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The Effects of Using Illustrative Instructional Texts in English on the Comprehension of Selected Grade One Pupils

Jonalyn D. Mendoza

Philippine Normal University

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**The Effects of Using Illustrative Instructional Texts in English on the Comprehension of
Selected Grade One Pupils**

A Seminar Paper

**Presented to the
College of Graduate Studies
and Teacher Education Research**

**In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in Teaching
with Specialization in Reading**

by

JONALYN D. MENDOZA

October 2013

Approval Sheet

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching with Specialization in Reading, this seminar paper titled **“The Effects of Using Illustrative Instructional Texts in English on the Comprehension of Selected Grade One Pupils”** prepared and submitted by Jonalyn D. Mendoza is hereby recommended for approval and acceptance.

Date

MERRY RUTH M. GUTIERREZ, Ph.D.
Adviser

Approved and accepted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Teaching with Specialization in Reading.

Date

MERRY RUTH M. GUTIERREZ, Ph.D.
Program Adviser

Date

MERRY RUTH M. GUTIERREZ Ph.D.
Director, Graduate Research Office

Date

ZENAIDA Q. REYES, Ph.D.
Dean
College of Graduate Studies
and Teacher Education Research

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Her beloved family, best friends and friends, for their prayers and moral support.

Her loving, supportive, and understanding husband, who never failed to encourage the researcher to continue especially during the time when she felt like giving up.

jdm

Dedication

To her beloved parents
Mr. Dionisio A. Mendoza (*deceased*)
and
Nancy D. Mendoza

To her sister and brother
Mary Anne and Jonathan

To her loving husband
Arnold C. Dungca

This research is humbly dedicated.

Abstract

Name:	Jonalyn D. Mendoza
Title:	The Effects of Using Illustrative Instructional Texts in English on the Comprehension of Selected Grade One Pupils
Degree:	Master of Arts in Teaching Reading
Adviser:	Merry Ruth M. Gutierrez, Ph.D.
Key Concepts:	Illustrative Instructional Texts, Reading Comprehension

Statement of Purpose

The general purpose of this study is to identify how illustrative instructional texts in English influence the comprehension of grade one pupils who have different reading levels as revealed by the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) assessment results. After determining the pupils' reading levels, the study exposed one group of 15 pupils to illustrative texts, while the other group used the conventional texts without support of illustration. The Phil-IRI post-test was administered to both groups to find out whether there were differences in their comprehension scores.

This study utilized the post test – only design where thirty (30) pupils were purposively selected and assigned to experimental and control groups with equal number of pupils matched according to gender, age, and grade level.

The study used five (5) narrative texts from a grade one book not subscribed by public schools as a textbook. The running print version of the stories was administered to the control group, but the same stories were adapted and illustrated for the use of the experimental group.

Twelve (12) grade one teachers validated the illustrative texts and the 5-item comprehension check using a rating scale. Their comments and suggestions served as basis for revising and improving the instruments of the study.

During their 40-minute remedial classes, the grade one pupils were requested to read one selection per day for 30 minutes and to answer the 5-item multiple-choice comprehension questions for 10 minutes. The reading sessions for both experimental and control groups lasted for five consecutive days. Finally, a post test was given to check comprehension improvement of the experimental group.

The t-test was used to determine if there was a significant difference between the mean scores achieved by experimental and control groups. Relative to the calculation of the t is the computation of the mean, the standard deviation, and the standard error of the means. Rejection or acceptance of a null hypothesis was set at the .05 percent level of significance.

Pre-test results showed that many grade one pupils were within the frustration reading level, but the treatment proved positive growth in this area when 40% of the pupils from the experimental group jumped to instructional reading level. Despite the 53% of the pupils still in the lowest reading level, the study concluded that the use of illustrative texts for young learners aid their construction of meaning; and this consequently improved their reading level.

The study offers recommendations for continued use of illustrative texts and for further research on reliability and validity of results to a bigger sampling.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

Chapter I

The Problem and Its Background

Introduction

Reading is the most fundamental skill taught and used in and out of school. Stoodt (1989) explains that reading is a basic life skill, the cornerstone of success in school and life, and the earlier it is acquired, the better for the children's educational and academic performance.

The first grade in the elementary is thought of as the level in which this skill gets basic foundation for later periods of growth and development (Austria, 1996). It is the stage when children are still within their formative years (Agtarap, 2002), a time when the mind is like a sponge absorbing so fast the incoming environmental stimuli.

Because of this, teachers of young learners should be very careful in directing the development of positive attitude in reading to avoid frustrations and failures among the pupils, providing proper training in basic reading skills in order to make reading easier, faster, and more enjoyable. Likewise, grade one teachers must find more effective ways in teaching reading to minimize if not to erase the number of non-readers.

Bondad (1994) cited that it is necessary for children to be equipped with reading readiness skills for beginning reading to be effective. There is no hurry to begin reading if the child is not yet ready to read. Progress in reading is faster and easier if a strong foundation has been established by the teacher. A good foundation for first graders should lead them to progress in the acquisition of other skills. In addition, Francisco (2009) said that grade one teachers need to realize their serious responsibility in the teaching of reading.

Reading being a tool subject is important in the life of the pupils. Nilo (2007) described in detail that learning to read is the most important task that the pupils face during the first years in school. Children come to school with concepts that have corresponding words. However, interpreting the written “squiggles” that support thoughts seems to create difficulties to some children. Despite reading instruction, many pupils fail to reach the functional level of reading skill by the end of their first year. They have difficulty in learning the relations between letters and sounds and between printed and spoken words and have problems in breaking the code. When these pupils with reading difficulties are not caught early enough, the gap for learning to read widens and it becomes much more difficult to close in the gap as children age. Struggling readers encounter negative consequences such as grade retention, low self-esteem, and low academic achievement. Thus, the teaching of reading is a big challenge to almost every grade one teacher.

