



Action Research: What Can I Do to Improve the Reading Habits of Students?

Dechen Loday^{1*}

¹*Gangrithang Primary School, Chokhor, Bumthang, Bhutan.*

Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analyzed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

Article Information

DOI: 10.9734/JESBS/2021/v34i930355

Editor(s):

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Complete Peer review History: <https://www.sdiarticle4.com/review-history/73087>

Short Research Article

Received 18 June 2021
Accepted 28 August 2021
Published 17 September 2021

ABSTRACT

Reading is critical to success both in school and life. It is a fundamental skill for children and adults alike. Like speech itself, it is the key to knowledge and opens up worlds. This action research aims to cultivate a reading habit of students. Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR) programme is the tool used to materialise this objective. The research samples are 21 students taken from Class IV of Gangrithang Primary School under Bumthang district. My experience in teaching and working at the Primary level for the last eighteen and half years as a teacher, made me to realized that student engagement particularly in reading books were not satisfactory as expected. This experience and realization has motivated me to take up an action research project to enhance reading habit of students. A questionnaire and a semi-structured interview schedule were used as the instruments of data collection. Findings reveal that out of 21 sampling 17 students confirmed USSR and teacher modeling are the most effective measure that can promote reading habits among students.

Keywords: *Action research; uninterrupted sustained silent reading programme; teacher modeling, extensive reading.*

GLOSSARY

USSR : *Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading Programme*

AR : *Action Research*

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading opens the mind of an individual as it allows vast opportunities of gaining knowledge. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that students read well in order to put himself or herself at a higher academic level or to advance into a new stage. Needless to say reading is indeed an important skill to be mastered as it contributes to student's excellence in their studies.

English is taught as a second language and it is also the medium of instructions for other subjects except Dzongkha (our national language). A secular education system has developed in Bhutan over the last 60 years wherein they use English and Dzongkha as the languages of instruction [1]. However, it is evident that a major percentage of students in schools have not mastered the language well enough for them to be efficient readers. Generally, we notice that our students face a number of problems that are significantly shown through their production of the English language either in their written assignments or their speaking ability. In their written assignments, there are many lexical and semantic mistakes that interfere with the message that they are trying to convey. This evidently reveals their limited vocabulary. In terms of speaking, it can be clearly seen that students are persistently not able to communicate their ideas as they do not know the words that they should use. Apart from problems due to their limited vocabulary, we also notice that students face problems in generating, exploring and explaining ideas. Hence, these problems lead the researcher to believe that our students are not doing enough independent reading. This study aims to find out ways to cultivate a reading habit of students where I teach.

1.1 Reconnaissance

According to Grundy [2] and Stringer (2004), action research (AR) is understood as systematic processes of inquiry aimed at bring improvement in one's own practices, in the situation or both. It is a cyclical research process that involves reconnaissance, identifying questions, planning,

acting, observing, collecting evidence, and reflecting [2] [3] [4].

1.2 Situational Analysis

"Reading is one of the main skills in children's learning. But children lack reading habits". After being in the teaching cadre for the last eighteen and half years, the students' academic performance was seen generally low. This is because children don't understand language. When ask to read, students cannot pronounce a word properly, fluently and they don't bother punctuation marks.

Serving in the different schools at different grades and location gave an opportunities to observed and learnt that students do not actively participate to read although various methods such as providing reading opportunities in school and at home, lecture or text-book, discussion and chorus reading to teach were provide to them.

So, looking at the children's attitude towards reading made me to think of ways to improve the reading habit of these students. The purpose of this research is to find out the solution to inculcate the reading habits students in general.

1.3 Competence

Taught and has been teaching in Primary and secondary schools for the last eighteen and half years and within the span of these many years go an opportunity to attend various trainings and workshops particularly in improving the overall performance of the school.

Further, the professional development course in Master in Educational Leadership and Management (M. Ed.) in Paro College of Education from 2010 to 2013 gave an opportunity to learn and gained some theoretical knowledge on research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading is a process of acquiring information by receiving a message from print in a meaningful way [5]. It is one of the most important components of our language. Reading is an essential tool to prepare children to be able to adapt to social and technological changes that are taking place at an unprecedented rate. In today's modern society, especially in text-rich developed countries, the ability to read well can and does make an enormous difference to one's

