

Article

Literature Circle Strategy for Grade 10 Learners Of Bigaa Integrated National High School

Maria Pamela P. Burgos*¹¹. University of Cabuyao, Philippines* Correspondence: pamburgos.2020@gmail.com

Abstract: This study confronts the persistent literacy challenges faced by Grade 10 students, demonstrating the potential of literature circles as a dynamic and student-centered instructional approach. Literature circles create a structured yet engaging environment where students collaboratively explore texts, engage in thoughtful discussions, and refine their critical thinking skills. Through these interactions, learners not only enhance their reading comprehension but also develop the confidence to articulate their ideas and engage meaningfully with their peers. To evaluate the impact of this method, a quasi-experimental research design was conducted at Bigaa Integrated National High School. A pretest and posttest were administered to assess students' literacy skills before and after the implementation of literature circles. The collected data underwent statistical analysis using the mean, independent t-test, and dependent t-test, revealing a significant improvement in students' literacy performance. These findings underscore the value of literature circles in fostering deeper learning experiences and addressing literacy gaps, reinforcing their potential as an effective educational strategy.

Keywords: Literature Circle, Strategy, Reading

1. Introduction

Reading is a transformative tool that allows individuals to experience diverse perspectives and deepen their understanding of the world. It is essential for fostering empathy, critical thinking, and cultural awareness. Aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), literacy is a fundamental pillar of lifelong learning and educational equity. However, studies indicate that Filipino students struggle with reading comprehension, as evidenced by World Bank data on learning poverty and PISA results. To address this issue, various teaching methodologies have been explored, including literature circles—a collaborative reading strategy proven to enhance comprehension, motivation, and engagement. Literature circles promote meaningful conversations, encourage student participation, and foster critical thinking. Given their success in other contexts, there is a need for localized implementation to support learners in Bigaa Integrated National High School, where educators seek effective strategies to improve reading proficiency post-pandemic. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the literature circles strategy in improving the reading comprehension of students at Bigaa Integrated National High School, promoting motivation, engagement, and critical thinking in reading.

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2. Materials and Methods

Research Design

This research used a quantitative research design. Specifically, quasi-experimental research design was utilized to determine the effectiveness of the literature circles strategy in enhancing the reading comprehension skills of Grade 10 learners of Bigaa Integrated National High School. Particularly, this study employed the nonequivalent group design. This is applicable as the participants are not randomly assigned to conditions; however, the resulting groups are likely to be dissimilar in some ways[1].

A quasi-experiment, according to Abraham & MacDonald, as stated in Iowa State University[2], is a study design similar to exploratory inquiry in which an independent variable is controlled.

In this study, there were two groups of participants: the experimental and the controlled groups. The experimental ones utilized the literature circles strategy, while the controlled group remained with the traditional teaching methodology.

Instrumentation (Validation and Scoring of Instruments)

The researcher created a 30-item pretest and posttest anchored with table of specifications that were answered by both groups of participants. The researcher made the said test bound by the Most Essential Learning Competencies of English Grade 10 learners. Moreover, only the five most essential competencies of the third quarter have been targeted. The competencies were: 1) Power struggles of characters (Marxist); 2) Gender relationships of characters (feminist); 3) Relevance of the selection to the historical context during which it was produced (historical); 4) Personal significance of the selection to the reader (reader response); and 5) Personal significance of the selection to the reader (reader response). Furthermore, the pretest and posttest are both validated by three respective validators.

Above all, the instrument of this study underwent reliability testing using internal consistency method. The results of Kuder-Richardson 20 revealed that the 30-item test in English reached "Good Reliability" level ($\alpha=0.805$). This means that the tool can be utilized for actual data gathering.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1. The Pretest Mean Scores of the Grade 10 Control Group in English.

Test	Group	N	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
PRE TEST	Control	30	6.33	2.51	Very Unsatisfactory

Legend: *Very Satisfactory* 25-30; *Satisfactory* 19-24; *Moderately Satisfactory* 13-18; *Unsatisfactory* 7-12; *Very Unsatisfactory* 1-6

Table 1 reveals that the Grade 10 control group, consisting of 30 Learners, began with a pretest average score of 6.33, which falls into the "Very Unsatisfactory" category. This reflects a notably low level of English proficiency prior to any interventions. The standard deviation of 2.51 indicates a moderate range in the students' scores. These findings emphasize the necessity of targeted instructional strategies to enhance their performance. The findings underscore the need for research-backed practices include teaching academic vocabulary intensively during content-area classes, connecting new concepts to students' prior knowledge, and providing structured opportunities for students to discuss academic words. Small-group interventions focused on foundational reading skills and comprehension strategies have also been shown to be effective in improving linguistic outcomes for struggling learners[3].

