

THE READING PROFICIENCY OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE
STUDENTS AS COMPARED TO CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE AND
FUTURE FARMER ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

By

JACK W. PRITCHARD

Bachelor of Science
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma
1958

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
the Oklahoma State University
for the degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
August, 1964

JAN 8 1955

THE READING PROFICIENCY OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE
STUDENTS AS COMPARED TO CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE AND
FUTURE FARMER ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

Thesis Approved:

Ewert D. Edington

Thesis Adviser

Robert R. Price

J. W. Boyce
Dean of the Graduate School

570310

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer expresses sincere appreciation to Everett Edington of the Agricultural Education Department for his guidance and assistance while this study was being prepared and written.

Special credit is due to Vocational Agriculture instructors, Mr. Paul Evans and Mr. Mac Irving. Their efforts and cooperation made the gathering of material for this study an enjoyable task.

Credit must also be given to the Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Vocational Agriculture students of the Perkins, Stillwater, and Glencoe High Schools.

This acknowledgment would not be complete without expressing deepest appreciation to my wife, Betty, and to my parents, Mr. and Mrs. V. J. Pritchard, for their continued encouragement while I was working on this study.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. PURPOSE AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY	1
Introduction	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Purpose of the Study	3
Scope of the Study	3
Limitations of the Study	4
Procedure of Investigation	4
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	6
III. PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA	10
IV. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	19
Summary	19
Conclusions	24
Recommendations	25
A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY	27
APPENDIX	29

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Per Cent of Students in Each of the Four Percentile Groups	11
II. Participation in Future Farmer Activities For the Four Percentile Groups	12
III. Classroom Response For the Four Percentile Groups	14
IV. Classroom Work Enjoyment For the Four Percentile Groups	15
V. Time Required to do Classroom Work For the Four Percentile Groups	16
VI. Class Attentiveness For the Four Percentile Groups	17
VII. Grade Point Average For the Four Percentile Groups	18

CHAPTER I

PURPOSE AND DESIGN OF THE STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Vocational Agriculture has been one of the most important tools in molding this state and the nation into a great producer of agricultural products. The United States ranks among the nations of the world in the production of food and fiber. Because of this productiveness, our standard of living is unexcelled.

In Oklahoma, agriculture is still our greatest industry. This is due not only to our splendid resources of land, labor, and mechanization, but also to the tremendous number of young men trained in Vocational Agriculture and the Future Farmers of America. These young men in the past have had a decided impact upon the productiveness of this state, as well as the entire nation.

The past is now history, but what about the future? Because of the tremendous advances in farm technology and the great amount of "know how," that will be needed in order to be a successful farm operator in the future, what are some of the absolute requirements for young men who will operate these large farm unit operations in years to come?

Generally speaking the farm operator of the future will have to successfully manage every phase of his farm resources. In order to manage these resources, it will be an absolute necessity that he be able to keep abreast of all new research and technological development in his specific field. He must be able to make a very calculated approach to each and every little daily problem. The problem of digestion and analysis of all new material will require that the farm operator will have to be able to read and understand tremendous amounts of printed matter and be able to make sound judgments and decisions based upon this proper understanding. Therein may lie the difference between his success or failure as a farm operator.

Statement of the Problem

As Vocational Agriculture students advance to the Sophomore, Junior, and Senior levels of secondary education, many do not attain goals that seem to be within their reach. Many do not actively participate in Chapter activities or in the discussion and activities of the classroom. Questions pertinent to the study include the following:

- (1) Does lack of reading proficiency constitute a handicap in Future Farmer activities participation?
- (2) Is the reading proficiency of Vocational Agriculture students a limiting factor in performance?

Purpose of the Study

It was the purpose of this study to obtain from Sophomore, Junior, and Senior high school students data concerning their reading vocabulary and their ability to comprehend what they read.

To determine if this lack of proficiency in reading is a limiting factor in the degree in which a student participates in Future Farmer activities and his classroom performance.

