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## EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MARUNGKO APPROACH AND READING PERFORMANCE IN THE COMPREHENSIVE RAPID LITERACY ASSESSMENT

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### ***ABSTRACT***

This study investigated the relationship between the level of effectiveness of the Marungko Approach and the reading performance of learners as measured by the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) in Impasug-ong I District, Division of Bukidnon, for School Year 2024–2025. Specifically, it examined the effectiveness of the Marungko Approach in terms of letter sound recognition, letter name recognition, and syllabication, and its correlation with learners' performance in the CRLA components of Letter Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, and Decoding. The study employed a quantitative research design, utilizing frequency count, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and Spearman's rank correlation to analyze the gathered data. Findings revealed that the Marungko Approach was very highly effective in enhancing learners' literacy skills in letter sound recognition, letter name recognition, and syllabication. Learners also demonstrated a proficient level of reading performance in the CRLA across all assessed components. However, the results indicated a significant relationship between the level of effectiveness of the Marungko Approach and the learners' overall reading performance. The study concluded that while the Marungko Approach effectively develops foundational literacy skills, other factors, such as individual learner differences, instructional strategies, and learning environments, may also influence reading outcomes. It is therefore recommended that schools continue to implement the Marungko Approach as part of early literacy instruction, supplemented with other evidence-based reading strategies and ongoing teacher training. Future research should investigate additional variables that affect literacy performance to promote a more holistic and comprehensive approach to reading development among beginning readers.

**KEYWORDS:** Marungko Approach, reading performance, Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment, literacy development, early reading instruction.

## INTRODUCTION

Reading enhances an individual's self-confidence and prepares them to think creatively and critically in today's fast-paced, competitive society. While the importance of reading literacy is widely recognized, especially in contributing to a nation's economic growth, many children around the world still struggle and are often considered not proficient enough in reading classes. Poor reading skills can hinder performance in other academic subjects (Bautista, 2019; Khalfaoui, 2018). To address this, learners must first develop solid foundational reading skills, including letter name recognition, letter-sound association, initial sound discrimination, familiar word reading, and oral passage reading.

Failing to develop strong foundational reading skills early can cause long-term challenges in mastering advanced reading abilities and negatively impact other areas of a child's life (Brink & Nel, 2019). To address this, the study evaluated the effectiveness of the Marungko approach, a teaching strategy aimed at helping educators tackle reading difficulties. The Marungko method emphasizes equipping Grade One learners with core reading skills to improve their overall reading performance. It introduces children to the sounds of the Filipino alphabet as a starting point for literacy development (Repaso & Macalisang, 2024). In the Philippine context, results from the 2019 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) showed that 15-year-old Filipino students scored an average of 340 points in reading literacy, well below the international average of 487 points, ranking the country last among 79 participating nations. This underscores the need for Philippine educators to revisit and strengthen the foundational stages of reading comprehension, beginning with early reading instruction (Abella, 2022; Boltron & Ramos, 2021). Accordingly, DepEd Memorandum No. 173, s. 2019, calls on all levels of the Department—from the Central Office to Regional Offices, Schools Division Offices, and individual schools—to actively support the "Hamon: Bawat Bata Bumabasa" (3Bs Initiative). This program aims to foster a strong reading culture by ensuring all students become proficient readers at their grade level, while empowering teachers to be more effective in facilitating reading (Dorado & Medina, 2022). The 3B initiative highlights the critical importance of beginning reading instruction, especially in Grade One.

The primary goal of formal education is to equip students with the ability to read the texts they encounter. Likewise, Catts and Kamhi (2017) noted that one of the key objectives of

reading is to make students proficient readers. In addition, according to Uysala and Bilgeb (2018), reading plays a crucial role in the teaching of not only some but all academic skills. Because of its significant role, it is taught in schools. Numerous studies have already been done on language instruction and teaching.

However, it is essential to realize that reading is not a simple procedure, making it challenging to teach this skill to students and teachers. This is consistent with Catts and Kamhi (2017), who asserted that reading comprehension is "one of the most complex cognitive processes." This statement aligns with the belief of earlier authors that nothing is straightforward regarding the capacity and talent required for students to flourish in their personal and academic pursuits. According to academics Muijselaar et al. (2017), reading is described as a multifaceted function involving multiple languages and cognitive processes rather than a single process.

Reading is a vital skill that serves as the foundation for learning and personal growth. It is a cognitive process that involves decoding symbols to derive meaning, allowing individuals to gain knowledge, enhance critical thinking, and improve communication skills. The ability to read effectively is crucial in academic performance and lifelong learning, making it a significant focus of educational institutions worldwide.

