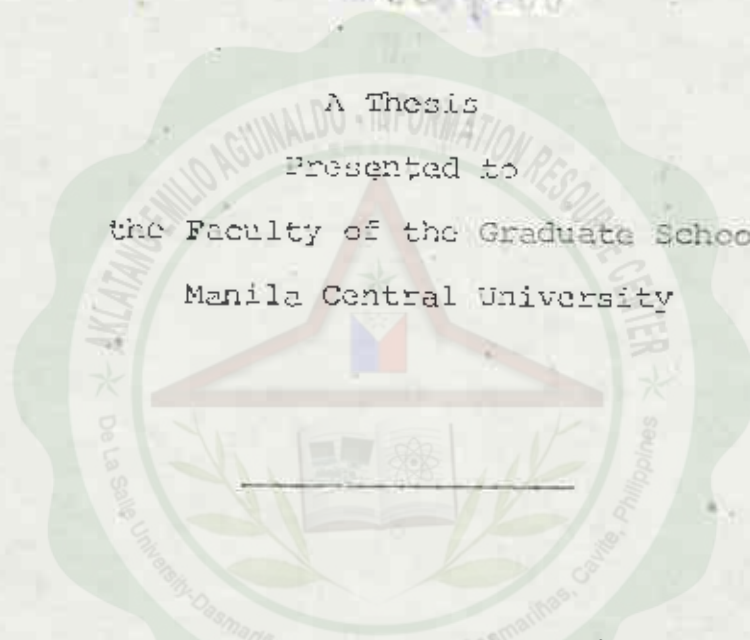


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DEVELOPMENTAL READING SKILLS DIFFICULTIES OF COLLEGE
FRESHMEN IN EMILIO AGUINALDO COLLEGE: BASES
FOR A PROPOSED INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
PACKAGE IN ENGLISH I

8888/900



A Thesis
Presented to
the Faculty of the Graduate School
Manila Central University
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Course
Master of Arts in Education

by

Aurora Rillo-Santos
October 1987

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CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Summary

The study was undertaken primarily to find out the college developmental reading skills difficulties of college freshmen enrolled in Emilio Aguinaldo College during the school year 1986-1987 with the end in view of using the results as the bases for proposed instructional materials in English I which hopefully could be the bases of a future workbook in English I.

Specifically, the study attempted to achieve the following objectives:

1. Find out the developmental reading skills difficulties in the three major reading skills, namely: Vocabulary Skills, Comprehension and Study Skills, and Literary Appreciation Skills of the college freshmen enrolled in the following courses in Emilio Aguinaldo College:
 - a. Liberal Arts
 - b. B.S. Biology
 - c. B.S. Education
 - d. B.S. Chemistry
 - e. B.S. Business Administration
 - f. B.S. Criminology
 - g. B.S. Physical Therapy

- h. B.S. Nursing
- i. Ass. B.S. Nutrition and Dietetics
- j. B.S. Psychology
- k. Ass. in Radiological Technology

2. Determine the level of the developmental reading skills difficulties of these students in the above three major reading skills.

3. Based on the findings of the study, prepare instructional materials that would hopefully be used as bases for a future workbook in English I.

This study would give the teachers an insight to the common developmental reading difficulties of college freshmen. Thus, the choice and preparation of instructional materials appropriate for them would be those which would minimize, if not entirely correct their difficulties making teaching-learning more effective and satisfying. Likewise, with strengthened skills in reading, the students' academic activities would be pleasurable and rewarding.

For the purpose of this particular investigation, only those first year college students enrolled in the courses requiring National College Entrance Examination (NCEE) passing marks were actually involved in the study. Hence, a total of 491 college freshmen, 200 of whom were male and 291 were female enrolled in the school year 1986-

1987, were made the subjects of this research undertaking.

The main problem of the study was centered to the developmental reading difficulties of the freshmen which were discovered from the results of the Survey Test in Developmental Reading administered to the subject-students. These developmental reading difficulties were on the three (3) major skills, namely: (a) Vocabulary Skills, (b) Comprehension and Study Skills, and (c) Literary Appreciation Skills.

The problem of the study also included the identification of the level of difficulties of the students in the above-mentioned major reading skills.

