



Contextual Teaching and Learning Approach in Literature among Junior High School Students in Bucas Grande Islands

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Abstract

This quasi-experimental study assessed the effectiveness of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach in enhancing literary competence and preserving cultural heritage among Junior High School students in Bucas Grande Island, Philippines. Two Grade 7 sections were selected: one using CTL (experimental group) and the other utilizing traditional teaching methods (control group). Results showed that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in literary competence, particularly in three out of four quarters. The experimental group's mean score increased from "Average" to "Above Average/Competent" after the CTL intervention, indicating marked improvement. Statistical analysis revealed that the CTL approach led to more consistent learning outcomes, while the control group showed little progress. Although a temporary decline in performance occurred in Quarter 2, the experimental group demonstrated resilience with significant gains in subsequent quarters. The study also found that CTL fostered deeper student engagement by integrating local narratives, enhancing both academic performance and cultural identity. The findings suggest that CTL is an effective strategy for improving literature learning and cultural preservation, offering a more personalized and relevant learning experience. Based on these results, the study recommends integrating CTL into broader curricula and promoting culturally responsive teaching practices to enhance students' academic and cultural development.

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Introduction

Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is an approach that helps students connect learning materials to real-life situations, including their personal, social, and cultural contexts. It emphasizes meaningful learning by relating lessons to everyday experiences (Afni & Hartono, 2020) ^[2].

Utami *et al.* (2023) defined Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) as an effective approach that helps students understand material through personal, social, and cultural contexts, enhancing their ability to actively construct knowledge. Their study found that CTL significantly improves reading comprehension. Integrating CTL in literature teaching addresses the need to make learning more engaging and relevant. Unlike traditional methods focused on rote memorization and isolated textual analysis, CTL connects literature to students' real-life experiences. This promotes active learning, critical thinking, and a deeper appreciation of the subject.

In literature, which explores human experiences and values, the CTL approach is especially effective. By connecting literary texts to students' lives, culture, and society, it makes themes and characters more relatable and meaningful. This method fosters higher-order thinking skills like analysis and research, while aligning with 21st-century goals such as critical thinking, creativity,

collaboration, and communication. CTL encourages students to become active participants in learning, creating meaning through reflection and performance. It also supports diverse learning styles and promotes an inclusive environment where all students can engage and contribute.

Bucas Grande Island, one of the largest in the Caraga Region, is home to several major Junior High Schools and rich in cultural heritage, including traditional songs, legends, and folktales. However, modernization has put these cultural treasures at risk of being forgotten. Many young people today show little interest in these traditions, affecting efforts to promote and preserve them for future generations. Additionally, students on the island face challenges in learning literature, particularly English literature. Teachers have observed that learners find it difficult due to complex vocabulary, unfamiliar themes, and poor reading skills. Literature is often seen as disconnected from their cultural, linguistic, and social context, making it harder for students to engage and succeed.

To address these issues, the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach offers a promising solution. By using local literary works and themes, CTL makes literature more relatable and meaningful for students. This approach helps bridge the gap between learners and literature, encouraging deeper understanding and appreciation. Implementing CTL in teaching literature can not only improve students' academic performance but also preserve the rich cultural heritage of Bucas Grande Island. Through locally inspired content, students can reconnect with their roots, fostering pride in their identity and keeping their cultural legacy alive.

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the CTL approach in literature classes, focusing on its impact on student participation, understanding, and appreciation of literature, and to develop a contextualized lesson exemplar using this method.

Problem Statement

The study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach in enhancing literary competence among Junior High School students in Bucas Grande Islands. It specifically sought to determine the level of students' literary competence before and after the implementation of the CTL approach through pretest and post-test scores, explored how the CTL approach is applied in the classroom, assessed if there was a significant difference between the pretest and post-test results, and aimed to identify instructional materials that could be developed to further support the teaching of literature based on the findings.

Materials and Methods

Research Design

The present study employed the quantitative research approach specifically quasi-experimental having experimental and controlled groups. This method is deemed appropriate because the study examined the implementation and integration of Contextual Teaching and Learning Approach to the literary competence of the learners towards preserving the island's cultural heritage.