Reading is a complex process requiring many skills which teachers need to develop so that the children can use them for effective reading. Hence, the teacher's primary duty is to help the children to get a good start in reading and promote a continued growth in reading proficiency. The responsibility of making grade one pupils read lies in the hands of teachers all over the country, public or private. The foundation of learning to read depends upon the development of reading readiness and of beginning reading skills among grade one pupils.

Reading as a skill plays a major role in academic success. Dela Pena (2008) contends that reading opens doors to the wonders of the world; Tan (2003) asserts that through reading children gain broader knowledge of the world. They can explore new ideas and experiences, get acquainted with the modern and scientific discoveries and invention, and broaden their imagination of the things, people, events and changes that take place in this complex civilization.

On the other hand, Tenefrancia (2004) said that reading is also a learning tool. It serves a means by which people broaden the range of human knowledge and experience. Through reading and with proper guidance of the teacher, the pupils will acquire the proper attitudes, values and skills that make successful and happy individual, good citizens and productive members of the society.

De Arao (2009) further explained that reading is basically a life skill. It occupies a high place of significance in learning and personal growth. It is a cornerstone of success in school and throughout life. The child's ability to read and comprehend may spell the difference between success and failure to cope with academic subjects. It is through skill in reading that children can have an access to other content subjects. Reading, therefore, is an indispensable means by which a learner may succeed in other subjects of the total school program.

The most important skill in reading is comprehension. Jabinez (2005) said that comprehension is the main purpose of reading. In fact, without it, there is no reading, since reading is the process of construction of meaning from the text. Reading involves many complex skills that have to come together for the reader to attain comprehension. For instance, proficient readers recognize the purpose of reading, approach the reading with that purpose in mind, use strategies that have proven successful to them in the past when reading similar text for similar purposes, monitor their comprehension of the text in light of the purpose for reading and if needed adjust their strategy use. Proficient readers know when words will interfere with achieving their purpose for reading and when they will not, when unknown words arise and their meaning is needed for comprehension.

Since comprehension and learning go hand in hand, teachers need to plan instruction that addresses the development of comprehension. The choice and use of instructional materials have to reflect congruence with principles of learning and comprehending.

Briones (2007) confirmed that children learn best when instructional design is from simple to complex and when the materials are arranged from something concrete to abstract. According to her, the use of illustrative reading materials helps teachers in providing the pupils with adequate and high-quality information, most especially in teaching beginning reading. In addition, children come to enjoy more the books they read because of illustrations. Lapus (2005) added that high-interest picture books with rich language, absorbing plots, lively characters and multiple layer of meaning will simultaneously promote pleasure and opportunity for learning. Likewise, the appeal and quality of the selections in terms of type and length can enhance or reduce the children's ability to comprehend. Cruz (2008) corroborated this when she mentioned that the use of the classical and colorful remedial reading materials encourage the pupils to learn well and through the encouragement and the promotion of reading as a fun and enjoyable activity for growth of mind, character and values, the reading ability of the pupils will be developed. She explained that the utilization of reading

materials and the artistic approach in teaching reading will help encourage the slow readers to study well.

The connection among concepts such as reading, comprehension, learning, and visual components of instructional materials for understanding and retention of ideas serves as bases of the study to determine the effect of illustrative materials on comprehension of young readers in English.

Conceptual Framework

This study is built on the concept that effective reading instruction involves more than teaching decoding. Children are taught to interact with the text using all available sources of information to create meaning from what they read.

Aside from the printed text, one valuable source of information for the construction of meaning is the illustrations provided in textbooks, which is categorized as part of visual literacy skills in the K-12 curriculum. Visuals, graphs, diagrams, and illustrations are added as textual features to aid the understanding of texts.

Reading therefore becomes comprehensible for young children when adequate stimuli for construction of meaning have been provided as support for understanding.

The figure that follows illustrates the conceptual framework of the study.

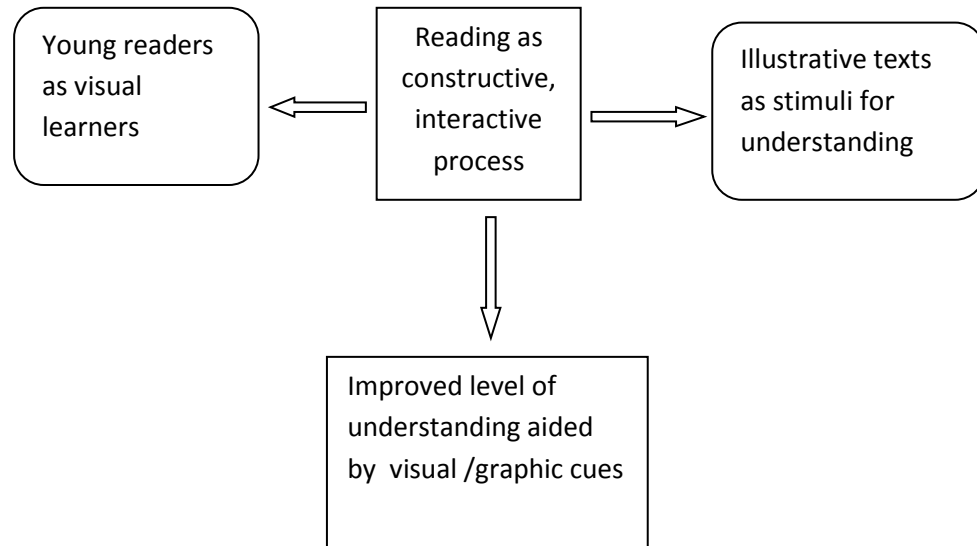


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

As shown in the figure, at the center of the paradigm is the view on reading as an interactive process of constructing meaning. The two participants in this process are the young readers who are characteristically visual learners as supported by principles of learning, and the printed material or the text which serves as stimulus for interaction with the author. Through the help of illustrations espoused by visual literacy tenet functioning as a support cue for understanding,

the comprehension level of readers is hoped to improve, thus raising the level of reading performance especially of the struggling young readers in school.

