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Filipino Language Competencies as Predictors of Grade 4 Pupils' Academic Performance in Araling Panlipunan

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between Filipino language competencies and academic performance in Araling Panlipunan among Grade 4 pupils of Nasipit Central Elementary School and Punta Elementary School. It focused on vocabulary proficiency, reading comprehension, teacher motivation, student attitude, and academic achievement, while identifying instructional needs that could inform a contextualized intervention. Findings revealed that teachers' instructional motivation was highly manifested, although it was not significantly related to pupils' academic performance. Grade 4 pupils generally demonstrated Filipino language competencies at the independent level, while a subgroup required teacher intervention and instructional scaffolding when dealing with complex academic texts. The pupils also attained a Very Satisfactory level of academic achievement in Araling Panlipunan. Statistical analysis established a significant positive relationship between Filipino language competencies and academic achievement ($p < .05$), indicating that stronger vocabulary proficiency and reading comprehension were associated with better performance. Student attitude emerged as an important driver of linguistic development, emphasizing the role of interest and engagement in learning. The study further identified the limited availability of locally developed reference materials addressing Araling Panlipunan vocabulary demands. Consequently, a Contextualized Glossary was proposed to strengthen vocabulary support, conceptual understanding, and meaningful engagement with social studies content.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Araling Panlipunan, Filipino Language Competencies, Reading Comprehension, Vocabulary Proficiency

Introduction

Language is a fundamental element of the teaching-learning process because it serves as the primary means through which learners communicate, understand concepts, and acquire knowledge. In the Philippine basic education system, learners' familiar language continues to support comprehension, participation, and concept development, particularly during the early stages of learning. Although Mother Tongue is no longer offered as

a separate learning area in the revised K to 12 curriculum, familiar languages remain useful instructional resources for promoting meaningful learning.

As learners progress through the grade levels, Filipino becomes an important medium for understanding content in learning areas such as Araling Panlipunan. Proficiency in Filipino enables learners to comprehend historical, cultural, social, and civic concepts while relating these ideas to their experiences. However, difficulties in vocabulary, reading comprehension, and language expression may limit learners' ability to understand lessons, participate in classroom activities, and demonstrate academic achievement.

Language competency is not the only factor associated with learning because teacher motivation and learner attitude may also contribute to academic performance. Motivated teachers can provide engaging learning experiences and supportive classroom environments, while positive learner attitudes can encourage interest and participation in academic tasks (Bano, 2020; Haimovitz & Dweck, 2020). Kumari and Kumar (2023) further emphasized that positive teacher-student attitudes are associated with improved learning outcomes and academic achievement, indicating the importance of considering these factors alongside language proficiency.

Concerns regarding reading comprehension remain evident in the Philippine educational context, particularly in content areas requiring substantial engagement with written texts. Langcuyan et al. (2021) identified reading comprehension difficulties and limited instructional resources as challenges in learning Araling Panlipunan, while the 2018 and 2022 PISA results reflected continuing difficulties among Filipino learners in reading literacy (OECD, 2019; OECD, 2023). These concerns are relevant to Grade 4 pupils of Nasipit Central Elementary School and Punta Elementary School, where institutional records, including Phil-IRI results and Araling Panlipunan grades, indicate varying levels of learner performance.

Given these conditions, the study entitled *"Filipino Language Competencies as Predictors of Academic Performance of Grade 4 Pupils in Araling Panlipunan"* seeks to determine the relationship between Filipino language competencies and pupils' academic performance in Nasipit Central Elementary School and Punta Elementary School. Specifically, it considers vocabulary proficiency, reading comprehension, learners' perceptions of teacher motivation, and their attitudes toward Araling Panlipunan to provide a broader understanding of factors associated with achievement. The findings may provide an empirical basis for developing appropriate instructional support that addresses learners' language needs and strengthens their understanding and performance in Araling Panlipunan.

Related Studies

This section presents related literature and studies, both foreign and local, that are related to the present study.

Language is an important part of classroom teaching. Clarity of the medium of instruction (MoI) greatly influences learners' comprehension of academic content. English is widely used in education and international communication in the Philippines, while Filipino, the national language, is less used in some academic environments. But the 1987 Philippine Constitution (Article XIV, Section 6) mandates the development and enrichment of Filipino as a medium of instruction and communication, citing its importance in nation-building and cultural identity.

Cunanan-Calado (2021) emphasizes that learning the Filipino language promotes the learners' identity and patriotism. She advocates the use of experiential and learner-centered approaches in teaching Filipino, especially for young learners who need meaningful engagement in content areas such as Araling Panlipunan. Supporting this, Parba (2021) emphasizes the significance of vocabulary development in enabling learners to express ideas effectively and critically engage with content, particularly in subjects demanding conceptual understanding.

Recent studies emphasize the connection between Filipino language proficiency and academic performance in Araling Panlipunan. Decipolo and Eliaga (2024) noted that code-switching remains prevalent in the classrooms, mirroring the difficulties in upholding Filipino as the primary medium of instruction. This often affects the students' comprehension of content-heavy lessons. Correspondingly, Mendez, Langcuyan, and Lopez (2024) discovered that vocabulary knowledge and reading fluency are strong predictors of comprehension and academic performance in Araling Panlipunan.