school performance, career potential and personal success [6]. Children are taught to learn to read so that they can eventually read to learn. Reading is a powerful tool that enables one to acquire knowledge and understanding. As per Keyser.D [7], "Reading is a gateway to learning anything about everything. It helps you discover new thing and educate yourself in any area of life you are interested in." Therefore, it is a key to a wealth of experience that links people in a way far beyond distance or time. However, there is no single set of confined definition for reading [8]. Some view reading as a complex process integrating all aspects of human behaviour and demanding to read accurately, to appraise what is read and to relate, what is read in a significant way to other areas of life. Similarly, Zangmo [9] stated that interest in reading opens doors for the reader to get engaged. On the other hand, an interested reader can comprehend difficult materials better compared to a child at a similar level who lacks interest. However, inculcating love for reading is a daunting task as Zangmo contended that some families or cultures consider reading as 'work'. But according to Darrell [10] 'reading provides experience through to the individual so that he may expand his horizons, identify, extend and intensify his interest and gain deeper understanding of himself and other human being and of the world'. Thus, reading depends on how a reader interprets it. Reading can be just the sounding or verbalizing of words found on a page without understanding the meaning of the printed words.

Reading is an important skill that will affect students' performance in all other language skills namely listening, speaking and writing; these language skill will be developed through different reading strategies; scanning, skimming, locating topic sentences, reading in detail, reading critically, summarizing key points, note taking and active reading. Each is useful at different times. Think about the ways in which you read. It is not always necessary (or indeed a good idea) to read everything in full. It is also important that you develop the skill of identifying the main idea in a text without wading through it in detail and avoid spending a long time looking up words in the dictionary McKeachie [11]. According to Davis, G. [12] "Reading is important because words-spoken and written are the building blocks of life. You are, right now, the result of words that you have heard or read. What you become in the future will depend on the words you read and learnt."

However, the inability to be an independent reader hinders student performance. Nevertheless more pervasive than lack of competence as a source of non-reading is lack of motivational ways. The teacher's modelling and reading strategy has great impact on developing students' reading habit. Children who are introduced to books early are more prone to develop their language skills, and are in turn usually better in reading comprehension compared to children who are non-readers or reluctant readers. The more children gain in this language ability and reading comprehension, the more children learn. Reading thus provides opportunities for children to develop cognitively and linguistically. One of the fundamental responsibilities of teachers is, therefore, teaching their students to read. Indubitably, the future success of all students hinges upon their ability to become proficient readers [13].

Reading, like other activities, needs to be practiced. Yet, as research has shown, a proportion of children either come from an environment where reading is not seen as a valued activity [14] or have experienced a lack of success with learning to read. These children become the low-achieving students commonly found in schools. Very often, these children have little love for reading, and they may not be proficient in reading at all. It then becomes a vicious cycle. As they do not read well, they refrain from engaging in any reading activities. Very frequently, these students do not engage in reading during reading periods. The after-effect of this is that their reading ability will make no progress as there is no practice involved. The ability to read is essential to being able to learn any subject taught in school.

Learning to read is an important part of growing up of a child [15] [10] & [16]. It is considered to be the first button in the garment of education. Bruno (1991 as cited in Ahuja) rightly remarked, "If the first button of a man's coat is wrongly put, all the rest are bound to be crooked" (p. 1). Thus, reading plays a vital role in children's life as it has the power to revolutionize their ways of thinking and living. It makes the young readers learn to have better understandings and insights. Purposes of reading are immense as remarked by Frank Jennings (1991 as cited in [17]

We read to learn. We read to live another way. We read to quench some blind and shocking fire.... We read our way into the presence of great wisdom, vast and safe

suffering, or into the untidy corners of another kind of life we fear to lead.

The reading directly or indirectly focuses to gain meanings, to gain information, to guide activity, to find values, to organize, to solve problems, to remember and to enjoy [18]. In short, reading is one great habit that can truly change one's life forever. It can entertain and amuse, but most of all it will enrich the reader with knowledge, and experiences narrated. An effective way a learner can develop good active reading habit is through reading much material in print and in digital formats and availing those resources in different ways.

Another important factor responsible for developing a reading interest in students depends on motivation. Leading researchers Guthrie and Wigfield [19] state that motivation and engagement make reading enjoyable, increase strategy use during reading, and support comprehension. It is no surprise that those who enjoy reading, read more, or that reading more improves reading outcomes. Adolescent struggling readers often lack motivation to read. This impairs their comprehension and limits their ability to develop effective reading strategies or to learn from what they read, thus limiting their exposure to important content-area information, world knowledge, and vocabulary (Ahuja & Ahuja [17]. Teachers can increase their students' motivation to read by incorporating several key components into instruction. However, increasing students' reading motivation does not single-handedly improve reading skills. Attention to motivating students should occur within the context of a comprehension reading program in which necessary reading skills and strategies are taught to struggling readers.