Table 2. The Pretest Mean Scores of the Grade 10 Experimental Group in English.

Test	Group	N	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
PRE TEST	Experimental	30	7.20	1.77	Unsatisfactory

Legend: *Very Satisfactory* 25-30; *Satisfactory* 19-24; *Moderately Satisfactory* 13-18; *Unsatisfactory* 7-12; *Very Unsatisfactory* 1-6

The Grade 10 experimental group scored an average of 7.20 on the pretest, placing them in the "Unsatisfactory" category. This means their English proficiency was still weak, though slightly better than the control group's average score of 6.33. The lower standard deviation of 1.77 indicates that the experimental group's scores were more consistent compared to the control group. These findings provide a starting point to measure how effective the Literature Circle will be for the experimental group. Furthermore, for the experimental group, this could lead to more consistent participation and effort because as mentioned by Karatay[4]. Literature Circle promote a sense of ownership and responsibility among students. It indicates that students involved in literature circles take charge of their learning by actively preparing for discussions and holding each other accountable for their contributions. This positive peer pressure fosters motivation and engagement, which are critical for improving performance in language learning.

Table 3. Test of Significant Difference between the Pretest Mean Scores of the Grade 10 Control and Experimental Group in English.

Test	Statistic Welch's t	p-value	Decision	Conclusion	Cohen's d Effect Size	Interpretation
PRE TEST	-1.550	0.128	Failed to reject Ho	No significant difference	-0.399	Small Effect

Significant if $p < 0.05$; $df = 52.1$; $d = 0.01$ Very small, $d = 0.2$ Small, $d = 0.5$ Medium, $d = 0.8$ Large, $d = 1.2$ Very large, $d = 2.0$ Huge (Sawilowsky, 2009)

Independent samples t-test was run to test if there is a significant difference between the pretest mean scores of the control and experimental groups in English. Independent samples t-test showed no significant difference between the pretest mean scores of the control and experimental groups ($p > 0.05$).

Table 4. The Posttest Mean Scores of the Grade 10 Control Group in English.

Test	Group	N	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
POST TEST	Control	30	13.90	3.91	Moderately Satisfactory

Legend: *Very Satisfactory* 25-30; *Satisfactory* 19-24; *Moderately Satisfactory* 13-18; *Unsatisfactory* 7-12; *Very Unsatisfactory* 1-6

The Grade 10 control group showed improvement on the posttest with an average score of 13.90, which is classified as "Moderately Satisfactory." This marks progress from their pretest score of 6.33, indicating some gains in English proficiency. However, since the score still falls short of the "Satisfactory" level, it highlights the need for further instructional improvements to help students reach higher proficiency levels. Research has shown that English Language Learners (ELLs) with lower proficiency levels often employ fewer effective learning strategies compared to their more proficient peers. Studies suggest that teaching cognitive, social, and motivational strategies can significantly improve

language achievement. For example, learners with higher proficiency frequently use affective strategies, whereas less proficient learners rely on motivational strategies to overcome challenges in language acquisition[5].

Table 5. The Posttest Mean Scores of the Grade 10 Experimental Group in English

Test	Group	N	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
POST TEST	Experimental	30	20.20	4.65	Satisfactory

Legend: *Very Satisfactory* 25-30; *Satisfactory* 19-24; *Moderately Satisfactory* 13-18; *Unsatisfactory* 7-12; *Very Unsatisfactory* 1-6

The Grade 10 experimental group showed a remarkable improvement in their English proficiency, with a posttest average score of 20.20, categorized as "Satisfactory." This is a big leap from their pretest score of 7.20, which was labeled "Unsatisfactory." The noticeable progress suggests that the intervention used for this group was highly effective. These results demonstrate the success of the experimental approach or literature circles over traditional methods. Furthermore, the structured roles within literature circles—such as summarizer, questioner, or connector—offer scaffolding that supports students in navigating complex texts while fostering collaborative learning. This method has been found to stimulate classroom interaction and create an authentic environment for practicing language skills. These features are particularly beneficial for groups with lower proficiency levels, like the experimental group, as they provide guided pathways to improve their skills.