Interventions for language and comprehension have worked as well. Game-based learning is shown to significantly improve Filipino vocabulary acquisition and academic performance (Estomata, Pepito, & Baluyos, 2025). Equally, Calautit (2024) found that strategic intervention materials enhanced the learners' understanding of Araling Panlipunan, and Dajay (2023) revealed that structured reading interventions are essential in improving reading comprehension and academic performance. These findings indicate that language-responsive instructional strategies are effective in improving student outcomes.

Instructional techniques such as differentiated instruction and gamification can help to enhance learner engagement and understanding. Mendez (2024) found that differentiated instruction improves reading comprehension and performance in Araling Panlipunan, while Panga (2025) noted that gamified learning strategies enhance learner engagement and reduce comprehension challenges.

The teacher variables also influence student achievement. Teacher motivation enhances instructional effectiveness and students' performance (Bano, 2020; Kumari and Kumar, 2023). Also, Kule, Tumwebaze, and Namanya (2022) found a positive relationship between teacher motivation and student achievement, indicating that motivated teachers foster more engaging and effective learning environments.

The attitude of the learner towards learning also influences academic performance. Benitez (2022) states that there is more engagement and better academic performance with positive attitudes towards Social Studies. In a similar manner, Haimovitz and Dweck (2020) highlight that a growth mindset encourages resilience and achievement in difficult subjects such as Araling Panlipunan.

Cañete (2024) also mentions that students' high language proficiency and effective instructional systems lead to better academic performance in Araling Panlipunan. "Teacher competence, school management and learner characteristics all together influence the academic success," further state Abdugaram and Asiri (2024).

Cognitive-linguistic skills, in particular vocabulary and comprehension skills, are still significant predictors of performance in content-heavy subjects, Pacaña (2022) reiterates. Delos Reyes, Tongkoh, and Chavez (2023) identified common challenges faced by Filipino language learners, including limited vocabulary and grammatical difficulties, highlighting the importance of immersive and supportive learning environments.

Salazar (2022) indicates that the mismatch between instructional strategies and learners' linguistic needs leads to poor academic performance. Hence, there is a need to contextualize teaching approaches. This is affirmed by DepEd Order No. 010, s. 2024, emphasizing Filipino literacy as a vital component in developing critical thinking and conceptual understanding under the MATATAG Curriculum.

In general, the reviewed literature and studies show that Filipino language proficiency, especially vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension, is significant to the academic performance of learners in Araling Panlipunan. The competencies help learners to develop a better understanding of concepts related to history, culture, and civics, and thus promote their sense of national identity and civic responsibility.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded on Jim Cummins' Theory of Linguistic Interdependence, which holds that the ability to use language is the precondition of academic success. The theory posits that students who possess language competence are better equipped to understand, process, and use academic concepts. In this study, the Filipino language competencies, such as vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension, are expected to be related to the academic performance of Grade 4 pupils in Araling Panlipunan, a subject that heavily depends on the comprehension and use of the Filipino language.

The study is also supported by Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which highlights that learning takes place through social interaction and guided instruction. Vygotsky emphasized the important role of the teacher in facilitating students' learning by providing suitable support and meaningful learning experiences. In this respect, teacher motivation is seen as an intervening variable, as motivated teachers are more likely to create engaging and supportive learning environments that can improve pupils' language development and academic achievement.

Vygotsky's theory also considers the inclusion of pupil attitude as an intervening variable. Learners who have a positive attitude to learning tend to be more active in classroom activities, in reading tasks, and in overcoming learning difficulties. Therefore, positive attitudes can help the development and utilization of Filipino language competencies, which in turn may enhance academic achievement in Araling Panlipunan. The theories of Cummins and Vygotsky serve as the basis for investigating the relationships between Filipino language competencies, academic performance, teacher motivation, and pupils' attitudes.

Objectives of the Study

This study sought to determine the following objectives: (1) determine the extent of manifestation of factors influencing pupils' characteristics in Araling Panlipunan in terms of teachers' motivation in the teaching-learning process and pupils' attitude toward the subject; (2) assess the level of pupils' Filipino language competencies based on the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) in terms of vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension; (3) determine the level of performance of Grade 4 pupils in Araling Panlipunan during the third-quarter grading period; (4) examine the significant relationship between pupils' Filipino language competencies and their performance in Araling Panlipunan during the third quarter; (5) determine whether a significant difference exists in pupils' Filipino language competencies as influenced by their attitude toward the subject and teachers' motivation; and (6) propose an appropriate intervention based on the findings to enhance pupils' Filipino language competencies and performance in Araling Panlipunan.

