

THE PROGRAMMED METHOD OF READING
AS ADOPTED FOR THE AKLANON DIALECT - -

OUTLINE, TEACHER'S GUIDE
AND SYLLABUS

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INTRODUCTION: THE STATUS AND HISTORY OF THE METHOD.

The principles of "The Programmed Method of Reading" were developed by educational psychologists during the later part of the 1950's at some of America's top universities, notably Harvard and Princeton. It had been researched and applied in a number of states in the U. S. educational system.

The principles were applied to the Tagalog language by a certain Aurora Sore at the Philippine Normal College during the 1967-68 academic year, under the advice and direction of Dr. Tommy Anderson. The program was generally deemed a success, though further developments and refinements were applied during the 1968-69 academic year.

For the Aklanon dialect, Mr. R. David Zorc (Peace Corps Volunteer) and Mrs. Avelina R. Aranas devised a specific method to be experimented and demonstrated during the 1968-69 school year. Permission was obtained from the acting superintendent, Mr. Jose Panaguiton to conduct the experiment; along with the vigorous support of Mr. Nicolas L. Prado, Academic Supervisor; Mr. Teodulfo Yerro, District Supervisor for Kalibo; and Mr. Emeterio L. Prado, Principal of the Kalibo Pilot Elementary School.

The Aklanon method involves certain changes from the Tagalog one: (a) the order of the letters taught has been changed to suit the Aklanon dialect and its specific vocabulary demands; and (b) the method is generally taught without the use of expensive text and drill books, using only as many visual aids as the individual teacher can prepare. Hence, much is left to the ingenuity of each teacher using the method, and personalizing it for herself.

The experiment was conducted by Mrs. Avelina Aranas. However, three other teachers on their own initiative, approached Mr. Zorc and requested to try out the method: Miss Maria Crisostomo, Mrs. Anastacia Perez, and Mrs. Ramona Claravall. These four teachers comprised the basic force of the experiment. The experiment was deemed a success on the following grounds:

- (1) Each teacher preferred the method and stated that they would not like to return to the older Cartilla method.
- (2) Each teacher found the method more interesting and more creative for the class; it was not as repetitious as the Cartilla, and demanded more active thought than memory work.
- (3) Upon rating the teacher's performance during the 1968-69 academic year [by comparing her lesson plans of that year to the previous, 1967-68, academic year--at which time the older Cartilla method was used] it was discovered that each teacher taught the Aklanon abakada in less time and with more response than in previous years. Hence, if for no other reason, the Programmed Method of Reading proved a faster way to teach basic reading and writing.
- (4) The teachers claimed they personally found the Programmed Method more interesting and less tedious than the Cartilla.

THEORIES AND PRINCIPLES BEHIND THIS METHOD.

1. Reading, writing and pronunciation are taught simultaneously. The three are taken into consideration from the very first day of class. The pupils begin working with actual words (rather than syllables) from the very first lesson. On the first day they are taught to read and write the word "lolo" (grandfather); on the second day they are led to discriminate in reading by identifying and writing: "lolo - lola". By the end of the third day they have a vocabulary of over a dozen words. By the end of the second week, they should be able to read, write and properly punctuate simple sentences--consisting of both questions and answers. By the end of

the third month all native and foreign letters should have been taught and mastered; and by the end of the first grade the pupils can be expected to write compositions or paragraphs about themselves or the world around them (through experience charts).

2. The method operates on the principle that alphabetical order is not necessarily the easiest or best order to teach reading and/or writing. Just like programming an electronic computer, the first things put in are: the easiest and most basic facts and then those facts which are most crucial to the problem at hand. With regard to reading and writing, we will therefore teach: (a) those letters which are the easiest to write, read and reproduce; and (b) those letters which are most crucial and important to the dialect or language at hand. In Aklanon, for example, if one follows alphabetical order, "R" comes very, very late. Yet its importance to the dialect is obvious because of the basic markers and function words, such as: "ro, ra, ron" which are needed in some of the most simple sentences. In this method, because of its importance to Aklanon, "r" is taught very early [the sixth letter] so that the children can read and/or write sentences using "ro", "ra" or "ron".

3. The method does not require the pupil to read or reproduce anything he has not yet learned. In this way the pupil can read and write simple sentences composed of words made up of as few as seven letters. Vocabulary and sentence structure is built up as more and more letters are taught.

