ICONOGRAPHIC READING MODULE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE AND STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS

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Abstract

This study determined the level of acceptability of the developed Iconographic Reading Module which served as the basis for utilization in enhancing students' reading comprehension skills. Specifically, this study dealt with evaluating the level of acceptability of the developed Iconographic Reading Module (IRM) in terms of its content, relevance, presentation, and overall package. The quantitative research approach was used in this study. Specifically, this study utilized a true experimental design. The participants of this study were the fifty – six (56) Grade 9-Egret students of Isulan National High School. Twenty-eight students were included in the control group and twenty-eight students for experimental group which were randomly selected. The study was conducted using the pre-test and post-test in both groups. Findings revealed that there was no significant difference between the pre-test scores of both groups. However, during the post-test there was a significant difference between both groups. Further, it revealed that there was a significant difference between the mean gain score of the control and experimental groups which means that the reading comprehension skills of the experimental group improved higher than the control through using the Iconographic Reading Module than plain texts. The reading comprehension of Grade 9-Egret students in the experimental group had relatively improved from Fair to Excellent whereas the control group had relatively improved from Fair to Good. Therefore, it is recommended that the Iconographic Reading Module shall be used in learning English Literature specifically for the Grade 9 learners.

Keywords: *Acceptability, English Literature, Iconography, Reading, Comprehension, Reading Module*

INTRODUCTION

The essential outcome of formal education is the production of learners who can read and comprehend the materials being read. One of the primary purposes of the educational system is to make learners skilled in reading. Reading comprehension is one form of skill that teachers find challenging to improve and develop. There is a need to strengthen the curriculum for college teachers, and one solution is for teachers to improve their skills and ability to develop and establish learning materials that are appropriate for the student's level of readiness and understanding, particularly in reading. As students struggle with reading comprehension, teachers should be able to create aided learning tools to help them enhance their reading ability.

In 2018, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) tested around 600,000 15-year-old students in 79 countries through the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Results showed that one in four students needs help to complete even the most basic reading tasks. Among 79 participating countries, the Philippines scored the lowest in reading comprehension in the 2018 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), according to the results released on December 3, 2019. The Philippines shared a significant rate of low performers among all PISA participating countries and economies. That is, 80% of Filipino students still need to reach the minimum level of proficiency in reading (San Juan, 2019).

The PISA 2018 framework for reading guided the development of the PISA 2018 reading literacy assessment. An important way to classify texts, and one at the heart of the organization of the PISA 2000 framework and assessment, is to distinguish between continuous and non-continuous texts. The Iconographic Reading Module follows the combination of these texts format. Both continuous and non-continuous formats are known as mixed texts. Examples of mixed texts include a paragraph with a picture or a graph with an explanatory legend. Mixed text is a common format in fixed-text magazines, reference books, and reports, where authors employ a variety of representations to communicate information (OECD, 2019).

Issues with reading comprehension occur when students need help understanding the meaning behind words, phrases, and other texts. Comprehension is not just something students do in text. Readers infer, summarize, and draw causal relationships all the time. In the case of Isulan National High School, there were still students who cannot comprehend the texts being read. Some students have difficulties meeting the reading competencies, so the researchers are enthused to develop an Iconographic Reading Module in English literature for the Grade 9-Egret Students of Isulan National High School. Hence, the researchers aimed to determine how the Iconographic Reading Module aids in improving students' reading comprehension skills.

This study aimed to determine how Iconographic Reading Module had a positive effect on students' reading comprehension skills, possibly to understand not only what is presented but also the intention, the context, and even the intrinsic world of the artist, making art in general more meaningful especially in understanding English literature. Thus, the researchers sought to know how Iconographic Reading Module has been a helpful tool to aid in mediating the reading comprehension skills of the students.

Statement of the Problem

Generally, this study determined the acceptability level of using the Iconographic Reading Module in improving the reading comprehension skills of the Grade 9-Egret students of Isulan National High School. Specifically, this study answered the following questions:

1. What is the level of acceptability of the developed Iconographic Reading Module in English literature as evaluated by experts in the field of teaching English in terms of the following: Content; Relevance; Presentation; and, Overall package?

2. What is the level of students' reading comprehension in the control and experimental groups during the pre-test and post-test?

