Improving Reading Skills Through Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) Strategy and Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) for the Grade Six Learners

[1]Deborah Jeane L. Pongcol, [2]Judith C. Chavez, [1]Lourdes College, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines [2]Lourdes College, Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines

Abstract

The directed reading thinking activity and collaborative strategic reading have become great tools for improving the reading skills of learners. This study sought to determine the effectiveness of the reading approaches to enhance the student's reading skills. The study was conducted on Grade six pupils in Claveria District, Division of Misamis Oriental. The experimental group, comprising 30 learners, was given the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy, and the control group, composed of 30 learners, was introduced to Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR). This study utilized a quasi-experimental design to see if there would be an improvement in the reading skills of Grade 6 pupils using a validated questionnaire based on the Department of Education's Grade 6 curriculum. Descriptive and inferential statistical tools were used for this study. The study revealed that the pupils exposed to both interventions enhanced their reading skills from *good* in the pretest to *very good* in the posttest except for sequencing events where the DRTA group increased from *poor* to *very good* after the interventions. The CSR group, however, obtained an elevated score in their performance from good to very good. Additionally, the study found a significant improvement in students' reading skills, indicating that the interventions helped improve their reading skills. The research further revealed that although DRTA and CSR are comparably effective in improving the student's reading skills, DRTA is more effective in enhancing their skill in sequencing events; hence, this study hopes to serve as a fundamental basis for future research endeavors, considering the diverse range of variables and conditions involved.

Keywords: reading skills, directed reading thinking activity, collaborative strategic reading

Introduction

Reading is one of the most fundamental skills pupils should master to learn new skills and have access to a variety of reasons and implications using their critical assessment skills. In effect, students' capacity to answer and modify the details provided in the content is an assessment of their reading accomplishment (Saraswati et al., 2021). Reading is an essential linguistic skill that primarily tries to gain an understanding of written texts. Learning to read allows people to access, evaluate, and communicate information (Kusdemir et al., 2018; Saputri et al., 2021). However, teachers are confronted with some realities of learners having comprehension difficulties most especially after the pandemic period. Furthermore, the teacher offers multiple possibilities for pupils to participate in learning and offers a structured framework that supports optimal instructional results according to Safitri et al. (2022) and Riswanto, et al. (2022). The tested strategies, thus, aim to bridge learning gaps in comprehension.

Based on the results of the pre-intervention assessment using the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI), the reading skills of the Grade VI pupils were classified at a frustration level, particularly during the pandemic time. To address these reading issues, learning strategies that can inspire and motivate pupils to improve their skills are required. Hence, the researcher intended to implement strategies such as Direct Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) and Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in the hope that the student's reading skills would be enhanced; hence, this study is hinged.

Framework

This study assumes that Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) and Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) can improve the learners' reading skills. It is anchored on the Constructivism theory by Jean Piaget and the Socio-Cultural Theory by Lev Vygotsky. According to Piaget's theory of constructivism, individuals create knowledge and meaning through their experiences. Accommodation and assimilation are two essential elements that contribute to the development of a person's new knowledge.

Vygotsky (1934) further believes that learning and development are collaborative activities that add to learners' comprehension skills and that children's cognitive growth occurs in the context of socializing and education. Culture provides

children with critical cognitive resources such as history, social context, customs, language, and religion, which affect their perceptual, attentional, and memory capacities.

In this study, reading skills are interactive activities between the reader and the author through text, Ahmad (2020). Reading is more than merely glancing through a book and the letters that have formed words, sets of words, phrases, paragraphs, and discourses. To read and comprehend information effectively, one must be able to think critically (Soto et al., 2019). Moreover, reading skills are required to comprehend the information or concepts conveyed by an author through written language, as well as to interpret the ideas included therein, both overtly and implicitly (Amin, 2019). Reading has different skills namely: sequencing events, noting details, predicting outcomes, and making inferences.

One of the most crucial reading skills is event sequencing, particularly in narrative writing. In all fields of problem-solving, sequencing is significant (Reading Rockets, 2015). When reading a selection and ordering the events, the how and why questions are frequently asked. These questions demand that some logic, implications, conclusions, assumptions, and interpretations be addressed. A reading skill called noting details is selecting a specific piece or piece of information from a text to accomplish a certain goal. Reading between the lines is known as result prediction. It requires them to apply their knowledge, past experiences, and observations to predict the future, which develops their ability to think critically (Allard and Sundblad, 2020). The approach that requires interpreting between the lines is making inferences. Students are encouraged to apply their prior knowledge and textual information to complete the process (Luka and Seniut, 2019).