Being able to read is an avenue for personal and social growth. A child can fully view ever-winding horizons and explore areas in the world of people, things, and events through reading. Indeed, the key to success lies in reading; therefore, proficiency in reading is essential for the continuous growth and development of children. Nowadays, as early as Grade 1, children should be exposed to various low-level but engaging reading materials that capture their interest, motivate them to turn pages, and later develop a love for reading. Moreover, start to read. It highly contributes to the child's development, especially in acquiring knowledge and the essential learning that will help them become more competitive and confident.

### ***Conceptual Framework***

In school, reading is the most essential subject for children to learn. In this regard, a child will learn little in today's world if they do not learn to read correctly. Reading is both a subject of instruction and a tool employed towards the effective teaching-learning process. It cannot be denied that for every teacher, reading is one of the most significant challenges they face. Indeed, teaching reading to young children is crucial to prevent them from becoming non-readers in the end. This made it clear that proficiency in reading is directly related to

academic success. Furthermore, reading skills are considered a fundamental factor in a child's life.

Nevertheless, despite all the efforts teachers exert in their desire to help learners read, many learners struggle to cope and can hardly decode printed words. One of the struggles faced by teachers in grades 1-3 is a learner who has difficulty in reading. Despite using various approaches to improve literacy rates, challenges are inevitable, especially in developing reading proficiency among young learners.

Most early-grade learners struggle with reading because they are new to the skill. Grade levels 1 to 3 are where learners develop their reading and writing skills. Utilizing an appropriate approach is crucial in learning, particularly in developing reading proficiency. In the Philippines, the Marungko Approach has been widely adopted in various schools.

Accordingly, the Marungko Approach has been proven effective in a particular elementary school here in the Philippines. There is a considerable gap in the improvement of learners before and after using the approach. The number of non-readers was reduced.

Foremost, the teacher must make every effort to explore every possible way to help her learners with reading disabilities cope with and overcome their failures, because no academic task can be achieved when they perform ineffectively in reading. For this reason, a functional CRLA is imperative to adequately address the problem.

As such, there is a concerted effort to identify and address intervention needs proactively ensuring that every learner gets the support they need to succeed academically. Against this backdrop, this study seeks to delve into the intervention landscape among primary grade learners of elementary school in Impasug-ong District I. By studying the effectiveness of the Marungko Approach and its relation to the reading performance of the learners by leveraging and unlocking academic potential using Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA), the research aims to assess the effectiveness of the Marungko Approach, its intervention needs and explore the reading performance.

In conclusion, the related studies demonstrate that the Marungko Approach yielded mixed results as a method for teaching reading to young learners. The Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) is also used to monitor the effectiveness of literacy programs and interventions in the Philippines. These assessments can identify areas of strength and weakness in pupils' reading skills, informing the development of targeted interventions. The Marungko Approach and the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) will be complementary tools for promoting early literacy. The Marungko Approach provides a

structured and systematic approach to teaching reading, while the CRLA will provide means of monitoring learners' progress and identifying areas for improvement.

### ***Statement of the Problem***

The study aims to determine the level of implementation of the Marungko Approach and the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment as perceived by teachers in the Impasugong I District during the 2024-2025 school year. Specifically, this study will address the following:

1. What is the level of effectiveness of the Marungko Approach in terms of a. letter sound recognition, b. letter name recognition, and c. syllabication?
2. What is the reading performance in the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment in the component of a. Letter Knowledge, b. Phonological Awareness c. Phonemic Awareness, d. Decoding?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the level of effectiveness of the Marungko Approach and the reading performance in the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment?

### ***Significance of the Study***

This study will be significant to the following:

Teachers. The findings will provide teachers with valuable insights into the effectiveness of the Marungko Approach and the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment, enabling them to refine their instructional practices.

School Administrator. This study will provide administrators with data-driven information to support the implementation of effective literacy programs and allocate resources effectively.

Curriculum Developers. The findings will inform curriculum developers about the strengths and weaknesses of the Marungko Approach and the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA), thereby informing potential improvements to literacy curricula.

Learners. Ultimately, the study aims to enhance learners' reading skills and improve their overall academic performance.

### ***Delimitation of the Study***

This study will be limited to teachers' perceptions in the Impasugong 1 District. The findings may not be generalizable to other contexts. The study will focus specifically on the effectiveness of the Marungko Approach and the level of the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA). Other literacy interventions and assessment tools will not be included. The study will focus on the teachers' perceptions as the respondents.

The data on the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment (CRLA) will be limited to teachers in Grades 1 to 3 in the District of Impasugong 1, Division of Bukidnon, for the school year 2023-2024.

