

## Project READY PLUS+ as Key to the Enhancing of Reading Comprehension Skills of Grade 6 Learners: An Action Research

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**ABSTRACT:** The study primarily aimed to enhance the reading comprehension skills of Grade VI pupils during the SY 2022-2023 using the intervention program Project READY PLUS. It specifically aimed to identify the results of the pre-reading assessment of the Grade 6 pupils at the start of the SY 2022-2023; the results of the reading assessments of Grade 6 pupils after the reading intervention program; and the significant difference in the Grade VI pupils' reading comprehension after the implementation of the reading intervention program. The study utilized the quasi-experimental research design particularly the one group pre-test post-test study. It was not only limited to slow-readers alone but more so focused on the enhancement of reading comprehension skill of 212 Grade VI pupils. Results revealed that the learners' reading comprehension level was at Average before the conduct of the Project READY PLUS; the MPS of the participants went higher after the conduct of the reading intervention program and the students are now Moving Towards Mastery in terms of reading comprehension; and that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the learners. Therefore, the hypothesis "there is no significant difference in the reading comprehension skills of the Grade VI pupils before and after conducting the reading intervention program" is not sustained.

**KEYWORDS:** Project READY PLUS, slow-readers, comprehension skills, reading intervention, reading assessment

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Reading is an essential skill that is critical to success in school and beyond. However, despite the efforts of educators and policymakers, many pupils struggle with reading comprehension. This problem is predominantly important among the learners of Lusacan Elementary School in Tiaong Quezon, where a large number of pupils struggle in attaining good reading comprehension.

According to report that was published in June 2022 by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), [1] De Vera (2022) mentioned that only around 3 out of every 20 kids in the Philippines are able to read simple texts, which is less than 15 percent of all school children in the Philippines. This is owing, in major part, to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has kept schools closed for more than 70 weeks as of the middle of February, making it the longest closure on record. This was the longest period of time that schools were closed in recorded history.

Following a period of two years in which students engaged in asynchronous and modular learning, Lusacan Elementary School, along with other public elementary schools across the country, has begun the process of transitioning to face-to-face learning modality or in-person instruction. One of the key worries of the teachers throughout this transition is still the pupils' reading ability, and the pandemic has made this concern even more prominent because it may have had an impact on the pupils' reading comprehension skills.

To address all the challenges facing now by the learners, parents, teachers, administrators and stake holders, the school has implemented Project READY PLUS which means (Reading Empowerment in Achieving Development of Our Youth with Passion, Love, Understanding, and Sacrifice). The project recognizes that enhancing reading comprehension skills requires not only effective instructional strategies but also a supportive learning environment that fosters a love of reading and a culture of understanding and sacrifice. As such, the project includes initiatives to promote reading culture and parental involvement.

Project READY PLUS includes a range of activities designed to engage learners, such as reciprocal teaching, graphic organizers, and vocabulary development. It also provides professional development opportunities for teachers to improve their instructional skills and use evidence-based practices in their teaching.

Overall, this study hopes to contribute to the ongoing efforts to enhance the reading comprehension skills among all learners particularly the Grade 6 pupils and promote a culture for the love of reading.

As English teacher in Grade 6 at the same time the researcher, I sought that the Project READY PLUS intervention program must be enforced to help address the needs of all our Grade 6 learners.

# Project READY PLUS+ as Key to the Enhancing of Reading Comprehension Skills of Grade 6 Learners: An Action Research

## II. METHOD

The study utilized the quasi-experimental research design particularly the one group pre-test post-test study. According to [2] Yazon, Callo, and Buenvenida (2019), it is the easiest type of experiment because it does not have a good control group. In other words, researchers often look at one group and do not compare it to a group that gets any treatment. This design uses a pre-test to ascertain baseline scores as an advantage.

The study was conducted in Lusacan Elementary School during the academic year 2022 - 2023. The school is considered mega size schools in Tiaong District II with fifty- two teachers headed by Ma'am Donata J. Añonuevo, Principal III. There were 6 sections in Grade VI level, with six advisers and 2 special teachers with 212 total number of learners.

During the pre-reading assessment conducted by the advisers at the beginning of the school year 2022 –2023, the result showed that all learners need to improve the reading ability and reading comprehension skills. This is because they are a product of Modular Distance Learning. Because of this alarming situation, the school looked for an immediate solution to address all the problems. The researcher who happens to be an English teacher in Grade VI at the same time researcher, immediately responded to the challenges, and finding immediate action and solution to the existing problem of the school.

The participants of the study were all Grade 6 pupils of Lusacan Elementary School who were enrolled during the SY 2022-2023. The purposive sampling was used by the researcher given that she is the English teacher in this grade level and it is important to give emphasis on the further enhancement of the reading comprehension of the learners at this stage as part of their preparation to enter another level of their education.