The quasi-experimental research design is appropriate for this study because random assignment was not feasible due to the natural classroom and sectioning structure of the school. Instead, existing intact classes were used. This approach is

valid under quasi-experimental designs, as emphasized by Creswell (2014), and still allows for meaningful comparisons of interventions.

Research Environment

The study was conducted particularly in two Grade 7 sections of Socorro National High School located in Bucas Grande Island also known as the Municipality of Socorro in the province of Surigao del Norte, Philippines.

Participants

The present study involved Junior High School students of Bucas Grande Island with Experimental and Controlled groups.

Strategically, two sections were selected from Grade 7 of Socorro National High School. In one section, the Traditional Teaching Strategy was applied and in the other section, the Contextual Teaching and Learning Approach was also strategically applied. This is to purposively examine how effective Contextual Teaching and Learning Approach in teaching literature across the island with its absolute goal of preserving the island's culture and tradition.

A total of 60 students were purposively selected and divided into two groups: Experimental Group (Villareal) and Controlled Group (Zara).

The Experimental Group comprised students from the Science and Technology Engineering (STE) section, Villareal, while the Controlled Group was drawn from the Special Program in Journalism (SPJ) section, Zara. These sections were strategically chosen to assess the effectiveness of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) Approach in a non-language-focused learning environment.

The Villareal (STE) section was exposed to the Contextual Teaching and Learning Approach, while the Zara (SPJ) section was taught using Traditional Teaching Strategies. This distinction allowed the researcher to determine how CTL influences literature learning performance, particularly in students who are not primarily trained or exposed to literature and writing-based disciplines.

Choosing the STE section (Villareal) as the Experimental Group helps test the true adaptability and impact of the CTL approach on learners who may not have a strong predisposition to literature. Unlike students in the Journalism section, those in the STE section are generally more oriented toward STEM-related subjects, making them an ideal test group to challenge the CTL's effectiveness in literature instruction.

This intentional and purposeful selection ensures that any observed improvements in the experimental group can be confidently attributed to the CTL strategy rather than prior literary inclination or curriculum design. The difference in program focus between the groups does not compromise the integrity of the research design; instead, it strengthens the outcome by demonstrating how CTL can potentially enhance literary skills in diverse academic contexts.

Research Instrument

This study used two groups designed between contextual teaching and learning approach and traditional lectured based to examine the extent of contextual teaching and learning approach in teaching literature towards cultural heritage preservation. A researcher-made test was used, serving as a pretest and post-test for evaluating the performance or target skills to be acquired by the students between contextual

teaching and learning approach and traditional method which will be roadmaps towards cultural preservation. The instruments were composed of contextualized lesson exemplars in Grade 7 literature subject from 1st to 4th quarter that are being aligned according to DepEd's Most Essential Learning Competencies. In every weekly lesson, there were two lesson exemplars, one was used to apply contextual teaching and learning approach and the other one for the traditional method. The localized learning materials, particularly, the original literary compositions in the island were provided for the students' reference herewith.

Ethics and Data Gathering Procedure

The researcher obtained permission from the school principal of Socorro National High School to conduct a study on the impact of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) Approach on students' literary competence and cultural awareness. Following approval, the study was implemented with two groups: the control group, which received traditional teaching methods, and the experimental group, which was taught using the CTL approach. Both groups took pre-tests to assess their initial understanding, followed by respective teaching methods. The control group engaged in textbook-based instruction, while the experimental group used localized texts and activities tied to cultural traditions. Afterward, post-tests were administered to evaluate immediate learning gains, followed by a summative test to assess overall learning outcomes, including knowledge retention and the ability to relate literature to cultural identity. The collected quantitative data was analyzed using

appropriate statistical methods to evaluate the effectiveness of the CTL approach.

Data Analysis

The study utilized several statistical tools to analyze the data: Mean and Standard Deviation were used to assess student performance levels in literature before and after implementing the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach. The T-test compared the mean scores of the experimental and control groups on various assessments to determine significant differences. Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) evaluated the post-test score differences while controlling for pretest scores, ensuring a more accurate assessment of the CTL approach's effectiveness. The Coefficient of Variation (CV) was applied to compare the consistency of student performance across both groups, with lower CV values indicating more uniform outcomes under the CTL approach.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the tabulated and analyzed data of the study. Interpretations and implications were also discussed to the vivid meaning of the data.