Efficiency in reading is dependent also on the student's motivational readiness. Lack of interest is an important cause of inefficient reading. To be an efficient reader, the student must first want to learn. Interests serve as internal motivation. Cummins and Fagin in Ahuja [17] suggest:

Interest is an emotional involvement of like or dislike which is associated with attention to some object. Interest arises through the interaction of our basic needs and the means we use to satisfy them. The student who is interested in reading is usually the student for whom reading satisfies the basic needs of self-esteem, esteem of others, curiosity, and success and personal adequacy. (p.45)

The research on reading motivation by Guthrie and Humenick [20] in McCardle (Ed.) identified four critical instructional features that can improve students' motivation to read: 1) providing content goals for reading, 2) autonomy, 3) providing interesting texts, and 4) increasing social interactions among students related to reading. When students choose what they read, what activities they engage in related to reading, and with whom they work, their motivation increases, as does the time they spend reading. Students enjoy reading texts that they find interesting and choose to continue reading these texts during free time (Guthrie & Humenick). When students can collaborate socially on reading and reading related tasks, they find the work more motivating and often continue working even after completing the assigned task (Guthrie & Humenick). Largely there are two types of motivations being discussed among researchers and theorists namely, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Guthrie and Wigfield posit that intrinsic motivation seems to emerge the desire and interest that the reader has within him/her. There is no imposing force from outside for reading. It is connected with deep and internalized learning thereby producing lifelong readers. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is based on rewards and social controls. However, current researchers have found out that extrinsic motivation can be used to bring about intrinsic motivation to read [9]. Thus, my Action Research will bring about balanced view on giving importance on motivation and reading strategies for students to develop interest for reading.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study hopes to answer the following question;

What can I do to improve the reading habits students?

Action Plan: Only one section of class IV students was selected to be involved in this action research. The base line data were gathered in order to understand the trend of students' reading habit with more focus on USSR programme and teacher's reading modelling as motivational support in my classes commencing from first week of March 2021. Survey questionnaires were piloted before administering to all the 21 students. Specific instructions are stated on the form to ensure that the respondents complete the questionnaire correctly. The responses to the questionnaire were then

analyzed. To elicit more information from the respondents regarding the findings of this study, a semi-structured interview schedule was also developed. Based on the analysis, an interview schedule was developed to seek answers for additional data and information. Apart from the questionnaire, a semi-structure interview with 21 of the respondents to gain more information and to reaffirm my findings was conducted separately to offers quiet and solitude being away from the classrooms. The responses of the interview were coded and used to explain the findings for the questionnaire. Each interview took about 10 – 15 minutes. By using a semi-structured interview format, answers to the interview questions could be probed. A deeper understanding of the answers and how the answers came to be realized was thus achieved. Detailed record of interviews was maintained. The document analysis was carried out to check their reading habits. Their previous class portfolio were checked and crossed checked the library issue register. All these base-line data did provide insights on the existing situation reinforcing my concerns for the research. After having carefully analyzed the situation, plans for improvement were designed and completed by the end of March, 2021.

Starting the first week of April, alternative strategies for teaching were implemented till the end of May. The impacts of these alternative strategies were monitored through interviews and a series of self-reflections. Towards end of May, 2021, intervention data were gathered using the same survey questionnaire from all 21 students in the class and interviews of 21 students. Intervention data generated were compared to the base-line data to see if there was improvement of reading habit. The data gathered through interview and survey questionnaires were analysed through development of patterns and themes. The feedback gained from the interviews, served to support my assumption and perception that USSR as reading techniques and teacher modelling are the most effective in getting students to read when all of the interviewees reflected that they read mainly because of relevant reading strategy and teacher modelling. However, the interview indicated that some of the students had no interest to read books.

Barriers to promoting reading habit from the Base – line data: The findings from the baseline data found that the students do not do enough independent reading on their own. Only few

students took interest in reading book, this is showed by the document analysis used as one of the tools to check their reading habits. I cross check with the library issue records. So the result from the baseline data was very discouraging one. The analysis of baseline data showed that there are some barriers to promote reading habit. Some of the issues that are admitted are lack of teacher modelling, reading techniques and motivation to promote independent reading. These issues which had been emerged as major issues are discussed in the following paragraphs:

Modelling refers to the patterning of thoughts, beliefs, strategies, and actions after those displayed by one or more models—usually teachers or parents who explain and demonstrate skills [21]. The role of the teacher is paramount. Research suggests that the frequency with which students read in and out of school depends upon the priority classroom teachers give to independent reading [22].

