

Research Article

Video Animated Stories: An Innovative Reading Assessment Scheme in Improving Comprehension Skills among Grade 7 Learners at Alitagtag National High School

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Abstract: The research aimed to utilized video animated stories as an innovative reading assessment scheme in improving comprehension skills among Grade 7 learners at Alitagtag National High School, Alitagtag District, Division of Batangas Province for the School Year 2020-2021. The study used a quantitative method and descriptive research design applying Informal Reading Inventory and Comprehension Test, Video Animated Stories and Questionnaire in analyzing data obtained from the learner-respondents. Purposive Sampling method was used focusing on *Capacity* reading category in the Pre-Reading Test administered. There were 77 learners out of 1529 student population who were considered struggling readers. Video Animated Stories were utilized from the three selected stories in Philippine literature which is serves as an innovative assessment scheme in improving the comprehension skills of learners. Questionnaire was also used in gathering the satisfaction level of the learners upon using video animated stories. The tools mentioned passed the Learning Resource evaluation, and was validated by experts in the field garnering reliability results of 0.90 Cronbach's alpha. Proficiency Level, Frequency, Weighted mean and Ranking were the statistical tools used in data treatment. Results of the study shows *Capacity* reading level are detected among Grade 7 learners. However, learner's achieved higher proficiency of reading comprehension in the three selected stories when video animated stories were utilized in the Reading Assessment tool. Likewise, greater learner reading speed is achieved by learner in video animation stories. Results in the Post- Informal Reading Assessment entailed positive results. Thus, learners derived High Satisfaction level of perception in the use video animation stories in improving their reading comprehension skills.

Keywords: Comprehension, video animated stories, reading capacity, literature.

Introduction

Comprehension is the key ingredient that is paramount to the acquisition and mastery of any academic discipline. Thus, being able to read and comprehend a written text caters to understanding and skills development essential to the lifelong growth of any Filipino learner. It is asserted, that reading is both conceptually-driven and data-driven process that leads to the students' mental model of what they learn (Bernardo, 2015; Gunobgunob-Mirasol, 2019). Hence, poor reading comprehension remains a serious problem among Filipino learners. From the Program for International Assessment (PISA) conducted during the 2018 global survey, it is revealed that among the 600,000 learners across the globe, Filipino learners ages around 15 garnered a rating of 340 points in reading comprehension which is significantly lower than the average passing rating of 487

points (Manaog, 2020). Thus, this led the country to rank last among 79 countries tested and evaluated. Malacañang thus challenges education sectors to “*make improvement in the state of Philippine education*.” Reading indispensable tool from time immemorial to this 21st century. Learners’ ability to read and comprehend texts and other learning areas are necessities educators need to foster and enhance.

In lieu of these, the Department of Education (DepEd) entices learners to develop a habit of a ‘genuine love for reading’. “*Read more to sharpen your vocabulary and writing skills*,” Department of Education Secretary, Leonor Magtolis Briones quoted statement (Montemayor, 2018). Thus, reading programs and activities were launched and spearheaded by schools and DepEd to ensure that its mandate of producing learners-who are proficient readers, productive and responsible citizens, are equipped with essential competencies and skills for lifelong learning processes (DM No. 173, s. 2019).

Alitagtag National High School, as an academically-drive learning institution, upholds that, “*every child is a reader-no child will be left behind*” mantra in its pursuant to the mandate of the department gearing towards accessible, equitable, and quality basic education among its Filipino learners. In this light, programs for reading were strategically planned and implemented in the school’s Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) as restrictions and health protocols are tightly observed on the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, the school also collaborates and builds partnerships among stakeholders and other organizations to ensure that reading continues despite the Modular Distance Learning setup (DepEd Order No. 12, s. 2020; BE-LCP 2020-2021).