It is desired that information obtained from this study may contribute to the revision or the re-evaluation of teaching methods if necessary, so as to put increased emphasis on reading proficiency of Vocational Agriculture students at the secondary level, and therefore by indirect means, may increase the participation of the student in Future Farmer activities and his classroom work, and thereby produce a student with greater leadership ability, in that he has the ability to read and understand what he has read and make sound judgment based upon this increased understanding.

Scope of the Study

This study included the testing of Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Vocational Agriculture students from three high schools. The schools used in this testing program were Perkins High School, Stillwater High School, and Glencoe High School. These three schools were selected due to their convenience in location and their representative size. Eighty-six students of Vocational Agriculture were given

the Nelson-Denny reading test. The test had the recommendation from the Oklahoma State University Testing and Measurements Department, as the test most likely to fulfill the needs of this study.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to three schools in Central Oklahoma.

Sophomore, Junior, and Senior high school students were tested. The use of chapter activities and classroom activities were used as criterion for determining a student's degree of participation in his Future Farmer work and his classroom performance.

Procedure Used in the Study

In order to obtain the information needed to complete the study, the following procedure was carried out:

1. The Nelson-Denny reading test was selected and administered to eighty-six students on the Sophomore, Junior, and Senior level in Vocational Agriculture. The test consisted of vocabulary and comprehension divisions.
2. A list of Future Farmer and classroom activities was developed and presented to each Vocational Agriculture instructor in the schools selected. The local instructor rated each of his own students tested in the activities listed before reading data

was made known. The evaluation by the instructor was based upon two phases: that of Future Farmer activity participation and classroom performance.

3. The Nelson-Denny reading test data was compiled along with data from the instructor's survey sheet to determine the relationship of a student's proficiency in reading to his participation in Future Farmer activities and his classroom behavior.
4. An attempt was made to obtain data from a representative high school of an enrollment of less than 100 students, a school with over 100 students and a school with several hundred students. This believed to be the somewhat representative size of schools in which Vocational Agriculture is taught. This attempt was primarily made to obtain representative size of schools and not to show differences between schools.
5. The total score of both divisions of the reading test will be used as an evaluation of the overall reading skills of the individual.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There were several studies that were reviewed and found helpful in this study concerning the reading ability of Vocational Agriculture students.

It was evident that an endless amount of research has been done for many years in other fields of secondary education concerning students reading habits and skills. It was also evident that there were very few studies concerning the reading proficiency of Vocational Agriculture students. The explanation for the absence of such studies are not readily available. It is possible that in the profession's desire to improve the many facets of agriculture through Vocational Agriculture, the improvement of reading may have been overlooked. It is also possible that the feeling that this phase of educational development is not as important as others, or that the responsibility of developing the reading skills within our students falls upon someone else's shoulders. No study was found which sought a relationship between a student's reading proficiency and his participation in chapter activities.

Several of the studies reviewed were concerned with the ranking students reading ability against the National Norm

the Vocational Agriculture class tested. (1) Other studies were concerned in part with the reading level of reference material of secondary Vocational Agriculture students. (2)

V. R. Cardozier, of the Department of Agriculture Education at the University of Tennessee, found through a study in six Tennessee high schools that the average reading ability of the group tested fell far below National Norm. The students scored lowest in the area of vocabulary. Almost one-third of the students could not understand fully materials above the eighth grade level in readability. This study was to have serious implications because of the readability of materials used in teaching Vocational Agriculture. According to Christensen's study (2) seventy per cent of books most used in Vocational Agriculture classes in the Pacific Region read at or above the ninth grade level. In applying the Christensen's study (2) to Tennessee, the Cardozier study (1) showed that seventy per cent of the books used in Vocational Agriculture classes in Tennessee were above the level of understanding of sixty-nine per cent of the students in the study. Cardozier (1) concludes that although the teacher of Vocational Agriculture is not generally considered to be responsible for remedial reading, he shares this responsibility with other high school teachers unless his school has a teacher who is specifically responsible for remedial reading work. That instruction in reading is usually considered to be a function of the elementary schools, but if the student

has not learned to read, then as a practical matter, teachers at the high school and college levels need to help him to improve his ability to read. Also, it is likely that some students can never learn to read well, but it also seems likely that very poor readers could, with proper guidance and encouragement, learn to read better.

