



## Reading Comprehension Component of Grades 7 and 8 English and Filipino Textbooks

*Rowanne Marie Maxilom-Mangompit, Norly R. Plasencia, Maria Russel A. Pielago, Adela M. Romeo, Charlotte Ablen, Mary Catherine Ariosa, Jennifer Inez, Fely B. Latras, and Roderick Villaflor*

University of San Carlos, Philippines  
Daegu Catholic University, South Korea  
Velez College, Philippines  
Cebu Technological University

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### ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze and evaluate the reading comprehension component in the selected Grades 7 and 8 English and Filipino textbooks used by the selected private schools in Cebu City. Content analysis and text analysis were used as research designs in evaluating the 21 textbooks used during the academic year 2012-2013 and academic year 2013-2014. Results in English textbooks revealed that among the competencies, strategies predominated among schema building, literary texts, and expository texts whereas in Grade 7 & 8 Filipino textbooks, the schema building and strategies predominated. Grade 7 & Grade 8 English Textbooks used by USC South Campus and Sacred Heart of Jesus - Hijas de Jesus met the K to 12 Guidelines for reading comprehension set by the Department of Education. Moreover, Grade 7 & Grade 8 Filipino textbooks used by St. Theresa's College only met the standards. Consequently, these textbooks are recommended to be used for Grade 7 and Grade 8 students in private schools.

*Keywords:* analysis, component, comprehension, content, reading, textbook

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### INTRODUCTION

Effective this academic year (AY) 2012-2013, the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) was implemented in the public schools and the private institutions as mandated by the Department of Education with the approval of Br. Armin Luistro, FSC, Department of Education Secretary ("Policy Guidelines", 2012). Teaching Grades I-X pupils and students is a very complex process. Hence, with the present call for change with regard to the use of the Mother Tongue as bridge in teaching, it is important to analyze textbooks used in the classroom in order to facilitate the learning process. Teachers and students alike must be equipped with substantial knowledge on the quality of teaching materials such as textbooks in conducting any educational practice in the classroom. Consequently, this study attempted to analyze and evaluate the reading comprehension component in the selected English and Filipino textbooks used in Grades 7 and 8 based on the K to 12 reading content standards. Hence, these textbooks that follow the guidelines set by the Department of Education would be recommended as the main references in English and Filipino to Grades 7 and 8 schools in Cebu City. This study is composed of four sections: introduction which consists of analyzing textbook contents, reading, and evaluation; method; results and discussion; and conclusions and recommendations.

Reviewed studies on content analysis focused on various subjects such as medical textbooks (Jason et al, 2010), reading (Zabihi, 2011), and Lervag & Lervag (2013). First, the textbook analysis research of Jason, et al. (2010) investigated medical textbooks to determine

the quality and quantity of chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS) information. It further identified the extent of CFS coverage in terms of number of pages, the content of information contained in the pages with CFS topic, and the number of textbooks and pages that mentioned other illnesses, like multiple sclerosis and cancer, for the purpose of comparison. To determine the presence of CFS topic, the table of contents and index were first inspected. Then, specific pages were located to further identify specific topics and the number of pages they occupied. The findings showed that 48 or 40.3 % of the textbooks mentioned or included information on CFS and this topic was presented in 0.09 % of the total number of pages. All areas or specific information investigated under CFS topic were present, but with different percentages. Thus, it was found that other illnesses like cancer and diabetes were more prevalent than CFS.

Second, Zabihi (2011) also investigated the effectiveness of various excerpts from three known textbooks written for developing the reading skills. This study also focused on critical thinking. Checklist was used in analyzing the books. Results revealed that the participants' goals should be emphasized, not the tasks. Although this study also focused on reading, this study highlighted on critical thinking while the present study focused on reading comprehension only.

