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# READING INVENTORY: BASIS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF SCHOLASTIC READING PROGRAMS IMPLEMENTED IN UNIVERSITY OF BATANGAS LIPA

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## Abstract

This study assessed the level of proficiency of teachers and Junior High School students who were under the Scholastic Reading Programs at the University of Batangas Lipa City for the AY 2017-2018. It also identified the efficacy of execution and the significant difference, if any, in how the teachers and students view teaching efficacy. These were used as a basis in the discussion of the proposed activities related to Assessment and Enrichment Program (AEP), Scholastic Reading Counts (SRC), and Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI), all under the Scholastic Reading Program. The researchers gathered the needed information by surveying 50 students selected through random sampling and by organizing a focus group discussion with 15 select students. The findings of the research include the gap in proficiency between the teachers, or program implementers and the students, through the Scholastic Reading Programs.  While the teachers peaked at the expected Lexile of more than 1500, the students' average was only equivalent to a fifth grader's. As per the read aloud and explicit skills instruction that is part of AEP, both the program implementers and the students agreed that focus must be given to prior knowledge, motivation, a deeper discussion that go beyond the prescribed lesson plans, and the application in real-life situations. The students are encouraged to participate in reading activities because of factors such as the teacher and their perception that the reading programs will provide a better quality of education. However, another factor, the mismatch of books to the reading ability and interest of the students, is detrimental in sustaining the students' interest in reading. To address these concerns, the researchers proposed activities related to the implementation of the reading programs. These activities may be beneficial to the institution in creating a more reader-oriented community.

*Keywords*: Education, reading, reading proficiency, reading comprehension, teaching efficacy, scholastic

## Introduction

To achieve high competency in communication, students must enhance the four macro skills of English. These are listening and speaking, along with reading and writing. These two pairs of skills are simultaneously working together in actual life scenarios; thus, posing the need to master each. To be more specific, in developing one's reading competencies students must be exposed to reading materials that are gradually challenging (Sadiku, 2015). The importance of the usage of challenging reading materials is further elaborated by Morrison (2017). She said that challenging reading, especially in the case of classic literature, did not just give reward upon its completion, but the reward lies in the knowledge and understanding that are only made open to readers who are prepared to take the challenge.

14ᵗʰ International Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation &
3ʳᵈ International Conference on Open Learning and Education Technologies
*20ᵗʰ & 21ˢᵗ July, 2019*

45

García-Madruga, Gómez-Veiga, and Vila (2016) defined reading comprehension as a complex and highly demanding cognitive task that involves the simultaneous process of extracting and constructing meaning. As a basic requirement, comprehension is necessary to predict improvement in reading (Dowker, A., 2017). Several interventions may be applied to achieve improvement. There is a need for fidelity of intervention implementation such as adherence to lesson plan structures, lesson duration, and quality of instruction (Ritchey, K. D., Palombo, K., Silverman, R. D., &Speece, D. L. 2017).

Among the subjects in the K-12 Enhanced Basic Education curriculum prescribed by the Department of Education, the English and Filipino subjects carry the challenge of fully integrating reading in its subject matter and classroom instruction, as evident in the May 2016 K-12 Curriculum Guides for these subjects which include reading comprehension as part of its nine learning competencies.

In the University of Batangas, additional reading programs are facilitated, in the form of Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) and the duo of Assessment and Enrichment Program (AEP) and Scholastic Reading Counts (SRC), all under the umbrella of the educational arm of Scholastic, Inc. AEP is an explicit skills instruction conducted once a week. On the other hand, SRI is "a criterion-referenced test intended to measure reading comprehension" through the use of a Lexile framework, which "places both readers and text on a common scale" (Scholastic Inc., n.d.). What it does is to identify the reading ability of a reader and the actual readability of a given text. Both the program implementers (teachers) and the students are advised to take SRI. A score of 1,500 is expected from teachers while a score within the range of 850-1250 is expected from students depending on their grade level. However, despite these reading programs implemented on top of the usual language subjects, still, students are behind in their skills in reading.

Upon the identification of each student's Lexile score, the students will then be matched to books that are appropriate to their reading level, and further development of their reading comprehension is done through AEP, which is integrated into the classroom instruction through a Scholastic-supplied lesson plan and materials executed by the teacher. AEP will begin with a Read Aloud activity. The program implementer must first read a book from the Scholastic Reading Center in the library before proceeding to the Explicit Skills Instruction. On this part, the implementer will model the assigned reading skill through think aloud, conduct a guided practice, before proceeding to the discussion of the summary.

