

# Multigrade Teaching in Public Elementary Schools in Batangas Province

Celerina Mendoza-Sintones

*Head Teacher I, Nag-iba Elementary School, Batangas, Philippines*

**Abstract:** This study aimed to propose performance-based learning tasks for multigrade (MG) teaching in public elementary schools in Batangas Province based on the assessment of the status of the teaching-learning situations in MG classes in the area. The descriptive method of research was utilized in this study. Results revealed that the MG classes followed scheduling in classes, utilized varied strategies in the teaching-learning process, the learning outcomes through varied forms of measuring instruments and implemented classroom management and discipline and MG pupils have acquired the competencies expected of their grade level. The MG teachers manifested adequate instructional and behavioral management competencies. These differences in assessments were results from different experiences, functions, position and personal knowledge and observation. Difficulties in the implementation of MG classes were found to arise from inadequate human, material, financial and technological resources.

**Keywords:** Multi-grade, performance-based learning task

## 1. Introduction

The future of the Filipino children is marred by various forms of uncertainties considering the critical conditions of the Philippine socio-economic and political situations. The problem of poverty is still hounding the country despite efforts for poverty alleviation; this affects children. In response to the need for better education of young Filipinos, the Philippine education system through the Department of Education has institutionalized the K to 12 Basic Education as stipulated in R.A 9155, an act instituting a framework of governance for basic education establishing authority and accountability in the department. Termed as Governance Basic Education Act of 2001, it aims to enhance the curriculum to address the needs for access, quality and relevant education for all-long learning of every young in public elementary schools. Inclusive in this is the provision of multigrade teaching to areas and for children with far access to regular classrooms due to their location. The researcher, a multigrade teacher for three years teaches groups of children of different ages, grade levels and abilities altogether in a single classroom at the same time in Mabini, Batangas, with 71 enrollees and four teachers. As a multigrade teacher need greatly aware of the need of the multigrade pupils to be taught so that they may be productive individuals in their community. She was greatly motivated to pursue this study to help find appropriate activities as learning aids to instruction of

different grade levels. The researcher hopes the performance-based learning tasks may support instruction.

## 2. Review literature

Multigrade teachers are educators, so they are expected to manifest teaching proficiencies and attributes just like contemporary teachers. Little (2005) cited major lessons that are useful as a multigrade teacher, in ensuring the best quality learning for the pupils. Teachers should understand the diversity of pupils and see this diversity not as a problem to be solved but as an opportunity to be used to produce better learning. The UNESCO (2005) presented the case of a multigrade classroom, multigrade teachers need to pay special consideration to the way their facilities and instructional materials are organized. These are other difficulties in the part of teachers.

In multigrade classes, performance-based learning may be useful to the multigrade teacher to manipulate the two or more classes at the same time. Use of appropriate activities or tasks for the grade level plays important roles into the teachers and pupils. The teachers may develop time management skills while the pupils enjoy in doing their task. The activities or tasks which are aligned in the curriculum may be useful for the development of the pupils' knowledge and skills. They may apply the learning in activity done in their everyday real life situation (Bowen, 2016).

## 3. Results and discussion

Based from the data gathered, the following results were obtained.

### A. Description of multigrade classes

The description of multigrade classes is one of the concerns of the study. The multigrade classes were described in terms of class schedules, strategies for teaching and learning, learners' assessment and classroom management and discipline.

- Class schedules. As a whole, the obtained composite means of 2.89 and 3.17 indicated teachers and the school heads agreed on scheduling preparations implying that the implementation of class schedules was acceptable to both school heads and teachers.
- Strategies for teaching and learning. As a whole, the composite means obtained were 2.81 and 3.41

interpreted as moderate extent, respectively from the assessment of the teachers and the school heads.

- Learners' assessment. The school heads rated that to a great extent, oral recitation was conducted to give pupils opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings and diagnostic, formative and summative tests were conducted at the beginning, during and after every grading period. These had weighted means of 3.63 and 3.53.
- Classroom management and discipline. As a whole, the composite mean obtained from the school heads' assessment was 3.53 in the item affirming classroom management and discipline was implemented to a great extent and to a moderate extent with weighted means of 2.60 as assessed by teachers.

**B. Level of Performance of Pupils in Multigrade Classes.**

Of the 38 schools with multi grade teaching, 16 schools results had pupils' performance described as Mastered, pupils of eight schools had Nearing Mastery and pupils from four schools had Not Mastered performance based on the results of National Achievement Test 2015. There were 10 schools without NAT results as they were primary schools and did not have grade six classes.

