

TEACHERS' INITIATIVES: SCAFFOLDED INTENSIVE READING IN FILIPINO LEARNERS' COMPREHENSION

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ABSTRACT

Scaffolding, in an educational context, refers to a supportive framework or instructional technique that is used to assist learners in acquiring new knowledge or skills. The concept of scaffolding is based on the idea that learners can achieve higher levels of understanding and competence with the help of appropriate support and guidance (Bruner, 1960). One of the interventions being identified is the scaffolded intensive reading comprehension strategy which refers to an instructional approach that provides systematic support and guidance to students as they develop their reading comprehension skills. In this strategy, teachers provide a series of supportive steps or "scaffolds" to help students understand and interpret the text.

This study was conducted to 8 teachers of Cluster 12, Division of Davao City. The participants were chosen based on the following criteria: (1) must be in the present position for at least 5 years- regardless of their age, sex and marital status; and (2) must have at least very satisfactory rating in their IPCRF. With this, key findings revealed that With these different interventions, key findings revealed that providing relevant feedback, incorporating authentic resources, and utilizing multi-media, choosing the right instructional tools, assessing diverse needs, and collegial assistance were effective in order to support teachers in implementing evidence-based strategies, addressing individual student needs, and utilizing appropriate teaching tools to enhance reading comprehension.

Key words: scaffolded intensive reading, learners' comprehension, teachers' initiatives

1. INTRODUCTION

Mastering the art of reading is an essential ability for young individuals, serving as a cornerstone for their educational and personal development. It not only grants access to a universe brimming with information, ideas, and boundless potential but also acts as the gateway to enlightenment and comprehension. Acquiring the skill of reading, children embark on a journey where they can delve into diverse disciplines, including science and history, broadening their awareness of the world around them. The act of reading empowers children to explore a vast array of literature, articles, and digital materials, enabling them to become self-reliant learners and avid seekers of knowledge.

Part of reading is comprehension. Cote (2011) discussed that reading comprehension plays a pivotal role in academic success, yet many learners struggle with this essential skill even in their national language. Several factors such as limited vocabulary and language skills, lack of reading practice and engagement, and inadequate reading strategies and techniques contribute to difficulties in understanding and interpreting written texts, affecting learners' overall learning outcomes.

One of effective strategies in promoting learners' reading comprehension in the national language is scaffolded intensive reading. Morin & Morin (2013) stressed that scaffolded intensive reading, as an instructional approach, holds significant importance in developing and enhancing students' reading comprehension skills in the national language. By providing targeted support and guidance, it helps learners overcome comprehension challenges and become proficient readers. However, Mejoras & Andres (2014) revealed in their study that implementing scaffolded intensive reading in the class poses unique challenges for countries around the world. These challenges hinder the effective application of intensive reading strategies and impact students' reading comprehension development in the national language.

Correspondingly, the Philippines, as a developing country, faces difficulty in implementing a scaffolded intensive reading strategy to teaching Filipino language to kids. Filipino is the country's native language, based on Tagalog. According to Rosario et al. (2013), the country struggles with insufficient resources, including access to excellent Filipino reading materials, technology, and educational finance. Because such reading materials are scarce, learners' exposure to varied texts, genres, and themes in Filipino is limited, restricting their reading experiences.

Furthermore, the digital gap is a big impediment to extensive reading in Filipino students. Students' capacity to explore online reading resources, access e-books, or engage in digital reading activities that can improve their reading comprehension skills is limited due to a lack of access to computers, tablets, and a dependable internet connection. These difficulties can also be found in the research location, Cluster 12, Division of Davao City.

The conceptual framework of the study is presented in three interconnected variables. These variables are the (1) challenges of teachers in improving learners' reading comprehension in Filipino through scaffolded intensive reading,

(20) teachers coping with the challenges of improving learners' reading comprehension in Filipino through scaffolded intensive reading, (3) and educational management insights are gained from the experiences of the teachers.

This study is organized around three interconnected variables: (1) the challenges teachers face in improving learners' reading comprehension in Filipino through scaffolded intensive reading, (2) the strategies teachers use to cope with these challenges, and (3) the educational management insights gained from the teachers' experiences.

Teachers Coping with the Challenges in Improving Learners' Reading Comprehension in Filipino Through Scaffolded Intensive Reading

When it comes to cultivating reading comprehension in Filipino language instruction, teachers encounter a multitude of obstacles that can impede students' advancement and hinder effective learning. Nevertheless, committed educators persistently devise methods to overcome these challenges and employ strategies aimed at nurturing reading comprehension skills. This section focused on the coping strategies employed by teachers to cope with the challenges in improving reading comprehension in Filipino Language through scaffolded intensive reading.

