

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY: APPLIED BUSINESS AND EDUCATION RESEARCH

2024, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1117 – 1126

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.05.03.30>

Research Article

Effectiveness of Contextualized Marungko Approach-Based Supplementary Reading Material

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Article history:

Submission March 2024

Revised March 2024

Accepted March 2024

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ABSTRACT

Acquiring solid reading skills is significant in education as it is the cornerstone for academic success and lifelong learning. This sequential explanatory mixed-methods study investigates the effectiveness of a contextualized Marungko approach-based supplementary reading material in improving the reading performance of Grade 1 pupils. In the pre-experimental phase the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) tool was utilized to measure the reading skills of the twenty four (24) Grade 1 pupils in terms of identifying letter sounds, identifying initial sounds, reading familiar words, reading invented words, and reading oral passages before and after the implementation of the contextualized Marungko approach-based supplementary reading material. Findings revealed a significant improvement in the early reading skills of Grade 1 pupils after using the supplementary reading material. This indicated that the reading material effectively enhanced the Grade 1 pupils' reading performance. The responses of the five (5) participants in the qualitative phase, which were examined following Braun and Clark (2013) analysis, yielded two (2) themes. It is recommended that educational institutions and policymakers should consider incorporating the Marungko Approach into their reading instruction programs to enhance alphabet knowledge, phonemic awareness, word recognition, decoding, and oral reading fluency.

Keywords: *Marungko approach, Reading performance, Supplementary material*

How to cite:

Repaso, J. C. & Macalisang, D. S. (2024). Effectiveness of Contextualized Marungko Approach-Based Supplementary Reading Material. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*. 5(3), 1117 – 1126. doi: 10.11594/ijmaber.05.03.30

Introduction

Acquiring solid reading skills is significant in education as it is the cornerstone for academic success and lifelong learning. Reading proficiently empowers learners to comprehend information, access a vast array of knowledge, and communicate effectively. Particularly during the early years of education, developing strong reading abilities becomes paramount as it lays the foundation for future academic achievements. Gove and Wetterberg (2011) believed that children must acquire reading skills in the primary grades because, without it, they run the risk of falling far behind in later years due to their inability to understand written materials, follow directions, or communicate clearly in writing. This means even more that reading is an essential ability that forms the basis for many other areas of learning. If learners struggle to read proficiently, they may encounter difficulties comprehending information presented in written form, understanding written instructions, and effectively communicating in writing. Thus, the ability to read is seen as a prerequisite for success in many other academic areas, and failure to develop this skill early on can lead to academic setbacks in the future.

De Belen (2017) highlighted the crucial role of early reading instruction. Giving importance of implementing effective reading strategies reinforce learners' academic success (Bonghawan & Macalisang, 2024). Building on this, Edelman (2017) emphasized the need for teachers to develop and implement effective reading programs to enhance learners' literacy skills. Additionally, Clavido & Macalisang (2024) underscored the importance of acknowledging learner diversity and understanding individual learning preferences especially in reading. This underscores the importance for teachers to tailor their reading approaches to accommodate varied learning styles and preferences. Thus, Marungko approach is one of the reading program used to teach reading to young learners. Marungko Approach helps learners meet their early reading needs and assist in recognize words right away by helping them recognize letter-sound correspondence. Further, this approach was developed to help

novice reader's progress to fluency. Relief in capitalizes of the most common to the least common sounds in the Filipino language.

The critical component of the Marungko approach is the supplementary reading materials, which complement the core curriculum and provide additional opportunities for learners to practice and reinforce their reading skills. These materials are designed to be engaging, age-appropriate, and aligned with the developmental needs of young learners. Supplementary reading materials aim to capture learners' attention and facilitate reading comprehension by incorporating colorful illustrations, simple sentences, and repetitive patterns.

One of the student groups that was most impacted by the adoption of remote learning due to the pandemic was the Grade 1 class at Sebas Elementary School for the academic year 2022–2023. Before beginning formal education, they had not taken full face-to-face classes, nor had they attended Kindergarten. Modular distance learning was the only mode of learning the learners received during those years. Considering their families' socio-economic status, most of them had no access to educational resources like reading materials and gadgets that could supplement their early literacy skills. For this reason, they entered Grade 1 having difficulties performing the fundamental skills in literacy. Thus, learning to read is one of the challenging tasks mainly because they need to gain knowledge of the fundamental literacy domains. The necessity for the Marungko approach to improve the reading abilities of first-graders motivated the researcher to carry out this investigation.