This study would cover the perceptions of the program implementers and the students on the efficacy of the former in implementing AEP. More so, it is only limited to the Junior High School students of UBLC as they are the only ones enrolled in both SRI and AEP in the Lipa City campus.

As AEP demands an explicit teaching strategy, it is imperative to evaluate the reading proficiency and teaching efficacy. The objectives of this study are to assess the level of proficiency of the program implementers and the students who were under the program for the academic year 2017-2018. Likewise, to identify the efficacy of execution and the significant difference, if any, in how the students and teachers view efficacy, as these may help in identifying the gap between the program implementers and the students. Furthermore, through this study, the researchers would like to propose activities targeting the better implementation of Scholastic's reading programs.

**Review of Related Literature**

Motivating the students to read has consistently been challenging as motivation is affected by how children perceive the significance and value of regular recreational

14th International Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation &
3rd International Conference on Open Learning and Education Technologies
20th & 21st July, 2019

46

reading. Reading engagement of the children in school is advantageous in the promotion of a continued literacy engagement, wherein acquisition of literacy skills spans across life. Thus, regular reading must be given due importance, in as much as independent skills acquisition (Merga, M. K. & Roni, S. M., 2018). These literary skills are now considered to be essentials in different aspects of life, especially now that the digital age changed the norms (Lange & von Merveldt, 2017).

According to Shelly (2015), there are two types of reading, extensive and intensive reading. Extensive reading focuses on the quantity of the books read that are within the reading ability of the readers. On the other hand, intensive reading is considered to be a careful reading of short yet more in-depth texts. Between the two, Shelly concluded that extensive reading leads to an improved learning process for users of English as a secondary language. Specifically, the ability to read, acquisition of vocabulary, and usage of grammar are improved by this practice.

In terms of metacognition, Ahmadi, Ismail, and Adbullah (2013) discussed that metacognition reading strategy positively affects the learning process of English, specifically as a second language. Furthermore, their study claimed that reading comprehension plays a central role in educational success. Thus, the study recommended that educational institutions must promote the development of metacognitive reading strategies of the students. To make this happen, explicit skills instruction is needed which is further supplemented by practice. Only then could students be expected to be proficient readers.

Another strategy to boost readership among students is focusing on their reading self-concept, as this reciprocates reading achievement (Retelsdorf, J., Köller, O., & Möller, J., 2014). The researchers then recommended that reading skills must be nurtured by focusing on the enhancement of the skills themselves and the readers' self-concept. However, Stutz, Schaffner, and Schiefelle (2016) reminded that while involvement significantly contributes to enhanced reading comprehension, the motivation that is competition-oriented is highly discouraged.

Speaking more about motivation, Smith, Smith, Gilmore, and Jameson (2012) mentioned that from 8 to 12 years old, the reading ability of students is increasing, but their self-perceived efficacy in reading and enjoyment are decreasing.

Another challenge that students face is their inability to comprehend what they are reading because of the mismatch of the reading comprehension level and the quality of text provided. Shelly (2015) concluded in her study in Bangladesh that students read better when the text, be it fiction or nonfiction, is at par with their reading ability. Also, the study noted that aside from the appropriateness of the text, the sustained interest of the students must also be considered to make reading more comfortable.

In terms of integrating technology, Chen, Cheng, Chang, Zheng, and Huang (2014) noted that computer-based readers, or those who use tablets, have a lower level of literal or shallow comprehension but have a higher level of inferential or deep comprehension as compared to the paper group, or those who use printed texts. Furthermore, Cheng, Zheng, Li, and Chen (2014) recommended that with the current transition from reading in print to online, ICT familiarity may be considered to be a significant factor in enhancing reading comprehension. This recommendation is based on their findings that readers who use computers perform better in answering the multiple choice questions and in summarizing the given texts employed by the researchers as compared to those who are considered to be under the paper and the tablet groups.

Rimensberger (2014) concluded in his study of 171 student teachers from Durban, South Africa that the optimistic attitude of the student teachers towards reading and their substantial knowledge on the significance of this skill are not directly related with the

14th International Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation &
3rd International Conference on Open Learning and Education Technologies
20th & 21st July, 2019

47

practice of reading for pleasure and of investing time on this activity. While this conclusion may be considered to be a good start, the inability to address this at the student teachers' level may lead to a mixed thought that "reading is important, but not measurable."