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#### Corresponding author:

Rowanne Marie Maxilom-Mangompit  
Email Address: rowannemarie.mangompit@ctu.edu.ph  
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Third, Lervag & Lervag (2013) reported a systematic meta-analytic review of studies that compared the reading comprehension including the language comprehension, decoding, and phonological awareness) in first- and second-language learners. This review included 82 studies, and 576 effect sizes were calculated for reading comprehension and underlying components. Results demonstrated that the second language learners showed a medium-sized deficit in reading comprehension and language comprehension but their phonological awareness and decoding skills only had small differences compared to the first language learners. This study showed implications that language comprehension skills could be given much attention. In this present study, the focus was on the reading comprehension in the English and Filipino textbooks.

This present study had operational definitions of the following terms. First, Reading Comprehension Component refers to the content standard. Second, Competencies refer to the schema building, strategies, literary text, and expository text. Third, Activities are tasks before, during and after reading that are assumed to be performed by the students (and/or/with the teacher) as found in the textbook.

According to Byrnes and Wasik (2009), reading

comprehension pertains to a "meeting of the minds between an author and a reader" (p. 214). In so doing, comprehension includes knowing what is going on the text. In contemporary theories of reading, readers are presumed to achieve understanding through mentally representing text at five levels of analysis as pointed out by Grasessaer et al, 1997 in Byrnes and Wasik, 2009). These are the five levels of analysis: 1) *surface-code level* where readers temporarily store a verbatim trace of segments of text, 2) *textbase level* where readers represent the content of text in a stripped-down format which preserves meaning, 3) *situation model* which refers to the people, spatial setting, actions, and events" of a mental microworld which is inferentially constructed by interactions between the explicit text and background world knowledge, 4) *communication level*, where a reader represents the author's communicative intent, and 5) *text-genre level* which reflects a reader's ability to classify texts into various types such as newspaper article, expository text, fiction, etc. With these five levels, achieving a higher-level understanding of text is possible. However, some of these comprehension skills were evident in the newly-made K to 12 Curriculum Guide prepared by Ocampo (2012).

Furthermore, evaluation is synonymous with assessment as stated by Swanepoel (2010). It generates knowledge which leads to a conclusion concerning

Competencies Matrix for Grade 7 & 8 English and Filipino

Content Standard	Grade 7	Grade 8	
Reading Comprehension	Schema Building	Use predictive and anticipatory devices or tasks to activate prior knowledge concerning the topic of reading or viewing selection.	Organize prior knowledge concerning the topic of reading or viewing selection using a variety of graphic organizers.
	Strategies	Distinguish between and among literal, inferential, and applied information presented in a reading or viewing selection and the questions formed on the basis of such information.	Respond to information from a reading or viewing selection through the use of oral or written short response formats and differentiated group performance tasks.
	Literary Texts	Establish the relevance and unity of the elements of a text vis-à-vis its intended purpose and production milieu.	Identify dominant literary devices and figures of speech that add color and heighten meaning in the reading or viewing selection.
	Expository Texts	Establish the validity and unity of the details of a text vis-à-vis its intended purpose and production milieu.	Identify dominant writing or filming techniques that add color to and heighten meaning of the reading or viewing selection.