This showed the emerging themes on teachers coping with the challenges in improving learners' reading comprehension in Filipino through scaffolded intensive reading which were providing relevant feedback, incorporating authentic resources, and utilizing multi-media. These themes implied that the incorporation of these emerging themes strengthens teachers' coping strategies in fostering reading comprehension skills in Filipino language. By employing authentic materials, educators expose students to culturally relevant texts and encourage active engagement with the content. The integration of technology broadens access to a vast array of resources and facilitates interactive learning experiences that promote the development of reading comprehension. Providing constructive feedback guides students' learning journey, assisting them in identifying areas for improvement and making meaningful advancements. The combination of these themes culminates in a comprehensive approach that addresses students' diverse needs, leverages the power of technology tools, and cultivates a supportive learning environment.

On the educational management insights drawn from the experiences of the teachers, which were choosing the right instructional tools, assessing diverse needs, and collegial assistance. These emerging themes provide a framework for educational managers to support teachers in implementing evidence-based strategies, addressing individual student needs, and utilizing appropriate teaching tools to enhance reading comprehension. Through effective educational management, teachers can facilitate meaningful learning experiences and promote the development of strong reading comprehension skills in the context of the Filipino subject.

This study is founded in the Theory of Zone of Proximal Development and Scaffolding of Vygotsky (1962). It refers to the gap between a learner's current level of independent performance and their potential level of development with guidance and support from a more knowledgeable individual, such as a teacher or peer. When applied to teaching reading comprehension in Filipino, the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory suggests that effective instruction should target the learner's zone of proximal development, providing appropriate support and scaffolding to help them advance their reading comprehension skills in Filipino.

Part of the task of the teachers is assessing the learners' current level through formal or informal assessment. This helps determine their reading abilities and identify their specific strengths and areas for improvement in Filipino language. Once the learner's current level is established, the teachers identify the ZPD by determining the reading comprehension skills and strategies that are just beyond their current abilities. These skills and strategies should be challenging but still attainable with guidance and support.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative approach to research specifically a phenomenological research design since it will focus on the lived experiences of teachers in scaffolded intensive reading for Filipino reading comprehension. According to Creswell, (2012), phenomenology is an approach to qualitative research that focused on the commonality of lived experiences within a particular group. The fundamental goal of the approach is to arrive at a description of the nature of the particular phenomenon. Typically, interviews were conducted to 8 teachers of Cluster 12, Division of Davao City and utilized the purposive sampling design since the participants were chosen based on the criteria or purpose of the study. Other forms of data such as documents, observations and art were also used. The data were read and reread and was culled for phrases and themes that was grouped into clusters of meanings. Through this process, the researcher was able to construct the universal meaning of the event, situation or experience and arrived at a more profound understanding of the phenomenon. In this study, thematic analysis was utilized to analyze the gathered data. The researcher analyzed the answers of the participants from the conducted interviews with the use of Creswell's Model specifically the identifying of themes approach.

3. RESULT

The study shows the emerging themes on the educational management insights drawn from the experiences of the teachers which were choosing the right instructional tools, assessing diverse needs, and collegial assistance. These emerging themes provide a framework for educational managers to support teachers in implementing evidence-based strategies, addressing individual student needs, and utilizing appropriate teaching tools to enhance reading comprehension. Through effective educational management, teachers can facilitate meaningful learning experiences and promote the development of strong reading comprehension skills in the context of the Filipino subject.

Educational Management Insights Drawn from the Findings of the Study

The participants shared their educational management insights, and it was narrowed down into one to emerge the themes. These themes were carefully analyzed and formulated based on what came from participants' accounts and reflections. The subthemes are shown below:

Choosing the right instructional tools. The careful selection of suitable teaching tools is vital in establishing a positive and effective learning environment that fosters the development of reading comprehension. It not only engages students and supports differentiation but also leads to increased achievement, facilitates active learning, and enhances teacher effectiveness.

They believe that the thoughtful selection of teaching tools not only enhances students' comprehension skills but also instills a love for the Filipino language and empowers them to engage critically with Filipino texts. Ultimately, integrating appropriate teaching tools in a well-considered manner improves students' reading comprehension abilities and contributes to their overall development in the Filipino subject.

Assessing diverse needs. The participant of this study emphasized that effective education requires the identification of students' needs as a fundamental aspect. To achieve this, teachers should adopt a personalized, continuous, data-driven, collaborative, and comprehensive approach in identifying and addressing their students' requirements. By doing so, every student can receive the necessary support to thrive both academically and socially.

