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EFFECTS OF LEARNERS' GENERATED QUESTIONS ON READING COMPREHENSION ACHIEVEMENT OF PRIMARY FIVE PUPILS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN ANAMBRA STATE

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of learners- generated questions on pupils' reading comprehension achievement in Anambra state. One research question and one hypothesis guided the study. The design used in the study was quasi-experimental design involves non-randomized control group pre-test, post-test, non-equivalent control group with an experimental group receiving treatment. The study was conducted in primary schools in Anambra State. The population of the study comprised all the 37,190 primary five pupils (19202 males and 17988 females) in the 1068 public primary schools in Anambra state for 2020/2021 academic session. The sample size for the study consisted of 200 (88 males and 112 females) of primary five pupils drawn from four intact classes. 101 pupils for experimental group (42 male and 59 females) and 99 pupils for control group (46 male and 53females). Purposive sampling technique was used to draw 40 public primary schools while simple Random sampling was used to draw four intact from the forty public primary schools in the area of the study; two schools each from Awka south L.G.A and two from Anaocha L.G.A. The researcher used Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (RCAT) instrument for collection of data in this study. Three experts validated the instrument, the RCAT, lesson plan with the title of the study, purpose, scope, research questions and hypotheses before distribution. Two from Early Childhood and Primary Education, and one from Measurement and Evaluation, all in Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. The validators examined the items, language and ascertained the extent to which the languages were clear and items suitable for responses. In establishing the reliability of the instrument, the researcher conducted a pilot study with 25 primary school pupils in Enugu State. The obtained scores were used to estimate the reliability co-efficient of the instrument using Kuder Richardson (k-R-20) and will be yielding a reliability index of 0.91". The experiment lasted for 6 weeks. The extraneous variables which could have affected the result of the study were effectively controlled. The data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation as well as ANCOVA. The Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research question while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the null hypotheses at (0.05) level of significance. The extraneous variables were controlled by the ANCOVA from the dependent variables. The study found that

there was an improvement among primary five pupils taught reading comprehension using learners' generated questions than those taught using conventional method. Part of the recommendations was that learner generated questions should be used in teaching other subject especially science subjects in various school locations.

keywords: learners' generated questions; Reading Comprehension; Achievement; primary five pupils

Introduction

Generally, education helps every child to gain knowledge and skills required to create value and establish a livelihood in the near future. Interestingly, a child's education begins at birth. Thus, once a child is born, his education starts in earnest. The early years of a child's education expose him to social, cognitive and psychological skills needed for educational achievements. The focus here is on primary education.

Primary school education is education given to children between 6-11 years and above (FRN, 2013). Primary school education as the foundation laying level of education in nations of the world improves the mini structural framework on which the quality of other levels of education is anchored, Ogunode et al (2021). Children go to primary school to learn how to read and write; which is the formal environment where education takes place. Anisiobi, wadi and Ushang (2023) opine that basic education is the foundational level where students acquire basic numeric and literacy skills. The objectives of primary education as specified in Nigeria National Policy on Education (NPE,2013) are: to inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy, and ability to communicate effectively; to lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking; to give citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society; to mould the character and develop sound attitude and morals in the child; to develop in the child the ability to adapt to the child's changing environment; to give the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child's capacity and to provide the child with basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality. A child exposed to primary education stand a chance to gain literacy which is more of reading and writing. This is part of the reasons for inclusion of reading comprehension in the curriculum of primary schools in Nigeria.

Onuoha and Okon (2022) defined reading comprehension as the level of understanding of a text or message. According to them, the word 'comprehension' is likened to 'understanding', hence, the comprehension and explanation of what is written in the passage and how it is written. Also, Comprehension is "reading with complete understanding of the text; while Banditvilai (2020) said that reading comprehension involves knowledge of vocabulary, understanding of sentence structure and syntax, and ability to interpret the intentions

of the writer. Flowers maintained that if one masters the skills of understanding the meaning, structure and organization of words, sentences and paragraphs, one will understand whatever is being read. Tompkins pressed that this understanding of text comes from the interaction between the words that are written and how they trigger knowledge outside the text/message. Also, Onuoha and Okon averred that reading comprehension is the process of simultaneously extracting and constructing meaning through interaction and involvement with written language. For the beginner, reading is concerned mainly with learning to recognize the printed symbols that represent language and to reader reads to comprehend a text. Banditvilai (2020) assert that comprehension involves understanding the vocabulary seeing the relationship among words and concepts, organizing idea, recognizing authors' purpose, making judgment and evaluating. Reading with comprehension means understanding what has been read. Teachers in primary schools employ different teaching methods to ensure that pupils grasp what they are being taught.