Orville E. Thompson (7) stated in the AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION magazine on pages 226 through 231 that:

The teacher should not be carried away with conditions within his classroom and undertake a reading improvement program to bring each student up to a point where he is reading to the best of his ability. This is a job for the specialist and requires much more time than the Vocational Agriculture instructor has available. That one point should not be overlooked in the process of attempting to match reading material with reading ability of the individual is his interest. The interest level may be more closely related to the student's actual age than his reading grade level.

Boyd C. Gartley (3) conducted a study concerning a student's reading ability in relationship to achievement in Vocational Agriculture. He found that a relationship does exist between reading ability and achievement in Vocational Agriculture on the high school level. For this study, the coefficient of correlation was 63. According to Linqvist () this is a relatively high correlation of the factors involved. It was also concluded from this study that the students enrolled in Vocational Agriculture need the training to develop and organize their thinking. It is meant that the pupil should be educated to the idea of seeing the whole meaning of a passage when reading material. This study also drew the conclusion that the idea of comprehension can be improved in

classes of Vocational Agriculture, however, that these improvement techniques should become "a part of" the course of study and not to be considered "in addition to" the teacher's course of study.

Ron Mehrer (5) stated in the AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION magazine on page 81 that:

That convincing the student that he can and should improve his reading ability is the first step towards better reading habits and increased proficiency.

In summary, it appears that there is a definite need for improving the reading proficiency of Vocational Agriculture students at the secondary level. It seems that there are far too many students who are deficient in the reading skills; and, because of this deficiency, many will not reach goals or their place in competitive vocational fields desired.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data presented in this chapter were obtained after determining the total reading scores of eighty-six Vocational Agriculture students of three Central Oklahoma high schools. The Vocational Agriculture instructors of these three schools were asked to determine closely the student's participation and performance in the different areas to be considered by this study.

The study attempted to determine the per cent of participation of each student in chapter activities and classroom performance based upon his reading ability and evaluation by his instructors.

The combined Vocabulary and comprehension scores were used in percentile ranking as the best indicator of the student's total reading ability.

The students in the test were grouped into four groupings based upon percentile rankings indicated by the Nelson-Denny reading test's percentile rank of scores.

General information concerning the per cent of students in each group is given in Table I.

The relative large percentage of students appearing in Group Four indicates that we do have some of the finer students

in Vocational Agriculture; that their ability as readers ranks with the students of non-vocational subjects. This seems to dispell for the moment the theory that the slower students should be put in vocational subjects primarily.

The most disturbing feature of Table I is the large number of students that scored in the 24th percentile or lower group. Many students in this group are ranked below the 10th percentile.

TABLE I

PER CENT OF STUDENTS IN EACH OF THE FOUR PERCENTILE GROUPS

	Group 4	Group 3	Group 2	Group 1
	<u>Above 75th Percentile</u>	<u>50-74th Percentile</u>	<u>25-49th Percentile</u>	<u>At or Below 24th Percentile</u>
Per Cent Of Students	25.6	20.9	22.1	31.4

This indicates that we may be getting more than the average numbers of the slower students in our Vocational Agriculture classes. This seemingly large percentage of lower ranked students possibly may not get "pushed" by the person in charge of guidance that we sometimes talk about. He may be in our classes for a reason. Further data of this study tend to bear this out.

The disturbing feature of this large per cent of students in groups one and two stem from the fact that a large number of our reference books readability are above this level. The students could not possibly understand what they are expected to read in the course of study.

In view of the data presented in Table I, it is a problem for the instructor to challenge the faster, higher percentile group of students with proper reading material and at the same time, with the same subject matter effectively teach the students who rank in the lower percentile groups.

Table I showed that 53.5 per cent of the students tested read below the 50th percentile ranking.

In the Program of Vocational Agriculture, we adhere closely to the theory that the student learns by doing. In essence, we are saying that our program is one of student participation. When we work up our calendar of events at the beginning of each year, we seem to have an endless list of activities in which the students are expected to participate. Our greatest desire is that by participating in these chapter or classroom activities the student will effectively learn.