Shelly (2015) recommended that extensive reading must be implemented as early as the beginning levels. Also, teachers should be trained in the implementation of extensive reading programs in the library. Speaking of, libraries must have a variety of reading materials that meet the interest and ability of the student.

On the other hand, Meyer and Ray (2017) also recommend that "direct instruction, modeling, scaffolding, elaborated feedback, and adaptation of instruction to student performance" are facets that must be touched in teaching the students in strategically using their knowledge about a given text.

Glenber (2017) proposed another that involves physical and imagined manipulation. Physical manipulation refers to using toys as part of the storytelling process. Imagined manipulation comes after the physical, wherein readers will merely imagine manipulating the toys. The study concluded that both types of manipulation enhance comprehension and memory.

## Methodology

The researchers used the descriptive method. Quantitative data were collected through survey, and qualitative data were from focus group discussions. The researchers used the generated data from the participating schools' post-tests under the Scholastic Reading Inventory for the AY 2017-2018 to assess the level of proficiency of the two program implementers and 50 select students. For the level of efficacy, a survey based on the Teacher Observation Form was administered to program implementers and students from UBLC. The adapted survey had two versions; one that focused on the perceived self-efficacy of the program implementers in executing AEP and another that focused on the perceived efficacy of the program implementers from the perspective of the students.

To address the gap between the teacher and the students' level of proficiency and efficacy, a focus group discussion with 15 students who participated in the survey was conducted in the solicitation of the information needed.

The students involved in this study, both in answering the survey and in participating in the focus group discussion, voluntarily agreed to be respondents. All of the data collected were treated with the utmost confidentiality and names were all withheld in the research. The questionnaire used and the recorded audio were all disposed of immediately after gathering the pertinent data needed in the study.

The statistical tools used in this research were mean to measure the average Lexile scores of the program implementers and students, and their assessment on the efficacy of the program implementers in the conduct of the Assessment and Enrichment Program. More so, Pearson's r was used to measure the relationship of the program implementers' and the students' perceptions on the teaching efficacy.

## Results and Discussion

During the end of the academic year 2017-2018, both the program implementers and the students took the SRI post-test with the following average Lexile scores. Only the data of those students who are still enrolled in the current academic year were used.

14th International Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation &
3rd International Conference on Open Learning and Education Technologies
20th & 21st July, 2019

48

Table 1
*SRI post-test results presented through the Lexile framework*

| Persons concerned | Average Lexile Scores |
|---|---|
| Program Implementers | 1,532.00 |
| Students | 724.26 |

The data shows that in terms of reading proficiency, the program implementers have higher Lexile scores than the students on average. The Lexile scores of the program implementers were matched with the expected outcome for professionals. However, when matched with the Lexile Framework used by Scholastic, the students' average scores are only equivalent to a fifth grader's; thus, showing that there is a gap between their expected Lexile scores and what the students have.

In the study of Stanford (2015), one of the integral factors of reading comprehension are reading strategies and motivation to read, along with three others. She added that extrinsic motivation shows a significant negative relationship with reading comprehension which indicates that those who are motivated internally have the higher ability in reading comprehension.

In AEP, the main reading program implemented in UBLC, reading skills are being taught every month. The lecture is composed of four meetings, with the first one for explicit teaching, the second for differentiated learning for those who are proficient (students who got the Lexile scores that match or are above the expected) and intervention (students who got lower Lexile scores than what are expected from their grade level), with the third and the fourth sessions for independent reading. Through this series of weekly activities, motivation is expected to be developed.

However, despite the framework of the used reading program, still, students were not able to meet the expected Lexile scores for the bracket of their grade levels.

During the interview, the students were asked whether they believe that proficient teachers are effective teachers. The respondents all gave their affirmation on this. When asked about the impacts of the proficiency and efficacy of the teacher implementing the program, the students mentioned three recurring answers - 1) quality teaching may be expected from the additional lessons on top of their usual English subject, 2) external motivation is empowered 3) as the students gain more respect to their teacher.