From the gathered data during the last three-year records of the school, it is attested that capacity readers are still detected in the administration of its PHIL-IRI and Pre-Oral Reading Inventory and Comprehension Test. In 2018, 84 or 6.96% *capacity learners* were identified out of 1207 JHS students. 78 or 5.98% of 1305 in 2019 and 87 or 6.62% of 1315 enrolled learners in 2020 respectively. The capacity reader is the reading category where a learner’s comprehension falls from 0-1 rating in the word comprehension scale or 75%-80% on the word recognition scale of Philippine Informal Reading Inventory Manual (PHIL-IRI) 2018 and Division Informal Reading Inventory and Comprehension Test (DRICT). Close monitoring and intensive reading enhancement activities were deemed provided for these learners set through their remedial and intervention class sessions. It also observed that the majority of the learners from this category are Grade 7 learners. Studies showed that transition periods are considered crucial turning points or adjustment periods for learners to cope with the immediate learning environment (Sarvi, Munger, Pillay, 2015).

Likewise, from the Pre-Reading Implementation administered this School Year 2021-2022, it is reflected that 77 or 5.04% of the enrolled 1529 learners fall under the ‘*Capacity*’ reading level. Learners have been found to have a poor foundation of reading comprehension which is essentially vital in the New Normal Education setup. From these compelling issues, the researcher crafted means of reading innovation and intervention to bridge gaps for reading comprehension development among the 77 struggling learners of the school. Using his skills in Information Communication Technology (ICT), the researcher crafted and utilized video animated stories from the reading texts of Grade 7 learners to upskilled their reading potential to at least a step higher than the pre-reading assessment using all platforms online platforms available and accessible for learners. As the school adapted both Modular and Blended Learning Modality, virtual classroom setup becomes a convenient platform for teachers and learners to interact. Likewise, the provision of tablets from the Local Government Unit (LGU) and other potential partners and linkages provides opportunities for learners to undergo virtual classroom learning though they are under the Modular Distance setup.

Video animated stories serve as an interactive and multi-sensory approach to reading and learning, allowing learners to have access and provision to reading activities through innovative literary stories presented, reinforcing written texts to their graphical illustrations (Rosenzweig, 2021). Animation

provides teachers an avenue to creatively present stories comically with artistic illustrations, clipart, design, and generated effects to move characters and motivate learners to read and comprehend easily a literary piece. It mixed reading strategies and skills with interactive and graphical presentations, purposively designed to facilitate an engaging and fun reading experience (Harvey and Goudvis, 2017; Belancourt, 2020). Likewise, it may even motivate students to infer meanings, draw conclusions, and evaluate events as they happen in the texts. This will enable learners to make appropriate judgments and analyses of what they read and improve the comprehension of the important details presented in the reading texts.

It introduces reading comprehension of literary texts innovatively as to what 21st-century learning processes require. Animated stories present visceral and unique stories reigniting learners' creative minds (Maio, 2020; Beal, 2021). Moreover, learners read the text more confidently since printed images of the characters were already reinforced. With a strong type of motivation through graphic and media presentation, the said strategy aims to facilitate learning, activate learners' imagination, prediction, and high-order thinking skills.

Hence, the researcher crafted video animated stories in the Philippine Literary works of English 7 using Powtoon and Canva,—Web-based animation tools that allows any user to create animated presentations by manipulating pre-created objects, imported images, providing music and user created voice-overs. (Powtoon.com, 2018; Canva.com, 2021) Through these web-based tools, video animation becomes easier and possible. Created video animations are then downloaded and customized using Wondershare Filmora and Quiz Creator to present as online assessment tool uploaded to the learners google classrooms and MS Teams or played during sessions via the Powtoon online viewer; exported to YouTube or other hosting sites.

Learners' proficiency, scores, and reading performance are monitored, checked, evaluated, and analyzed. Questionnaires will also be administered to determine students' perceptions of the benefits derived from using video animated stories in improving their reading comprehension skills. All results and data collected in the conduct of this research study will be interpreted and treated with utmost confidentiality. Selected stories used are *English* by Estrella Alfon, *The Happiest Boy in the World* by NVM Gonzales, and *The Sacrifice* by Celso Al Carunungan.