Teaching method refers to the style of instructional delivery adopted by a teacher for teaching. Shofoyeke (2014) opined that teaching methods can be defined as practical application of teaching principles based on the nature of the subject and their learning needs. However, most primary school teachers in Anambra state seem to use conventional teaching method for teaching.

Conventional teaching method is a method that is practically used by most teachers in Nigeria to impart knowledge to learners. It is basically a teacher-centered teaching method that pays little or no attention to the learners because teachers' intention is to cover the scheme of work, whether the learners understand the subject or not. Menakaya et al (2022) noted that apart from being teacher centered, the conventional teaching method appears not to activate student's prior reading knowledge of reading. This type of teaching strategy requires little or no critical thinking. It makes provision for limited information, because as long as there are no adequate interactions between teacher and learners, knowledge or experiences are not appropriately shared within them. Conventional teaching method is an instructive process because the teacher gives all the information, required. For Ruiz, Mintzer, and Leipzig in Igbo, Apeh and Ojonugwa (2020), in conventional method, the learners are extrinsically motivated by the desires to get good grades, please the teacher and to acquire rewards. It is basically pencil, paper, board, chalk and textbooks representation. This is supported by Achuonye (2015), who observed that conventional method is very prevalent in primary schools in Nigeria. The reason for utilizing conventional teaching methods includes: it saves time, permits flexibility, adaptability and versatility.

Despite the reasons for utilizing the method, it has some disadvantages. In conventional method, learners are more passive than been active, the cooperation and interactions between the teachers and the pupils are minimal. Yap (2016), stressed that in conventional teaching method, instructor initiate discussions in the classroom and focus exclusively on knowing the content in textbooks and notes. The author added that this method of teaching limit the room for

more creative thinking and also rarely consider individual difference. Similar to this Feider and Silverman cited in Farha (2016) argued that conventional teaching method makes pupils uninterested in class, discouraged, bored and do poorly in test. These short comings of the conventional method have led to some innovative teaching strategies such as learners generated question strategy.

Learners' generated questions are questions generated by pupils which are aimed at stimulating answers to all areas of learning experiences they are about to learn or learnt already. Xin Jia, Wenjie Zhou, Xu Sun, and Yunfang Wu. (2021). referred to learner-generated questions as drafted question items drafted by learners which helps them becomes more implemented in the learning process. While learner-generated questions serve useful functions for learners, they are also useful to teachers for prompt reflective thought and pupil's active participation. On the other side, conventional teaching method is the direct instruction which is seen as comprehensive system of teaching that involves all aspects of instruction and has been variously described as a radical learning programme, an educational revolution, systematic teaching and active teaching (Ewing 2011). It is a teacher directed approach that requires pupils been expose to a learning experience and mastering that learning. The extraneous variables that may confound the outcome of the study which was controlled are: non randomization effect, experimental bias, test knowledge.

Dentisak (2013) carried out a study on the effects of question generating strategy instruction on EFL freshmen's reading comprehension and use of English tenses. This quasi-experimental study was conducted to find out if the instruction of a question generating strategy would help to enhance university EFL freshmen's English reading comprehension and their ability to use English tenses. A pre-and post-test with control group design was employed. The samples, purposively selected, were 40 undergraduate students who registered for Foundation English I course during the first semester of academic year 2010. The students were divided into an experimental group (n = 20) and a control group (n = 20). The data collection tools used included a pre- and post-English reading. The two groups were administered the pre-tests before the experiment which lasted two weeks, and then the post-tests, upon completion of the experiment. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequency, mean, and standard deviation. An independent samples t-test was used to test the hypotheses. The results were that the experimental group gained statistically higher scores from the post-tests of both reading comprehension and use of English tenses than the control group ($p<.01$). This study is related to the current study in the sense that both studies are on effects of question generation on reading comprehension. Both studies adopted quasi experimental design, with pre-test and post-test. However, the reviewed study deferred from the current study in the sense that the current study was conducted in Awka South LGA and Anaocha LGA in Anambra State. The data was analyzed using ANCOVA. While the reviewed study was analyzed using