"The more we see *na magaling sa isang bagay* ang teacher, the more we respect him/her. *Kapag kasi hindi naman* credible *ang isang* teacher, *ang hirap maniwala sa tinuturo niya*" (Student A, personal communication, Oct. 4, 2018). The more we see that a teacher is good at one thing, the more we respect him/her. If the teacher is not credible, it is hard to believe on whatever he/she is teaching.

"*Masarap makinig sa* teacher *na alam mong magaling*. Practice what you preach, *ika nga. Nakaka*-motivate *kapag ganun*" (Student B, personal communication, Oct. 4, 2018). It feels good to listen to a teacher whom you know to be good. As they say, practice what you preach. It motivates you.

"*Yung dagdag na* lessons, *kahit na* hassle *minsan, ay* all for additional quality education *naman, na* aim *ng* university" (Student C, personal communication, Oct. 4, 2018). The additional lessons, although an additional burden at times are all laid for additional quality education, which is the aim of the university.

In the study of Zee and Koomen (2016), the perceived self-efficacy of the teachers positively affects students' academic adjustment, which by certain extensions, may be considered to be academic achievement. More so, Schiefele and Schaffner (2015) found out that efficacy, as shown in mastery-oriented practices, has a strong contribution to

14th International Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation &
3rd International Conference on Open Learning and Education Technologies
*20th & 21st July, 2019*

49

student motivation. However, Rodriguez, Fernandez, Pena, Valle, Pineiro, and Menendez (2014) noted that among teachers with high, medium, and low self-efficacy, those with intermediate level tend to have more learning-oriented students. Those who are on the upper level of the spectrum tend to engage less with the subject and the student.

Motivation, being more specific, has positive effect leading to the enhancement of learners' achievement on the reading skill. Hence, motivation must not only be investigated from a theoretical point of view that seeks to understand what the nature of motivation is or how much of that exists in people (Salehi, N., Samimi, F., &Razmjoo, S. A., 2018).

These findings and literature conclude that the self-efficacy of the program implementers positively affect the level of motivation and engagement of the students who are under the Scholastic Reading Programs. Because of the motivation and engagement of these students, they perceive the additional programs as beneficial tools to achieve a better quality of education. With all these combined, students tend to have respect to their program implementers, and by extension, to their teachers, and the subject discussed.

Table 2
*Program implementer's assessment on their self-efficacy in read aloud*

| Indicators | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|
| I prepare the students' prior knowledge or background knowledge by providing motivation question. | 3.50 | 0.5 |
| I ask questions about the book cover to spark the students' interest and make predictions about the story. | 4.00 | 0 |
| I read the title, author, and illustrator of the book. | 3.00 | 0 |
| I unlock unfamiliar and difficulty works, ideas, and situations. | 3.00 | 0 |
| I read the story with appropriate gestures and expressions. | 3.00 | 0 |
| I provide guide questions to help the students understand, predict, and infer about the setting, events and characters. | 3.00 | 0 |
| I ask questions to monitor students comprehension and appreciation of the story. | 3.00 | 0 |
| I make sure that the material is appropriate to the grade level, age, and interest level of the students. | 2.50 | 0.5 |
| I make sure that the length is appropriate for the allotted time. | 3.50 | 0.5 |
| I empower the students' enthusiasm during Read Aloud. | 3.50 | 0.5 |
| **Weighted Mean** | **3.20** | |

*Legend: 1.00-1.49 - Strongly Disagree; 1.50-2.49 - Disagree; 2.50-3.49 - Agree; 3.50-4.00 - Strongly Agree*

Out of the ten indicators about the practices during read aloud activity of the AEP, the practice of asking questions about the book cover to spark the student's interest and make predictions about the story ranks first, with 4.00 as its mean with a verbal interpretation of strongly agree. This is done at the beginning of the read-aloud activity to entice the students to follow through the story. These ranked first because these are performed at the beginning of the activity; thus, the exclusion of these are close to minimal.

Rollins (2014) conducted a study on the effects of book covers on the level of interest of consumers of fiction books. Based on the findings, the research's respondents associate 73% of the total value of a book with cover design. According to Rollins, this finding is aligned with that of Schmidt-Stoling et al., which found that 74% of the value is

14th International Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation &
3rd International Conference on Open Learning and Education Technologies
*20th & 21st July, 2019*

50

due to book covers. Thus, there is a significance to build interest with the use of book covers.

