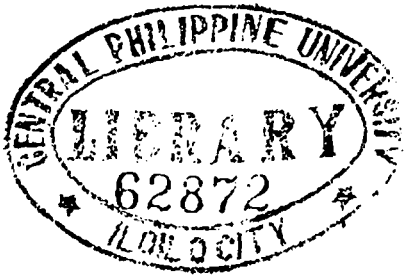


PREPARATION OF SPEED-AND-COMPREHENSION
READING MATERIALS FOR GRADE V

A SPECIAL PROJECT IN LIEU OF A THESIS
PRESENTED TO
the Faculty of the School of Graduate Studies
Central Philippine University



In Partial Fulfillment
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MASTER OF ARTS IN EDUCATION

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

Reading is a tool subject essential to learning in the other subject areas like science, social studies, or mathematics. It is a subarea of the study of language arts; that deals with the development and strengthening of communication skills. And the communication skills that individuals acquire have a powerful influence on their lives. Their success in education, their vocational choices and success in their vocations, even their standing in social life--among peers and in the community--are dependent upon, related to, or influenced by communication skills.

Reading is a complex process. According to DeBoer and Dallman, effective reading involves all the higher mental processes. It involves recall, reasoning, evaluation, imagining, organizing, applying, and problem solving.¹

The prime functions of reading are to give the reader vicarious experience, to enable him to derive meaning from context, and to appreciate the author's thoughts. It is therefore important that the child have materials rich in content and that he be trained to get thought from them.

¹John J. DeBoer and Martha Dallman, The Teaching of Reading (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, Inc., 1951), p. 19.

In learning to read, children do not all progress at the same rate. Different children bring varying levels of ability to the reading act. Even among those with adequate ability, there are some who meet problems that delay or block their learning. It is sad to note that some pupils, and even high school students, are deficient in reading. Malmquist states that 40 per cent of the world's adult population--about 800 million--are estimated to be unable to read and write. At least 65 per cent of the world's population is estimated to fall below the level of functional literacy, i. e., their reading ability will not enable them to read properly, given the fourth-grade level of reading ability as criterion.²

In a study made by Biocos,³ she states that the average fourth-grade Filipino pupil was retarded by about a year when compared with his American counterpart. The following are the reading skills in which the pupils were weak: ability to follow directions, skill to look for references, skill to look for meaning of opposites, skill in interpreting of materials, and skill in recognizing word form.

²Eve J. Malmquist, "Retardation," The Teaching of Reading edited by Ralph C. Staiger (Paris: UNESCO, Ginn and Company, 1973), p. 15.

³Benita B. Biocos, "A Comparative Study of the Reading Achievement of Fourth-Grade Boys and Girls" (unpublished Master's thesis, Central Philippine University, Iloilo City, 1966), p. 3.

Irimero,⁴ who made a study of the reading difficulties of first year teacher-education students of the Iloilo School of Arts and trades, states that the average remedial reader could interpret materials only on the level expected of a student in the middle of fifth grade. The students were from two to three levels below their expected reading-grade level.

Project SOUTELE, or Survey on the Outcome of Elementary Education, which ascertained the outcomes of elementary education and determined the factors that affected these outcomes, reported that, regarding scholastic achievement, the grade six pupils throughout the nation have achieved the least in the areas that are traditionally called the 3R's and that, while the sixth graders consistently score higher than the fifth graders in the scholastic achievement test, the differences are not statistically significant.⁵

The results of these studies moved educators to study and revitalize the reading program throughout the nation. The Learning Continuum⁶ is one of the immediate responses of the Bureau of Elementary Education to the changes in the

⁴Victoria Santillan-Primero, "A Before and After Study of Reading Difficulties of Teacher-Education Students of Iloilo School of Arts and Trades" (unpublished Master's thesis, Central Philippine University, Iloilo City, 1983), p. 80.

⁵Philippines (Republic), "Report on the Survey of the Outcomes of Elementary Education" (Manila: Bureau of Elementary Education, 1976), p. 6.

⁶Philippines (Republic). The Elementary Learning Continuum (Manila: Ministry of Education and Culture, 1980).

educational system recommended by Project SOUTELE. The listing of viable learning outcomes may well serve as springboard for the planning of school programs and the selection of curricular content, instructional materials, and facilities that will serve the needs of the growing child whose potential as a human resource in the New Society the educational system greatly desires to develop.

Innovations have been made and are being done in our educational system in order to raise the low performance level of pupils, especially in reading. The ten-year educational program initiated by Presidential Decree 6-A is to change elementary education with regard to "improvement of curricular programs and quality facilities, adoption of cost-saving instructional technology, and training and retraining of teachers and administrators." Necessarily, the program includes, as one project, the development and production of new primary textbooks for children and of other instructional materials. The realization of this project is one of the functions of the Educational Development Project Implementing Task Force (EDPITAF) which the decree created as a unit of the Ministry of Education and Culture.⁷

Another program embodying this planned change is the PRODED (Program for Decentralized Educational Development).

⁷Philippines (Republic) English, Language Arts 2.
Manila: Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, Textbook Project, 1979.

One of its features is the implementation of the New Elementary School Curriculum (NESC). PRODED has some priority needs to meet in order to achieve its objectives and to implement the NESC effectively. One of these is the development of supplementary materials.⁸

In Region VI, a program has been launched whose purposes are to train teachers to become reading specialists; to study pupils' reading difficulties and propose probable, relevant remedial activities; and to prepare materials geared to the interests and reading levels of the children.

The last concern of the new program is based on the observation that children learn to read more easily if the material is meaningful to them and if they are interested in the ideas and/or the way the ideas are expressed. Therefore, books which deal with ideas familiar and interesting to children will be more successful teaching tools than books which deal with ideas which are unfamiliar and uninteresting, from the children's point of view.⁹

In Region VI, as in many parts of the country, there is a dearth of reading materials. The author, desirous to help other teachers in the field avail themselves of needed

⁸Philippines (Republic) NESC Primer. Manila: A PRODED-ERP Publication for the Bureau of Elementary Education, 1984.

⁹Constance McCullough and Chinna Chacko, "Developing Materials for Instruction," The Teaching of Reading edited by Ralph C. Staiger (Paris: UNESCO, Ginn and Company, 1973), p. 180.

suitable, interesting, varied, and true-to-life reading selections, prepared reading selections according to these specifications. It is hoped that these materials--prepared according to the pupils' interests, reading levels, and experiential background--will improve the quality of their reading tastes, enhance their reading skills, and consequently improve pupil achievement in reading.

Statement of the Problem

Purpose for the Materials. This study was an attempt to produce speed-and-comprehension reading materials that are within the reading levels and interests of the grade five pupils, for whom they are intended. The materials, prepared and validated by the writer, were purposely made to supplement the basic readers now used in the classrooms and to improve the pupils' basic reading skills, on the development of which effective reading depends. Test exercises were provided to help pupils build up these skills. These exercises provide for vocabulary development through getting word meanings, and development of comprehension through getting the main idea of the selection, noting details, choosing the best title for the selection, outlining and sequencing, and drawing conclusions.

The materials were meant to be either for independent reading or for remedial reading instruction in the classrooms.

Questions to be Answered. Specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions:

1. Do the reading materials reflect the reading interests of the grade five pupils?
2. Are the selections appropriate for the grade?
3. How valid and reliable are the test exercises developed to test comprehension of the reading selections?
Are the distractors functional?

¹⁰Carter V. Good, Dictionary of Education (3rd ed.; New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1958), p. 7.