**C. Professional Knowledge and Skills**

The professional knowledge and skills of the multigrade teachers play an important role to perform effectively in teaching. Managing the instructional and behavioral competencies ensure enhancement of the knowledge and skills to be delivered to the pupils.

- Instructional management competencies. As a whole, the obtained composite means of 2.66 and 3.39 from the respective assessments of the teachers and the school heads were indicators that the levels of instructional competencies of the multigrade teachers were manifested to the moderate extent.
- Behavioral management competencies. As a whole, the obtained composite means were 3.39 and 2.66 affirming that for the school heads and teachers manifestation of behavioral management competencies among multigrade teachers were manifested to a moderate extent.

**D. Difficulties Experienced in Multigrade Classes.**

From the school heads' assessments, the top three difficulties cited experienced to a moderate extent were limited knowledge to manage curriculum innovation, limited time to prepare anchor activities that pupils may choose once they are through with their assigned tasks, and inadequate instructional materials for the different grade levels, with respective weighted means of 3.08, 2.93 and 2.88. The three lowest rated difficulties experienced by the teachers in multigrade classes were limited time to interpret the test results, limited time to organize learning experiences on subject matter and content and poor

condition and small size of the classrooms with respective weighted means of 2.33, 2.40 and 2.45 which were difficulties experienced to a slight extent. The top three difficulties experienced assessed to a moderate extent by the teachers were limited activities for different grade levels, limited knowledge to manage curriculum innovation and limited time to share with other teachers which had weighted means of 3.05, 3.00 and 2.99. The lowest weighted means were 2.27, 2.43 and 2.47 on unavailability of internet connection to support in instruction cited experienced to a slight extend. The obtained composite means of 2.69 and 2.66 from the respective assessments of the teachers and the school heads indicated that the difficulties encountered in multigrade teaching were to a moderate extent.

**E. Proposed performance-based learning tasks for multigrade classes**

The proposed performance-based learning tasks were focused on the development of level of performance of the multigrade pupils. These comprised objectives, desired outcomes, procedures, presentation and learning activities based on weaknesses in the different learning areas English, mathematics and science for grade five and six.

**PROPOSED PERFORMANCE-BASED LEARNING TASKS FOR MULTIGRADE CLASSES**

**I. ENGLISH**  
 Performance-based learning tasks in English are the different ways that may help the pupils to develop their written and oral communication skills with their classmates, teachers and own family. The English tasks will explore pupils' knowledge and skills by applying them in real life situations.

**a. Writing Sentences**  
 Objective:  
 Write clear and coherent sentences  
 Desired Outcome:  
 At the end of the task, pupils will construct their own sentences which are clear and coherent  
 Presentation:  
 In writing a sentence, the pupils need to know and understand its meaning and part. A sentence is group of words or phrases which express a complete thought or ideas. It has two basic parts, a subject and a predicate. If you have clear understanding of the sentence itself, you can construct a clear and coherent sentence.  
 Read the paragraph  
 There are three reasons why Mabini is one of the best tourist destinations in Batangas. First, Anillo has an excellent underwater reef which attracts everyone to swim in the sea. Next, it has high mountains, the Gulgug Baboy and Mount Panay. In the mountain you can see the attractive scene of Balaan View. Some mountaineers spend their nights in the mountains to witness the sunset. Finally, the clean and green environment around Anillo shows how the people take care of it. The hospitable attitude of the community makes visitors feel well in Mabini. Generally, Mabini is an environment-friendly town.  
 Tasks:  
 Based on the paragraph below, do the following tasks.  
 Activity No. 1- Model Sentence  
 1. From the paragraph, copy as many as you can sentence.  
 2. Underline the subject and encircle the predicate.  
 3. Show your output to the class.

**II. MATHEMATICS**  
 Mathematics plays an important role in everyday life of pupils. The performance-based learning tasks may help pupils create and express their experiences. Explaining, evaluating, communicating and applying the model will make their experiences practical and meaning.