descriptive statistics and an independent sample t-test was used to test the hypotheses. The essence of the learners' generated questions as a teaching method is to improve pipuls' achievement in school.

Achievement is the degree of success or accomplishment in a given area of endeavour and a score on an achievement test. Similarly, Eneh (2015) refers to achievement as success in activities after personal effort has been invested on a goal-oriented exercise. The word achievement is mostly used to measure success in different endeavors such as business, arts, education etc. Bossaert, Doumen, Buyse and Verschueren (2011) defined achievement as success in meeting short- or long-term goals after a programme or activity. This study focused in academic achievement.

Academic achievement refers to the accomplishment, attainment or expertise gained following a period of study, training or practice. Tuckman, in Eneh (2015) said that achievement is the realization of one's potential in an activity or task. According to Dorgu and Igbojinwaekwu (2016) achievement in academics is the score or grade pupils obtain after a period of academic exercise and assessment. This means that academic achievement is built on a child's consistency towards learning. Okpala and Okigbo (2021) defined academic achievement as total of a learner's performance in a given standard test over specified time period of time. In the context of this study, achievement means success in any discipline or given academic area.

Elui, (2015) investigated the effect of extensive reading approach on primary four pupils' attitude and achievement in reading comprehension. The study was motivated by both observed and reported inability of pupils in public schools in Onitsha urban to decode and comprehend. This has been traced to the poor teaching of reading at the foundational level. The study adopted quasi experimental, non- equivalent, pre-test post-test design. Involved in the study which lasted for eight weeks were 121 primary four pupils (58 males and 63 females) in four primary schools in Onitsha South Local Government Education Authority. Two instruments: the Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (RCAT) and Reading Attitude Scale (RAS) were validated by experts and used six research questions and six hypotheses were answered and tested. Mean, Standard Deviation and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) were used for analysis. Major findings of the study indicated that extensive reading could be employed as method of teaching reading comprehension. The pupils exposed to extensive reading approach performed significantly better than those taught with the conventional approach. Both studies are similar; because they are experimental, researched on pupils reading comprehension achievement. Pre-test and post-test were used for data collection. Mean, standard Deviation and Analysis of Covariance (ANOVA). However Elui,s study differ from present study in the sense that it was conducted in public in Onitsha urban, while the present study was in Awka South LGA and Anaocha LGA in Anambra State. Also Elui,,s study is on effect of extensive reading approach on of primary four pupils, while the present study was on effect of learner generated question on primary five pupils.

The academic achievement of pupils in the area of the study is seemingly below expectation, hence this study.

Statement of the Problem

Observations and experiences by the researcher have shown that some pupils have poor reading attitude and skills which make them become easily distracted and lack reading comprehension achievement. The researcher observed that most pupils in Awka South L.G.A in particular have poor reading habit and ability which affects their academic achievement. This poor reading ability of pupils most times also depends on their environment, the teaching method adopted by the teachers for teaching and school location. Scholars and researchers also hold the assumption that a child's academic achievement may be greatly influenced either by the environment in which he lives, the school location and method of teaching used by the teachers for teaching, and as a result of the poor reading ability, there is, therefore, the need for instructional approach that can make pupils reading comprehension achievers. It is against these backups that the researcher sought the need to examine the effect of learners- generated questions on pupils' reading comprehension achievement in Anambra state.

Research question: What is the mean Achievement Score of primary five pupils taught reading comprehension using learners' generated questions and those taught using the conventional teaching method?

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the achievement scores of primary five pupils taught reading comprehension using learners' generated questions and those taught with conventional teaching method.