Statement of the Problem

The general purpose of this study is to identify the effect of using illustrative instructional text in English on the comprehension of grade one pupils.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the pupils' performance level in comprehension before the use of illustrative texts?
2. What is the performance level in comprehension of the pupils exposed and not exposed to illustrative texts?
3. Is there a significant difference between the post test scores of the two groups?

Significance of the Study

The result of the study would benefit the following:

Pupils. The study will help them understand the important role played by illustrations in improving their comprehension as they become aware of such in the selection.

Teachers. This study could help them focus instruction on using illustrations as they deliberately coach children for comprehension. This could also guide them to produce helpful, interesting and effective instructional reading materials.

Parents. The results of the study could encourage them to utilize illustrative books for home reading as they commit their time to the act of reading with their young children outside school.

School Administrators. This could motivate them to allot budget for the purchase of instructional materials that are illustrated.

Scope and Delimitation

This study followed the two-group post test only design to determine the effect of illustrative texts on comprehension of young readers. The stimulus materials were five narrative texts followed by comprehension questions after each selection. T-test results of the two groups were compared to check whether there was a difference in the scores of the two

groups comprising 15 grade one pupils for each, and to find out whether the difference was significant. The descriptive measures were used for the validation of stories and illustrations, while the quantitative measures were applied in the analysis of the comprehension score comparison.

Definition of Terms

To facilitate a clearer understanding of the study, the following terms were contextually and operationally defined:

Comprehension. It is the ability to derive meaning and understanding from the printed language. It is the summation of the reading act.

Illustrative Text. It refers to any text with illustration of the content used to help children visualize the concepts and ideas in texts.

Instructional Materials. These refer to anything used to aid the transfer of learning, like textbooks, supplementary materials, workbooks, and modules to facilitate ease in constructing meaning.

Reading Comprehension. This refers to the ability of the reader to understand what is written or printed as opposed to what is heard or watched.

Chapter II

Review of Conceptual and Research Literature

This chapter reviews conceptual and research literature pertinent and significant to this study. This has provided the researcher substantial background in the conceptualization of the data in the study.

Conceptual Literature

On Reading

Reading is the process of constructing meaning from written texts. It is a complex skill requiring critical and creative thinking process to pull together a number of interrelated sources of information. Indeed, reading is the main tool of learning. It involves many complex skills that have to come together for the reader to be successful. Its basic task is to discover the meaning intended by the author. Before adequate comprehension is possible, the learners must have understanding of the spoken language. The efficient readers must be able to understand what they read. Tejero et.al (2004) stated that reading typically is bringing meaning to rather than the gaining of meaning from the printed page. The researcher agrees to this idea since authors do not really convey ideas to the

reader, but merely stimulate them to construct meaning out of their own experiences.

Rionda (1996) explained that reading is the receptive phase of written communication. In decoding the written language, the readers actively utilize knowledge of language, past experiences and conceptual attainments. Reading therefore is regarded as an interaction where readers attempt to reconstruct a message from the writer. In addition, Tejero et.al (2004) affirmed that reading involves much more than recognition of the graphic symbol. She mentioned that it includes even more than the arousal of meaning or the gaining of meaning from printed symbols. Effective reading includes experiencing, learning and thinking. It frequently requires reflection, judgment, analysis, synthesis, selection and the critical evaluation of what is being read. Readers are stimulated by the author's words with his/her own meaning. The readers must select one specific meaning from the numerous meanings that they have acquired. It was further explained that reading is the process in which information from the text and the knowledge possessed by the reader get together to produce meaning.

Reading consists of two major components: recognizing and analyzing words, often referred to as decoding and understanding words and ideas often called comprehension. Thus, reading is a combination of being able to recognize

and analyze words almost instantly and to understand what the words mean when they are strung together in a sentence, a paragraph or a longer passage.

There are various information sources in reading (Ehri as cited by Tejero et.al, 2004). The first is knowledge of language which enables readers to recognize sentences and syntax or the way in which words are put together to form phrases, clauses, sentences, harmonious arrangement of parts or elements. Second is the knowledge of the world/background knowledge including both encyclopedia and experiential knowledge which supply readers with background for understanding ideas and filling in parts that are left implicit (assumed known) rather than stated explicitly in the text. Third is metacognitive knowledge which enables readers to monitor their own comprehension to ascertain whether the information makes sense and meets specific purposes. Metacognitive knowledge about corrective strategies such as reading and questioning the self enables the reader to remedy comprehension failures. And lastly, knowledge of the alphabetic-phonemic (letter-sound) systems involves knowing how the spelling system represents speech, including how to transfer graphemes into phonemes, the smallest unit of sound. Lexical knowledge refers to the reader's dictionary of words held in memory including words of sight. All of these types of knowledge can contribute to comprehension. Also, memory is important for linking the meaning of a text to previously read text as well as for integrating it with information from other knowledge source.

On Reading Comprehension

To state simply, comprehension is reading. Without comprehension there would be no purpose to reading words. Caldwell (2002) stressed that comprehension is what entices a reader to continue reading. Comprehension is an active process. Good readers use the words of the author to construct a personal version of the text in their minds. This text is similar to what the author has written, but good readers supply additional details and make inferences that are not stated in the text.

Comprehension is the construction of meaning from the printed material. Indeed, it is an interactive process that requires the use of background knowledge which the reader brings, in combination with the material found on the text. Readers connect what they already know with the information in the text. It is the process of gaining meaning from the text, which is the purpose of reading. The act of comprehending text involves a person's ability to know and use strategies (metacognition) before, during, and after reading to successfully understand what is being read. This recognition process, is, of course, fundamental to reading comprehension.

Monteclaro (2002) contends that comprehension requires a fusion of separate words into a chain of related ideas to understand its main thought, specific details, sequence and direction to be followed. The implied involves inferences, sensing relationships, drawing conclusions and recognizing the author's purpose, tone and feeling. These help the reader to grasp the total meaning of the passage.