Through careful observation of students' needs, teachers can acquire invaluable insights into their academic and social-emotional requirements. Armed with this information, teachers can customize their instruction to cater to each student's specific needs, thereby fostering enhanced reading comprehension, increased engagement, and heightened motivation among the students.

Collegial assistance. The participants in the study asserted that fostering collaboration among colleagues within the subject area can positively impact students' reading comprehension. They emphasized the importance of encouraging teachers to share ideas, expertise, strategies, and materials, as it plays a pivotal role in cultivating a reading culture within the school. Additionally, the availability of numerous online resources, such as interactive stories, reading games, and comprehension quizzes, was highlighted as valuable tools that colleagues can utilize to enhance students' reading comprehension.

4. DISCUSSIONS

This purpose of the study was to explore the initiatives taken by teachers in the utilization of the scaffolded intensive reading comprehension approach in Filipino. The emerging themes on the experiences of teachers in improving learners' reading comprehension in Filipino through scaffolded intensive reading. The themes under positive experiences were witness rapid improvement, and address learners' prior knowledge gap. The themes under negative experiences were time constraints and meeting diverse needs.

Witness rapid improvement. Teachers who have employed Scaffolded Intensive Reading have reported remarkable improvements in their students' reading comprehension skills. The structured and step-by-step approach of this method allows learners to gradually build their reading abilities. As teachers witness their students' progression, they gain a sense of fulfillment and motivation. The positive feedback received from students further reinforces the effectiveness of the approach, leading to a virtuous cycle of improved motivation and engagement.

Addressing learners' prior knowledge gap. Filipino educators have recognized that learners often come from diverse backgrounds, with varying levels of prior knowledge and language proficiency. Scaffolded Intensive Reading caters to these differences by offering targeted support to bridge the gaps in learners' understanding. Teachers can identify individual strengths and weaknesses, tailoring their instruction accordingly. Through accommodating learners' unique needs, teachers create an inclusive and supportive learning environment, fostering a sense of belonging and enhancing the overall learning experience.

Time constraints. Implementing scaffolded intensive reading requires a significant investment of time and effort from teachers. Designing appropriate reading materials, creating tailored lesson plans, and providing individualized support demand additional preparation beyond regular teaching duties. Moreover, the need to progress at a suitable pace while ensuring mastery can be challenging, especially when faced with time constraints imposed by an already packed curriculum. As a result, some teachers may feel overwhelmed and unable to dedicate as much time as they desire to each student.

Meeting diverse needs. In any educational setting, learners exhibit diverse learning styles, interests, and cognitive abilities. While Scaffolded Intensive Reading attempts to cater to individual differences, it may still prove challenging for teachers to adequately address the unique needs of each learner. Some students may require more intensive support, while others may be ready to advance at a faster pace. Striking a balance between differentiated instruction and maintaining a coherent learning progression can be demanding, leading to feelings of frustration and inadequacy for educators.

All these themes implied that educators and policymakers can work collaboratively to design support systems that optimize the positive aspects of scaffolded intensive reading while addressing its limitations. Additionally, providing professional development opportunities and allocating resources to alleviate time constraints can empower teachers to deliver effective reading instruction, ultimately fostering a generation of competent and confident readers in the Filipino language.

Moreover, the emerging themes on teachers coping with the challenges in improving learners' reading comprehension in Filipino through scaffolded intensive reading were providing relevant feedback, incorporating authentic resources, and utilizing multi-media.

Providing relevant feedback. One of the essential elements in scaffolded intensive reading is the provision of relevant feedback to learners. Constructive feedback serves as a valuable tool to guide students' understanding, identify areas of improvement, and build their confidence as readers. Teachers can offer feedback on students' comprehension, vocabulary usage, and critical analysis of texts.

Incorporating authentic resources. To engage learners and foster a genuine interest in reading comprehension, teachers should incorporate authentic resources into their lessons. Authentic resources refer to materials that mirror real-life language usage, such as newspaper articles, short stories, poems, and essays in Filipino. Integrating these resources not only promotes linguistic diversity but also exposes students to various writing styles and perspectives.

When learners encounter authentic resources, they develop a deeper understanding of the Filipino language and its cultural significance. Moreover, real-world context enhances their comprehension skills, as they encounter language in its natural form. By immersing students in meaningful and relevant content, teachers can kindle a passion for reading and inspire lifelong learners.

Utilizing multimedia. Incorporating multimedia elements into scaffolded intensive reading practices can significantly impact students' engagement and comprehension. Multimedia, such as videos, audio recordings, and interactive presentations, caters to different learning preferences, making the learning experience more enjoyable and effective.

When teachers use multimedia resources, learners are exposed to a multi-sensory experience that reinforces their understanding of the text. Visual aids, audio elements, and interactive components appeal to various learning styles, enabling students to grasp complex concepts more easily. As a result, students become active participants in their learning, encouraging critical thinking and analytical skills.