Conceptual Framework

The Marungko Approach represents a pedagogical approach specifically crafted to increase the reading skills of young learners. This approach places great importance on critical facets of reading, such as phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency. The main goal of this particular study was to assess the effectiveness of the Contextualized Marungko Approach-Based Supplementary Reading Material in enhancing the reading performance of Grade 1 pupils.

To accomplish this goal, the study considered two (2) variables: the independent variable is the utilization of the contextualized Marungko approach-based supplementary reading material and the dependent variable is the pupil' reading performance. Analyzing the collected data was in the form of instrumental

in evaluating the effectiveness of the Marungko Approach-Based Supplementary Reading Material. The outcomes of this study can inform educators and policymakers in designing and implementing effective strategies to improve early reading skills among young learners.

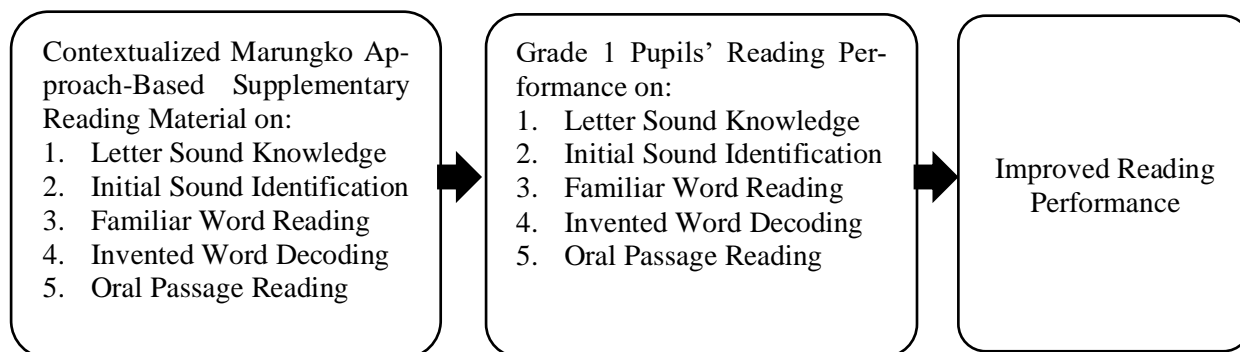


Figure 2. Conceptual Plan of the Research

Methods

Using a sequential explanatory mixed-method approach, the study included the one-group pre-test-post-test pre-experimental research design. The utilization of a pre-experimental research design involved assessing the pupils on two occasions: firstly, through a pre-test administered before any treatment or intervention, and subsequently, through a post-test conducted after the treatment (Thyer, 2010). By comparing the results of the pre-test and post-test, the researcher could ascertain any significant improvements in the pupils' performance following the given treatment. This design was chosen as it focused on examining the improvement within a single group of participants.

Furthermore, the study incorporated a qualitative research method, which involved collecting data through interviews. This transcendental phenomenology research design allowed the researcher to gather in-depth information and insights regarding the participants' experiences, perceptions, and perspectives. Interviews provided an avenue for the researcher to explore the qualitative aspects of the study, enabling a deeper understanding of the teachers' experiences with the Marungko approach-based supplementary reading material.

The researcher collected the necessary data for the study using the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) Tool, a standardized tool used to assess the reading proficiency of the Grade 1 learners in terms of letter-sound knowledge, initial sound identification, familiar word reading, invented word decoding, and oral passage reading. The participants were given supplemental reading material based on the contextualized Marungko approach developed by the researcher. Both prior to and following their education of the reading strategy, the participants completed pre-tests and post-tests. The following formulas were used to interpret the mean scores from the Early Grade Reading Assessment: 1.67-2.33 Developing, 2.34-3.00 Consistent, and 1.00-1.66 Beginning. The elements listed by RTI International (2016) were used to assess the early reading skills of the participants in this study. These

Both sources played a significant role in determining the reading level of the Grade 1 pupils in this study. The framework provided by RTI International (2016) ensured a comprehensive assessment of early reading skills, while the specific indicators from Del Rosario (2021) added further insights into the pupils' reading abilities. Lastly, in gathering the data for the teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of a Marungko approach-based reading

material, the researcher employed validated self-made interview guide questions.

