Improving the Language Competence of the Grade School Learners

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Abstract: Language serves as a medium for reflection, empowering individuals to contemplate actions and ideas, contributing to societal enhancement. Language, with its intricate system of rules and norms, is vital for conveying meaning and interpretation. Culture plays a crucial role in interpersonal connections, socialization, personal identity, and broadening experiences. This study addresses concerns regarding poor language proficiency, particularly in reading skills such as schema, vocabulary, fluency, and word recognition. The study aims to develop a framework to alleviate reading difficulties for all pupils and implement a comprehensive training program to enhance teachers' professional language skills for the benefit of their pupils. Grade 5 pupils identified as having "No Mastery" according to the competency-based curriculum in the 5 big schools of Banta District, Division of I locos Sur during the School Year 2022-2023, were selected as respondents. Teacher-made tests based on Least Learned Competencies from melcs, verified by language experts, were administered to assess the language proficiency of Grade 5 pupils in reading skills. Quantitative methods were employed to analyze the collected data, including multiple-choice tests to measure improvements in language proficiency based on least learned competencies along schema, vocabulary, fluency, and word recognition skills. Findings revealed that grade 5 school pupils have low mastery, a one-step higher to their previous level which is absolutely no mastery on their level of improvement. Reading Poverty Framework was developed to address students' poor language proficiency, along with a comprehensive training program for teachers to enhance their professional language skills.

Keywords: Reading Poverty Framework, language proficiency, strategies, comprehension skills

1. INTRODUCTION

In the K-12 English Curriculum Guide 2016, it is stated that language plays a significant role in human life [1]. One tries to acquire, learn, and use language as a means of communication and simultaneously as a social symbol of humanity. Using language, someone could make statements, convey facts and knowledge, explain or report something, and keep social relations among language users [2]. These indicate that by using language, people can express their ideas, feelings, information, and others through communication. This is why curriculum planners in the Philippines considered English a compulsory subject in elementary schools. Language, with its intricate system of rules and norms, is vital for conveying meaning and interpretation. Culture plays a crucial role in interpersonal connections, socialization, personal identity, and broadening experiences [3]. Language serves as a medium for reflection, empowering individuals to contemplate actions and ideas, contributing to societal enhancement. Its pervasive influence spans across academic disciplines, emphasizing its centrality in holistic education and human progress. Echoing UNESCO's position, the Department of Education

highlights the significance of preserving access to and quality of education, especially in times of crisis [4]. Through the Sluing Edukalidad framework, they prioritize maintaining high-quality basic education services in the Philippines to preserve this commitment [5]. The Bureau of Curriculum Development makes sure that learning standards are current and flexible even in the face of obstacles like COVID-19.In response to these efforts, the Department releases the Most Essential Learning Competencies (melcs) nationwide [6]. These competencies encompass students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes in every lesson, aiming to develop practical and lifelong learning skills essential for success. Importantly, the release of melcs does not lower curriculum standards but serves as a guide for teachers to address learners' needs effectively [7]. The incorporation of a targeted set of learning goals and the creation of conditions that allow students to meet necessary learning goals are critical first steps in putting in place a competency-based system. Competency-based education (CBE), according to Gravis, is a harmonious fusion of professional education with liberal arts education [8]. Over the previous 200 years, this synthesis shows a notable progression. Furthermore, as part of their attempts to improve education, international organizations like the Carnegie Institute and the United Nations are giving "competency-based learning" more importance [9].In the ever-evolving landscape of educational pedagogy, the proficiency of grade school learners in reading is a fundamental cornerstone for academic success. The ability to read fluently, comprehend text through schema, enrich vocabulary, and recognize words effectively serves as the bedrock for all learning disciplines as opined in the study of Zhao Jing that language learning is inseparable from reading [10]. Reading, as one of the four skills in the foreign language, is by far the most important skill for many students learning English. In this regard, reading is the main way to obtain and master information. We should determine the relevance and effectiveness of these strategies before implementing such a framework in our classrooms [11]." Next, language teachers should employ a range of reading techniques suited to the requirements and proficiency levels of their students. It's important to choose teaching strategies that align with students' English proficiency and the texts they are working with, as it can be time-consuming and challenging to teach alternative approaches. This guarantees that students receive tailored assistance to address their learning requirements and get past any obstacles they may have with text comprehension. Additionally, language schema can assist students in finding specific information in the text and prepare them for reading [12]. Additionally, it will introduce prior knowledge that may be expanded upon by the students as well as active content schema that will support their reading. Research, vocabulary acquisition is more crucial than grammar in shaping the language itself. Lack of vocabulary proficiency will negatively impact the meaning or message being communicated. As a result, the teacher must be able to help pupils' vocabulary skills in addition to concentrating on grammar [13]. Furthermore, Tindal stressed the importance of oral reading fluency as a fundamental skill for comprehension. They argue that fluency significantly contributes to understanding, which is the primary aim of reading. The study of Disallow and Babinski noted that 90% of comprehension issues stem from inadequate oral fluency. Hence, students with poor fluency in early academic years may encounter difficulties later [14]. This underscores the necessity of fostering literacy skills during early learning stages. However, many English learning programs worldwide have overlooked this aspect. It emphasizes that comprehension hinges on precise and swift word recognition, highlighting its importance in effective reading. Emphasized that word recognition is a crucial component contributing to a reader's proficiency [15]. They found that students demonstrated acceptable performance on scaffolding forms, indicating improvement after each lesson. Additionally, the development of word recognition skills positively affected reading comprehension, who suggested that learners perform better when they possess a wide vocabulary knowledge base [16]. Over the past two years, many language teachers have encountered challenges due to the transition from in-person to online English teaching amid the pandemic. Numerous studies have examined the impact of this shift. For instance, Macintyre, Grierson, and Mercer explored how language teachers cope with teaching online, while Hartshorne and McCurry investigated the effects