All these themes implied that the incorporation of these emerging themes strengthens teachers' coping strategies in fostering reading comprehension skills in Filipino language. Employing authentic materials, educators expose students to culturally relevant texts and encourage active engagement with the content. The integration of technology broadens access to a vast array of resources and facilitates interactive learning experiences that promote the development of reading comprehension. Providing constructive feedback guides students' learning journey, assisting them in identifying areas for improvement and making meaningful advancements. The combination of these themes culminates in a comprehensive approach that addresses students' diverse needs, leverages the power of technology tools, and cultivates a supportive learning environment.

Lastly, the emerging themes on the educational management insights drawn from the experiences of the teachers were choosing the right instructional tools, assessing diverse needs, and collegial assistance.

Choosing the right instructional tools. Selecting appropriate instructional tools is a critical aspect of educational management. In the modern classroom, teachers are faced with a myriad of teaching resources, ranging from traditional

textbooks to digital technologies. Experienced teachers have highlighted the significance of matching these tools with the diverse learning styles and preferences of their students.

In their experiences, teachers found that incorporating visual aids, such as graphic organizers and multimedia resources, greatly benefits visual learners. On the other hand, auditory learners thrive in an environment where audio recordings and read-aloud sessions are integrated. By thoughtfully selecting these tools, teachers can engage students more effectively and create an inclusive learning atmosphere that caters to individual needs.

Assessing diverse needs. Another crucial aspect of educational management is the assessment of diverse needs among students. Each student comes with unique strengths, weaknesses, and learning capabilities. Recognizing and addressing these differences is essential for promoting academic growth and personal development.

Through formative assessments, teachers can gain valuable insights into individual student progress and comprehension levels. Such insights enable them to make informed instructional decisions, tailor teaching approaches, and provide targeted support to bridge learning gaps. By utilizing various assessment methods, including digital tools, teachers can better understand their students' needs and cultivate a more personalized learning experience.

Embracing collegial assistance. The power of collaboration and collegial assistance cannot be understated in the realm of educational management. Teachers who actively seek support from their colleagues and engage in professional development opportunities enhance their effectiveness in the classroom.

All these emerging themes provide a framework for educational managers to support teachers in implementing evidence-based strategies, addressing individual student needs, and utilizing appropriate teaching tools to enhance reading comprehension. Through effective educational management, teachers can facilitate meaningful learning experiences and promote the development of strong reading comprehension skills in the context of the Filipino subject.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, data obtained had impact for various stakeholders in education including policymakers, administrators, and teachers. The future directions of this study are as follows:

For Policy Makers. Policy makers bear the responsibility of creating a conducive environment that nurtures the use of scaffolded reading in Filipino language education. They may prioritize incorporating scaffolded reading strategies into curriculum guidelines and educational policies.

This ensures that teachers receive the necessary guidance and resources to effectively implement the approach. Additionally, policy makers must invest in professional development programs, equipping teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to utilize scaffolded reading techniques. Facilitating continuous learning opportunities, may empower educators to confidently employ scaffolded reading practices in their classrooms, thus fostering a generation of proficient and enthusiastic Filipino language learners.

For Administrators. Principals play a vital role in shaping the school's culture and instructional practices. To foster the use of scaffolded reading in promoting comprehension in the Filipino language, principals must be champions of this approach. They may encourage and support teachers in experimenting with various scaffolded reading techniques, providing necessary resources and training. Furthermore, principals may promote a collaborative learning community within the school, where teachers can share successful practices, discuss challenges, and exchange ideas related to scaffolded reading.

Regular meetings, workshops, and professional learning communities dedicated to scaffolded reading can enhance the collective expertise of educators and elevate the quality of instruction.

For Teachers. Teachers, as key agents of change, are at the forefront of implementing scaffolded reading in the classroom. They may embrace innovative strategies and personalized approaches to cater to the diverse needs of their students. Employing a wide range of scaffolded reading tools, such as graphic organizers, interactive activities, and multimedia resources, teachers may create dynamic and engaging learning experiences.

Moreover, teachers may actively assess their students' progress and make data-driven instructional decisions. Monitoring comprehension levels and adjusting scaffolded reading interventions accordingly will ensure continuous growth in language proficiency. Teachers may also encourage active participation and collaboration among students, enabling them to learn from one another and build a sense of community in the classroom.

For Future Researchers. Further development on the similar and different contexts can be done in this study. It is recommended to consider the experiences of other levels in basic education. Moreover, there is also a need to examine the views and beliefs of administrators and policy makers which were not tackled in this study.

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