Literary Competence of the participants before and after the implementation of the CTL approach

The Table 1 presents the literary competence of the participants before and after the implementation of the CTL approach.

Table 1: Literary Competence of the participants before and after the implementation of the CTL approach, as measured by the pretest and post-test scores

Group	Test	Mean	SD	Verbal Interpretation	Qualitative Description
Control	Pretest	58	8.2	Poor	Not Competent
	Posttest	64	10	Below Average	Not Competent
Treatment	Pretest	70	7.01	Average	Less Competent
	Posttest	83	2.99	Above Average	Competent

Legend:

Scale	Verbal Interpretation	Qualitative Description
90-100	Excellent	Very Competent
80-89	Above Average	Competent
70-79	Average	Less Competent
60-69	Below Average	Not Competent
59 and below	Poor	

This table presents the literary competence of participants before and after the implementation of the Contextualized Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach.

It can be seen on the table that the controlled group had a mean score of 58 on the pretest, which is described as "Poor." The scores were somewhat spread out, with a standard deviation of 8.2. After the intervention period, their mean score increased to 64 on the posttest, moving their performance to the "Below Average" category. The spread of scores also increased slightly (SD = 10).

The experimental group started with a higher mean score of 70 on the pretest, categorized as "Average," with a standard deviation of 7.01. Following the implementation of the CTL approach, their mean score significantly increased to 83 on the posttest, reaching the "Above Average/Competent" level. Notably, the standard deviation decreased considerably to 2.99, indicating that the scores within this group became more consistent and clustered around the higher mean. The

substantial increase in the mean score and the decrease in the standard deviation for the experimental group suggest that the CTL approach may have been effective in improving the literary competence of the participants in this group.

The experimental group consistently outperformed the controlled group in the posttest, further supporting the potential positive impact of the CTL intervention.

The lower standard deviation in the experimental group's posttest scores might indicate that the CTL approach led to a more uniform improvement in understanding and skills among the participants in that group. This is supported by the study of Retnawati, H., Arlinwibowo, J., & Wulandari, N. F. (2017) that despite challenges, schools using CTL-integrated thematic instruction saw notable improvement in student understanding and retention.

The result provides evidence suggesting that the implementation of the CTL approach may have positively impacted the literary competence of the experimental group,

leading to a higher average score and more consistent performance compared to the controlled group. These findings support CTL as a promising strategy for improving literary competence, particularly in fostering consistent, high-level outcomes.

However, the pre-existing gap between groups underscores the need for cautious generalization. Educators might consider piloting CTL in diverse classrooms to validate its effectiveness across varying baseline abilities.

Table 4: Controlled Group Data in Normality Test (Shapiro-Wilk) from Quarter 1 to Quarter 4

Normality Test (Shapiro-Wilk)					
			W	p	Decision
Quarter 1	-	Pre-Post Test	0.953	0.216	Normally Distributed
Quarter 2	-	Pre-Post Test	0.966	0.462	Normally Distributed
Quarter 3	-	Pre-Post Test	0.951	0.189	Normally Distributed
Quarter 4	-	Pre-Post Test	0.969	0.543	Normally Distributed

Note. A low p-value suggests a violation of the assumption of normality

The data collected from the controlled group for all four quarters shown in table 3 were normally distributed, as shown by p-values well above the 0.05 threshold. This means the dataset followed a normal distribution and was suitable for

further analysis using parametric tests. Despite the normal distribution as shown in table 4, none of the quarters showed statistically significant improvements between pretest and post-test scores in any of the four quarters.