TABLE II

PARTICIPATION IN FUTURE FARMER ACTIVITIES
FOR THE FOUR PERCENTILE GROUPS

<u>Percentile Group</u>	<u>Active Chapter Leaders</u>	<u>90 Per Cent Participation</u>	<u>Below 50 Per Cent Participation</u>
4	54.6	22.7	22.7
3	50.0	22.2	27.8
2	36.8	31.6	31.6
1	7.4	22.2	70.4

The data in Table II reveals that a substantial per cent of Group Four are active leaders. Data indicates that 77.3

per cent of Group Four are active leaders or participate in at least 90 per cent of Chapter activities. Data indicates clearly that most of those active in Chapter affairs are above average readers. There is substantially no difference between group three and four in leadership or participation.

In Group One a tremendous break occurred, only a very small percentage of this group were active leaders, and a relatively small percentage participated in 90 per cent of Chapter activities. The most revealing data of Table II is in Group One where 70.4 per cent of this group participated below the 50 per cent level. This is a complete breakdown of our program of participation in Vocational Agriculture. This 70.4 per cent figure presents a real problem for the instructor. There are several questions to be answered concerning this group. Do we know who these students are? What are we going to do about them? How can we change such a situation? Can these students be motivated so as to overcome this situation? These questions may be beyond the scope of this study, but once the problem has been identified we certainly can start taking steps in the right direction in order to help eliminate the situation.

Our program of participation seems to be geared to those students of higher reading ability. The fact that 31.4 per cent of those tested fell into Group One where 70.4 per cent do not actively participate in Chapter activities. How are we meeting the needs of this group if our program is one of learning by doing? The students of Group One learning will be rather meager because they are not doing.

TABLE III

CLASSROOM RESPONSE FOR THE FOUR PERCENTILE GROUPS

<u>Percentile Group</u>	<u>Very Responsive</u>	<u>Occasionally Responsive</u>	<u>Must Be Asked To Respond</u>
4	54.6	36.3	9.1
3	50.6	33.3	16.7
2	31.6	52.6	15.8
1	14.8	22.2	63.0

An analysis of Table III shows an average of response for Group three and four. It would seem to indicate the lack of response for the higher reading ability groups. It is not evident why the response for these two groups was not higher.

Again the first break was in Group Two, and once again as in Table II the 50th percentile seemed to be the breaking point.

In Table III, Group one data indicates a real break in the response of the student of the low reading group. Most significant is that the instructor will have to ask 63.0 per cent of the students to respond in this group.

In Group One there is evidence that even though ability to understand reading material is impaired, 14.8 per cent of these students were very responsive.

TABLE IV

CLASSROOM WORK ENJOYMENT FOR THE FOUR PERCENTILE GROUPS

<u>Percentile Group</u>	<u>Enjoys Classroom Work</u>	<u>Does Not Enjoy Classroom Work</u>
4	82.0	18.0
3	66.7	33.3
2	36.8	63.2
1	18.5	81.5

An analysis of Table IV indicates Group Four as having a very high per cent of students that enjoy their classroom work. A tremendous contrast is presented between Groups four and one. This is the greatest variation of any of the groups for any area of evaluation. Indicating clearly that those who do not understand subject matter do not enjoy classroom work, but on the other hand those who have the ability to read and understand do enjoy their classroom work.

Again the first real break between the groups came at the 50th percentile level.

Questions again arise. How shall we teach groups of students when large percentages do not enjoy doing the work?

Even in Group Two a relatively large per cent do not enjoy their classroom work.

TABLE V

TIME REQUIRED TO DO CLASSROOM WORK FOR
THE FOUR PERCENTILE GROUPS

<u>Percentile Group</u>	<u>Does Work Rapidly</u>	<u>Does Work Slowly</u>	<u>Does Work Very Slowly</u>
4	86.4	13.6	None
3	61.1	27.8	11.1
2	31.6	63.2	5.2
1	18.5	44.4	37.1

Table V reveals a high per cent of Group Four do not have trouble doing classroom work. Only a very small number will do their work slowly, and none will do work very slowly. Table V indicates a significant drop from Group Four to Group Three for those doing work rapidly and those doing work slowly. Here in Table V the first break was not at the 50th percentile but at the 75th percentile.

