

Effects of Marungko Approach in Teaching Reading and Literacies of Primary Pupils

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Abstract

This study determined the effects of the Marungko Approach in teaching reading and literacies among primary pupils in the District of Morong during School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, it examined the perceived effects of the approach in terms of phonemic awareness, decoding skills, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension, and determined whether significant differences existed in the respondents' perceptions when grouped according to age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, position title, length of service, and in-service trainings attended. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. Data were gathered from 115 teachers selected through purposive sampling using a researcher-made questionnaire-checklist. The findings revealed that the respondents were predominantly female and married, with most belonging to the age groups of 26–30 and 36–40 years, holding Teacher I positions, possessing master's degrees, having 11–19 years of teaching experience, and having attended division-level in-service training. Overall, the Marungko Approach was perceived to have a high effect on the reading and literacies of primary pupils across the four areas examined, namely phonemic awareness, decoding skills, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. Furthermore, the results showed no significant difference in the perceived effects of the Marungko Approach when respondents were grouped according to their demographic and professional characteristics. This indicates that teachers generally shared consistent perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the approach regardless of their personal and professional profiles. The study concluded that the Marungko Approach is perceived as an effective instructional strategy for strengthening foundational reading and literacy skills among primary pupils. It is recommended that school administrators sustain relevant in-service training, teachers employ varied and developmentally appropriate reading strategies, and schools strengthen home-school collaboration and reading interventions. An action plan was proposed to further enhance the implementation and effectiveness of the Marungko Approach.

Keywords: Marungko Approach, Reading, Literacies, Phonemic Awareness, Decoding Skills, Vocabulary Development, Reading Comprehension, Primary Pupils

1. Introduction

Reading is a fundamental skill that serves as a foundation for learning across all subject areas. During the primary years, pupils are expected to develop essential literacy competencies such as recognizing sounds, decoding words, acquiring vocabulary, reading fluently, and comprehending texts. However, difficulties in foundational reading remain a concern among elementary learners, particularly those who struggle to recognize letter sounds, blend sounds, decode unfamiliar words, and understand what they read. These challenges emphasize the need for systematic, developmentally appropriate, and responsive approaches to beginning reading instruction. In the Philippine elementary school context, the Marungko Approach has been utilized as a phonics-based strategy designed to strengthen foundational reading competencies through systematic instruction in letter sounds, blending, word recognition, and reading practice.

Recent studies have provided evidence supporting the potential of the Marungko Approach in improving pupils' reading performance. Alauya and Basmayor (2023) examined the Marungko Approach among Grade 4 pupils in Lanao del Sur and found improvements in reading performance following its implementation. Their findings demonstrated the potential of the approach as an intervention for learners experiencing difficulties in beginning reading. Similarly, a 2023 study on the impact of the Marungko Approach on pupils' reading development reported a positive relationship between the extent of teachers' use of the approach and pupils' development in phonics, word recognition, and comprehension. These findings suggest that systematic phonics instruction may contribute to strengthening several dimensions of reading development.

The effectiveness of the approach has also been documented in more recent studies. Casupanan and Fastidio (2024) evaluated an enhanced Marungko Approach among 81 Grade 2 pupils and examined reading literacy in English, including oral passage reading, reading comprehension, listening comprehension, and dictation. The study reported that pupils initially demonstrated basic levels of competency, highlighting the need for structured instructional interventions to strengthen their reading literacy. The findings further support the use of an enhanced Marungko-based approach in addressing the foundational literacy needs of primary learners.

Bernabe (2024) likewise investigated the effectiveness of the Marungko Approach among Grade 1 pupils in Apayao. Using a quasi-experimental design, the study found a significant mean gain in pupils' reading performance from pretest to posttest. The findings indicated that the approach could significantly improve beginning reading performance and emphasized the importance of strengthening parental participation through learning action cell activities and home-based reading support. In another study, Tamba and Garces (2024) examined the Marungko Approach among Grade 2 non-reader pupils in General Santos City. The researchers reported that pupils who initially obtained very low pretest scores demonstrated higher scores after the implementation of Marungko-based reading materials, providing further evidence of its potential as an intervention for struggling readers.

The relevance of structured reading interventions was further demonstrated by Ganotice (2025), who examined a reading intervention program for primary learners in Apayao. The study found that learners initially demonstrated difficulties in basic reading, particularly in blending and decoding. After the intervention, improvements were observed in word and sentence reading; however, some learners who demonstrated stronger fluency and word recognition still experienced difficulties in answering comprehension questions. This finding is particularly important because it indicates that improvements in basic decoding and fluency do not necessarily guarantee corresponding development in comprehension. Similarly, Bete (2025) examined the National Reading Program among Grade 1 to 3 learners and found significant improvements in reading comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary following structured reading interventions. The findings reinforce the importance of sustained and systematic literacy instruction during the primary years.

