



**IMPROVING READING SKILLS THROUGH PEER ASSISTED LEARNING  
STRATEGIES OF SELECTED STUDENTS AT CITY OF BALANGA  
NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL  
(AN ACTION RESEARCH)**

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## **I. Situation**

In one of the classes handled by the researcher, he noticed his two students had difficulty reading a text being presented before the class. The first one stuttered and couldn't proceed any further without repeating a word for several times. The other was a slow reader as if attempting his first try in a reading class. In an attempt to help his students, he told these students to stay behind after class and spend time to practice how to read with the teacher. It was only to find out that it was not helping them because either the students were too nervous or too shy to practice and be corrected by the teacher. Also in an effort to really help them, the researcher tasked the president and the most able student of the class to monitor the reading progress of the students already mentioned. Reading texts were given to the class president, he listened to them read, made corrections after they read and made them read the text all over again until such time that they could read the story with so much ease.

Students grow comparatively on reading comprehension and fluency brought about by peer-mediated instructions in high school and special remedial classes based on the study made by Kazdan ( 2013) .Also according to Greenwood, Carta and Hall ( 1988 ), there is an identified improvement in self-esteem because of more cooperative, pleasant classroom atmosphere.

Peer-Assisted Learning Learning Strategies is a peer-tutoring program to improve proficiency in reading. Peer-Assisted learning Strategies was developed for use with students with diverse academic needs and has been used with English language learners.

This study used peer- mediated instruction, a process where students work in pairs to provide tutoring and monitoring reading fluency and comprehension.

The willingness and enthusiasm of students to read more and learn more every time somebody from their peers take responsibility to help, was witnessed by the researcher during Independent and Cooperative Learning ( ICL ). For the same reason this research was made during the fourth quarter of SY 2013-2014.

## **II. Statement of the Problem**

It is strange that every year the researcher meets students whose reading speeds are comparable to students in elementary grade. The following are the problems faced by the students in Grade 7:

1. Reading the alphabet with ease
2. Difficulty reading or decoding words in a paragraph correctly
3. Slow or word by word reading
4. Reading comprehension

One of the biggest problems the teacher had to deal with is to motivate students (particularly those with difficulties) to read. It is a fact that children are only given the time to read during school time. Circumstances at home like environment and culture do not boost constant interaction with books. Technology, internet, computer games and DVD have taken the place of books. Secondly most students would be too uncomfortable if not terrified to spend extra time with teacher for a remedial class. With the existence of The English Reading Club the researcher thought it best to engage the help of the officers and registered members of the organization to help tutor those with difficulties and help monitor the reading progress (speed) of those students who can read. Every year students are prompted to establish the English Club and to elect its officers but without a particular objective or vision of the organization it would be standing there in its futility. Equally significant is the recruitment of promising future teachers (the students) in the profession. More and more students are in need of reading remediation. They need a functional Reading Club and the help its officers can give.

### **III. Solution**

In order to remedy problems encountered by the researcher, a program called "Remedial Reading" was initiated. The following is the work plan of the said program:

The teacher enlisted registered members and officers of "The English Club" to help those who have special needs or assistance in reading. At the same time those who could read but had problems in comprehending were allowed to enroll where they will be monitored in terms of speed and comprehension\_ otherwise known as "timed reading".

#### **Principal Team Members**

- **English Club Officers**
- **English Club members**
- **English Club Adviser**

#### **Responsibilities**

- Club officers administered the distribution of texts which were read.
- Befriended, coached, tutored, corrected, student(s) along the way
- Monitored and signed reading progress via readers log

## Level of Task

### **A. Scoring Stage**

1. Text was presented by the officer to concerned student.
2. Reading speed was noted by administering officer.
3. Deficiencies and discrepancies were corrected.
4. Word recognition scoring were made as to: Highest independent, highest instructional, lowest frustrational level.
5. Re-reading was made as necessary

### **B. instructional Stage**

1. When word recognition has turned to instructional, timed reading was practiced by the student .
2. Questions were given after.
3. Officer monitored speed and comprehension of student.
4. Officer signed reading log/progress.

