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## Teaching and Learning Filipino as a Subject at Esperanza Elementary School: Pedagogical Practices in Basic Education

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### Abstract

*This study examined the teaching and learning of Filipino as a subject at Esperanza Elementary School, with particular emphasis on pedagogical practices in basic education. Using a descriptive mixed-methods research design, the study explored the instructional strategies, classroom practices, learning resources, and assessment techniques employed by Filipino teachers, as well as their influence on pupils' participation and language skill development. Quantitative data were gathered through survey questionnaires, classroom observation checklists, and pupil learning assessments, while qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were used to analyze the data. Findings revealed that teachers demonstrated a very high level of pedagogical practice, particularly in the use of learner-centered strategies, interactive language activities, and varied teaching methods. Pupils showed very high levels of classroom participation and high levels of Filipino language skill development, especially in listening and speaking skills, while reading and writing skills required further instructional support. Qualitative findings indicated that learner-centered and interactive practices fostered engagement and confidence in using Filipino. However, teachers and pupils encountered challenges such as varied learner abilities, limited instructional materials, and time constraints. Despite these challenges, teachers employed adaptive coping strategies, including peer learning, lesson modification, and the use of improvised instructional materials. Conclusively, the study concludes that effective pedagogical practices significantly contribute to improved participation and language development in Filipino. The findings provide a basis for enhancing instructional strategies, strengthening writing and reading interventions, and improving the quality of Filipino instruction in elementary education.*

**Keywords:** *Filipino instruction, pedagogical practices, basic education, learner-centered teaching, language*

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# Teaching and Learning Filipino as a Subject at Esperanza Elementary School: Pedagogical Practices in Basic Education

## Introduction

Filipino, as the national language of the Philippines, plays a vital role in shaping learners' linguistic competence, cultural identity, and critical thinking skills. In basic education, the teaching and learning of Filipino serve not only as a means of communication but also as a foundation for developing literacy, values, and national consciousness among young learners. Effective pedagogical practices in Filipino instruction are therefore essential in ensuring that pupils acquire meaningful language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, the quality of learning outcomes in Filipino largely depends on how teachers implement instructional strategies, classroom practices, and assessment methods that respond to learners' needs and contexts. This study examines the teaching and learning of Filipino at Esperanza Elementary School, with particular emphasis on pedagogical practices in basic education, to understand how these practices influence pupils' language development and classroom engagement.

In recent years, educational reforms in the Philippines, including the K-12 curriculum and the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) policy, have emphasized learner-centered instruction, contextualized teaching, and the development of communicative competence in language subjects (Department of Education [DepEd], 2016). Filipino teachers are expected to employ varied instructional strategies, interactive language activities, and appropriate assessment techniques that foster active learning and meaningful language use. Despite these policy directions, several studies have noted persistent challenges in Filipino instruction, such as limited instructional resources, traditional teacher-centered approaches, and learners' difficulties in reading comprehension and written expression (Barrot, 2016; Bernardo, 2019).

At the elementary level, pupils' early experiences in learning Filipino significantly affect their language proficiency in later grades. Teachers' pedagogical decisions such as the choice of teaching methods, classroom interaction patterns, and assessment practices play a crucial role in shaping learners' motivation and skill development. In rural and public elementary schools, contextual factors such as class size, availability of materials, and learners' language backgrounds further influence teaching and learning processes. Given these realities, there is a need to closely examine how Filipino is taught and learned in specific school contexts, such as Esperanza Elementary School, to identify effective practices, existing challenges, and areas for instructional improvement.

Studies on language pedagogy consistently highlight the effectiveness of learner-centered and communicative approaches in improving language learning outcomes. According to Nunan (2015), learner-centered language teaching encourages active participation, meaningful interaction, and the development of communicative competence, which are essential in language subjects such as Filipino. Similarly, Richards (2017) emphasized that the use of varied instructional strategies, including cooperative learning and task-based activities, enhances learners' engagement and language proficiency. In the Philippine context, Barrot (2016) found that interactive teaching strategies and authentic language activities positively influence students' speaking and writing skills in Filipino and other language subjects.

