

# Enhancing the Reading Ability of Primary Pupils of Otavi Elementary School Using Contextualized Language Instruction

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**Abstract:** *This study determined the pre - test and post - test of the primary pupils before and after using contextualized learning activity created by the researcher. The sample of 100 primary pupils that composed of grade 1, 2 and 3 were the primary respondents of the research. Based from the data gathered, the following findings were revealed. The performance level of primary pupils in reading comprehension (Pre - test) before using Contextualized Language Instruction was interpreted as poor and they belong to below 75 and garnered 78% of the primary pupils. The performance level of primary pupils in reading comprehension (Post - test) after using Contextualized Language Instruction was interpreted as satisfactory and 45% of primary pupils belongs to the bracket 80 - 84 and it is satisfactory performance. The computed t - value is 5.298 which is less than the critical value of 2.776 with a 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom of 4. Hence, the hypothesis that is stated in null form is to be rejected. Self - regulation of pupils got the highest rank with 89 frequencies. Second, Persistence with 78 and tolerance of failure has 76. Likewise, achievement goals, self - efficacy and volition having 70, 67 and 56 frequencies. Based from the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made: Conduct rigid reading activities and create CLI to the pupils to enhance their performance not only in English but to other subjects. The Department of Education must be aware about the reading abilities of the pupils most especially in this time of pandemic. Conduct training activities for the teachers that can suit to the present situation of the country. The CLI must utilized to sustain the satisfactory performance of the pupils in reading. Related research to other subjects about CLI must be conducted.*

**Keywords:** Reading Ability, Contextualized Language Instruction

## 1. Acknowledgement

Most of all, I would like to give my tributes and praises to our Almighty God for giving me strength and wisdom in preparing and finishing this study.

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## 2. Context and Rationale

Nowadays, there has been a hot debate by scholars on the way of teaching English to young learners. Some experts claim that teaching English to young learners should give an emphasis on the language form which is called as skill - based approach or traditional bottom up approach as cited by Margana from (River in Shrum & Glisan, 2005: 51). This approach accentuates analyzing and learning the grammar rules and vocabulary. Such a way of teaching facilitates young learners to construct the language concept of the target language enabling them to create accurate and appropriate utterance or sentences. This assumption drives English teachers of young learners spend much time to deal with teaching vocabulary and grammar of the target language which are separated from their contexts and culture as well as the macro - language skills such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. Through such a way of

teaching, young learners are expected to be able to cognitively analyze the linguistic forms, for example, nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, and the like. They are also concerned with the teaching of grammar embodying tenses, active voice, passive voice, degree of comparison, conditional sentences, and others. Such a condition is supported by the existence of the various methods: direct methods, indirect methods, audio - lingual, and the like advocating the utilization of segregating teaching - the separation of the macro - language skills and micro - language skills. Also, English teachers of young learners are spoiled with the availability of the English textbooks designed for young learners which are organized with regard to a grammatical syllabus. As a result, young learners get bored of English lesson and have a concept in their mind that learning English is difficult and stressful. The following presents the example of teaching English with the use of bottom - up approach.

The term contextualized language instruction has the same meaning as the top - down approach. It refers to the way of teaching of the target language applied by English teachers through providing young learners with contextualized and meaningful texts not discrete grammars and isolated linguistic components (Adair - Hauck & Cumo - Johanssen, 1997). This approach is aimed at conferring learners a clear and whole portrait of how linguistic elements and grammatical rules are activated based on the contexts that perform them in the overall meaningful message. The contextualized language instruction is established with regard to the theory which advocates that the meaning of words is successfully described through the contexts (Shrum & Glisan, 2005: 53). This suggests that teaching English to young learners should be carried out with the use of contextualized language instruction.

With the use of the CLI, young learners are driven to apply higher - level skills which are then followed by lower - level skills (Adair - Hauck & Cumo - Johanssen in Shrum & Glisan, 2005: 53). This suggests that they are guided to manipulate the learned target language to communicate thoughts by activating higher-level skills which include relating knowledge from several areas, utilizing the known ideas to create the new ones, making a generalization from the facts, predicting the content of the text, making a conclusion, and others. After that, young learners are directed to apply lower - level skills to recognize, identify, and recall the language elements as performed in given texts. In other words, young learners deal with the use of the language in context by promoting the meaning negotiation and problem solving with their friends and teacher before they focus on language elements.

