Experiences of Parents and Teachers in Teaching Reading Fluency Among Grade One Learners in Distance Education

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Abstract

The research sought to find information that provides solutions for teaching reading fluency among grade one learners in distance education to identify the underlying factors that affect the teaching and learning process in Pulangbato Elementary School, Quiot Elementary School, and Maria Montessori International School, Cebu, Philippines. This research delved into the experiences of the parents' personal opinions concerning learners' reading habits and fluency at home, teachers' opinion survey on reading, how parents' involvement affects learners' reading fluency, and parents' and teachers' challenges in teaching reading to learners on distance learning. It employed a Qualitative-Phenomenological method with 18 teachers and 18 parents from 3 different schools as participants. The researchers utilized an interpretative phenomenological analysis with the help of a survey questionnaire to determine the experiences of both participants, the parents, and teachers. The results of the study revealed that both participants, the parents, and the teachers, are still trying their best to adapt to the new normal set-up of learning, distance education. The parents favor having face-to-face classes for they are not confident with their ways of teaching, especially in teaching reading fluency among their learners. In addition, they are having difficulty balancing their work and, at the same time, teaching their learners.

Keywords: Early Childhood Education, Teaching Reading Fluency, Distance Education, Qualitative-Phenomenological Design

INTRODUCTION

Rationale of the Study

Reading fluency of the learners indeed plays a significant role in the learning process. It allows learners to focus on the text they are reading while it bridges word recognition and comprehension.

Given the new standard set-up of education due to the world's crisis, the government modified the private and the public sectors. In Australia, teachers used compressed video conferencing to reach remote learners in Western Australia. Furthermore, many local communities in Australia have unstable internet connections, so they must consider offline learning opportunities.

On the other hand, in South Korea, learners still attend online classes wherein the teachers give them reading materials and read online. This strategy improved the independence and willingness of the students to learn amidst the current situation.

In the Philippines, distance learning works as a means of teaching and learning. Distance learning works through learning modules or purely online classes. Learning modules such as educational books and other printed materials transmit and process learning with parents' guidance and involvement. Some interactions between learners and teachers happen through the computer and other electronics technologies.

Learners receive instruction from the teachers through online classes, video recording, video conferencing, and other audio/visual learning platforms with this type of learning modality. This learning modality is a big challenge for the government, learners, parents, stakeholders, and teachers. With the sudden change in the classroom, the learners' reading fluency is greatly affected. Moreover, this study was able to identify the learning modalities to be used by the learners that are more efficient for them to improve their reading performance and the teachers' teaching strategies that could fit best with the distance learning.

With the preceding, this research delves into parents' experiences in teaching reading fluency in distance education among Grade one learners in the private and public schools in Cebu City.

Theoretical Lenses

This study is anchored on Piaget's Preoperational Education Theory, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Learning Theory, and Bandura's Social Learning Theory. Also, this study is supported by the following legal bases, namely the DepEd Order No. 14, s. 2018 also known as the Policy Guidelines on the Administration of The Revised Philippine Informal Reading Inventory, DepEd Order No. 74, s. 2009 or Institutionalizing Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MLE), and DepEd Order No. 32, series of 2020, otherwise known as the Guidelines on the Engagement of Services of Learning Support Aides to Reinforce the Implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan in Time of COVID-19 Pandemic.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

According to Swiss psychologist and scientist Jean Piaget (1896-1980), reading theory comes when the child is between two and seven. It is known as the preoperational stage of life. During this period, children begin to use language and think more abstractly about objects, with the ability to form mental images; however, their understanding is more intuitive and lacks much ability to deduce or reason (McLeod, 2018). The child understands the ideas of a past and a future but needs repetition to grasp the sequence concept. Rereading the same story helps children to learn this (Friedman, 2019).

In cognitive development in childhood, Piaget discovered that kids play an energetic position in gaining expertise. When kids get new information, they actively attempt to regulate the enjoyment or expertise they have obtained before. This capacity extends the intellectual global of kids as indicated via a way of randomly describing people, homes, cars, clouds, etc. (Amidon, 2021).

Furthermore, Vygotsky's sociocultural learning theory is an established progressive education theory that has a considerable influence on the approach of this study. Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) defined sociocultural theory as a theoretical framework that supports reading by discussing text structures. The teacher assigns students' difficulties or themes in a social learning environment and asks them to brainstorm questions about the problem or topic. Students assist one another in problem-solving and benefit from group work.

Vygotsky's fundamental idea is his notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). It explained the difference between a child's "actual developmental level as determined by independent problem-solving" and a child's "potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978). The child's ZPD is not inactive. Even though the zone or locale of affectability to learning is characterized at first by the child's existing information or competence in a range of mental development, with appropriate support for education, the child's level of competence in this range changes, and the child's ZPD changes in like manner (Gauvain, 2020).