Despite these studies, several gaps remain in the existing body of research. First, many recent studies on the Marungko Approach have concentrated on pupil-level outcomes using experimental or quasi-experimental designs, commonly comparing pretest and posttest performance. While these studies provide evidence of improvement, fewer studies have examined the perceived effects of the Marungko Approach from the perspective of classroom teachers, particularly across multiple dimensions of literacy. Second, existing studies frequently focus on a single grade level or a limited number of struggling readers, leaving a need for broader examination of primary pupils' literacy development across key domains. Third, although previous research has examined general reading performance, relatively limited attention has been given to the distinct dimensions of phonemic awareness, decoding skills, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension within a single study. Fourth, there remains limited evidence regarding whether teachers' demographic and professional characteristics, such as age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, position, length of service, and participation in in-service training, are associated with differences in their perceptions of the effectiveness of the Marungko Approach.

These gaps establish the need for a study that examines the Marungko Approach beyond the measurement of pupils' pretest and posttest scores. Specifically, there is a need to understand how teachers perceive its effects on the major components of foundational literacy and whether such perceptions vary according to their personal and professional characteristics. Addressing this gap is particularly relevant in the District of Morong, where primary teachers are directly involved in implementing reading interventions and supporting pupils with varying literacy needs. Thus, this study seeks to determine the effects of the Marungko Approach in teaching reading and literacies of primary pupils in the District of Morong during School Year 2025–2026, with particular focus on phonemic awareness, decoding skills, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension. The findings may provide empirical evidence that can guide teachers, school administrators, and other education stakeholders in

strengthening reading instruction, designing appropriate interventions, and developing professional development activities that support foundational literacy among primary pupils.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive survey research design to determine the perceived effects of the Marungko Approach in teaching reading and literacies of primary pupils in the District of Morong during School Year 2025–2026, particularly in terms of phonemic awareness, decoding skills, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension, as well as to determine whether significant differences existed in the respondents' perceptions when grouped according to their demographic and professional characteristics.

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in the District of Morong, Division of Rizal, during School Year 2025–2026, covering the public elementary schools where the selected primary teachers were teaching and implementing reading and literacy strategies, making the district an appropriate locale for examining the perceived effects of the Marungko Approach among primary pupils.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were 115 teachers teaching primary pupils in the District of Morong during School Year 2025–2026, who were described according to their age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, position title, length of service, and in-service trainings attended and who provided their perceptions regarding the effects of the Marungko Approach on pupils' phonemic awareness, decoding skills, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study involved 115 teacher-respondents who were selected through purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique in which participants are deliberately chosen based on their relevance to the study, particularly their experience in teaching primary pupils and their familiarity with reading instruction and the Marungko Approach.

2.5 Research Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire-checklist consisting of two parts, with the first part gathering the respondents' demographic and professional profiles and the second part measuring the perceived effects of the Marungko Approach in terms of phonemic awareness, decoding skills, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension using a Likert-type scale, and the instrument was subjected to validation by qualified experts before its administration.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher secured the necessary permissions from the concerned education authorities and school administrators before administering the validated questionnaire to the 115 qualified respondents, explained the purpose and confidentiality of the study, collected the accomplished questionnaires, and subsequently checked, coded, tabulated, and prepared the data for statistical analysis.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The gathered data were analyzed using frequency and percentage to describe the respondents' profiles, weighted mean to determine the perceived effects of the Marungko Approach in the identified reading and literacy dimensions, and appropriate inferential statistical tests to determine significant differences in the respondents' perceptions when grouped according to their demographic and professional characteristics, using a 0.05 level of significance.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

The study observed ethical principles in conducting research involving human participants. Participation in the study was voluntary, and the respondents were informed about the purpose of the research before answering the questionnaire. The information gathered from the respondents was used solely for academic purposes and was treated with confidentiality. The researcher ensured that the respondents' identities and personal information were protected throughout the research process. The collected data were analyzed and reported objectively to maintain the integrity and credibility of the study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Profile of the Respondents in Terms of Selected Variables

The respondents were predominantly 26–30 and 36–40 years old, each comprising 20.9%, and were mostly female (93.9%) and married (64.3%). In terms of educational attainment, Master's degree holders comprised the largest group at 40.0%, followed by those with a Bachelor's degree at 29.6% and Master's units at 27.0%. Regarding position, most were Teacher I (45.2%), followed by Teacher III (43.5%). In terms of length of service, the largest proportion had 11–19 years of teaching experience (44.3%), closely followed by those with 0–10 years (43.5%). For in-service training, most respondents had attended division-level trainings (33.0%), followed by regional-level trainings (27.0%) and district-level trainings (13.0%), indicating that the respondents were generally experienced, professionally qualified, and exposed to various levels of continuing professional development..

