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EFFICIENT UTILIZATION OF THE TEACHING SCHEMES IN MULTIGRADE CLASSES

Jorenz A. Belleza and Esper L. Feliciano

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Multigrade teachers of Tublay prefer using Scheme A to relieve them from multiple preparations and for them to efficiently use the time allotted for each subject.**
- **The nature and time alignment of the competencies in the curriculum make it obligatory to teachers to use Scheme D.**
- **The Tublay multigrade teachers deviated from the suggested standard teaching process of the Scheme D specially in shifting from one grade level to another.**
- **Tublay Multigrade Teachers have very limited to no training prior to their deployment to multigrade classes.**

INTRODUCTION

Amongst the many endeavors of the programs of the Department of Education is the multi-grade education. Specifically, multi-grade education is reaffirmed as a tool to attain the 2015 Education For All (EFA) goals. A multi-grade class combines at least two different grade levels in the same classroom at the same time. The combination is usually of successive grade levels; such as, three and four, five and six. In the Philippines, multi-grade classroom set up was incorporated in the educational system with the belief that it can raise the literacy and achievement rate in the rural areas. By 2009, close to a third of the public elementary schools in the country have some form of multi-grade instruction. As such, the advent of issues and challenges such as the implementation that lack monitoring and quality evaluation. All of these have emerged as a consequence of rapid growth of multi-grade classes in the country, (SEAMEO, 2011). At the grassroots level, the division of Benguet have a vast number of schools with multi-grade classes which gives a great sense in the idea of giving attention to what is going on inside these classrooms. Moreover, even schools with complete grade levels still resort to utilizing multi-grade as a teaching approach.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopted the case study approach. Qualitative data were derived from intensive individual interviews and classroom observations. Furthermore, the study used complete enumeration as all the seven multi-grade school with intermediate multi-grade teachers in the schools district of Tublay were involved in the research. The data were classified using themes and were presented using figures and diagrams. Answers, comments and other relevant information were properly documented and were treated as part of the responses that were subjected to analysis.

As themes for comparison of the implementation processes employed by the multi-grade teachers, the study utilized the elements of the chosen scheme such as waiting time, shifting, with teacher activity or teacher supervised activity, without teacher activity or independent activity.

FINDINGS

Teaching schemes used by the teacher in teaching mathematics in multi-grade classes.

The Department of Education provided multi-grade teachers with teaching process options in teaching multi-grade called Schemes. There are five multi-grade teaching schemes which are Scheme A, Scheme B, Scheme C, Scheme D, and Scheme E. Identification of the scheme to be used is based on the grade level learning competencies.

1. **Scheme A** will be used when the behavioral and content competencies are common to the grade levels, hence, they are taken as one.
2. **Scheme B** will be utilized when 3 grade levels are combined and when two of these grade levels have the same instructional objective while the other grade has a different objective.
3. **Scheme C** will be applied when all combined grade levels have learning competencies with the same behavior but have different content or level of difficulty.
4. When competencies are uncommon on both behavior and content, separate teaching processes will be employed using **Scheme D**.
5. Finally, **Scheme E** will be used when the objective in one of the grade is a prerequisite to the competency of the other grade level.

The teachers teaching multi-grade mathematics identified D and A as the schemes that they have been using in teaching. However, Scheme D is the most used scheme which is anchored to the reason that the learning competencies on the different grade levels under the same timeline are uncommon in both behavior and content.

Expectedly these schemes are used by teachers since these were strongly endorsed by the Schools Division of Benguet during multi-grade teachers' trainings and seminars. These schemes are total opposites especially in terms of the teacher's delivery of the lesson and time allotment for each of the combined classes. Main factors considered by teachers in choosing the teaching schemes are the learning objectives set by the curriculum under the K-12 program.

The implementation processes observed when using the chosen scheme in teaching mathematics in the multi-grade class

The implementation process employed by teachers varied from each other even when they claim to use the same scheme which is Benguet Scheme D. Though all of the teachers developed separate teaching-learning process for the combined grade levels, most of the processes used inside the classroom deviated from the processes expected when using Benguet Scheme D. Specifically, the most evident deviation was posed during the shifting of the teachers from one class to the other.

As observed no one among the teachers followed the exact format of the scheme in executing the teacher supervised activities. Some claimed that they came up with some changes to make the teaching-learning process more productive. Meanwhile, other teachers exclaimed that the deviation arose due to some situations and classroom management concerns.