In expansion, the social learning hypothesis of Albert Bandura (1977) created a social cognitive theory which in portion paid respect to Piaget's prior work. He considers learning to be dynamic preparation, in line

with all constructivist thinking, and stresses the significance of the social nature of learning. Bandura contends that people know via witnessing role models in their daily lives. He says that if people had to rely exclusively on the consequences of their acts to determine what to do, education would be extremely tedious, not to mention dangerous (Bandura, 1976).

Through his observation of children and his famous research using the Bobo doll, Bandura identified the role of imitation, modeling, and self-regulation on behavior (Bandura, 1977). Bandura's theory added a social element, arguing that people can learn new information and behaviors by watching others. This sort of learning, known as observational learning, can be used to explain a wide range of actions, including some that are frequently not explained by conventional learning theories (Cherry, 2019).

Additionally, DepEd Order No. 74, series of 2009 mandates the use of using the Mother Tongue – Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) Policy in the Philippine Educational System, implementing Mother Tongue as a Learning Subject. A Medium of Instruction (MOI) from Grade 1 until Grade 3. The learner's first language will be used as the primary medium of instruction from preschool to at least Grade 3 and as the primary vehicle to teach understanding and mastery of all subject areas such as Math, Science, Makabayan, and language subjects as Filipino and English under this framework.

The Mother Tongue as a subject and language of teaching and learning will be initiated in Grade 1 for conceptual understanding. In contrast, additional languages such as Filipino, English, and other local or foreign languages will be presented as separate subjects no earlier than Grade 2.

The Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan requires the complementary and broader roles of parents, guardians and other household partners, and community members to support the students' learning process at home, hence, the need for additional human resources in schools. For this reason, the Department of Education shall be engaging the services of Learning Support Aides. Learning Support Aides are qualified professionals who will work with instructors to provide learning opportunities that encourage learner accomplishment and advancement.

The Learning Support Aide's primary duties in collaboration with teachers are to guide learners and households on the chosen learning delivery modalities, assist the teacher in the lesson preparation and delivery, and monitor and track learner progress and achievement. The LSAs shall report directly to the teacher whom they are assisting. That means that the teacher is still the central responsible school personnel in charge of the teaching-learning process.

According to the Department of Education Undersecretary of Planning, Human Resource, and Organizational Development, the teachers remained the primary learning facilitator. The engagement of LSAs is DepEd's way of ensuring the provision of assistance to the teachers in managing learners and in coordination with teachers to ensure that learning is taking in different learning modalities.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Design

This research employed Qualitative-Phenomenological Research Design. It highlights parents' and teachers' personal opinions concerning learners' reading fluency which involves investigating phenomena through people's experiences.

Thematic Analysis is used to collect Grade one parents' and teachers' data in terms of their demographic profile, personal opinions concerning learners' reading habits, and fluency at home, parents' involvement in learners' reading fluency, and challenges in teaching reading in distance learning.

Moreover, parents and teachers interviewed online or one-on-one (face to face).

The Flow of the Study

This study follows the input-process-output (IPO Model) flow of the survey. Underputs include the parents' demographic profile: age and gender, number of children, combined monthly family income, and highest educational attainment. Also, teachers' demographic profile includes their age and gender, civil status, number of years in teaching Grade one learner's, highest educational attainment, and relevant training and seminars attended.

The Flow of the Study

Under "process" includes the submission and approval of transmittal letter, administration of survey questionnaire and conduction of the interview, gathering data, and transcription of qualitative data.

The "output" of the study is the implications for practice.

Environment

This study was conducted in the identified private and public schools in Cebu City, namely; Pulangbato Elementary Schools and Quiot Elementary Schools and one private school in Cebu City, Maria Montessori International School.

Pulangbato Elementary School. Its school ID is 119902 and is located at Pulangbato Bridge Rd, Cebu City, Cebu, Philippines. A part of Region VII-Central Visayas' North District 4. This school provides curricular classes for students ranging from Kindergarten to Elementary. It began operations on January 1, 1960.

The school has a security team to ensure the safety of the students and teachers. The school has programs relating to school and community partnerships and has partners or stakeholders from the wider community. Some of the Programs are Gulayan sa Paaralan, Brigada Eskwela, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM), Adopt-A-School-Program, School-based Feeding Program with the partnership of the following: East West Bank, Julies' Bakeshop, SM Supermalls, Center for Industrial Technology and Enterprise, Local Government Unit (LGU) and parents.

Currently, the school has a total of 1,249 enrollees and 38 faculty members. With this new standard set-up of distance learning, the school has prepared to learn facilities to cope with the students' needs. Some of the school's teaching facilities are as follows: computer laboratory, printers, self-learning modules, photocopier to print lacking modules, and laptops. It is well-equipped with all the learning tools needed to foster and encourage learning.