Figure 1. Competencies Matrix for Grades 7-8 English

Pamantayang Pangnilalaman	Batayang Kakayahan	Baitang 7	Baitang 8
	Batayang Kakayahan	Nagagamit ang dating kaalaman at karanasan sa pag-unawa at pagpapakahulugan sa mga kaisipan sa teksto at akdang pampanitikan	Napapaunlad ang sariling kakayahang umunawa sa binasang akda sa pamamagitan ng pagkilala sa kahulugan ng mga idyoma, mga salitang di-lantad ang kahulugan, pagkakahawig at pagkakaiba
	Batayang Kakayahan	Naiisa-isa ang katangian ng relasyon ng tao sa lipunan na inilalahad sa akda Nakapaglalahad ng mungkahing solusyon, kongklusyon, paniniwala, at epekto ng akda sa sarili Nagpapahalaga sa mga anyong panitikan alinsunod sa isang payak ngunit malinaw na kasaysayang pampanitikan ng Pilipinas	Nagpapamalas ng kakayahang bumasa at sumuri ng tula at epiko
Pag-unawa sa Binasa	Pamantayan Sa Pagganap	Naihahambing ang dalawang saliksik o ulat Nakapagtatanghal ng iba't ibang uri ng dula mula sa mga nabasang akda (Hal. Reader's Theatre) Nailalarawan ang silbing tagpuan sa isang akda Nailalarawan ang mga angking katangian ng mga tauhan sa isang kuwento Nahihinuha ang paksang teksto sa tulong ng pamagat, pangunahing kaisipan, simula o wakas	Nailalahad ang mga patunay, halimbawa at iba't ibang damdaming nangingibabaw sa tula Nakapaglalahad ng sariling kongklusyon, paniniwala, pagbabago sa sarili at epekto ng akda sa sarili Nakapagpapatunay na ang mga pangyayari sa akda ay maaaring mangyari sa tunay na buhay Nakapagbibigay hinuha/kahulugan sa mga matalinhagang pahayag Nagbibigay ng mungkahi, sariling pananaw at paghahambing ng sariling karanasan sa nabasang akda

(Source: Dr. Dina Ocampo, LAT Convenor version as of January 31, 2012 formatted by Dr. Pado and Villaneza)  
(\*\* See Appendix for the English translation by Mr. Roderick Villaflor.)

\*\*Figure 2. K to 12 Baitang 7-8

the worth, merit or significance of the object under investigation as pointed out by Scriven (2003 in Swanepoel, 2010). Approaches to assessment or evaluation of textbook quality can also be considered. Evaluating textbooks could be done by determining whether the learning outcomes have been attained by learners who use the textbook & the textbook has the characteristics which make it suitable to guide learners in attaining the outcomes. In this present study, the second approach was more relevant since the competencies in textbooks were evaluated whether the learning outcomes of the K to 12 curriculum guide concerning the competencies in the mother tongue would be attained. To provide empirical studies on the framework and method of textbook evaluation, Swanepoel (2010) and Lawrence (2011) determined the most appropriate method or instrument to be used in evaluating the science education textbooks and the most scientifically justifiable approach to follow in developing an appropriate instrument to guide

the evaluation process. Through qualitative-quantitative method and personal interviews with the teachers, results revealed that the contents of the textbooks were logically organized. Hence, textbooks may support teachers and curriculum implementation. In addition, Lawrence (2011) evaluated and enriched the two areas of literature such as the lack of a detailed systematic framework in evaluating curriculum fitness and a shortage of post-use evaluation of empirical studies in the literature. Using a checklist as an evaluation instrument and structured interviews with two in-service NSS English language subject coordinators, the result of this study demonstrated the strengths and weaknesses of the textbooks. Overall, the theories relevant in this present study are the following: reading and its models, reading comprehension, comprehension skills, models of the comprehension process, K to 12 Guidelines for the content standards of reading, and evaluation of textbooks.

Moreover, Mukundan & Kalajahi (2013) evaluated the general attributes of the textbooks and to evaluate the learning-teaching content. 944 male and female English teachers evaluated the English books using a valid and reliable checklist. Concerning the attributes and learning-teaching content of the textbooks, results showed that Year 1 to Year 6 teachers reported that the current textbooks are 'highly useful' to the students while Form 1 to Form 5 teachers contended that the school books are only 'moderately useful'. However, only the English textbooks were evaluated in this study unlike the present study which included the Filipino textbooks. To synthesize, with the newly-revised Basic Education in 2012, only few studies on textbooks were dealt with to fill in gaps of the existing curriculum guides for the improvement of the curriculum. With this gap, the present study aimed to contribute to the improvement of the educational system in the Basic education through examining textbooks used in both grades 7 and 8 in English and Filipino subjects.