One of the strategies employed in the study is the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA), developed by Russell (1969). It is an activity that helps students understand that each segment of text can help them figure out the next segment. According to Hanifah, Satria, and Kurnia (2022), using the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy, guides students through the process of sampling text, making predictions based on immediately prior knowledge and content, revising text, and proving or modifying predictions in light of new information. The Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy helps students form predictions as they read (Akamal 2018; Utami and Sugirin, 2019). Predicting equips the reader for comprehension and it aims to enhance the students' abilities to create their predictions, as stated by Hanifah, Satria, and Kurnia (2022). Before reading a passage, teachers may assist and stimulate students' thinking by reviewing the title, chapter headings, illustrations, and other explanatory features. Then, as students make assumptions about the text's perspective or subject, teachers can use open-ended questions to guide them. Students should be encouraged to give a rationale for their answers and use past knowledge to teach students to read the story until the first specified pause point. The teacher will next ask the students questions about specific pieces of information, encouraging them to assess and, if necessary, improve their predictions. Students should analyze their predictions and look for supporting opinions in the text to assess if they are correct. In this approach, students are given ample time to reflect, to continuously make predictions, to defend and explain them, and to evaluate the accuracy of their judgment (Jennings, Caldwell, and Lerner, 2014).

Another strategy employed was Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR), originally designed by Klingner and Vaughn (1996). This is a strategy that combines enhanced collaborative instruction and cooperation in learning. The strategies in CSR are designed to teach students with diverse abilities comprehension strategies for use with expository text (Klingner, Vaughn, and Boardman, 2015). This step aims to improve pupils' understanding of the paragraph or section. Implementing stages of CSR can enhance teaching and learning productivity and boost student comprehension (Lain 2019). Furthermore, CSR is a strategy that integrates reading comprehension with planned instruction and cooperative learning, as well as a set of reading comprehension strategies (Chuong and Huong, 2021).

CSR necessitates preview is an approach that requires students to scan parts of the text, including the title, subheadings, and visuals, to locate significant words and terms; brainstorming prior information about the subject, such as details learned from previous courses or watching a movie or watching television; and finally, writing an essay on the topic by Jannah (2020). Click and clunk is identifying difficult vocabulary as they read and figuring out the meaning of terms they do not understand. Such a method is intended to help pupils keep track of their comprehension (Purnawan, 2019). To get the gist, students strive to find the main concept in each paragraph through group discussion according to (Purnawan, 2019). According to Khonamri (2015), a wrap-up is an approach that teaches learners to produce questions and thoughts to review the key concept in the book he has read.

In this context, the DRTA strategy is considered a teaching methodology in language learning to improve reading skills as opposed to CSR. Four reading skills would serve as the reading performance of the pupils. First, sequencing events is the skill used in breaking down an event into simple steps and putting those steps in order. Sequencing skills are talking about something that logically happened in the past so others can follow according to Paul and Wang (2017). Second is noting details which help one concentrate and analyze the text. Taking notes during interactive tasks such as listening and reading improves understanding. It is stated that noting details helps with remembering lecture material as well as improving problem-solving and self-explanation, which improves learning and comprehension overall (Alzu'bi, 2019). Third is predicting outcomes which reading a short narrative with complicated or unfamiliar ideas, structures, and language helps students develop their predicting skills. Last is making an inference when readers must combine information from the text that is distributed throughout different sentences or when they must include information from another source (Rapp et al., 2016). Figure 1 below illustrates the interplay of the variables in this study. The independent variables in the study are the interventions such as Directed Reading Thinking Activity and Collaborative Strategic Reading premised to improve the reading comprehension skills of the learners which is the dependent variable in the study.
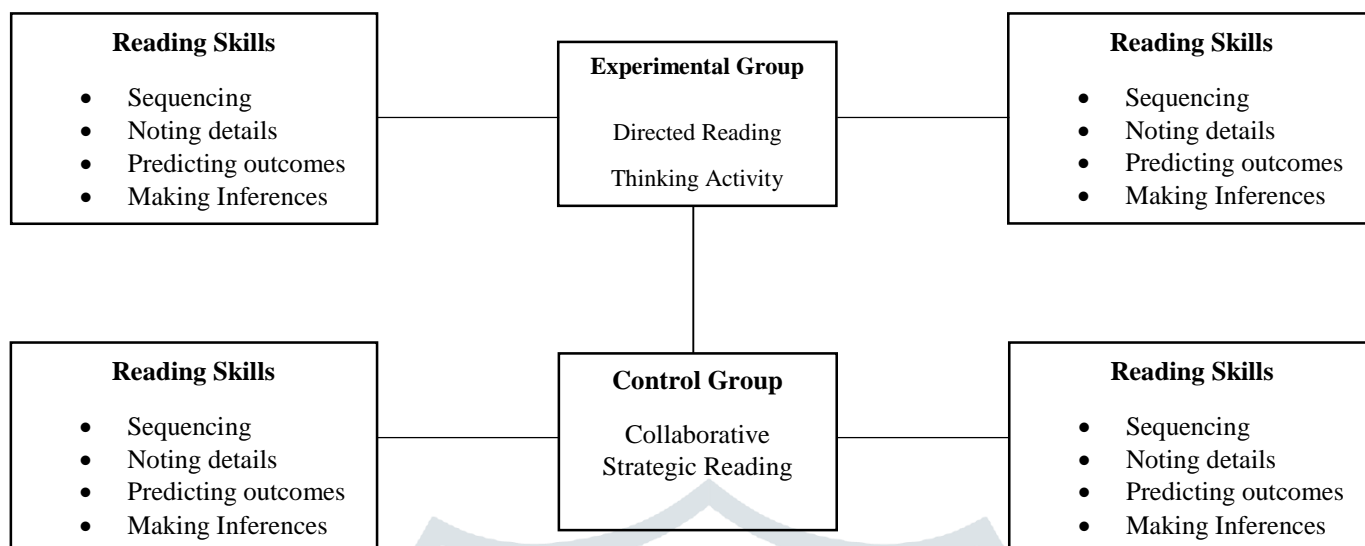
Reading Skills