Research also underscores the importance of instructional materials and assessment practices in language learning. Tomlinson (2013) argued that well-designed learning resources support language acquisition by providing meaningful input and opportunities for practice. In a local study, Corpuz and Salandanan (2018) noted that teachers who effectively utilize contextualized materials and formative assessment techniques are more successful in addressing learners' language difficulties. Furthermore, Bernardo (2019) reported that pupils' reading comprehension in Filipino improves when teachers integrate guided reading strategies and continuous feedback in classroom instruction.

Several studies have examined challenges in Filipino language instruction. Dela Cruz (2020) identified common issues such as limited time for language practice, insufficient instructional materials, and varying levels of learners' language readiness. Teachers often resort to traditional lecture-based methods due to large class sizes and heavy workloads, which may limit opportunities for learner interaction. Despite these challenges, studies suggest that teachers who employ adaptive strategies, such as differentiated instruction and collaborative learning, are better able to support learners' language development (Gay, 2018; Orbeta & Paqueo, 2020).

Although existing studies have explored pedagogical practices and challenges in language teaching, most focus on secondary education or broader national contexts. There is limited empirical research that specifically examines the teaching and learning of Filipino at the elementary level within a single school context, particularly in relation to how pedagogical practices influence pupils' participation, comprehension, and language skill development.

# Teaching and Learning Filipino as a Subject at Esperanza Elementary School: Pedagogical Practices in Basic Education

Moreover, few studies integrate teachers' instructional strategies, classroom practices, learner outcomes, and coping mechanisms into a single investigation.

This study addresses these gaps by providing a context-specific analysis of Filipino instruction at Esperanza Elementary School, offering insights that may inform instructional improvement and contribute to the enhancement of Filipino language education in basic education settings.

## Research Objectives

The study aims to examine the teaching and learning processes in Filipino at Esperanza Elementary School with particular emphasis on the pedagogical practices used in basic education. Specifically, it seeks to describe the instructional strategies, teaching methods, and classroom practices employed by teachers in delivering Filipino lessons, including the use of learner-centered approaches, language activities, learning resources, and assessment techniques.

The study also aims to determine how these pedagogical practices influence pupils' participation, comprehension, and development of Filipino language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In addition, it intends to identify the challenges encountered by teachers and learners in the teaching and learning of Filipino and the coping strategies used to address these concerns. Ultimately, the study aims to provide a basis for enhancing pedagogical practices and improving the quality of Filipino instruction in elementary education.

## Methodology

This study employed a descriptive mixed-methods research design to comprehensively examine the teaching and learning of Filipino as a subject at Esperanza Elementary School, with particular emphasis on pedagogical practices in basic education. The descriptive approach was appropriate as the study sought to systematically describe existing instructional strategies, classroom practices, and assessment techniques used by teachers without manipulating variables. The mixed-methods design enabled the integration of quantitative data on pupils' learning outcomes and classroom participation with qualitative insights into teachers' and learners' experiences, challenges, and coping strategies, thereby providing a holistic understanding of the teaching-learning process in Filipino.

The locale of the study was Esperanza Elementary School, a public elementary school offering basic education. The participants included Filipino teachers and selected pupils from the intermediate grade levels. Teachers were chosen through purposive sampling based on their direct involvement in teaching Filipino, while pupils were selected using simple random sampling to ensure fair representation. The inclusion of both teachers and learners allowed the study to capture multiple perspectives on pedagogical practices and learning experiences.

