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Factors affecting reading performance among Grade 3 pupils in Boston, Davao Oriental, Philippines

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ABSTRACT. The aim of this study is to explore the factors that affect the reading performance of Grade 3 pupils. This study was administered in a classroom with a total of 76 respondents using a researcher-made survey questionnaire that underwent a validity and reliability test. The result determined the level of reading performance of Grade 3 pupils from the data given by the advisers, which is remarked as "reader without comprehension." Moreover, this study determined the level of practice of the factors presented, the significant difference between paired factors, and the factors that best predict reading performance. Among the factors presented, this study revealed that vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge, teacher, and parental involvement best predict the reading performance of Grade 3 pupils at Boston Central Elementary School.

Keywords: Background knowledge, reading fluency, reading performance, student's interest, vocabulary knowledge

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INTRODUCTION_

Reading is the open sesame for acquiring knowledge. You can learn to read, and you can read to learn just about anything (Alfano, 2022). According to Bigozzi (2016), reading is a skill used to recognize a visual form that is used to associate with previous experiences and learning in order to interpret its meaning. Duncan (2007) states that among all the skills that students need to learn, reading is considered to be one of the most important, especially in today's world where reading is fundamental to success.

The ability to comprehend written words is referred to as comprehension. It's not the same as being able to recognize words. Recognizing words on a page but not understanding what they mean is not the same as comprehension, which is the aim or goal of reading (Hirsch, 2003). Consider this scenario: a teacher assigns a youngster to read a text. The child can read the full chapter, but when asked to explain what was read, he or she has no idea. The meaning of what is read is enhanced by comprehension. When words on a page aren't just words, but concepts and ideas, reading comprehension happens (Kamil, 2005). Reading is more entertaining, engaging, and educational when you understand what you're reading. It is required for academic, professional, and personal success (Brandon, 2021). A study conducted by Savolainen et al. (2008) found that a person's reading comprehension affects their overall academic achievement. Students must be able to understand what they read in order to do their homework (Hall et al., 2014). This means they must be able to figure out what letters and words mean and connect sentences into a single mental image Reading skills and comprehension are both components in evaluating a child's reading performance. Hence, both skills must work hand in hand for a child to have an excellent or better reading performance. However, due to the change in learning modality, students' literacy is affected, specifically reading. This study aims to determine the factors that affect the reading performance of grade 3 students at Boston Central Elementary School (BCES). researcher believes that through The

identifying the factors, the underlying causes of the reading problem and difficulties in BCES with grade 3 pupils will be given a solution or at least recommendation.

MATERIALS AND METHODS_

This study was conducted in Boston Central Elementary School on April, 2022. The school belongs to the Division of Davao Oriental, Region XI- Davao Region. The respondents of the study were the Grade 3 pupils. The method used in conducting this study was descriptive quantitative method using a survey questionnaire made by the researcher which underwent a pilot study and a validity test through factor analysis with KMO of 0.191 (acceptable value is greater than 0.05) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity of 0.000 (acceptable value is less than 0.05) which both suggest that there is enough sample and correlation among data for the test, and a reliability test using alpha coefficient reliability or Cronbach Alpha with a coefficient of 0.700 (acceptable value is greater than 0.70), which showed that the questionnaire is highly reliable. The respondents for this study were the grade 3 pupils of BCES, with a total number of 76. The researcher asked for the approval from the school principal of BCES and upon approval the researcher collaborated to the grade 3 teachers in conducting the survey. The current study used a quantitative approach (Creswell, 2013). The researcher employed descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and the descriptive method (questionnaire students) to process the data, as well as a paired samples t-test (a statistical examination of the difference between a set of paired samples). Further, a regression analysis was made to determine the factor that best predict reading.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION_

Level of Reading Performance

Table 1 depicts the level of reading performance of Grade 3 pupils of Boston Central Elementary School. Based from the gathered data which originate from the grade 3 advisers using DepEd tool for Reading Performance, the level of reading performance of the grade 3 pupils of BCES consists of 3 sections with the total of 76 respondents with the mean of 1.97 is interpreted as sentence reader without comprehension. This shows that majority of the pupils are struggling in terms

of comprehending the read texts. A notion that students learn to read until third grade, then begin reading for content learning in fourth grade (Duncan and Murnane, 2011). However, this is a contrary to the study conducted by Davis and Guthrie (2015) which states that children can absorb content from reading even before fourth grade.