### *Review of the Literature*

Santos and De Vera (2019) noted that the Marungko Approach aims to equip pupils with the necessary reading skills to enhance their reading achievement. It also aims to create a training program that will improve teachers' skills in teaching reading in the primary grades. The Marungko Approach is designed with a dual focus, directly enhancing pupils' reading abilities and empowering primary-grade teachers with more effective instructional techniques. This suggests a holistic strategy that recognizes the interconnectedness of student learning and teacher preparedness.

By aiming to improve both student outcomes and teacher skills, the approach likely seeks to create a sustainable and impactful improvement in early literacy education. Ultimately, the goal is to foster a stronger foundation in reading for young learners, setting them up for future academic success. The Marungko Approach is a comprehensive strategy that targets both student literacy and teacher effectiveness in the early grades. I have come to realize that it is not solely focused on direct instruction for pupils but also on enhancing educators' pedagogical skills in reading instruction. This dual focus suggests a systemic approach to improving reading outcomes, recognizing that well-equipped teachers are crucial for learners' success.

Consequently, the Marungko Approach aims to achieve a sustainable impact by empowering both learners and their teachers in the foundational stages of reading development in the Philippines.

According to Ehri et al. (2019), the Marungko Approach is a reading instruction developed to help beginning readers attain reading fluency. This approach suits the early reading needs of pupils by helping them understand letter-sound correspondence, enabling them to recognize words instantly.

This describes the Marungko Approach as a targeted reading instruction method specifically designed to cultivate reading fluency in beginners. It emphasizes the crucial role of understanding letter-sound correspondence as the primary pathway to achieving automatic word recognition. By focusing on this foundational skill, the approach aims to equip young learners with the essential building blocks for developing fluent reading skills. Therefore, it

directly addresses the early reading needs of pupils by prioritizing the development of rapid and accurate word identification.

Bolton, M. T., & Ramos, A. L. (2021) conducted a study evaluating the impact of the Marungko Approach on developing foundational reading skills in Grade 1 learners. Their findings revealed a significant improvement in beginning reading competencies between the pre-test and post-test assessments. Consequently, it was concluded that the Marungko Approach is an effective method for enhancing early-stage reading performance, which serves as a critical foundation for further progress in reading skills. His study highlights how the Marungko Approach directly targets the building blocks of reading. Phonological awareness, letter-sound correspondence, and early decoding strategies are crucial for young learners. It is imperative that by the early stages of a child's development, they can already identify the names and sounds of letters.

Espino (2020) stated that recognizing and identifying printed symbols, as well as the ability to recognize sounds, are ways to recognize letter sounds and how to pronounce them. He emphasizes here that recognizing and identifying printed symbols and "the ability to recognize sounds are pathways to understanding letter-sound correspondence and pronunciation; he underscores the crucial interplay between visual and auditory processing in learning to read. The learners must recognize the sounds first so they can start reading. Based on the researcher's experiences, learners can easily learn to read if they first learn the letter sounds so that they will not confuse them. After mastering the sounds, the letter names will follow. From that, if the learner already knows the sounds and then tries to blend them with other sounds, eventually, they can read.

Yayen (2018) emphasized that when specific patterns of letter sounds are already taught, phonemic manipulation of blending sound letters is presented to create words, and learners are encouraged to produce words using the letters learned from these patterns. Then the learners are guided to read the different words that somebody produced". Letter sounds describe a systematic and explicit approach to early reading instruction. It highlights a logical progression where foundational letter-sound patterns. Were established before learners were guided to blend these sounds to form words actively. Encouraging learners to produce their own words using learned patterns fosters a deeper understanding of letter-sound correspondence. This passage emphasizes a structured and active approach to early literacy instruction, where learners move from understanding letter-sound patterns to actively applying this knowledge to create and read words. It highlights the importance of explicit

teaching, followed by opportunities for students to manipulate sounds and generate their linguistic output.

Carlo (2019) stated that reading is a systematic process of recognizing and understanding printed letters or symbols so that the message the writer wants to convey is understood and interpreted by the reader. It emphasizes that reading is not just about seeing words; it is an active and methodical process. The inclusion of "understanding" highlights the crucial step beyond mere recognition, focusing on extracting meaning. Ultimately, it accurately identifies the primary goal of reading: comprehending the writer's intended message through interpretation. In reading, we get information and meaning from the symbols. If the reading is incorrect, then there might be a problem with the reader's skills. Correct reading serves as a means to understand written symbols.

Gurotayo (2020) mentioned that there are tools available to develop student's reading skills and reading accuracy. Various tools and strategies can indeed be employed to enhance students' reading accuracy. These tools might include phonics-based activities, sight word practice, and techniques for decoding multisyllabic words. Utilizing these resources systematically can help students build a strong foundation in accurate word recognition. Salvador (2015) emphasized that reading is one of the important skills that a person should acquire.