The deviations further affected the other elements of the scheme which resulted to some problems such as multiple idle time for learners. While varied reasons for the deviations were identified, some common results were observed. Among these are the inefficient utilization of time resulting in unfinished delivery of the lesson. Furthermore, due to multiple shifting, interrupted learning process among learners were evident. Teachers may also miss some important parts of the teaching-learning process when the remaining time for the subject becomes insufficient to complete the process.

Figure 1 shows the teaching process in a multigrade class using scheme D. This scheme is utilized when the learning competencies of the combined classes does not have any commonality. Since the competencies for each grade level are not common, the teacher must separately develop the lesson for both the classes.

Scheme D have five main elements which are the Waiting Time, With Teacher Activity, Independent Activity (Without Teacher Activity), Assessment and the Teacher Shifting.

This scheme suggests two to three shifts for the teacher to efficiently maximize the time in teaching the combined grade levels. Scheme D suggests that the teacher should give instructions to the grade level who will work independently while the other grade level is waiting for their With Teacher activity. Upon giving the instruction, the teacher will shift to the other grade level to complete the review until the generalization or application while the other grade level is working on their Independent Activity. After the With Teacher activity, the teacher will give an Assessment and will shift to the grade level who had the Independent Activity to complete the Presentation of lesson until generalization or application before giving an Assessment.

After which, the teacher may opt to shift back to the other grade level to check their Assessment output while the other grade level is doing their Assessment Activity.

Figure 2 shows the Observed Teaching Process Deviation 1. The teaching process started with a joint motivation activity. This is followed by a waiting time for Grade B while the independent activity instructions are given to Grade A. After which, the teacher went for a review in Grade B and gave an instruction for an Independent Activity before shifting back to Grade A.

After shifting back to Grade A, the teacher presented the lesson and guided learners during their developmental activities while Grade B is having their Independent Activity. However, due to inefficient utilization of time, the teacher missed to guide learners in generalizing the lesson.

Another Independent activity was given to Grade A as the teacher guides learners in Grade B during their developmental activities. However, it is noticeable that the teacher immediately guided the Grade B learners in generalizing the lesson and resorted to collecting the unfinished outputs of the Grade A learners due to lack of time.

Figure 3 shows the Observed Teaching Process Deviation 2. The start of the process is similar to the suggested scheme D which starts with giving of instructions for an independent activity. However, After shifting to Grade A, the teacher simply delivered a review and presented the lesson and immediately gave an independent activity before shifting back to Grade B to check their independent activity output.

After, presenting the lesson and guiding the Grade B learners during their developmental activity, the teacher shifted back again to Grade A to guide the learner in their developmental activities which was followed by another independent activity.
It took the teacher four shifts before completing the developmental activities until application of learning in Grade B.
When the teacher shifted back to Grade A, time is no longer sufficient. This prompted the teacher to simply check the learners outputs and immediately generalize the lesson. The multiple shifting and interrupted flow of the teaching process resulted to collection of unfinished outputs.

