) and the metacognitive strategies were K-W-L, SQ4R, and Conversing with the Author through Text Annotation. These strategies involved the strategies in the MARSI: global reading, problem-solving, and support reading strategies. The basic steps in the explicit teaching procedure were: introduction, teaching and modeling, discussion and evaluation, guided practice, and independent practice. The students
had to complete the graphic organizers for each strategy twice -- once with a partner, and the second time independently for evaluation. They were only expected to do this after the teacher modeled the strategy twice, the second modeling being a review of the strategy during which the students were encouraged to participate. Each lesson plan contained a rubric for evaluating the graphic organizers made by the students. The rubrics clearly specified the expectations for each aspect of the graphic organizers and gave the suggested range of scores depending on the extent to which the expectations were met by the students. After learning how their work was graded, they took responsibility in the last lesson to grade their own text annotations based on the rubric provided. (See Table 1).

**Data Collection**

The data gathering procedure included four phases: the development of instruments, the pre-testing period, the Metacognitive Intervention (See Table 2), and the post-testing period.

After Phase I, the development of the instruments, Phase II was begun with the
Table 2. Metacognitive Intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Sessions</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
<th>Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-testing</td>
<td></td>
<td>120 minutes</td>
<td>Administration of MARSI, cloze tests, reading comprehension tests in English and Filipino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-W-L</td>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>60 minutes/session = 420 minutes</td>
<td>World History book, Geography Map Project, learning portfolio, K-W-L graphic organizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SQ4R</td>
<td>8-16</td>
<td>60 minutes/session = 540 minutes</td>
<td>World History book, Geography Map Project, learning portfolio, Chapters 21&amp;22 Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text Annotation</td>
<td>17-25</td>
<td>60 minutes/session = 300 minutes</td>
<td>World History book, Geography Map Project, learning portfolio, post-its or colored paper and book tape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Testing</td>
<td></td>
<td>120 minutes</td>
<td>Administration of MARSI, cloze tests, reading comprehension tests in English and Filipino, and the Post Metacognitive Intervention Questionnaire</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

administration of the Pre-Intervention Questionnaire. The final grades of the students in the subjects of Filipino, English, and World History from the 1st to the 3rd quarters of the school year were averaged. The English and Filipino versions of the MARSI or Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategies Inventory were administered with each item and each translation being read aloud by the researcher (for both versions) while the students wrote their answers.

Some students ignored the read alouds and answered the questionnaire at their own pace. The researcher-made cloze tests on Filipino and English news articles were also administered during the students’ World History class period. Lastly, the reading comprehension tests on English and Filipino news articles were administered. Although the students found the tests a bit tedious, they were very cooperative since the study and its purpose were well-explained to them.

Phase III of the data collection procedure was the Metacognitive Intervention (25 hours of direct instruction in metacognitive strategies). The scope and sequence of the intervention is clearly delineated in Table 3.

The medium of instruction in World History class was English. However, though the lesson plans and instructional materials were in English, code-switching, code-mixing, and translating did take place since the students would ask the teacher questions about terms or sections they could not understand during the program. Sometimes, translations were given by the teacher for better understanding of the vocabulary word or concept.

For each lesson, the Questionnaire on the Metacognitive Strategy Taught (QMST) was conducted after the teaching of each strategy. After the last session, the students were instructed to organize their work in the learning portfolio and make a table of contents based on the list provided by the researcher. They were also instructed to write an introduction for their portfolio. It was to be a description of their overall response to the strategies, the intervention itself, and the lessons covered.

Due to time constraints, the researcher was permitted to double teach. There were days when she was given time by other teachers and days she used her time for other subjects to teach World History.

The students’ retention of important facts was consistently tested with quizzes for every few pages of the world history texts. Quizzes were administered after modeling, after guided practice, and after independent practice. A long
Table 3. Metacognitive Intervention: Scope and sequence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Metacognitive Strategy</th>
<th>Schedule per session and skills covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 21: The British Empire</td>
<td>K-W-L (sessions 1-7)</td>
<td>Seven sessions, Session 1: introduction to the intervention and terms in the chapter; introduction to KWL, the checklist, and rubric; modeling: K (activation of prior knowledge on England) W (setting a purpose for reading by asking questions on the Victorian Period) L (monitoring comprehension by answering questions in the W portion); evaluation of the chart</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Session 2: modeling a second time for review of the KWL: K(activation of prior knowledge on Ireland, Britain and her colonies) W (setting a purpose for reading by asking questions on British government and relationship with Ireland) L (monitoring comprehension by writing answers to the questions asked in the W portion) again for review; discussion of results; evaluation of the chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Session 3: guided practice of the students with a partner; completion of the chart using the lesson on Britain’s colonies and missions activities in Asia; discussion of the results; and evaluation of the chart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sessions 4, 5, 6: quiz on previous lesson; independent practice of the KWL on the topic of Africa; discussion; collection and grading of charts by the researcher</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Session 7: application of KWL for the last part of the lesson on Africa; teacher did it with students; interview of the students on the KWL (QMST)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 22: World War I and the Rise of Communism</td>
<td>SQ4R (sessions 8-16)</td>
<td>Nine sessions, Session 8: introduction to the chapter and terms; introduction to SQ4R</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Sessions 9 and 10: detailed explanation of the SQ4R and its rubric; modeling of the SQ4R on Europe in the late 19th century and how World War I began: Survey (previewing, setting a purpose for reading by activation of prior knowledge and making predictions); Question (setting a purpose for reading by asking questions on the topic); Read and Recite (monitoring comprehension by finding and memorizing answers to the questions made); Review (monitoring comprehension); and Reflect (connecting the topic to personal experience; setting a goal for future learning; application); discussion of results; evaluation of the SQ4R completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sessions 11 and 12: quiz on previous lesson; modeling a second time for review of the SQ4R on America’s role in World War I and outcome of the war; students asked to reflect; discussion and evaluation of results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sessions 13 and 14: quiz on previous lesson; guided practice of the SQ4R on Russia (in pairs); and discussion and evaluation of the chart</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sessions 15 and 16: independent practice of the SQ4R on the second part of the lesson on Russia; answering of the QMST; collection and evaluation of the SQ4R charts by the researcher; review on the previous two chapters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Data Analyses

Quantitative and qualitative analyses were conducted on the data gathered from the students’ grades in English, World History, and Filipino before and after the intervention; a comparison of their pre- and post test scores in the cloze and reading comprehension tests and MARSI in English and Filipino; their learning portfolio; their responses to the Questionnaire on the Metacognitive Strategy Taught (QMST) conducted after the teaching of each strategy during the conduct of the intervention; and their responses in the Post-Metacognitive Intervention Questionnaire.

Results

Results of the study (see Table 4) revealed that after the intervention, there was a significant difference in the students’ Filipino reading comprehension tests where the p value yielded was 0.02 (p<.05), Filipino Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategy Inventory (MARSI) results where nine out of 16 (56%) had an improvement in their scores, World History grades which yielded the significant p=5.16E-07 (0.00), and English grades which yielded the significant p=0.00. Likewise, four individuals showed improvement in five out of the nine evaluation measures (44%); one showed improvement in five out of eight of the evaluation measures (62%) since he only completed eight of them; one showed improvement in six out of the nine evaluation measures (67%); and one showed improvement in seven of the nine evaluation measures (78%). It could be said that since this mixture of average and good students improved in more than half of the measures, the intervention program was effective for them. See Table 4 for the summary of results.
However, statistical results also show that there was no significant difference in the students’ pre- and post- intervention test results in the English (p=0.33) and Filipino (p=0.18) cloze tests, English reading comprehension tests (p=0.06), English Metacognitive Awareness of Reading Strategy Inventory (MARSI) results (only 7 or 44% improved), and grades in their Filipino subject (p=0.07).

A lack of improvement in the English comprehension tests could be attributed to vocabulary and language difficulty in English, and lack of skill in noting details, using context clues, and activating prior knowledge (a metacognitive strategy). Inadequate grammatical ability (particularly in subject-verb agreement, tenses, and use of articles) remained evident in the post-intervention English cloze tests even though some of the answers were syntactically and semantically acceptable.

There was a significant improvement in the Filipino comprehension test, but not in the Filipino cloze test. The cloze test ruled out syntactically and semantically acceptable answers, which would have shown a higher level of Filipino expository texts comprehension in the students. Based on the individual results of the Filipino MARSI, it can also be said that since nine students out of the sixteen who completed the tests had an improvement in scores and the students’ self-reports and learning portfolio grades were positive, there was an improvement in the students’ metacognitive strategy awareness in Filipino.

Quantitative analysis of the bilingual students’ performance revealed the following:

1. Metacognitive strategy instruction improved bilingual readers’ comprehension of Filipino expository texts.
2. Metacognitive strategy instruction improved bilingual readers’ awareness of metacognitive strategies.
3. Metacognitive strategy instruction improved bilingual readers’ performance in their English class.
4. Metacognitive strategy instruction improved bilingual readers’ performance in their World History class.
However, due to time constraints in the implementation of the Metacognitive Intervention, the small number of participants in the study, the use of non-standardized instruments, and the limitation of teaching the strategies in the World History subject only, other quantitative results showed that:

1. Metacognitive strategy instruction did not improve bilingual readers’ comprehension of English expository texts.

2. Metacognitive strategy instruction did not improve bilingual readers’ performance in their Filipino class.

A qualitative analysis of the students’ performance in and responses to the sessions revealed that there was an improvement in their awareness of metacognitive strategies and in their love for reading. Although the intervention may not have yielded better comprehension scores in English, it achieved the objective of making the learners more content literate and thus more adept for content area reading and learning. By explicitly teaching the students metacognitive strategies, the program established a stronger base for their further acquisition of knowledge through expository texts or content area material. It reoriented them in the important aspects of reading such as previewing the text, tapping into prior knowledge, making predictions, asking questions on the main points of the texts, seeking answers to those questions, synthesizing information acquired, and applying that information to one’s daily life and experiences.

This conclusion is based on the students’ responses to the interview and questionnaires administered after each strategy was taught. It is also based on their responses to the Post-Metacognitive Intervention Questionnaire in which most of them gave a positive response to the teaching of the strategies and most if not all had at least one metacognitive strategy as a favorite. A few comments on the KWL strategy were:

“It's interesting.”