Based on the findings of the study, proposed instructional materials in English I is designed which hopefully could be the basis for a workbook in English I.

In developing the study, the descriptive approach was used as the method most appropriate considering the nature of its problem.

The main data-gathering instrument employed in this investigation was a survey test in Developmental Reading Skills for college freshmen specifically intended for the students concerned in Emilio Aguinaldo College. The test, which has a total of 114 items was taken from the three levels of difficulties of the "Skill Builders of Efficient

Reading" by Araceli Villamin.

The test was administered before the end of the first semester of the school year 1986-1987 to all the 491 first year students enrolled in the eleven (11) courses offered in the Emilio Aguinaldo College. These students who composed the subjects of the study were also considered the respondents.

Data obtained through the use of the 114 item-Survey Test in Developmental Reading Skills in English needed statistical treatment. For this purpose, percentage and rank order were used as the statistical tools.

The major findings of the study are, therefore, summarized following the logical order of the specific problems of the study.

Specific Problem Number 1: The test items relative to the three major reading skills, namely, vocabulary skills, comprehension and study skills, and literary appreciation skills in which the freshmen-respondents gave the most number of wrong responses are indicated below according to the total number and per cent obtained as well as rank order:

<u>Major Skill</u>	<u>Sub-Skill</u>	<u>Item Number</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rank</u>
1. Vocabulary Skills	Suffixes	4	95 students or 80.44 per cent (164 males or 82.00 per cent and 231 females or 79.38 per cent)	1
	Use of Context Clues	2	347 students or 70.67 per cent (142 males or 71.00 per cent and 205 females or 70.44 per cent)	2
	Use of Context Clues	1	341 students or 69.45 per cent (137 males or 68.50 per cent and 204 females or 70.10 per cent)	3
	Suffixes	2 (b)	339 students or 69.04 per cent (151 males or 75.50 per cent and 188 females or 64.60 per cent)	4
	Use of Idioms	4	330 students or 67.20 per cent (138 males or 69.00 per cent and 192 females or 65.97 per cent)	5
				329 students or 67.00 per cent (151 males or 75.50 per cent and 178 females or 61.16 per cent)

<u>Major Skill</u>	<u>Sub-Skill</u>	<u>Item Number</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rank</u>
	Use of Context Clues	2	311 students or 63.34 per cent (157 males or 78.50 per cent and 54 females or 52.92 per cent)	7
B. Comprehension and Study Skills	Sequencing Ideas	4 (b)	439 students or 89.40 per cent (182 males or 91.00 per cent and 257 females or 88.31 per cent)	1
	Sequencing Ideas	1 (d)	438 students or 89.20 per cent (188 males or 94.00 per cent and 250 females or 85.91 per cent)	2
	Sequencing Ideas	1 (c)	437 students or 89.00 per cent (174 males or 87.00 per cent and 263 females or 90.37 per cent)	3
	Sequencing Ideas	1 (b)	430 students or 87.57 per cent (172 males or 86.00 per cent and 258 females or 88.65 per cent)	4
	Sequencing Ideas	2 (d)	427 students or 86.96 per cent (194 males or 97.00 per cent and 233 females or 80.06 per cent)	5
	Noting Details	4 (d)	425 students or 86.55 per cent (172 males or 86.00 per cent and 254 females or 86.94 per cent)	6

<u>Major Skill</u>	<u>Sub-Skill</u>	<u>Item Number</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rank</u>
	Sequencing Ideas	5 (b)	422 students or 85.94 per cent (189 males or 94.50 per cent and 233 females or 80.06 per cent)	7
	Sequencing Ideas	5 (d)	421 students or 85.74 per cent (178 males or 89.00 per cent and 243 females or 83.50 per cent)	8
	Sequencing Ideas	5 (b)	414 students or 84.31 per cent (177 females or 88.50 per cent and 237 females or 81.44 per cent)	9
	Sequencing Ideas	5 (c)	410 students or 83.50 per cent (173 males or 86.50 per cent and 237 females or 81.44 per cent)	10
C. Literary Appreciation Skills	Understanding Figures of Speech	4 (a)	387 students or 78.81 per cent (162 males or 81.00 per cent and 225 females or 77.31 per cent)	1
	Understanding Figures of Speech	5 (c)	322 students or 65.58 per cent (122 males or 61.00 per cent and 200 females or 68.72 per cent)	3