Data were gathered using multiple research instruments to address the specific objectives of the study. A survey questionnaire was administered to teachers to describe the instructional strategies, teaching methods, learning resources, and assessment practices employed in Filipino instruction. The questionnaire was researcher-made and validated by experts in language education. To determine the influence of pedagogical practices on pupils' participation and language skill development, a pupil learning assessment checklist and a classroom observation guide were utilized. These instruments focused on listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, as well as pupils' engagement during Filipino lessons. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, and focus group discussions were held with selected pupils to identify challenges encountered in teaching and learning Filipino and the coping strategies used to address these challenges.

The data collection procedure followed ethical research standards. Permission to conduct the study was secured from the school administration, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. Quantitative data were collected first through the administration of questionnaires and classroom observations, followed by qualitative data collection through interviews and focus group discussions to further explain and validate the quantitative findings. Data collection was conducted during regular class hours to ensure authenticity of classroom practices.

For data analysis, quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, weighted means, and ranking, to describe pedagogical practices and pupils' learning outcomes. Qualitative data from interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed, coded, and analyzed using thematic analysis. Emerging themes were identified, categorized, and interpreted to explain teachers' and learners' experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms in Filipino instruction. The integration of quantitative and

# Teaching and Learning Filipino as a Subject at Esperanza Elementary School: Pedagogical Practices in Basic Education

qualitative findings strengthened the validity of the results and provided deeper insights into the teaching and learning processes.

Conclusively, this research methodology was designed to generate reliable and meaningful data that would serve as a basis for enhancing pedagogical practices and improving the quality of Filipino instruction in elementary education.

## Results/Findings

### Quantitative Results

This section presents the quantitative findings of the study on the teaching and learning of Filipino at Esperanza Elementary School. Data were obtained from the survey questionnaire administered to Filipino teachers and the classroom observation and pupil learning assessment checklist used to measure pedagogical practices, pupils' participation, and language skill development.

**Table 1**  
**Pedagogical Practices Employed by Filipino Teachers**

<b>Pedagogical Practices</b>	<b>Weighted Mean Verbal Interpretation</b>	
Use of learner-centered strategies (e.g., group work, discussions)	4.32	Very High
Integration of language activities (songs, games, storytelling)	4.45	Very High
Use of instructional materials (visual aids, textbooks, charts)	4.18	High
Application of varied teaching methods	4.26	Very High
Use of formative assessment techniques	4.10	High
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.26</b>	<b>Very High</b>

Table 1 shows that Filipino teachers at Esperanza Elementary School demonstrated a very high level of pedagogical practice, as indicated by the overall weighted mean of 4.26. The highest-rated indicator was the integration of language activities such as songs, games, and storytelling, suggesting that teachers actively promote interactive and engaging Filipino lessons. Learner-centered strategies and varied teaching methods also received very high ratings, indicating that teachers frequently employ approaches that encourage pupil participation. These results imply that Filipino instruction in the school aligns with learner-centered and activity-based teaching principles, which are essential for effective language learning in basic education.

**Table 2**  
**Pupils' Level of Classroom Participation in Filipino Lessons**

<b>Indicators of Participation</b>	<b>Weighted Mean Verbal Interpretation</b>	
Active participation in class discussions	4.21	Very High
Willingness to answer and ask questions	4.08	High
Engagement in group and pair activities	4.35	Very High
Responsiveness to teacher's instructions	4.27	Very High
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.23</b>	<b>Very High</b>

As reflected in Table 2, pupils' classroom participation in Filipino lessons was rated very high, with an overall weighted mean of 4.23. Pupils showed the strongest engagement during group and pair activities, which supports the effectiveness of collaborative and learner-centered instructional strategies used by teachers. High responsiveness to instructions and active involvement in discussions indicate that pupils are comfortable using Filipino in the classroom. These findings suggest that effective pedagogical practices positively influence pupils' active participation in language learning.