Table 6. Test of Significant Difference between the Posttest Mean Scores of the Grade 10 Control and Experimental Group in English.

Test	Statistic Welch's t	p-value	Decision	Conclusion	Cohen's d Effect Size	Interpretation
POST TEST	-5.680	<0.001	Reject Ho	With significant difference	-1.467	Very Large Effect

Significant if $p < 0.05$; $df = 56.3$; $d = 0.01$ Very small, $d = 0.2$ Small, $d = 0.5$ Medium, $d = 0.8$ Large, $d = 1.2$ Very large, $d = 2.0$ Huge Effect

Independent samples t-test was run to test if there is a significant difference between the posttest mean scores of the control and experimental groups in English. Independent samples t-test displayed a significant difference between the posttest mean scores of the control and experimental groups ($t = -5.680$, $p < 0.001$), with a very large effect size ($d = -1.467$) [6].

Problem #7: What are the pretest and posttest mean scores of the of the Grade 10 experimental group in English?

Table 7. The Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores of the of the Grade 10 Experimental Group in English.

Test	Group	N	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation
PRE TEST	Control	30	6.33	2.51	Very Unsatisfactory
	Experimental	30	7.20	1.77	Unsatisfactory

POSTTEST	Control	30	13.90	3.91	Moderately Satisfactory
	Experimental	30	20.20	4.65	Satisfactory

Legend: *Very Satisfactory* 25-30; *Satisfactory* 19-24; *Moderately Satisfactory* 13-18; *Unsatisfactory* 7-12; *Very Unsatisfactory* 1-6

Both the control and experimental groups demonstrated progress from pretest to posttest. The control group improved their average score from 6.33, categorized as "Very Unsatisfactory," to 13.90, which is considered "Moderately Satisfactory." Meanwhile, the experimental group showed a more notable improvement, increasing their average score from 7.20 ("Unsatisfactory") to 20.20 ("Satisfactory"). This significant difference suggests that the intervention used for the experimental group was much more effective in boosting English proficiency compared to the traditional methods applied to the control group.

Table 8. Test of Significant Difference between the Pretest and Posttest Mean Scores of the Control and Experimental Groups.

Group	Statistic Student's t	p-value	Mean difference	Decision	Conclusion	Cohen's d Effect Size	Interpretation
Control Group	-14.50	< .001	-7.57	Reject Ho	With significant difference	-2.64	Huge Effect
Experimental Group	-14.00	< .001	-13.0	Reject Ho	With significant difference	-2.55	Huge Effect

Significant if $p < 0.05$; $df = 29$; $d = 0.01$ Very small, $d = 0.2$ Small, $d = 0.5$ Medium, $d = 0.8$ Large, $d = 1.2$ Very large, $d = 2.0$ Huge Effect

Dependent samples t-test was run to test if there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest mean scores of the control and experimental groups in English. Dependent samples t-test showed significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores in English of control group ($t = -14.50$, $p < .001$), with a huge effect size ($d = -2.64$). It also showed significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores in English of experimental group ($t = -14.00$, $p < .001$), with a huge effect size ($d = -2.55$).

4. Conclusion

The study revealed that Grade 10 learners' reading comprehension skills remain below the expected proficiency level, aligning with national and international assessments like PISA. While some improvement was observed among low-achieving students, the overall reading performance showed no significant gains. A substantial percentage of students still struggle with basic comprehension, indicating the need for more effective reading interventions.

The implementation of Literature Circles as an instructional strategy was found to have a positive impact on student engagement and reading comprehension. Students who participated in collaborative reading discussions demonstrated better understanding, critical thinking, and motivation compared to those using traditional reading methods. The findings highlight that structured peer-led discussions can enhance comprehension skills by fostering deeper text analysis, active participation, and improved confidence in reading.

The findings suggest that while both traditional reading instruction and the Literature Circles Strategy contribute to reading comprehension improvement, the latter is significantly more effective. The collaborative and interactive nature of Literature Circles facilitated deeper engagement with texts, critical thinking, and overall reading comprehension development. Therefore, this strategy can be recommended as an effective intervention for enhancing students' reading skills, with further studies suggested for its long-term impact and scalability.

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