“I learned how to make questions and summarize what I learned.”

“It helps widen understanding of the topic.”

“It helps you get more ideas from the text.”

“It's very useful; makes it easier to understand lessons and become more active in reading.”

One of few negative responses was: “It's not that effective because I'm not that good in self-study.”

One student enjoyed “realizing there are more important facts than the ones in bold or italics.”

In relation to tapping into prior knowledge, one student said that “it allowed understanding more things better and recalling what one had learned before and connecting this to the topic.” An explanation for a positive response to the SQ4R was “the test results”. Other positive comments on the SQ4R were:

“It can help us also in other subjects because using this strategy is like reviewing.”

“It was fun and enjoyable because I learned with fun.”

“I enjoyed recalling what was learned previously and connecting it with the lesson and predicting what the lesson may be about.”

“It aroused my interest in history.”

A negative comment was “It's sort of hard because we need to memorize what we read.”

Some positive feedback students gave for Text Annotation were:

“I got a high grade in my quiz.”

“It is really fun because you can tell or write what you feel about the topics.”

“It forced me to think carefully.”

“Thinking of comments made me remember the details.”

“getting over laziness to read”

“It really expanded knowledge on the topics like the causes of the wars.”
Negative responses were: “I don’t like it because it forces you to read” and “It’s hard to give comments.”

Strengths the students identified in themselves were: “being able to concentrate even though it's noisy”, “getting over laziness to read”, and “rereading for comprehension and annotating.” The weaknesses they saw in themselves were in “making Text-to-World connections” and “commenting and summarizing”.

Most of those who completed the graphic organizers for the metacognitive strategies did so thoroughly. They carried out the expectations made on them by the rubrics prepared for evaluating the use of the strategies. Some even saw the relevance of the strategies for college education or reading of other expository texts, while one student found the strategies most appropriate for reading world history material saying it was most challenging to read, understand, and remember. Due to the more active reading required by the intervention, one interesting lesson learned by students who were excelling prior to the intervention was that important facts or words are not just the ones in italics or in bold; a reader should note that there are other important facts which may not be easily identified. A few students were also satisfied with the higher scores they got in their quizzes.

The findings of the study are supportive of van Gelderen et al’s (2007) assertion that language skills enhance the effectiveness of metacognition and Arafat’s (1996) findings that language affects comprehension. Results of this study showed that descriptive reports of both the researcher and subjects are crucial in determining the effects of a metacognitive intervention. Likewise, students need psychological preparation or a good atmosphere and breathing space after working with the strategies before they are given post-tests. The time in which the subjects in this study took the post-tests was towards the end of the school year when some already had their vacation in mind.

With regard to the bilingual nature of the students, a few found knowledge of Filipino as a factor affecting their comprehension of English material. Those who found it as a factor affecting their comprehension were not referring particularly to Filipino as a language, but rather to background knowledge they have of Philippine history and events. Other students who considered it a factor that affects comprehension were referring to the Filipino cloze and comprehension tests which, of course, they claimed one would not be able to answer if he/she had no knowledge of the Filipino language. Those who considered knowledge of English as a factor affecting comprehension of World History material were aware that if one lacked vocabulary or English ability, he/she would have difficulty comprehending the text.

Based on the Philippine Constitution’s expectation of Filipinos’ proficiency in English and Filipino, one could agree with former Education Secretary Andrew Gonzales who claimed that approximately 20% or one million of the four million secondary students in the Philippines are having difficulty communicating in both English and Filipino (in Abello, 2003). Educators in the Philippines should then take steps to remediate this problem. This study was an attempt to help in remediation. Studies such as Ocampo’s (2002) have shown that proficiency and reading ability in the L1 facilitates reading in the L2. However, some subjects in the study were exposed to both English, Filipino, or even a provincial language at the same time. This simultaneous exposure to different languages and the leniency in allowing students to switch back and forth between languages for purposes of communication may have affected their fluency in either or both the L1 and L2.

The study of van Gelderen et al (2007) focused on determining whether a threshold level in the L2 was necessary for use and transfer of L1 reading skills. His study proved something beyond the language skills noted in the processing efficiency hypothesis. His study showed that metacognitive ability determined reading comprehension. This was proven in the current study since the subjects’ World History
grades improved. It was specifically in World History where they were required to use metacognitive strategies, showing that the effects of metacognitive instruction is local rather than global (Carver, 1987 in Padilla, 2002). Since metacognitive ability includes a lot of external factors and experiences of the students, van Gelderen et al (2007) ruled out the idea that the processing efficiency hypothesis is crucial to adolescents’ reading comprehension but noted that vocabulary and grammar ability strengthen the effects of metacognition on comprehension. Jimenez’ (1997 in Gunning, 2003) conclusion is even more significant since it takes the bilingual nature of the reader and considers it as an important tool for the reader’s comprehension and awareness of metacognitive strategies. This may not have been reflected in the results of the study; however, code-switching, code-mixing, and translating did take place since the students would ask the teacher questions about terms or sections they could not understand during the program, and when the teacher wanted the students to have better understanding of a word or concept. When this was done, two points of view were provided for the students’ comprehension of the material—that of the L1 and that of the L2.

Conclusions

Results of the study are inconsistent on matters pertaining to improvements in reading comprehension and academic performance. After the intervention, there was an improvement in the students’ Filipino reading comprehension, World History grades, and English grades. However, there was no improvement in the students’ English reading comprehension and Filipino grades. On the other hand, the improvement in the students’ awareness of metacognitive reading strategies is consistent with findings of previous studies.

As a whole, the findings of the study support the assertions that 1) language affects comprehension (Arafat, 1996) and 2) language skills enhance or enable the effectiveness of the use of metacognitive strategies for comprehension (van Gelderen et al, 2007).

Implications

Good readers are good metacomprehenders (Paris, Lipson, & Wixson 1983 in Ryder & Graves, 1994). From the information gathered, should the students be given more time in applying the metacognitive strategies (See Latonio, 1993 and “Middle school study with developing metacognitive skills”, 2005), the basic and most important parts of the strategies (such as previewing the text, activation of prior knowledge, making predictions, asking questions about the key points in the text and finding answers to those questions to monitor comprehension, and expressing the relevance of what they are reading to the reality of their life and the world) will make them more proficient readers. They will be equipped with strategies needed to deal with a variety of reading situations. As using these strategies becomes a habit and they find themselves more successful in comprehending expository texts, they will become more content literate, and thus better independent readers and learners ready for exploring the world of higher knowledge. Given more time and using explicit instruction, the students will be given opportunity to “overlearn” the strategies so that automaticity in using the strategies is achieved for better comprehension.

However, they may need to cross a language barrier -- first in the L1, then in the L2 -- before they can fully benefit from metacognitive strategy instruction. That is, they need to cross a language threshold in the L1, and then in the L2 before they can focus on higher level thinking in both languages. Priority should then be given to developing vocabulary and language proficiency, followed by higher thinking skills in the L1 and in the L2. This is not to say that language is a barrier for higher metacognitive ability; on the contrary, it is an enabler and facilitator.

Recommendations

Reading is complex, and being an L2 reader may add to the complexity of the process. However, it seems that the bilingual nature of the reader is actually an asset that allows the reader access to more than one system of symbols in order to
find meaning in a piece of text. With this in mind, focus should return to fulfilling aim of the bilingual policy of the 1987 Philippine Constitution. The bilingual nature of the reader brings him to a higher level of monitoring his/her thinking process; that is, it allows the reader to become more “metacognitively aware”. The reader may code-switch, code-mix, or translate to reconstruct meaning from a piece of text. The educational system of the Philippines should then work towards making the most of the bilingual nature of its students.

Based on the conclusions made in the study and the implications drawn from it, it is recommended to educators that:

- In the elementary stage, emphasis be made on the importance of acquiring proficiency and literacy skills in the L1 for the transfer of these skills to the L2;
- Higher level thinking skills be emphasized in the L1;
- Students be assisted in using English and Filipino strategically and cooperatively for better comprehension of expository material;
- Content area classes include English proficiency as a goal, since it is the most important “language of knowledge” (Tickoo, 2008: 10);

- Though English is seen as the language of learning, there is important knowledge that is best acquired through the L1 or Filipino, the national language;
- Effort be made towards using the learner’s strongest language as a base for developing literacy for effective transfer of these skills to the L2;
- Teachers be oriented that the students’ language ability may not be a hindrance to his/her use of metacognitive strategies for comprehending expository material, but that the teacher should provide the necessary training using explicit instruction for the use of these strategies;
- Language and reading teachers work with content area teachers in implementing a program for the school year which would provide the students’ with the necessary reading strategies for dealing with expository text in both the L1 and the L2;

- At the beginning and end of the school year, students be evaluated on their awareness and use of metacognitive or reading strategies in their reading of L1 and L2 expository text; and

- Students be taught metacognitive strategies for the purpose of establishing a base for the them to eventually comprehend expository text better, thus
  - encouraging them to be strategic readers who become more content literate as they deal more successfully with expository text,
  - training them to plan and monitor their own comprehension of text and apply necessary fix-up strategies when they recognize problems in their comprehension,
  - making use of their bilingual nature in the comprehension and acquisition of knowledge from content or expository material, and
  - making them more independent readers.

For further research, it is recommended that other studies be made using a longer time frame, to explore the advantages of being a bilingual for the acquisition and use of metacognitive strategies and how this bilingual nature can aid L2 readers in their comprehension of L1 and L2 expository texts. A parallel program can also be conducted in other content areas, side by side or after the implementation of comparable metacognitive instruction in the Filipino and English subjects. Through this, students will be better equipped to read successfully and learn effectively from different kinds of texts in varied reading situations and contexts. Finally, language-specific, content/discipline-specific, text type-specific, and generic measures of comprehension and metacognition appropriate for Filipino bilingual readers should be developed for a better assessment and appreciation of their abilities.
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Newspaper Articles


Electronic Documents


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**International Reading Association**

**Position Statement on Adolescent Literacy**

**Summary (rev 2012)**

The 21st century has brought with it a tremendous evolution in how adolescents engage with text. As adolescents prepare to become productive citizens, they must be able to comprehend and construct information using print and nonprint materials in fixed and virtual platforms across disciplines. The International Reading Association offers this updated position statement as a guide for supporting adolescents’ ongoing literacy development.