There are four (4) main factors that affect a reader's comprehension (Salazar as cited by Tejero et.al , 2004). The first factor is prior knowledge or experiences the reader has. It includes what is read about the subject and the particular/special vocabulary known about the particular subject. The second factor is interest in the subject. It is said that when readers are interested in a subject, they will give undivided attention to it while reading. The third factor is purpose in reading which differs from reader to reader even when of the same text. The fourth factor is ability to decode, which refers to the ability to attack new words with facility such that readers are better able to concentrate on getting the meaning of reading selection.

Tejero et.al (2004) enumerated that comprehension involves three (3) levels: literal, inferential, and critical or applied. The literal level is also known as reading the lines where learners derive meaning from the sequential words and their grammatical relation to each other in sentences, paragraphs, and chapters.

The readers convert the author's thoughts into their own using their personal experiences as "fillers". This level enables learners to recognize the main thought of a paragraph. They can identify key words, main ideas, and supporting details. They can follow the writer's development of ideas. In a short story, for instance, learners can detect the theme, its introduction, climax, and resolution. In a reading article, too, learners can pick up the writer's generalizations and conclusions. In a fiction, learners can easily visualize the characters, the setting, and the series of events. This level of comprehension enables the learners to get the basic of understanding what the material is saying.

Inferential level or reading between the lines expects learners to be mature in reading habits. It is achieved when learners can recognize the author's purposes, interpret his/her thoughts, and pass judgements on his/her statements. Learners are able to distinguish fact or opinion, interpret clues to character and plot, sift the author's ideas from their own. They are also able to assess the author's competence and authority in the areas being written about. In this level, comprehension requires the ability to recognize and interpret literacy devices, such as metaphor, simile, irony, among others.

The third level is reading beyond the lines, considered as the most difficult task in comprehension because it involves critical and creative reading techniques. On this level, learners are expected to recognize implications,

anticipate consequences, and draw conclusions not stated by the author. This is achieved when learners can arrange the author's ideas into new patterns, enlarging their scope or combining them into one's own ideas and experiences. Learners are able to analyze and synthesize the author's thoughts, giving them a new insight into the significance of both sets of ideas – the author's and learners. This, then, is the most rewarding type of reading because learners are actually synthesizing, creating something new out of what they have read.

Paloma (2001) identified five comprehension levels, which seem to be more than the three levels just cited. However, the difference lies in breaking up inferential and critical levels, then again in creative and applied levels. Consequently, it can be construed that no contradiction exists in levelling comprehension.

On Beginning Readers

Austria (1996) stated that the formative years of children are delicate, sensitive, and yet productive such that the grade one teachers should be aware in directing attitudes in reading and also redirecting the undesirable ones to instill helpful reading habits all throughout life. When undeveloped reading readiness skills are overlooked and permitted to accumulate, frustrations and failure will

happen. Reading readiness problems that remain unchecked and are tolerated will cause problems at the start of reading, and this will be carried over in succeeding years.

It is necessary then that grade one teachers find ways to minimize reading readiness problems among the beginners, usually the seven year- old readers (Golocan, 1997). Reading at the age of seven does not itself qualify them as ready to read. Many of them are not as mature as an average child of five. A few of them are not as advance as an average child of eight or nine. Giving immature children a difficult task beyond their ability is a certain way of making them fall. On the other hand, the more advanced children should not be held back by the weak ones. The teacher's recognition of differences in maturity and rate of development among their pupils should affect planning. The program should meet the needs of all the pupils, -- the immature as well as the advanced.

A good reading foundation for first graders should lead them to progress in the acquisition of other reading skills. This is done by introducing reading in a very meaningful and joyous situation with the use of interesting and enticing instructional materials following the principles of learning (Briones, 2007). The use of illustrative reading materials helps teachers in providing readers with adequate and high-quality information, most especially in teaching beginning reading.

Golcan (1997) cited what a reading specialist had said, “Give everything to children while in the lower grades and they will take care of themselves in the future”. This quotation implies a solid and strong foundation in the first grade in order to prevent non-readers as well as retarded readers. Undoubtedly, progress in reading would be easier when strong foundation has been established by the teacher. Anything learned meaningfully in grade one will not be easily forgotten as years roll by.

Briones (2007) listed the benefits of having illustrations as aid for understanding. Firstly, students who learned how to use and construct graphic representations are in control of the study strategy. It allows them to identify what parts of the text are important, how ideas and concepts are encountered in text are related, and where they can find specific information to support more important ideas. Learners need to see these relationships and learn how to link ideas. When using graphics while studying a concept, they build these links. Secondly, using visuals with text creates both verbal and non-verbal codes as well as connections between the two. Individuals can process information in a variety of ways and these processes determine what is learned and how well. (Craik and Lockhart, 1972; Pavio, 1986). The third one is the breadth of processing also occurs when identical content is used in two different forms (connected discourse and visual representation; this should lead to better memory because understanding of one form is likely to improve understanding of the other form – something that occurs

with repetition of the same form. Thus the spatial nature of illustrations opens a range of learning possibilities not available when language is used alone. Images in picture books evoke variety of responses in the young children as they read colors, borders, and body language, framing devices, covers, visual metaphors and visual jokes (Walsh, 2003). Further, illustrations in picture books influence children's oral, written, visual and representative responses to instructional materials for beginning readers.

Enriquez (2005) supports these claims. Accordingly, there is a wealth of lovely illustrations that will delight the young readers. Second, the beautifully drawn pictures are so animated, so full of action, and so full of life that will surely impress the young readers. Third, the pictures help the young learners in understanding the meaning of the new words as well as stories told, for they effectively suggest the ideas presented. Next, the pictures effectively portray the moods and feelings of the characters. And lastly, the pictures have human and humorous appeal that will easily win the children's interest.

Stood (1989) stated that in order to develop concepts of language and print for young children and to create a foundation for reading success activities will contribute in this foundation. First is the use of wordless picture books that encourage children to think of the language that could be used with the story. Next, providing audio-taped stories for children with accompanying pictures

works suitably well for their comprehension. Third is collecting interesting photographs and illustrations for discussion. Teachers can ask children to describe what is happening in the pictures, who the characters are, what happened just before the picture, or what they think will happen immediately after the picture incident.

