



Students' Difficulties in Translating Worded Problems into Mathematical Symbols

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Abstract: This paper sought to identify the difficulties encountered by students in translating worded problems into mathematical equations in a private sectarian school in Manila. The study examined the students' difficulties and level of performance in translating worded problems into mathematical symbols. A 20-item problem solving test involving the four fundamental operations was given during the third quarter of the school year 2012-2013 to 204 Grade 5 students. Scores in this test measured their performance level in translating worded problems while interpretation of their mistakes identified their difficulties in translating worded problems. Results indicate that 40% of the respondents are below the satisfactory level in translating worded problems. Carelessness, lack of comprehension, interchanging values, and unfamiliar words are some of the common difficulties encountered by the respondents in translating worded problems.

Key Words: mathematics difficulties; problem solving skills; elementary students; translating worded problems into mathematical symbols