Improving the Basic Oral Reading Skills of Grade 10 Through Word Stress Intersect

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Abstract

The study sought to determine the effectiveness of Word Stress Intersect as a strategy for improving the oral reading skills of Grade 10 – Carnelian Candon National High School (CNHS) students during the school year 2022-2023. Specifically, it aimed to determine (1) the level of the oral reading skills of Grade 10 – Carnelian students of CNHS, (2) the significant difference between their pre-test and post-test scores, and (3) the gain ratio obtained by the students from the results of the pre-test and post-test of the study. The study also employed a one-group pre-test/post-test research method to assess the efficacy of word stress intersect in improving the students' basic oral reading skills. A teacher-made test was also used to determine the level of the oral reading skills of the students in two-syllabled and three-syllabled nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and prepositions during the pre-test and post-test. The 43 Grade 10 – Carnelian students served as the study's respondents. Based on the result of the study, the following are presented: the level of oral reading skills of the respondents improved from Poor to Outstanding, and there is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. It implies, therefore, that Word Stress Intersect is an effective strategy in improving the level of the oral reading skills of the student-respondents.

Keywords: Word Stress Intersect, Level, Oral Reading Skills, Strategy

I.   Introduction

Reading skills are a person's capacity to read, comprehend, interpret, and decode written language and texts (Yapp et al., 2021). They encompass both the ability to decode written language and the ability to comprehend and interpret the content, context, and nuances of the text. Reading is a fundamental skill that enables access to knowledge, communication, and lifelong learning. It is the ability to interact with and comprehend text, which can be accomplished through silent or oral reading.

Moreover, some theories provide frameworks for understanding the cognitive processes involved in reading. One of those is the Whole Language Theory. It emphasizes the significance of the reader's interaction with the text and the ensuing process of building meaning. This theory advocates the idea of a strategic reader or one who actively engages with the text, drawing on their prior knowledge to analyze and interpret the information offered. (Mirhossein & Norin, 2022). In essence, this theory advocates for a more holistic reading method that recognizes the reader's part, as well as that of the text and the context. It also enables learners to become not only fluent readers, but also critical thinkers who can comprehend the structure of a language and the world around them.

Furthermore, enhancing the learners' reading skills is advantageous for them. It allows students to seek knowledge, extensively research concepts, and gain an in-depth comprehension of the world (Pearson, 2022). It is important to a child's academic success because the learners can access the curriculum to improve their communication and language skills. The benefits of improving the learners' reading skills include improved brain activity, vocabulary, critical thinking skills, and the ability to comprehend text, reduced memory loss, and increased class participation (Auld, 2023). It also encompasses many abilities that can be applied to all aspects of life.

Students who cannot read, on the other hand, struggle to grasp key concepts, score poorly on tests, and fail to fulfill educational milestones. They often get discouraged and frustrated with school, leading to high rate of school dropouts, low performance on standardized tests, and other undesirable effects, all of which can have serious and long-term implications (School of Education and Human Sciences, 2021). In this regard, the study focused on the reading skills of the Grade 10 – Carnelian students. The learners are observed to have problems with their skills in reading two-syllable and three-syllable words.

The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically decreased students' reading skills, especially in elementary and high school. Learners missed the opportunity to master reading competencies within the 2-year lockdown and blended learning due to the absence of a formal learning setting. For this reason, our country's education sector faces countless challenges to the quality of the learner's education at home. The pandemic had a significant influence on K-12 learners development, placing them five months behind in mathematics and four months behind in reading by the end of the school year (Dorn et al., 2021). This goes without saying that the pandemic has become one of the factors contributing to the student's difficulties in their oral reading skills.

Even though teachers exerted effort by implementing the different learning modalities, there are more convenient learning environments for the learners than at home. The learning modalities used during the Covid-19 pandemic are distance learning, blended learning, homeschooling, modular distance learning, TV-Radio-based instruction, and online distance learning (DepEd, 2022). Moreover, it is essential to understand that alternative learning strategies are a practical choice for many students. However, they are only suitable for some because learners may differ in learning style, and their environment may not be suitable for learning (Lim, 2021). Despite these strategic attempts, the gaps in the learners' skills, resulting from alternative learning modalities, are soon observed inside the actual learning environment.