3. Is there a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the control and experimental groups?

4. Is there a significant difference in the mean gain scores of the control and experimental groups?

METHODS

Research Design

This study aimed to determine the acceptability of the Iconographic Reading Module in the reading comprehension skills of students in English literature. The quantitative research approach was used in this study. Specifically, it utilized true experimental design, a statistical approach that manipulates a control group towards a group of randomly selected subjects and records the effect of this manipulation. The researchers utilized the pre-test and post-test for both groups. Pre-test was given to both groups wherein the experimental group received treatment while the control group did not, and a post-test was given to both groups. In addition, the design followed the research design, which was adapted from Gay et al. (2006).

Locale of the Study

This research study was conducted at Isulan National High School because it is one of the outstanding secondary schools in Sultan Kudarat. Isulan National High School is a secondary school in the Municipality of Isulan, province of Sultan Kudarat, Mindanao, Philippines. Furthermore, the researchers chose to conduct the research study in this institution because it gave the researchers the needed information about the acceptability of the Iconographic Reading Module to the reading comprehension skills of these students.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study were the fifty-six (56) Grade 9-Egret students of Isulan National High School. Twenty-eight students were included in the control group and twenty-eight students in the experimental group, randomly selected to determine the level of students' reading comprehension skills.

Sampling Technique

This study used a simple random sampling technique, specifically, the fishbowl or lottery method. The researchers used the fishbowl sampling technique in selecting 1 out of 15 sections of Grade 9 students in Isulan National High School by putting the names of each section on a slip of rolled paper in a bowl or box, and the researchers randomly picked one section to be the respondents. Those who picked EG would be the experimental group, and all those who got CG would be the control group.

Data Gathering Instrument

Evaluation instrument questions rated by the experts in the field of teaching English, such as Master Teachers and Instructors/Professors, validated the developed Iconographic Reading Module was used in the conduct of this study in 14 terms of content, relevance, presentation, and overall package, which modified and adapted from the work of Sultan (2018). It was further interpreted using the five-point Likert- scale adopted and patterned after Herrera (2011).

Rating Scale and Interpretation on the Acceptability Level of the Developed Iconographic Reading Module:

Rating	Range of Mean	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
5	4.30 – 5.30	Excellent	Meets above 91-100 % quality Standard
4	3.40 – 4.29	Very Satisfactory	Meets above 75-90 % quality standard
3	2.60 – 3.39	Satisfactory	Meets above 60-74 % quality standard
2	1.80 – 2.59	Fair	Meets above 35-59 % quality standard
1	1.00 – 1.79	Poor	Meets 34% and below the quality standard

Furthermore, the researchers used pre-test, treatment, and post-test for the Grade 9-Egret students of Isulan National High School students to determine the level of students' reading comprehension skills of the Grade 9-Egret students of Isulan National High School. This study had three (3) phases: Phase 1 was on the students answering the pre-test that helped the researchers to identify the level of students' reading comprehension skills in the control and experimental groups indicated through the classification of their score intervals, phase 2 focused on the students who were given treatment in which the experimental group was treated with a reading module with pictures. In contrast, the control group was given a reading module without pictures. After that, phase 3 centered on the students answering the post-test after the treatment to determine the student's reading comprehension skills of the Grade 9-Egret students of Isulan National High School indicated through the classification of their score intervals. The classification of the student's scores was adapted from Depdiknas (2006).

Statistical Tools and Treatment of Data

In order to ensure the movability and to obtain data from the respondents, statistical treatment was employed. The study's results were analyzed using T-Test to know whether the result was statistically significant. The total number of respondents was completed statistically and analyzed by using the t-test, standard deviation, and getting the mean. Mean was employed to determine the level of acceptability of the developed Iconographic Reading Module in English Literature and students' reading comprehension skills between the control and experimental groups during the pretest and post-test. Standard deviation was used to determine how dispersed the data was about the mean of the pre-test and post-test scores between the control and experimental groups and the level of acceptability of the developed Iconographic Reading Module in English Literature rated by the English experts. T-test was utilized to determine the significant difference between pre-

test and post-test scores and mean gain scores between the control and experimental groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Summary of the Overall Grand Mean of the Level of Acceptability of the developed Iconographic Reading Module in terms of Content, Relevance, Presentation, and Overall Package