However, the real break came at the 50th percentile. Group Two shows a significant decrease between those who work rapidly and those who do work slowly. This 30 per cent drop indicates a very rapid drop in the student's ability to do classroom work once he drops below the 50th percentile ranking in his reading ability.

The explanation for the 5.2 per cent who did classroom work very slowly is not evident.

An analysis of Table V also shows that in Group One 81.5 per cent of this group was either slow or very slow.

The explanation for 18.5 per cent of students in Group One or 31.6 per cent of Group Two did classroom work rapidly is not readily evident.

TABLE VI

CLASS ATTENTIVENESS FOR THE FOUR PERCENTILE GROUPS

<u>Percentile Group</u>	<u>Attentive in Class</u>	<u>Unattentive in Class</u>
4	90.9	9.1
3	72.2	27.8
2	63.2	36.8
1	40.7	59.3

An analysis of Table VI shows that reading Group Four was very high in the per cent of those who were attentive in class. A low per cent of this group were unattentive in class even though they understood the subject material being taught. The data of Table VI shows a considerable break at the 75th percentile ranking for Group Three. The relationship of reading ability to attentiveness seemed rather high, for Group Two had dropped approximately 20 per cent from Group Four.

No significant difference was noted in data between Groups Three and Two in class attentiveness.

In Group One a sizeable per cent remained attentive in class despite the handicaps of being poor readers. However, the 59.3 per cent of Group One who were unattentive in class creates a problem in teaching any subject matter where reading is involved.

TABLE VII

GRADE POINT AVERAGE FOR THE FOUR PERCENTILE GROUPS

<u>Percentile Groups</u>	<u>Grade Point Average</u>
4	3.24
3	2.92
2	2.43
1	1.94

The data presented in Table VII reveals that in this study the higher the student's reading ability, the higher the grade point average. It is possible that the averages in Table VII may not be as meaningful as they might have been, because of the practice of grading partly on the student's participation in Future Farmer activities. Because of this practice, the grades presented in Table VII may not correctly reflect the true performance of the student grade wise. There is good reason to believe that, if the grades had been based strictly upon classroom work thereby showing the effects of a student's reading ability, the grade point average of possibly Groups One and Two would not have been as high.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to attempt to determine the relationship of reading ability to a student's participation in Chapter activities and his classroom performance.

A total of eighty-six Sophomore, Junior, and Senior students were tested with the Nelson-Denny reading test. This test had the recommendation of the Oklahoma State University's Testing and Measurements Department. It was assured that the combined total score of Vocabulary and Comprehension would be accurate indication of the student's reading ability.

The three Vocational Agriculture instructors of these eighty-six students completed a questionnaire to determine in the opinion of the instructors the student's per cent of participation in activities of the Chapter and a comprehension evaluation of the student's performance in the classroom.

The grade point was obtained as an additional classroom evaluation.

The raw scores of Vocabulary and Comprehension were combined to give each student a total reading score. By the use of this total raw score, the percentile ranking was determined by the percentile ranking chart of the Nelson-Denny reading test.

The percentile ranking of the total number of students was divided into four groups for closer comparison of their Chapter participation and classroom performance. Group Four included the students who ranked in the 75th to 99th percentile; Group Three were those students who ranked from the 50th to 79th percentile; Group Two ranked from the 25th to 49th percentile; and the final Group were those who ranked at or below the 24th percentile in their reading ability.

It was found that 25.6 per cent of the eighty-six students were in Group Four. This is considerably higher than expected. Group Three and Group Two did not contain the majority of the eighty-six students as might have been expected. The 31.4 per cent of the eighty-six students in Group One was one of the most disturbing aspect of the study. It was expected that a larger portion of these students would have been found in Group Two. By the same reasoning, a considerable number of Group Four would have been expected to be in Group Three.

In determining the per cent of participation, it was evident that the students with higher reading proficiency participated at a greater degree than those who were less proficient.