In connection with the previous finding, the limited access to technology and internet connectivity, insufficient support for online learning, decreased interaction and engagement with teachers and peers, fewer opportunities for hands-on and practical learning experiences, and disparities in resources and learning environments during the pandemic are attributed to the reason why learners have problems in their oral reading skills (DepEd, 2022). As observed, the Grade 10 – Carnelian learners are having problems reading two-syllable and three-syllable nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and prepositions with their proper word stress.

The researchers observed that the Grade 10 students, specifically the Grade 10 – Carnelian students, had difficulties in their reading skills. The difficulty is shown during oral recitations. When asked to read the selection as an example of an informative essay, the learners often committed mistakes when reading two-syllable and three-syllable words with their proper word stress. It confused the other learners, especially those who prefer to listen rather than read the same material presented. The same is also observed when the teacher asks the learners to answer the questions of the activity. According to Neider (2020), learners can process information through four primary learning styles, which include visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic. Therefore, the oral reading skills of the learners must be improved, considering the different learning styles of the respondents. To improve the oral reading skills of the learners, the researchers utilized Word Stress Intersect as a strategy. Word Stress Intersect uses marks to indicate where the stress is located among the syllables of a word (Short, 2020). Specifically, it is crafted to indicate the stress of two-syllabled and three-syllabled nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and prepositions. According to Short (2020), it is a process of assisting a learner by modeling the expected competencies and skills. Generally, a teacher, parent, or peer explains the indication, which can be any shape, such as a circle, located just above the syllables. The larger shape indicates the exact location of the stress.

The study focused on the reading skills of Grade 10 Carnelian students. The learners were observed to have gaps in their oral skills, including reading two-syllabled and three-syllabled nouns, verbs, adverbs, adjectives, and prepositions. The word stress intersect is used as a strategy to address these gaps.

This study examined the efficacy of the Word Stress Intersect as a strategy for enhancing the oral reading skills of Grade 10 Carnelian students at Candon National High School. More specifically, it aimed to address the oral reading skills of the students at CNHS at both the pre-test and post-test, the significant difference in the oral reading skills scores between the pre-test and post-test, and the average gain ratio that the students obtained from the study's pre-test and post-test results.

II.   Literature Review

Reading skills enable a person to interact with and understand written language. It refers to the capacity to decode language, a combination of phonics, vocabulary building, and reading comprehension strategies (Ahmed Okasha, 2020). Moreover, it highly promotes structured and independent learning. If learners can master these skills, it is easier for them to develop the foundations of their education. It is also essential for lifetime learning and personal development.

Reading difficulties are one of the most common issues in schools. Moreover, there are challenges in reading skills that could be improved for learners. One of the major barriers to

children's learning is awareness of phonemics, or the ability to comprehend the various sounds of letters, which is essential for identifying the structure of the word. Working memory which operates poorly is another aspect that influences a student's ability to read and comprehend the written word. Another factor associated with reading difficulties is a need for prior knowledge and vocabulary skills. Motivation is another factor that may influence students' reading processes (Sandford, 2015). Students are also motivated to achieve their learning goals. It is essential to recognize that motivating students is a crucial element of good teaching. This implies that learners' motivation is the most crucial element of learning (Filgona et al., 2020). Despite the importance of reading, students need more interest in reading English materials.

There is also a correlation between reading performance and the learners' confidence. One of the most significant influences on the reading achievement of the learner is the decrease or the increase of their perception of their ability or self-confidence. The primary influence on students' acquisition of expert reading performance is confidence and motivation to keep reading. Some causes of lack of confidence are insufficient parental involvement in assisting students in learning how to read fluently at home and schools' tendency not to motivate students to read. These factors contribute to the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for reading (Moneva & Tribunals, 2020).

Since oral reading skills are used in most aspects of life, proper techniques and strategies should be incorporated to ensure the skill is developed correctly and will not hinder the learning process. The more strategies used in teaching reading, the better the outcome (Muslaini, 2017). The strategies should complement each other in making and selecting the strategies for improving reading skills. The strategies should adhere to one specific goal and not oppose the purposes of each strategy. If that is the case, then when compared to many strategies used by the teachers, combining some of them was more appropriate. Students would be more focused if the teacher used fewer but well-applied strategies to teach reading rather than many strategies that target different areas of development.