Consequently, this study aimed to analyze and evaluate the reading comprehension component in the selected English and Filipino textbooks used in Grades 7 and 8 based on the K to 12 reading content standards and to recommend textbooks as the main references in English and Filipino to Grades 7 and 8 schools in Cebu City. Through this study, books that meet the criteria in the competencies would be recommended to schools. Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following questions: (1.) What competencies in the reading comprehension component are reflected in the activities of the selected textbooks for Grades 7 & 8?, (2.) Do these competencies in the selected textbooks match with the competencies matrix (content standards) for Grades 7 & 8?, and (3.) Which textbooks meet the competencies (content standards)?

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design.

This study used the content analysis method since the selected English and Filipino reading textbooks in Grades 7 and 8 of the selected schools in Cebu City were analyzed and evaluated based on the competencies in the K to 12 Curriculum Guide, especially on reading comprehension competencies. As a research method, content analysis represents a systematic and objective means of describing and quantifying phenomena (Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Schreier, 2012 cited by Elo et al., 2014). In addition, personal interviews with the DepEd supervisors and language coordinators were also done to demonstrate triangulation in the gathering of data aside from the textbooks as sources of data in analyzing the reading comprehension components of the chosen textbooks in English and Filipino subjects.

**Research Environment.** This study was conducted in Cebu City. The following schools were the venues of this study: Colegio dela Inmaculada Concepcion, Sacred Heart School-Hijas de Jesus, St. Theresa's College, University of San Jose-Recoletos, University of San Carlos-North Campus, University of San Carlos-South Campus. The selection of schools was done using the purposive sampling. Only the private learning institutions were selected because

usually these schools allowed their students to purchase textbooks they prescribed based on the compliance of the Department of Education in choosing textbooks. It was then crucial to select textbooks for the students.

These were the criteria in selecting the schools. These were PAASCU accredited schools with Level II and Level III status. These schools are located in Cebu City and are administered by priests and nuns. These are private schools offering with basic education program.

**Research Data and Sources.** The 21 textbooks were the data which were analyzed and evaluated in terms of the reading skills as stipulated in the books based on the reading competencies in the K to 12 Guidelines. Textbooks in Filipino and English used in Grade 7 and Grade 8 from each school were used in the analysis and evaluation. These textbooks were locally published and were K to 12 compliant as shown in the front cover pages of the books. The publishers were Vibal, Rex Book Store, FNB, Phoenix, Big Start Don Bosco Press, St. Bernadette Publishing House, Jo-es Publishing and EMI Innovative Education Materials Inc.

**Research Instruments.** Since this study used a content analysis, the basic instrument was the checklist (coding sheet). Personal interviews with the supervisors and professors teaching reading were also considered as instruments in gathering the data.

**Research Procedure.** These are the following steps in the gathering of data. First, the researchers set a meeting to conceptualize the research problem and the parts of the proposal. Second, the researchers secured copies of the K to 12 Curriculum Guide in Filipino and English from the Department of Education, Cebu City Division. Third, they set an appointment with the statistician for the formulation of the research problem and the statistical tool used in the study. Fourth, they set another meeting for the organization of the theoretical background. Fifth, the activities of the textbooks were coded and analyzed by the researchers and the research assistants. Sixth, series of sessions were set among the researchers and assistants to resolve the coding disagreements. Seventh, the coordinators in English and Filipino of the Department of Education Cebu City Division [i.e., Abayon (2013) and Tangente (2013)], two instructors from the University of San Carlos South Campus and USC North Campus (i.e., Lisondra (2013), Filipino instructor and Sumabal (2013), respectively) and one Grade 7 and 8 English secondary teacher from public school (Cabunillas, 2014) in Cebu to validate the results.

**Treatment of Data.** The data were analyzed based on the list of competencies in reading provided by Department of Education and taken from the Internet to validate the authenticity of the document. Univariate Anova through SPSS was used as a statistical tool in the analysis. In coding and analysis, K to 12 Curriculum Guide was the main framework of analysis. The units of analysis include questions, activities, and all contents of the textbooks containing reading comprehension.