The researcher opted to conduct this study to minimize the difficulties encountered by the grade pupils in reading comprehension and free from frustration level. Propose a contextualized language instruction to enhance the performance of the grade 1 pupils in reading. According to Lightbown & Spada, 2003: 60) asserted that enabling him/her to store the language in long - term memory space in a fantastic time through meaning negotiation. Cummins in Shrum & Glisan (2005: 97) also explained and add that younger learners may acquire higher levels of functional proficiency than those learners who begin language learning at a later age. This implies that communicative tasks seem to be successfully gained in the critical period. Therefore, English teachers of young learners are encouraged to provide contextualized tasks in order to facilitate them to acquire the target language maximally.

### 3. Action Research Questions

This study aimed to determine the level of performance of the grade 1 pupils before and after using contextualized language instruction in Otavi Elementary School S. Y.2020 - 2021.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

- 1) What is performance level of grade 1 pupils in reading comprehension (Pre - test) before using Contextualized Language Instruction?
- 2) What is the performance level of grade 1 pupils in reading comprehension (Post - test) after using Contextualized Language Instruction?
- 3) Is there a significant difference between the performance level of before and after using Contextualized Language Instruction?
- 4) What are the challenges encountered by the pupils, teachers and parents using Contextualized Language Instruction?

### 4. Proposed Innovation, Intervention and Strategy

#### Reading

In teaching reading, some English teachers of young learners tend to do testing. It means that English teachers give some

texts and comprehension questions. They ask learners to read the texts and answer the comprehension questions. After that, they discuss the answers of the comprehension questions by asking young learners to write down on the whiteboard one by one followed by calculating the right answers and the wrong ones. Rarely do English teachers discuss the reasons for the answers.

This activity is an example of Contextualized Language Instruction on which the pupils are provided with pictures, charts, and illustrated instruction that will serve as the guide to read and comprehend from every activity being accomplished by the English teachers. Contextualized Language Instruction is an intervention being proposed by the proponent to improve the reading comprehension of the pupils.

### 5. Action Research Methods

This research used the descriptive correlational method of study. These methods would try to describe present conditions, events or systems based on impressions or reactions of respondents (Downie and Heath 1984). The aim of descriptive research is to verify formulated hypothesis that refer to the present situation in order to expound it. Moreover, this method allows a flexible approach, thus, when important new issues and questions arise during the duration of the study, further investigation maybe conducted.

This action research utilized triangulation method as a data gathering procedure through survey questionnaire, Observation, interview and field notes. The performance level would determine though using teacher - made - test that will undergo validation and dry - run to test the reliability.

#### A. Participants and/or other Source of Data and Information

The study will use total enumeration of population of primary pupils with the total of one hundred (100) in Otavi Elementary School. The respondents attended kindergarten class during the previous school year and had undergone the Early Childhood Education Curriculum Program (ECECP).

The participants are the grade 1 - 3 class in Otavi Elementary School for School Year 2020 - 2021 including summer 2021. These pupils - respondents are chosen due to the purpose of this study intended for primary grades. The parents also will serve as the respondents to determine the challenges and mechanism being encountered in conducting Contextualized Language Instruction. The teacher will also give feedback on the approach through an interview process.

#### B. Data Gathering Tools

##### Research Instrument

The main instrument used in the study was teacher made - test to assess the performance level of primary pupils before and after using Contextualized Language Instruction. The teacher - made - test topics were selected using the most essential learning competency (MELC) of the Department of Education during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter academic year 2020 - 2021.

The researcher selected only four topics in second quarter based from the memorandum OUCI - 2020 - 307 suggested measures to foster academic ease during the COVID - 19 pandemic. The learning competencies were from the Curriculum Guide for grade 1 of K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (2013).

The researcher presented a preliminary draft of the instruments for comments and suggestions of the experts. The dry - run will be conducted on in Sigad Elementary School composed of 20 grade 1 pupils to test and validate the test. Moreover, it was also found out that the pre - test result of teacher - made - test as a mandatory guideline of the Schools Division of Sorsogon, was checked by subject teacher. Therefore, to make it uniform, it was decided that the teacher - respondent was the checker of the post - test result used for the study.

To determine the index of difficulty and the reliability of the questionnaire the researcher devised a table of equivalent for the percentage equivalent and description and used the Cronbach's alpha score for the level of reliability.