**Table 3**

**Pupils' Level of Filipino Language Skill Development**

<b>Language Skills Weighted Mean Verbal Interpretation</b>		
Listening skills	4.30	Very High
Speaking skills	4.12	High
Reading skills	4.05	High
Writing skills	3.98	High
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.11</b>	<b>High</b>

Table 3 indicates that pupils demonstrated a high level of Filipino language skill development, with an overall weighted mean of 4.11. Listening skills obtained the highest mean, suggesting that pupils are able to comprehend spoken Filipino effectively during lessons. Speaking, reading, and writing skills were also rated high, though writing received the lowest mean among the four skills. This result implies that while pupils are generally developing well in Filipino, writing skills may require additional instructional support and practice to further enhance language proficiency.

**Table 4**

**Challenges Encountered in the Teaching and Learning of Filipino**

<b>Identified Challenges</b>	<b>Frequency Percentage</b>	
Limited instructional materials	9	45%
Pupils' difficulty in reading comprehension	11	55%
Varied language ability of pupils	13	65%
Limited time for language activities	8	40%
Large class size	10	50%

Table 4 presents the challenges encountered by teachers and learners in Filipino instruction. The most frequently identified challenge was the varied language ability of pupils (65%), followed by difficulties in reading comprehension (55%). These findings indicate that teachers handle diverse learner needs within the same classroom, which may affect pacing and instructional focus. Limited instructional materials and large class sizes were also noted as significant concerns. These challenges highlight the need for differentiated instruction and enhanced learning resources to support effective Filipino teaching and learning.

**Table 5**

**Coping Strategies Used by Teachers in Filipino Instruction**

<b>Coping Strategies</b>	<b>Frequency Percentage</b>	
Use of group and peer learning	14	70%
Adaptation of lesson activities	12	60%
Use of improvised instructional materials	10	50%
Remedial reading and writing activities	9	45%
Collaboration with fellow teachers	8	40%

Table 5 shows that the most common coping strategy used by teachers was the implementation of group and peer learning activities (70%), which helps address varied pupil abilities. Adapting lesson activities and using improvised instructional materials also emerged as common practices, reflecting teachers' flexibility and creativity

# Teaching and Learning Filipino as a Subject at Esperanza Elementary School: Pedagogical Practices in Basic Education

in addressing classroom challenges. These strategies indicate that teachers actively adjust their pedagogical practices to ensure continued learning despite constraints.

## Qualitative Results and Findings

The qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews with Filipino teachers and focus group discussions with selected pupils were analyzed using **thematic analysis**. Four major themes emerged that describe the teaching and learning experiences in Filipino at Esperanza Elementary School.

### Theme 1: Learner-Centered and Interactive Pedagogical Practices

Teachers consistently emphasized the use of learner-centered strategies such as group activities, storytelling, games, and oral recitations to encourage active participation in Filipino classes. These practices were viewed as effective in making lessons engaging and in motivating pupils to use the Filipino language confidently.

#### Participant Responses:

*“Mas natututo ang mga bata kapag may laro at talakayan kaysa puro lecture.” (Teacher 1)*

*“Gusto namin ang group work kasi nakakapag-usap kami sa Filipino.” (Pupil 3)*

*“Mas nagiging masaya ang klase kapag may kwento at awit.” (Pupil 1)*

These responses indicate that learner-centered and interactive strategies create a positive learning environment that supports language use and participation. Such practices help pupils develop confidence in speaking Filipino and improve their overall engagement in the learning process.

### Theme 2: Development of Filipino Language Skills through Practice and Exposure

Both teachers and pupils highlighted that continuous practice and exposure to Filipino through classroom activities contributed to the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Teachers noted that oral activities improved comprehension, while reading and writing tasks required more structured support.

#### Participant Responses:

*“Malaki ang naitutulong ng pakikinig at pagsasalita sa pag-unawa ng mga bata.” (Teacher 2)*

*“Mas madali sa amin ang makinig at magsalita kaysa magsulat.” (Pupil 2)*

*“Kailangan pa ng dagdag na oras sa pagsulat.” (Teacher 4)*

The findings suggest that pupils develop receptive and oral language skills more easily than productive writing skills. This highlights the need for focused writing instruction and guided practice to balance language skill development.