Competencies Rank	Textbooks (Grade 7 & 8)						Mean
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Schema 2 Building	41	98	62	11.5	102	51	60.9167
Strategies 1	53.50	74	59	112.50	169.50	170	106.4167
Literary 3 Texts	44	72	20	37.50	105	42.5	53.50
Expository 4 Texts	.05	49	15	15.5	19.50	29.50	21.4250

  

Legend	Name of Schools
A	Colegio dela Inmaculada Concepcion
B	Sacred Heart School-Hijas de Jesus
C	University of San Carlos-North Campus1
D	St. Theresa's College/University of San Jose Recoletos
E	University of San Carlos-South Campus
F	University of San Carlos-North Campus2

Table 2. Reading Competencies in Grade 7 & 8 English Textbooks and Content Standards

Competencies Value	Schools Interpretation						Mean P
	A	B	C	D	E	F	
Schema .000 Building significant	41	98	62	11.5	102	51	60.9167
Strategies .000 Significant	53.50	74	59	112.50	169.50	170	106.4167
Literary .000 Texts significant	44	72	20	37.50	105	42.5	53.50
Expository .000 significat Texts	.05	49	15	15.5	19.50	29.50	21.4250

Lastly, the inter-rater reliability was also established through discussion with the pair of researchers to reach the consensus without the use of percentage.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results and the corresponding discussion of the expected reading comprehension skills evident in the Grade 7 and Grade 8 English and Filipino textbooks. Also, this section shows which of the analyzed textbooks matched with the standards.

Table 1 presents the reading competencies in the Grade 7 & Grade 8 English Textbooks. The results reveal that strategies ranked 1st among the criteria in evaluating the textbooks. Among the six textbooks, three textbooks used various strategies. This result implies that most of the textbooks used contain different reading strategies to improve the students' reading skills and to facilitate these students to comprehend and apply their reading skills after reading the texts. This finding supports Zacarron et al. (2017) that readers are expected to have highest exposure to reading strategies.

Some of these strategies that were based on the consensus and interviews with Abayon (2013, personal communication) and Sumabal (2013, personal communication) include any reading activity, skimming, vocabulary activity before the text three or more questions to check Comprehension per se even if there is one question about a literary element, collage, etc.

In addition, three textbooks were able to use various activities to activate the students' prior knowledge. This implies that before reading the text, students should have a background knowledge of what they would be reading. An (2013) mentioned that efficient comprehension requires the ability to relate the textual material to one's own knowledge. However, only few textbooks contained competencies needed for literary and expository texts. This could be attributed to the few activities in the textbooks and the authors of the textbooks focused more on the schema building and strategies more.

According to Kraemer (2012), students who are exposed to varied literary texts through read aloud demonstrated improvement in general language ability, vocabulary acquisition, and comprehension. Thus, competencies related to expository texts should still need improvement.

Table 2 presents the reading comprehension skills such as the schema building, reading comprehension, and application (i.e. role play, theater, etc.). Results imply that learning is evident. In fact, language and culture are interrelated. Therefore, the textbooks follow the K to 12 Curriculum Guide concerning reading comprehension component. Zacarron et al.'s (2017) results also shared the same reading strategies with the present study.

Table 3 demonstrates the reading competencies in the Grade 7 and Grade 8 textbooks which match the standards. For the schematic building, strategies, only the textbooks used by School B met the standards. As reported by Elleman & Oslund (2019, p. 5), "effective knowledge and

Table 3. Reading Competencies as reflected in the activities of Grades 7 & 8 English Textbooks

Competencies	Schools					Mean	Rank
	A	B	C	D	E		
1a.	79	41	30.5	41.5	16.5	39.83	1
1b.	12	37.5	48.25	19.5	16.75	30.375	2
1c.	29	40	12.75	13	0.5	18	5
1d.	7	9	9.25	8.5	0	7.1667	9
2a.	1	13	8.25	8	6.7	7.5417	8
2b.	3	48	29.5	17.5	5.25	22.2917	3
2c.	2	14	16	25.5	8.25	13.625	7
2d.	19	30	12.25	27	5.75	17.7083	6
2e.	16	44.5	13.5	26	5.5	19.8333	4