The practices of empowering enthusiasm and preparing the student's prior knowledge through motivation questions both have a mean of 3.50 and a verbal interpretation of strongly agree; thus, ranking second topmost indicators. Through a question posted before the actual read aloud, along with interest in book covers, the students' enthusiasm is peaked. This shows that the program implementers employ the use of critical thinking in the conduct of the program.

Alfaki and Siddiek (2013) studied how schema-based, pre-reading activities affect the reading comprehension of the readers. They concluded that previewing the text as a pre-reading activity is positively correlated with improved reading comprehension. This pre-reading activity used THIEVES, which stands for Title, Headings, Introduction, Every first sentence in a paragraph, Visuals and Vocabulary, End-of-Chapter Questions, and Summary.

In the context of AEP, the preview of the title, headings, visuals, and vocabulary are integrated into the first part of the read-aloud activity. This is part of the motivational activity that aims to engage the students right at the beginning of the reading program. More so, through the preview, critical thinking is also empowered as students are often asked to imagine what the story may be about using the clues such as the title and the graphics in the book.

On the other hand, the practice with the lowest mean of 2.50 and a verbal interpretation of agree is about the appropriateness of the text to the grade level and interest level of the students. This is due to the lower Lexile scores that the students have received on average which leads to a poor choice of books for their actual score and not on the expected score based on the Lexile framework. As mentioned, AEP works in such a way that the books that students are encouraged to read are within the Lexile scores that they have received during the conduct of the pre- and post-test of SRI. Through this, it can be ensured that students will not read books that are considered to be inappropriate to their reading ability, which may result in a lack of engagement and comprehension.

This finding is aligned with the earlier literature presented. Shelly (2015) suggested that the reading ability of the students must match the kinds of text that are given to them. This matching will ensure that students will be able to read and comprehend better, especially if the ability and the texts are also matched with the students' topic interest.

Table 3
*Students' assessment of program implementers on their self-efficacy in read aloud*

| Indicators | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|
| The teacher prepares the students' prior knowledge or background knowledge by providing a motivation question. | 3.24 | 0.6 |
| The teacher asks questions about the book cover to spark the students' interest and makes predictions about the story. | 3.28 | 0.6 |
| The teacher reads the title, author, and illustrator of the book. | 3.72 | 0.4 |
| The teacher unlocks unfamiliar and difficulty works, ideas, and situations. | 2.90 | 0.4 |
| The teacher reads the story with appropriate gestures and expressions. | 2.74 | 0.4 |
| The teacher provides guide questions to help the students understand, predict, and infer about the setting, events, and characters. | 2.82 | 0.4 |

14th International Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation &
3rd International Conference on Open Learning and Education Technologies
*20th & 21st July, 2019*

51

| Indicators | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|
| The teacher asks questions to monitor students' comprehension and appreciation of the story. | 3.08 | 0.4 |
| The teacher makes sure that the material is appropriate to the grade level, age, and interest level of the students. | 2.60 | 0.5 |
| The teacher makes sure that the length is appropriate for the allotted time. | 2.88 | 0.4 |
| The teacher empowers the students' enthusiasm during Read Aloud. | 3.26 | 0.6 |
| **Weighted Mean** | **3.05** | |

Legend: 1.00-1.49 - Strongly Disagree; 1.50-2.49 - Disagree; 2.50-3.49 - Agree; 3.50-4.00 - Strongly Agree

Out of the 10 indicators pertaining to the practices being done by the program implementers during read aloud activity of the AEP, the practice of reading the title, author, and the illustrator ranked first, with a mean of 3.72 and a verbal interpretation of strongly agree. This was followed by the practice of empowering student's enthusiasm and preparing their prior knowledge with 3.26 and 3.24 as means and both with a verbal interpretation of agree, respectively mainly because these strategies are embedded as part of the introduction. These are similar to motivation questions that are used before the start of the normal classroom instruction.

This is in connection with the sources cited earlier that states once the prior knowledge is activated, better reading comprehension may be expected (Alfaki, I.M. & Siddiek, A. G., 2013). This is also explained by Yuksel (2012) who stated that assessing the prior knowledge can help in predicting the level of performance of a student and that this activity may help the teachers better design the teaching and learning processes.