3.2 Extent of Effects of Marungko Approach in Teaching Reading and Literacies of Primary Pupils with Respect to Phonemic Awareness, Decoding Skills, Vocabulary Development, Reading Comprehension

The findings revealed that the Marungko Approach had a high effect on the reading and literacies of primary pupils, with a composite weighted mean of 4.36. Among the assessed aspects, phonemic awareness ranked first with 4.42, followed by vocabulary development with 4.39 and reading comprehension with 4.36, while decoding skills ranked fourth with 4.26. Despite the differences in ranking, all four aspects were interpreted as High Effect, indicating that the approach supports the development of essential foundational and higher-level reading competencies. The results suggest that the systematic and phonics-based nature of the Marungko Approach helps pupils recognize and manipulate sounds, decode words, expand vocabulary, and comprehend texts, thereby strengthening their overall reading literacy and confidence in engaging with reading activities. These findings further imply that the approach is a useful instructional strategy for developing interconnected reading skills among primary pupils, consistent with the findings of Abellana et al. (2023) that effective literacy instruction should address multiple components of reading development and Abildina et al. (2024) that structured and integrated reading strategies contribute to improved reading literacy.

3.3 Significant Difference on the Extent of the Effects of Marungko Approach in Teaching the Reading and Literacies of Primary Pupils as Perceived by the Respondents with Respect to the Cited Aspects in Terms of their Profile

The findings revealed that no significant difference existed in the perceived effects of the Marungko Approach in terms of phonemic awareness, decoding skills, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension when respondents were grouped according to age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, position title, length of service, and in-service trainings attended, as all obtained p-values greater than the 0.05 level of significance; hence, the null hypothesis was accepted. The results indicate that teachers generally shared similar perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the Marungko Approach regardless of their personal and professional characteristics. This suggests that the systematic and structured nature of the approach provides teachers with relatively consistent classroom experiences in supporting pupils' reading and literacy development, particularly in strengthening foundational skills and comprehension. The findings further imply that teachers' backgrounds, educational qualifications, teaching experience, position, and exposure to training do not substantially influence their perceptions of the approach, indicating a generally consistent recognition of its contribution to pupils' reading development. These findings may be viewed alongside Koyuncu and Firat (2023), who emphasized the influence of personal and socioeconomic factors on reading literacy outcomes, and Capistrano (2022), who reported variations in reading performance based on learners' demographic and socioeconomic characteristics.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concluded that the Marungko Approach has a high effect on the reading and literacies of primary pupils, particularly in phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and decoding skills. The overall findings demonstrate that the approach provides a systematic and structured means of developing essential foundational reading competencies among primary learners. Phonemic awareness obtained the highest assessment, followed by vocabulary development, reading comprehension, and decoding skills, although all aspects were rated as having a high effect. Furthermore, no significant differences were found in the respondents' perceptions when grouped according to age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, position title, length of service, and in-service trainings attended. This indicates that teachers generally recognize the effectiveness of the Marungko Approach regardless of their personal and professional characteristics.

Based on these findings, school administrators are recommended to sustain and strengthen the implementation of the Marungko Approach through regular in-service training, coaching, and monitoring focused on effective reading instruction. Teachers may continuously employ varied and developmentally appropriate activities that reinforce phonemic awareness, decoding, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension, while providing immediate feedback and targeted support to pupils who experience reading difficulties. Schools may also strengthen collaboration among teachers, parents, and other stakeholders to provide consistent reading support at home and in school. Pupils should be provided with regular opportunities for oral reading, storytelling, word games, guided reading, and collaborative literacy activities to enhance their engagement, confidence, and reading skills. The proposed action plan may be implemented to further improve the delivery of the Marungko Approach, while similar studies may be conducted in other districts, grade levels, or educational settings using additional variables and respondents to further validate and expand the findings.

5. Compliance with ethical standards

The author affirms that no conflicts of interest exist in relation to this study. The research was conducted in accordance with accepted ethical principles for human-participant research, including obtaining informed consent, ensuring voluntary participation, allowing participants to withdraw at any stage without consequence, and protecting participant confidentiality through anonymous, secure, and aggregated data management. Because the study examined psychological well-being, all research procedures were non-invasive and implemented with appropriate measures to reduce the risk of discomfort. Participants were informed of available support services should the need arise. Furthermore, the necessary institutional approvals were obtained for the administration of the research instruments and access to relevant academic records.

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