Results and Discussion

The table 1 presents the reading performance of Grade 1 pupils in letter sound knowledge, initial sound identification, familiar word reading, invented word reading, and oral passage reading before their exposure to the contextualized Marungko approach-based supplementary reading material. The interpretation ranges provided in the table offer clarity in understanding the different performance levels. Scores between 1.00 and 1.66 are categorized as “Beginning,” indicating a need for further development. Scores between 1.67 and 2.33 fall under the “Developing” category, suggesting progress but still requiring refinement. Scores between 2.34 and 3.00 are classified as “Consistent,” indicating a higher level of proficiency and consistency in reading skills. In terms of letter sound knowledge, initial sound identification, familiar word reading, invented word reading, and oral passage reading, the

results showed a basic level of performance. These results highlighted the value and possibility of using the Marungko Approach-Based Supplementary Reading Material to help students improve their reading abilities.

The above pre-test results showed that students were just beginning or were still developing their basic reading skills, such as phonemic awareness and alphabet knowledge, prior to using the contextualized Marungko approach-based supplemental reading material. They therefore had poor fluency skills and required assistance to read and decode familiar words. The outcome suggests that the students had not yet mastered the foundational skills of reading. This is in line with the study by Tomas et al. (2021) which found that not mastering the reading elements was one of the reasons people thought contributed to their poor reading abilities. Among the skills required for reading are fluency, phonological awareness, word recognition, mastery of the alphabet, mastery of phonics, word recognition, and comprehension.

Table 1. The Reading Performance of the Grade 1 Pupils before the Intervention

Sub Task	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Letter Sound Knowledge	1.833	.3807	Developing
Initial Sound Identification	2.000	.5108	Developing
Familiar Word Reading	1.333	.4815	Beginning
Invented Word Reading	1.375	.4945	Beginning
Oral Passage Reading	1.083	.2823	Beginning
TOTAL	1.524	0.430	Beginning

1.00-1.66 Beginning; 1.67-2.33 Developing; 2.34-3.00 Consistent

Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the reading performance of Grade 1 pupils after their exposure to the contextualized Marungko approach-based supplementary reading material. The reading subtasks listed in the table include letter sound knowledge, initial sound identification, reading familiar words, reading invented words, and reading aloud passages. The students’ mean score in letter sound knowledge was 2.792, with a standard deviation of 0.4149. The rating of “Consistent” for this performance denotes a notable advancement in their comprehension of letter-sound correlations. After reading the

contextualized Marungko approach-based supplemental reading material, the students showed increased proficiency in this subtask.

For initial sound identification, the pupils obtained a perfect mean score of 3.000, indicating complete mastery of this skill. With SD of 0.0000, the performance is considered “Consistent.” This suggests that the pupils consistently and accurately identified initial sounds after utilizing the supplementary reading material. In the sub-task of familiar word reading, mean score of 2.458 with a SD of 0.5090. This performance is categorized as “Consistent.” The pupils demonstrated improved reading

abilities in recognizing and reading familiar words more consistently.

For the invented word reading, mean score of 2.500 with a SD of 0.5108, placing their performance within the “Consistent” category. This indicates that the pupils consistently mastered decoding and reading invented or unfamiliar words. Regarding oral passage reading, the pupils achieved a mean score of 2.000 with a standard deviation of 0.6594, categorizing the pupils’ performance as “Developing.” Although there was an improvement, further progress regarding reading fluency and comprehension of oral passages is needed.

The results collectively demonstrate a consistent enhancement in the reading proficiency of students across various sub-tasks, encompassing letter sound knowledge, initial sound identification, familiar word reading, and invented word reading. However, there remains a need for further advancement in oral passage

reading. These findings underscore the efficacy of the contextualized Marungko approach-based supplementary reading material in augmenting students’ reading skills and overall performance. The Marungko approach emphasizes phonics instruction, which equips students with the necessary skills to decode unfamiliar words in written texts (Ehri et al., 2001). Research by Levi et al. (2006) suggests that children find it easier to associate letters with sounds rather than names, with learning sounds facilitating the subsequent acquisition of letter names, but not vice versa. Additionally, Sitthitikul (2014) affirmed that phonics instruction significantly influences a reader’s performance. Consequently, as students’ progress in identifying letter sounds, they concurrently enhance their proficiency in other reading competencies, thereby illustrating the interconnected nature of phonics instruction and reading skill development.