As per the lowest mean of 2.60 with a verbal interpretation of agree, it pertains to the program implementer's practice of using materials that are appropriate to the students' grade level, age, and interest. This is also in line with the finding presented in Table 2. While the students agreed with this statement, still, it is important to note that the books being used for these activities are not matching their expected Lexile range as Junior High School students. Some books, which match the Lexile scores they had during SRI, are intended for first to third graders. These were picture books with short texts and books that do not necessarily require critical thinking expected from Junior High School students.

The other practice with the lowest mean of 2.74 and a verbal interpretation of agree is about the teacher's use of appropriate gestures and expressions in the conduct of the Read Aloud activity. Program implementers are expected to creatively read the story to serve as a motivational tool for students to better participate in explicit instruction. In connection with this, the practice of providing guide question also has one of the lowest means of 2.82, also with a verbal interpretation of agree.

Rule (2015) mentioned in his study about the influence of read-aloud activities to students' preference of reading materials that reading aloud books to a group of listeners may be used as a scaffold for struggling readers to have their independence and confidence in reading eventually. Furthermore, it is during this kind of activities that a teacher can "scaffold the student's sense-making and support their learning of new concepts" (Strachan, S.L., 2015). Thus, there is a necessity to be engaging during Read Aloud through creative reading and guide questions. This finding is also aligned with that of Oliveira (2015) which states that using the discourse-centered method, which in this present study may refer to the use of guided discussions, affects the reading engagement.

14th International Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation &
3rd International Conference on Open Learning and Education Technologies
20th & 21st July, 2019

52

Also, this method helps readers to have a deeper understanding of the process of making meaning out of the texts read.

Table 4
*Program implementers' assessment on their self-efficacy in explicit instruction*

| Indicators | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|
| I state explicitly what the target strategy is. I explain how the strategy is useful. | 3.50 | 0.5 |
| I present an example of how the strategy is used. | 4.00 | 0 |
| I provide a detailed definition and description of the skill. | 3.50 | 0.5 |
| I give and example of how the strategy is used. I provide a visual aid of the steps in performing the skill. | 3.50 | 0.5 |
| I explain each step in detail. I give a substantial explanation of the importance of the skill in a practical and social context. | 4.00 | 0 |
| I read and demonstrate each step by doing the Think Aloud. | 4.00 | 0 |
| I summarize by reading the steps again done during the Think Aloud and enjoin the students to ask questions. | 4.00 | 0 |
| I state that the whole class will use the strategy and distribute the prescribed text to be used. | 3.50 | 0.5 |
| I instruct the students to read aloud the sections and guide them on how to apply the strategy on the text. | 3.00 | 0 |
| I perform the steps one at at time, referring to the written procedures through the use of a graphic organizer. | 3.50 | 0.5 |
| I provide feedback on the accuracy of the students' output and reviews the steps. | 3.50 | 0.5 |
| **Weighted Mean** | **4.00** | |

*Legend: 1.00-1.49 - Strongly Disagree; 1.50-2.49 - Disagree; 2.50-3.49 - Agree; 3.50-4.00 - Strongly Agree*

In this set of practices, four have a mean of 4.00 and a verbal interpretation of strongly agree. These are the practices of presenting an example of the application of the strategy, explaining the process and its practical application through a Think Aloud, and summarizing the steps at the end of the discussion. These are all examples of explicit instruction, which is prescribed in the conduct of AEP. As these strategies serve as the backbone of the explicit skills instruction, these are the most practiced strategies. These are also explicitly provided in the detailed lesson plans provided by Scholastic to its program implementers.

Explicit instruction, be it topic- or skill-based, helps the students in the process of facilitating information, especially about unfamiliar topics (Kruit, P. M., Oostdam, R. J., van den Berg, E., & Schuitema, J. A., 2018). This finding is also in congruence with van de Kamp, Admiraal, van Drie, & Rijlaarsdam (2015) which states that in terms of fluency and flexibility, explicit instruction focused on metacognition has a positive effect.

The study's findings revealed that reading comprehension might be improved through explicit instruction, specifically with the use of graphic organizers, which is a part of the modeling part of AEP. However, while explicit instruction is recommended, it was also suggested that a collaborative environment must be fostered, which in AEP, may be done through the guided practice that comes after modeling.