Morrow (1989) likewise cited that experiences with literature can lead children to use contextual print and illustrations to recognize that words have meaning and to help them decode words in the printed page. For instance, the teacher selects a story that is predictable, in which the text and illustrations are very closely related. Ask the children to look at the pictures on a page before reading it to them. Ask them what they think the words will say. Then read the page to demonstrate the print and illustration are closely related and that the pictures provide information that can help the children as they read the story. In Knapp's Article "Discourse: An Illustrative Reader" he further explained that illustration clarifies and emphasizes the meaning of something, either by rendering it in more nearly specific or concrete terms (example) or by juxtaposing it to something whose similarities and differences can make its own features more striking and visible. Linguistically, an image is an effort to create through words the mental version of a sensory, especially a visual impression. Tolosa (2007) claimed that illustration is a big help for students to ignite the interest in reading.

Research Literature

The study of Briones (2007) has relevance to the present study because both study tried to find out the advantages of using illustrations in reading materials to assess and improve one's comprehension. It was revealed that illustrations have significant effects on the comprehension of the pupils and they served as a tool to motivate them to read, to continue reading and to overcome possible reading problems, helping them to perform according to their instructional and independent level. She commented that the result reflects the importance of illustrative texts in enhancing comprehension. This seems to show a greater number of pupils overcoming possible reading problems when they see illustrations as a support to ideas in print not clear to them. In her study, it was found out that no one from the experimental group got frustration level, but there were three (3) who got this in control group. According to her, this result indicated how teachers could enable their pupils to become better comprehenders if only they try to maximize the use of illustrative instructional materials in the classroom.

The study of Lapus (2005) is similar to the previous study for it also focused on the illustrations. In her study, results indicated that interactive story reading enhanced pupils' higher listening comprehension and retelling skills but

in varying degrees based on their previous experience with books at home. Pupils with more experience with story books and exposure to oral models of English language possessed better listening behavior and had the most diverse and sophisticated responses. Those pupils also showed retelling skills faster than those who had limited experience with books and few opportunities for oral interaction in English. It was found based on the performance of the six (6) ESL Filipino pre-schoolers that few responses indicated focus on print and illustrations. Often the readers among the subject pupils were the ones that manifested concern for the print as they read a word or a phrase along with the teacher. Concern for illustrations was more common among the non-readers in the group. They seemed to use illustrations to help them understand what was going on in the story.

Tan (2003) determined the effectiveness of using good illustration in reading materials for non-readers. She pointed out that teaching and re-teaching the reading skills among the beginners and poor readers can never be over-emphasized. The use of good illustration in reading materials for the cited readers illuminates the meaning of the words on the page, which enables the readers to proceed faster in the learning process. According to her, it is often said that a picture speaks a thousand words; hence, illustration can enhance the verbal description by giving a concrete shape to it.

In another study on illustrated reading materials in English for the pupils of Malvar District, Division of Batangas, results proved that said materials were not only an effective tool in teaching but also in learning the rudiments of the basic reading skills that are very much needed by the learners. The study attributed the success attained to the relevance and acceptability of the proposed materials as well as the commitment and competencies of the teachers who handled the subject.

Also, Tenefrancia (2004) found that illustrated materials for slow grade 2 pupils of Kaunlaran Elementary School improved the pupils' reading level from mostly frustration to instruction and independent levels after three (3) months' use of the developed reading materials. Likewise, the number of slow readers decreased dramatically to only 5 pupils. This finding runs parallel to that of Tan's study, proving the important role of illustrations in improving comprehension.

Another study which has bearing to the present study is that of Francisco (2009) who studied the effect of using pictures in different stories to attract the attention of the pupils and to assess their comprehension. The grade one pupils of Silang District II who were poor comprehenders attended remedial reading programs using the illustrated materials, which proved to jack up their reading level from frustration to instruction level after several exposures to the materials.

Illustrations also help not only those lagging behind their reading development, but also those who have mild mental retardation. Tumbaga (2006) concluded that visual illustrations were acceptable as an additional tool in teaching reading, and that the activities and exercises in reading comprehension skills were very much suitable to the level of competencies of said children. The illustrations and drawings aroused their interest such that they kept to the tasks until the completion with much understanding of concepts presented.

In addition, Camigue's (2000) and Reyes' (2000) studies revealed the same finding on the importance of illustrations as they provide enjoyment, arouse interest, and sustain motivation because of the presence of colors, shapes, and other visual elements of the text.

In summary, the findings of all the aforementioned studies enlightened the researcher on the importance of reading and its instruction for young children since virtually all learning is based on the ability to read and comprehension is the main purpose of reading. Despite its importance, many beginning readers seemed unprepared to handle the challenge as revealed by the low scores in national examinations and classroom-based tests.

All the foregoing studies guided the researcher in designing the study, choosing appropriate grade level as participants, and preparing illustrative

instructional materials in English to determine how visuals help increase the comprehension level of struggling beginning readers.

Chapter III

Research Methodology

This chapter presents and discusses the research design, participants of the study, sampling procedure, locale, instrument, data-gathering procedure and the statistical tools used in data analysis.

Research Design

This study utilized the two-group post test – only design where thirty (30) pupils were purposively selected and assigned to experimental and control groups with equal number of pupils matched according to gender, age and grade level.

The post-test consisted of 5-item multiple choice type of comprehension test for each of the five (5) selections read. This was patterned after the Phil- Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) used by the Bureau of Elementary Education.

Participants of the Study

The thirty (30) grade one participants of the study were purposively selected based on their reading level, section, age range, and gender.

Sampling Procedure

Out of 45 pupils in Grade One – Makabayan section, only 15 boys and 15 girls satisfied the criteria set for selection. They were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups with equal number of boys and girls each.