Methodology

The study utilized a quantitative non-experimental predictive-correlational research design to determine the relationships among Filipino language competencies, selected affective factors, and the academic performance of Grade 4 pupils in Araling Panlipunan. The research was conducted at Nasipit Central Elementary School and Punta Elementary School in Nasipit, Agusan del Norte, involving 133 Grade 4 pupils from regular classes through complete enumeration. The study utilized a modified questionnaire adapted from the Work Tasks Motivation Scale for Teachers (WTMST) to assess pupils' perceptions of teacher motivation and a researcher-developed questionnaire to measure pupils' attitudes toward Araling Panlipunan, which underwent expert validation and pilot testing and obtained a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.79. The Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) Group Screening Test Post-Assessment was used to determine pupils' Filipino language competencies in vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension, while their third-quarter grades served as the measure of academic performance in Araling Panlipunan. For data analysis, Arithmetic Mean and Standard Deviation were employed to describe teacher motivation and pupil attitude, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to determine the significant relationship between Filipino language competencies and academic performance, and Linear Regression was applied to determine the influence of teacher motivation and pupil attitude on Filipino language competencies.

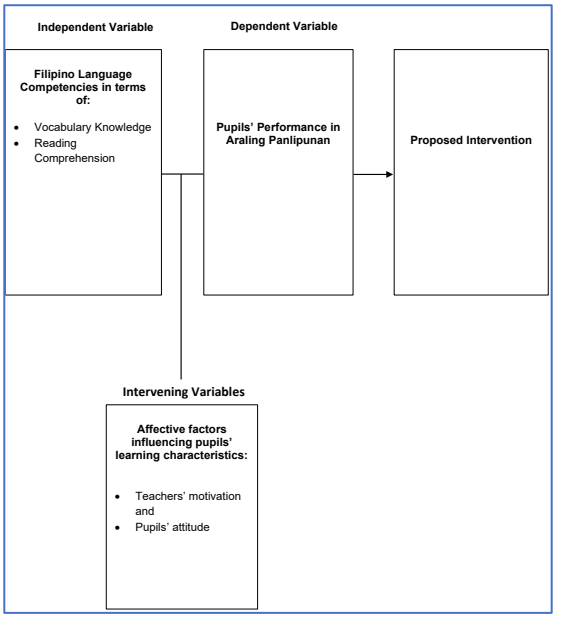

Figure 1. Research Flow of the Study

Results and Discussion

Problem 1. What is the extent of manifestation of the following aspects on molding the characteristics of the pupils toward Araling Panlipunan in terms of teacher's motivation in teaching and learning, and pupils' attitude toward the subject?

Table 1. Extent of Manifestation on Molding the Characteristics of Pupils Toward Araling Panlipunan Considering Teachers' Motivation

	Statement	x̄	Standard Deviation	Description
1.	My teacher in Araling Panlipunan uses fun and creative activities that make me excited to learn Araling Panlipunan. Ginagawa ng aming guro sa AP na masaya at kapana-panabik ang aming klase sa pamamagitan ng mga malikhaing aktibidad.	4.24	0.57	Highly Manifested

2.	My teacher in Araling Panlipunan explains hard words in Araling Panlipunan using simple examples that I can easily understand. Gumagamit ang aming guro sa AP ng mga simpleng salita upang matulungan kaming intindihin ang mga mahihirap na paksa sa kasaysayan.	4.22	0.57	Highly Manifested
3.	My teacher encourages and helps me so that I can join and answer during our class discussions. Binibigyan kami ng aming guro sa AP ng kumpiyansa at pagkakataon na makasagot at makilahok sa aming diskusyon sa klase.	4.27	0.57	Highly Manifested
4.	My teacher in Araling Panlipunan uses different and interesting ways to teach us about history and our community. Gumagamit ang aming guro sa AP ng iba't ibang paraan ng pagtuturo upang mas madali naming matutunan ang aming mga aralin.	4.54	0.57	Highly Manifested
5.	When a word in Filipino is too hard, my teacher in Araling Panlipunan translates it into our local language (Sinugbuanong Binisaya) so I can understand it better. Ipinaliliwanag ng aming guro sa AP ang mga mahihirap na salitang Filipino sa aming sariling wika (Binisaya) upang mas maintindihan namin ito nang malinaw.	5.00	0.57	Highly Manifested
6.	My teacher in Araling Panlipunan inspires and supports me to study hard so I can get high grades in Araling Panlipunan. Binibigyan kami ng inspirasyon at tulong ng aming guro sa AP upang mag-aral nang mabuti para makakuha kami ng mataas na marka sa subject na ito.	4.64	0.57	Highly Manifested
7.	My teacher in Araling Panlipunan is patient in helping me when I have a hard time reading or understanding the Filipino words in our AP lessons. Ang aming guro sa AP ay matiyagang tumutulong sa amin kapag nahihirapan kaming magbasa o umunawa ng mga salitang Filipino sa aming aralin.	4.46	0.57	Highly Manifested
8.	Our Araling Panlipunan teacher uses different materials like videos and pictures to help us enjoy and love the subject more. Gumagamit ang aming guro sa AP ng mga video at mga larawan upang mas mahalin at magustuhan namin ang aming asignatura.	4.67	0.57	Highly Manifested

9. Our Araling Panlipunan teacher always talks to us and encourages us to keep trying, even when we find it hard to speak or understand Filipino. Palagi kaming pinapaalalahanan at hinihikayat ng aming guro sa AP na magpatuloy sa pag-aaral kahit nahihirapan kami sa wikang Filipino.	4.67	0.57	Highly Manifested
10. Our AP teacher teaches us clearly how to be good and responsible citizens who care about our country and community. Tinuturuan kami nang mabuti ng aming guro sa AP kung paano maging mabuti at responsableng mamamayan na may pagmamahal sa bayan.	4.89	0.57	Highly Manifested
Over-all Mean	**4.56**	**0.57**	**Highly Manifested**

Note: 1.00-1.78: Not Manifested, 1.79-2.59: Slightly Manifested, 2.60-3.40: Moderately Manifested, 3.41-4.21: Manifested, 4.22-5.00: Highly Manifested

This presents the data on the extent of manifestation of molding the characteristics of pupils towards Araling Panlipunan as to teachers' motivation. The statistics showed an overall mean of 4.56 for the indicators, which is below the verbal description of "Highly Manifested." This indicates that respondents strongly perceive their teachers as highly motivating, patient, and resourceful in adapting instructional methods to support their learning needs.