of the COVID-19 pandemic on ESL learners and TESOL practitioners in the United States. Additionally, the Department of Education has implemented the Most Essential Learning competencies, a more focused curriculum compared to the K-12 Curriculum, requiring language teachers to unpack these combined competencies before delivering their lessons. The overarching goal of this research study is to shed light on the progress and advancement of grade school learners with respect to key reading competencies [17]. By pinpointing the levels of competency across various reading skills, educational stakeholders can identify areas of strength and opportunities for targeted interventions, hence, fostering an environment where each learner can thrive and achieve their full potential in reading and comprehension .Moreover, the researcher intends to evaluate the language proficiency of fifth-grade pupils, focusing on their reading abilities, and to pinpoint the variables that impact their academic performance [18]. This assessment includes a meticulous analysis of mastery across different competencies through Test Results Item Analysis to highlight specific challenges and to identify opportunities for targeted enrichment and intervention [19]. The researcher posits that the outcomes of this study will yield critical data for language educators, informing strategies to bolster student competencies in key areas such as schema, vocabulary, fluency, and word recognition. The anticipated benefits of this research extend to pupils, by improving their language skills, to parents and educators, by providing them with actionable insights, and to school administrators, by contributing to more effective educational programming. Statement of the Problem This study sought to evaluate the progress of learners in language competence, particularly their mastery along reading, focusing on schema, vocabulary, reading fluency, and word recognition [20].

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This section introduced the research design and methodology, the study's target population, the tools used and procedures for data collection, and how the collected data will be analyzed. This study employed a quantitative analysis to assess students' English language competency using questionnaires. This method will be the basis if the learner participants need more interventions to improve their language proficiency from the gathered results. To gather quantitative data, multiple-choice test questions were administered to assess the improvement in language competence among learners. These questions focused on various skills such as schema, vocabulary, fluency, and word recognition. The results were analyzed using the Test Results Item Analysis to find out if the level of improvement on the least learned skills on language competencies population and locale of the study. The study employed purposive sampling that carefully chooses the participants who would provide data pertinent to the research goals. Grade 5 pupils with the lowest language proficiency as determined by an analysis of test results are the respondent and they are identified also by their subject teacher. This approach aimed to glean valuable results that will help teachers to identify interventions that is appropriate to address the needs of every learner. The researcher utilized tools to obtain the necessary data for this study. Language competence in reading was assessed based on the Most Essential Learning Competencies (melcs) through Test Results Item Analysis, focusing on the list of Least Mastered Competencies for grade 5 learners. A teacher-made test, aligned with a table of specifications detailing the level of mastery in reading competencies such as schema, vocabulary, fluency, and word recognition, was administered. The grade 5 pupils underwent a teacher-made test focusing on the least mastered competencies, which was validated by experts in the field. The test results were analyzed through the Test Results Item Analysis to find out if there is improvement among learner's language competence. The following statistical tools were used for the interpretation of data. To address the question, data were gathered through multiple-choice questionnaires to compare and determine the level of improvement of learners' proficiency, utilizing a scale based on the list of least mastered competencies, including schema, vocabulary, reading fluency, and word recognition. The results were treated through Test Results Item Analysis. The test questions employed were validated by experts and