Research Method

The design used in the study was quasi-experimental design involves non-randomized control group pre-test, post-test, non-equivalent control group with an experimental group receiving treatment. The design was used because the experiment was carried out on intact-classes, so as to avoid disruption of normal classes. For this reason, there was no randomization of pupils into experimental and control groups. The design is diagrammatically represented as follows:

Diagrammatical representation of the quasi-experimental design

Group	**Pre-test**	**Treatment**	**Post-test**
Experimental Group	O1	X1	O2
Control Group	O1	X2	O2

Where O1 is pre-test
X1 is treatment using Learners-generated question
02 is post-test
X2 is conventional method of teaching (No treatment)

The study was conducted in primary schools in Anambra State. The population of the study comprised all the 37,190 primary five pupils in the 1068 public primary schools in Anambra state for 2020/2021 academic session. Primary five pupils were chosen to be used for the study because they are not exam class and they can generate questions from comprehension passage. The sample size for the study consisted of 200 primary five pupils drawn from four intact classes. 101 pupils for experimental group and 99 pupils for control group. Purposive sampling technique was used to draw 40 public primary schools. Simple Random sampling was used to draw four intact from forty public primary schools in the area of the study. The purposive sampling technique was used based on the following criteria: The schools are public schools, in each of the schools, intact-class was selected. One school in Awka South L.G.A was assigned to treatment and the other was assigned to control. The choice was based on the homogenous nature of the schools, gender composition and location of the schools.

The researcher used Reading Comprehension Achievement Test (RCAT) instrument for collection of data in this study. The instrument consists of 20 multiple choice items with options A-D. One option is correct while the remaining three are distracters. The items are the contents of the comprehension from Macmillan Brilliant Primary English book five, Titled: The visiting day page (58) and Farming page (69). Each correct answer attracted five marks, totaling 100 marks. Marking was done by the researcher. This instrument was used for dual purpose. First it was administered to the experimental group and control groups as a pre-test before the commencement of the experiment and secondly as a post-test to the experimental group after the experiment, to determine whether the academic achievement of the four groups is significant or not. Other materials that were used for this study are lesson plans for learners – generation question strategies, lesson plan for control group, and comprehension passage.

Three experts validated the instrument, the RCAT, lesson plan with the title of the study, purpose, scope, research questions and hypotheses before distribution. Two from Early Childhood and Primary Education, and one from Measurement and Evaluation, all in Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. The validators examined the items, language and ascertained the extent to which the languages were clear and items suitable for responses. After validators' comments that the researcher should not use the same questions asked and answered for each lesson to form pre-test and post-test questions. The corrections, were affected and the items were re-typed before distribution. To establish how reliable the instrument was, the researcher conducted a pilot study with 25 primary five pupils of Community Primary School Agungwu Village, Ugwuoba in Orji school Local Government Area of Enugu State which was not part of the research population. The obtained scores were used to estimate the reliability co-efficient of the instrument using Kuder Richardson (k-R-20) which yielded a reliability index of 0.91". This approach was used because k-R-20 is mostly suitable for multiple choice tests.

Introductory letter was presented for permissions from the schools' authorities to enable the researcher use their pupils and their lesson period and class teachers once in a week for 6weeks.

One week of briefing was organized for the English teachers of the sample schools used for the study. For the Experimental group, the English teacher was briefing on how pupils will use learners – generation question strategy for reading comprehension achievement. The briefing was as follows:

Familiarity with Learners- generation questioning strategy and comprehension activities. The instructional process, assessment and evaluation procedures. Learners generating question prompts identification, interaction patterns and teachers attitudes towards the pupils was made clear to the teacher.

The administration of pre-test to the pupils used in the study and post-test at the end of the experiment period was for both the experimental groups and control groups. The researcher made use of RCAT designed for the two groups. RCAT Pre-test was administered in the first week on the selected comprehension passage for the study. Afterwards, the two groups received the same lesson based on the learners –generation questions and conventional teaching method. At the end of the experimental period, pupils in the two groups took the same RCAT post-test which was used to know the deference in learning outcome.