Listed below are the participants and their designated group, their name, age, and gender.

Experimental Group

Control Group

Name	Sex	Age	Name	Sex	Age
1. Adique, John Vic A.	M	6	1. Abtahi, Araf Saimel D.	M	6 1/2
2. Cañete, Kizrhey L.	M	6	2. Escaño, Edgar III P.	M	6 1/2
3. Evangelista, Juan Manuel A.	M	6 1/2	3. Manzano, Paolo Miguel J.	M	6 1/2
4. Hayno, Lenard Brian L.	M	6 1/2	4. Novelero, Caleb John R.	M	6
5. Mondano, Neil John L.	M	6	5. Paradero, John Raven S.	M	6 1/2
6. Tacsuan, Rowill Yzyqyll C.	M	6	6. Purisima, Thomas Gabriel A.	M	6
7. Velasco, Renz Daniel A.	M	6 1/2	7. Susa, Jio Gabriel B.	M	6
8. Ancheta, Stefanie J.	F	6	8. Cabrera, Mary Pauleen G.	F	6 1/2
9. Garces, Jan Jade M.	F	6	9. Lardizabal, Cohlyn Allyson M	F	6 1/2
10. Gusi, Anicah Mae G.	F	6	10. Manzana, Ma. Fatima J.	F	6 1/2
11. Oliveros, Janica Jean G.	F	6	11. Manalo, Christine Nathalia Q	F	6
12. Panaguiton, Maree Janessah L	F	6 1/2	12. Rances, Julia P.	F	6 1/2
13. Pante, Juliana Rosebenz M.	F	6	13. Savedia, Gilianah Nathalia	F	6 1/2
14. Ramos, Jacquelyn Kate P.	F	6	14. Siasat, Mia Joy M.	F	6 1/2
15. San Pedro, Erma Hidda E.	F	6 1/2	15. Talaue, Gabrielle Louiza L.	F	6 1/2

Research Locale

The gathering of data took place at Itaas Elementary School – Main, Type C, N.B.P. Reservation, Poblacion, Muntinlupa City, a public elementary school in national capital Region (NCR).

Research Instruments

The study used five (5) narrative texts as stimulus material which was adapted from the book *Come and Play / Fun and Surprises* by Salud R. Enriquez. These stories appeared in two forms: one was with illustration for each story given to the experimental group, and the other was without illustration of the story given to the control group.

A Rating Scale for the Evaluation of Illustrative Stories was also given to the evaluators prior to the actual use of the stories to ensure the acceptability and validity of the illustrations.

A 5-item multiple choice comprehension check served as post test for each selection to determine how well the participants understood the selection read.

Validation of the Instruments

For the purpose of establishing content validation of the data gathering tools, the researcher requested all the grade one teachers to evaluate the illustrative text materials, non-illustrative text materials, and the 5-item multiple choice type of test on the basis of some evaluative criteria. The concerned evaluators went over the items to judge the appropriateness and to make necessary comments for the improvement of the research instruments.

The grade one teachers evaluated all the instruments used in the study. The results of the evaluation of the instruments indicated commendable feedback from the evaluators as regards their appropriateness and acceptability, and thus recommended minor revisions before said instruments were used.

Data Gathering Procedure

Certain procedures were undergone for the data gathering.

Firstly, the researcher asked permission from the principal of Itaas Elementary School – Main to conduct the study among grade one pupils.

With the principal's approval, the researcher provided the participants with the copies of research instruments together with the letter explaining the

purpose, design, and procedure of the study. The following were the specific steps taken to obtain data from the pupils.

1. The schedule for remedial class was determined. It was held daily for forty minutes among struggling grade one pupils. The data gathering lasted for a week or equivalent to five days, with one story read and answered each day.
2. The purposively selected participants were grouped equally into two. The illustrative texts were read by the experimental group while the non-illustrative text was read by the control group.
3. The remedial class time for the week of actual data gathering was apportioned by allotting 30 minutes for the reading of the selection and 10 minutes for answering the 5-item post test. This took place from September 26 to October 3, 2013.
4. The data gathered for each selection was tabulated and analyzed.

To identify the reading level after the post test, the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil.IRI) was used as guide. Columna (2013) cited Mckenna and Stahl (2009) for the interpretation of the scores, categorizing the three comprehension levels corresponding to the description of Phil.IRI.

The *independent level* is the level at which a student can read a text without assistance. This includes the reader's ability to both decode the text and

comprehend what he/she is reading. A text is considered to be at the child's independent level if the child is able to read the text with 95% accuracy or higher and comprehend the text with at least 90% accuracy during an assessment.

The *instructional level* is the level at which a child can read a text with the help of a teacher. The reader can work through the text, but it will present challenges that will require his/her to learn new problem-solving strategies. A text is considered to be at a child's instructional level if the child is able to read the text with at least 90% accuracy and comprehend the text with at least 75% accuracy.

The *frustration level* is the level at which a text is so difficult that a child cannot read it, even with help, and he/she may be turned off from reading the text. If a child is focused to read frustration-level texts, it will stifle his/her fluency and cause anxiety.

The matrix below summarizes the levels and their description.

Reading Level	Phil.IRI 2010
Independent	90 - 100
Instructional	75 - 89
Frustration	74 & below

The reading level can be computed by getting the pupil's score divided by the number of items multiplied by 100. Using the scoring system mentioned, the researcher has identified the appropriate reading level of each pupil in the two groups.

Statistical Treatment

The use of percentage, mean, and ranking helped in describing one part of quantitative data. However, to determine the difference of post test scores, the t-test was used.

Chapter IV

Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data

This chapter discusses the results of the study, presents the findings, analysis, and interpretation of the data gathered.

The study aimed to identify whether there was a significant difference in the post test scores of pupils exposed and not exposed to illustrative materials.

Findings of the Study

Objective 1: What is the comprehension level of the pupil –participants that read the non-illustrative texts (control group) after reading the stories?