The Association believes that adolescents deserve

- Content area teachers who provide instruction in the multiple literacy strategies needed to meet the demands of the specific discipline
- A culture of literacy in their schools with a systematic and comprehensive programmatic approach to increasing literacy achievement for all
- Access to and instruction with multimodal, multiple texts
- Differentiated literacy instruction specific to their individual needs
- Opportunities to participate in oral communication when they engage in literacy activities
- Opportunities to use literacy in the pursuit of civic engagement
- Assessments that highlight their strengths and challenges
- Access to a wide variety of print and nonprint materials
The effects of a literature-based reading program on pupils’ reading attitude and comprehension

This study explored the effects of a literature-based reading program on the reading attitude and comprehension of 90 grade four students in a public school in Davao City. After a 10-week exposure to the program, both quantitative and qualitative measures show significant improvements on the two variables, with gains most remarkable among the experimental group who had longer exposure to the program. One month after the cessation of the program, a decrease was noted in the students’ attitude and comprehension of narrative material, pointing to the need for a sustained implementation of the program.

Introduction

One of the problems that confront schools today is the increasing number of pupils with reading difficulties. There are factors that can affect the pupils’ reading performance, one of which is poor reading comprehension which most of the pupils encounter during the 4th grade when more complex reading is needed in the content areas. Another factor is their attitude towards reading.

To address this problem, school reading programs must offer children with many varied opportunities to read high-quality literature (Anderson, Hiebert, Scott, & Wilkinson, 1985). One way to motivate pupils to read is to teach them to love reading. By bringing literature into the reading classes, the genuine love for reading in children will be developed. Literature-based reading programs can promote their desire to read and develop positive reading habits.

It is with this premise that this study was conducted. It examined the effects of a literature-based reading program on the grade four pupils’ reading attitude and comprehension in one of the public elementary schools in Davao City Division.

Readers construct alternatives and focus their interest in diverse ways during any reading event. Wood and Moss (1992) acknowledged three kinds of reading instruction in the school. The first is “learning to read” which centers on the attainment of the reading skills necessary for accomplished reading. The second is “reading to learn” which focuses on using reading as an instrument for learning in the content areas. The last is “private reading” which distinguishes reading as a very personal activity.

Frank Smith, (1983, as cited in Wiener & Cohen, 1994) transformed the existing view of the reading process by stressing using comprehension, using perceptions based on
communication systems. The integrative, holistic model of reading began to appear in the early 1980’s. It emerged from researchers and practitioners who viewed the reading process in a essentially different way. To integrate all language processes, reading was reconceptualized to accentuate relevant and meaningful reading and writing activities, a new movement appeared on the educational horizon called whole language which encompasses integrated learning, literature-based reading, and thematic reading (Wiener & Cohen, 1997).

“Literature is the expression of life in beautiful language” and literature facilitates reading development (Dictionary of Literacy, IRA, 1995 as cited in Diaz De Rivera, 1997). Following this premise, the University of the Philippines, College of Education, Reading Department has developed a framework that takes into account the principles of whole language but at the same time includes explicit or direct instruction of selected skills using the context of the literature (Hermosa, 2005).

Reader’s attitude towards reading are determined through their interests, feelings, motivations and self-concept (Barr, 1995). Attitude towards reading pertains to the affective side of reading which is as imperative as the cognitive dimensions of reading. Research and strategies show that a reader’s attitude towards reading can affect the preferences that readers make (Berger, 1996).

Johnson & Giorgis (2001) emphasized that when one interacts with literature, he also invites pleasure, nurtures interest and amazement, and discovers things never experienced before. Literature that interacts with the curriculum extends the focus to include books and readers along with content area knowing. It has often been said that it is not enough to teach children how to read; we must in addition, teach children to want to read.

Comprehension (Cox & Zarillo, 1993) refers to the ability of the reader to bring meaning to print. Comprehension (Richek et al, 2002), is the essence of reading; indeed it is the only purpose of reading.

Pado (2002) explains that the essence of reading is making meaning out of the printed words. A reader should be able to get meaning from and give meaning to the printed page. As such, comprehension should be an essential part of the beginning reading instruction. The stories and poems read to children can help them how to decode and develop comprehension.

Another way to help improve reading comprehension is teaching students how to listen. Harris & Hodges (1995) referred to listening as the "act of understanding speech". The use of strategies to promote students' abilities to listen has been shown to be particularly effective for improving reading comprehension (Boodt, 1984; Sippola, 1988). Research has shown that early exposure to or instruction using expository texts can increase comprehension, memory, and recall of important text information in young children (Duke & Kays, 1998).

Wiener & Cohen (1997) explain that those who endorse the integrative language model and re-examined instruction now focus on quality literature as the basis for teaching literacy. Literature offers new ways of exploring the world and the new worlds to explore – the stuff a child’s brain thrives on (Smith, 1983).

Reading for learning begins in the intermediate level (Chall, 1983). A common point of weakness in reading development reported in the research and also in practice comes at about Grade 4. According to the Department of Education, the fourth grade level is critical in the development of functional literacy. This is the age when the child begins to read comfortably and intervention at this point proves to be more effective in terms of developing the love and habit of reading.
THE STUDY

Aims

To establish the effects of a literature-based reading program to pupils’ reading attitude and comprehension, this research sought answers to the following questions: 1) Does a literature-based reading program help improve Grade IV pupils’ reading comprehension? and 2) Does a literature-based instruction help improve the level of Grade four pupils attitude toward reading?

Method

Research Design

This study used a quasi-experimental method, with two Control Groups and one Experimental Group, and using both quantitative and qualitative techniques. To answer the research questions specified for this study, a comparison of the reading comprehension and attitude towards reading had to be made before and after the implementation of the Reading Program.

Sample

The sample consisted of three intact, heterogeneous classes of Grade four pupils. At the start, 90 pupils comprised the sample but towards the end, only 82 pupils were left to finish the program. The experimental group consisted of 28 pupils (2 pupils dropped from school). The Control Group 1 was comprised of 28 pupils (2 pupils transferred to another school). The Control Group 2 consisted of 26 pupils after 4 of them left school. The three groups were selected through a fish bowl method that determined the experimental group, Control Group 1 and Control Group 2.

Instruments

A pretest and three posttests were administered to the respondents before and after the implementation of the reading program. To assess the Grade four pupils’ comprehension the pupils were evaluated with the following: 1) cloze test, 2) oral reading of narrative text, 3) test for listening of narrative text, 4) test for silent reading of narrative text, and 5) expository reading. The researcher used the Analytical Reading Inventory (ARI) and cloze test. To assess the level of Grade four pupils attitude towards reading, the Reading Attitude Survey Scale for Grade 3-6 (Lim, 2001) and Anecdotal Notes were used. Qualitative analysis was based on the researcher’s observation during the interview, conduct of the assessment, pupils’ responses during the assessment and presentation of the lessons. The anecdotal notes also provided for the recorded observations of the researcher during the conduct of the study which was also used as basis of the qualitative analysis.

Data Collection

The pre-test was administered to Control Group 1 and Experimental Group using the ARI and cloze test for reading comprehension and the Reading Attitude Scale for Grade 3-6 (Lim, 2001) for reading attitude. For the next five weeks, actual teaching was done for the Experimental Group and Control Group 2 using the literature-based reading program lesson plans made by the researcher while the Control Group 1 was handled by a regular teacher using the prototype lesson plans based on the Revised Basic Education Curriculum. The first post test was then administered to the three groups. For the remaining five weeks, the 2nd phase of the implementation was administered to the Experimental Group and Control Group 1 using the literature-based reading program lesson plans made by the researcher while the Control Group 2 was handled by a regular teacher using the prototype lesson plans based on the Revised Basic Education Curriculum (RBEC). Post test 2 was administered to the three groups at the end of this period. One month after the program ended, Post test 3 was administered to the three groups.

The Literature-Based Reading Program

The researcher prepared 10 lesson plans based on children’s literature for the whole program. Each lesson plan had three parts:

Prereading, which prepares the pupils for the context of reading by activating prior knowledge, developing vocabulary and purpose for reading:
During reading which used different strategies like read aloud, interactive reading and silent reading; and

Post reading which had engagement activities, oral and seatwork activities and skill development.

All 10 lesson plans were conducted with the Experimental Group for a period of 10 weeks. Control Group 1 was taught for the first five weeks using lesson plans based on RBEC. During weeks 6-10, the class was taught using the Literature-based Reading Program. Control Group 2 was taught using the Literature-based Reading Program for the first five weeks while the remaining five weeks were taught using the lesson plans based on RBEC. All three groups were given the three Post-tests. But only the Experimental Group and Control Group 1 had pre-tests. (See Table 1 for a summary of the Procedures)

Data Analysis

To compare the differences between the Control Group 1 and the Experimental Group, T-test was used for the pre-test; anova was subjected for the posttest and ancova was applied for the posttest if pre-test was significant to answer the first research question, “Does a literature-based reading program help improve Grade Four pupils’ comprehension in terms of cloze test, oral reading of narrative text, listening of narrative text, silent reading of narrative text and expository reading?” For the second research question, “Does the literature-based instruction help improve the level of Grade four pupils reading attitude?” t-test for the pre-test was used to compare the difference between the Control Group 1 and Experimental Group, since the Control Group 2 was not subjected to a pre-test because its result was just confirmatory; anova for the posttest and ancova for the posttest if the pre-test difference was significant.

Results and Discussion

Reading Comprehension. Reading comprehension was assessed in terms of the cloze test, oral reading, listening, silent reading of narrative text and expository reading tests. All the three groups showed improvements though the progress by the Experimental Group who had 10 weeks exposure to the program was most remarkable.

This means that the Literature-based reading program had positive effects on the pupils’ reading comprehension. However, the said improvements were not sustained in the Reading Comprehension of narrative text in Posttest 3 which was given one month after the program ended (See Table 2). This indicates that cessation of the program can lead to a decline in pupils’ reading comprehension. Expository Text reading Comprehension results on the other hand, increased even one month after the withdrawal of the program.