The data attained an Overall Mean of 4.56, which is analyzed as "Highly Manifested." This proposed that the teachers at Nasipit Central and Punta Elementary Schools hold a high level of work motivation and dedication to their vocation, especially in delivering instructions in the Araling Panlipunan subject.

All ten indicators were rated as Highly Manifested. Item 5 got the highest mean score of 5.00, which implies that the teacher is trying to translate the difficult Filipino words to Sinugbuanong Binisaya to enhance the understanding of the students. This means that all the respondents gave the highest rating. This may be because all respondents have a positive perception. Other indicators also got high means, such as varied teaching strategies (Item 4, 4.54), use of instructional materials (Item 8, 4.67), and continuous encouragement (Item 9, 4.67).

Item 5 obtained the highest mean score (M = 5.00), implying that teachers always translate difficult Filipino terms into the pupils' local language (Sinugbuanong Binisaya) for them to understand better. This finding indicates that teachers not only see Araling Panlipunan as a subject to be taught but also as an essential way to secure meaningful understanding among learners. This is a strong sign of instructional commitment, especially in overcoming language barriers, which can be a barrier to pupil participation and learning.

All indicators were rated positively, but Item 2 ("explaining difficult words by using simple examples") had the lowest mean score of 4.22, but was still considered Highly Manifested. This means that although teachers are consistently using approaches to unpack concepts, there may be slight variations in the effectiveness of these

explanations as compared to other practices, such as translation into the local language or the use of different instructional materials.

Bano (2020) emphasized that Araling Panlipunan teachers who are highly motivated use more effective teaching strategies, as cited in the literature review of this study. The "Highly Manifested" motivation of the teachers in this study (Mean=4.56) confirms the assertion of Kumari and Kumar (2023) that teacher motivation is a major driver of instructional commitment and classroom effectiveness.

Generally, the high manifestation level of teacher practice and motivation gives a solid base for an effective learning environment. The teachers' continuous application of different teaching methods, instructional materials, and language modifications is evidence of their active response to the difficulties they encounter in teaching Araling Panlipunan using Filipino as the medium of instruction. These initiatives support the idea that teachers' motivation and responsiveness to the needs of learners can have a significant impact on improving pupils' understanding and engagement with the subject.

These findings are supported by the Department of Education (2020), which promotes the use of the mother tongue to enhance learners' understanding. Similarly, the use of varied teaching strategies and instructional materials aligns with UNESCO (2021), which emphasized the effectiveness of multimodal instruction in improving learner engagement.

Moreover, the high level of teacher motivation is consistent with the OECD (2020), which reported that motivated teachers demonstrate more effective teaching practices. The teachers' encouragement of learners also supports the World Bank (2021), highlighting the role of teacher support in fostering persistence, while clear explanations reflect the findings of the Education Endowment Foundation (2021) on effective scaffolding practices.

Another aspect that is examined in molding the character of the pupils toward Araling Panlipunan is the pupils' attitude toward the subject table 3 shows the results.

Table 2. Extent of Manifestation on Molding the Characteristics of Pupils Toward Araling Panlipunan Considering Pupils' Attitude Towards the Subject

	Statement	$\bar{x}$	Standard Deviation	Description
1.	I look forward to our Araling Panlipunan period every day. Inaasahan ko ang oras ng aming Araling Panlipunan araw-araw.	4.32	0.62	Highly Manifested
2.	I believe that learning about history and society in important for my future. Naniniwala akong mahalagang matutuhan ang tungkol sa kasaysayan at Lipunan para sa aking kinabukasan.	4.53	0.62	Highly Manifested
3.	I feel confident expressing my opinions during Araling Panlipunan discussions.	3.69	0.62	Manifested