Since the participants were found to have frustration reading level prior to treatment, the post test served as basis for comparing the results between two groups. The scores for the five stories read and answered by the pupils in control group were presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Comprehension Scores of Pupils in Control Group

Pupil Number	Story 1 Score (5)	Story 2 Score (5)	Story 3 Score (5)	Story 4 Score (5)	Story 5 Score (5)	Total Score (25)	Comprehension Level
1	2	1	3	2	2	10 (40%)	Frustration
2	3	2	5	4	0	14 (56%)	Frustration
3	5	2	3	4	2	16 (64%)	Frustration
4	2	4	5	3	5	19 (76%)	Instructional
5	3	1	3	3	2	12 (48%)	Frustration
6	3	2	3	2	0	10 (40%)	Frustration
7	4	2	5	3	4	18 (72%)	Frustration
8	4	2	3	3	2	14 (56%)	Frustration
9	2	2	1	3	3	11 (44%)	Frustration
10	1	2	5	2	3	13 (52%)	Frustration
11	4	2	4	3	3	16 (64%)	Frustration
12	3	2	4	2	4	15 (60%)	Frustration
13	2	3	3	2	2	12 (48%)	Frustration
14	3	3	4	4	2	12 (48%)	Frustration
15	3	3	4	4	2	16 (64%)	Frustration

Table 1 shows the individual score for each story read by the pupils and the total scores obtained after reading the five stories, totalling to 25 items.

Noticeably, 14 pupils or 99% were still in frustration level, while 1 or 1% now improved to instructional level. This result did not show any change in the pupils' reading level, except for one that moved to a higher one. Despite the remedial class attended by the pupils, no improvement was observed in the reading level, perhaps because the reading selections remained to be the same without any attempt to aid their understanding. Majority of the pupils still found difficulty in comprehending the story, hence, their low score in the post test.

The intervention program was a commendable solution to identified school reading problems among children; unfortunately, this seemed insufficient to really arrest the problem and help raise children's reading level. More could have been included, like the use of interesting, illustrated materials as aid for understanding and sustaining motivation to read on. Likewise, support for improved instruction calls for suitable and appropriate materials that children love and enjoy for intervention program to be effective.

Objective 2: What is the comprehension level of the pupils using illustrative texts (experimental group)?

Table shows the experimental group's scores on the comprehension check.

Table 2. Comprehension Scores of Pupils in Experimental Group

Student	Story 1 Score (5)	Story 2 Score (5)	Story 3 Score (5)	Story 4 Score (5)	Story 5 Score (5)	Total (25)	Comprehension Level
1	5	4	5	3	5	22 (88%)	Instructional
2	4	2	5	3	3	17 (68%)	Frustration
3	3	3	4	3	3	16 (64%)	Frustration
4	4	2	4	4	4	18 (72%)	Frustration
5	5	2	5	4	4	20 (80%)	Instructional
6	5	5	5	4	4	23 (92%)	Independent
7	4	5	5	3	3	20 (80%)	Instructional
8	4	2	3	3	3	15 (60%)	Frustration
9	5	4	5	2	3	19 (76%)	Instructional
10	4	2	4	4	3	17 (68%)	Frustration
11	4	2	3	3	3	15 (60%)	Frustration
12	3	3	5	4	4	19 (76%)	Instructional
13	3	5	5	3	2	18 (72%)	Frustration
14	3	3	5	4	2	17 (68%)	Frustration
15	5	3	5	4	2	19 (76%)	Instructional

Table 2 shows the scores of pupils for each story as well as the overall score for all the five stories, totalling to 25. Starting with a frustration reading level, the pupils now showed an improvement in reading. One pupil was in independent level, 6 in instructional level, and yet 8 were still in frustration level. Nevertheless, 7 pupils or 47% benefitted from the illustrations provided based on their increase in post test scores. Although 53% were still in frustration level, the visuals that matched the texts undeniably contributed to the meaning-making

process of the young readers. Apparently, teachers needed to think of other things to work on in aiding the children's reading growth, and not just doing remedial class and using illustration for the texts.

At a glance, the illustrative texts may have influenced the improvement of comprehension as reflected in the high score earned in the post test. Nevertheless, these are not the only adjustment needed to reach out to the struggling beginning readers. The challenge remains to think of innovation, materials production, and meaningful, engaging instruction to help children succeed.

Objective 3: Is there a significant difference between the comprehension scores of pupils using illustrative and non-illustrative texts?

Table 3 reflects the mean and standard deviation of the two groups as basis in identifying whether a significant difference occurred in the post test scores between the groups.

Table 3. Mean and Standard Deviation of the Comprehension Scores of Two Groups

Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Story1 1.00 (experimental)	4.0667	.79881	.20625
2.00 (control)	2.9333	1.03280	.26667
Story2 1.00 (experimental)	3.1333	1.18723	.30654
2.00 (control)	2.2000	.77460	.20000
Story3 1.00 (experimental)	4.5333	.74322	.19190
2.00 (control)	3.6667	1.11270	.28730
Story4 1.00 (experimental)	3.4000	.63246	.16330
2.00 (control)	2.9333	.79881	.20625
Story5 1.00 (experimental)	3.2000	.86189	.22254
2.00 (control)	2.4000	1.35225	.34915
Total 1.00 (experimental)	3.6667	.46394	.11979
2.00	2.8267	.55481	.14325

Experimental group who read a story 1 entitled “Bananas” got a mean of 4.0667, its standard deviation is .79881 and its standard error mean is .20625 while control group obtained a mean of 2.9333, a standard deviation of 1.03280 and a standard error mean of .26667.

In story 2 entitled “Chonggo and the Kite” experimental group got a mean of 3.1333, a standard deviation of 1.18723 and a standard error mean of .30654 whereas control group acquired a mean of 2.2000, a standard deviation of .77460 and a standard error mean of .20000.

Moving on story 3 with a title “A Surprise for Tony” the experimental group got a mean of 4.5333, a standard deviation of .74322 and a standard error mean of .19190 while the control group acquired a mean of 3.6667, a standard deviation of 1.11270 and a standard error mean of .28730.