Table 1. Summary of Procedures (Schedule of Pretest, Intervention, and Post-tests)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>PreTest</th>
<th>Lit-based Reading Program (Weeks 1-5)</th>
<th>Post Test 1</th>
<th>Lit-based Reading Program (Weeks 6-10)</th>
<th>Post Test 2</th>
<th>Interval (Weeks 10-14)</th>
<th>Post Test 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expt’l Group</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group 1</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group 2</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The literature-based reading program helped improve the pupils’ reading comprehension in terms of cloze test, oral reading of narrative text, listening of a narrative text, silent reading of narrative text and expository reading. However, it was evident that 5 to 10 weeks exposure to the program is not sufficient. Their gains in all reading comprehension tests were not remarkable nor sustained. The program seemed to have more lasting effects on Expository Test Reading Comprehension but not to the level of significance.

Reading Attitude. The reading attitude of the grade four students was determined and measured through the Reading Attitude Scale for Grade 3-6 by Lim (2001). Anecdotal notes taken during the presentation of the lessons, pupils’ responses during the conduct of assessment and the whole implementation of the program were also used to substantiate the results.

As shown in Table 3, a significant difference in the attitude of pupils had an average gain of 0.15 in Control Group 1, 0.14 in the Experimental Group, and 0.20 in the Control Group 2. However, these gains in the attitude’s mean scores of the pupils are not significant after PostTest1 (t=-.89, p=0.07), posttest 2 (t=-2.05, p=0.05) and posttest3 (t=-2.04, p=0.05) were conducted.

### Table 2. The Summary of the Pretest and Posttest Results in Reading Comprehension by Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group/Test</th>
<th>PRETEST (MEAN)</th>
<th>POST-TEST 1</th>
<th>POST-TEST 2</th>
<th>POST-TEST 3</th>
<th>f-value</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Group 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloze test</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>8.21</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Reading</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>0.005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>1.21</td>
<td>15.99</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent Reading</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>17.14</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expository Reading</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Group 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloze test</td>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>10.04</td>
<td>8.08</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Reading</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>0.053</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent Reading</td>
<td>1.73</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expository Reading</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Experimental Group</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloze test</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>8.61</td>
<td>10.96</td>
<td>8.04</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Reading</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silent Reading</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>1.57</td>
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</table>

*In a row, means labeled with different letters are significantly different from each other at .05 level
ns – not significant at .05 level
These results indicated no significant difference in the reading attitudes of the pupils among the three posttests administered. These results confirm the findings in posttest 1 which suggest that partial implementation of the Literature-based program for the last five weeks of the Reading program did not effect much change in the reading attitude of the pupils.

Pupils under the 10-week Literature-based Program class maintained a significantly better attitude to reading than did the controls, whose scores in the Reading attitude scale did not significantly improve. There were no significant differences in the reading attitudes of pupils between the Control Group 1 and Control Group 2 with partial implementation of the literature-based program. There was also no significant improvement in the reading attitudes of the pupils one month after the cessation of the reading program.

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The following are conclusions and recommendations that may be inferred from the results of this study. First, this paper found that a literature-based reading program is an effective tool in improving comprehension and attitude towards reading. The results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses of this study showed that the literature-based reading program significantly improved the pupils’ comprehension in terms of cloze test, oral reading of narrative text, listening of narrative text, silent reading of narrative text, expository reading and attitude toward reading.

Second, it was shown that the length of exposure to the literature-based reading program can have varied effects in improving reading comprehension and attitude of learners. Experimental Group subjects who had longer exposure to the literature-based reading program made significant improvements in some of the reading comprehension skills tested and in their attitude toward reading. But it was also noted that the pupils who had partial exposure to the treatment also showed significant improvements in some of the reading comprehension skills tested. In fact, the cessation of the Literature-based reading program only after 5 or 10 weeks can lead to a decline in performance in comprehension and attitude towards reading. It was also noted that there was a decrease in the pupils’ performance in almost all the reading skills tested. The same trend was also noted in the result in their attitude towards reading. This suggests that prolonged exposure is needed to sustain the gains made during the intervention. Related to the duration of exposure is the implication to lengthen the implementation of the literature-based reading program. The researcher recommends that implementation of...
the program would be for the whole school year. In so doing, the pupils will have a longer period of exposure to the literature-based reading program, which would help them improve their comprehension and attitude toward reading. For future research, it is recommended that a bigger population should be considered. A wide array of literature genres may also be used in order to bring out the best among pupils’ reading interests. Since the length of exposure yielded varied results in this study, it is also recommended that it will be considered as one of the factors to be studied in future research.

References


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*Dina Ocampo* is a professor of reading education and Dean of the College of Education, University of the Philippines, Diliman. She is currently the president of the Reading Association of the Philippines. As consultant for the DepEd’s Basic Education Reform Agenda (BESRA) she has advocated for the use of the mother tongue in the early grades. She is likewise a leading figure in the current K-12 curriculum reform movement, in the area of language and literacy.
This study investigated the use of response journals as a strategy for bridging the gap between the story world in a historical fiction and the experiences of adolescent readers for them to have a deeper understanding and appreciation of the novel Kangkong 1896 by Ceres Alabado. Students' journal entries were analyzed based on the response processes of engagement and involvement in the text as explained in the experiential theories of response. Results confirm that adolescent readers' life experiences help shape their understanding of the text. Insights gained from this study may help teachers understand better how adolescent readers forge links with literature.

Introduction

Reading a story such as historical fiction may alienate adolescent readers from the time setting and may cause them to ignore other more significant issues explored in this genre for it is difficult for them to step into some stories especially when the story world is far removed from their everyday world (Temple, C.A., Martinez, M.A. & Yokota, J., 2006). Research data also show that young readers usually judge the merits of a book in relation to their preconception of what reality is in their world (Beach, 1993). Thus, oftentimes they think that certain books are unreal because they cannot reconcile the events, characters' actions, and settings with their expectations. And if instruction will not lead them to develop the habit of 'experiential reading', they will tend to focus only on facts. Therefore exploration of emotional reactions is necessary to involve them in the text (Rosenblatt, 2005).

Experiential theories of response

Experiential theories of response focus on the nature of readers’ engagement or experiences with the texts — the ways in which, for example, readers identify with characters, visualize images, relate personal experiences to the text, or construct the world of the text). Using Rosenblatt’s transactional theory, theorists (Beach, 1993) delineated specific response processes that describe the readers’ engagement with and involvement in the text, which are as follows:

Engaging

Csikszentmihalyi (1991) described engaged reading as a state of total absorption or ‘flow.’ The engaged readers ‘lose’ themselves in the reading act as they reflect upon the characters, their motives, and feelings, and how their actions do or do not resemble their own (Berger, 1996). As readers vicariously experience a gamut of emotions, they gain insights into the realities of being human and enhance their understanding of themselves and of the
universality of human problems. (Beach, 1993, as cited in Moore et al, 1999). posited that “vicariously stepping into text worlds can nourish teens’ emotions and psyches as well as their intellects” (p. 102).

Constructing

According to Langer (1990), as readers move through stories, their understanding grows and sometimes even changes dramatically. Readers may assume one of four different stances as they read. These are a) being out and stepping in--readers make initial contact with the text to decide whether to continue reading or not; b) being in and moving through - once in, readers attend to element of the story that particularly captivates their interests and use their world knowledge, personal experiences, and knowledge of text in moving through the story world and in weaving together the elements of the story; c) being in and stepping out - readers reflect on the way/s in which a book relates to their own life or the lives of others and; d) stepping out and objectifying the experience - readers reflect on the story as a crafted object and react to the content, to the text, or to the reading experience itself.

Identifying/Empathizing

When young readers perceive commonalities between them and the characters, they tend to empathize and identify with them, oftentimes adopting their perspectives (Beach, 1993).

Imaging/Visualizing

Readers do not only connect with the text, they also create visual mental images (Beach, 1993). These images that they create may refer to what the five senses can imagine. Sometimes these scenes that they see in their mind, like memorable scenes in films, are etched in their minds forever.

Connecting

When readers recall related life and reading experiences in relation to the present text, that helps them interpret and reflect on what they are reading (Beach, 1993). The more readers engage in this process, the deeper their perspective about certain character/events become.

Evaluating/Reflecting

Readers evaluate the quality of their experiences with the text either by using the expectations that they hope to gain in the reading act or according to aesthetic criteria (Beach, 1993).

Response journals

Studies show that when young readers work on response activities that focus on their experiential response, they tend to think more deeply about stories and their responses continue to grow. These activities help certain kinds of literary experiences to be brought about (Beach, 1993). One such activity is keeping response journals. Journal writing facilitates and guides the process of reflective inquiry (Berger, 1996) for it allows the readers to step into the world of the characters, live the events, and look deeper into the story.

THE STUDY

Aim

This study a) investigated the specific response processes that characterize adolescent readers’ personal responses, and b) analyzed these responses to find out the role of personal experiences in shaping their responses to the historical novel, Kangkong 1896 by Ceres S.C. Alabado (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Kangkong 1896
(Alabado, 1997)
Method

Sampling

The participants were 20 freshmen college students (10 boys and 10 girls) who were enrolled in a Philippine Literature class and who belong to the same age bracket of 16-18 y.o. (in Philippine setting, this is the usual age that students enter college). They were randomly chosen from a block section taking up the same course.

Instruments

The students’ responses were interpreted and analyzed using a rubric (see Table 1) prepared by the teacher and which is based on the five response processes stated in Beach (1993).

To guide the students in writing their responses, the teacher provided them with guide questions (with minor modifications) based on Berger (1996) guidelines for writing a reader response journal for a novel. Table 2 shows the guide questions for the responses.