- Sequencing
- Noting details
- Predicting outcomes
- Making Inferences

Experimental Group

Directed Reading Thinking Activity

Reading Skills

- Sequencing
- Noting details
- Predicting outcomes
- Making Inferences

Reading Skills

- Sequencing
- Noting details
- Predicting outcomes
- Making Inferences

Control Group

Collaborative Strategic Reading

Reading Skills

- Sequencing
- Noting details
- Predicting outcomes
- Making Inferences

Figure 1. Schematic Presentation of the Study

Objectives of the Study

This study addressed the improvement of reading skills through directed reading thinking activity strategy and collaborative strategic reading.

Methods

This research employed a quasi-experimental design with a nonequivalent control group design, intended to examine whether or not there would be an improvement in reading skills through Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) and Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) for Grade-Six learners. Fraenkle and Wallen (2012) defined quasi-experimental research as a study design that does not employ a random assignment of participants. In this research, the experimental group was exposed to the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy, while the control group was introduced to Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR).

Result and Discussion

The participants' reading skills in the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) group, initially assessed as good during the pretest with a mean of 3.13, experienced an improvement after the intervention. The post-test results increased to a mean of 5.78, marking a substantial shift to a very good level. Similarly, in the Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) group, the pretest results were positioned within the good range, with a mean of 3.63. Following the intervention, the post-test results exhibited a significant ascent to a very good level, registering a mean of 5.56. The observed enhancements in both groups underscore the positive outcome of the interventions, DRTA and CSR, on participants' reading skills.

Table 1

Participants' Reading Skills Performance before and after the Interventions (Overall)

Reading Skills	Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA)						Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR)					
	PRETEST			POST-TEST			PRETEST			POST-TEST		
	M	Int.	SD	M	Int.	SD	M	Int.	SD	M	Int.	SD
Noting details	3.73	G	1.80	5.80	VG	1.37	3.80	G	1.77	5.60	VG	1.59
Predicting outcome	4.47	G	5.90	2.03	VG	5.90	3.63	G	2.11	5.67	VG	1.94
Making Inferences	3.17	G	1.17	5.70	VG	1.44	3.60	G	1.0	5.53	VG	1.54
Sequencing Events	1.13	P	1.57	5.70	VG	1.70	3.50	G	1.53	5.43	VG	1.87
OVERALL	**3.13**	**G**	**1.17**	**5.78**	**VG**	**1.44**	**3.63**	**G**	**1.0**	**5.56**	**VG**	**1.54**

Expanding on the significance of Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR), Muziatun and Katili (2020) pointed out that CSR not only enhances students' overall achievement in reading comprehension but also specifically bolsters their ability to make inferences. This suggests that CSR, as implemented in the current study, goes beyond surface-level improvements, contributing to a profound understanding of textual nuances and fostering advanced communication skills. These findings, coupled with the recommendation from Fithrotunnisa et al. (2022), collectively advocate for the integration of these pedagogical strategies in teaching practices. The emphasis on active engagement, collaborative learning, and strategic reading approaches aligns with contemporary educational paradigms, reinforcing the notion that these techniques offer valuable avenues for enhancing both reading comprehension and reading skills among students.