<u>Major Skill</u>	<u>Sub-Skill</u>	<u>Item Number</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rank</u>
	Under- standing Figures of Speech	4	35 students (153 males or 76.50 per cent and 163 females or 56.01 per cent)	3
	Under- standing Proverbs and Say- ings	2	314 students or 63.95 per cent (128 males or 64.00 per cent and 186 females or 63.91 per cent)	4
	Under- standing Figures of Speech	1(b)	311 students or 63.34 per cent (136 males or 68.00 per cent and 175 females or 60.13 per cent)	5
	Under- standing Figures of Speech	3	310 students or 63.13 per cent (133 males or 66.50 per cent and 177 females or 60.82 per cent)	6
	Under- standing Figures of Speech	5(a)	308 students or 72.00 per cent (137 males or 68.50 per cent and 171 females or 58.76 per cent)	7

As a whole, the average per cent of the respondents who gave wrong responses for the items are given below in descending order with the corresponding major reading skill: "Comprehension and Study Skills," 64.25 per cent; "Literary Appreciation Skills," 59.18 per cent; and

"Vocabulary Skills," 37.97 per cent.

Specific Problem Number 2: The most difficult test items pertinent to the three major reading skills are given below in accordance with the total number and per cent of the students who gave wrong responses for the identified items with the corresponding sub-skills:

<u>Major Skill</u>	<u>Sub-Skill</u>	<u>Item Number</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Difficulty Level</u>
A. Vocabulary Skills	Suffixes	4	395 students or 80.44 per cent	Very Difficult
	Use of Context Clues	2	347 students or 70.67 per cent	Very Difficult
	Use of Context Clues	1	341 students or 69.45 per cent	Very Difficult
	Suffixes	2(b)	339 students or 69.04 per cent	Very Difficult
	Use of Idioms	4	330 students or 67.20 per cent	Difficult
	Suffixes	2(a)	329 students or 67.00 per cent	Difficult
B. Comprehension and Study Skills	Sequencing Ideas	4(b)	439 students or 89.40 per cent	Very Difficult
	Sequencing Ideas	1(d)	438 students or 89.20 per cent	Very Difficult
	Sequencing Ideas	1(c)	437 students or 89.00 per cent	Very Difficult

<u>Major Skill</u>	<u>Sub-Skill</u>	<u>Item Number</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Level of Difficulty</u>
	Sequencing Ideas	1(b)	430 students or 87.51 per cent	Very Difficult
	Sequencing Ideas	2(d)	427 students or 86.96 per cent	Very Difficult
	Sequencing Ideas	5(a)	422 students or 85.94 per cent	Very Difficult
	Sequencing Ideas	5(b)	414 students or 84.31 per cent	Very Difficult
	Sequencing Ideas	5(c)	410 students or 83.50 per cent	Very Difficult
	Sequencing Ideas	3(a)	408 students or 83.09 per cent	Very Difficult
	Sequencing Ideas	3(b)	407 students or 82.89 per cent	Very Difficult
C. Literary Appreciation Skills	Understanding Figures of Speech	4(a)	387 students or 78.81 per cent	Very Difficult
	Understanding Figures of Speech	5(c)	322 students or 65.58 per cent	Difficult
	Understanding Proverbs and Sayings	4	316 students or 64.35 per cent	Difficult

<u>Major Skill</u>	<u>Sub-Skill</u>	<u>Item Number</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Level of Difficulty</u>
	Under- standing Proverbs and Say- ings	2	314 students or 63.95 per cent	Difficult
	Under- standing Proverbs and Say- ings	3	310 students or 63.13 per cent	Difficult
	Under- standing Figures of Speech	5(a)	308 students or 62.72 per cent	Difficult

Specific Problem Number 3: The Instructional Material

Package (IMP) is the outcome of the results of the test on the college developmental reading skills difficulties of the first year students enrolled in the different courses offered in Emilio Aguinaldo College administered at the end of the first semester of the school year 1986-1987. The difficulties as revealed in the test became the bases of the choice of exercises that the students may work on with the aim in view of correcting, minimizing, strengthening and reteaching the reading skills which were missed most.