### **C. Reinforcement Stage**

1. Another set of texts were given
2. Speed reading and comprehension were noted.
3. Reader's log was noted by officer.

More and more students are in need of reading remediation. They need a functional Reading Club and the help its officers can give. The teacher believes that reading skills are consequences of constant reading and constant reading brings enjoyment.

## **IV. Plan of Action**

This study tried to remediate the difficulties in learning reading English, increase reading speed of those who can read (Beginning, Developing, Proficient and Advanced readers) and therefore effectively help selected students in learning reading English as a Second Language

### **A. Objectives**

1. To improve the reading skills of students with difficulties
2. To assess the effectiveness of peer-assisted learning in conducting remediation and special classes

### **B. Time Frame**

This study was conducted at the beginning of the fourth quarter of SY 2013-2014.

Nine out of twenty students remained and continued to enlist in the English Club Peer-Instruction Program. The researcher believes that only those with a good reading and learning attitude can be helped with their problems. Also anyone who wished to improve their reading skills was allowed to continue in the program. Out of these nine students, three had word recognition under the Lowest Frustration Level and therefore were given reading cards A (Beginning) as starting point. These students were monitored for two weeks in terms of speed and comprehension. Texts ranging from Beginning, developing and advanced level were administered by English club officers and monitored by the English club adviser.

## V. Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria were used to rate students:

Table 1. Phil IRI Test Criteria

Level	Word Recognition (WR)	Comprehension
Independent	97%-100%	80%=100%
Instructional	90%-96%	59%-79%
Frustration	89% below	58% below

Word Recognition were computed based on the following formula:

**Word Recognition (WR):**  $\frac{\text{no. of major miscue (M)}}{\text{no of words in the passage (N)}} \times 100 = \% \text{ of M}$

Example: (No of miscue) 2 / (no of words) 64  $\times 100 = 3\%$

$\% \text{ correct} = 100\% - 3\% = 97\%$

**Comprehension (C):**  $\frac{\text{no of correct answers}}{\text{no of questions}} \times 100 = \% \text{CR}$

Example:  $\% \text{CR} = \frac{5}{7} = 71\%$

Table 2. Overall Reading Ability

Word Recognition	Comprehension	Reading Level
Independent	Independent	Independent
Independent	Instructional	Instructional
Independent	Frustration	Frustration
Instructional	Independent	Independent
Instructional	Instructional	Instructional
Instructional	Frustration	Frustration
Frustration	Independent	Frustration
Frustration	Instructional	Frustration
Frustration	Frustration	Frustration
Non-Reader	Listening capacity	Non-Reader

## VI. Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Case study technique was used in the study. Case study technique has been used frequently in educational instructional situations to develop critical thinking. Yin, in *Case Study Research Design and Methods* (2003, p. 13), defines case study research as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident. This research method was very appropriate since it focused on participants who recognized the existence of shortcomings and who liked to adopt some initial stance in regard to the problem, formulated a plan, carried out intervention, evaluated the outcomes, and developed further strategies (Hopkins 1992).

Purposive sampling was employed in selecting the respondents of the study. Students with reading difficulties were taken from the list recommended by advisers. Also an announcement was made by the English club adviser to help those who would like to improve their reading skills. However only those who attended the remedial reading religiously were considered by the researcher

The teacher adopted the “Bader Reading and Language Assessment Inventory” during the study. The BRLAI is an assessment tool to measure students’ entry reading level and as a point against which to measure reading progress. According to Professor Jeewek as cited by Pearson (2012), this basic reading and language inventory tool is easy to use individually administered informal reading assessment which identifies students’ strength and weaknesses in reading. It’s an all in one package which includes all the tools needed for students to assess, interpret, and develop responsive reading instruction for administering, scoring, and interpreting the BRI. Using this instrument, the researcher got flexible effective approach carrying out every aspect of effective reading and learning assessment from a quick screening to comprehensive reading assessment.