The data in Table 2 show a large effect size of 0.87 for Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) and 0.82 for Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) indicating significant improvements in reading skills.

Table 2

Result of the Test of Difference (Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test) in the Participants' Reading Skills Before and After the Interventions

	Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA)						Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR)					
	Negative Ranks	Positive Ranks	Ties	Z	p	Effect Size	Negative Ranks	Positive Ranks	Ties	Z	p	Effect Size
Noting details	0	26	4	4.50**	.000	0.82	4	21	5	3.48**	.001	0.64
Predicting outcome	3	18	9	3.32**	.001	0.61	3	24	3	3.69**	.000	0.67
Making Inference	3	27	0	4.41**	.000	0.81	5	24	1	3.70**	.000	0.68
Sequencing Events	0	30	0	4.81**	.000	0.88	7	20	3	3.45**	.001	0.63
OVERALL	0	30	0	4.79**	.000	0.87	3	27	0	4.48**	.000	0.82

Legend: Negative Ranks: Post-test < Pretest   Positive Ranks: Post-test > Pretest   Ties: Post-test = Pretest   ** significant at 0.01 level

Findings reveal that overall, it is statistically significant (Z = 4.48, p = 0.00) and given that a large effect size is considered 0.8 or greater (Sullivan & Feinn, 2012), the rejection of the null hypothesis underscores a notable increase in participants' reading abilities post-intervention for both DRTA and CSR. The Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) strategy helps students form predictions as they read (Akamal, 2018; Utami & Sugirin, 2019). However, collaborative strategic reading (CSR) not only aided in the development of reading abilities but also resulted in positive outcomes in social relationships and interactions in the classroom, which had a significant impact on reading comprehension (Babapour et al., 2019).

In the context of DRTA, it is evident that the sequencing events components significantly contribute to a substantial increase in participants' test scores on the post-test. It revealed a noteworthy positive effect size of 0.88. The substantial impact of DRTA on sequencing events (Z = 4.81) emphasizes participants' enhanced understanding of chronological flow. Hasanah (2016) posited that, in general, the stages of Directed Reading Thinking Activity were to enhance the students' ability to ask questions, hoping that they would become critical readers, and then foster their thoughts in the text's meaning, not only the literal meaning but also the implied meaning of the text.

On the contrary, predicting outcomes got the lowest result although still high with a result of 3.32. This may be due to the ability of the participants to anticipate and foresee developments in the text. This is supported by the study of Yapp, D & et. al (2023) that the reader thinks ahead while reading and predicts outcomes and anticipates events in the text, which in turn enables a faster and more efficient reading process.

In the context of CSR, a notable effect size (0.68) for making inferences (Z = 3.70) underscores its positive influence on participants' ability to conclude. The analysis also conveys a tied rank at position 1 highlighting instances where participants achieved similar test scores and performances. The participant's ability to make inferences got a result of 3.70 which suggests variations in participants' ability to draw conclusions or make educated guesses based on the information presented. The results support the claim made by Klingner, Vaughn, and Boardman (2015) that comprehension methods for use with expository texts are taught to students with a variety of abilities through the use of CSR strategies. Increasing learners' knowledge and comprehension of the paragraph or passage are the primary objectives of this stage. The steps of CSR can be implemented to increase student comprehension and productivity in the teaching-learning process (Novita, 2010).

On the contrary, sequencing events got the lowest result although still high with a result of 3.45, the Collaborative Strategic Reading approach had a notable effect on participants' ability to sequence events within the text, and the observed difference is not likely to be random. The idea of the CSR approach involves students working together to identify main ideas and confirm their understanding of information. Ross and Jannah (2020) pointed out that by previewing the material, students generate interest and activate background knowledge, enabling them to make predictions about what they will learn.

These findings align with prior studies and highlight the practical significance of DRTA and CSR in positively shaping participants' reading abilities through active engagement and collaborative strategies.

Table 3 presents the results of the test differences in the increments of reading skills between the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) and Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) groups. Findings reveal that overall, it is statistically significant (t = 2.16, p = 0.035), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis that posited a significant difference in the increments of reading skills between the two groups. This finding indicates that the interventions have a comparable effect on the participants' reading skills, affirming the study's assumption of a difference and improvement resulting from the use of DRTA and CSR interventions.