Table 5: Controlled Group Data in Paired Samples T-Test from Quarter 1 to Quarter 4

Paired Samples T-Test						
			statistic	df	p	Decision
Quarter 1	Pre-test	Post test	-1.47	28.0	0.153	No Significant
Quarter 2	Pre-test	Post test	-0.753	28.0	0.458	No Significant
Quarter 3	Pre-test	Post test	1.73	28.0	0.095	No Significant
Quarter 4	Pre-test	Post test	1.39	28.0	0.176	No Significant

For the first quarter, the paired t-test revealed no significant difference between the students' pre-test and post-test scores ($p = 0.153$). This outcome suggests that the conventional teaching method, which tends to focus heavily on rote learning and passive content delivery, did little to enhance students' initial literary competence. Students may have encountered the material, but it likely did not resonate with them in a way that inspired deeper understanding or appreciation.

Quarter 2 continued this trend, with the p-value (0.458) indicating no meaningful improvement. This highlights that repeated exposure to traditional instruction does not necessarily equate to improved performance, especially when

the teaching remains detached from students' everyday experiences and cultural identity.

There was a slight uptick in the mean scores for Quarter 3, but the results still did not reach statistical significance ($p = 0.095$). This subtle increase may reflect students' gradual acclimatization to the subject but not enough to demonstrate genuine competence or deepened understanding.

By the final quarter, while students had been exposed to months of instruction, their performance remained statistically stagnant ($p = 0.176$). The cumulative data suggests that the traditional method was unable to trigger substantial or lasting improvements in literary skills.

Table 6: Experimental Group Data in Normality Test (Shapiro-Wilk) from Quarter 1 to Quarter 4

Normality Test (Shapiro-Wilk)					
			W	p	Decision
Quarter 1	-	Pre-Post Test	0.989	0.985	Normally Distributed
Quarter 2	-	Pre-Post Test	0.956	0.232	Normally Distributed
Quarter 3	-	Pre-Post Test	0.928	0.038	Not Normally Distributed
Quarter 4	-	Pre-Post Test	0.972	0.576	Normally Distributed

Note. A low p-value suggests a violation of the assumption of normality

Table 7: Experimental Group Data in Paired Samples T-Test from Quarter 1 to Quarter 4

Paired Samples T-Test						
			statistic	df	p	Decision
Quarter 1	Pre-test	Post test	-11.6	30.0	<.001	Significant
Quarter 2	Pre-test	Post test	-1.00	30.0	0.325	No Significant
Quarter 4	Pre-test	Post test	-7.90	30.0	<.001	Significant

Table 8: Experimental Group Data in Wilcoxon rank signed Test from Quarter 1 to Quarter 4

Wilcoxon rank signed Test					
			Statistic	p	Decision
Quarter 3	Pre-test	Post test	0.00	<.001	Significant

Unlike the controlled group as shown in tables 5,6, and 7, the experimental group showed significant gains in three out of four quarters, demonstrating the powerful impact of the CTL approach in enriching literary competence when instruction is made relevant, meaningful, and culturally rooted.

In the first quarter, students exposed to CTL recorded a dramatic improvement ($p < 0.001$). This suggests that right from the beginning, contextualizing literary lessons such as using local folklore, relatable themes, or community-inspired texts helped students engage more fully. By grounding the material in their own experiences and culture, students were not just learning, they were connecting.

The CTL approach transformed literature from an abstract subject into something alive and relevant. This early win laid the foundation for increased motivation and engagement for the rest of the school year.

Interestingly, Quarter 2 did not show statistically significant improvement ($p = 0.325$). At first glance, this may appear as a limitation. However, it's important to contextualize this finding.

Quarter 2's content may have involved literary forms or topics that were either too unfamiliar or lacked strong cultural alignment, potentially reducing the effectiveness of the contextualization strategy. Nevertheless, this isolated result does not negate the overall impact of the CTL approach. The significant gains recorded in Quarters 1, 3, and 4 provide compelling evidence that CTL remains a robust and reliable strategy. One quarter of plateaued performance does not erase the benefits seen in the broader learning journey. In fact, this momentary lull underscores the importance of careful planning and culturally aligned content to sustain the momentum of the CTL strategy.

Quarter 3 results required a non-parametric Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test due to a non-normal distribution ($p < 0.001$), yet the result was still highly significant. This means students continued to make measurable progress even under statistical irregularities.