The following results are as presented below:

Name of student:

### A. Student 1

#### 1. Reading Card A/G6RC8Level6 (Beginning)

Score	3/6
Speed	45 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	30
Word recognition	86.30% Frustration Level
Comprehension	58% Frustration Level
Reading Level	Frustration Level

2. Reading Card A / G6RC8Level6 (Beginning)

Score	5/6
Speed	76 word per minute
Words read incorrectly	10
Word recognition	95.43 Instructional
Comprehension	83.33% Independent
Reading Level	Independent

3. Reading Card B / G7H1 ( Developing )

Score	5/12
Speed	50 word per minute
Words read incorrectly	6
Word recognition	97.3% Independent
Comprehension	41.67% Frustration
Reading Level	Frustration

4. Reading Card B / G7H1 ( Developing )

Score	8/12
Speed	66.7 word per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	66.67% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

5. Reading Card C /8GAL1 ( Advanced )

Score	4/8
Speed	55 word per minute
Words read incorrectly	15
Word recognition	96.25% Instructional
Comprehension	33.33% Frustration
Reading Level	Frustration

**B. Student 2**

1. Reading Card A/ G6RC8Level6 ( Beginning)

Score	2/6
Speed	50 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	20
Word recognition	83% Frustration Level
Comprehension	33.33% Frustration Level
Reading Level	Frustration level

2. Reading Card A/ G6RC8Level6 ( Beginning)

Score	4/6
Speed	78words per minute
Words read incorrectly	15
Word recognition	88.58 %Instructional
Comprehension	66.67% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

3. Reading Card B /G7H1 ( Developing)

Score	6/12
Speed	67 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	3
Word recognition	98.5% Independent
Comprehension	50% Frustration
Reading Level	Frustration

4. Reading Card B /G7H1 ( Developing)

Score	9/12
Speed	80 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	75% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

5. Reading Card C/ 8G AL1 ( Advanced)

Score	6/8
Speed	88.89words per minute
Words read incorrectly	3
Word recognition	99.25% Independent
Comprehension	75% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

**C. Student 3**

1. Reading Card A/G6RC8Level6 ( Beginning)

Score	2/6
Speed	55 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	13
Word recognition	94.06 % Instructional
Comprehension	33.33% Frustration
Reading Level	Frustration



2. Reading Card A/G6RC8Level6 ( Beginning)

Score	5/6
Speed	73 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	13
Word recognition	93.15% Instructional
Comprehension	83.33% Independent
Reading Level	Independent

3. Reading Card B /G7H1 ( Developing )

Score	8/12
Speed	67 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	14
Word recognition	93% Instructional
Comprehension	66.67 Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

4. Reading Card B /G7H1 ( Developing )

Score	9/12
Speed	67 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	10
Word recognition	95 Instructional
Comprehension	75% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

5. Reading Card C/ 8G AL1 ( Advanced)

Score	4/8
Speed	100 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	13
Word recognition	96.75 Instructional
Comprehension	50% Frustration
Reading Level	Frustration

**D. Student 4**

1. Reading card A/G6RC1 ( Beginning)

Score	5/8
Speed	78 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100%
Comprehension	62.5% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

2. Reading card A/G6RC1 ( Beginning)

Score	7/8
Speed	97.5 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	87.5% Independent
Reading Level	Independent

3. Reading Card B /G7H1 ( Developing)

Score	11/12
Speed	66.67%
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	91.67% Independent
Reading Level	Independent

Score	12/12
Speed	100 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	100% Independent
Reading Level	Independent

4. Reading Card C/ 8G AL1 ( Advanced)

Score	2/5
Speed	80 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	40% frustration
Reading Level	Frustration