Legend	Name of Schools
A	Colegio dela Inmaculada Concepcion
B	Sacred Heart School-Hijas de Jesus/St. Theresa’s College/University of San Jose-Recoletos
C	University of San Carlos-North Campus
D	University of San Carlos-South Campus1
E	University of San Carlos-South Campus2

Table 4. Reading Competencies in Grades 7 & 8 Filipino Textbooks and Content Standards

Competencies	School					Mean	P Value
	A	B	C	D	E		
1a. (significant)	79	41	30.5	41.5	16.5	39.83	0.044
1b. (not signifincat)	12	37.5	48.25	19.5	16.75	30.375	0.212
1c. (not significant)	29	40	12.75	13	0.5	18	0.655
1d. (not significant)	7	9	9.25	8.5	0	7.1667	0.946
2a. (not significant)	1	13	8.25	8	6.7	7.5417	0.589
2b. (not significant)	3	48	29.5	17.5	6.25	22.2917	0.194
2c. (not significant)	2	14	16	25.5	8.25	13.625	0.420
2d. (not significant)	19	30	12.25	27	5.75	17.7083	0.294
2e. (significant)	16	44.5	13.5	26	5.5	19.8333	0.036

integrate it with the information in the text, self-generated elaborations, graphic organizers that connect concepts to one another, and text clues (e.g., Elbro & Buchlversen, 2013; Kendeou et al., 2016 in Ellen & Oslund, 2019).

Besides, these textbooks were well-organized and the activities really facilitate students’ ability to comprehend and apply what they learned from reading the various texts. In general, the textbooks used by Schools B, D, and E highly met the standards in most of the reading competencies. The results imply that the authors of these textbooks really followed the K to 12 guidelines set by the Department of Education, specifically on the reading comprehension components.

However, the literary and expository texts of these textbooks did not meet the standards because there were only few activities in the textbooks that highlight these two content standards. Overall, there is a significant difference in the reading skills that matched with the standards of reading competencies set by the Department of Education, specifically on the schema building, strategies, literary, and expository.

Table 4 demonstrates that the textbooks titled “Pluma 1 and Pluma 2” met the standards since these textbooks are comprehensive and complete. Concerning competencies, it consists of more activities for schema building, various strategies, literary and expository texts. Elleman & Oslund (2019) concluded that the early and sustained focus on developing background knowledge, vocabulary, inference, as well as the comprehension monitoring skills is necessary to improve reading comprehension across grade levels.

This result was validated through the personal interview with USC Filipino Coordinator Mrs. Lisonra (2013, personal communication). She reported that during the AY2013-2014, USC South Campus already used “Pluma 1 and 2” from “Maragtas 1 and 2” textbooks because they found that these textbooks meet the criteria. In so doing, the Department of Education is constantly revising the K to 12 Curriculum and is conducting training for teachers.

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings, these are the following conclusions: (i) Strategies and schema building

predominated because these are negotiable and the teachers will have the freedom to explore the topics deeper through various activities in Filipino textbooks; (ii) Competencies are evident but vary in terms of emphasis; (iii) Not all textbooks match the standards, however, there are some textbooks that are able to surpass the standard.

Based on the conclusions, these are the following recommendations. First, the textbooks that match with the standards based on K to 12 Curriculum Guide should be used. Second, grades 7 & 8 Faculty members can also write textbooks based on their students' needs. Third, the authors of the textbooks should add more activities to enhance the competencies of the students in relation to literary and expository texts. Fourth, authors of the English and Filipino textbooks for Grade 7 & 8 could add parts of the textbooks to facilitate learning. Fifth, the K to 12 Curriculum Guide focusing on the reading comprehension should be enhanced, modified, and validated from time to time. Sixth, the teachers of Grade 7 & Grade 8 should be resourceful in finding activities that are helpful in reaching the maximum potential of students in reading. Seventh, more researchers are needed in evaluating the other domains. Eighth, there should be another study on whether the new textbooks published in 2013 have also followed the revised K to 12 Content Standards not only for Grades 7 and 8 but also for 9, 10, 11, 12.

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