Research Objectives

The given study aims to improve reading comprehension skills among learners of Alitagtag National High School whose reading category is in the *Capacity Reading level*. Specifically, the study endeavors determine learners' reading level in a Pre-Informal Reading Inventory and Comprehension Test. Identify improvement of learners reading proficiency in the video animated stories using the selected reading materials. Evaluate and compare learner's reading level in a Post- Informal Reading Inventory and Comprehension Test. Lastly, identify level of satisfaction in the reading experience among learners where Video Animated stories were utilized.

Methodology

The researcher utilized quantitative research method and descriptive research design in conducting the study at hand. Seventy-seven (77) struggling learners in the capacity reading level serves as respondents using purposive sampling technique. Philippine Informal Reading Inventory Manual (PHIL-IRI) 2018 and Division Informal Reading Inventory and Comprehension Test (DRICT) serves as the main instrument in identifying readers under the given category. Video animated stories created using Powtoon and Canva were the main tool use in the study to evaluate and improve learner's reading comprehension skills. The animated videos were evaluated and approved by the school Learning Resources (LR) Committee for authenticity of video as learning tool in reading assessment. Select stories from Philippine Literature of Grade 7 level which includes: *English* by Estrella Alfon, *The Happiest Boy in the World* by NVM Gonzales, and *The Sacrifice* by Celso Al Carunungan, were used in the video animation. A survey questionnaire was also used in determining

the learner's level of satisfaction in their experience of using the reading activity using the crafted tools. It was also validated by experts in the field and achieved 0.90 Cronbach's Alpha reliability testing. Given this, the questionnaire also passed the needed validation and can be utilized for administration.

Moreover, descriptive statistical tools such as proficiency level, percentage, weighted mean, and frequency, and ranking were used in the treatment and analysis of data. Values and ethics for data privacy were also sought by the researcher in the conduct of the study. Respect for human rights, research merits and securing proper approval from parents, advisers, and school head following minimum health standards of the IATF were carefully ensured in the entire duration of the study. All results of the reading process reflected herein were treated with utmost confidentiality.

Results and Discussion

After careful and thorough analysis of the data gathered through reading assessments given, this study yielded these salient findings.

Table 1 shows the learners' reading level in a Pre- Informal Reading Inventory and Comprehension Test administered.

Grade Level	Enrolment	Capacity	%	Frustration	%	Instructional	%	Independent	%
7	421	77	18.29	109	25.89	150	35.63	85	20.19
8	368	0	0.00	68	18.48	104	28.26	196	53.26
9	361	0	0.00	80	22.16	140	38.78	141	39.06
10	379	0	0.00	35	9.23	156	41.16	188	49.60
Total	1529	77	5.04	292	19.10	550	35.97	610	39.90

Learner's reading level and category are presented in the table above. It is reflected from the data that from the population of 1529 Junior High School learners 77 learners of 5.04 percent of learners were identified as *Capacity* readers.; 292 or 19.10 percent are under the *Frustration* level; 550 or 35.97% percent in the *Instructional level*; and 610 or 39.90 percent in *Independent* level. *Capacity* reading level are detected from Grade 7 learners comprising 18.29 percent of the 421-student population of the current school year. Romero and Romero (2008, 1985) emphasized that poor comprehension results from the communication gap between the author and reader. Thus, when this gap is bridged, better comprehension will take place.

Likewise, as much as reading is essential for success in any life's endeavor during face-to-face classes much greater importance is entailed in a virtual learning setup. In a technologically driven society, demands for higher literacy are every increasing, creating more grievous consequences for those who fall short of the standard level (Pokhrel and Chhetri, 2021; Snow, Burns, & Griffin 1998).

In addition to this, Sintema (2020) argued that the level of academic performance of learners dropped in varied learning classes fall behind in almost all academic institutions worldwide due to reduced contact hours, reading abilities, consultation with teachers in fused with difficult subject areas. In light of these, a more innovative approach to facilitate comprehension and literacy hopes to bridge these barriers and allow learners to thrive despite the New Normal setting. Individuals' ability to read and comprehend written text shapes both learning processes and learning outcomes (Manaog, 2020; Cain, Compton, and Parilla, 2017).