Table 1. Rubrics for assessing reader response in the experiential level

| I. Direction: As you read your students’ entries, see which of the following was included in their works. Using the scale below, rate the student’s response based on the five response processes. |
|---|---|
| A. Engaging | Yes | No |
| • Relates personal experiences with the events/situations in the story. | [ ] | [ ] |
| • Identifies with or empathizes with characters | [ ] | [ ] |
| • Expresses feelings of anger, sympathy, envy, grief, fear, and other emotions over a situation/event/character. | [ ] | [ ] |
| • Feels for the characters. | [ ] | [ ] |
| B. Constructing | | |
| • Generates hypotheses regarding motives, feelings, or intentions of characters. | [ ] | [ ] |
| • Infers insights on events and actions of characters. | [ ] | [ ] |
| • Adopts characters’ perspectives | [ ] | [ ] |
| C. Imaging | | |
| • Creates visual, mental images of characters. | [ ] | [ ] |
| • Revises impressions about characters as they learn more about the character and the other characters. | [ ] | [ ] |
| D. Connecting | | |
| • Makes connections between previous readings, films, or songs and the present material. | [ ] | [ ] |
| • Discusses related life experiences. | [ ] | [ ] |
| E. Evaluating/Reflecting | | |
| • Has expectations regarding what to experience in reading the text. | [ ] | [ ] |
| • Reflects about the theme. | [ ] | [ ] |
| • Remember lines, dialogues, or characters that touch them. | [ ] | [ ] |
| • Questions probability of events as well as decisions made by the characters. | [ ] | [ ] |
| • Enjoys/admires certain aspects of the story, e.g. storytelling techniques, symbolisms used, etc. | [ ] | [ ] |
Procedure

The class read the historical novel, *Kangkong 1896* as part of the assigned reading for Philippine literature. They wrote a total of three journals each. The works of 20 students (10 girls and 10 boys) were randomly chosen for this study. Each entry was analyzed using the rubrics designed and prepared based on the five response processes.

Results and Discussions

Dominant Responses

Looking closely at the readers’ responses to *Kangkong 1896* in general, those that pertain to engaging, constructing, and connecting dominate most of their responses. They could easily make connections between their experiences and the events in the story. Relating with the dilemmas, adventures, and emotions of Plorante comes naturally for they see in him part of themselves, even if they belong to two different eras. They, too, get involved with the struggles of the Katipuneros, which elicited strong responses expressing anger and resentment for the Spaniards and contradicting feelings of sympathy, admiration, happiness, and disappointment for the Katipuneros. Some journal entries follow:

*Nakakainis ang mga Katipunero. Nakakadismaya. Basta na lang sila*

Table 2. Guide questions for responding

*Directions:* Read the novel for fun! After every four or five chapters, write your response. Make sure that each of your journal entries talks about one or more of the following points:

**What do you notice?**

Examples: Do you notice any changes in the personality of your protagonist or antagonist? Do you notice any emphasis on an object or minor character that might later be important? Do you notice any repeating patterns in the book? Do you notice the significance of the title in the chapter you are reading? Is there anything unusual about the book’s beginning or ending? Do you expect how the story would end or do you have a different expectation? What is it?

**What do you question?**

Examples: Do you question any decisions that a character has made? Do you wonder what a certain passage in the book might mean? Do you question whether the author realistically presented a certain part of your book? Do you question if something that happened in the author’s life might have influenced the writing of the novel?

**What do you feel?**

Examples: Does any part of this book make you feel scared, annoyed, sad, frustrated, happy, or horrified? Which part and why? Do you feel differently about a character or situation in the novel now than you felt before? Why have your feelings changed? Do you want to read another novel by this author? Why or why not? Are there lines/dialogues in this story that struck or touched you? What are they and why?

**What do you relate to?**

Examples: Does anything in this book remind you of something from your own experience, or a movie, a TV program, a song, or another book you have read? Talk about that relationship. Do you have a favorite character? Why do you like him/her? Is there a character whom you dislike? Why?

sumugod nang hindi man lang nag-iisip na wala silang laban sa mga sandata ng mga Kastila. Gayon din si Plorante, sumusugod ni hindi naman marunong gumamit ng baril. Nagsayang lang siya ng oras sa kakatakbo, ni wala naman siyang nagawa para sa tatay at kaibigan niya. (Glenn)

Natuwa ako nang magwagi ang mga Katipunero na agawin mula sa mga sundalong Kastila ang kuta. Buong akala ko ay mabibigo sila sa labanan sapagkat tunay na wala kalaban laban ang mga itak, patpat sa mga sandata ng kalaban Talagang matindi na ang galit ay makakaya kahit ano. (Natz)

There are also other more personal feelings that the young associated with the story—that of the relationship between Plorante and his father. It can be gleaned through the students’ responses that despite their disagreement with Mang Victor’s treatment of Plorante early in the story, still the father and son relationship evoked in them a longing for a father whom many do not have.


In visualizing Plorante’s decision to return to Kangkong, one reader recalled a story he had read which helped him understand the difficulty of the situation involving Plorante. Another reader connected a movie experience with the novel which resulted to realizations about life in general.

In identifying with Plorante, they also see that there are some concerns that had remained constant all throughout the ages. For instance, they recognize that young people, regardless of the era they belong to, deal with common concerns such as peer pressure and living up to the expectations of parents, the excitement of first love, and other nuances associated with growing up as expressed in this entry,

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Ang pagkamatay ng kanyang ama ay pagpakatulad ni Plorante. Madalas ko ring ginagawa kung ano ang ipinagbabawal ng mga magulang ko. Ewan ko, siguro ay ganon lang talaga ang mga kabataan kahit pa anong henerasyon. (Mike)

Identifying/empathizing with the character is also present in most of the entries, though not as dominant. Perhaps, it helps that the protagonist is also an adolescent. They can identify with him and often, they take his side, especially at those instances when his parents scolded him for disobeying. Being a teenager like him, they understand his actions and reactions; his inclinations; and his sentiments, even justifying all these. As one reader puts it,

Marami kaming pagkakatulad ni Plorante. Madalas ko ring ginagawa kung ano ang ipinagbabawal ng mga magulang ko. Ewan ko, siguro ay ganon lang talaga ang mga kabataan kahit pa anong henerasyon. (Mike)

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Para rin akong si Plorante na gusto laging ‘in’ sa mga kabarkada. Sa palagay ko nga kay siyang sumali sa Katipunan ay dito at siyempre dito na rin sa tatay niya. Ako rin naman e, ayokong napapag-iwanan ng mga kaibigan ko. (Flem)

Less Dominant Responses

Results also show that responses pertaining to imaging/visualizing are not as dominant as the other four processes. However, the scenes where Plorante’s father and his friend Tonio were killed created a strong impact on the readers. Most were horrified at the manner of
their deaths. Another common response among them is about the character of Plorante’s father. Their responses revealed initial dislike to Mang Victor.


However, this negative impression about Mang Victor gradually changed as they learned about his participation in the upcoming revolution and as he revealed his thoughts about the prevailing situations in the country. They interpreted his actions in terms of their experiences with their family.

Ngayon alam ko na hindi pala siya masamang ama. Gusto lang niyang palakhin si Plorante na may prinsipyo at pangarap. Nalala ko tuloy ang tatay ko, hindi ko rin siya maintindihan noon. (Arthur)

These reactions show that the students are creating visual mental images regarding their initial or changing perceptions of the character and clearly, they base these perceptions on their own concepts, attitudes, and experiences.

On the other hand, they hardly pay attention to the aesthetic aspects of the novel. And if they did, their concern still points to the topics and the content of the novel as related to the realities of their lives. Except for one reader who stepped out of the novel to discuss the war theme of the novel, on a limited scope, the rest mentioned very little about the writer’s craft, no one reflects about his/her aesthetic experience with Kangkon 1896. Even those lines that they found memorable are not due to their aesthetic appeal but because of how they relate with them.

Conclusions and Implications for Teaching

This study confirmed that young readers make use of personal experiences such as family conflicts, peer pressure, and other growing up experiences: a) to gain a deeper perspective on characters, events, and other aspects of the story; b) to construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct meaning in the story; and c) to understand themselves, others, and the world. Adolescents turn to their personal experiences to bridge the gap between them and the character and events in a story.

Young people appreciate literature where they can see themselves as they are and which will allow them to see themselves in the futures. In the end, they see Kangkon 1896 not as a historical novel but as a novel that speaks for the concerns and dreams of young people like them. As long as they sense commonalities between them and the story, they will transcend concerns such as genre. It is also important that teachers come up with activities that will evoke in the readers the words and the world in the text in a meaningful way. Emotional and experiential preparation is significant not only in understanding texts but also in the appreciation of its aesthetic aspect which also contributes to the totality of the reading experience.

Marie Grace C. Reoperez teaches literature at the Far Eastern University. She is currently pursuing doctoral studies in reading education at the University of the Philippines. She was recently an Erasmus Mundus research scholar at the Danish School of Education, Denmark
References


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**International Reading Association Position Statement on Young Adolescents’ Literacy Learning**

**Summary**

It is during the middle years of schooling that most students refine their reading preferences, become sophisticated readers of informational text, and lay the groundwork for the lifelong reading habit. They begin to use reading to help answer profound questions about themselves and the world. With good instruction, ample time, and opportunity to read a variety of texts, young adolescents can become successful readers both in and out of school.

To support young adolescent learners, schools should provide

- Ongoing reading instruction across the curriculum
- Instruction that is appropriate for each individual student
- Assessment that informs instruction
- Ample opportunities to read and discuss reading with others

Because of the importance of reading and literacy, IRA and the National Middle School Association together urge classroom teachers, school administrators, policymakers, and family and community members to take action to improve the literacy performance of all middle level students. The position statement provides specific recommendations for each group.
This paper discusses one model of reading remedial program that may be implemented in public secondary schools on a long-term basis through the use of effective policies, strategies and materials that can be described as experience-based, constant, consistent, and sustainable. It also describes the policies, program components, teaching strategies and materials, and assessment procedures which have been implemented in the RRA Reading Clinic since 1998.

Background

I came to Davao City to seek not greener but simpler pastures. In 1998, having been married for seven years and raising two kids, the stressful work and streets of Manila no longer fit my picture of a happy life. My husband then convinced me to start a new life with him in the city where he was born. When we came to Davao City in October of 1998, the first thing that we did was to set up a reading clinic. The staff at the Department of Trade and Industry would not accept the trade name of “The Reading Clinic” in my application papers. In a hurry to process my documents, I asked the personnel for suggestions and he said that the fastest way to be approved was to add my initials to the trade name I wanted. Thus, the RRA Reading Clinic was established. In a small room of the home that we were renting then, with a round table, two chairs, a shelf full of books and a cabinet containing tests and other materials, I welcomed five students on the first month of my reading clinic’s operation.