In his social learning studies, Bandura [23-25] showed the importance of social behaviour. A child will follow the beliefs and behaviours of an adult perceived to be important. Consequently, any activity that particular adult performs, the child responds with a desire to do it as well.

Consciously or not, if teachers present the lesson or activity with enthusiasm, suggesting that it is interesting, important and worthwhile, students are more likely to adopt the same attitude [26] [27] [28]. Affirming this, Campbell [29] found that children spent more time reading if the teacher also read. When children see their teachers enjoy reading during USSR, it reinforces the idea that reading is valuable and important. Empirical studies by Methe and Hintze [30], Pluck et al. [31], Wheldall and Entwistle [32], and Widdowson et al. [33] demonstrated unanimously that when the teacher models reading for the students, the students' on-task reading naturally increases.

Guthrie and other researchers such as Gambrell, Wigfield, Alvermann and Baker agree that reading motivation is the main component of engagement. Motivated readers will look for meaning, have enjoyment in learning and trust their own reading abilities. Therefore, from the above point of view, learning is directly proportional to motivation. The greater the motivation, the greater the learning.

Base-line data indicates that generally the teaching technique of reading used is quite good. However, there were also a significant percent of students who are not satisfied with the teaching that help them to enhance independent reading. Almost 50% of students agree that I need to promote the skill of motivating while teaching through role modelling. Accordingly, some intervention strategies were designed to improve these weaknesses. It was agreed by the students that reading is encouraged and done just for academic purposes rather than promoting reading habit in the long term. Thus, there are no appropriate reading techniques and motivational strategies given for students to promote reading habit.

The responses from the base-line data questionnaire indicate that there is less focus to the use of different books for the sake of meeting syllabus coverage. Many students have admitted that they lack information to other forms of books or reading materials that will help them to show keen interest in developing reading habit.

Students do not have role models to look up and promote reading habit. Teachers use only prescribed textbooks to teach and they are required to cover syllabuses to meet the deadlines. So role model reading cannot take place in the interest of time. At home, reading books other than the text hardly ever takes place. Robert and Marlene in Ahuja [17] states that

Teachers are models, not just by being engrossed in reading but by what is done after reading. If teachers talked about what they had read, shared the ideas encountered and their reaction to them, shared their ideas in the classroom, read some parts of stories orally because they wanted to share the author's exact words, pupils began to do the same things (p.118).

Findings from the base-line data indicate that I need to improve my teaching reading techniques and the way I model reading to them. As a teacher, I must be aware that these little things serve as motivational factors for promoting their reading habit or independent reading.

Intervention Strategies: The following intervention strategies have been designed based on the findings from the analysis of the base-line data.

3.1 Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR)

I have chosen Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading Programme (USSR) as the intervention strategy to materialize the findings of base-line data. Researched have shown that the programme is a practical method to be implemented in promoting extensive reading among students (Grabe, 1991 and [34]. According to Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistic, extensive reading is intended to develop good reading habits, to build up knowledge of vocabulary and structure, and to encourage a liking for reading [35]. To implement extensive reading in the classroom, at least 10 minutes of uninterrupted sustained silent reading is set aside for students to read individually anything they wish to before the actual class begins and in alternate days in a week without having to do the social works. This programme is to enable students to enjoy reading and to read without help unfamiliar text, at appropriate speed, silently and with adequate understanding.

Non-accountability is also a characteristic of USSR. The accountability is rather low as a guide for teacher to ensure that reading is taking place. USSR is a program that focuses on personal reading development and not assessment for result. For this program, I have sought help of English teacher as a guide for teachers, students' assessment is observed when students develop their own reading speed, reading level and understanding of the text. Here it is hoped since no formal assessment is conducted, students will commit themselves to the reading programme honestly.

As most of the books selected are within student's knowledge and level, theory of prior knowledge ensure that learning will take place. Prior knowledge is the foundation upon which new meaning is built. This will link to new ideas, skills and competencies. This happens when students personally choose the book they like and books that students have prior knowledge of. Assigned reading given to students might discourage students from reading the assigned text due to lack of prior knowledge. Learners learn best when they are interested and involved. Since students personally choose the book they like, it should interest them and they will be involved in the reading. The goal of a successful programme should be the development of readers who can read and who choose to read.