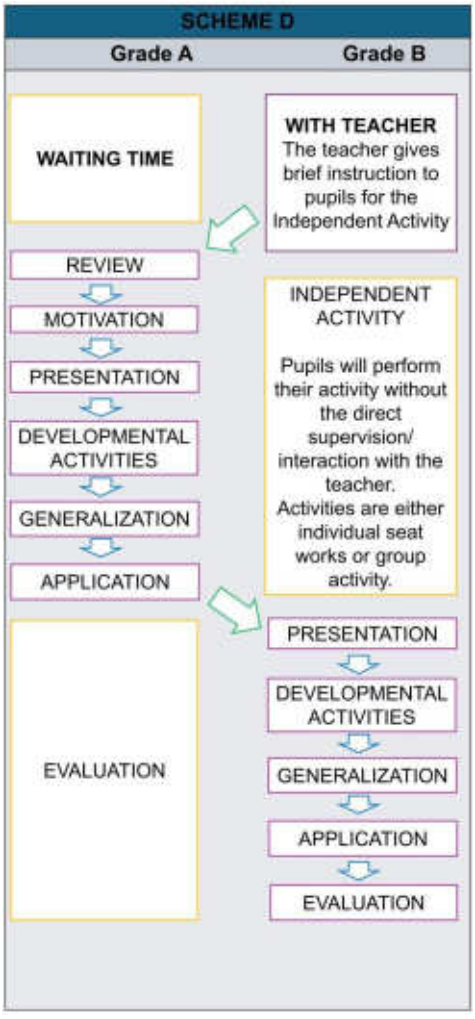

Figure 1: Scheme D

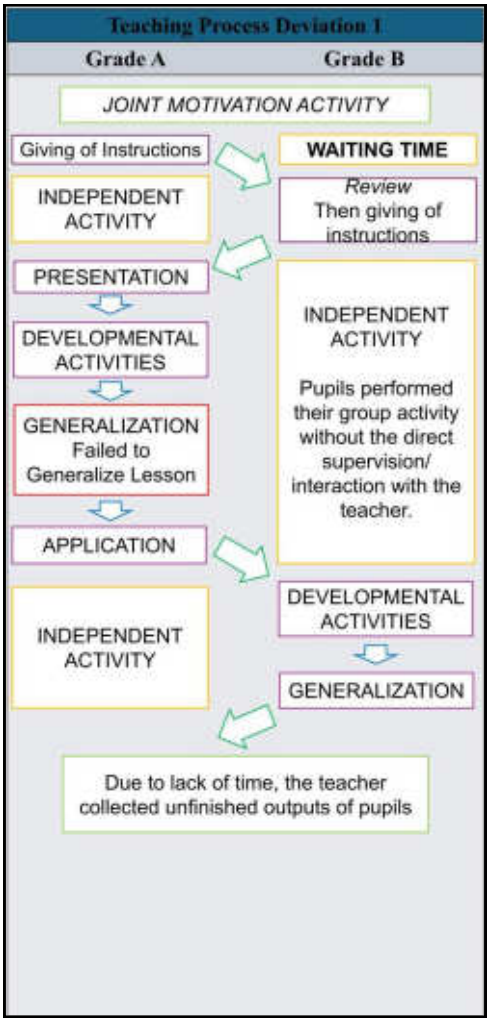

Figure 2: Teaching Process Deviation 1

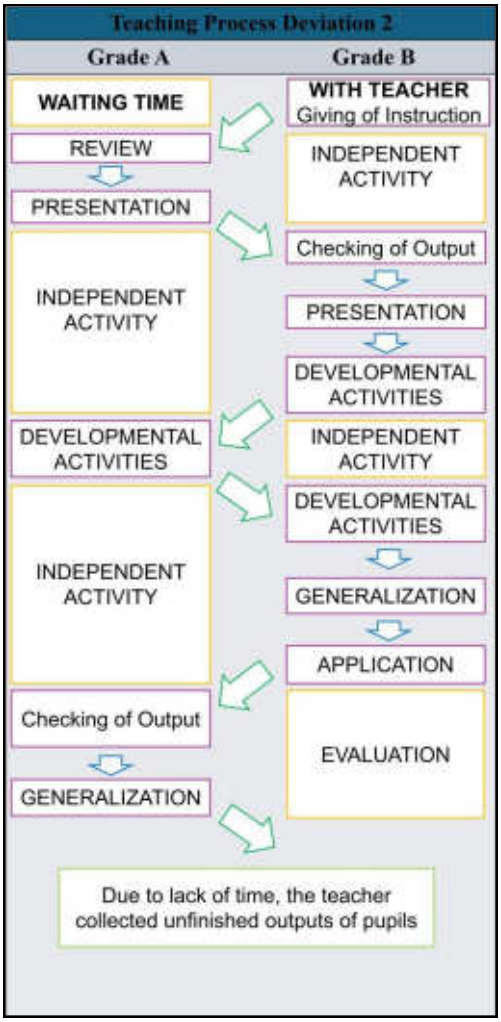

Figure 3: Teaching Process Deviation 2

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CALL TO ACTION

- Equip teachers with sufficient multigrade teaching knowledge and skills before deploying them to multigrade classrooms through a series of Department of Education-Division based or localized multigrade teaching trainings and teacher competency assessments.
- Conduct actual classroom and simulated demonstrations on the use of the multigrade teaching schemes as part of trainings provided by the Schools Division of Benguet to help new and old multigrade teachers visualize the implementation of the multigrade teaching schemes.
- Provide multigrade teachers with localized suggested lesson indexing and alternative competency arrangements to allow the teachers to have more flexible options in the utilization of the schemes.
- Include multigrade teaching as a compulsory course or subject in the curriculum of Teacher Education Institutions.

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ABOUT THE MATERIAL

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Institute of Social Research and Development
Research and Extension Publications Office
2601 La Trinidad, Benguet, Philippines
em@il Address: isrd@bsu.edu.ph | repo@bsu.edu.ph
Telephone/ Fax: +63 (074) 422-1877

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