	Nakaramdam ako ng kumpyainsa sa pagpapahayag ng aking opinion sa mga talakayan sa Araling Panlipunan.			
4.	I find the topics in Araling Panlipunan interesting and easy to relate to. Nakikita kong kawili-wili at madaling maignay sa aking buhay ang mga paksa sa Araling Pnalipunan.	4.03	0.62	Manifested
5.	I am willing to read Araling Pnalipunan textbooks even if the language is a bit difficult. Handa akong magbasa ng aklat sa Araling Panlipunan kahit medyo mahirap ang wika nito.	4.05	0.62	Manifested
6.	I feel happy whenever we have group activities or projects in this subject. Masaya ako tuwing may mga gawaing panggrupo o proyekto sa asuignautrang ito.	4.06	0.62	Manifested
7.	I pay close attention when the teacher explains lessons about Philippine culture and government. Masusing nakikinig ako kapag nagpapaliwanag ang guro tungkol sa kulturang Pilipino at pamahalaan.	4.23	0.62	Highly Manifested
8.	I get bored easily when we are discussing Araling Panlipunan topics. Madali akong mainip kapag tinatalakay ang mga paksa sa Araling Pnalipunan.	3.68	0.62	Manifested
9.	I take pride in getting high scores in my Araling Pnalipunan quizzes and exams. Ipinagmamalaki ko kapag nakakuha ako ng mataas na marka sa mag pagsusulit at eksaminasyon sa Araling Panlipunan.	4.61	0.62	Highly Manifested
10.	I am eager to learn new words and terms used in our Araling Panlipunan lessons. Sabik akong matuto ng mga bagong salita at termino na ginagamit sa aming aralin sa Araling Panlipunan.	3.94	0.62	Manifested
	Over-all Mean	**4.12**	**0.62**	**Manifested**

Note: 1.00-1.78: Not Manifested, 1.79-2.59: Slightly Manifested, 2.60-3.40: Moderately Manifested, 3.41-4.21: Manifested, 4.22-5.00: Highly Manifested

The data shows an Overall Mean of 4.12, portrayed as "Manifested." This suggests that the Grade 4 pupils typically maintain a positive and open-minded attitude toward Araling Panlipunan. While they recognize the value of the subject, there are specific areas where their involvement is influenced by the complication of the content and the language used.

The highest mean score was recorded for Item 9 (4.61, Highly Manifested), indicating that pupils "take pride in getting high scores." This shows that the learners are goal-oriented and hold a high level of extrinsic motivation. Similarly, Item 2 got a mean of 4.53 (Highly Manifested), which means that even at a young age, these Grade 4 pupils have a strong sense of the subject's usefulness, believing that social studies are "important for their future."

However, it is important to evaluate the items with the lowest scores as they give a hint about the “linguistic struggle” mentioned in the study’s framework. The lowest mean, 3.68, was for Item 8, “I get bored easily”, and Item 3, “I feel confident expressing my opinions”, with a mean of 3.69. The scores are still within the range of “Manifested,” but these lower scores suggest that when the lesson becomes difficult with technical terms or when the lesson requires a high level of verbal expression in Filipino, students may struggle with confidence or experience a lapse in attention. This is consistent with the result of Filipino language competencies, if a student does not have the vocabulary to express an opinion, their confidence in participating in a discussion naturally reduces.

Item 5 (“Willingness to read textbooks even if the language is difficult”) surprisingly received a mean of 4.05 (Manifested). This shows a positive attitude among learners, ready to face the linguistic challenge, but the low confidence in speaking mentioned earlier shows a gap between receptive skills (reading/understanding) and expressive skills (speaking/discussing).

The findings about the pupils’ attitude are consistent with the literature of Benitez (2022), which states that students who have a positive attitude toward Social Studies are more academically engaged. Moreover, the findings support Haimovitz and Dweck (2020) that students’ growth mindset is vital for them to learn complex subjects such as Araling Panlipunan.

In conclusion, the attitude of the pupils towards Araling Panlipunan is generally positive, with zeal to succeed and appreciation for the importance of the subject. But the language barrier makes the manifestation of this attitude slightly harder. The findings indicate that while the students are willing to learn, their comfort level in using the Filipino language somewhat limits their full participation. The findings support the need for the language-centered interventions suggested in this study.

These findings are supported by the OECD (2020), which emphasized that goal-oriented learners demonstrate higher engagement in academic tasks. The pupils’ recognition of the importance of Araling Panlipunan also aligns with UNESCO (2021), which highlighted that perceived relevance increases learner motivation. However, the observed difficulty in expressing ideas supports the World Bank (2021), noting that language barriers can hinder participation and confidence. Furthermore, the gap between receptive and expressive skills is consistent with the Department of Education (2020), while decreased engagement in difficult lessons reflects the findings of the Education Endowment Foundation (2021).

This table reveals the statistical data on the extent of manifestation of molding the characteristics of pupils towards Araling Panlipunan in relation to the pupils’ attitude towards the subject. The indicators obtained an overall mean score of 4.12, which corresponds to the verbal description “Manifested”. This indicates that the Grade 4 learners generally have a positive, receptive, and cooperative attitude towards learning the content and concepts of the subject.

Problem 2. What is the level of Filipino Language Competencies of the pupils based on Phil-IRI in terms of vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension?

Table 3. Level of Language Competencies of pupils in terms of Vocabulary Knowledge

Vocabulary Knowledge (Pagkilala sa mga Salita)	F	%	Description
Independent Level	80	60.15	Pupils can recognize words correctly without assistance from the teacher.
Instructional	41	30.83	Pupils can recognize most words but still need guidance from the teacher.
Frustration	12	9.02	Pupils have trouble recognizing many words and require significant teacher support.
Total	**133**	**100**	

Note: 58% and below: Frustration, 59%-79%: Instructional, 80%-100%: Independent

The result shows that most of the Grade 4 pupils, a total of 80 (60.15%), were at the independent level in understanding vocabulary knowledge. This suggests that more than half of the respondents hold a strong foundation in reading words, and this allows them to know Filipino terms used in their class in Araling Panlipunan without any aid from the Araling Panlipunan teacher.