The exercises in the IMP are grouped into three levels: The "Beginner," the "Springboard" and the "Twister." Following psychological and pedagogical

principles, they are arranged from the easy to the difficult and from simple to complex. Each set provides practice on a specific skill or on related skills. The student should work on the sets in the given order and not jump from one skill to another. Until there is an ideal performance level of 80%, the student should repeat the set until he has found the source of his mistake before he proceeds to the next.

The Instructional Materials Package (IMP) followed a certain pattern of presentation to facilitate better understanding of its content. The learning exercises were organized by major developmental skills wherein varied exercises under each sub-skill for each of the major skills have been prepared. The presentation therefore of the Instructional Materials Package (IMP) content has been made in accordance with the following order:

A. Vocabulary Skills

1. Structural Analysis

a. Root Words

- (a) Recognizing Root Words
- (b) Understanding Root Words

b. Prefixes

- (1) Matching prefixes with meanings
- (2) Matching prefixes with words to form new words

c. Suffixes

- (1) Choosing correct suffixes
- (2) Recognizing words with suffixes
- (3) Providing the correct suffix to given clues

2. Use of Context Clues

- a. Using context clues to get the meaning of unfamiliar words

3. Use of Idioms

- a. Understanding idioms
- b. Selecting the meaning of idiomatic expressions
- c. Matching idiomatic expressions with their meanings

3. Comprehension and Study Skills

Comprehension

1. Noting Details
2. Getting the Main Idea
3. Sequencing Ideas

Study Skills

4. Expressing Opinions
5. Identifying Characters
6. Critical Reading

C. Literary Appreciation Skills

1. Sensing Character Traits
2. Understanding Proverbs and Sayings
3. Understanding Figures of Speech

Conclusions

In the light of the findings made, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. a. While the students showed relative mastery on the proper identification of root words and prefixes with regard to vocabulary skills, they were found to be generally weak on the proper use of suffixes, context clues and idioms. Students taking up Liberal Arts, B.S. Biology, Associate in Nutrition and Dietetics, and Associate in Radiological Technology gave the most number of wrong responses on items regarding the aforementioned skills. This implies a need for the application of remediation techniques.

b. Comparatively speaking, the respondents performed the poorest on test items relative to comprehension and study skills. There was a particularly high incidence of errors committed on items regarding the sequencing of ideas, expressing opinions and identifying characters through their traits and qualities.

Sadly enough, students failed to arrange events in

their logical order despite the fact that only short and simple paragraphs were given. This shows that the respondents missed the opportunity of being attuned to the flow of ideas coming from the authors. Hence, it can be said that a majority of the freshmen involved are inadequate in their comprehension skills. Their comprehension level is also far from desirable.

c. Respondents were obviously hampered in their ability to interpret proverbs and sayings and understand figures of speech involving similes and metaphors. Almost two-thirds of the freshmen involved failed to grasp the figurative meaning that lay behind the given statements. Most often, the students gave the literal interpretation which turned out to be quite comical and clearly a manifestation of their naiveté. There is a need for the students to be guided properly in discerning the message or meaning that lies behind a proverb or figurative statement so they will be able to appreciate the beauty of thought being conveyed.

2. a. As a whole, the test on developmental reading skills given to the respondents was deemed to be difficult. Only the items pertaining to the spotting of root words and the use of prefixes were relatively easy and within the students' level of mastery.

Since the test was diagnostic in nature, it revealed the weaknesses of the students. Unfortunately, it was discovered that the vocabulary and comprehension levels of the respondents were below average and considered below expectations for college students.

b. Evidently, the students do not possess the desired level of mastery for skills involving structural analysis or vocabulary recognition, sentence comprehension, paragraph analysis which involves getting the main idea, sequencing events, and finding major and minor supporting details, and keen literary appreciation. This is where the instructors should concentrate, and exert their efforts for this is where the learners' biggest handicap in reading lies.

3. The Instructional Material Package is ideally suited to the students because it seeks to minimize, if not entirely eradicate the identified weaknesses of the students regarding vocabulary skills, comprehension and study skills, and literary appreciation skills. Students' difficulties are traced and attacked at the roots thereby increasing the chances of improving the students' acquisition of reading skills and eventually mastering them. Furthermore, the learning exercises are specifically programmed to meet the needs of the students in

these three varying levels: enrichment, reinforcement, and remediation.