Word Stress Intersect is a strategy to improve oral reading skills (Short, 2020). It is an interactive strategy that divides the words into syllables. A shape, often a circle, is assigned for each syllable. This strategy connects the position of the stress to how big or small the shape is. The most giant shape positioned at the top of a syllable determines where the stress of the word is. This has to do with the cognitive theory of theory. The foundation of cognitive theory is the notion that before people comprehend a concept, they must first grasp it by breaking it down into smaller parts. It contends that in order for children (or adults) to comprehend new ideas, their cognitive capacities must grow, beginning with tiny chunks, and gradually expanding their mental models of the world around them (Falcon & Kieffer-Jones, 2015). Learners are encouraged to use a strategy that will help them know the language's rules, structures, and components before speaking and comprehending it.

There are also what are known as hybrid theories of reading, which argue that reading is the ultimate and smallest process simultaneously because, as readers approach entire texts and decipher passages from them, they also increase their own vocabularies and grammatical knowledge, which helps them understand texts as a whole. Consequently, this approach is

related to cognitive theories of reading since these theories challenge conventional wisdom by arguing that reading is a process that is first learned and then broken down into words, phrases, paragraphs, and so forth. Hybrid models of reading, like hybrid theories of reading, encourage readers to gather lists or banks of phonemes, words, sentences, and other components as they learn to read and handle longer and more complicated texts (Hamilton, 2017).

According to John Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory, teachers who explicitly guide students through new material and skills and provide them practice and feedback are more effective than those who make students figure out a lot of the material on their own (Sweller, 2017). This theory supports the importance of modeling in teaching learners how to read fluently. Word stress intersect utilizes visuals to show the structure of a language, but it also relies on how the model presents the information. The metacognitive theory plays a crucial role in comprehending Word Stress Intersect as a strategy because students' decisions are directly influenced by their understanding of themselves, the tasks they complete, and the strategies at their disposal. These decisions primarily concern how actively they will participate in and engage in learning opportunities (Hapgood & Chen, 2019). According to metacognitive theory, individuals with metacognitive skills can monitor and regulate their reading performance actively, resulting in more significant skills. The learners can utilize Word Stress Intersect to help them improve their oral reading skills. This can be done as they practice the new knowledge they acquired.

Metacognitive reading strategies emphasize gaining control of reading and assessing understanding while immersing on the process of reading. Students who read with metacognition continuously inquire to themselves, "Do I understand what I just read?" or "What is the main point here?" This necessitates constant attention and inquiry. Metacognition will not emerge until a child is "leaning forward" with reading, unless she is engaged and driven to enhance her literacy skills and tackle each written language with a plan, while being motivated and engaged (Agosin et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the theory of social development proposed by Vygotsky, holds that social interactions can influence and moderate a child's cognitive development and learning ability. His idea (also known as Vygotsky's Sociocultural theory) asserts that learning is essentially a social activity rather than an independent path of discovery. He goes on to argue that children's education develops enormously when guided by a more knowledgeable community member, such as a parent or teacher (Gowrie, 2020).

To synthesize, oral reading skills are essential in the growth of the learners. It is a foundation of language skills. As it is a common problem in educational institutions, it must be addressed through a strategy that utilizes memorization and comprehension. Word Stress Intersect is a reasonably new strategy that has yet to be incorporated into other studies. However, as supported by the cognitive theory, cognitive load theory, metacognitive theory, and social development theory, the strategy is efficacious in improving the oral reading skills of the learners, focusing on their proper word stress of two-syllabled and three-syllabled nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositions.

III.   Methodology

Research Design

This action research study employed a one-group pretest-posttest design to investigate the efficacy of word stress in enhancing the oral reading abilities of Grade 10 Carnelian students at Candon National High School, situated in Barangay Bagani Campo, Candon City, Ilocos Sur. Quasi-experimental research, as opposed to experimental research, does not have a control group, random selection, random assignment, or active manipulation; rather, it manipulates an independent variable in the same way to observe its effects on the outcome. Quasi-experimental research differs from experimental research in that it does not have a control group, random assignment, random selection, or active manipulation (Iowa State University, 2023). This type of research is the main design of the study for the reason that there is no control group, and random selection is utilized. Since the study is quasi-experimental, it utilized a one-group pretest-posttest design. This quasi-experiment determines the outcome of interest twice, before and after a non-random set of participants receives a particular treatment or intervention. It possesses three remarkable qualities. First, it is a quasi-experimental design because the people who get the intervention are selected using a non-random criterion. Secondly, there's no reference group with which to compare the result. Lastly, a comparison of pre- and post-intervention assessments is used to assess the effectiveness of the intervention (Choueiry, 2021).