Quiot Elementary School. It is located at F. Sabellano St., Sitio Bogo, Barangay Quiot, Cebu City, Cebu, Philippines. The school has been operating since January 1, 2004, with the school ID of 187501.

The school is for Kindergarten and Elementary Levels which consists of 70 faculty members. It has three buildings occupied by different Kindergarten/Grade Levels, and there are shifting classes, the morning and afternoon shifts. It has eleven Grade One teachers and three hundred twelve students at the Grade One level.

The Principal's office, guidance office, and registrar's office sites are on one of the buildings' first floors. The schools' neighborhoods are houses, a daycare center, Barangay Hall, a public market, and different stores. The school has various facilities that help learners develop their skills and academic performances. The school has its library, computer room, canteen, and a small quadrangle. The students are utilizing these learning facilities to develop and improve their reading habits and fluency.

Maria Montessori International School-Talamban Campus. It is a private academy composed of the Preschool as well as Grade School and High School Department. Maria Montessori International School is located in San Jose, Purok 5 Talamban, Cebu City.

There are four levels in the Preschool Department: Nursery 1, Nursery 2, Kinder 1, and Kinder 2. Its classroom offers a "prepared environment." It provides an "open classroom" design with clearly defined

Practical Life, Sensory, Language, Mathematics, and Cultural activities. It was designed due to its usage of the Montessori Method of instruction. Its medium of instruction is English.

The Talamban campus added a new home for the Preschool, Grade School, and High School levels in 2001. In 2007, the school's name got changed to Maria Montessori International School. MMIS, known as the pioneer in delivering Montessori education in Cebu City, continues to encourage each child's development into a self-sufficient, responsible, and service-oriented individual.

Participants

The study participants were the Grade one parents and teachers of the identified private and public schools in Cebu City, Cebu.

Table 1 Distribution of Research Participant

Name of School		Frequency	Percentage
Pulangbato Elementary School	Parents`	6	16.66
	Teachers	6	16.66
Quiot Elementary School	Parents	6	16.66
	Teachers	6	16.66
Maria Montessori International School	Parents	6	16.66
	Teachers	6	16.66
Total		36	100

Instruments

The research questionnaire on parents' and teachers' opinions on reading fluency was adapted from Berg & Lyke, 2012 action research. It utilized a research-made interview guide highlighting the experiences of parents and teachers in teaching reading fluency among Grade 1 learners in distance education.

The interview is used as an instrument of data collection in this study. It contains three (3) parts: Part I is the Introductory Statements as to their demographic profiling of the participants. The parents' demographic profile is age and gender, the number of children; the combined family income; and the parents' most excellent educational attainment. The demographic profile of Teachers involved age and gender; civil status; the number of years in teaching Grade one; highest educational attainment, and training, seminars, or workshops attended relevant to the reading readiness of the pupils. Researchers utilized the information to identify valid, credible interviewees/study participants from whom the researcher will collect Qualitative data.

Part II consists of parents' and teachers' opinions concerning reading fluency at home and school. This research questionnaire was adapted from Berg & Lyke, 2012 action research.

Part III contains the participants' positive experiences, negative experiences, and challenges in teaching reading fluency among grade one learners.

The researchers had an in-depth interview virtually with the participants one by one through Google meet and Microsoft teams platforms. They recorded the meeting to have a vivid and accurate copy of participants' responses to each interview question. The in-depth interview took place between March 29, 2021, and April 27, 2021, and it was contingent on the participants' availability. Researchers videotaped all of the in-depth interviews. The longest interview time for parent-participants was 39 minutes, while the shortest interview time was 3 minutes. For teacher-participants, the longest interview time was 25 minutes, while the fastest was 4 minutes. The data gathered was treated through thematic analysis.

Data Gathering Procedures

Once the instrument is verified and validated, the researchers secured a written permit to the private and public schools Principals of Pulangbato, Quiot, and Maria Montessori International Schools. After giving permission, the researchers explained the purpose of the study to the selected participants and then made sure each participant corresponded to their predefined criteria. The researchers collected the data utilizing participants' responses in the interview, which comprises demographic profiling, participants' opinions concerning learners' reading fluency, positive experiences of the participants, negative experiences of the

participants, and challenges encountered by the participants in teaching reading fluency among grade one learners.

After the conduction of the interview, researchers transcripted all the qualitative data gathered.