**a. Adding Dissimilar Fractions**  
 Objective:  
 To add dissimilar fractions  
 Desired Outcome:  
 At the end of the task, pupils will know how to add dissimilar fraction  
 Presentation:  
 In adding dissimilar fraction, we need to remember the following:  
 1. Find the least common denominator and write the equivalent fractions  
 2. Add the numerators.  
 3. Write the common denominators.  
 4. Write the final answer in the simplest form.  
 Tasks:  
 1. The pupils will read and analyze the steps in adding dissimilar fractions.  
 2. Pupils will apply the steps in each task presented.  
 Activity No. 1- Using Cut Outs in Adding Dissimilar Fractions  
 Word Problem:  
 Roy has a squash which weighs 2 2/3 kilogram. Joey also has a squash which weighs 3 3/6. They plan to sell them in the vegetable market. What is the total weight of Roy's and Joey's squash?  
 1. Group the class into 2.  
 2. Read the problem.  
 3. Draw the situation in the bond paper.  
 4. Apply the steps in adding dissimilar fractions in the cut outs.  
 5. Show the output to the class.

**III. SCIENCE**  
 Our performance-based learning task in multigrade science teaching is to be certain that not one child is turned off on science. The tasks shown grow out of what we know about the process, skills and content of science since the process skills are essential for learning effectively.

**a. Changes on the Earth's Surface**  
 Objective:  
 To describe the changes on the Earth's surface  
 Desired Outcome:  
 At the end of the task, pupils will demonstrate the changes on the Earth's surface  
 Presentation:  
 We all know that the Earth which is almost spherical shape is made up land, air and water. It is composed of different layers with their own structure in the surface. Learners need to be aware of the composition of the planet. The movement of every layer of the Earth makes different changes on the Earth's surface.  
 Tasks:  
 1. Group the class into two according to their favorite fruits.  
 Group 1- Apples  
 Group 2- Grapes  
 2. Read and analyze the presentation.  
 3. Do the assigned tasks.  
 Activity No. 1 - Creation of the Earth using Body Movement  
 1. Present the task to the group.  
 2. Give 5 minutes to plan the activity for the group.  
 Present the structure of the surface of the Earth using body movement.  
 1. Present the output to the class.

Fig. 1. Sample Output in English

Fig. 2. Sample Output in Mathematics

Fig. 3. Sample Output in Science

#### 4. Recommendations

The following were the recommendations of the study:

- Multigrade teachers need to meet regularly in order to come up with more innovative performance-based learning tasks that maximize time and effort in lesson preparation.
- Special meetings and collaborative projects may be instituted by the schools and government/ non-government agencies to address the difficulties met by multigrade teachers.
- Similar studies may be conducted for the multigrade classes involving other grade levels to optimize utilization of varied performance-based learning tasks.

#### 5. Conclusion

From the findings, the following conclusions are drawn:

- The multigrade classes consistently observe scheduling of classes utilizing varied strategies in the teaching-learning process, assessing learning outcomes through varied forms of measuring instruments and implementing classroom management and discipline.
- The multigrade pupils have acquired the competencies expected of their grade level.
- The multigrade teachers manifest adequate instructional and behavioral management competencies.
- School heads and teachers vary in the assessments on the status of multigrade classes and on the manifestation of

instructional and behavioral management competencies resulting from different experiences, functions, position and personal knowledge and observation.

- Difficulties in the implementation of multigrade classes tend to arise from inadequate human, material, financial and technological resources, but they are manageable through the collaborative efforts of the school heads, the teachers and the community, along with other stakeholders.

#### References

- [1] Jabbarifar, Taghi The Importance of Classroom Assessment and Evaluation in Educational System, Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference of Teaching and Learning, INTI University College, Malaysia, 2009.
- [2] Little, A. Learning and Teaching in Multigrade Settings, for the UNESCO 2005 EFA Monitoring Report. NY: Springer, 2005.
- [3] Miller, B.A. Multigrade Instruction, Journal of Research Education, winter 2002, Vol. 7, No. 2 pp. 3-13., 2002.
- [4] Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development. Study on Multi-grade/Multi-class Teaching: Status and Issues, Kathmandu, Tribhuvan University, 2003.
- [5] Bowen, T. Teaching Approches: Tased-based learning. <http://www.onestpoenglish.com/methodology/teachingapprochestask-based-learning/146502.article.,2016>.
- [6] Heskey, E. Activities to Promote a Positive School Climate, 2013. <http://www.ehow.com>
- [7] Basic Education Act of 2001.
- [8] DepEd e-BIES
- [9] DepEd, "The Multigrade Training Resource," Multigrade Programs in Philippine Education (MPPE), Philippine, 2008.
- [10] Multigrade Teachers Handbook, 2014.