Week 1: Training of the research assistants. Administering of pre-test to the two groups.

Week 2: The teacher introduced the topic of learning as learners –generation question strategies for reading comprehension achievement.

Week 3: The teacher introduced Learners-generating question prompts identification with two lines, one for question and the other for Answer after the teacher must have taught the topic; he/she can engage the pupils in a related activity.

Week 4: The teacher introduced Learners-generating question prompts identification with a stop sign, after the teacher must have taught the topic; he/she can engage the pupils in a related activity.

Week 5: The teacher introduced learners-generated question prompts identification with a stop sign and read aloud. After the lesson the teacher can engage the pupils in the related activity.

Week 6: In this last week the teacher administered post-test to the two groups. After the experiment, the two groups will be tested in order to obtain their understanding and reading comprehension achievement of the learning topic.

The item was scored as follows:

The total number of items was 20 in number, the pupils respond was score as five (5) when they correctly get the answer and was zero when they fail it. The comprehension Achievement score was the total number of questions correctly answered. The maximum score was hundred. (100)

Control of Extraneous Variables

In order to ensure that any change in behaviour of the pupils would be as a result

of training, the researcher adopted the following strategies to ensure that extraneous variables, which could affect the result of the study, were controlled:

Experimental bias: To avoid experimental bias, the pupils were taught by their regular teachers, to prevent the researcher from being personally involved in administering the research materials.

Pre-testing: Pre-test, is the act of administering research test to pupils before the commencement of a study, which may sensitize them to become aware of or suspicious of the purpose of the post-testing aspect of the experiment. Therefore, research assistants were disallowed to read the test questions.

Teacher variable: Errors that might arise as a result of teacher differences were controlled by organizing a pre-experimental conference for the research assistants. Separate conference was organized for teachers in the same groups. The research assistants were exposed to practical demonstration of the training strategies, especially in the use of learners-generated questions in teaching. The essence of the conference is to enable the research assistants acquire the competencies for presenting the experimental conditions, thereby establishing a common instructional standard among research assistants. The research assistants conducted the experiments in their respective schools and during normal school English periods in the timetable. The study was monitored and supervised by the researcher to ensure a uniform approach as specified in the lesson plan for each group.

Inter-group variables: The intact-classes were used for the study in order to eliminate the errors of non-equivalence arising from non-randomization of subjects. Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used for data analysis; further corrected the non-equivalence among research subjects.

Subject's interaction: The researcher was not select treatment and control groups from the same school to ensure that the pupils in the treatment and control groups would not mix-up at all. This is to reduce the errors that might arise from interaction and exchange of ideas among research subjects

Method of Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using mean and standard deviation as well as ANCOVA. The Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research question while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the null hypothesis at (0.05) level of significance. The extraneous variables were controlled by the ANCOVA from the dependent variables. For hypothesis testing, if the p-value is less than or equal to the level of significance (0.05), then hypothesis was rejected, this shows that, the effect of the learner-generated question strategy and conventional teaching method on pupils reading comprehension achievement is significant at a certain level, however, if the p-value is greater than or equal to the level of significance (0.05), the hypothesis was accepted.

Research question: What is the mean Achievement Score of primary five pupils taught reading comprehension using

learners' generated questions and those taught using the conventional teaching method?

Table 1: Mean Achievement Scores of pupils taught reading comprehension using learners' generated questions and those taught using the conventional teaching method.

	Pretest			Post-test			
Group	N	Mean	S.D	N	Mean	S.D	Mean diff
Learner's generated question	101	33.38	11.45	101	46.23	16.81	12.85
Conventional teaching method	99	32.09	10.99	99	36.18	12.79	4.09

Result Table 1 revealed that the mean achievement scores of primary five pupils' taught reading comprehension using conventional method had mean achievement of 32.09 and 36.18 for pretest and post-test respectively with difference of 4.09 while pupils taught with learners generated questions had mean scores of 33.38 and 46.23 for pre-test and post-test respectively with mean difference of 12.85. and finally gave a mean difference of 8.76 from the two methods in favour of those taught with learners generated questions. The result revealed that the mean achievement of pupils when learners' generated question was used was far better than when' conventional method was used.