4. THE METHOD REQUIRES THE PUPIL:

- to think creatively from the first day of class, to play an active role in the learning process;
- to discriminate between the reading, writing and pronunciation of words by the end of the second lesson;
- to command seven crucial letters by the end of the second week; and to be able to read, write, construct, pronounce or take dictation of simple sentences composed from those seven letters;
- to learn the difference and use of small and capital letters simultaneously;
- to learn the grammar and structure of his/her dialect from the very beginning rather than wait for a command of the full alphabet.

5. THE METHOD REQUIRES THE TEACHER:

- to act as a model and guide, a source of reinforcement; but with more active participation on the part of each pupil;
- to do less correcting and grading since the pupils have their exercises to do and to correct by themselves [the teacher only need go around the room during the testing time to advise or to encourage];
- to drill far less than in the previous methods, with much drill left in the hands of the individual aptitude and abilities of the pupils which the teacher can govern or estimate. In the older methods, as many as 3,600 syllables were drilled and mastered over an extensive period of time. With the programmed method, approximately 230 steps must be covered to teach reading, pronunciation and writing as well;
- to cover the basics of reading all three languages (Aklanon, Pilipino, and English) with this one method [with necessary adjustments for transfer to English reading and pronunciation-- the PHONOVISUAL METHOD is highly recommended in this case];
- to produce interesting and enlightening visual aids and/or pictures to gain the class's attention and interest, and to enhance the learning process.

6. IN GENERAL, we are working with actual reading--carefully--from the very beginning. We do not want the children to have to read or reproduce any letters or words which they have not been thoroughly acquainted with, except for a few simple sight words which they can be trained to react to (not necessarily read or write).

However, the teacher should be aware that as the method progresses, after the first few lessons have been introduced, the pupils have already built up a large repertoire of skills [such as drawing circles or lines, discrimination of left to right, discrimination of sizes and shapes, pronunciation correspondence to written symbols, the use of small and capital letters, vocabulary development at a rapid pace, and so on]. Hence, as each new letter is taught, the previous skills should be reviewed, incorporated as much as possible into the teaching of the new letter. For example, drawing circles occurs with "o, b, d, p"; drawing lines occurs with "l, b, i, r, k, h, d, t"; drawing diagonal lines occurs with "A, N, K, y, Y" and so on. The teacher should have a clear idea of the skills that have been taught and are being taught, and use the pupils' knowledge to build up upon.

We start with letters, but from the first day we also deal with full words. We do not in any way stress syllables, except to reinforce or review. In a very short time we arrive at simple sentences. The emphasis of this method is towards the more realistic and more complex structures of actual speech. It has been found that pupils can cope with this approach, and that it is not difficult for them to keep up. However, the teacher must judge from the reaction of the majority of the pupils if she is proceeding too fast or too slow. By all means, she should present a challenge to the pupils; but the challenge should not be so great as to lead to (her or the pupils') frustration. Generally, it is found that in the first grade pupils are capable of accepting greater challenge than is expected of them by their teachers. Teachers can check results and the general awareness of the class by: (a) daily review, (b) visual aids and games to make the lessons interesting, (c) dictation exercises given frequently, and (d) individual attention distributed to each pupil at some time or other.

Contrary to popular belief, a student learns in spite of his mistakes, not from them. It is not the aim of this method to corner a pupil into more and more difficult situations until he finally makes a mistake. The program cannot be written too easy--though it can be written without challenge. The ideal situation is that the class will score high, not because tests were obvious or easy, but because they presented both interest and challenge to the class as a whole. Above all, the pupil must grasp all the stages intuitively. Rules are not to be given by the teacher as crutches for the learning process. Instead, the pupils should be made to develop and see the rules and to explain them as a test of their learning and as an additional challenge to stimulate their interest.

FIVE THINGS TO CONSIDER ABOUT THIS METHOD:

1. EACH SOUND IS TO BE TAUGHT ON ITS OWN--WITHOUT A NAME. Syllables are not stressed, but rather the particular sound of each vowel or consonant. Thus, the teacher must introduce both THE NAME and THE SOUND of each letter--but the sound of the letter is to be stressed before the name. For example, "l" can be given the name "ele" [Spanish], "el" [English] or "la" [Tagalog, Aklanon]. But it should be practiced silently and orally in its pure pronunciation, without any accompanying vowel sounds. In this way, the pupils will be able to read it in any position of a word or a syllable quite easily. This will avoid the mistake of reading or pronouncing "ol" as /o-la/. This will also avoid the problem of the Cartilla wherein syllables having initial consonants were first taught in their entirety /ba, be, bi, bo, bu--ka, ke, ki, ko, ku, etc. / and only much, much later syllables having final consonants /ab, eb, ib, ob, ub, etc. /.

