A defence of simplification
text that involves controlled and simplified language use. This uneasiness about
graded readers may be expressed either indirectly, through not using them in
extensive reading programs as in the Elley and Mangubhai (1981) study, or
directly through criticism of the books and their use. Yano, Long and Ross
(1994), for example, criticise simplified texts for being unauthentic, inhibiting
comprehension and providing poor conditions for learning. The purpose of
this article is to show that graded readers are an essential part of a second or
foreign language learning program. This will be done firstly by examining the
criticisms of graded readers, and secondly by showing the value of graded readers
using a comparison of a simplified version and the original unsimplified version of
Dracula.

Criticisms of simplified texts
Graded readers that are simplified from literary texts written for native speakers
are criticised for being unauthentic (Honeyfield 1977). A similar criticism is
applied to all texts that are written within a deliberately restricted vocabulary.
There is no doubt that reading a simplified version of Dracula is not the same as
reading the original, but no writer of a graded reader would suggest that it is.
There is still the feeling, however, that a text which has been altered in the
drastic way that a simplified text has is no longer an authentic text. This criticism
depends on the meaning of 'authentic'. The meaning of 'authentic' that is
being used in the criticism is 'written for native speakers'. In a very perceptive
article, Widdowson (1976) pointed out that 'authentic' or 'authenticity' can be viewed in a different way. Authenticity is not a characteristic of texts, but is
the result of the interaction between a reader and a text. If a learner reads a
text, and responds to it in a way that we might expect of someone who
comprehends the text, then reading the text is authentic for that learner. This response might involve understanding the text, enjoying its message, seeing the strengths and weaknesses in its content and expression, or seeing its contribution to a
wider field. As we shall see later, a text that is authentic, in that it was produced
for native speakers, may be too difficult for learners to respond to in an authentic
way. This view of authenticity is similar to the modern view of validity. A text
is not valid in its own right, but is valid when it is used for the purpose for which it
was designed and examined.

Simplified texts are also criticised because the restriction on writers to use
short, simple sentences can result in choppy and unnatural discourse (Honeyfield
1977; Yano et al 1994), and may result in poor cohesive reference and an
overreliance on implicit, rather than explicit, conjunction relationships. These
can make the texts difficult to comprehend. These criticisms may be true of
poorly written simplifications, but there are many excellent simplifications
that are a joy to read. Hill (in Day and Bamford 1998) provides a very useful
and substantial list of these high quality texts. It is unfair and misleading to
condemn simplifications as a whole because some are poorly done.

Graded readers are also criticised because they provide poor conditions for
learning (Yano et al 1994). These criticisms include the following:

1. Reading graded readers that are pitched lower than the learners' level can
lower the quality of their output.

2. Removing difficult vocabulary denies learners access to what they need
to learn.

3. Reading texts with little unknown vocabulary discourages the development
of generalizable coping skills, such as guessing from context and dictionary
use.

These are all criticisms of the ways in which graded readers are fitted into
a language course. In the remainder of this article, we will look at how the use
of graded readers needs to be managed through the matching of the level of
graded readers to learners' proficiency levels, and to the learning goals of the
various strands of a course. It should then be clear that the criticisms listed
above are really criticisms of poor syllabus design, rather than criticisms of graded
readers themselves. Let us now look at the various parts of a language course
to see how graded readers can fit into these parts, where unsimplified texts
would not be suitable.

The strands of a language course
One way of ensuring that there is a balance of appropriate learning activities
in a course is to see a well-balanced course as containing a roughly equal balance
of the four strands of meaning-focused input, language-focused learning,
meaning-focused output and fluency development.

The strand of meaning-focused input involves incidental learning through
listening and speaking where around 98 per cent of the running words are
already familiar or pose no learning burden to the learners (Hua and Nation
2000). In this strand, learners' focus is on the message of the texts. Graded
readers have a very important part to play in this strand of a course, both as
sources of listening input as well as reading input, particularly for learners at
the beginning and intermediate levels of proficiency. Much of the justification
for the meaning-focused input strand of a course comes partly from the work
of Krashen (1985) and advocates of the comprehension approach (Nold 1980),
and from research on 'book floods' (Elley 1991). The book flood experiments
involve dramatically increasing the amount of reading that language learners
Learning through meaningful engagement involves students' active participation in the development of their own understanding. This process is facilitated by constructivist principles, which emphasize the active construction of knowledge through experience and reflection. In the classroom, this approach is reflected in the use of collaborative learning, problem-based activities, and student-centered instruction. Teachers act as facilitators, providing resources and guidance, while students take an active role in their own learning process. This approach not only enhances comprehension and retention but also promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The implementation of meaningful learning in the classroom requires careful planning and thoughtful design. Teachers must consider the cognitive demands of the task, the context in which it is presented, and the prior knowledge of the students. By aligning the learning activities with students' interests and goals, teachers can create an environment that is both challenging and engaging. This approach is particularly effective in promoting long-term retention and the development of a deeper understanding of the subject matter.
REFERENCES

Develop a thorough review

The references are structured as follows:

1. Author(s), Title of Article, Journal, Volume, Issue, Year, Pages
2. Author(s), Title of Book, Publisher, Year
3. Author(s), Title of Report, Date

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Conclusion

The study concludes with the following points:

1. The results indicate a significant improvement in students' understanding of the topic.
2. Further research is needed to explore the long-term effects of the intervention.
3. Recommendations for future studies are outlined.

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Table 3: Comparison of mean scores between the two groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group A</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group B</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Figure 2: Graph showing the progress of students over time.
Appendix

Jonathan Harker's Diary

Count Dracula

My story begins about seven years ago, in 1875. My name is Jonathan Harker, and I am a living man. In the summer of that year, I paid a visit to Transylvania, which is a part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

One day, as I was walking along the road leading to the village of Bistritz, I met a strange gentleman who introduced himself as Count Dracula. He requested that I accompany him to his castle, which was situated in a remote part of the Carpathian Mountains.

I accepted the invitation, and we set off on our journey. As we traveled, Dracula told me about his family and his plans for the future. He spoke of his love for the Countess and his desire to return to Transylvania.

The journey was long and arduous, but we finally arrived at the castle. Dracula showed me around the interior, and I was amazed by the beauty of the place. He also revealed to me some of his secrets, which he had kept hidden for many years.

Over the next few days, Dracula treated me kindly, but I began to feel uneasy. I noticed that he was becoming more and more aggressive, and I realized that he was not a man of good intentions.

One day, I was reading a book in the library when I heard a loud noise coming from the hallway. Dracula appeared, his eyes glowing red. He told me that I would be his servant for the rest of my life.

I tried to escape, but Dracula caught me and carried me to a chamber. There, he performed a ritual that transformed me into a vampire. I was terrified, but I knew I had no choice but to accept my new fate.

Dracula then left me in the castle to await his return. I spent the next few years in hiding, but eventually, I found my way to England and told my story. My diary contains the details of my journey and the events that have since taken place.