Table 2. The Reading Performance of the Grade 1 Pupils after the Intervention

Sub Task	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Letter Sound Knowledge	2.792	.4149	Consistent
Initial Sound Identification	3.000	.0000	Consistent
Familiar Word Reading	2.458	.5090	Consistent
Invented Word Reading	2.500	.5108	Consistent
Oral Passage Reading	2.000	.6594	Developing
Weighted Mean	2.550	0.41882	Consistent

1.00-1.66 Beginning; 1.67-2.33 Developing; 2.34-3.00 Consistent

Table 3 presents a comprehensive analysis of the significant difference in the reading performance of Grade 1 pupils before and after their exposure to the contextualized Marungko approach-based supplementary reading material. The table revealed that in the “Between Groups” section compares the pupils’ reading performance scores before and after exposure to the supplementary reading material. The mean score before exposure was 1.524, while the mean score after exposure increased to 2.550. The t-value calculated for this comparison is 6.001. The p-value associated with this t-value is 0.004, lower than the predefined significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. As a result, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, indicating a significant difference in the reading performance between the two groups.

On the other hand, the “Within Groups” section of the table provides information regarding the variability of scores within each group. This section does not present specific details, such as mean scores, t-values, and p-values, as it primarily focuses on comparing the performance within the same group.

Overall, the findings from Table 3 show a significant difference between the reading abilities of first-graders before and after they were exposed to the contextualized reading materials based on the Marungko approach. The increased mean score and the significant t-value suggest a notable improvement in the pupils’ reading abilities after utilizing the supplementary reading material. The rejection of the null hypothesis provides strong evidence supporting the conclusion that the utilization of the

contextualized Marungko approach-based supplementary reading material had a positive and statistically significant impact on the reading performance of the pupils. This finding is corroborated by the research conducted by Vales (2019), which highlighted the effectiveness of the Marungko Approach in enhancing the reading levels of Grade 1 students. Additionally, the study by Crawford M, Rutkowski D., & Rutkowski L. (2023) demonstrated that a combination

of books and contextualized resources effectively improved reading outcomes, leading to increased reading frequency, duration, and proficiency. These findings collectively underscore the beneficial impact of incorporating the Marungko approach-based supplementary reading material into educational practices, ultimately contributing to enhanced reading performance among students.

Table 3. The Significant Difference in the Reading Performance of the Grade 1 Pupils before and after the Intervention

Group	Mean	T-value	P-value	Decision	Interpretation
Between Groups	1.524	6.001	0.004	Reject H ₀	Significant
Within Groups	2.550				

α = 0.05

Qualitative Phase

The research participants' categories were grouped and arranged under two emergent

themes, namely: prioritizing and sequencing letters and appropriacy of sequenced activities.

Table 4. Categories and Themes

Categories	Themes
Effective for Teaching Reading Develop Reading Fluency Enhancing Reading Level Teaching Beginning Reading Recognize Basic Fundamentals of Reading	Prioritizing and Sequencing letters
An Effective Learning Toolkit for Grade 1 To make it simple to teach learners It has a Systematic Progression It has Phonics Emphasis It Enhanced Reading Comprehension	Appropriacy of Sequenced Activities

Prioritizing and Sequencing Letters. This theme encompasses various focal points and strategies aimed at equipping learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to become proficient readers. Educators focus on implementing effective instructional practices and interventions to support learners' reading development. This includes providing explicit instruction in phonics, decoding strategies, vocabulary expansion, and reading comprehension skills. By systematically teaching these fundamental components of reading, educators lay the foundation for advancing reading proficiency. Additionally, the theme emphasizes the importance

of promoting reading fluency. Accuracy, speed, and prosody are all components of fluency, which improves comprehension and makes reading more enjoyable overall. To assist students in improving their fluency, teachers use techniques like repeated reading, modeling fluent reading, and giving them opportunities for independent reading. This is true when one participant said:

I find the use of Marungko Approach to be highly effective for teaching reading among Grade 1 pupils. This approach prioritizes the teaching of letter sounds over letter names, beginning with the simplest

sounds and progressing in an orderly manner. By first mastering letter sounds, learners are better equipped to recognize and read words, which leads to improved reading ability and comprehension.