Specifically, however, the components of noting details, predicting outcomes, and making inferences did not differ implying that both approaches are comparably effective in improving such skills. This, however, did not hold to sequencing events where the aforementioned skill differed significantly denoting that CSR is more effective in improving the learners' sequencing events skill.

This result aligns with the Constructivism Theory of John Piaget, asserting that knowledge is constructed based on experiences. The intervention methods, as proposed by Butler et al. (2019), involve doing, reflecting, thinking, and applying, allowing learners to engage in tangible experiences, replicate those experiences, formulate theories, and articulate assumptions. This approach serves as an instrument for bringing about positive modifications in academic education, enabling learners to apply their acquired knowledge.

Furthermore, the data emphasize the significance of sequencing events in the overall reading skills increment, with DRTA showing a higher increment (t= 4.33, p= 0.000). The groups differ significantly in sequencing events, with the DRTA group being more effective in improving reading skills. Students are allowed to investigate the content and story structure through sequencing activities, which develop their reading skills (Teacher Vision, 2015).

In summary, during the intervention, there was a corresponding increase in participants' performance (t=2.16, p=.035). These findings collectively underscore the effectiveness of both interventions and highlight the specific effectiveness of sequencing events on reading skills. Such finding finds consonance with the study of Rahman (2015) postulates that the Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) approach to teaching reading comprehension is effective at raising students' reading comprehension proficiency.

Additionally, the findings support the Socio-Cultural Theory of Lev Vygotsky, which emphasizes the role of social interaction in development. Han and Wang (2021) asserted that learners can be motivated through engagement in classrooms, reinforcing the idea that collaborative interventions, such as CSR, contribute positively to skill development.

Similarly, the Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) is regarded to be successful in increasing the requirement for thinking skills in the curricula (Richardson & Morgan, 2019). The DRTA technique would help students improve their reading comprehension although some factors, such as classroom management that is out of control and prior knowledge of the book, could make this strategy less effective (Lubis, 2018).

Table 3

Result of the Test of Difference in the Two Groups' Reading Skills Increments

Reading Skills	DIRECTED READING THINKING ACTIVITY (DRTA)		COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIC READING (CSR)		t	p	Effect Sizes
	M	SD	M	SD			
Noting Details	2.07	1.36	1.80	2.24	.558	.579	*.144*
Predicting Outcomes	1.43	1.98	2.03	2.36	1.07	.290	*-.276*
Making Inferences	2.52	1.87	1.93	2.10	1.17	.247	*.302*
Sequencing Events	4.57	2.18	1.93	2.52	4.33**	.000	*1.12*
OVERALL	2.65	1.02	1.93	1.53	2.16*	.035	*.558*

*significant at 0.05 level
**significant at 0.01 level

Findings reveal that overall, it is statistically significant (t = 2.16, p = 0.035), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis that posited a significant difference in the increments of reading skills between the two groups. Furthermore, the data emphasize the significance of sequencing events in the overall reading skills increment, with DRTA showing a higher increment (t = 4.33, p= 0.000).

Conclusion and Recommendations

The use of Directed Reading Thinking Activities (DRTA) and Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) has significantly enhanced students' four reading skills: sequencing events, noting details, predicting outcomes, and making inferences. It has significantly improved the children's reading abilities. This means that using Directed Reading Thinking Activity (DRTA) and Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR) in the teaching-learning process can help students enhance their reading skills and ability to analyze, evaluate, and generate ideas. Additionally, the said interventions are comparably effective in improving students' reading skills except for sequencing events where CSR is more effective in improving the learners' sequencing events skill.

The social and constructivist learning theories that underpin this study were confirmed. These ideas lend support to the level of potential development at which learning happens. It consists of cognitive structures that continue to generate but can only flourish with the help of or in collaboration with others. It highlights the need to encourage students to generate their meaning from text rather than imposing a teacher's opinion of the meaning on them (Schreiber & Valle, 2013). Teachers can serve as tools to bridge the linguistic and cultural gaps that pupils face when reading a text.

Teachers may explicitly teach reading strategies such as DRTA and CSR where they can help students improve their comprehension and analyze texts productively thereby enhancing their reading skills. School Principals may continue encouraging language teachers to engage in professional conversations exploring strategies that develop reading comprehension to minimize the incidence of struggling readers in their context.

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