STORY GRAMMAR STRATEGY (SGS): ITS IMPACT ON THE DEVELOPMENT TO COMPREHENSION SKILLS AMONG SELECTED SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Reading comprehension is a crucial skill for academic success and cognitive growth, particularly in analyzing complex literary texts. This study investigated the impact of the Story Grammar Strategy (SGS) on the development of comprehension skills among selected senior high school students. SGS, grounded in cognitive learning theory, enhances comprehension by teaching students to identify and organize narrative elements such as characters, setting, plot, and resolution. Using a quasi-experimental design, the study compared the comprehension outcomes of two groups of senior high school students: an experimental group exposed to SGS and a control group taught using traditional methods. The research was conducted at Jorge M. Padilla National High School in Nueva Ecija, Philippines, involving 60 senior high school students from the Technical-Vocational-Livelihood (TVL) and General Academic Strand (GAS) tracks. A 30-item comprehension test, a Story Grammar Graphic Organizer, and the literary text Footnote to Youth by Jose Garcia Villa were utilized as data collection tools. Results showed a significant improvement in the comprehension skills of the experimental group, with a T-statistic of -7.409 and a P-value of 3.653e-08 ($p < 0.05$), while the control group showed no significant change, with a T-statistic of 0.300 and a P-value of 0.766 ($p > 0.05$). These findings underscore the effectiveness of SGS in enhancing comprehension and higher-order thinking skills, addressing challenges faced by students in understanding complex texts. This study contributes to the growing body of evidence supporting SGS's integration into educational practices, particularly in the Philippine context where English is a second language. Further research is recommended to explore its long-term effects and applicability across diverse genres and student populations.

Keywords: Story Grammar Strategy (SGS), Reading Comprehension, Senior High School, Philippines.

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is essential for both academic achievement and personal development, especially when it comes to understanding literary texts that often require advanced thinking skills. Senior high school students frequently struggle with analyzing complex narratives, as traditional teaching methods may not sufficiently cater to individual learning differences. The Story Grammar Strategy (SGS), grounded in cognitive learning theory, focuses on organizing information based on story elements such as characters, setting, plot, and resolution. This approach aids in better understanding and retention of textual content.

The Story Grammar Strategy is an instructional method designed to enhance students' reading comprehension by teaching them to recognize and utilize the structure of narratives. This strategy has proven effective in various educational settings, particularly in improving the comprehension skills of students learning English as a second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL) (Herawati, 2018; Mukherjee, 2022). In the context of the Philippines, where English is a second language for many students, the implementation of SGS can be particularly beneficial.

The Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines has recognized the importance of developing reading comprehension skills among students. DepEd Order No. 70, s. 2012, emphasizes the need for effective reading programs to improve literacy rates and academic performance among Filipino students (Department of Education, 2012). This directive supports the integration of strategies like SGS in the curriculum to enhance students' comprehension abilities. Furthermore, DepEd Memorandum No. 173, s. 2019, which outlines the guidelines for the National Reading Month and the nationwide implementation of reading programs aimed at improving literacy and comprehension skills among students (Department of Education, 2019). This

memorandum underscores the government's commitment to fostering a culture of reading and ensuring that students develop the necessary skills to succeed academically.

Research has shown that the use of SGS can significantly improve students' ability to understand and retain information from texts. For instance, a study by Herawati (2018) found that Indonesian students who were taught using SGS showed marked improvements in their reading comprehension scores. Similarly, Mukherjee (2022) demonstrated that SGS, combined with story mapping, helped ESL students in India better understand and recall narrative texts.

In the Philippines, the application of SGS can address the challenges faced by senior high school students in comprehending complex texts. By teaching students to identify key elements of a story—such as setting, characters, plot, conflict, and resolution—SGS helps them to organize and interpret information more effectively (Yousef, 2019). This structured approach not only aids in comprehension but also enhances students' critical thinking and analytical skills. While existing studies highlight the effectiveness of SGS in elementary and middle school contexts, its impact on senior high school students, particularly in the Philippine setting, remains underexplored. This study aims to address this gap by investigating the effectiveness of the Story Grammar Strategy in enhancing the comprehension of literary texts among senior high school learners.

II. METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for studying the impact of the Story Grammar Strategy (SGS) on the development of comprehension skills among selected senior high school students employs a quantitative approach. This involves the use of structured assessments and statistical analysis to measure changes in comprehension skills. Pre-tests and post-tests are administered to gather numerical data, which is then analyzed using statistical methods to determine the effectiveness of SGS in enhancing students' comprehension abilities. This approach ensures objective measurement and analysis of the data collected.