In Groups Three and Four, it was expected that a larger percentage would have been active Chapter leaders. However, in Group Four 77.3 per cent were active Chapter leaders or participated in 90 per cent of Chapter activities compared with 29.6 per cent for Group One. There is a very significant

break in participation between Groups One and Two. In Group Two 68.4 per cent of the students were leaders or participated in 90 per cent of Chapter activities compared to 29.6 per cent for Group One. The 24th percentile was certainly the breaking point in this phase of study.

The 70.4 per cent of Group One who participates in less than 50 per cent of activities seems to be a significant figure in view of the fact that the program of Vocational Agriculture is a Program of Participation. For years we have said that our students learn by doing. This study indicates that a fairly high per cent of the students tested are not participating.

The relatively large per cent of students in the top two groups who participate in less than 50 per cent of Chapter activities presents a problem. These students could be participating in activities at a higher level if motivated properly.

In classroom performance, it was found that only 54.6 per cent of Group Four were very responsive in class. This was expected to be considerably higher. It is somewhat disturbing to find that 45.4 per cent of the higher reading group occasionally responds or must be asked to respond. This clearly indicates the lack of motivation or challenge for the more proficient student. In this case, it cannot be attributed to not understanding what is being taught. Primarily this condition exists also in Group Three.

The break in this area of the study appears at the 50th percentile. In Group Two 68.4 per cent occasionally responds or must be asked to respond. In Group One 85.2 per cent fall into this category.

In the lower two groups motivation and interest are factors, evidenced by 31.6 per cent for Group Two and 14.8 per cent in Group One who despite their proficiency were considered very responsive.

It is firmly believed that the majority of those only occasionally responding and those who must be asked to respond was due in a large measure to their inability to understand the material used in classroom study.

The study showed, as was expected, that those students with higher reading proficiency enjoyed classroom work much more than did those of the lower reading level. In Group Four 82.0 per cent enjoyed classroom work compared with 18.5 per cent in the lower Group One showing a very definite relationship between reading ability and enjoyment of classroom work.

A fact worth considering is that 81.5 per cent of Group One does not enjoy their classroom work. The instructor will have a tremendous job motivating this group of students, because of their lack of ability to comprehend. These students do not understand the great majority of classroom material; therefore, do not enjoy what they do in the classroom. How is the student to learn by doing when he both does not understand and does not enjoy his work?

The speed by which a student performs in the classroom seems to be based primarily on his ability to understand what is expected of him in the performance of his work. In this phase of the study, it was found that a large per cent of Group Four did their work rapidly. In this area of the study, the relationship between reading proficiency and performance seems to be very high. As the student's reading ability decreases, there is a very definite drop in the speed in which the student performs his classroom work. This relationship is shown by the 86.4 per cent doing work rapidly in Group Four as compared with 18.5 per cent for the same performance for Group One. There is a very definite break between each of the percentile groups. The breaks are more uniform between groups than for the other phases of this study, indicating the validity of the relationship.

The study shows 68.4 per cent for Group Two and 81.9 per cent for Group One do their work slowly or very slowly. Certainly this makes for a real handicap in classroom instruction. In this phase of the study, the motivation and interest factors appear somewhat limited in comparison to other areas of the study. Inability to perform at a rapid rate because of reading deficiency is the most limiting factor.

Group Four showed a high degree of interest in classroom work as was expected. However, the difference between Group Four and corresponding groups was not as great as for other parts of the study as evidenced by the 90.9 per cent for Group Four compared to 40.7 per cent for Group One. It can be said with a high degree of validity that the upper reading

level students were able to comprehend what was taught, thus stimulating interest and attentiveness in class. A considerable per cent of the upper reading level groups were unattentive in spite of their ability to understand what was being taught, indicating lack of interest or motivation.

It is of interest to observe that even though the students on the lower reading level do not enjoy classroom work, are not responsive in class, do their work slowly or very slowly, a substantial percentage of students are still attentive in class.

As was expected, the relationship between a student's reading proficiency and his grade point average was evident in this study. The practice of grading students partly on Chapter participation and activities instead of strictly upon classroom work was definitely a factor to be considered. If the student's grade point had been based upon classroom work alone, it is believed that a greater variation of grade point averages would have been evident.

Conclusions

It can be concluded from the data presented in this study that there is a definite relationship between a student's reading ability and his participation in Future Farmer Chapter activities.