Table 2 presents the improvement on the performance of the learners' reading proficiency in the video animation stories using the selected reading materials in the Grade 7 Philippine literary texts of the 77 *capacity* readers.

Philippine Literary text	Reading Comprehension Assessment	Reading Comprehension Assessment with Video Animation Stories	Learners Reading Level out of 77 Struggling Readings in Video Animation Stories			
	Learners Reading Proficiency Level		Capacity	Frustration	Instructional	Independent
<i>English</i> by Estrella Alfon	70	87	11	35	31	0
<i>The Happiest Boy in the World</i> by NVM Gonzales	78	89	15	40	22	0
<i>The Sacrifice</i> by Celso Al Carunungan	75	91	17	28	32	0
Average	74	89				

After series of evaluation and remedial sessions conducted, learners reading comprehension skills significantly improves when video animation stories were provided instead of traditional reading comprehension assessment tools. Learners achieved higher proficiency level of 89 percent in the three selected stories when video animation stories were utilized. Moreover, decrease in number of capacity readers were also reflected from the three literary texts: 11 in *English* by Estrella Alfon; 15 in *The Happiest Boy in the World* by NVM Gonzales; and 17 in *The Sacrifice* by Celso Al Carunungan. Only 74 percent of learning proficiency was attained by learners in traditional reading assessment tool without video animation.

Ouda (2012) supports this in her investigation of the effectiveness of animation in reading comprehension skills in skimming, scanning, and inferencing selected stories. Experimental group which undergoes animation outperformed those in the control group. Animation in reading stories in literature supports cognitive and affective aspects of the learning process. (Joshi, 2021; Koehencke, 2000).

Video animation eases learning of complex concepts and allows representations of these abstract concepts using combination of sounds, images, drawings, pictures to create an innovative learning experience (Rall, 2017; Stoney and Oliver, 1998). Animation in education is about “*interactive learning*”. This only proves that reading comprehension skills among learners is strengthened and reinforced when video animation stories were applied.

Likewise, Table 3 presents the comparison of the reading achievement of learners in both reading comprehension procedures:

Reading Assessment Procedure	Learners Reading Comprehension			
	Capacity	Frustration	Instructional	Independent
Reading Comprehension Assessment	38	35	4	0
Reading Comprehension Assessment with Video Animation Stories	15	34	28	0
Difference	23	1	24	0
Reading Assessment Procedure	Learners Reading Speed			
	S-C-	S+C-	S-C+	S+C+
Reading Comprehension Assessment	36	25	16	0
Reading Comprehension Assessment with Video Animation Stories	14	14	29	20
Difference	22	11	13	20

It can be gleaned from the table that greater learner comprehension skills and reading speed is achieved by learner in video animation stories. A 23 difference in the no of *Capacity* readers are identified from 38 in traditional Reading Comprehension Assessment and 15 with Video Animated Stories. Likewise, difference of 1 is observed in the *Frustration* level; 24 in the *Instructional*; and 0 in the *Independent* reading level respectively.

Moreover, in terms of reading speed; it is identified that there is only S-C- and S+C- learning reading type among students in a video animation story assessment giving a huge difference of 22 and 11 for traditional manner of Reading Comprehension Assessment procedure of 36 and 25 in the S-C- and S+C- learning reading type. Hence only in video animation stories that S+C+ of 20 learners occur; while achieving greater results in S-C+ on a given frequency difference of 13 from 29 in Reading Comprehension Assessment with Video Animation Stories and 16 for without.

Liu and Elms (2019) explained that animation constitute a powerful pedagogical tool; combined with audio messages and tailored with visual cue and graphical presentations; serve the dual functions of explaining abstract concepts and likewise engage students' interest in the entire learning process. It enhances students learning experience, improve understanding, and greater flexibility in self-directed learning.

With these, video animation of literary stories offers educators the opportunity to harness animation technology in producing effective and efficient teaching resources.

In table 4 learner's reading level in a Post-Informal Reading Inventory and Comprehension Test is presented.