Treatment of Data

Thematic Analysis is used in the transcription of qualitative data. Concerning the demographic profiling of the participants, parents' and teachers' opinions regarding learners' reading fluency at home and in school, positive experiences of the participants, negative experiences of the participants, and challenges encountered by the participants in teaching reading fluency among grade one learners.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
PARENTS PERSONAL OPINIONS ON LEARNERS' READING HABITS AND FLUENCY AT HOME

This section presents the parents' personal opinions concerning learners' reading habits and fluency at home. Table 2 shows the information about the reading habits of the grade one pupils.

The data shows that parent-participants 1, 2, and 4 agreed to read adequately for their grade level when listening to their children's reading. However, parent-participants disagreed that their child could read enough based on their grade level. This data denotes that their children's reading abilities vary depending on their innate intelligence quotient and communication skills.

Table 2 Parents' Opinion on Teaching Reading Fluency

Participant No.	Statements of Indicators					
	When I listen to my child read, I feel that they read adequately for their grade level	My child reads at home	I help my child when they have difficulty reading	My child selects a book and begins reading without being told	I read aloud to my child for enjoyment.	My child discusses books to read at home or school with me
1	Agreed	Strongly Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed
2	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Agreed
3	Disagreed	Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Disagreed	Agreed
4	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed	Agreed	Agreed
5	Agreed	Disagreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Disagreed
6	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed	Agreed

Moreover, parent-participants 2, 3, 4, and 6 agreed that their children read at home, while parent-participant 5 had a contradictory response. This data means that the parents observed and even tutored their children on how to read at home.

In addition, all parent-participants agreed that they helped their children when they had difficulty reading. These responses indicate that distance education played a significant role in assisting their children in their learning journey without face-to-face meetings between the teachers and the learners.

Regarding the child's reading preference, parent-participants 1, 2, 5, and 6 agreed that their children select a book and begin reading without being told. This data means that the grade one learners can practice self-directed reading and possess the ability to choose what type of books interest them. The participants also disagreed about the preference of parents for their kids to read books without instructions.

Further, parent-participants 4, 5, and 6 agreed to read aloud to their children for enjoyment, while only parent-participants 2 and 3 disagreed. These narrations from the participants indicate that childrens' can learn through pleasurable means aside from the conventional purpose of reading.

The parent-participants 1,2,3,4 and 6 also agreed that their children discuss books to read at home or school with them. Meanwhile, only parent-participant five disagreed that they do this. It means young learners develop comprehension with the books they read and manifest confidence in sharing their learnings.

When fluent readers read silently, they automatically detect words. They swiftly organize words to help them understand what they are reading. Fluent readers can read aloud with ease and expression. Their reading comes out as natural and conversational. Readers who have not yet mastered fluency should read slowly and carefully, word by word. Their task is stuttery. Fluent readers can concentrate on the meaning of the text instead of deciphering the comments because they don't have to focus on decoding them. They can create connections between the text's concepts and their prior knowledge. Put another way, fluent readers perceive and comprehend words simultaneously (Reading Rockets, 2021).

Parental involvement and involvement in education are in decline, and it is more important than ever. Children whose parents are more supportive in their education have higher academic performance than children whose parents are less involved in their education. Researchers and policymakers that have linked attempts to improve parent involvement into broader educational policy initiatives have noticed the impact of parental involvement on academic success. A child's academic progress after early primary school is mainly stable, despite this evidence showing the importance of early academic performance.

"Pupils can have access to YouTube videos; they have the ample time to watch educational tv shows that can somehow affect and help their reading fluency."

On the part of the teacher, the new pedagogical system forced them to be updated with the latest technology. Informant 5 shared that:

"Teachers can use and enhance their ICT tools and skills."

Through distance education, the teachers opined that the children would be exposed to the newest learning trend, watching YouTube videos and educational learning programs wherein there are varying options for them to choose from it. In this way, they can readily embrace high-technological educational resources while learning how to read correctly with proper pronunciation and diction.

Compared to reading materials, writing tasks, and listening exercises, video has a significant benefit immediately engaging. Videos appeal to students of all ages, and many regard them as a delight when used in the classroom. Whether a video is authentic or developed expressly for an ESL audience, it has been created to get and hold the attention of your pupils. Students will learn and be responsive to the activities once they are interested in the material.

FINDINGS

The data on parents' opinion in teaching reading fluency in distance learning reveals that parents strongly agreed that reading does not happen all at once. It involved a series of stages that lead, over time, to independent reading and fluency. The optimal time for children to begin learning how to read is very young, usually in preschool.

Furthermore, the teachers' opinions on reading fluency in distance learning indicated that parent-teacher collaboration is essential in learners' reading development. The teacher will choose a different direction for various groups of students to foster maximum knowledge in the class. At the same time, at home, learners' must be engaged in conversation in the language spoken around them. Shared experiences, explaining one's thinking, and asking open-ended questions so the child can share their thoughts and facilitates a deeper level of communication which builds metacognition for comprehension and reading success.

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