The pronunciation, reading and writing of syllables are only given as follow-up drills once the pronunciation, reading and writing of each particular sound is mastered. Also, it is important to start from the very beginning with all sorts of syllables: consonant first or last, and three letter syllables too, such as: /lo, ol, lol/.

SUGGESTION. Just as all of us have a face (hitsora) and a name (ngaeon), so the letters also have a face or particular sound (mitlang, tunog) and a name (ar, ere, ra). What is important is not the name, but the face or the particular sound. The teacher may use the Spanish, English or Tagalog names for the letters at her own discretion.

2. **TEACH THOROUGHLY** before going on the next step or the next lesson. The program is not difficult, since the pupil is expected to learn and to master each step before going on. Thus, every phase of pronunciation, reading and writing, drill and review must be covered.

However, there are times when it seems the class gets bogged down, due to a difficult letter or due to difficulty with some sentences. This is to be expected. And the teacher may, in such cases, proceed, because in going on one always drills and reviews the previous letters anyway. For example, if the class has difficulty in drawing the "y" beyond the prescribed 4 day period, it would not matter. Go on to the next letter, but be sure to always give them review words, syllables and sentences with "y". Sometimes the novelty of a new letter is a spur to their learning the past letters better.

3. **USE WORDS COMPOSED OF THE LETTERS AT HAND.** As the program progresses more and more letters and words become possible. However, if in a creative part of the lesson a pupil suggests a word they cannot spell because a letter or two have not yet been taken; it is suggested the teacher write the unknown letters on the board and then fill in the blanks--or have the pupils fill in the blanks--with the already known letters. This adds challenge and interest to the lesson. For example, if someone suggests the word "ramos" and "m" and "s" have not been taught, the teacher could write "___ m ___ s" on the board and let some pupil fill in the blank.

4. **REINFORCE BOTH CAPITAL AND SMALL LETTERS SIMULTANEOUSLY.** In this way, transfer to sentence writing can be made by the end of the first unit [second week]. In the beginning lessons, always drill on three possible spellings, such as: "lolo, LOLO, Lolo".

5. **INDIVIDUALIZE THE METHOD FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR CLASS.** Every teacher has her own method of teaching and her own personality. Some tend to be formal and strict, others are easy-going. Some use many and colorful visual aids; others use the blackboard and things immediately at hand. The lesson plans here presented are suggestions so that you may introduce this method the way you best see fit. You may be as creative or as different as you wish in applying the lesson plans to your class. Note that the biggest changes involved are:

- (a) a different alphabetical order; intermixing of vowels and consonants;
- (b) stress on the pronunciation of a letter rather than on its name or the drilling of syllables;
- (c) building up of vocabulary words from the very beginning;
- (d) using sentences and proper punctuation as soon as possible;
- (e) teaching grammar along with the letters, even before all the letters have been taught.
- (f) syllables, if and when drilled, are taken in all positions ["is, si, silk, kis"];
- (g) capital and small letters are taught simultaneously.

A TYPICAL LESSON PLAN FOR EACH LETTER RUNS AS FOLLOWS:

1. Review of previous material [past letters, words, sentences] of unit taken.
2. **PHONICS**--drill on the new sound [new letter]: sound only, not a syllable.
3. Introduction of the **READING OF THE LETTER**: small-capital, and recognition exercise, finding the letter anywhere in the room--on charts, in books, etc.
4. **SYLLABLE PRACTICE**: in all positions (see letter "f" just above).
5. **VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT** (8 to 12 words--introduced with visual aids if possible).
6. **WRITING PRACTICE**: small and capital letters, syllables, words.
7. *****GAME*****
8. **DICTATION** [oral-aural-graphic]
9. **CHECK UP**: syllable, word and sentence reading/writing.
10. **CREATIVE FREE EXPRESSION.** The children are asked to give words or phrases that contain the new letter but which they have never yet read or written for themselves. Then they are asked to try to write that word or phrase, letting the class itself correct any mistakes

THE ALPHABETICAL ORDER TO BE FOLLOWED -- FOR AKLANON.