As a reading specialist in a clinical setting, my job is to assess the strengths and weaknesses of students and to find out their level of performance in various reading components. Then, I design an individualized remedial program for each student with specific materials and strategies that suit his learning style. Many students receive reading sessions at the RRA Reading Clinic for about two years. Some professionals label this program as educational therapy. Students who have regularly attended our individualized sessions for a minimum of two years have improved significantly such that referrals continue to flood in. Today, struggling learners are referred to our clinic by developmental pediatricians, principals, guidance counselors, teachers and parents.

“Reading is at the heart of everything we do.” So goes the ad of a big US publishing company. Knowing this, most parents and teachers focus their attention on the reading development of their preschool and elementary children. On the
other hand, former International Reading Association (IRA) President Carol Minnick Santa (1999), in her article "Adolescents: The Forgotten Faction", reminded educators to give value to adolescent literacy because many schools are spending less on helping adolescents succeed in school. She described how most of the budget of schools was allocated for early intervention. She wrote further that her school community fit a pattern in the United States of diminishing support for the high school child. In a similar way, Michael F. Graves (1999), from the University of Minnesota, observed that reading for secondary students gets relatively little attention, with most educators, researchers, and policy makers focusing their attention on the lower grades.

One way to improve secondary school literacy is to see how we can make an impact on the way we do our remedial reading programs at the secondary level. This paper describes my experience with secondary students at RRA Reading Clinic. From 1998 to 2008, I was able to test a total of 315 students with reading difficulties. 57 of these cases were aged 12 and above. These 57 students were assessed initially using formal and informal tools. Many of them needed help not just in improving comprehension but also in basic decoding skills. Those who attended remedial sessions twice a week for a minimum of two years were able to make significant improvement, such that these students were recommended to apply the strategies on their own and to learn independently, without help from our clinic.

How were these students at the secondary level helped in our clinic? The purpose of this paper is to describe a framework of policies and strategies that have been implemented at RRA Reading Clinic for thirteen years now. It is my hope that not only our Secondary Education Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs but also other educators and administrators who are deeply concerned about reading remediation for adolescents may appreciate what can be learned from this documentation of our experience at RRA Reading Clinic.

When a student is referred to our clinic, we do an initial assessment procedure before teaching the student in an individualized reading program. The results of the assessment are given to parents in a diagnostic report. After several months of intervention, the student is re-evaluated and the parents are given a progress report. What I have done is to gather all the diagnostic reports, progress reports and policy documents that have been filed in our office since 1998 and to glean what can be learned from the experience.

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) define qualitative data analysis as “working with data, organizing it… discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others”. As a researcher, I analyzed the documents and looked for common themes, patterns and issues. Then, I assembled the "big picture" of what effective reading remediation is all about, within the context of the experience at RRA Reading Clinic.

In my inquiry, I sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the usual weaknesses of the students aged 12 and above who were referred to and assessed at the Reading Clinic from 1998 to 2008?
2. What are the main policies of reading remediation that guide the programs for these students at RRA Reading Clinic?
3. What are the usual components and strategies of an individualized remedial program at RRA Reading Clinic?
4. What is the usual assessment procedure at RRA Reading Clinic?

The RRA Reading Clinic Experience

The Weaknesses of Students Referred to and Assessed at the RRA Reading Clinic

Prior to setting up my reading clinic, I was trained how to use certain standardized tests by my mentors at the UP College of Education Reading Area and at WORDLAB, a clinic that specializes in working with people with dyslexia and other learning disabilities. In my own clinical practice, I have continued to use those standardized tests, namely, the Gates-
MacGinitie Reading Tests for Vocabulary and Compre-hension, the Slosson Oral Reading Test, and the Wide Range Achievement Test.

The results from these tests, administered to my clinic students as part of their initial assessment, were presented in their diagnostic reports. All results were presented in Grade Level Equivalents such that parents and other professionals can easily see the gap between what is expected of the student and his or her current achievement. For instance, a second year student who should be performing at Grade 9 in the test but is only performing at Grade 2 level reveals a gap of seven years in that skill area.

Fifty-seven out of 315 cases or 18% of the students brought to the Reading Clinic from 1998 to 2008 were aged 12 and above. Of these 57 students, 84% had difficulties in comprehension, 72% had difficulties in vocabulary, and 30% had difficulties in decoding. Tables 1-3 show the gaps in terms of number of years between expectation and achievement in comprehension, vocabulary, and decoding, respectively.

I took note of the highest percentages of students that are common in all the three areas of reading. I found that from 1998 to 2008, the highest percentage of students aged 12 and above at the time of assessment at RRA Reading Clinic typically needed to work on closing a gap of three years between grade expectation and current achievement in all three areas of decoding, vocabulary and comprehension.

Results of my data analysis led me to conclude that many secondary students even after years of reading instruction in the elementary level can have skills in decoding, vocabulary and comprehension that are delayed by about three years or even more. These are the students that have academic difficulties and are usually referred to remedial programs.

### Policies of Reading Remediation that Guide the Programs

At RRA Reading Clinic, the clinic policies are thoroughly explained to the parents or guardians in order to engage their cooperation in ensuring each student’s consistent attendance in the program for at least two years. Then, the parent or guardian signs the Agreement Form where these policies are written. The four basic policies that guide the implementation of the programs at the RRA Reading Clinic are as follows:

1. All remedial sessions are delivered through one-on-one instruction;
2. Each student after being assessed is given an Individualized Educational Plan designed by the reading specialist, wherein the priority goals for the next three months for that particular student have been set;
3. Each student receives at least two hours per week of individualized instruction from a trained reading clinician; and
4. Each reading clinician who handles students have been trained on and receives ongoing professional development on the theories of

<p>| Table 1. The gap between expectation and achievement in comprehension (N=57) |
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<p>| Table 2. The gap between expectation and achievement in vocabulary (N=57) |
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<p>| Table 3. The gap between expectation and achievement in decoding (N=57) |
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</table>
teaching reading and research-based approaches to teaching students with difficulties.

These policies are supported by the research literature. In the article, “Building Reading Proficiency at the Secondary Level: A Guide to Resources”, Peterson, et al (2000) concluded that a consensus seems to be building among researchers that traditional reading remediation is insufficient. In their review, Klenk and Kibby (as cited in Peterson et al, 2000) proposed "mediational process" for both teachers and students. Such an approach supports the concept of Vygotsky (1978) on zones of proximal development. The term “scaffold” is from Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky who stressed the importance of teacher support of a learner through dialog, questioning, conversation, and nonverbal modeling. Such support or scaffolding can only be effectively done if the teacher understands basic theories on teaching reading, knows when to use and how to use strategies and approaches, truly knows the strengths and weaknesses of the student and if the sessions are done regularly and individually, thereby addressing the needs of that particular student.

In Adolescent Literacy: A Position Statement for the Commission on Adolescent Literacy (CAL) of the IRA (Moore, D., Bean, T., Birdshaw, D. & Rycik, J. (1999), the CAL recommended services that included providing tutorial services, assessing students’ reading and writing to plan instruction and teaching strategies tailored to individuals’ competencies. The CAL also believes that adolescent learners deserve reading specialists to assist those learners who experience difficulty and teachers who understand the complexities among individual adolescent readers. This position statement is a strong support for the policies on individualizing programs and teacher training that are being implemented at RRA Reading Clinic.

The Usual Components and Strategies of a Typical Remedial Program

After reviewing and analyzing the Recommendations section of the diagnostic report of each of the 57 students, as well as the Progress Reports of the students who did continue with their remediation, it can be said that the complete list of components of the Reading Clinic program and of every individualized educational plan (IEP) includes the following: decoding, vocabulary, comprehension, spelling and writing, study skills and rate and fluency. The emphasis of the program however, depends on the top three priority goals of each student. After three months of instruction, or at least 24 hours of remediation, the student is re-assessed and the IEP goals are revised.

The usual components of the typical remedial program at RRA Reading Clinic are written in every diagnostic report and every progress report that is provided to the parents of each student who has been assessed at the reading clinic. The use of these components is supported by research as well. Peterson et al (2000) stated that the major cognitive components necessary for proficient reading are decoding and language comprehension. Furthermore in their review of programs that develop reading proficiency, Peterson et al (2000) included the following components and definitions in their evaluation (see Box 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOX 1. Components of Programs that Develop Reading Proficiency (Peterson et al, 2000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic Decoding</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fluent Decoding</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Comprehension</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Linguistic Knowledge</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since 2004, in addition to the reading components, the development of math computational skills and problem-solving skills has been a necessary component of all IEPs in RRA Reading Clinic. I have trained my clinicians how to teach students to read tables and graphs, to use strategies and materials for faster computation and to use strategies in problem-solving. This move is supported by Dancis (2002) who wrote that comprehending math word problems correctly is important and that there is a critical need for instruction in the reading and comprehension of word problems. He also encouraged the inclusion of instruction in paraphrasing a word problem into mathematical expressions, as well as the reading of tables, charts and graphs.

Case study: Roco

To clearly explain how remediation should individualize the strategies according to the student’s need, let me present one case of a student whom I assessed in May 2008. Roco (not his real name), who had just completed first year high school, was 13 years and 9 months old when he was referred for assessment. The results of my initial testing revealed above average abstract reasoning potential and Grade 12 level of performance in computation. However, his comprehension skill was at Grade 6 level and his vocabulary performance was at Grade 5 level. In the spelling test, Roco wrote nessecity instead of necessity, sovereignty instead of sovereignty and irresistible instead of irresistible. Results of informal writing assessment activities with Roco indicated difficulty with expressing ideas in writing and applying rules in spelling, punctuation and grammar.

In his diagnostic report dated May 9, 2008, recommendations were made to let Roco attend sessions daily during the summer and twice a week during the first semester of the school year. To address his unique difficulties, the program shown in Table 4 was recommended for six months, written in Roco’s diagnostic report and given to his parents.