This was used in the study by administering the pre-test and post-test without excluding any learners, with the exception of two who were absent or forming another group for a separate strategy. The study covered all grade 10 Carnelian students.

Research Instrument

In finding the level of the oral reading skills of the learners, the researchers constructed a 40-item word stress test that is divided into five parts, which are Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, Adverbs, and Prepositions. Each section consists of four two-syllabled and four three-syllabled words. The study focused on these parts of speech because these are the specific difficulties affecting the learners' oral reading skills as observed in real-time by the researchers. Moreover, the researchers chose two-syllable and three-syllable words because these are what the learners find most challenging at their current level of learning. The learners' English teacher also noted the number of syllables and reading problems in these particular parts of speech in addition to the researchers' observations.

The test instrument did not undergo reliability testing because the pre-test and post-test were crafted to specifically address the difficulties observed in the oral reading skills of Grade 10 – Carnelian. The words included in the 40-item word stress test are specific words observed. At the same time, the learners read a selection entitled "The Importance of Research for ICT Teachers," found in English 10 Quarter 4 Module 1: Distinguish Technical Terms Used in Research. Additionally, the researchers received additional words from the student's English teacher.

The test instrument was reviewed and improved by the research adviser and their validators, who included a language teacher, a teacher with a master's degree in language and teaching, and a secondary education teacher. They evaluated the validity of the test instrument

through content validity and were able to provide feedback on how to improve the research instrument. The validity index was 4.6, indicating "very high validity."

Below is the range of intervals that determined the level of oral reading skills of the respondents.

Interval	Descriptive Rating
32.01 – 40.00	Outstanding
24.01 – 32.00	Very Skilled
16.01 – 24.00	Skilled
8.01 – 16.00	Poor
8.00 and below	Very Poor

On June 4, 2023, the researchers requested that the Principal of Candon National High School, Dr. Alejandro Haboc Jr., permit them to conduct their study. Following approval of their request, the researchers created a word stress checklist that was reviewed and approved by their research adviser and the students' subject teacher. Moreover, the principal and the subject teacher also checked the lesson plans to help the learners enrich their oral reading skills. The pre-test was administered on January 5, 2023, to determine the current level of the student's oral reading skills focusing on word stress.

The researchers split the learners into four groups, one group for each researcher, to maximize the time given to them. Each student was asked to read the two-syllable and three-syllable nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositions. The researchers asked the permission of their subject teacher and the students before taking audio recordings. To mitigate bias, their research adviser evaluated the recorded results through a word stress checklist. All audio recordings were compiled and checked to determine if the learners could pronounce the proper word stress of the words presented.

On January 9, 2023, the first day of actual teaching, one of the researchers taught the word stress of nouns and verbs, incorporating the Word Stress Intersect strategy. On January 10, 2023, the second day of actual teaching, one researcher discussed the word stress of adverbs and adjectives. On the last day, January 11, 2023, one researcher discussed the word stress of prepositions. Afterwards, all the lessons were recapitulated. On January 16, 2023, the post-test was administered.

During the 3-day lesson proper, the researchers used the word stress intersect to discuss the proper stress of the words. The word stress is located on the first syllable for two-syllabled and three-syllabled nouns. The word stress is in the last syllable for two-syllabled and three-syllabled verbs, adverbs, and prepositions. For two-syllabled adjectives, the stress is on the first syllable, and for three-syllabled adjectives, the stress is on the second syllable. The words are divided into syllables, and a circle is placed at the top. The bigger or largest circle is located at the top of the syllable, where the stress is located. Using circles or shapes to visualize the stress of the words enables the learners to understand language in smaller units. Furthermore, the researchers presented words with particular word stress or words that do not follow the pattern presented to explain that special rules must be considered in learning languages. They prepared instructional materials such as manila papers, markers, and PowerPoint Presentations to make the strategy more straightforward in a classroom setting.

The collected and statistically treated data served as the foundation for the researchers' evaluation of Word Stress Intersect's effectiveness in improving the oral reading skills of Grade 10 Carnelian students.