Next is story 4 entitled “At Auntie’s Home”, the experimental group obtained a mean of 3.4000, a standard deviation of .79881 and a standard error mean of .16330 whereas the control group obtained a mean of 2.9333, a standard deviation of .79881 and a standard error mean of .20625.

In the last story entitled “Surprises” the experimental group achieved a mean of 3.2000, a standard deviation of .86189 and a standard deviation of .86189 and a standard error of .22254 whereas the control group attained a mean of 2.4000, a standard deviation of 1.35225, a standard error mean of .34915.

The experimental group got an over-all total mean of 3.6667, a standard deviation of .46394 and a standard error mean of .11979 whereas the control group realized a mean of 2.8267, a standard deviation of .55481 and a standard

error mean of .14325. In here, the group mean was used to determine the average comprehension scores of the two groups. Also it used the standard deviation to shows how much variation or dispersion from the average exists.

To determine whether a significant difference exists between the scores of the two groups based on group means and standard deviations, the t-test was used, the results of which are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. T-Test Results

Story	t	Sig. (2-tailed)	Interpretation
1	3.362	.002*	Significant
2	2.550	.017*	Significant
3	2.508	.018*	Significant
4	1.774	.087	Not Significant
5	1.932	.064	Not Significant
Total	4.498	.000*	Significant

at .05 level of significance

Legend: * less than .05

Statistical Analysis Using T-test

The t-test was used to determine if there was a significant difference between the mean scores achieved by experimental and control groups. Relative to the calculation of the t is the computation of the mean, the standard deviation, and the standard error of the means. Rejection or acceptance of a null hypothesis is set at the .05 percent level of significance.

For the result with less than .05 value the interpretation meant the difference was significant. However for the result higher than .05 value the interpretation meant the difference was not significant.

For story 1 entitled “Bananas” the t-test result was 3.362 with .002 value, implying a significant difference since .002 value is less than .05.

In story 2 with a title “Chonggo and the Kite” the t-test result was 2.550 with .017 value. This also indicated that the difference was significant since .017 value is less than .05.

Next is story 3 entitled “A Surprise for Tony” with the t-test result of 2.508 with .018 value, meaning the difference was significant too since .018 value is less than .05.

In story 4 entitled “At Auntie’s Home” the t-test result was 1.774 with .087 value, implying that the difference was not significant since .087 value is higher than .05.

The same result was true with story 5 entitled “Surprises” where the t-test result was 1.932 with .064 value, showing that the difference was not significant since .064 value is higher than .05.

Summarily, there were three stories which reflected a significant difference in the scores of the two groups, and two stories with no significant difference at all. Nonetheless, the overall t-test result of the said five stories is 4.498 with .000 value which showed that there was a significant difference in the comprehension scores between the two groups.

This result suggests other factors affecting comprehension. Perhaps aside from illustrations and visual support for the texts, teachers need to consider how much background knowledge readers have about a selection, how interested and familiar they are about the topic, and what purpose they have for reading a passage. Also, text factors are not to be taken for granted -- vocabulary and conceptual load, idea organization, and background knowledge required play an important role in understanding a selection.

Overall, it is implied from these findings that illustrative instructional texts have significant effects on improving the comprehension level of the pupils. This supports the studies of Walsh (2003) and Enriquez (2005), claiming that visual support, shapes, images, illustrations, and other aids for comprehension help children understand the narration better, because of which they perform better in answering questions related to comprehension.

Chapter V

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This chapter covers the summary of significant findings, corresponding conclusions, and recommendations.

Summary of Findings

The study arrived at the following findings in relation to the effect of illustrative texts on improving the comprehension scores of grade one pupils:

1. Initially, it was found that young readers of English as a second language began with a frustration reading level. Almost all of them struggled in constructing meaning of selections in English, especially when what they saw on the page was the running texts filled with words unknown to them.
2. The group of pupils that read selections without illustrations did not show improvement in comprehension level despite the intervention program conducted by the teacher. There was only one pupil or 7% who improved from frustration to instruction level after attending intervention class.
3. However, the group of pupils that read the illustrative texts improved the level of comprehension, to wit: there was now one pupil or 7% with

independent reading level, 6 pupils or 40% with instruction level, yet 8 pupils or 53% were still in frustration level.

4. The post test scores of experimental group were significantly higher than the post test scores of control group.
5. A significant difference in the post test scores was seen between the two groups where the one that used illustrative texts showed a marked improvement in comprehension level.

Conclusions

In view of the cited findings, the following conclusions are made:

1. Many young Filipino readers of English as a second language experience difficulty in constructing meaning from texts at the onset of the school year. They might be doing well in Filipino, but this is not true in English. They have a hard time understanding written texts in English as revealed by the Phil-IRI results indicating their frustration reading level.
2. Intervention programs need more than just spending extra time teaching the children. Such programs must incorporate innovative strategies, suitable reading materials, and other aids for comprehension, especially the use of visuals and illustrations to help facilitate the process of understanding second language selections and academic readings.

3. Illustrations and visual components of the selections work to the advantage of young readers in English, although these should be coupled with other aids to obtain optimal reading growth among them.
4. Young readers in English who begin with difficulty can surmount the challenges of second language reading when provided with adequate instruction, supportive environment, and innovative ways of facilitating instruction.
5. Illustrations pave the way for motivated reading, sustained reading interest, and improved comprehension among children.

Recommendations

Based on the cited conclusions, the following are recommended:

1. Catch early the young children experiencing difficulty in second language reading to avoid aggravating the case of poor comprehension.
2. Conduct seminars and conferences on the utilization of illustrative instructional text materials in English for grade I readers.
3. Try out the illustrative materials with all grade pupils of a given school to determine reliability and validity of results of the study.
4. Make use of illustrative texts in other subject areas to determine the effectiveness of such in improving comprehension.

5. Improve the design and enrich the contents of illustrative instructional text materials to enhance pupil's interest in reading.