5. Reading Card C/ 8G A1L1 ( Advanced)

Score	4/6
Speed	81.76 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	66.67% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

6. Reading Card C/ 8G A1L1 ( Advanced)

Score	5/6
Speed	92.6 word per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	83.33% independent
Reading Level	Independent

7. Reading Card D/ 9GAL1 ( Advanced)

Score	2/10
Speed	105 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	20% Frustration
Reading Level	Frustration

8. Reading Card D/ 9GAL1 ( Advanced )

Score	6/10
Speed	105 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	60% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

**E. Student 5**

1. Reading Card A/ G5RC5Level5 ( Beginning)

Score	3/4
Speed	44 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	75% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

2. Reading Card A/ G5RC7 level 5 ( Beginning)

Score	5/7
Speed	59.5 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	71.42 Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

3. Reading Card B/ G7RC6Level7 ( Developing)

Score	5/7
Speed	71 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	71.42% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

4. Reading Card D/ 9GAL2 ( Advanced)

Score	2/7
Speed	177 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	28.57% Frustration
Reading Level	Frustration

5. Reading Card D/ 9Gal1 ( Advanced)

Score	7/11
Speed	175 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	63.63% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

**F. Student 6**

1. Reading Card C/ 8RC5 ( Advanced)

Score	3/5
Speed	72 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	60% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

2. Reading Card C/ 8GA1L1 ( Advanced)

Score	5/8
Speed	79.43 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	62.5% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

3. Reading Card D/ 9RC4 ( Advanced )

Score	5/6
Speed	147 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	I ndependent
Comprehension	83.335 I ndependent
Reading Level	I ndependent

4. Reading Card D/ 9GAL2 ( Advanced)

Score	4/8
Speed	118 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% I ndependent
Comprehension	50% frustration
Reading Level	Frustration

5. Reading Card D/ 9RC5 ( Advanced)

Score	4/5
Speed	94 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% I ndependent
Comprehension	80% I ndependent
Reading Level	I ndependent

**G. Student 7**

1. Reading Card A/ 5Rc1Level5 ( Beginning)

Score	8/9
Speed	100 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% I ndependent
Comprehension	88.9% I ndependent
Reading Level	I ndependent

2. Reading Card B/ G7Rc1Level7 ( Developing)

Score	3/6
Speed	168.7 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% I ndependent
Comprehension	50% Frustration
Reading Level	Frustration

3. Reading Card B/ G7RC3Level7 ( Developing)

Score	6/7
Speed	121 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	85.7% Independent
Reading Level	Independent

4. Reading Card B/ G7RC6Level7 ( Developing)

Score	5/7
Speed	71 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	71.4% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

5. Reading Card B/ G7Rc1Level7 ( Developing)

Score	6/10
Speed	170 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	60% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

**H. Student 8**

1. Reading Card C/ 8GA1L1 ( Advanced)

Score	4/6
Speed	92 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	66.67% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

2. Reading Card C/ 8GA1L1 ( Advanced)

Score	6/6
Speed	139 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	100% Independent
Reading Level	Independent

3. Reading Card D/ 9GAL2 ( Advanced)

Score	2/7
Speed	118 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	28.57% Frustration
Reading Level	Frustration

4. Reading Card D/ 9GAL2 ( Advanced)

Score	5/7
Speed	136 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	71.42 Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

5. Reading Card D/ 9GAL1 ( Advanced)

Score	5/11
Speed	154.7 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	45.45% Frustration
Reading Level	Frustration

**I. Student 9**

1. Reading Card B/ G7RC2Level7 ( Developing)

Score	6/7
Speed	87 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	85.71% Independent
Reading Level	Independent

2. Reading Card B/ G7RC6Level7 ( Developing)

Score	5/7
Speed	73.5 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	71.42 Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