Table 1. Level of reading performance among Grade 3 pupils.

Level of Reading Performance	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Remarks
Sentence reader with comprehension	33	43.4		Sentence reader
Sentence reader with comprehension	26	34.2	1.97	without
Word reader	8	10.5		comprehension
CVC reader	3	3.9		
Non-reader	6	7.9		
TOTAL	76	100.0		

It is impossible to overstate the significance of reading. Former Secretary of Education Bro. Armin Luistro stated that it is critical to evaluate students' reading abilities because reading is the foundation of all academic learning. If students do not grasp basic reading abilities from the start, they will find it difficult to succeed in other subjects, robbing them of the opportunity to become literate and productive citizens. Further, reading proficiently at the end of third grade (as measured by NAEP at the start of fourth grade) might be a make-or-break milestone in a child's educational journey. Third grade has been identified as important to reading literacy because it is the final year children are learning to read, after which students are "reading to learn." If they are not proficient readers when they begin fourth grade, as much as half of the curriculum they will be taught

will be incomprehensible (Casares, 2019).

Level of Practice of Factors

Reading performance assesses a person's ability to comprehend, apply, and reflect on written texts in order to attain objectives, develop knowledge and potential, and participate in society (OECD, 2022). Thus, reading performance is influenced by numerous factors (Sadeghi, 2007).

Background knowledge is the amount of information or expertise someone has regarding a particular topic (Starke, 2021). Hence, background knowledge is crucial for both reading comprehension and subject learning; when someone is familiar with a subject, they are more likely to remember it and expound on it (Shapiro, 2004).

Table 2. Level of practice in terms of background knowledge.

Description/Factor	Standard Deviation	Mean	Remarks	Interpretation
1. I understand English stories				
by associating what I read	0.50	1.69	Sometimes	Average
from my existing knowledge.				
Total	0.50	1.69	Sometimes	Average

Table 2 depicts the level of practice in terms of background knowledge which revealed to be average. In order to improve student's reading performance background knowledge must be established among them, according to a study by Coiro (2011), prior understanding of the material being read is a crucial stage in strengthening one's reading performance. Less established background knowledge may result to poor comprehension. Furthermore, according to Echevarria (2013), when students lack background knowledge or are unfamiliar with the subject, learning may be more challenging.

Parental involvement is when parents take an active role in their own child's development at home and at school (Smith

et al., 2007). There is evidence to support the significance of parental involvement in children's education (Desforges, 2003). As Table 3 presents the level of practice in terms of parental involvement, it is visible that it got a high remark which means that parents of the sample size were involved in their early education. This back up the result of table 1 which indicate that Grade 3 pupils are reader, parental involvement in their child's reading is, without a doubt, one of the most important influencers of language and emerging literacy (Alfano et al., 2022). Moreover, another study conducted by Wade and Moore (2004) supports this claim, that throughout elementary school, parents who read to their children give them a head start in school and a leg up on their peers.

Table 3. Level of practice in terms of parental involvemen

Description/Factor	Standard Deviation	Mean	Remarks	Interpretation
1.)My Mother/Father helps me				_
whenever reading at home.	0.50	1.55	Yes	High
2.)My Mother/Father shares				
personal experiences to	0.53	1.55	Yes	High
me at home.				
3.)My Mother/Father dedicate				
time to help me practice	0.60	1.61	Yes	High
reading.				
Total	0.37	1.57	Yes	High

Teacher is one of the most significant factors in a student's learning (Harrington, 2001). Thus, student's reading performance is heavily influenced by the teacher itself (Botha et al., 2008). Table 4 displayed the result for the level of practice of Grade 3 students of Boston Central Elementary School in terms

of teachers influence in applying different approaches in conducting reading session towards their reading performance since using variety of reading approach has been proven helpful in catering the preference of the students in learning.

Table 4. Level of practice in terms of teacher.