Indicators	Mean	SD	Verbal Description
A. Content	4.44	0.18	Excellent
B. Relevance	4.32	0.19	Excellent
C. Presentation	4.52	0.14	Excellent
D. Overall Package	4.38	0.19	Excellent
Overall Grand Mean	**4.42**	**0.024**	**Excellent**

Table 1 revealed the result of the summary of the overall grand mean in terms of the content, relevance, presentation, and overall package of the developed Iconographic Reading Module (IRM) as evaluated by the English teachers resulting in a qualitative description of Excellent in all components. Specifically, the acceptability in terms of Presentation garnered the highest grand mean of 4.52, while, the Relevance of the developed Iconographic Reading Module obtains the lowest mean of 4.32 with still a qualitative description of Excellent which implies that the developed IRM meets the 91-100% acceptability standard. These findings are supported by the study of Tety (2016) revealed that instructional materials have been a powerful strategy for bringing about effective teaching and learning. The importance of quality and adequate instructional materials in teaching and learning can occur through their effective utilization during classroom teaching. Furthermore, these findings are related to the study of Kasmaienezhadfard, Pourrajab, and Rabbani (2015). Images in textbooks influence the learning process. Students often see pictures before reading the text, and these pictures can enhance the power of imagination of the students. The findings of this study show that pictures in textbooks can increase students' creativity and reading comprehension.

Table 2. The Level of Reading Comprehension of the Control Group in the Pre-test and Post-test Results

Control Group Scores	Pre-test	Verbal Description	Post-test	Verbal Description
MEAN	15	*Fair*	23	*Good*
SD	3.79		7.76	

Table 2 shows the control group's reading comprehension level in the Pretest and Post-test results. It can be seen that the control group obtained a mean score of 15 (SD= 3.79), which is described as Fair during the pre-test. However, during the post-test, the control group garnered a mean score of 23 (SD= 7.76) with the qualitative description of Good. It can be seen that the control group has a significant improvement in their pre-test and post-test results. This result is supported by the study of Kilapong, et. al. (2022), who found that visuals can help students better understand descriptive text. Picture as media may assist students in comprehending the meaning of the text and keep them interested in studying. Using images is advantageous since a good image

conveys a meaning that is only sometimes expressible in words. Images can assist students who are unable to understand a reading text. It also provides an opportunity for students to expand their knowledge.

Table 3. The Level of Reading Comprehension of the Experimental Group in the Pre-test and Post-test Results

Experimental

Group Scores	Pre-test	Verbal Description	Post-test	Verbal Description
MEAN	17	*Fair*	41	*Excellent*
SD	4.15		3.60	

Table 3 shows the experimental group's reading comprehension level in the pre-test and post-test results. It can be seen that the experimental group obtained a mean score of 17 (SD= 4.15), which is described as Fair during the pre-test. However, during the post-test, the experimental group garnered a mean score of 41 (SD= 3.60) with a qualitative description of Excellent. This result is supported by the research conducted by Efendi (2018) which aimed to know the effect of pictures as iconography to improve students' reading comprehension. Based on the result of the discussion, pictures theoretically can be a good medium to help students enhance their reading comprehension. 37 Therefore, it is justifiable to hypothetically conclude that using pictures to strengthen students' visual sense can help them understand a text. It can be concluded that the experimental group has improved higher based on their post-test scores. Also, it points out that the post-test scores of the experimental group are much higher than the scores of the control group. Thus, it implies that using an Iconographic Reading Module improved the students' reading comprehension.

Table 4. The Significant Difference in the Level of Reading Comprehension between the Control and Experimental Group in the Pre-test result

VARIABLE	N	MEAN	SD	t-computed	t-critical	DECISION	INTERPRETATION
CONTROL	28	15	3.79				
				2.02	2.05	Accept $H0_1$	There is no significant difference.
EXPERIMENTAL	28	17	4.15				

Table 4 revealed the t-test for determining whether there is a significant difference in the pre-test results between the control and experimental groups. It perceives that the t-computed value of 2.02 is lower than the t-critical value at a 0.05 level of confidence which is 2.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted, which implies that there is no significant difference between the level of reading comprehension of the control and experimental group in the pre-test result. The implications of this result showed that, based on the pre-test data, the control group and experimental group were comparable in terms of their reading comprehension abilities before any intervention or treatment was applied. Meaning to say, their level of reading comprehension is still the same.