Grade Level	Enrolment	Capacity	%	Frustration	%	Instructional	%	Independent	%
7	421	11	2.61	175	41.57	146	34.68	90	21.38
8	368	0	0.00	55	14.95	101	27.45	212	57.61
9	361	0	0.00	60	16.62	153	42.38	148	41.00
10	379	0	0.00	23	6.07	168	44.33	188	49.60
Total	1529	11	0.72	313	20.47	568	37.15	638	41.73

As obtained from the data, learners' performance significantly increases in their reading level. From the 77-*Capacity* reader only 11 were left or 2.61 percent in the 421 learners in Grade 7. This comprise of 0.72 percent on 1529 enrolled learners of the school.

In addition, significant increase in other reading level is reflected: 313 were the reported *Frustration* level learners or 20.47 percent; 568 *Instructional* level learners or 37.15 percent; and 638 *Independent* reading level learners or 41.73 percent.

Results entails that video animated stories are effective in facilitating comprehension among Junior High School learners. It enables learning and reading fitted in the New Normal Education setup where technologically-based activities are utilized and implemented.

Fernanda, Sutarsyah, and Nurweni (2019) supported this concept as learners reading comprehension skills were improved in terms of the following reading skills: main idea, specific information, inference, and vocabulary in their study conducted.

Table 5 indicates the perceived level of satisfaction among learners in the use of Video Animated Stories in improving their reading comprehension skills in the selected reading texts in Philippine literature.

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. Allows easy and accurate identification of important details and concepts derived from a literary text	3.63	HS	1
2. Helps transcribed written words into informative concepts and ideas	3.46	HS	5
3. Makes reading more engaging and fun	3.45	HS	6
4. Graphics, pictures, design and animation added brings text to life for greater understanding	3.47	HS	4
5. Promotes easier comprehension through symbolic relations of text to graphics and vice versa	3.37	HS	8
6. Adds creativity to learning experience	3.43	HS	7
7. Generates visual learning cues easily for recap and retelling of events	3.55	HS	2.5
8. Strengthen learning mastery and analysis of ideas in literature	3.55	HS	2.5
Average Weighted Mean	3.49	HS	

Learners derived High Satisfaction level of perception in the use video animation stories in improving their reading comprehension skills as reflected from the average weighted mean of 3.49. In lieu of this, majority of the learners agree that video animation stories allow an easier and accurate identification of important details and concepts from a literary text as revealed by an average weighted mean of 3.63. This was followed by generating visual learning cues for recap and retelling of events and strengthening mastery and analysis of ideas in literature having 2.5 ranking and 3.55 average weighted mean.

Conclusion

In light of the findings revealed, the following conclusions were drawn:

- First, learners' reading level in the Pre-Informal Reading Assessment showed that *Capacity* reading level are detected among Grade 7 learners comprising 77 learners of the 1529 student population of the current school year. However, learner's achieved higher proficiency of reading comprehension with an average of 89 percent in the three selected stories when video animated stories were utilized in the Reading Assessment tool; whereas, 74 percent of learning proficiency was obtained by learners in traditional reading assessment tool without video animation.
- Likewise, greater learner reading speed is achieved by learner in video animation stories. Only in video animated stories that majority of learners gained S+C+ of reading level. Results in the Post-Informal Reading Assessment entailed positive results under learners who utilizes video animated stories. Significant increase is noted among all Grade levels. Hence, learners derived High Satisfaction level of perception in the use video animation stories in improving their reading comprehension skills.

Recommendations

Reading assessment must continuously conducted in the Second Quarter to further improve the remaining 11 learners under the *Capacity* reading level. Likewise, improvement in the learners under *Frustration* reading level must also be addressed for learners to transition to the *Instructional* and *Independent* reading level which is the ideal category for Junior High School students. Moreover, the school should continue to develop and create video animated stories in literature among other Grade level to monitor and assess its implication in other year levels. Likewise, the school must also devise a program to facilitate teaching of how video animated stories may be utilize by other learning areas in these New Normal times where innovations for pedagogical practices is a necessity.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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