Alphabetical order is a conventional arrangement of most of the letters we write with. It was never really intended as a practical or systematic presentation of sounds for the process of reading, writing and/or pronunciation. We now teach the letters of a written language with stress or emphasis on (a) the ease with which they can be taught or learned, and (b) their importance to the dialect or language being taught. Hence, this method will differ from dialect to dialect, depending on these two principles. FOR AKLANON, the order will be:

LETTER	REASON FOR BEING TAUGHT AT THIS POINT
1 O o	Easiest of all letters to read and write; a vowel; sounds like and looks like bOla.
2 L l	Easiest of all consonants to write; looks/sounds like <u>L</u> apis. First word: "lolo".
3 A a	Easy to read and write; essential as a vowel. Discrimination: "lola - lolo".
4 B b	Easy to read and write; allows for an initial large vocabulary in Aklanon: "bao, bala, bola, balo, lobo, bolo, baba, bobe, abb, abo, oba, obo".
5 I i	Essential as another vowel; enlarges beginning vocabulary: "iba, iba, ila, ilo, bibi, bibi, libo, bilo, alila, abi, bili, bail".
6 R r	Crucial to content words in Aklanon: "ro, ra". Simple sentences can be made with the introduction of punctuation marks.
7 . ?	Basic punctuation for statements and questions: "Abò ra." "Abò ro lolo?"
8 N n	Crucial for content words: "ron, ano, nano"; expanded vocabulary.
- - - - - END UNIT ONE: stressing first seven letters and basic punctuation/sentences.	
9 K k	Easy to read and write; important for content words: "kara, karon" and expanding vocabulary: "karo, kaka, kabo, kabkab, akon, baka, etc."
10 U u	Easy to read and write; important as a vowel to distinguish from "o".
11 Y y	Crucial for larger vocabulary and content words: "ay, raya, ruyon, kinyo, ninyo"
12 H h	Important for content word "hay" and developing vocabulary.
13 E e	Crucial to Aklanon as a CONSONANT: "eaki, eaha, ueo, uea, bakae, baeoe, eon".
- - - - - END UNIT TWO: stressing continued vocabulary development and basic sentences.	
14 E e	A borrowed VOWEL, occurring in such words as: "relo, yelo, kaiye, Enero".
15 M m	Crucial for adjectives beginning with "ma---" and content word "may".
16 D d	Vocabulary development: "mayad, damoe, bida, daba, dada, dila, labada, etc."
17 G g	Crucial for verb prefixes: "naga-, nag-, gina-, gin-".
18 S s	Vocabulary development: "siin, sa, si, asin, saka, baeas, hueas, ibis, etc."
- - - - - END UNIT THREE: stressing more complex words and three letter syllables.	
19 T t	Easy to write; important for content word: "it". Vocabulary development.
20 P p	Important for very large vocabulary development.
21 W w	Difficult to write, but important for pronouns: "ikaw, imaw" Also: "owà, ayaw".
22 NG ng	Important to stress this as a single sound but spelled with two letters.
23 -	The glottal sound found in the middle of words; an actual consonant: "sin-o, kan-an-om, ap-at, tam-is, ham-an, gae-om, hin-uno, mayad-ayad, etc."
- - - - - END OF UNIT FOUR: stressing continuous reading and free expression.	

At this point, all native sounds could be reviewed alphabetically with the sentence (or song): "ABA KA, DAEAGA, HA? ILA, MANA, NGA OPA RA SA TAUWAYA?"

THE FOREIGN LETTERS CAN BE TAUGHT IN THE FOLLOWING SUGGESTED ORDER: c C, x X, v V, z Z, f F, j J, ñ Ñ, ll Ll, qu Qu, sh Sh, ch Ch". After this, transfer to English reading and writing could be made, along with the teaching of the English alphabet.

THE ALPHABETICAL ORDER FOLLOWED BY OTHER KNOWN DIALECTS USING THIS METHOD.

<u>ORDER</u>	<u>TAGALOG-PILIPINO</u>	<u>HILIGAYNON-ILONGGO</u>
1.	O o	O o
2.	L l	L l
3.	A a	A a
4.	B b	B b
5.	I i	I i
6.	T t	N n
7.	. ?	. ?
8.	D d	T t

9.	K k	K k
10.	U u	U u
11.	N n	G g
12.	G g	NG ng
13.	NG ng	S s

14.	E e	M m
15.	Y y	Y y
16.	M m	H h
17.	R r	D d

18.	S s	R r
19.	P p	P p
20.	W w	W w
21.	H h	E e
22.		- [internal glottal stop]