

DI Approach and the Reading Comprehension Skills of Grade Five Learners

Aldren L. Geyrozaga

Doña Pilar L. Marfori Elementary School

Abstract:- This study aimed to determine the impact of DI Approach in the reading comprehension skills of grade five learners of Doña Pilar L. Marfori Elementary School. It utilized the descriptive comparative research design using the paired sample t-test. Primary data were obtained using the Reading Comprehension Test results in English. The findings revealed a mean of 13.725 with very satisfactory descriptive equivalent, a p-value of 0.000 with significant descriptive equivalent and an η^2 of 0.627 which generated an empirical evidence that DI Approach is effective as a teaching strategy since it has a large effect on the reading comprehension skills of learners.

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is widely recognized as one of the macro skills needed in the knowledge achievement of learners (Kent, 2005). This idea is supported by Hall and Piazza (2008) that the ability of learners to read effectively and the development of this particular skill play an essential role in their achievement at all proficiency levels. Thus, reading is considered as the building block of learning. However, Tomlinson (2002) argued that many teachers still struggle and face difficulties in teaching diverse groups of learners especially in catering their individual needs in terms of reading. For Gregory and Chapman (2002), they conjectured that if the main goal of teaching reading is to improve the reading comprehension of learners, then it is very important for teachers to plan and design learning activities that meet the academic needs of their learners.

This present investigation is anchored on the contentions of Howard Gardner in his Multiple Intelligences (MI) theory. Gardner (1985) identified eight different types of intelligences that are relatively independent but interconnected cognitive skills. These intelligences include visual-spatial, linguistic-verbal, logical-mathematical, body-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. Bender (2012) postulated that while some children excel in more than one area of intelligence, others may show strengths in many other intelligences. Therefore, every learner has a distinct set of strengths and weaknesses related to his/her intellectual abilities (Brualdi, 1998). For clarity, terms like multiple intelligences, learning style, and learning preference are frequently used interchangeably (Bender, 2012; Brualdi, 1998).

The relationship between reading comprehension problems and differentiated instruction has been given much emphasis by many researches today. In the study conducted by Thornton (2011), he claimed that in improving the reading comprehension of struggling adolescents, differentiated instruction plays a pivotal role. Four students in the tenth grade participated in his study, and their reading comprehension performances were compared and analyzed before and after differentiated instruction was implemented. The results of the standardized test scores of these learners before and after implementing differentiated instruction were found to differ significantly. In order to better understand the advantages of differentiation in this case, learners were asked to identify and describe the strategies that helped them to become ready for their assessments. For Thornton (2011), some of the best practices of differentiated instruction that helped struggling learners in the classroom include flexible grouping, peer tutoring, anchor activities as well as scaffolding and modeling. Indeed, the abovementioned propositions highly support the notion that differentiated instruction is effective and constructive especially in helping struggling learners to develop their vocabulary and reading comprehension skills (McCullough, 2011).

In another study conducted by Cusumano and Mueller (2007), they highlighted the importance of implementing differentiated instruction in their school as an effort to cater the different learning needs of their students. They reported that the school's AYP targets were achieved, and that its API scores had been rising gradually after differentiated instruction was implemented. Concurrently, discipline referrals from students significantly decreased, teacher morale increased, and students' reading, writing, and arithmetic performance levels significantly improved. Moreover, Chamberlin and Powers (2010) found that differentiated instruction based on students' readiness, interests, and learning profile could result to improved performance, study habits, social interaction, cooperation, attitude toward school, self-worth, motivation and engagement. In addition to proving the institutional effectiveness, differentiated instruction may also provide students with a variety of learning opportunities that will enable them to effectively respond to the increased challenges of a changing global community.

In the Philippines, differentiated instruction has been highly recommended by many experts especially in teaching the K to 12 Curriculum. In the study of Aranda and Zamora (2016), they discovered that learners who received differentiated instruction outperformed their peers academically. Hence, it can be concluded that teaching Filipino subjects to tenth grade students was effective when differentiated instruction was implemented. Locally, in Doña Pilar L. Marfori Elementary School, each teacher has his/her own strategy in teaching reading to learners. One of the strategies implemented was DI Approach which was the subject of the researcher’s study to determine its effectiveness as employed to learners with comprehension problems.

This study aimed to determine if there is a significant relationship between DI Approach and the reading comprehension skills of the grade five learners of Doña Pilar L. Marfori Elementary School. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions: 1. What is the score of the grade five learners before the implementation of DI Approach? 2. What is the score of the grade five learners after the implementation of DI Approach? 3. Is there a significant difference on the implementation of DI Approach in the reading comprehension skills of the grade five learners? 4. What is the effect size of DI Approach in improving the reading comprehension skills of the grade five learners?

The following terms were defined operationally for better understanding of the investigation.