Difficulty Indices	
91% - 95%	Very Easy
76% - 90%	Easy
25% - 75%	Average
10% - 24%	Difficult
5% - 9%	Very Difficult

Cronbach's Alpha Score	Level of Reliability
0.0 - 0.20	Less reliable
>0.20 - 0.40	Rather reliable
>0.40 - 0.60	Quite reliable
>0.60 - 0.80	Reliable
>0.80 - 1.00	Very reliable

The researcher will deploy a focused group discussion (FGD) to the parents of the participants to determine the challenges and mechanisms using Contextualized Language Instruction.

**C. Data Analysis Plan**

The collected data were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted with the use of appropriate statistical measures and techniques. The before and after using Contextualized Language Instruction results from teacher - made - test are treated statistically by getting the performance level in reading comprehension of the pupil - respondents, the same statistical tools are used to determine the significant difference of hypothesis presented. Frequency count and percentage were the statistical measures used to determine the challenges and mechanisms using the Contextualized Language Instruction.

The following scale is used to determine the teacher - made - test of pupils based from the Curriculum Implementation Division of Schools Division of Sorsogon ((Division Memorandum No.176, s.2019).

- Grade Interpretation
- 90 - 100 Outstanding
- 85 - 89 Very Satisfactory
- 80 - 84 Satisfactory

- 75 - 79 Fairly Satisfactory
- Below 74 Did not meet the expectation

To determine the difference between the before and after using CLI results of the students when grouped according to learning competencies, t - test with 5% level of significance will be used.

**6. Discussion of Results and Reflection**

This chapter presented the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from the respondents. Appropriate tables which were sequentially arranged were used to answer the problems being sought in the study. This may discuss the results of the study on the enhancing the reading ability of primary pupils of Otavi Elementary School using contextualized language instruction (CLI).

**Table 1:** The performance level of primary pupils in reading comprehension (Pre - test) before using Contextualized Language Instruction.

Table 1 presents the performance level of primary pupils in reading comprehension (Pre - test) before using Contextualized Language Instruction. The results garnered highest frequency in 75 below with 78 students got poor performance. The bracket 75 - 79 with fairly satisfactory performance having 15 students and 7 from 80 - 84 and satisfactory performance.

Performance	F	Percentage	I
90 - 100	0	0	O
85 - 89	0	0	VS
80 - 84	7	7%	S
75 - 79	15	15%	FS
75 below	78	78%	P
Total	100	100%	

**Legend:** O - Outstanding VS - Very Satisfactory  
S - satisfactory FS - fairly Satisfactory P - Poor

It can be gleaned from the table that there are 78% of the pupils got poor performance and 15% of the pupils got fairly satisfactory performance. Likewise, 7 % of students having a satisfactory performance. The result shows that most pupils did not meet expectations compared to the 75% standard set by the Department of Education. This implies that most of the pupils have low level of knowledge in reading comprehension. Maybe they need to utilized another intervention like CLI or other reading comprehension intervention to enhance the performance of the primary pupils.

This result was supported by Kukan L. and Beck I. (1997) according to their research that thinking aloud in reading comprehension that considers thinking aloud as a method of inquiry, a mode of instruction, and a means for encouraging social interaction. As a method of inquiry, the analysis of verbal reports provided by readers thinking aloud revealed the flexible and goal - directed processing of expert readers. As a mode of instruction, thinking aloud was first employed by teachers who modeled their processing during reading, making overt the strategies they were using to comprehend text. Subsequently, instructional approaches were developed

to engage students themselves in thinking aloud. Such endeavors revealed facilitation effects on text understanding. Current efforts to engage students in constructing meaning from text in collaborative discussions seem to indicate a new direction for thinking aloud research, one in which social interaction assumes increased importance.

**Table 2:** The performance level of primary pupils in reading comprehension (Post - test) after using Contextualized Language Instruction.

Performance	F	Percentage	I
90 - 100	15	15%	O
85 - 89	29	29%	VS
80 - 84	45	45%	S
75 - 79	11	11%	FS
75 below	0	0	P
Total	100	100%	

**Legend:** O - Outstanding VS - Very Satisfactory  
S - satisfactory FS – fairly Satisfactory P - Poor

It was confirmed from the table the results of the post - test of the pupils that 15 percent having an outstanding performance and 29 percent with very satisfactory performance. Similarly, 45 percent garnered a satisfactory performance and 11 percent belongs to fairly performance.