Description/Factor	Standard Deviation Mean Rema		Remarks	Interpretation
1.) My teacher uses different				
style in conducting reading	0.49	1.76	Sometimes	Average
session.				
Total	0.49	1.76	Sometimes	Average

Table 4 revealed that teacher got an average remark which indicate that teachers rarely change its approach in conducting reading session. Further, teachers' negative attitude towards teaching reading, deficient reading strategies, and inadequate grasp of teaching literacy may result to student's poor reading performance (Adebayo, 2008). Moreover, Linder (2008) elaborated that most students have trouble reading because their teachers find it difficult to move them from beginner to average readers. This is due to teacher's attitude towards the strategy they are using as well as the students' lack of exposure to reading strategies.

Reading Fluency is characterized as the capacity for precise, fluid, and expressive reading (Nieporent, 2021). It is essential to the of development students' reading comprehension and forms the basis of the balanced literacy framework according to Cotter (2012). Table 5 contains the indicator for reading fluency which aims to determine the level of practice among grade 3 students since it is one among factor presented that is believed to influence reading performance. According to Alvarez-Caizo et.al. (2015), reading fluency and comprehension are integrally linked to important aspects of academic life like school success, notably reading performance.

Table 5. Level of practice in terms of reading fluency.

Description/Factor	Standard Deviation	Mean	Remarks In	terpretation
1.)I can read aloud English				
sentences/paragraphs	0.50	1.79	Sometimes	Average
continuously.				
2.) I observe proper				
punctuation marks whenever	r 0.50	1.83	Sometimes	Average
reading.				
Total	0.35	1.81	Sometimes	Average

Furthermore, Table 5 shows the level of practice in terms of reading fluency which is revealed to be average. Due to the essentiality of reading fluency to development of students' reading comprehension, this truly affect the reading performance of Grade 3 pupils. Hence, this should be given focus in improving students' comprehension. However, increasing fluency takes practice and giving students a range of opportunities to do so will increase their participation and engagement (Nichols et al., 2009).

Vocabulary knowledge plays a major role in reading performance (Wagner, 2007). Hence, a good indicator of reading performance is vocabulary. In addition, it is a necessary prerequisite and a casual component in understanding (Maher Salah, 2008). Table 6 presents the level of practice in

terms of vocabulary knowledge among Grade 3 pupils. It was revealed to be average which surely affects the reading comprehension of Grade 3 students. This is in support to the level of reading performance among Grade 3 pupils which is reader without comprehension since vocabulary knowledge is known to be a strong indicator of reading comprehension. In spite of that, there is always a room for improvement, according to Snow's findings from 2002, as the students passed through the grades, the correlation between vocabulary knowledge performance reading increases. dditionally, it has been demonstrated that vocabulary improve reading can comprehension by helping readers identify the semantic meaning of words and by working with inference to help readers understand the meaning of sentences in literature (Lawrence et al., 2019).

Table 6. Level of practice in terms of vocabulary knowledge.

Description/Factor	Standard Deviation	Mean	Remarks	Interpretation
1.)I can give synonyms and				
antonyms of some English	0.50	1.73	Sometimes	Average
words.				
Total	0.50	1.73	Sometimes	Average

Interest is the capacity of an active soul to understand linguistic patterns in order to obtain knowledge pertaining to the will, activity, and pleasurable sentiments that may enable people to choose, pay attention to, and accept anything outside of themselves (Donal, 2015). Consequently, Individuals who are well-informed about their interests are more likely to set task-specific goals and engage in learning strategies that are effective

and resemble habits (Lipstein and Renninger, 2006). Table 7 displayed the level of reading performance in terms of student's interest. It revealed to have a high remark from the result. The result indicated that Grade 3 pupils enjoy reading English stories. Further, reading interest is known as the degreetowhichapersonenjoysreadingwritten materials and is happy to discover new things (Sandjaya, 2006).

Table 7. Level of practice in terms of student's interest.

Description/Factor	Standard Deviation	Mean	Remarks	Interpretation
1.)I enjoyed reading English	0.50	1.49	Yes	High
stories				
2.)What type of reading				
materials do you enjoy	0.50	1.57	Yes	Comics
reading?				
Total	0.38	1.53	Yes	High

Furthermore, Table 7 revealed that Grade 3 pupils prefer reading comics among textbooks and storybooks. Research showed that students are more engaged with learning when they can choose their own literature, and students who are strongly invested in a work are driven to study more demanding materials and are better able to absorb more complex, high-interest information (Fulmer et al., 2015). In addition, People show more tenacity, participation, and positive effect when working on tasks that they are passionate about (Ainley et al., 2002).