On the other hand, the practice of instructing the students to read aloud the sections and guiding them through the process ranks the lowest, with a mean of 3.00 and a verbal interpretation of agree. While this contradicts the earlier results that state that explicit

14th International Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation &
3rd International Conference on Open Learning and Education Technologies
*20th & 21st July, 2019*

53

instruction is being executed in the conduct of AEP, still, it must be noted that Think Aloud is practiced more by the program implementers. However, this does not mean that guided practice, in which the students are asked to read aloud the sections, is not also executed. Another factor that may have affected this is that guided practice is done as a class, and not individually which would have been more fit as guided practice.

The need for modeling and constant practice is emphasized on the study of Moriarty (2007) in her research about the impacts of teacher modeling of fluent reading strategies to students' fluency. Her findings revealed that after being exposed to consistent modeling of specific reading strategies that lasted for one academic year, the respondents showed an increase in their scores and fluency in reading. The students' confidence also improved as a result of this strategy.

Table 5
*Students' assessment of program implementers on their self-efficacy in explicit instruction*

| Indicators | Mean | SD |
|---|---|---|
| The teacher states explicitly what the target strategy is. The teacher explains how the strategy is useful. | 3.50 | 0.5 |
| The teacher presents an example of how the strategy is used. | 3.34 | 0.6 |
| The teacher provides a detailed definition and description of the skill. | 3.20 | 0.4 |
| The teacher gives an example of how the strategy is used. The teacher provides a visual aid of the steps in performing the skill. | 3.14 | 0.5 |
| The teacher explains each step in detail. I give a substantial explanation of the importance of the skill in a practical and social context. | 2.82 | 0.4 |
| The teacher reads and demonstrates each step by doing the Think Aloud. | 3.30 | 0.5 |
| The teacher summarizes by reading the steps again done during the Think Aloud and enjoins the students to ask questions. | 3.52 | 0.5 |
| The teacher states that the whole class will use the strategy and distributes the prescribed text to be used. | 3.40 | 0.5 |
| The teacher instructs the students to read aloud the sections and guides them on how to apply the strategy on the text. | 3.30 | 0.5 |
| The teacher performs the steps one at at time, referring to the written procedures through the use of a graphic organizer. | 2.98 | 0.5 |
| The teacher provides feedback on the accuracy of the students' output and reviews the steps. | 3.44 | 0.5 |
| **Weighted Mean** | **3.60** | |

*Legend: 1.00-1.49 - Strongly Disagree; 1.50-2.49 - Disagree; 2.50-3.49 - Agree; 3.50-4.00 - Strongly Agree*

For the students' assessment, explicit instruction-related practices still top the list; summarizing the steps during Think Aloud with 3.52 as its mean with a verbal interpretation of strongly agree, explicitly stating the target strategy and explaining the use of it with 3.50 with a verbal interpretation of agree, and directing the class towards guided practice with 3.40 with a verbal interpretation of agree. This is consistent with the earlier results that explicit instruction is implemented in AEP's lessons, as these are the backbone of the activity.

14th International Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation &
3rd International Conference on Open Learning and Education Technologies
*20th & 21st July, 2019*

54

"People learn naturally by imitating models." Examples in disciplines like Math and Science were provided. One related example is when a Math teacher works on a problem on the board, he/she is using modeling. The same thing applies for a Science teacher who demonstrates a lab experiment. When used properly, modeling becomes a useful tool (Harbour, K. E., Evanovich, L. L., Sweigart, C. A., & Hughes, L. E., 2015; Haston, W., 2007)

About the practice with the lowest mean, 2.82 with a verbal interpretation of disagree, it may be concluded that as per the students' assessment, the program implementers fail to explain each step in detail and to give a substantial explanation of the skills' application in practical and social contexts. This indicator is divided into two ideas, the explanation of the steps which is done through the explicit instruction, the idea behind the top indicators, and the explanation of the skills' application, which is most likely the loophole identified by the students.

In connection with these findings, Burk (2016) shared that when students can find a connection between what is being taught and what they will use in real life, their motivation to learn increases. This is especially the case if task-based activities allow the students to interact with one another in a real-world context. The researcher suggested that instructors must provide opportunities to students to practice "authentic communication and meaningful interaction" and for them to contemplate on the purpose of learning a particular topic. If for the students, learning is a form of investment, then they will view resources as valuable.

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20th & 21st July, 2019

55

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20th & 21st July, 2019

56

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14th International Conference on Language, Education, Humanities and Innovation &
3rd International Conference on Open Learning and Education Technologies
*20th & 21st July, 2019*

57