This result is a testimony that the primary pupils motivated to develop reading comprehension using contextualized learning instruction. Even in higher grade level students similarly adopting contextualized learning instruction to accelerate in their performance. Contextualization is anything a teacher does to help create understanding of language and/or concepts by using materials such as actual objects, pictures, gestures or language etc.

These results were supported by Perin (2011) that in contextualization, it is defined as an instructional approach connecting foundational skills and college - level content. Two forms of contextualization are identified, contextualized and integrated instruction. Despite methodological limitations, the available studies suggest that contextualization has the potential to accelerate the progress of the academically underprepared students.

**Table 3** The significant difference between the performance level of before and after using Contextualized Language Instruction

This section presented the significant difference between control group and experimental group in the post test. The researcher used t - test for independent samples to get the significant difference.

**Significant Difference between Pre - test and Post Test in Reading Comprehension Performance of the Primary Students after using Contextualized Learning Instruction (CLI)**

Statistical Bases	Statistical Analysis
Degree of freedom (df)	4
Level of Significance	0.05
t critical value	2.776
t computed value	5.298
Decision on H <sub>0</sub>	Rejected
Conclusion	Significant

The computed t - value is 5.298 which is less than the critical value of 2.776 with a 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom of 4. Hence, the hypothesis that is stated in null form is to be rejected.

The result shows that the t computed vale is greater than the t critical value. This means that there is a significant difference between the pre - test and post - test after using the contextualized learning instruction of the primary students.

The decision indicated that the pre - test and post - test is significantly different to each other. This implies that the scores of the post - test is slightly higher than the pre - test.

This was supported by the study of Balim (2009), in which he found out that there is a significant difference in favor of the post - test over the pre - test regarding the average of academic achievement, scores of retentions of learning, and perception of inquiry learning skills scores, both on cognitive and affective levels.

**Table 4:** The challenges encountered by the teachers and parents using Contextualized Language Instruction

Challenges	F	Rank
1. Self - regulation of pupils	89	1
2. Persistence	78	2
3. Tolerance for failure	76	3
4. Achievement goals	70	4
5. Self - efficacy	67	5
6. Volition	56	6

After utilizing triangulation method as a data gathering procedure through survey questionnaire, Observation, interview and field notes the research come up with the challenges experience by the pupils and teachers.

The table 4 presented challenges encountered by the teachers and parents using Contextualized Language Instruction. Self - regulation of pupils got the highest rank with 89 frequencies. Second, Persistence with 78 and tolerance of failure has 76. Likewise, achievement goals, self - efficacy and volition having 70, 67 and 56 frequencies.

It implies that pupils being challenged using contextualized learning instruction because they develop the spirit of self - regulated ways in studying and developing reading comprehension. Moreover, pupils may academically understand the lesson being thought because locally understood the subject being thought.

## 7. Findings

Based from the data gathered, the following findings were revealed:

- 1) The performance level of primary pupils in reading comprehension (Pre - test) before using Contextualized Language Instruction was interpreted as poor and they belong to below 75 and garnered 78% of the primary pupils.
- 2) The performance level of primary pupils in reading comprehension (Post - test) after using Contextualized

Language Instruction was interpreted as satisfactory and 45% of primary pupils belongs to the bracket 80 - 84 and it is satisfactory performance.

- 3) The computed t - value is 5.298 which is less than the critical value of 2.776 with a 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom of 4. Hence, the hypothesis that is stated in null form is to be rejected.
- 4) Self - regulation of pupils got the highest rank with 89 frequencies. Second, Persistence with 78 and tolerance of failure has 76. Likewise, achievement goals, self - efficacy and volition having 70, 67 and 56 frequencies.

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## 8. Conclusion

Based from the findings, the following conclusions are drawn;

- 1) The pre - test performance of the primary pupils before using contextualized learning instruction was poor.
- 2) The post - test performance of the primary pupils after using CLI was satisfactory.
- 3) There is a significant difference between pre - test and post test of the primary students before and using CLI.
- 4) Self - regulation was a highest frequency as challenge experienced of primary pupils.

## 9. Recommendation

Based from the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) Conduct rigid reading activities and create CLI to the pupils to enhance their performance not only in English but to other subjects.
- 2) The Department of Education must be aware about the reading abilities of the pupils most especially in this time of pandemic.
- 3) Conduct training activities for the teachers that can suit to the present situation of the country.
- 4) The CLI must utilized to sustain the satisfactory performance of the pupils in reading.
- 5) Related research to other subjects about CLI must be conducted.

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