Another group, 41 pupils (30.83%), were at the Instructional level. These learners can read most of the words correctly; however, they have trouble when encountering terms that are not familiar to them, and this requires assistance from the teacher. In the subject of Araling Panlipunan, these learners are mostly able to understand the content of a textbook or a lecture, but may temporarily stop or have difficulties when they face unfamiliar terms related to history, culture, or governance.

12 learners (9.02%) were under the Frustration Level. Since this is the smallest group, it shows an important segment of the class. Learners at this level have difficulty in reading a lot of basic terms in Filipino words, which makes learning a significant challenge. Since Araling Panlipunan is taught basically in Filipino, these 12 learners have a high chance of lagging because they spend more analytical effort to “decode” the words themselves rather than comprehending the historical or social ideas being taught.

Consistent with the review of related literature, the findings on vocabulary knowledge align with the study of Parba (2021), who emphasized that building a strong vocabulary is foundational to students' confidence and ability to engage in critical thinking. The presence of learners in the instructional and frustration levels in this study supports the observation of Mendez, Langcuyan, and Lopez (2024), which identifies vocabulary knowledge as a primary predictor of a student's overall linguistic competence and reading comprehension.

The general results for vocabulary knowledge were positive, with over 90 % of the learners being within the Independent Level and Instructional Level. Yet, the presence of learners in the Frustration and Instructional levels (a total of 40 % of the class) emphasizes the need for teachers to continue using “simplified localized terms” and “bridging” as indicated in the teacher motivation data. This makes sure that vocabulary constraint does not challenge the learners’ overall mastery of Araling Panlipunan content.

These findings are consistent with the framework of the Department of Education (2020), which classifies learners into Independent, Instructional, and Frustration levels based on their reading and comprehension abilities. The high number of learners at the independent level indicates that most learners can understand vocabulary without assistance, while those in the Instructional and Frustration levels require teacher support.

These learners' difficulties align with the World Bank (2021) findings that vocabulary was a major barrier to learning. This is consistent with UNESCO (2021), which stressed the importance of strong foundational literacy, as some learners are likely to focus on decoding versus comprehension. This need for simpler, more localized instruction also aligns with the Education Endowment Foundation (2021), which points to the role of scaffolding and is supported by the Department of Education (2020), which promotes mother-tongue-based bridging strategies.

Table 4. Level of Language Competencies of pupils in terms of Reading Comprehension

Reading Level (Pag-unawa sa Binasa)	F	%	Description
Independent	53	39.85	Pupils can understand the text independently with minimal assistance
Instructional	54	40.60	Pupils understand the text with the help and guidance of the teacher
Frustration	26	19.55	Pupils have difficulty understanding the text even with teacher assistance.
Total	**133**	**100**	

Note: 58% and below: Frustration, 59%-79%: Instructional, 80%-100%: Independent

According to the data, the Instructional Level is the largest group of learners with 54 people (40.60%). This implies that most Grade 4 learners can understand Filipino texts but still require the help of teachers and scaffolding to process complex information. This is in line with the framework of the Department of Education (2020), which states that Instructional Level learners need guided support to fully understand. This is more evident in subjects with heavy content, such as Araling Panlipunan, where abstract concepts are often introduced.

The Independent Level group is not far behind with 53 learners (39.85%), which indicates that a good number of students have sufficient reading and comprehension skills to grasp learning materials on their own. However, the Frustration Level was found in 26 learners (19.55%), which is too high compared to the vocabulary results. This means learners can read words but have difficulty making sense of sentences and paragraphs. This aligns with findings from UNESCO (2021) that poor reading comprehension constrains learners' capacity to develop complex ideas beyond word recognition.

This pattern also indicates a gap between decoding skills and comprehension skills, where learners can recognize words but have trouble interpreting meaning. As stated by the World Bank (2021), poor comprehension skills are a serious impediment to learners' academic performance in subjects that call for critical understanding, like social studies.

The Instructional and Frustration Level learners together make up 60.15%, emphasizing the need for more robust instructional interventions. It is essential to use scaffolding techniques, visual supports, and context-

based learning materials. This is supported by the Education Endowment Foundation (2021), which pointed out that structured support and scaffolding help learners to understand more, particularly for those who are not yet independent in reading.

The results are supported by the literature in terms of reading comprehension. Delos Reyes, Tongkoh, and Chavez (2023) noted that an unfamiliarity with formal grammar and academic terms in Filipino is a major hindrance that prevents pupils from reaching an understanding of independence. As stated in the literature, this also echoes the general findings of Mendez (2024) that highlight the difficulty of learners constructing meaning from texts when their language exposure is limited to colloquial or informal usage.

Problem 3. What is the level of performance of Grade 4 pupils' in Araling Pnalipunan during the third quarter grading period?