Significant Difference on the Level of Practice

Table 8 below presents the result of a

post hoc test that determines the pair of factors with significant difference. By comparing each factors data towards each other it yielded those 2 pair of factors that differ significantly.

Teacher factor and Parental Involvement has been revealed to have a significant difference as well as Vocabulary knowledge and Pupil's Interest. These factors differ significantly as seen in tables number 2 that Teacher Factor got a sometimes remarks while Parental Involvement got a yes remarks, same goes to Vocabulary knowledge that got a sometimes remark and Pupil's Interest with a yes remark. This means that the significant difference between these 2 pair of factors may be the cause of the lack of comprehension among Grade 3 students.

Table 5. Level of practice in terms of reading fluency.

Factors	Mean	F-test	Post Hoc
Background Knowledge	1.69		The pairs of factors affecting reading
Parental Involvement	1.57		performance have significant
Teacher Factor	1.76	15.822	difference: Teacher Factor & Parental
Reading Fluency	1.81	p-value,	Involvement
Vocabulary knowledge	1.73	0.000	Vocabulary Knowledge &
Pupils Interest	1.53		Pupil's Interest

This result supports the claim that teacher is a major factor that affect the learning of every student (Harrington, 2001). Same goes with parental involvement that it has a big impact on students reading performance (Bus et al., 2004). Vocabulary knowledge also has a significant difference, this manifest that despite of student's interest towards a text without vocabulary knowledge comprehension won't be possible (Wagner, 2007).

Factors that Best Predict Reading Performance

Table 9 presents the results of a regression analysis made in order to determine the factors that best predict reading performance among Grade 3 pupils. Among 6 factors presented, background knowledge, parental involvement, teacher, and

vocabulary knowledge are the factors that best predict the reading performance of grade 3 pupils of Boston Central Elementary School. On the other hand, reading fluency and Student's Interest reveals to less affect their reading performance. Similar to the result conducted by Eidswick (2009), using a reading recall test, researchers discovered that strong interest in a second language does not always reflect better reading comprehension.

The result is somehow intriguing since various studies have shown a strong connection between reading fluency and comprehension are intricately linked, as are other aspects of academic life, such as school success (lvarez-Caizo et al., 2015). However, as indicated from the result of this study that this has no significant difference beyond greater population.

Table 9. Regression analysis result.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	
Factors	В	Std. Error			
(Constant)	2.980	1.202	2.480	.016	
Background Knowledge	183	.304	601	.550	
Parental	219	.391	561	.577	
Teacher	241	.323	746	.458	
Reading Fluency	.212	.431	.493	.623	
Vocabulary	159	.295	538	.592	
Student Interest	040	.423	094	.925	

Proposed Intervention

Basing from the factors that predicts the reading performance of Grade 3 pupils the researcher is proposing an Intensive Reading students in order address to vocabulary and background knowledge that is ought to develop their reading comprehension. Intensive reading is a type of reading in which the content must be read attentively and thoroughly in order to obtain specific information (Surbhi, 2020). It was proven by the study conducted by Andres (2020) that intensive reading improved student's reading performance and has a positive effect towards student's attitude. Believing that utilizing this approach has the probability of creating a positive impact towards the reading performance of Grade 3 pupils given that Boston Central Elementary School conducts a reading session every day in accordance to the supported program of DepEd which is "Every Child A Reader Program" this is a good opportunity for the intensive reading approach to be implemented.

Another factor that requires attention is the teacher, a 3-day seminar is proposed to address the teacher factor which reveal teachers do not use different approaches in conducting reading. The seminar will be named; The Reading Enhancement Program (TREP): school-based seminar to strengthen approaches in reading. The seminar will have 3 different resource persons to ensure that the objectives will be maximize.