Reading is the interpretation of knowledge gathered from printed texts. In essence, acquiring strong reading skills is an investment in a person's intellectual independence and overall well-being. The beginning reader should be guided in reading to correct reading errors. Recognizing letters is one step in developing reading skills. Learners must understand and remember the basic knowledge of letters.

According to Burns et al. (2017), many students struggle to read words with multiple syllables. Many students find reading words with multiple syllables difficult because these words often have more complex sound-spelling patterns, requiring them to blend multiple sounds. Decoding these longer words demands strong phonological awareness, knowledge of syllable types, and the ability to break words into manageable parts. Without explicit instruction in these areas, students can feel overwhelmed and struggle with reading fluency and comprehension. This emphasizes the need for targeted instruction and strategies to help students break down longer words. It reinforces the importance of teaching syllable types, affixes, and effective decoding techniques to build confidence and fluency with multisyllabic vocabulary. Some rules must be followed in syllabication to pronounce and cut words correctly. Pupils should be taught to spell a word correctly as early as possible.

It highlights the vital connection between proper letter arrangement and effective communication. This implies that mastering spelling empowers individuals to convey their thoughts clearly and avoid misunderstandings in their writing. It is necessary that pupils can recognize letter sounds, enabling them to spell words by combining letter sounds to make syllables and form words. After all, the goal of spelling is to produce text that the reader easily understands.

Cruz (2016) defined reading accuracy as the correct pronunciation of written or printed words. Mispronunciations can alter words, sounds, phrases, and even spelling, affecting the overall reading process. Reading accuracy involves the ability to decode and pronounce words correctly so that spoken language aligns with the written text. This skill is fundamental, as it enables readers to understand the text more easily without being disrupted by errors in pronunciation. When learners consistently pronounce words accurately, they develop greater confidence and fluency, both of which are vital for achieving deeper comprehension.

### ***FINDINGS***

There was a significant relationship between the level of effectiveness of the Marungko Approach and the learner. A significant relationship was identified between the effectiveness of the Marungko Approach and learners' reading performance in the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment. The Marungko Approach is a highly effective method for enhancing learners' literacy skills, particularly in letter-sound recognition, letter-name recognition, and syllabication. This suggests that the approach effectively supports early reading development by providing systematic, engaging instruction that strengthens foundational literacy competencies. Therefore, the continued implementation and reinforcement of the Marungko Approach in beginning reading programs are strongly recommended to sustain and further improve learners' reading proficiency.

### ***CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS***

The results reveal that learners demonstrated proficiency in the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment across Letter Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, and Decoding. This indicates strong foundational literacy skills necessary for fluent reading and comprehension. The findings further suggest that the instructional strategies and interventions implemented were effective in developing these essential reading competencies, supporting continued literacy growth and academic success.

The results indicate a significant relationship between the effectiveness of the Marungko Approach and learners' reading performance in the Comprehensive Rapid Literacy Assessment. The findings suggest that the systematic and phonics-based strategies of the Marungko Approach effectively enhance foundational literacy skills, particularly in letter recognition, sound association, and word decoding. This strong relationship underscores the approach's vital role in developing early reading proficiency and supports its continued use and reinforcement in beginning reading programs.

In view of the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

It is strongly recommended that schools institutionalize the Marungko Approach as a core component of early literacy instruction. Teachers should receive continuous training and capacity-building programs to ensure effective and consistent implementation across grade levels. Supplementary learning materials and interactive activities aligned with the Marungko sequence should be developed to engage learners further and reinforce mastery of letter-sound relationships, letter recognition, and syllabication. Regular monitoring and evaluation are also advised to assess learners' progress and refine instructional practices. Future studies may explore integrating the Marungko Approach with other literacy strategies to maximize reading fluency and comprehension among beginning readers.

Given learners' proficient performance in Letter Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Phonemic Awareness, and Decoding, it is recommended that teachers continue and further enhance effective instructional strategies and interventions. Sustained reinforcement and enrichment activities should be provided to maintain and advance reading proficiency, with particular attention to higher-order literacy skills such as vocabulary development, reading fluency, and comprehension. Continuous monitoring and assessment of learners' progress are encouraged to identify areas needing improvement and ensure consistent literacy growth. Future initiatives may include integrating technology-based reading programs and collaborative reading activities to engage learners further and strengthen overall literacy development.

Educators are encouraged to implement a broad and varied literacy instruction framework that works alongside the Marungko Approach. Incorporating proven reading strategies—such as differentiated instruction, context-based activities, and interventions targeting comprehension—can help meet the diverse needs and learning preferences of students.

Ongoing professional development in innovative and flexible teaching methods is also recommended for effective practice. Further studies might investigate additional influences on reading achievement, including student motivation, the home literacy setting, and teacher expertise, to expand insights into improving overall literacy results.

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