3. Reading Card B/ G7RC4Level7 ( Developing)

Score	3/4
Speed	130 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	75% Instructional
Reading Level	Instructional

4. Reading Card C/ 8GA1L1 ( Advanced)

Score	5/6
Speed	92.6 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100% Independent
Comprehension	83.33% Independent
Reading Level	Independent

5. Reading Card C/ 8GAL1 ( Advanced)

Score	6/6
Speed	117 words per minute
Words read incorrectly	0
Word recognition	100%
Comprehension	100% Independent
Reading Level	Independent

The series of reading test results showed that the Peer-Assisted Learning through The English Club is effective. Some students with notable word recognition under frustration Level had shifted towards Instructional and Independent. The same is true with Comprehension and Reading level and Reading speed which were somewhat increased. The rest of the students whose word



recognition were already under Independent Level had increased speed and understanding aside from the fact that they used advanced reading cards. As a whole the results showed that it helped improved the reading skills of students at COBNHS

( Student 1\_ who started using cards for beginners ended up using advanced level cards; had increased his Reading level from frustration to Instructional Reading level; frustrational word recognition to Independent level.)

(Student 2\_ who started using cards at beginning level ended up taking advanced cards; with a speed of 56 word per minute and progressed to 80 words per minute; word recognition at frustration level to An Independent level; Reading level from frustration to Instructional)

(Student 3 \_ who initially used beginning level cards has moved to developing level cards; from 55 word per minute to 67 word per minute at the end;Reading level from frustration to Instructional)

( Student 4\_ at her beginning level had advanced and ;from beginning speed at 78 word per minute and ended up with 105 word per minute)

( Student 5\_ who began using beginning level cards ended up using advanced level cards; from 59.5 words per minute to 175 words per minute)

(Student 6\_ who was using advanced level cards had progressed from 72 words per minute to 94 words per minute; reading level at instructional towards achieving independent level)

(Student 7\_who began using cards at beginning level had progressed to using developing cards; from 100 words per minute to 170 words per minute)

(Student 8\_who used advanced level cards ,hadprogressed from 92 words per minute towards 157.5 words per minute.)

( Student 9\_ at developing level cards shifted to advanced level cards;73.5 words per minute to 117 words per minute; and had maintained an independent Reading level.)

## **VII. Conclusions**

The results can be applied to remediate reading difficulties of willing students at COBNHS. Based on the study it can also help improve reading speed and reading level of students at City of Balanga National High school. Since outcome demonstrated that Peer-Assisted Learning is effective, we can enlist the help of the English Club and its members in helping schoolmates with special needs and promote good reading habits among peers.

## **VIII. Reflections**

It was several years ago that the researcher was burdened to do something for students who couldn't even read the alphabet with ease. As stated earlier in the study it recurs every year some Grade 7 students compare to students in elementary in terms of speed and comprehension. The existence of the English Club gave the Researcher an idea to use its potential to assist teachers in administering special remedial sessions to students with special needs.

It was also a very rewarding task as a whole since students who stuttered and read very slowly were able to progress remarkably. It is however noteworthy that these students who showed improvements had very noticeable good attitude when it comes to attending remedial reading classes.

## **Recommendations**

The findings of the of this study would serve as the basis for sensitizing the people in the school and community about the importance of reading and recommend to the following, to wit,

**The Teachers.** This study recommends that Peer-Assisted Learning should be addressed to help remedy problems faced by students in learning the English Language.

**Parents.** Not only is peer assisted Learning should be recommended but Parents-Assisted Learning should be taken into consideration. Parents should cooperate and coordinate with teachers and administrators in helping and enlightening students to read at home.

**The School Administrators.** The outcome will provide school administrators reasons to address more successfully reading difficulties particularly that of Grade 7 students at COBNHS. It is an appeal that during the review of curriculum a separate subject for reading and writing be considered.

**Future Researchers.** It is recommended that related information be used by other researchers in conducting similar studies.