There were two main instruments used in the study. First was the 40-item multiple choice type of pre-test and post-test materials developed by the researcher. She chose passages and test questions from Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil IRI), and Developing Reading Power (DRP) VI textbook that focuses on skills such as noting details, getting the main idea, and predicting outcomes, making inferences and following directions.

The second instrument was utilizing the Teacher's Made Crafted Instructional Reading Materials during Project READY PLUS. These materials are made up of short passages with 10- item short quiz to measure the pupils' comprehension.

The researcher with all the other advisers of Grade 6 conducted the pre-reading assessments to their pupils at the beginning of the SY 2022-2023 using the Phil IRI evaluation tool. After consolidating all the results, they were able to identify the readers, slow readers and struggling readers in each particular class. A pre-test was also given to the pupils to determine their reading comprehension levels.

After determining the reading comprehension of each pupil, the researcher and the teachers involved proceeded to the conduct of the study wherein they utilized the Developing Reading Power textbook (DRP) VI and teachers crafted instructional reading materials to further develop their reading comprehension skills.

The reading intervention called Project READY PLUS is being conducted every day in the afternoon before the classes end. Every end of the month, the English teacher conducted oral reading assessment to all pupils of Grade 6 to identify whether the pupils are improving or not. Furthermore, the school heads of Tiaong District II headed by our PSDS Ma. Lourdes C. Cabanag conducted pre- reading assessment for monitoring purposes and evaluation.

The program lasted for seven (7) months and a post-test was given to the pupils to determine whether there was a significant improvement on their reading comprehension skills.

The gathered and collected data were interpreted and analyzed using the simple mean percentage to determine the average score of respondents before and after the intervention was implemented. The t-test was also applied to determine whether there was a significant difference between the respondents' pre- and post-test scores.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

PRE-TEST			
Grade Level	Number of Participants	Mean	MPS
Six	212	24.79	61.73

**Table I. Mean Percentage Score of Grade Six Pupils Before the Intervention**

The table indicates that the 212 Grade Six pupils who took the pre-test got a mean of 24.79 and a mean percentage score (MPS) of 61.73% which means that the pupils have an Average reading comprehension skill.

The result shows that the pupils are still far from expectations in terms of reading comprehension skills mastery. It supports the idea of [3] Freedburg & Fray (2017) who highlighted that as society and the environment in which students learn in the twenty-first century adapt, many believe that the current educational system is inadequate and does not match students' learning needs.

# Project READY PLUS+ as Key to the Enhancing of Reading Comprehension Skills of Grade 6 Learners: An Action Research

POST-TEST			
Grade Level	Number of Participants	Mean	MPS
Six	211	31.21	77.26

**Table II. Mean Percentage Score of Grade Six Pupils After the Intervention**

The table shows that there was one absentee from the participants when the number of test takers from pretest and posttest are equated. Hence, it does not affect the comparison of the results. The learners’ posttest scores are higher and a mean of 31.21 and MPS of 77.26 are recorded. This indicates that the students are now moving Towards Mastery in terms of their reading comprehension skill.

In the study conducted by [4] Keles and Dogan (2021), the success rate of students in terms of reading comprehension also became higher after conducting a reading intervention to the learners. Thus, this can also mean that it is important for the teachers to continue to provide reading intervention programs to the pupils.

**Table III. T-test to Show the Significant Difference Before and After Imposing the Intervention Program**

	Mean	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value	Decision to Ho	Interpretation
Pre-test	24.79	6.42	-22.55	8.82	reject	significant difference
Post-test	31.21					

In table 3, the result of the t-test between the pre-test and post-test is shown. Based on a t-value of -22.55, the pre-test and post-test scores have significant difference and therefore, the null hypothesis result is “there is no significant difference in the reading comprehension skills of the Grade 6 pupils before and after conducting the reading intervention program” is not sustained. Thus, the t-test result clearly indicates that the intervention program Project READY PLUS is found effective in enhancing the reading comprehension skills of the learners.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

After gathering all the necessary data needed in the study, the researcher arrives at the following conclusions:

1. The learners’ reading comprehension level was at Average before the conduct of the Project READY PLUS.
2. The MPS of the participants went higher after the conduct of the reading intervention program and the students are now Moving Towards Mastery in terms of reading comprehension.
3. There is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the learners.
4. The intervention program, Project READY PLUS, is found effective in enhancing the reading comprehension skills of the Grade 6 learners.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The researcher would like to express her profound gratitude to Lusacan Elementary School for allowing her to expand her knowledge for professional progress, and for granting permission to conduct this study.

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