IV.   Results and Findings

LEVEL OF THE ORAL READING SKILLS OF GRADE 10 – CARNELIAN

The results show that 43 students took the 40-item pre-test and post-test. The population of Grade 10 – Carnelian consists of 45 students. However, two students were absent during the pre-test. The highest pre-test score is 27, while the post-test score is 40. The lowest pre-test score is 8, and the post-test score is 32. As observed, there is an improvement in the highest and lowest scores of the pre-test and the post-test. In the pre-test range, no student scored 32.01 to 40, with a descriptive rating of outstanding. Most students scored between the range of 8.01 to 16, consisting of 53.49% of the total student population of Grade 10 - Carnelian. On the range of scores for the post-test, 97.67% of the students have the descriptive rating of outstanding. The remaining 2.33 % has the descriptive rating of very skilled. Moreover, the overall mean also indicates the improvement of scores from Poor to Outstanding. Pre-test scores were 15.53, and post-test scores had 37.56 overall mean.

Additionally, the standard deviation of pre-test and post-test indicates good results. For the pre-test, the standard deviation is 4.01, and 1.94 for the post-test. This means that the scores during the pre-test are more varied than those during the post-test, with a significant difference. Lastly, the coefficient of variation for the pre-test is 25.84 and 5.18 for the post-test. This means that the pre-test scores are more consistent than the post-test scores. All of the results show a difference in scores between the pre- and post-tests. In conclusion, the oral reading skills of Grade 10 – Carnelian of Candon National High School improved after implementing the research instrument.

SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE PRE-TEST AND THE POST-TEST SCORES IN THE ORAL READING SKILLS OF THE GRADE 10

The results show that the mean difference between the pre-test and post-test is 22. 03. The t-test value, 32.08, is greater than the tabular value, 1.99, at the 0.05 level of significance, with a degree of freedom of 42. Therefore, the null hypotheses were rejected, and the results show that there is a significant difference between the levels of oral reading skills during the study's pre-test and post-test. This implies that the Word Stress Intersect is efficacious in improving the students' oral reading skills.

Learning that utilizes both visual and verbal representations makes information memorable. The Dual Coding theory (Paivo, 1971) states that learning is more effective when it utilizes two representations of information, both visual and verbal (Kanellopoulou et al., 2019). Adding images or visuals to verbal information makes the idea concrete and more accessible. Word stress intersect as a strategy is a form of dual coding that utilizes both shapes to illustrate the stress of the syllables as read and demonstrated by a model.

Average Gain Ratio Obtained By The Students From The Results

The table reveals that the mean during the pre-test is 15.53, while the post-test is 37.56, and the average gain ratio is 89.52 percent. This shows that the performance of the Grade 10 Carnelian students increased from the pre-test to the post-test. Furthermore, the use of Word Stress Intersect as a strategy for improving the oral reading skills of Grade 10 Carnelian is effective.

However, the study's results negate the findings of Slavin (2019), who stated that knowing the student's learning styles and crafting instruction based on these is just a neuromyth and does not guarantee effective learning. According to him, when teachers create new strategies that accommodate diverse learning styles, they divert the instruction away from strategies already supported by a substantial body of research. To oppose this, word stress intersect utilizes two learning strategies (verbal and visual) but is proven effective in addressing learners' difficulties in their oral reading skills.

In support of the result above, Younas (2018) found that Vygotsky's Scaffolding or learning with the assistance of a teacher or a peer is proven beneficial when teaching and learning a sentence's punctuation. Word Stress Intersect, utilized by the researchers, is an effective scaffolding technique.

Findings

Based on the results of the study conducted, the following findings are hereby presented:

1. The mean score of the Grade 10 Carnelian students during the pretest study was 15.53, while the mean score during the posttest was 37.56.
2. The mean difference between the study's pretest and posttest is 22.03, and the computed t-value is 32.08 at a 0.05 significance level with 42 as its degree of freedom.
3. The overall gain ratio of the scores garnered from the pretest and the posttest results is 89.52 percent.

V.   Conclusion

Based on the research's significant findings, it is concluded that word stress intersection has improved the level of students' oral reading skills. There is a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores in the Oral Reading Skills of the Grade 10 Carnelian students. Word stress intersect is effective in improving the oral reading skills of Grade 10 Carnelian students of Candon National High School.

VI.   Statements and Declarations

VII. References

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