Table 5. Level of Performance of Grade 4 Pupils During the Third Quarter

Grading Scale	F	%	Description
90-100	39	29.32	Outstanding
85-89	47	35.34	Very Satisfactory
80-84	32	24.06	Satisfactory
75-79	14	10.53	Fairly Satisfactory
Below 75	1	0.75	Did Not Meet Expectations
Total	**133**	**100.00**	

Note: Below 75.00%: Did Not Meet Expectations, 75.00%-79.00%: Fairly Satisfactory, 80.00%-84.00%: Satisfactory 85.00%-89:00% Very Satisfactory, 90.00%-100%: Outstanding

The data shows that Grade 4 pupils have generally performed well academically. Most of the students, 47 (35.34%), received an 85-89 grade, which was "Very Satisfactory", and 39 pupils (29.32%) had an "Outstanding" (90-100) performance. The two groups combined account for 64.66% of the total population, showing a strong overall performance in Araling Panlipunan.

Underscoring the importance of contextualized and learner-centered teaching in improving academic achievement, especially in content subjects delivered in Filipino (Department of Education, 2020).

On the opposite side, 32 pupils (24.06%) were at the level of "Satisfactory", and 14 pupils (10.53%) were rated as "Fairly Satisfactory". Only one pupil (0.75%) did not pass.

Overall performance is positive, but the existence of learners in the middle and lower performance bands suggests variation in levels of mastery. According to the World Bank (2021), learning gaps are often associated with variations in language proficiency and comprehension, impacting students' capacity to attain higher cognitive levels.

The results showed that the Grade 4 pupils were generally satisfactory in Araling Panlipunan. However, some students in the Satisfactory and Fairly Satisfactory groups might still have challenges in reading comprehension, especially those functioning at instructional and frustration levels. This finding is in line with

the assertion by UNESCO (2021) that learners with limited comprehension skills are limited in their ability to demonstrate higher-order thinking skills and achieve higher levels of academic achievement.

Furthermore, the results are in agreement with the Education Endowment Foundation (2021), which underscores the importance of ongoing instructional support, scaffolding strategies, and targeted interventions to help students move toward higher levels of performance. Correspondingly, Cañete (2024) found that well-organized educational strategies and strong administrative support have positive effects on learners' achievement in Araling Panlipunan. These results underline the importance of maintaining academic and language support to help pupils improve their learning outcomes.

Problem 4. Is there a significant relationship between the pupils' language competencies and their performance in Araling Panlipunan during the third quarter grading period?

Table 6. Results in Testing the Null Hypothesis

Computed r	Critical r	Df	Level of Significance	Decision on Ho
0.638	0.156	131	5%	Reject Ho

The statistical analysis shows the calculated r of 0.638 is greater than the critical value of 0.156 at 5% level of significance with 131 degrees of freedom. Thus, we have enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis. The results showed that the reading comprehension and academic performance of the respondents were very high.

Additionally, the results show a statistically significant positive correlation between reading comprehension and academic achievement ($r = .355$, $p = .001$), suggesting that as students' reading comprehension increases, so does their academic achievement. The study is funded by Dela Cruz (2026) and supported by the findings of Dela Cruz (2026), who found a strong positive correlation between vocabulary knowledge and academic achievement. The research is supported by the findings of Irvin (2022).

The findings indicate that vocabulary is a significant predictor of reading comprehension, writing quality, and overall GPA. The literature demonstrates that vocabulary size has a direct effect on a student's ability to comprehend complex academic texts, with vocabulary knowledge accounting for more than 25% of the variance in student GPA. Based on these results, it is suggested that academic achievement can be improved further by using effective instructional strategies.

Schools should be focusing on literacy programs at the school level. Particularly, programs focusing on reading comprehension. Focusing on this fundamental literacy provides students with the support needed to meet higher academic standards and overall proficiency.

Problem 5. Is the level of language competencies of the pupils influenced by the attitude of the pupils toward the subject and the teachers' motivation?

The problem will be solved by regression analysis. The null hypothesis stated that the pupils' Filipino language competencies in Araling Panlipunan are not influenced by their attitude towards the subject and by the motivation of the teachers. The results of the regression are presented in Table 8.

It can be gleaned from the table that there is a weak to moderate positive correlation between the predictors and the dependent variable (0.3176) as indicated by Multiple R.Approximately 10.08 % of the variance in the dependent variable can be explained by pupils' attitude toward the subject and teachers' motivation. This suggests that nearly 90% of the variance is due to other factors not included in this model.

F-statistic (5.441) is a moderate value indicating some explanatory power and its significance (0.0057) is less than the level of significance of 5%.This will show that the null hypothesis is rejected. The results also show that the pupils' attitude toward the subject is a predictor of the language competencies of the pupils as indicated by the p-value of 0.0139 which is less than 5%. However, teachers' motivation is not a predictor of the pupils' language competencies as shown by the p-value of 0.1853 which is greater than alpha of 5%.