Table 5. The Significant Difference in the Level of Reading Comprehension between the Control and Experimental Group in the Post-test result

VARIABLE	N	MEAN	SD	t-computed	t-critical	DECISION	INTERPRETATION
CONTROL	28	23	7.76				
				12.18	2.05	Reject $H0_1$	There is a significant difference.
EXPERIMENTAL	28	41	3.60				

Table 5 shows the t-test for determining whether there is a significant difference in the post-test results between the control and experimental groups. It perceives that the t-computed value of 12.18 is higher than the t-critical value at a .05 level of confidence which is 2.05. It shows that the developed Iconographic Reading Module is much better than the usual plain reading materials. It concludes that during the post-test, both groups significantly improved. However, the experimental group, with a mean score of 41(SD= 3.60), is relatively higher than the control group's 23 (SD= 7.76) on their post-test results. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, implying a significant difference between the level of reading comprehension of the control and experimental groups in the post-test result. The findings suggest that the Iconographic Reading Module had a notable positive impact on post-test performance, providing support for its effectiveness in improving reading comprehension compared to the usual plain reading materials used in the control group. The result implies that the Iconographic Reading Module is a more effective instructional method for improving reading comprehension compared to traditional plain reading materials. This result is anchored on the study conducted by Azmi (2019) who found out that the use of pictures in teaching reading comprehension to ninth-grade students of SMPN 1 Gambut in the academic year 2013-2014 has improved the students' reading comprehension, especially in the experimental class. The control class also shows improvement in reading comprehension, but the improvement is not as significant as the experimental class.

Table 6. The Significant Difference in the Mean Gain Scores between the Control and Experimental Group in the Pre-test and Post-test Results

VARIABLE	N	MEAN	SD	t-computed	t-critical	DECISION	INTERPRETATION
CONTROL	28	8	8.24				
				9.09	2.05	Reject $H0_2$	There is a significant difference.
EXPERIMENTAL	28	23	4.62				

Table 6 revealed the t-test for determining whether there is a significant difference in the mean gain scores between the control and experimental groups in the pre-test and post-test results. It can be seen that the experimental group obtained a mean score of 23 (SD= 4.62), while the control group garnered a mean score of 8 (SD= 8.24). Also, it is observed in the table that the t-computed value of 9.09 is higher than the t-critical value at a .05 level of confidence which is 2.05. The learning gain of the experimental group is relatively higher than the control group. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating a significant difference between the mean gain scores between the control and experimental groups in the pre-test and post-test results. This result is supported by the study conducted by Sari (2017), who suggested that it is easy for students to understand texts using media. Several common media can be used. One of them is text-related pictures. Using text related pictures, the teachers can exploit variations of the pictures from some sources, like a picture from the calendar or the internet.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the study findings affirmed the effectiveness of the developed Iconographic Reading Module (IRM) as a valuable tool for teaching English literature and enhancing reading comprehension skills. The thorough evaluation by experts highlighted its excellent acceptability in terms of content, relevance, presentation, and overall package. This underscores the IRM's potential as a valuable aid for improving reading comprehension skills.

Additionally, significant differences observed in the pre-test and post-test results indicated that students in the experimental group, exposed to the IRM, achieved notably higher scores compared to their counterparts in the control group. In simpler terms, incorporating visuals like the IRM into English literature study significantly enhances the learning experience, aiding students in better understanding and retention of the material. The study provides clear support for the practical application of the IRM to foster improved reading comprehension skills among students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the findings and conclusion of the study, the recommendations are as follows:

1. The developed Iconographic Reading Module (IRM) may be recommended for use in Grade 9 learners to improve students' reading comprehension skills in English literature.

2. It is recommended to consider the integration of the Iconographic Reading Module (IRM) into the curriculum or a similar instructional approach for improving reading comprehension skills in Grade 9 students.

3. Similar research may be conducted in other places to triangulate this research to further increase the credibility and validity of research findings.

4. Future researchers may consider adding other relevant activities to the developed Iconographic Reading Module (IRM).

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