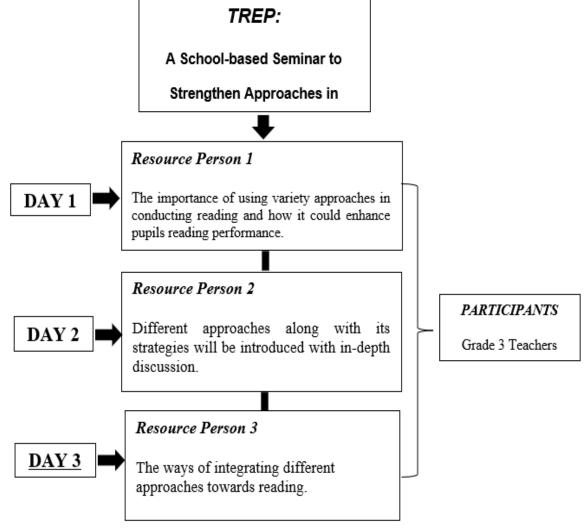


Figure 3. TREP (The reading enhancement program) flow diagram.

The first day will be about the importance of using variety approaches in conducting reading and how it could enhance pupils reading performance. On the next day the different approaches along with its strategies will be introduced and in-depth discussion will be made. For the last day, the discussion will be about how to implement or integrate those strategies effectively.

The third intervention will be addressing the parental involvement factor,

the researcher is proposing a 2-day seminar as well. The seminar will have a theme of Parental Involvement in Early Literacy (PIEL): The Key to a Child's Development". The aim of this seminar is to encourage parents to get involve in their child's academic development, also this seminar aims to discuss the effect of parental Involvement to the parents to enlighten them on how important it is to guide their children throughout their education.

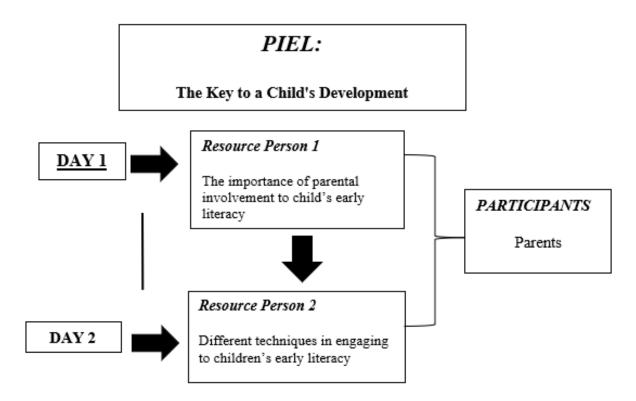


Figure 4. PIEL (Parental involvement in early literacy) flow diagram.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION_

This quantitative study revealed that the level of reading performance of Grade 3 pupils is "Reader without Comprehension" based on the data from the grade 3 advisers taken from their monthly reading report (a tool from DepEd). In terms of the level of practice, it shows that background knowledge, teacher factor, reading fluency, and vocabulary knowledge are not well established among grade 3 pupils since they

gathered a sometimes remark. This aligns to the result of the level of reading performance, which is a lack of reading comprehension. On the other hand, parental involvement and student's interest have a yes remark, which means that these 2 factors are established and this is agreeable since students are revealed to be readers. Furthermore, the results revealed that there is a significant difference among the following pair of factors: teacher

and parental involvement, and vocabulary knowledge and pupil's interest. Lastly, it was found out that the best predictors of reading performance among the factors presented were: teacher factor, parental involvement, background knowledge, and vocabulary knowledge. Also, it revealed that the study is not statistically significant beyond a greater population but only for the sample size given (Grade 3 pupils of BCES). Based on the results, the researcher proposed 3 interventions. First, an intensive reading approach for the vocabulary and background knowledge. Second, a 3-day seminar (The Reading Enhancement Programme) is proposed to address the teacher factor that aims to enhance teacher skills in terms of reading approaches and a 2-day seminar (Parental Involvement in Early Literacy) for parents that aims to encourage them to help and get involved in their children's early literacy.

Based on the results, the researcher is recommending that the institution conduct a program or seminar for the teachers that will enable them to develop their reading approaches. For parental involvement, another seminar is recommended that aims to encourage parents to get involved in their child's early literacy. For the internal factors, which are vocabulary and background knowledge, the researcher is recommending an intensive reading approach since this has been proven in various studies to develop children's comprehension.

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