

# ***PHILIPPINES***

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**The Cooperative Learning: A Proposed  
Technique in Teaching Reading with  
Comprehension to Students with Hearing  
Impairment**

## **Rationale:**

The increasing awareness and concern for children and youth with special needs is considered the recent development of special education in the Philippines. This may be attributed to the strong advocacy role assumed by parents and the several laws enacted particularly during the 1980's. The needs of exceptional children became the focus of so many programs and studies. In the light of this development, most educators and other professionals concerned with children are now fully convinced that education first before being special.

The rights of the exceptional children to education is provided for in Article XIV of the 1989 Constitution of the Republic of the Philippines.

The basic philosophy of special education is derived from the premise that in a democracy, every individual is valuable in his own right and should be afforded equal opportunities to develop his full potential. Every child, even the most severely handicapped should be given equal educational opportunities within the nation's educational system.

Education of children with special needs in the Philippines is a part of the macro-educational system. Its goal are embodied in the National Educational goals. The over all responsibility for the administration and supervision of special education is on the Department of Education (DepEd). The Bureau of Elementary education through its Special Education Division provides the leadership and guidance over the special education program. The Division also provides supervisory and consultative services to assist regional and division offices in developing and expanding their program. This administrative structure ensures the quality and continuity of educational services down to the school level.

At the regional level, the Special Education Unit is directly in charge of the administration and supervision of all residential schools. A set of supervisors supervise the effective implementation of Special Education program in the field.

Providing special education services for the Filipino deaf is a never ending endeavor. Section 1 of Article V ( Policies and Guidelines for Special Education) states that "*The curriculum for special education shall be based on the curriculum prescribed for the regular school by the Department of Education*". There are schemes which may be adopted for special education program depending upon the needs of the special learners: (a) the regular curriculum prescribed for regular children, (2) the modified curriculum which is the regular curriculum with certain adaptations to meet the needs of special children, such as inclusion of orientation and mobility for

children with visual impairment, and (3) the special curriculum which is designed for children with special needs and aimed primarily at developing adaptive skills and or their potential.

Though, prototype instructional materials specially designed for the above children are prepared by the Special Education Division and made available to the field, every special education (SPED) teacher is encouraged to try and employ variety of teaching methods which she believes to be effective and meaningful.

### **Recent Development and Future Challenges: Philippine Setting**

Since the new millennium heralds the arrival of the knowledge age, it means that it will be an "*Age of Learning*" where learning will be fused with work, recreation, "edutainment," personal development, and even the expansion of spirituality. Likewise, citizens will learn every day throughout long and productive lives; learning will take place anywhere, anytime, and just-in-time using the following: a.) desktops and laptops, b.) classrooms and boardrooms, c.) academic malls, d.) community learning centers and homes of mentors.

Learning in the "knowledge age" will be characterized in different ways. Learning will be **perpetual**- where work will be fused with other activities and it will occur all the time and again and again. Learning will also be **distributed** by linking learners in every physical space with a pervasive atmosphere of virtual learning resources, It is also **interactive**, such that technology will enable to produce a rich tapestry of communication; interactivity will replace educational delivery as the metaphor for learning, and last, but the least, learning would be **collaborative/cooperative** where learners will function as member of learning teams as well as individual.

The scenario that has brought about by the new century was considered as one of the several considerations why the Department of Education restructured the curriculum.

### **The 2002 Basic Education Curriculum (BEC): The Answer to the Challenge**

The 2002 Basic Education Curriculum (BEC) is a restructuring of the elementary and secondary curricula. This aims at raising the quality of our Filipino learners and graduates and empowering them for learning how to learn anywhere even when they are left to themselves. The curriculum is restructured to promote more mutual interaction between students and teachers, between students themselves (**collaborative learning**) and instructional materials, between students and multimedia sources, and between teachers of different disciplines (**collaborative teaching**). The integration of values education in all learning areas is considered.

### **New Methods of Delivering Special Education Services to Meet the Demand of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Provision for new generations of powerful integrated approaches, techniques and services to support the education of the century is most wanting. Before the implementation of 2002 BEC, massive trainings for school administrators, teachers and other school personnel were conducted. Parents and other stakeholders were also informed about the restructured curriculum through mass media.

Though the curriculum for the special children is based on the 2002 BEC with some modification depending upon the needs of the special children, conferences, write shops and trainings were also conducted by the Bureau of Elementary Education and the SPED division in search for the right methods, strategies and techniques that would help the SPED teachers implement the curriculum. The choice of the teaching strategy to be used is critical. One of the teacher responsibilities is to meet these differences by providing the students with hearing impairment appropriate environment to learn to their maximum capabilities.

### **Cooperative Learning: A Proposed Technique in Teaching**

#### **Reading with Comprehension for the Hearing Impaired**

World educators have continuously search for the right formula that will minimize the problem in reading. The search for the right solution has necessitated studies on wide range of subjects. The researches include the teaching techniques, methods and approaches for effective reading.

The teaching of reading as a subject for the Filipino deaf students had always been the problem of every reading teacher. Educators for the deaf claim that it is difficult to teach reading to Filipino deaf students because they have to master two languages (English and Filipino) at the same time pursuant to the Bilingual Policy.

Helping the students with hearing impairment to read with comprehension is everybody's concern. Comprehension is the ultimate outcome of having read. It is the most important ongoing activity of reading. Without comprehension, reading is nothing. But reading, with comprehension is the crowning glory of the human race.

It is in this premise why teachers for children with hearing impairment are continually experimenting with a variety of methods and techniques to accommodate the individual needs of the hearing impaired.

The paper discusses the cooperative learning technique which is perceived to be the right technique in teaching reading with comprehension to students with hearing impairment with consideration to the characteristics of the learning in the new century.