DI Approach refers to Differentiated Instruction. This teaching strategy generally emphasizes accommodation of learner’s individual differences in terms of readiness levels, interest, and learning styles.

Reading Comprehension refers to understanding what is being read from the text. It involves remembering or recalling fact explicitly in the material, looking for the implied information in the selection and evaluating the materials read.

II. METHOD

The descriptive comparative research design was used in this study. The respondents of the study were 40 grade five learners of Doña Pilar L. Marfori Elementary School located at Don Isidro Village, Madapo Hills, Davao City. Probability purposive sampling was used by the researcher in choosing the respondents. Primary data were obtained using the Reading Comprehension Test results. Data were analyzed using the statistical treatments such as mean and standard deviation to measure the learners’ proficiency level, paired sample t-test to ascertain the difference between the pretest and posttest results, and eta² to identify its effect size.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the tabular and textual presentations of the findings of the study with its implications to the teaching-learning process.

Table 1. Scores of the Respondents before the Implementation of DI Approach

Test	N	Mean	SD	Descriptive Interpretation
Pretest	40	8.727	3.234	Unsatisfactory

Shown in Table 1 is the pretest scores of the learners. It reveals a mean of 8.725 with an unsatisfactory descriptive interpretation.

Table 2. Scores of the Respondents after the Implementation of DI Approach

Test	N	Mean	SD	Descriptive Interpretation
Posttest	40	13.725	4.320	Very Satisfactory

Depicted in Table 2 is the post test scores of the learners. It reveals a mean of 13.725 with a very satisfactory descriptive interpretation.

Table 3. Paired Sample T-test on DI Approach

Test	N	df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Pre & Post tests	40	39	- 8.103	0.000	Reject

Presented in Table 3 is the paired sample T-test on DI Approach. It reveals that the pretest and the post test generated a t-value of -8.103 with a p-value of 0.000 which interpreted as significant.

The result of the study agrees with Aranda and Zamora (2016), that learners who received differentiated instruction outperformed their peers academically.

Table 4. Effect Size of DI Approach

N	t-value	eta ²	Remarks
40	- 8.103	0.627	Large effect

Revealed in Table 4 is the effect size of DI Approach. It generated an eta² value of 0.627 which signifies a large effect, thus DI Approach is an effective strategy in improving the reading comprehension skills of the learners.

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the results obtained from this investigation, the following conclusions are deduced:

- The pretest result of grade five learners on reading comprehension was unsatisfactory.
- The post test result of grade five learners on reading comprehension was very satisfactory.
- There was a significant difference on the pretest and post test scores of grade five learners.
- The DI Approach has a large effect on the reading comprehension skills of grade five learners.

RECOMMENDATION

This study shows that DI Approach as a teaching strategy is effective in improving the learners' reading comprehension skills. Hence, it is recommended to employ this strategy in teaching reading for it accommodates and better prepares learners of all reading types and ability levels to improve their reading outcomes. It also helps teachers to achieve their learning goals in the classroom by modifying their teaching methods and learning resources and activities to better address the reading needs of the learners. Most of all, it supports the importance of diversity in learners from their learning styles to their learning abilities.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Aranda, M.R., & Zamora, J.L. (2016). *Using Differentiated Instruction in improving the academic performance of students in Filipino language*. Retrieved from http://www.national-u.edu.ph/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/JSTAR-4_Aranda.pdf
- [2]. Bender, W.N. (2012). *Differentiating instruction for students with learning disabilities: New best practices for general and special educators* (3rd Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Crowin.
- [3]. Brualdi, A. (1998). Gardner's theory. *Teacher Librarian*, 26(2), 26.
- [4]. Chamberlin, M., & Powers, R. (2010). The promise of differentiated instruction for enhancing the mathematical understandings of college students. *Teaching Mathematics and Its Applications*, 29(3), 113–139.
- [5]. Cusumano, C., & Mueller, J. (2007). How differentiated instruction helps struggling students. *Leadership*, 36(4), 8–10
- [6]. Gardner, H. (1985). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. Basic books.
- [7]. Gregory, G. H., & Chapman, C. (2002). *Differentiated instructional strategies: One size doesn't fit all*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.
- [8]. Hall, L., & Piazza, S. (2008). Critically reading texts: What students do and how teachers can help. *Reading Teacher*, 62(1), 32–41.

- [9]. Kent, A. (2005). Early childhood educators and literacy leaders: Powerful partners. *Reading Improvement*, 42(4), 238–244.
- [10]. McCullough, Sh. (2011). *The effects of differentiated instruction on academic achievement of struggling second grade readers*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. UMI No. 3489743.
- [11]. Thornton, N. (2011). *The impact of differentiated instructional strategies with struggling adolescent readers*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. UMI No. 3491215.
- [12]. Tomlinson, C. A. (2002). Different learners different lessons. *Instructor*, 112(2), 21–25.