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the achievement scores of primary five pupils taught reading comprehension using learner's generated questions and those taught with conventional teaching method.

Table 2: Analysis of covariance between the mean achievement scores of primary five pupils taught reading comprehension using learner's generated questions and those taught with conventional teaching method

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P-value	Decision
Corrected Model	12244.609[a]	8	1530.576	7.931	.000	
Intercept	24412.083	1	24412.083	126.492	.000	
Pretest	685.154	1	685.154	3.550	.061	
Method	4623.135	1	4623.135	23.955	.000	Significant
Gender	542.392	1	542.392	2.810	.095	
Location	2057.293	1	2057.293	10.660	.001	
Method * Gender	1382.916	1	1382.916	7.166	.008	
Method * Location	951.778	1	951.778	4.932	.028	
Gender * Location	18.799	1	18.799	.097	.755	

Method * Gender * Location	2590.112	1	2590.112	13.421	.000
Error	36861.586	191	192.993		
Total	387853.000	200			
Corrected Total	49106.195	199			

a. R Squared = .583 (Adjusted R Squared = .548)

The result in Table 2 shows that there is a statistically significant difference in the mean achievement scores of primary five pupils' taught reading comprehension using learners' generated questions and those taught with conventional teaching method. This is so because; the p-value (.000) is less than the level of significant (0.05). Based on the above, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Summary of the findings

Findings of the study were summarized as follows:

1. There was an improvement among primary five pupils taught reading comprehension using learners' generated questions than those taught using conventional method.
2. There was a statistically significant difference in the mean achievement scores of primary five pupils' taught reading comprehension using learners' generated questions and those taught with conventional teaching method.

Discussion of findings

Efforts were made in this study to ascertain mean achievement scores of pupils taught reading comprehension using learners-generated questions and those pupils taught using conventional teaching method. Findings showed that primary five pupils taught reading comprehension using conventional method had mean achievement scores of 32.09 for pre-test and 36.18 for post-test with a difference of 4.09, while the mean achievement score of those taught with learner generated questions was 33.38 for pre-test and 46.23 for post-test with a difference of 12.85. The mean difference of those taught with conventional method and learner generated questions were 4.09 and 12.85 respectively. This showed that the mean difference of those taught with learner generated questions which is 12.85 surpassed those taught with conventional teaching method by 8.76 to indicate more improvement on the part of pupils taught with learner generated questions. The above results are in-line with the findings of Dentisak (2013) who reported in his study that the experimental group gained statistically higher scores from the post-test of both reading comprehension and use of English tenses than the control group. The above findings are also in-line with the findings of Ngadim (2021) who discovered that generated questions promoted reading comprehension better than reading only.

Ngadiman (2021) proved that both provided and generated questions promoted reading comprehension better than reading-only. This showed that there was always an improvement in post-test exercise among learners. More so, result of the hypothesis which stated that there is no statistically significant difference between the mean achievement scores of primary five school pupils taught reading comprehension using learner's generated questions and those taught with conventional teaching method proved the improvement of the students taught with learners' generated questions as it showed a statistically significant difference. This is because the p-value (.017) is less than the level of significance (0.005) and with this, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that learners' generated question strongly has effect on the reading comprehension achievement of primary five pupils in Anambra State. It had significant effect on reading comprehension achievement of pupils in Anambra State.

Educational Implication

The study established that primary five pupils improved in reading comprehension using the learner generated strategy. The curriculum of primary schools would by this, need to be restructured to bring in academic activities that would ensure that pupils participate in the same academic exposure to ensure that academic achievement of pupils in Anambra State improves continually.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government and curriculum planners should inculcate use of learners' generated questions in teaching difficult concepts in primary schools in Anambra State.
2. Learner generated questions should be used in teaching other subject especially science subjects in various school locations.
3. Language teachers should create learning atmospheres that are conducive for learning in order to enhance the development of students' learning experiences.
4. Parent should provide literacy materials especially for their children at home and thus, educate them with the materials to prepare them for literacy challenges they might face in school.

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