Results show a direct relationship between a student's reading ability and his performance in the Vocational Agriculture classroom.

It appears that the relationship of reading ability to Chapter participation is not as high for the upper level readers as it is for the lower level readers.

It also appears that the overall relationship of reading ability to Chapter participation is not as significant as in areas of a student's classroom performance.

In all areas of classroom performance the relationship of reading ability to performance was high.

There was a positive relationship between grade point average and reading ability.

Factors of motivation and interest were evident throughout the study.

Recommendations

As a result of this study, it is recommended that more research be conducted to determine the extent of reading deficiencies in our schools, both on the primary and secondary level. Broader studies need to be undertaken to determine if the deficiencies noted in this study are wide spread. It is recommended that these deficiencies be identified as early as possible in the student's educational processes. Studies of the smaller Agriculture Community schools at the primary and secondary level need to be undertaken. If deficiencies do exist, determine if possible the feasible remedial steps to be taken to correct deficiencies existing. This study showed that a slight deficiency existed in the three schools involved.

It is recommended that every school that does not now test for deficiencies in reading do adopt a testing program that will incorporate this phase.

It is recommended that Vocational Agriculture instructors along with other teachers help to identify these students with reading deficiencies where testing programs do not exist. Characteristics presented in this study can help to identify those students who are retarded in the reading skills.

Remedial reading classes should be set up in all schools which do not presently provide them.

It is further recommended that individual teachers help students with proper reading habits in the classroom work. Do not be afraid to have students read aloud in class.

It should be recognized that the first step in encouraging good reading habits is to convince the student that he can and should improve his reading. The student must be shown the importance or reason for improving his reading.

It must be pointed out that in most of the larger schools remedial reading classes are already available. But, in the smaller schools where the majority of Vocational Agriculture Departments exist no testing program in reading is used, no remedial classes are offered, no reading instruction is provided above the primary level, unless some one teacher becomes alarmed with the retarded readers in the class and gives some classroom time to reading.

It is hereby recommended that more research be done in this field to bring to light reading deficiencies that do exist.

A SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Cardozier, V. R. "Reading ability of High School Students of Vocational Agriculture," Staff Study, 1958, University of Tennessee, Department of Agriculture Education, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
2. Christensen, Howard, "The Readability of Agricultural Text Books and Bulletins," (Unpublished Master's Report, Colorado A & M College, 1953)
3. Gartley, Boyd C. "Reading Ability in Relation to Achievement in Vocational Agriculture," (Thesis, MS, 1952, Pennsylvania State University)
4. McPherson, David E. "A Study of the Readability of University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service Publications and Leaflets for Boy's Taking Vocational Agriculture in High School," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Tennessee, 1957)
5. Mehrer, Ron, "Improving Reading Ability of Vocational Agriculture Students." Agriculture Education Magazine, (October 1959)
6. Showman, Elmer S. "Evaluation of Selected High School Vocational Agriculture Texts." (Unpublished Master's Thesis, Montana State College, 1957)
7. Thompson, Orville E. "Should You Be A Teacher Of Reading Too"? Agricultural Education Magazine, (October 1959)
8. Traxler, Arthur E. "Reading and Secondary School Achievement," 1946 Achievement Testing Program in Independent Schools And Supplementary Studies, Educational Records Bulletin No. 45 (New York: Educational Records Bureau, June 1946)

APPENDIX

VITA

Jack W. Pritchard

Candidate for the Degree of
Master of Science

Thesis: THE READING PROFICIENCY OF VOCATIONAL AGRICULTURE
STUDENTS AS COMPARED TO CLASSROOM PERFORMANCE AND
FUTURE FARMER ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

Major Field: Agricultural Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born at Seminole, Oklahoma, August 4,
1930, the son of Vinson and Ina Pritchard.

Education: Graduated from Earlsboro High School in
1949; received the Bachelor of Science degree
from Oklahoma State University in 1958, with a
major in Agricultural Education; completed the
requirements for the Master of Science degree
in August, 1964.

Professional experience: Vocational Agriculture
Instructor at Glencoe High School from 1958
to the present time.