Recommendations

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions, the following suggestions are hereby offered:

1. a. To enable the students to improve on their reading skills, they should be encouraged to read books or articles that are within their sphere of interests. Such materials should be readily within their reach. It is suggested that the college library should provide a wide array of reading materials such as those which deal with the contemporary, classical, historical, future-oriented, fiction, non-fiction, prose, non-prose, poems, essays, dramas, stories and novels.

b. Since the students will naturally choose to read books or articles that match their ability to read, care should be taken that the students would not select materials that are mediocre or too simplistic. Instructors should guide their students on their choice of reading materials to ensure that the vocabulary load, sentence structure, size of print, format and organization, and illustrations are appropriate for college students.

2. a. While most of the students' reading materials in the classroom are basically developmental or those which aim at developing their reading skills through controlled vocabulary and sentence structures, the freshmen should likewise be exposed to remedial reading materials.

Students with determined difficulties as has been identified in the investigation should be referred to some materials specifically prepared to help them overcome such difficulties. Thus, respondents involved in the study may be advised to use instructional materials purposely designed to improve their weak points. The proposed Instructional Material Package being espoused by the researcher is highly suitable in this regard.

b. Difficulties met by the students regarding the use of context clues can be minimized if they are properly exposed to the different means of deriving meaning of words co-occurring with the unknown word thru semantic clues.

In this regard, exercises about the various kinds of semantic clues such as definitions, appositives, comparisons or contrasts, and explanations should be regularly provided to the students either thru boardwork or a skillbook.

c. To help the students understand idioms and proverbs and sayings better, it is suggested that they should be guided to make it a daily habit to take note of the precise words that make up the statements, read much, read good modern authors, and commit idiomatic expressions and sayings to memory.

Furthermore, they should be enjoined to tackle the exercises included in the proposed Instructional Material Package with drive and enthusiasm.

3. a. Other English instructors in the college are enjoined to contribute ideas and materials to make the proposed workbook for Developmental Reading truly representative of the needs of the students.

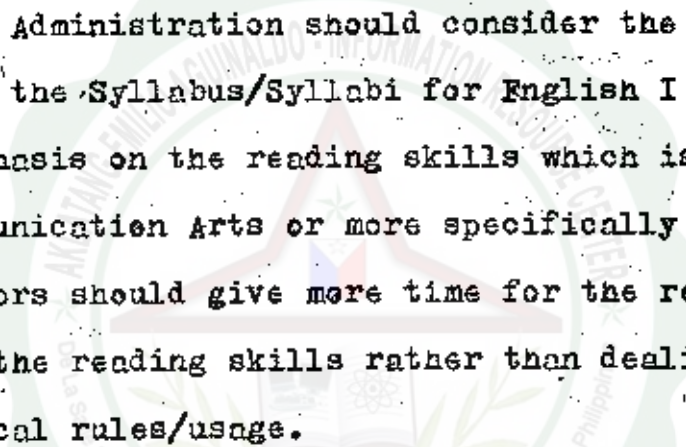
b. The Instructional Material Package should be tried out to the freshmen enrolled in the current school year in order to determine its effectiveness and further refine it for future use. In this connection, comments and suggestions of the students as well as the results of the learning exercises should be taken in serious consideration.

c. College deans are enjoined to give their full support and backing in the administration of the Instructional Material Package to the students to help upgrade instruction and raise the academic performance of

the students to the optimum level.

d. If possible, the administrators of Emilio Aguinaldo College should commission a group of English instructors to come up with a workbook to be published and used by the students in Developmental Reading using the Instructional Material Package devised by the researcher as a prototype.

4. Administration should consider the idea of revising the Syllabus/Syllabi for English I to give more emphasis on the reading skills which is part of the Communication Arts or more specifically English I. Instructors should give more time for the reinforcement of the reading skills rather than dealing with grammatical rules/usage.

The watermark is a circular seal of Emilio Aguinaldo College. It features a central emblem with a book and a lamp, surrounded by the text "EMILIO AGUINALDO COLLEGE" and "University-Dasmariñas • Since 1977 • Dasmariñas, Cavite, Philippines".