P1:SS1

Teachers believed that one of the key strategies used to develop reading fluency is providing ample opportunities for repeated reading. Through repeated readings of familiar texts, students gain practice and gradually improve their speed, accuracy, and expression. This practice allows them to develop automaticity in word recognition and frees up cognitive resources for deeper comprehension. Modeling fluent reading is another effective approach within this cluster theme. By reading aloud to learners and demonstrating fluent reading, educators provide a clear example of what proficient reading sounds like. When learners hear fluent reading, they are better able to absorb appropriate expression, intonation, and pacing, all of which they can use in their own reading.

In addition, Grade 1 teachers also believed that incorporating explicit instruction and practice in prosody is also essential for developing reading fluency. Prosody involves using appropriate phrasing, intonation, and emphasis to convey the meaning and emotions within the text. Thus, teachers understand how punctuation, sentence structure, and dialogue cues can influence the way a text is read aloud. This was true when Participant 2 stated:

Using Marungko Approach in teaching reading is effective in improving the reading performance of my Grade 1 pupils. I can say that it is effective because this kind of approach follows a certain sequence of letter sounds and pupils are taught step by step. This also helped develop my Grade 1 pupils' reading fluency. This approach, which is suited to my students' reading needs, allows them to easily identify words. **P1:SS2**

Appropriacy of sequenced activities. This theme encompasses a range of focal points and approaches that aim to provide a solid foundation for literacy skills during the early years of education. Teachers concentrate on putting

into practice teaching strategies that are adapted to the unique requirements and developmental phases of young children. This includes creating a nurturing and stimulating learning environment that fosters a love for reading and writing. Engaging activities, such as storytelling, rhyming, and interactive reading experiences, are incorporated to capture children's interest and curiosity, promoting a positive attitude towards literacy.

Additionally, the theme highlights the importance of vocabulary development during early literacy instruction. Teachers employ strategies to expand children's vocabulary by introducing new words, engaging in discussions, and providing opportunities for word-play and exploration. Building a rich and diverse vocabulary enhances children's understanding of language and supports their reading comprehension skills. Furthermore, the theme recognizes the importance of providing opportunities for children to engage in meaningful and purposeful writing experiences. Through activities such as drawing, dictating stories, and writing their ideas, young learners develop their emergent writing skills and begin to understand the connection between spoken and written language. This was true when Participant 5 said:

For me using Marungko Approach in teaching reading is effective because it begins with teaching the pupils to recognize letter sounds which are essential in decoding syllables, then recognizing words, and finally reading phrases, sentences, and short passages. It is also effective because pupils are learning to read gradually starting from the most basic to the more difficult one. **P1:SS5**

Most teachers focus on developing and utilizing a variety of instructional materials and resources tailored to the unique needs of Grade 1 pupils. These resources may include age-appropriate books, manipulatives, multimedia resources, educational games, and interactive learning platforms. By incorporating these tools into instruction, educators create a stimulating and inclusive learning environment that promotes active engagement and exploration. They believed that the learning toolkit for

Grade 1 also encompasses the implementation of effective teaching strategies and methodologies. Grade 1 teachers utilize evidence-based practices to support early literacy and numeracy development, social-emotional learning, fine and gross motor skills, and cognitive growth. These strategies may include play-based learning, hands-on activities, collaborative learning, scaffolded instruction, and differentiated approaches that cater to the diverse needs and learning styles of young children.

Participant 2 revealed:

For me, Marungko approach-based reading material is an effective reading toolkit. It is very effective especially for Grade 1 pupils because it teaches the needed basic skills first that help them able to read. **P2:SS1**

In the context of advancing reading proficiency, most of the teachers gave importance to a systematic approach to teaching reading skills in a well-organized manner. A systematic progression ensures that learners build a solid foundation of skills and knowledge before moving on to more complex concepts. It involves carefully sequencing instruction to ensure a smooth and gradual development of reading abilities. This approach recognizes that reading is a cumulative process and that each new skill or concept builds upon previously acquired ones. This was evident when Participant 3 said:

For me, the Marungko Approach follows a carefully structured and sequential progression in teaching letter sounds. Beginning with the simplest sounds and gradually introducing more complex ones, this approach ensures that learners build a strong foundation in phonics. By mastering letter sounds in a systematic manner, students develop the necessary skills to decode words and enhance their reading abilities. **P2:SS3**

Phonics is a critical element of literacy education that centers on the connection between letters and sounds. One teacher emphasizes the significance of phonics instruction in helping learners acquire reading proficiency and establish a solid basis for decoding and recognizing words. By giving importance to phonics,

educators prioritize teaching learners the fundamental principles that govern the sounds in the English language. This entails teaching pupils about the correspondences between letters and their corresponding sounds, how to combine sounds to form words, dissect words into their constituent sounds, and comprehend pronunciation patterns and guidelines. Phonics instruction equips students with the necessary tools to decipher unfamiliar words, read with fluency, and develop skills in recognizing words.

Participant 4 stated:

This approach prioritizes teaching letter sounds over letter names. By focusing on phonics, learners acquire the essential skills to recognize and blend sounds, enabling them to read words accurately and independently. This emphasis on phonics lays a solid foundation for reading and improves overall literacy skills. **P2:SS4**

Enhanced reading comprehension goes beyond simply decoding words and understanding their literal meanings. It involves actively engaging with texts, making connections, drawing inferences, and critically analyzing information to construct meaning. Learners with strong reading comprehension skills can extract key ideas, identify the author's purpose and perspective, and evaluate the credibility and reliability of sources. To achieve enhanced reading comprehension, educators employ a range of instructional practices. They give learners explicit instruction in comprehension techniques like questioning, summarizing, visualizing, and drawing connections. These strategies equip students with the tools to actively interact with texts, monitor their understanding, and adjust their reading strategies as needed.

Participant 5 said:

By prioritizing letter sounds and phonics, the Marungko Approach equips learners with the tools necessary for word recognition and decoding. By building a strong phonetic foundation, students can tackle more complex texts with greater ease and understanding. **P2:SS5**

The Marungko Approach to teaching reading is supported by the Constructivist Learning Theory, which underscores its effectiveness. This approach aligns closely with the principles of constructivism, as it encourages active knowledge construction and meaningful learning experiences. Firstly, it promotes hands-on and experiential learning, allowing learners to engage with reading materials and activities, thereby fostering a solid understanding of phonics. Secondly, it facilitates learner-centered learning, enabling learners to connect prior knowledge with new information and develop reading skills at their own pace. Additionally, the approach emphasizes interactions and collaboration, providing opportunities for learners to share ideas and negotiate meaning, thereby enhancing learning through multiple perspectives. By integrating constructivist principles, the Marungko Approach creates an effective learning environment that allows learners to construct knowledge and meaning through experiences, interactions, and reflections, leading to a comprehensive understanding of phonics, decoding skills, and reading comprehension.

Conclusions and Recommendations

It is a compelling evidence based on the findings that there was a positive impact of the contextualized Marungko approach-based supplementary reading material on the reading performance of Grade 1 pupils. The initial reading performance of the pupils demonstrated the need for intervention, as they were at the “developing” and “beginning” levels across different reading sub-tasks. However, significant improvements were observed following their exposure to the supplementary reading material. The pupils’ reading performance significantly advanced to the “consistent” level in essential areas such as Letter Sound Knowledge, Initial Sound Identification, Familiar Word Reading, and Invented Word Reading. The difference between pre-and post-intervention reading performance further supports the effectiveness of the contextualized Marungko approach-based supplementary reading material. These underscored the significance of implementing targeted and evidence-based supplementary materials to enhance the reading skills

of young learners, emphasizing the need for teachers and policymakers to consider the Marungko approach as a valuable tool for improving early reading proficiency.

Based on the conclusion, strong implications and recommendations were made:

1. Incorporate the Contextualized Marungko Approach-Based Supplementary Reading Material;
2. Ensure the successful implementation of the contextualized Marungko approach-based supplementary reading material;
3. Promote a Whole-School Approach to create a supportive and conducive environment for improving early reading skills; and
4. Conduct further research on the potential benefits for learners with diverse learning needs.

Acknowledgement

The researchers express their sincere gratitude to the Southern Capital Colleges for their generous support and encouragement. They also extend their heartfelt appreciation to the participants for their enthusiastic involvement, which greatly contributed to the successful completion of the study.

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