After reviewing and analyzing the Recommendations section of all the diagnostic reports of 57 students from 1998 to 2008, I created a matrix showing the strategies used at RRA Reading Clinic as well as the number of years that they have been implemented (see Box 2).

Analysis of diagnostic reports and progress reports of students at the Reading Clinic reveal that there are strategies and materials that have been used and consistently recommended in the individualized plans of the students in this clinic since 1998. These are discussed in the sections that follow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of minutes</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Materials and Methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>MEGAWORDS: Learning word analysis skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>CHAPTER BOOKS: Reading a passage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>PAPER AND PENCIL: Analyzing the meaning of the passage that has been read, by organizing information graphically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>REASONING AND READING: Learning isolated comprehension skills like classification, cause-and-effect, main idea, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>PAPER AND PENCIL: Expressing ideas through writing, and getting help with editing own work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>SINGAPORE MATH STRATEGIES: Spending some time on understanding word problems and on problem solving strategies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Usual Procedure for Assessment at the Reading Clinic

Many secondary students even after years of reading instruction in school can have skills that are delayed by about three years or even more. One such student was Mark (not his real name) who was assessed at RRA Reading Clinic when he was in 2nd year high school. After five months of attending an individualized reading program at RRA Reading Clinic, his record showed the following progress:

**TABLE 6. PROGRESS OF MARK AFTER FIVE MONTHS OF READING REMEDIATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>March 1999</th>
<th>August 1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Grade 2.8</td>
<td>Grade 5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>Grade 4.9</td>
<td>Grade 6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 shows that Mark gained progress equivalent to more than two grade levels in the area of comprehension and more than one full year in the vocabulary component after only five months of remediation. The progress report of Mark further stated that “his interest and attitude seem to have improved. He now asks the clinician more questions about the science texts being discussed.”

While it is not feasible to present in this article all the progress reports that have been given to each of the students who were taught at RRA Reading Clinic from 1998 to 2008, it is important to ask questions as regards what brings about significant changes in a secondary student such as Mark. Aside from the usual components and strategies used, what are the usual steps in the assessment and intervention procedures at RRA Reading Clinic?

1. Students are usually referred to the Reading Clinic by their parents, guidance counselors, teachers, principals, psychologists or developmental pediatricians.

2. The student undergoes an initial assessment that is accomplished through several hours of diagnostic teaching and testing usually spread out over ten sessions.

3. The reading specialist then writes a formal report of the findings and gives recommendations for a specific program. The individualized educational plan (IEP) or remedial plan is designed based on the student’s strengths, weaknesses and needs. When the parents or guardians approve the
plan and agree to the policies of the clinic, the IEP is implemented.

4. After three to six months of implementation and monitoring, the student is again evaluated. Results of re-evaluation are the basis of new goals and recommendations. At the Reading Clinic, progress is also evaluated through standardized testing, working portfolios, anecdotal records and descriptive reports.

This process is supported by Paterno and Ocampo-Cristobal in their book, “Now What Do I Do?” (1993) where they outlined the steps in the process, viz:

1. Sensing the special need
2. Initial assessment
3. Formal diagnosis
4. Formulation of the IEP
5. Implementation, monitoring, and evaluation

The process and practices of teaching and assessment at RRA Reading Clinic have been implemented for several years now. Students who learned and made progress were eventually terminated from the program as new clients were accepted into the program. Parents and professionals who have referred children to the RRA Reading Clinic must have seen the value of the process of diagnosis and intervention that assures success of students enrolled in the program.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper reported that the highest percentage of the students aged 12 and above assessed at RRA Reading Clinic in the ten-year period showed a gap of about three years between grade expectation and current achievement in the areas of decoding, vocabulary and comprehension.

I shared the main policies of reading remediation that guide our remedial programs and emphasized that all remedial sessions be delivered through one-on-one instruction at least twice a week; that educational plans be based on the individual’s assessment results and priority goals; and that each reading clinician who handles students be trained on and receive ongoing professional development.

As gathered from the recommendations section of the diagnostic reports of the 57 students, and from the Progress Reports of the students who continued for at least two years of remediation, I shared that the top two components that need to be addressed among the secondary students were decoding and comprehension while the other components of the typical remedial program designed for the secondary students included vocabulary, writing, spelling, study skills, rate and fluency, computation and problem-solving as well. I also gleaned from documents that the usual teaching strategies that have been consistently used at RRA Reading Clinic were Multi-sensory Approach, Environmental Print, Collaborative or Paired Reading and Graphic Organizers, and recently, Audiblox, Singapore problem-solving strategies and use of abacus.

Finally, I shared that assessment at RRA Reading Clinic has been done by following a particular procedure consisting of steps of initial assessment, formal diagnosis, formulation of individualized educational plan, implementation of the IEP, monitoring and re-evaluation of progress.

As I teach high school teachers enrolled in graduate school, they report that their schools implement summer reading remediation programs or after-school programs that are given to large groups of students and which do not differ much from the usual school instruction, in terms of size and methods. Many teachers in my graduate classes complain that the students who have been referred to their summer and after-school remedial programs turn out to be the same students year in and year out and show no significant progress. My answer: “Effective reading remediation for secondary students is possible!” We can implement remedial programs on a long-term basis through the use of policies, strategies and materials that have been proven to work, through experience. It is true that at RRA,
there were practices that were added in recent years as a sign of openness to new trends in the field of reading education and in learning theories. Still, the basic policies and strategies implemented can be described as constant, consistent and sustainable.

Our success with students is not only shown by the continuous referral of clients from other professionals around Mindanao for the past 13 years but also by the growth of RRA Reading Clinics in Cainta, Rizal since 2007 and in San Fernando, Pampanga since 2010. Our program policies and procedures in Davao have been implemented in the said areas in Luzon and are currently being studied for replication by other schools in the Visayas.

There is much to learn from the experience of the RRA Reading Clinic in implementing individualized reading remediation programs:

- Reading specialists and teachers must be trained in order to gain a better understanding of the theories on the reading process, teaching and assessment strategies and principles of remediation.

- Effective reading remedial programs can be set up by consistently implementing basic policies and strategies that work for the students even at the secondary level. If the schools or learning centers keep on changing practices and procedures due to educational fads, then reading teachers, clinicians and

![Figure 1. Framework for a Remediation Program for Secondary Students](image)

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Public high school teachers and reading specialists can be motivated and trained to establish and implement reading remedial practices that have been tested through time within the context and experience of each particular school. They can keep the procedures and strategies to the basic minimum by choosing those that are truly effective for the student population.

Good documentation is important in order to effectively evaluate not only the progress of individual students but also of the whole program in general. It is important to keep diagnostic reports, progress reports, anecdotal records and narrative descriptions of the history of each case as well as documentation of the reading program and system as a whole.

In closing, Figure 1 is offered to the Secondary Chiefs and Assistant Chiefs of the Department of Education as a possible framework of effective reading remediation for secondary students.

References


Rachel Red Amparo is the Executive Director of the RRA Reading Clinic in Davao City, with branches in Cainta, Rizal, and San Fernando, Pampanga. Ms. Amparo holds a MAEd in Reading Education from the University of the Philippines Diliman.
Introduction

Jose Rizal whose 150th birthday we are marking this year, was a patriot who wore many hats. He was most of all a prolific letter writer and Ambeth Ocampo reports that almost a thousand letters he has written to friends and family are extant yielding volumes of them kept in archives (4 March 2011) If he were alive today, it would not be farfetched to imagine that he would have kept a Twitter or a Facebook account.

The littlest known of his various roles was as writer and illustrator for children. While in Europe, he came across the very popular works of the Danish author, Hans Christian Andersen and promptly sent translations of five (5) of these stories in Tagalog and sent them to his nephews and nieces in Calamba (Ocampo, 2000)

He seemed always surrounded by children of some of his compatriots as well as the children of occasional landladies with whom he boarded in the many pension houses he had patronized all over the great European capitals.

It is said that while in Paris in the mid-1880’s he wrote and illustrated a re-telling of The Monkey and the Turtle for the enjoyment of some of the community of Indios Bravos he was hanging around with at that time. Since they were in France, he first retold the fable in French accompanied by line drawings (Tahanan, 2003)

The original has not been preserved, unfortunately and it is only through Austin Craig (1913) that Rizalistas had found a copy of the English version of the tale.

His translation of the fable into English was for a rather scholarly article that he had written and submitted to a London-based special interest magazine called Trubner’s Oriental Record. He submitted a comparative study of the fable vis-a-vis the Japanese version, which features a crab rather than a turtle as protagonist (Ocampo, 2003)
The turtle and the monkey once found a banana tree floating amidst the waves of a river. It was a very fine tree, with large green leaves and with roots, just as if it had been pulled off by a storm. They took it ashore.

“Let us divide it,” said Turtle, “and plant each its portion.”

They cut it in the middle... and the monkey, as the stronger, took for himself the upper part of the tree, thinking that it would grow quicker, for it had leaves. The turtle, as the weaker, had the lower part that looked ugly, although it had roots.

After some days they met.

“Hello, Mr. Monkey,” said the turtle, “how are you getting on with your banana tree?”

“Alas,” answered the monkey, “it had been dead a long time. And yours, Miss Turtle?”

“Very nice, indeed, with leaves and fruits. Only, I cannot climb up to gather them.”

“Never mind,” said the malicious monkey. “I will climb and pick them for you.”

“Do, Mr. Monkey,” replied the turtle gratefully. And so, they walked toward the turtle’s house.

As soon as the monkey saw the bright yellow fruits hanging between the large green leaves, he climbed up and began plundering, munching, and gobbling, as quickly as he could.

“But give me some, too,” said the turtle, seeing that the monkey did not take the slightest notice of her.

“Not even a bit of the skin, if it is eatable,” rejoined the monkey, both his cheeks crammed with bananas.

The turtle meditated revenge. She went to the river, picked up some pointed snails, planted them around the banana tree, and hid herself under a coconut shell.

When the monkey came down, he hurt himself and began to bleed. After a long search, he found the turtle.

“You wretched creature, here you are. You must now pay for your wickedness. You must die. But as I am very generous, I will leave you the choice of your death. Shall I pound you in a mortar, or shall I throw you into the water? Which do you prefer?”