The content in this quarter might have resonated more strongly with the students, integrating community narratives, personal storytelling, or other forms of participatory literature that encouraged not just comprehension but emotional connection. The success here further supports the idea that CTL thrives when the material is relevant and experiential.

Quarter 4 once again confirmed the effectiveness of CTL, yielding a significant difference between pre-test and post-test scores ($p < 0.001$). This consistency suggests that students not only maintained the gains made earlier in the year but continued to build upon them.

By the end of the school year, students had likely developed a routine and deeper understanding of how literature could reflect their own stories and culture. This allowed them to critically engage with texts, express themselves creatively, and reflect on their identity—core indicators of literary competence.

The graph displays a striking contrast between the experimental group using the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach and the control group using conventional teaching strategies over a seven-week period. The experimental group demonstrates consistently superior performance throughout the assessment period, with mean ratings consistently ranging between 85-100 points, while the control group exhibits significant variability and generally lower scores.

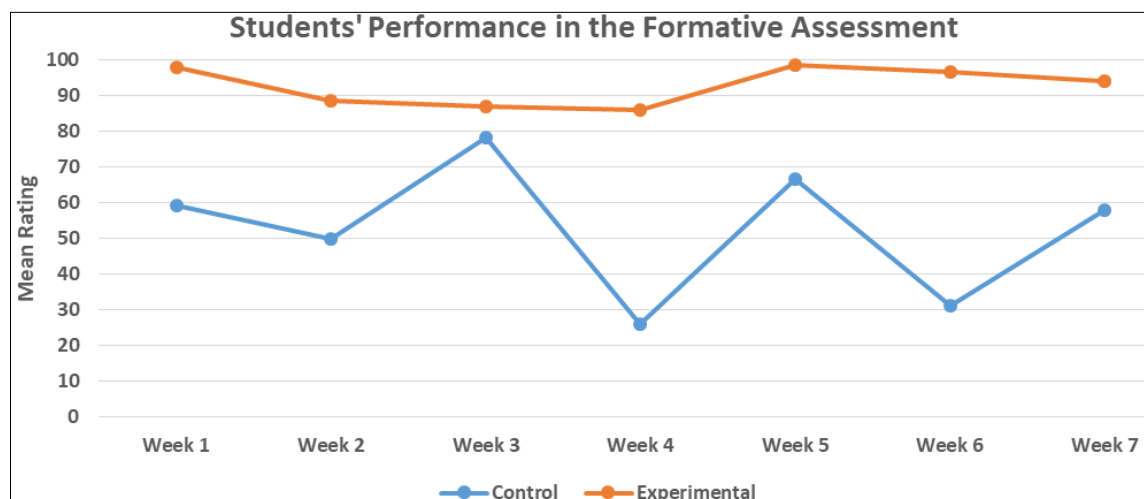


Fig 2: Students' Average Performance Rating in their Formative Assessment

The most notable difference between the two groups is stability of performance. The CTL group maintains relatively steady high scores with only minor fluctuations, starting at approximately 98 in Week 1, experiencing a slight decline to around 85 in Weeks 2-4, before rebounding to nearly 100 in Week 5 and sustaining high performance through Week 7. In contrast, the control group demonstrates extreme volatility, with dramatic highs and lows—peaking at around 80 in Week 3 but dropping to approximately 25 in Week 4 and 30 in Week 6.

The control group's oscillating pattern suggests inconsistent comprehension and retention of materials, potentially

indicating that students struggled to build upon previous knowledge using conventional teaching methods. The CTL approach appears to foster more effective knowledge integration and retention, as evidenced by the experimental group's sustained high performance even after small dips.

The smallest performance gap between the two groups occurred in Week 3, where the control group reached its highest point. However, this convergence was temporary, with the gap widening dramatically in subsequent weeks. By Week 7, a substantial difference of approximately 35 points remained between the groups, underscoring CTL's sustained effectiveness.

These findings strongly suggest that the Contextual Teaching and Learning approach provides significant advantages over conventional teaching strategies, not only in terms of higher overall achievement but also in promoting consistent learning outcomes and stable academic performance among students. The study of Suwarno (2024) showed that learning with Contextual Teaching Learning (CTL) strategies is quite

effective.