1. Research Design

Due to the nature and objectives of the study, the researchers employed a quasi-experimental research design, specifically the pretest-posttest design, to examine the impact of the Story Grammar Strategy on the development of comprehension skills among selected Senior High School students. According to Creswell (2008), as cited in Lopez and Dela Cruz (2022), the pretest-posttest design can be applied in quasi-experimental research, where variables are measured before and after a treatment is implemented.

A quasi-experimental research design is particularly useful for testing causal hypotheses in situations where random assignment of individuals or groups to treatment and control conditions is not feasible. While quasi-experiments share similarities with randomized controlled trials, they face challenges in maintaining internal validity due to the absence of randomization, which can introduce potential threats to validity (Maciejewski, 2020).

In this design, the independent variable has already occurred, and the researchers examine its effects after its occurrence. The researchers do not manipulate variables but observe categories of subjects. Instead of randomization, matching is employed to ensure comparability between groups (Singh, 2021).

2. Research Locale

The study was carried out in the Division of Nueva Ecija, particularly at Jorge M. Padilla National High School (JMPNHS) in the district of Laur. The school was chosen by the researchers because of its accessibility and familiarity. The Jorge M. Padilla National High School is located in Sagana, Laur, Nueva Ecija, Philippines.

3. Research Participants

The participants in this quasi-experimental study were selected from senior high school students enrolled in two distinct senior high school strands: Technical Vocational and Livelihood (TVL) and General Academic Strand (GAS). Each group comprised 30 students, making a total of 60 participants. These students were chosen to form the experimental group, which was subjected to the Story Grammar Strategy (SGS) intervention. The selection criteria ensured a balanced representation of both strands to evaluate the impact of SGS on their comprehension skills effectively. The paired-group test design facilitated a comparative analysis of the pre- and post-intervention performance within these groups.

4. Research Instrument

This study used a 30-item comprehension test, a Story Grammar Graphic Organizer, and the literary text Footnote to Youth by Jose Garcia Villa as data-gathering instruments. The validated test, developed by the researchers, was administered as both a pretest and posttest to assess comprehension skills before and after the intervention. The Story Grammar Graphic Organizer was used to guide the experimental group in analyzing narrative elements, such as the setting, characters, plot, and resolution, and to enhance their understanding of sentence structure within the context of the story. The short story Footnote to Youth served as the reading material for both groups, chosen for its rich narrative structure and thematic relevance, supporting the study's objective of determining the impact of the Story Grammar Strategy on the development of reading comprehension skills among selected Senior High School students.

5. Data Gathering Procedure

The mode of data collection employed was the pre-test and post-test method to determine the impact of the Story Grammar Strategy on the development of comprehension skills among selected Senior High School students. This approach aimed to evaluate how the strategy influenced students' ability to understand and analyze text.

In gathering the data, the researchers carried out the following procedure:

1. The researchers prepared request letters addressed to the School Principal of the selected school to seek permission to conduct the study. The researcher waited for the School Principal's approval before proceeding with the study.

2. The researchers conducted an orientation and explained the study's purpose, objectives, and procedures to the students. Participation was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. Respondents were assured that their information would remain confidential and be used solely for research purposes.

3. A pre-test was administered to both the control group and the experimental group to evaluate their initial comprehension skills. The control group was then taught Footnote to Youth using the traditional teaching method, while the experimental group was instructed using the Story Grammar Strategy.

After the instructional period, a post-test was given to both groups. The results of the pre-tests and post-tests were compared to assess the impact of the Story Grammar Strategy on the development of students' comprehension skills.

III.   ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Graduate Studies Department of La Consolacion University Philippines (LCUP) recently implemented specific ethical considerations to ensure compliance with ethical requirements, safeguarding the interests of research participants.

To align with these ethical guidelines, the researchers obtained institutional clearances and permissions from the School Principal of the public high school involved. The following ethical considerations were observed in this research undertaking:

1. The respondents were informed that their identities would remain completely anonymous and would not be recorded in any form. Additionally, they were assured that their names would not appear in the completed action research.

2. A formal letter was sent to the School Principal of the identified school to seek permission to conduct the study.

3. All research data were kept confidential throughout the course of the study.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Experimental Group Pretest and Posttest Scores

	Respondents																		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Pretest	7	5	8	6	7	7	5	9	6	6	6	8	4	9	6	6	4	6	6
Posttest	14	8	8	17	11	16	19	19	16	16	13	10	14	18	11	20	17	18	12

Respondents										
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
4	6	6	8	6	5	5	15	16	14	11
18	23	18	18	8	7	21	14	14	12	12

The results in Table 1 show a significant improvement in the comprehension skills of the experimental group after the implementation of the Story Grammar Strategy (SGS). The mean difference between the pretest and posttest scores is 7.5, indicating a substantial enhancement in comprehension skills.