Table 7. Results in Testing the Null Hypothesis

Regression Statistics	**Regression Statistics**
Multiple R	0.3176
R Square	0.1008
Adjusted R Square	0.0823
Standard Error	4.3347
Observations	133

	Df	**SS**	**MS**	**F**	**Significance of F**	**Decision on Ho**
Regression	2	204.487	102.243	5.441	0.0057	Reject Ho
Residual	130	1822.67	18.790			
Total	**132**	**2027.16**				

	Coefficients	**Standard Error**	**T-Stat**	**P-value**
Intercept	81.441	5.6265	14.474	5.68E-26
Pupil's Attitude	2.2669	0.9048	2.5052	0.013901
Teacher's Motivation	0.05	0.8722	-1.3339	0.1853

The conceptual relevance of teacher motivation was not statistically significant for this data set. This suggests that the influence of teachers' motivation on the language abilities of pupils may be indirect and may operate through other factors, such as instructional strategies, classroom environment, or the learning attitudes of the pupils themselves. It is also possible that the difference in motivation of teachers perceived by the pupils was not big enough to have a measurable effect on language competencies within the frame of the study.

The regression equation is expressed as: $Y = 81.441 + 2.266X_1$
Where:

Y = Language competencies in Araling Panlipunan
X_1 = Pupils' attitude toward the subject

As reported in literature, Guarin and Salcedo (2018) argued that internal cognitive and affective states of a learner had more direct influence on language acquisition than external factors. This explains the fact that in this study, pupil attitude was a significant predictor and teacher motivation was not statistically significant ($p = 0.1853$). This confirms the theory of Haimovitz and Dweck (2020) that a student's internal mindset is the primary driver of mastery.
Teachers' motivation is important in facilitating instruction, but its effect might be mediated through teaching strategies and classroom interaction rather than predicting language competencies independently. Also, since most teachers in the participating schools would probably already show a relatively consistent level of motivation in delivering instruction, the limited variation of this variable could also result in its non-significant statistical effect.

Problem 6. Based on the findings, what intervention can be proposed to enhance pupils' Filipino language competencies and performance in Araling Panlipunan?

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers proposed a Glossary of Contextualised Araling Panlipunan Terms to enhance the Filipino language competencies and academic performance of Grade 4 pupils in Araling Panlipunan. The glossary is a localized and learner-friendly reference material which contains difficult Filipino words, concepts and terminologies commonly encountered in the subject with simplified meanings, contextual examples and Sinugbuanong Binisaya translations when necessary. This intervention was planned based on the findings that most pupils possessed satisfactory vocabulary knowledge, but a substantial proportion were still at the Instructional and Frustration Levels in reading comprehension.

The proposed glossary aims to enhance learners' vocabulary acquisition, comprehension of subject specific terms, and lessen language barriers that impede understanding of Araling Panlipunan concepts. Since the study revealed a significant relationship between Filipino language competencies and academic performance in Araling Panlipunan, the intervention is expected to help learners develop better comprehension skills, increase confidence in using Filipino, and improve academic achievement in the subject. It also assists teachers in their efforts to promote understanding by contextualizing and translating difficult terms into the learners' indigenous language.

Conclusions

Based on the data gathered and interpreted, the following conclusions were reached:

1. Language as the Basic Core: The first pillar of academic success in Araling Panlipunan is Filipino language proficiency especially in terms of vocabulary and comprehension.
2. The Comprehension Gap: There is a huge gap between students' basic word recognition and their ability to synthesize complex historical and socio-political concepts.
3. Learner Attitude: This precedes intrinsic motivation and inner attitude of learners has more role in developing language skills and mastery of content than the extrinsic teacher-driven motivation.
4. Evidence of Instructional Resilience: High student academic performance despite language barriers shows that teachers are effectively using localized and contextualized strategies to close learning gaps.

5. Key Predictive Relationship: Filipino language skills are a significant predictor of academic achievement; lower language skills are directly associated with lower performance in Araling Panlipunan.
6. The need for targeted intervention: The observed vocabulary deficits necessitate the development of a Contextualized Glossary to prevent language barriers in conceptual understanding.

Recommendations

Araling Panlipunan Vocabulary Curriculum Alignment. Teachers are also encouraged to incorporate vocabulary reinforcement within the Araling Panlipunan curriculum itself. Teachers can ensure that there is a smooth transition from language learning to mastery of content by matching instructional strategies with Filipino language subjects.

Schoolwide Reading Improvement Programs. Effective instructional practices and school-wide literacy initiatives should be promoted to enhance reading comprehension and further improve academic achievement. Schools need to implement targeted programs to support the 19.55% of learners at the 'Frustration Level' so they do not lag in text-heavy courses.

Attitude Strengthening. There is a need for the teachers in Araling Panlipunan to continuously design and implement contextualized lessons that will continue to sustain students' positive attitude towards the subject and inspire them to learn appropriate measures on how to extend their proficient vocabulary and reading comprehension skills in Filipino.

Proposed Action Plan. It is recommended to create a 'Glossary of Contextualized Araling Panlipunan Terms' to provide learners with a reference for difficult Filipino terms used in Araling Panlipunan.

Future researchers. Inspired to broaden the scope of this study to include various grade levels, subjects, and wider educational settings to further validate related findings. In addition, future studies may further investigate the role of teachers' motivation in teaching Araling Panlipunan, specifically by examining possible factors that may account for the lack of significant relationship with pupils' performance. Such investigations may yield more insights into the influence of instructional practices and teacher-related factors on learning outcomes, as well as the effectiveness of the Glossary of Contextualized Araling Panlipunan Terms in enhancing students' vocabulary retention and deeper understanding of the subject.

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