Significant Difference in the Pretest Scores between the Controlled and the Experimental Group

Table 9 presents the significant difference in the pretest scores between the controlled and the experimental group.

Table 9: Significant Difference in the Pretest Scores between the Controlled and the Experimental Group

Variable	t**	df	p *	Remark
Pretest	-6.35	58	0.001	Significant

*Significant at $p < 0.05$ level of significance

**Independent samples t-test

As displayed in the table, the independent samples t-test revealed a significant difference in the pretest scores between the controlled and experimental groups, $t(58) = -6.35$, $p = .001$. This indicates that the two groups were not equivalent at the beginning of the study, with the experimental group demonstrating higher initial performance in literature compared to the control group.

The presence of this baseline difference underscores the importance of controlling for initial disparities when evaluating the effectiveness of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach. Therefore, subsequent analyses, such as ANCOVA, are necessary to adjust for these differences and provide a more accurate assessment of the intervention's impact.

Significant Difference in the respondents' Pretest and

Post-test Scores between the Controlled and Experimental Group

The table below presents the significant difference in the respondents' pretest and post-test scores between the controlled and experimental group.

The results of the Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) indicate a significant difference in the post-test scores between the controlled and experimental groups, even after controlling for pretest scores.

Specifically, the group variable, representing the teaching method (Contextual Teaching and Learning [CTL] approach versus conventional strategy), showed a highly significant effect on the participants' performance, $F(1, 57) = 48.91$, $p < .001$. This suggests that the CTL approach (Mean=83) had a substantial positive impact on students' literary competence compared to the conventional method (Mean = 64).

Table 10: Significant Difference in the respondents' Pretest and Post-test Scores between the Control and Experimental Group

Variable	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F**	p *	Remark
Pretest	103	1	102.8	1.96	0.017	Significant
Group	2562	1	2561.6	48.91	< .001	Significant
Residuals	2985	57	52.4			

*Significant at $p < 0.05$ level of significance

**Analysis of Covariance

Additionally, the pretest scores were also found to be a significant covariate, $F(1, 57) = 1.96$, $p = .017$, indicating that initial differences in students' baseline knowledge influenced post-test outcomes. However, the adjustment for these baseline differences through ANCOVA strengthens the validity of the conclusion that the CTL approach effectively improved learning outcomes. The residual variance was relatively low, demonstrating that the model explained a considerable portion of the variance in post-test scores. Overall, these findings provide strong empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of the CTL approach in enhancing literature achievement among junior high school students, highlighting its potential as a superior instructional strategy compared to conventional teaching methods. The findings are supported by the study of Syahputri (2019) [35] that there was an improvement on students' achievement in reading comprehension by applying contextual teaching and learning (CTL) improved.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach significantly enhances students' literary competence by making literature more personal and relevant through the integration of local cultural content. The statistically significant improvements in the experimental

group's post-test scores, particularly in three out of four quarters, highlight the effectiveness of CTL in fostering deeper connections to literature. CTL empowers students to relate literary themes to their own cultural heritage, promoting self-awareness and cultural pride. Despite a temporary dip in performance during Quarter 2, the rebound in Quarter 3 underscores the resilience of the CTL approach. In contrast, the control group's lack of significant growth reflects the limitations of traditional instruction, which often fails to inspire meaningful connections to literature. CTL not only improves academic outcomes but also contributes to cultural preservation by reviving local narratives.

Recommendations

Based on these findings, it is recommended that teachers integrate CTL strategies into their lessons, using texts that reflect students' cultural heritage and incorporating hands-on activities like storytelling and dramatizations. School leaders should support this by organizing workshops and providing access to local literary materials. Policy makers and curriculum developers should consider incorporating CTL into the national framework for literature education, with an emphasis on local literature and folklore. Future research could explore the application of CTL in other subjects and examine its long-term impact on students' academic

development and cultural identity. This study emphasizes the value of teaching through culture, showing that education can be a tool for both personal growth and community preservation.

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