“The mortar, the mortar!” answered the turtle. “I am so afraid of getting drowned.”

“O ho!” laughed the monkey. “Indeed! You are afraid of getting drowned! Now I will drown you.” And going to the shore, he slung the turtle and threw it in the water.

And soon the turtle reappeared swimming and laughing at the artful monkey.
It is this English retelling combined with the line drawings that Tahanan Books had republished in color during the Christmas season of 2003. The tale is presented here in full in Rizal’s own words.

**Rizal’s style and the Queen’s English**

Allow me the privilege of “reading closely” Rizal’s use of the Queen’s English in the retelling of this popular Filipino fable.

(I am using *Queen* not only in deference to the present British crowned head but also to remind ourselves that at the time Rizal was in London, the reigning monarch was also a woman, Victoria Regina, in whose Empire at that time, the sun never set.)

Inevitably, the quality of the narrative technique will have to be analyzed as well.

The opening sentence is a creative writer’s dream. In a few words Rizal succeeds in rendering to the reader the most basic elements in the story: the time, place, main characters and the initiating event. It is linguistic economy of expression that would have delighted the parsimonious Emily Dickinson herself.

His English strikes this teacher of language as outstanding in its grammatical and rhetorical construction. Only a few lines seem stilted in that no other more Anglisized idiom is employed – as in “They cut it in the middle” as well as in “She meditated revenge.” The former looks like a direct Tagalog translation of “*Hinati nila sa gitna.*” The latter is pompous and too formal a register for this type of narrative. Otherwise, the linguistic flow is smooth and authentic such as in “seeing that the monkey did not take the slightest notice of her” as well as in the use of “Indeed” twice in the dialogues between the characters. It is very British and that particle suggests courtesy and sincerity. (The British are generally known to be among the most polite people in the world.)

Rizal displays a rich lexical repertoire in his descriptions as in – “plundering, munching, and gobbling as quickly as he could” – moving the narrative well while projecting the immense greediness of the monkey. He demonstrates his knowledge of nuances of punctuation marks and capitalization. When addressed, turtle and monkey are capitalized while when referring to them as animal characters, Rizal uses lower case. Rizal also employs a simple flashback to show what happened to characters’ attempts at planting the banana tree. At this point, to the feminist readers’ delight, Rizal makes the hero of the story a female, Miss Turtle.

The entire prose piece lends itself to oral rendering. There is a charming musicality in the rhythm of the words and phrases. It is noteworthy that Rizal in this output does not use the rather florid style of his novels and later poems. Those leaned toward the flowery though gorgeous Spanish flow of words. The entire fable is linguistically Anglo-Saxon - clean, clear and crisp - although the contents, the emphasis and the delineation of character as well as the humor in the story and the illustrations are undoubtedly *Pinoy* in flavor.

**Rizal as Illustrator**

The illustrations are excellent in that they apply the requirements articulated by Patricia Cianciollo (1981) in a book she wrote a hundred years after Rizal rendered his line drawings. Rizal succeeds in depicting the superior swagger of the monkey and though the turtle’s image is too small for the artist to show facial and muscular character, the reptile’s traits through more overt actions are well-projected.

It is particularly delightful to note Rizal’s varied drawings of the monkey’s tail. What the monkey’s words and face do not show, the tail reveals. Hardly are two pictures of the tail the same. It expresses delight, triumph, greed, deceit, stress, confusion, disappointment, anger, defeat – the gamut of emotions and feelings that the monkey lived through that indeed, it is tempting to re-title the story “The Tale of the Tail”.

Cianciollo (1981) states in her book that an illustration for children must not only aid in comprehension, it should amplify the story told. Rizal follows this instinctively because during his time, there was hardly any scholarly readings on the art of illustrating for children. So he was
The enduring relevance of Jose Rizal’s retelling of The Monkey and the Turtle

...not exposed to any guidelines. He knew how to make clear his narrative to the young reader.

A notable example is the point at which the monkey found the turtle who was hiding in a coconut shell. The text does not say it but the monkey actually found the turtle when the latter pulled his tail through the center hole of the shell. A more amusing amplification is the scene where the “friends” meet again weeks after they had planted their respective shares of the banana tree. The monkey is shown carrying a top hat and a cane (very European) and they are drawn conversing under a lamplight—the monkey in a chair; the turtle on the footrest or ottoman. They also embrace after turtle promises to share her harvest with the scheming, hypocritical monkey. All those details are nowhere in the text and yet Rizal could not resist putting in many proofs of his whimsical Pinoy humor.

Critiquing Re-tellings

Today, there is an inadequate corpus of serious literary criticism in childist—a term coined by Dr. Peter L. Hunt of the University of Wales. A few librarians and reading specialists come out with an article or two but they sound more like book reviews, not critiques. That is why it is a cause for joy when a national artist recently published an entire book on childist criticism—a term coined by Dr. Peter L. Hunt of the University of Wales.

National Artist for Literature, Virgilio Almario (2010) had been hitherto only reading papers on this genre at academic conferences. A recurring theme in his critiques is what he considers a travesty committed by modern-day retellers of folk literature. He takes special potshots on one particular multiple re-telling of several alleged output of a well-known author. I shall simply mention some of his critical comments against which I shall evaluate Rizal’s own output.

First of all, Almario wants re-tellers to choose among many types of folklore. He says, there are those which are indigenous to our cultural heritage; those that had been drawn from awits and coridos shared by the Hispanic colonizers and those from collections culled and/or retold by European and other western sources like the brothers Grimm, Charles Perrault and some popular tales from Arabian Nights and the Decameron. In the Philippines we have the collections of Dean Fansler and Mabel Cole, both early American professors at UP. Later, Dr. Damiana Eugenio enriched the collections by adding contributions from her own students.

Almario leans toward our indigenous heritage like his favorite, Manik Bwangsi and the story of Alunsina and Tungkod Langit. He acknowledges that since the awit at corido had been absorbed by and made popular by our compatriots from the babaylan to our respective lolas—they have become legitimate lodestones for our rereadings and re-tellings. Only, he says that those told by our colonizers had for their hidden agenda evangelizing the natives, to the extent that fantasies are given, more often than not, divine interventions. Those from America and other European countries extol their ways of life and ideals. Results are most of the time a lack of artistic logic and resorting to the deus ex machina literary trap from the Spanish tales. From northern Europe, references to culture bound concepts such as the four seasons and featuring characters with golden hair and snow-white skin abound.

Almario wants choices among many possible foreign sources that would affirm our values—values that are truly ours. He distinguishes the way an anthropologist vis-a-vis a writer might study cultural values among an assortment of influences or origins. He says that an anthropologist looks for commonalities among them. A writer looks for the differences (among a varied group) that make a particular culture unique.

Did Rizal make a fine choice in retelling this fable? Absolutely. Since folk literature is supposed to encapsulate the nature and aspirations of a culture, he chose to show a fable that could very well reflect the plight and might of the Filipino. A seemingly weak but actually very wise creature as represented by the female turtle is made to contend with a bigger, more powerful antagonist who abuses the generosity of the weaker heroine and even attempts to slay her. The powerful oppressor is self-serving, greedy, cruel and does not seem to have a bit of...
a sense of fair play. Isn’t that scenario familiar? Nevertheless, Miss Turtle uses her natural and practical talents, wit and humor to put one over on Mr. Monkey.

There is no need for magic or a miracle to save the turtle. The events are day-to-day occurrences that one experiences while living in a colonized country. Filipinos may no longer be actually colonized the way they were in Rizal’s time but you and I know that there is the pervading colonial mentality that most of us still carry as our emotional and intellectual baggage. Actually Rizal should no longer be relevant as far as his dreams of a free Philippines and a dynamic, progressive and self-confident Filipino is concerned. There should no longer be a need for us to re-examine twice a year what Rizal envisioned about our country, visions that he and the other patriots had strived for. We ought to be offering to him by now the fulfillment of those dreams for our nation and culture. Yes, Rizal is still relevant. We wish, though that his bright goals are fait accompli, moot and academic, no longer future perfect but present fact.

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The RAP Journal accepts articles on reading, literature, language, literacy education, reading and language teacher education and related educational topics. These are the sections to which papers may be submitted:

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2. **Research** – Inquiries into various aspects of literacy comprise majority of the articles published in The RAP Journal. Articles submitted should report on inquiries conducted within the last 10 years. Research-based articles are evaluated based on the relevance of the research aim, the soundness of the research process, the quality of discussion of the data, and the cohesion between the findings and generalizations. Articles may not exceed 6,000 words including the abstract and bibliography.

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5. **Book Reviews** – The evaluation of books on reading education may be submitted to The RAP Journal. There is preference for books published or available in the Philippines. The book review must consist of an introduction to the book and its author, a summary of the book and its parts, an assessment of the book’s internal and external qualities, a discussion of how the book will help promote reading teacher education in the country. A book review may not exceed 1,000 words.
For all submissions, the following general guidelines apply:

1. Articles in Filipino and English are accepted.

2. All submissions should use the Times New Roman font size 12 and should be double-spaced.

3. The first page of the submission should contain the following:
   - Title of the Article
   - Name(s) of Author’s/ and Authors’ Affiliation/s
   - Brief write-up of Author(s)’ professional involvements
   - Author’s telephone numbers and email address
   The rest of the paper should NOT have marks that will identify its author/s.

4. The second page will be the beginning of the article. The title should be the first to appear on this page followed by an abstract not longer than 150 words. After the abstract, the paper should be presented already.

5. Tables and Figures should be numbered as they are to appear in the article. The paper should indicate where Tables and Figures should be inserted in all bold capital letters. Tables and Figures within the text should be appended to the article (after the bibliography). There should be only one table or figure on a page and each should be labeled properly.

6. All submissions require a bibliography. The RAP Journal follows the APA 5th edition format, citations, and referencing guidelines.

7. Articles will be evaluated for correct grammar, clarity, and appropriate language use.

8. Please submit articles to: therapjournal.org@gmail.com. The subject line of the email should follow this format: SURNAME (of author) – TITLE OF ARTICLE. In the body of the email, kindly indicate to which section you are submitting the article.

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