### Theme 3: Challenges in Teaching and Learning Filipino

Teachers identified several challenges that affect effective Filipino instruction, including varied language abilities of pupils, limited instructional materials, large class sizes, and time constraints. Pupils also shared difficulties in understanding long texts and expressing ideas in writing.

#### Participant Responses:

*“Iba-iba ang antas ng kakayahan ng mga bata sa isang klase.” (Teacher 3)*

*“Minsan kulang ang libro at visual materials.” (Teacher 1)*

# Teaching and Learning Filipino as a Subject at Esperanza Elementary School: Pedagogical Practices in Basic Education

*"Nahirapan kami sa mahahabang babasahin."* (Pupil 4)

These challenges indicate structural and instructional constraints that limit the full implementation of ideal pedagogical practices. Addressing learner diversity and resource limitations is crucial to improving Filipino teaching and learning outcomes.

## **Theme 4: Adaptive and Collaborative Coping Strategies**

Despite the challenges, teachers demonstrated adaptability by modifying lessons, using improvised materials, implementing peer learning, and collaborating with colleagues. Pupils acknowledged that group activities and teacher guidance helped them overcome learning difficulties.

### **Participant Responses:**

*"Gumagawa kami ng sariling visual aids kapag kulang ang gamit."* (Teacher 2)

*"Malaking tulong ang peer learning sa mahihinang magbasa."* (Teacher 4)

*"Mas naiintindihan namin kapag may tumutulong na kaklase."* (Pupil 5)

These findings show that teachers' flexibility and collaboration play a vital role in sustaining effective instruction. Adaptive strategies help mitigate existing challenges and ensure continued learning in Filipino.

## **Discussions**

The findings of this study confirm that learner-centered pedagogical practices significantly enhance pupils' engagement and language development in Filipino, supporting Nunan's (2015) and Richards' (2017) assertions that interactive and communicative teaching approaches promote effective language learning. The high level of pupil participation observed aligns with Barrot's (2016) findings that activity-based instruction improves learners' confidence and language use.

The study also revealed that pupils demonstrate stronger listening and speaking skills compared to reading and writing abilities. This supports Bernardo's (2019) findings that productive language skills, particularly writing, require explicit instruction and sustained practice. The challenges identified such as learner diversity and limited resources mirror those reported by Dela Cruz (2020), emphasizing the need for differentiated instruction and adequate learning materials.

Furthermore, the adaptive strategies employed by teachers reflect principles of culturally responsive and flexible teaching highlighted by Gay (2018). Collaboration, peer learning, and improvisation of materials serve as effective coping mechanisms that sustain quality instruction despite contextual constraints.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the findings, the study concludes that Filipino teachers at Esperanza Elementary School employ effective and learner-centered pedagogical practices that positively influence pupils' participation and language skill development. Pupils demonstrate a high level of engagement and competence in listening and speaking skills, while reading and writing skills require further instructional support. Despite challenges related to learner diversity, limited resources, and time constraints, teachers exhibit adaptability and commitment through the use of collaborative and innovative strategies. Overall, pedagogical practices play a crucial role in enhancing the quality of Filipino instruction in basic education.

## **Recommendations**

In light of the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed:

# Teaching and Learning Filipino as a Subject at Esperanza Elementary School: Pedagogical Practices in Basic Education

1. **Teachers** should strengthen writing-focused strategies in Filipino, such as guided writing, journaling, and structured composition activities, to enhance pupils' writing skills.
2. **School administrators** should provide additional instructional materials and support professional development programs focused on differentiated and learner-centered instruction.
3. **Curriculum planners** may consider integrating more contextualized and culturally relevant learning resources to support Filipino language development.
4. **Future researchers** are encouraged to conduct similar studies in other elementary schools or use experimental designs to examine the effectiveness of specific pedagogical interventions in Filipino instruction.

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## Conflicts of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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