In short, extensive reading together with USSR will give students more freedom to choose reading materials that interest them and more responsibility in finding materials within their proficiency range. [36].

The USSR program has been chosen and implemented as the intervention strategy to promote the reading habit. Time is set aside either during the period or before school instructional hours for this program. The teachers and students are, in general, free to choose their reading materials, whether fiction or non-fiction. This program was also designed for teachers to demonstrate a reading model for the students.

3.2 Teacher Modelling

Human behaviour is learned in part by observation and imitation [25]. For students, a given role model, modelled by parents, teachers or peers may facilitate their learning of it. Gambrell [37] stated that students need to see that we value reading and that reading is important in our lives. Share with your students. What better way to show them that reading is important? Findings from base line data show that teacher modelling is required for students to encourage and promote reading habit. Therefore, a teacher's role is a crucial in fostering students' reading attitude. So it is important here that the teacher must also read a book when implementing this program. Collins [38] comments that, if a valued person is observed at least occasionally to be functionally engaged in reading, then the probability of independent reading is increased. One of the effective, if not the most effective, ways to motivate the pupils to read during USSR is teacher modelling.

In his social learning studies, Bandura [23-25] showed the importance of social behaviour. A child will follow the beliefs and behaviours of an adult perceived to be important. Consequently, any activity that particular adult performs, the child responds with a desire to do it as well.

Consciously or not, if teachers present the lesson or activity with enthusiasm, suggesting that it is interesting, important and worthwhile, students are more likely to adopt the same attitude [26] [27] [28]. Affirming this, Campbell [29] found that children spent more time reading if the teacher also read. When children see their teachers enjoy reading during USSR, it reinforces the idea that reading is valuable and important. Experimental studies by Methe and Hintze [30], Pluck et al.

[31], Wheldall and Entwistle [32], and Widdowson et al. [33] demonstrated unanimously that when the teacher models reading for the students, the students' on-task reading naturally increases. These studies are important as they adopted the reversal design, whereby the teacher stopped modelling for a period of time and then modelled again after that period of time. The pupils' on-task reading correlated positively and directly with the teacher's action. Not only is teacher modelling important in itself, it proves to be even more important to low achieving readers. Few of such readers have reading models outside of schools [39]. Therefore, there is greater need for these students to have appropriate reading role models in schools. Pluck et al. [31] showed that the gains made by the low-achieving readers under concurrent modelling were greater than those made by the high achieving readers. High achieving readers already have a reading habit. Teacher- or adult-modelling reading has less impact on good readers compared to readers who do not have a reading habit. Low-achieving readers need to be convinced of the importance of reading; they do not read and hence they are the ones who require convincing. Thus, teacher modelling of reading has a positive effect on student learning. In a study conducted more than a decade after the study by Pluck et al. [31], Widdowson et al. [39] found that concurrent modelling clearly increased the on-task reading behaviour of both low and average-achieving readers during USSR. The on-task behaviour for the low-achievers increased to nearly that found for the high-achieving readers at baseline. Both these studies demonstrate that teacher modelling is indispensable in motivating low-achieving readers.

Therefore, to help students to become highly engaged readers, teachers themselves need to be highly engaged [19]. Garrett [40], in his article delineating the affective and cognitive factors impacting students' reading attitudes and consequent reading behaviour, found that "teachers and principals have an enormous impact on the attitudes children develop toward reading" (p. 21). Generally, getting the child to mimic the modelling teacher is more effective than preaching to the child. This in essence is the principle underlying observational learning. Thus, the worry is this: If the teacher does not read, how can it then be important to the students, particularly the low-achieving ones?

3.3 Comparison of Base-line with Post Intervention Data

Towards the end of May, 2021, intervention data using the same questionnaire were gathered from all 21 students in the class and conducted interviews with all the 21 students. All 21 students returned the fully responded questionnaire. Besides these, a detailed observation notes in the form of diaries were maintained throughout the intervention period. Post intervention data generated were compared with the base line data to see if there were improvements in my choice of intervention strategies for promoting reading habit. Data analysis has been carried out based on intervention strategies implemented.