The significant improvement in the experimental group's comprehension skills suggests that SGS is an effective instructional strategy. This finding aligns with previous research. For instance, Alves et al. (2015) found that explicit instruction in story grammar significantly improved reading comprehension among students with learning disabilities

Similarly, Boulineau et al. (2015) demonstrated that story-mapping, a component of SGS, effectively enhanced the comprehension of story-grammar elements among elementary students with learning disabilities. These studies support the effectiveness of SGS in enhancing reading comprehension, as observed in the experimental group.

Table 2. Control Group Pretest and Posttest Scores

	Respondents																		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
Pretest	19	18	12	18	18	15	8	15	18	16	14	16	11	7	19	16	15	8	17
Posttest	20	20	13	17	19	24	8	20	20	10	13	17	15	13	18	15	16	5	19

Respondents										
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
17	10	19	17	17	18	18	13	10	14	16
13	17	18	20	15	16	16	10	15	15	21

The results in Table 2 show no significant improvement in the comprehension skills of the control group. The mean difference between the pretest and posttest scores is -0.533, indicating no substantial change in comprehension skills.

The lack of statistically significant improvement in the control group mirrors the findings of prior research. Studies by Taboada Barber et al. (2017) indicated that traditional instructional techniques often fail to produce comparable gains in comprehension, especially when not supplemented with explicit strategies like SGS. This suggests that traditional methods may not be sufficient to enhance comprehension skills effectively, highlighting the need for innovative strategies such as SGS.

Table 3. T-statistic and P-value for both Experimental and Control Groups

Group	T-Statistic	P-Value
Experimental	-7.409011	3.653326e-08
Control	0.300227	7.661454e-01

The experimental group's T-statistic of -7.409 and a P-value of 3.653e-08 demonstrate a significant enhancement in comprehension skills (p-value < 0.05). Conversely, the control group's T-statistic of 0.300 and a P-value of 0.766 show no significant improvement in comprehension skills (p-value > 0.05).

This indicates that the Story Grammar Strategy (SGS) had a notable positive effect on the comprehension skills of the experimental group, whereas the control group did not exhibit a statistically significant improvement.

The findings of this study align with previous literature demonstrating the effectiveness of the Story Grammar Strategy (SGS) in enhancing reading comprehension. For instance, Wong et al. (2016) highlighted that strategies focused on narrative structure, such as SGS, significantly improve learners' ability to analyze and understand texts. Similarly, the study by Alkhawaldeh and Khabour (2021) affirmed that employing structured approaches in teaching reading fosters measurable improvements in comprehension skills among students. Moreover, in comparison to unstructured instructional methods, these strategies are consistently linked to better outcomes (Lee & Park, 2019).

On the other hand, the lack of statistically significant improvement in the control group mirrors the findings of prior research. Studies by Taboada Barber et al. (2017) indicated that traditional instructional techniques often fail to produce comparable gains in comprehension, especially when not supplemented with explicit strategies like SGS. Therefore, the experimental group's significant enhancement, evidenced by a T-statistic of -7.409 and a P-value of 3.653e-08, underscores the potential of SGS in addressing gaps in comprehension skills.

V.   CONCLUSION

The findings of this study demonstrate the effectiveness of the Story Grammar Strategy (SGS) as a pedagogical approach for enhancing the reading comprehension skills of senior high school students. The significant improvement observed in the experimental group's comprehension scores, as evidenced by a T-statistic of -7.409 and a P-value of 3.653e-08 (p < 0.05), highlights the impact of SGS as an instructional method. In contrast, the control group, which utilized traditional teaching methods, did not exhibit a statistically significant improvement, as reflected by a T-statistic of 0.300 and a P-value of 0.766 (p > 0.05).

The lack of significant improvement in the control group can be attributed to the limitations of traditional instructional methods. Traditional approaches tend to focus on surface-level comprehension, such as vocabulary recall or basic text interpretation, rather than providing students with structured tools to analyze narrative elements like characters, plot, and conflict. This unstructured approach often fails to engage learners in deeper, meaningful interactions with the text, resulting in minimal gains in comprehension.

These results highlight the capacity of SGS to foster a deeper understanding of narrative structures by guiding students in identifying key elements such as characters, setting, plot, conflict, and resolution. Furthermore, the strategy's structured approach appears to facilitate the development of higher-order thinking skills, such as critical analysis and synthesis, which are essential for academic success. In the Philippine educational context, where English functions as a second language, the adoption of SGS aligns with the Department of Education's directives to enhance literacy and reading comprehension skills among learners. The strategy provides a practical and evidence-based solution to the challenges faced by Filipino students in engaging with complex

textual content. Given the results of this study, future research should explore the long-term effects of SGS on reading comprehension and its applicability across different literary genres and student populations. Additionally, investigations into the integration of SGS with other instructional methodologies could provide valuable insights into optimizing reading comprehension strategies in diverse educational settings.

VI.   REFERENCES

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