3.4 Uninterrupted Sustained Silent Reading (USSR)

According to questionnaire and interview conducted, almost 80% of students comment that "before he used to teach with more focus on the coverage of syllabus but later he used to come to class and teach reading with the use of USSR technique". Some students candidly comment that "before it was more of less reading activity but now students were involved to read books based on their choice". Comments in the observation diary also reveal that such strategy encourage students to participate in reading process actively. For instance, with the implementation of USSR strategy/programme, I have seen that "all the students in the classroom are motivated and read during this time" [41]. A comment made by English teacher also reveals that such strategy encourages students to read books of their choice with enjoyment. The findings from this AR support the literature that learners learn best when they are interested and involved. This programme enables students to enjoy reading and to read without help unfamiliar text, at appropriate speed, silently and with adequate understanding. Since students personally choose the book they like, it should interest them and they will be involved in the reading. The goal of a successful programme should be the development of readers who can read and who choose to read. In short, extensive reading together with USSR will give students more freedom to choose reading materials that interest them and more responsibility in finding materials within their proficiency range [36].

3.5 Teacher Modelling

Findings from the post intervention data show that there has been improvement in the way

teaching took place in the class for them to encourage reading habit. For instance, many of students have mentioned both in the questionnaire and interview that some of my strengths are "teacher model" in reading that encourages reading. It revealed what Gambrell [37] stated that students need to see that we value reading and that reading is important in our lives. Share with your students. What better way to show them that reading is important? Findings also showed that teacher modelling is required for students to encourage and promote reading habit. Therefore, a teacher's role is a crucial in fostering students' reading attitude. So it is important here that the teacher must also read a book when implementing this program. Collins [38] comments that, if a valued person is observed at least occasionally to be functionally engaged in reading, then the probability of independent reading is increased.

Some students responded that when you models reading, our on-task reading naturally increases. These studies are important as they adopted the reversal design, whereby the teacher stopped modelling for a period of time and then modelled again after that period of time. The pupils' on-task reading correlated positively and directly with the teacher's action. Not only is teacher modelling important in itself as per the findings, but it proved to be even more important to low achieving readers. Further, it showed that the gains made by the low-achieving readers under concurrent modelling were greater than those made by the high achieving readers. Teacher- or adult-modelling reading has great impact to readers who do not have a reading habit. Thus, teacher modelling of reading has a positive effect on student learning. In a nutshell, teacher modelling clearly increased the on-task reading behaviour of both low and average-achieving readers during USSR. The on-task behaviour for the low-achievers increased to nearly that found for the high-achieving readers at baseline. Thus, the findings from students' responses demonstrate that teacher modelling is indispensable in motivating low-achieving readers.

4. DISCUSSION

This action research has been a good experience to encourage students to develop reading habit to a great extent. The students showed some reluctance in the initial stage, but gradually the students' mind set continued to adapt and improve with the strategy. As they were exposed

to the strategy of the teacher modelling and USSR, they started gaining interest and willingness to read more books with enjoyment and actively. Findings from this action research suggests that the students' reading habit is enhanced and promoted drastically through use of USSR and teacher modelling strategies of teaching in the classroom. For instances, out 21 samples 17 students showed a keen interest in reading and said that they require right strategies and right intervention to enhance their reading. Unlike in the past, they promised that they will continue to read in future as they have acquired necessary skills to comprehend text and has developed the pleasure of reading. The records maintained with the school library has also showed that the students had borrowed many books from the library from the identified group compared with other students.

From all this information, I have come to understand that students feel encouraged and interested to read books if suitable strategy and teacher modelling with regard to reading is done actively. On the other hand, if teacher concerned does not read, students are not likely to read the books.

This action research concludes that such a teaching – learning programme or strategy have to be inculcated right from the beginning of the schooling so that students are used to it and build their reading habit.

5. CONCLUSION

This action research has been an enriching professional development process for me. In the process of implementing strategy and acting as teacher model in reading, I was exposed to new pedagogical knowledge and learning experiences. Learning about new reading strategy and being teacher model were challenging and inspiring experiences. This action research reveals that our students need to be encouraged to read independently. USSR has proven to be an effective immediate measure that can promote reading among them. Therefore, this programme should be continued as it may help to cultivate reading habit among students and this in turn will contribute to an increase in the students' proficiency in language.

This AR concludes that the teacher is the one who can influence the reluctant reader to read because the teacher is living and real. The teacher is able to influence by the words used

and the actions performed. For the teacher to influence, the first step is to model his/her reading engagement. Only through the persistent and dogged modelling can the teacher be the key that unlocks the gate to the reading garden. Teacher modelling is the necessary.

Although there has been overall improvement that promotes independent reading, yet there has been area such as implementing other reading skills as well to enhance reading habits. Therefore, this AR leaves room for further research in promoting students independent reading habits.

CONSENT

As per international standard or university standard, Participants' written consent has been collected and preserved by the authors.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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