were statistically treated using the scale below. The table above with the title "Pupils' Level of Improvement towards Mastery per Competency" serves as a pivotal instrument in this study. It aims to gauge the efficacy of interventions used by teachers in enhancing pupils' language proficiency across various skills to meet the language competencies of the lesson, such as schema, vocabulary, fluency, and word recognition. It also delineates a five-tiered scale that classifies pupil performance into distinct categories of mastery, each corresponding to a range of raw scores, mean values, percentage bands and description. At the lowest end of the spectrum, the scale begins with a level of "Absolutely no Mastery," signifying a complete lack of proficiency in the targeted language areas with raw scores from 0 to 4, mean scores of up to 0.20, and encompassing 0-20% of the statistical limit. This is followed by "Low Mastery," which indicates a rudimentary understanding where pupils achieve raw scores between 5 and 8, mean scores from 0.25 to 0.40, and fall within 21-40% of the expected proficiency range. The midpoint on the scale is marked as "Average Mastery," highlighting an intermediate command over the language competencies, exemplified by raw scores ranging from 9 to 13, and mean scores between 0.45 and 0.65, accounting for 41-65% of the statistical limit. Progressing further towards higher proficiency, the "Moving towards Mastery" level represents pupils who are close to mastering the skills, with raw scores of 14 to 16, means from 0.70 to 0.80, and 66-80% of the statistical limit. At the apex of the table is the "Mastery" level, where pupils demonstrate excellent command and understanding, reflected in raw scores of 17 to 20, mean scores from 0.85 to 1.00, and a statistical limit of 81-100%. This signifies an unparalleled mastery of the language competencies being assessed. Collectively, the table provided a quantitative framework for the study, allowing for a nuanced analysis of the interventions' impact on the language competence of pupils, thereby guiding educational stakeholders in identifying strengths, weaknesses, and avenues for targeted curricular enhancement.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results and findings of the study on the language competence of learners in reading along schema, vocabulary, fluency and word recognition.

Table 01: Level of Improvement in Language Competence of the Learners on Reading Along Schema

Scale	Level of language competence					Level of Improvement				
Test Item No.	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Raw Score	7	7	6	6	4	9	10	12	8	9
Mean	0.35	0.35	0.30	0.30	0.20	0.45	0.50	0.60	0.40	0.45
Statistical Limit	23%	23%	20%	20%	13%	30%	33%	40%	26%	30%
Description	ANM	ANM	ANM	ANM	ANM	LM	LM	LM	LM	LM
General Weighted Average	0.30					0.50				
Statistical Limit	20%					32%				
Level	Absolutely No Mastery					Low Mastery				

Table 2 presents the level of language proficiency of the learners along schema skills with the competency on inferring the meaning of words that contain affixes with the help of context clues (synonyms, antonyms, word parts) and other strategies (Grade 5 MELCS-Q1). The table indicates a significant deficit in schema skills in grade school. For the level of language competence, the raw scores range from 4 to 7, which translates to means between 0.20 and 0.35. These raw scores are rather low, and the associated means result in statistical limits between 13% and 23%. Each test item within this scale is described as "Absolutely No Mastery", indicating that the students showed an insufficient grasp

of the language competencies being assessed. The General Weighted Average mean for this scale is 0.30, which is below the statistical limit of 20%, confirming the overall assessment of "Absolutely No Mastery". On the level of improvement scale, the raw scores are higher, ranging from 8 to 12, with means from 0.40 to 0.60 and statistical limits between 26% and 40%. These scores represent a "Low Mastery" level, suggesting some advancement in language competencies, yet still below an average level of proficiency. The General Weighted Average mean has increased to 0.50, which is above the 32% statistical limit, indicating an overall "Low Mastery". The data indicates critical deficiencies in initial language skills, as evidenced by scores indicating "Absolutely No Mastery." However, there is a notable progression to "Low Mastery," demonstrating some positive effects of current educational strategies. Nevertheless, the overall "Low Mastery" status calls for sustained and targeted educational support to reinforce language learning. Personalized teaching strategies that address specific weaknesses identified by the test results can enhance learning outcomes. Though the improvement trend is promising, it emphasizes the ongoing requirement for strategic educational interventions to bolster language proficiency among students. The findings on the language competence agreed with that when connecting concepts within graphical representations like knowledge graphs, there is a potential to create a more interconnected understanding of academic concepts. The use of structured visual aids can help address the gaps in learners' schema skills, as identified in the table related to schema competencies. The findings reinforce the idea that a complete reading process requires learners to construct various schemata including cultural, linguistic, content, and embedding schema instruction into daily lesson plans and using graphic organizers or concept maps might support knowledge integration, thereby directly addressing the gaps identified in learners' schema skills as stated in the study. The findings on the level of improvement emphasized the importance of tailored instructional approaches as Srinivasan & Murthy, stated in their study. To meet specific student needs technology interventions are designed to improve reading and comprehension showing the potential for integrating technology into interventions aimed at improving schema skills. Further, the findings on the level of improvement align with Ding Yuan's assertion regarding content schema, which refers to the framework of knowledge and experiential background stored in one's mind related to a topic. It suggests that using culturally relevant materials and technology in education can improve student understanding and engagement. Tailored interventions and personalized teaching methods are recommended to address diverse learning needs and assist students with schema-related challenges, in line with educational research supporting adaptive instruction based on individual student profiles.

Table 02: Level of Improvement in Language Competence of the Learners on Reading along Vocabulary

Scale	Level of Language Competence					Level of Improvement				
Test Item No.	6	7	8	9	10	6	7	8	9	10
Raw Score	7	5	4	5	6	9	10	10	9	8
Mean	0.35	0.25	0.20	0.25	0.30	0.45	0.50	0.50	0.45	0.40
Statistical Limit	23%	17%	13%	17%	20%	30%	33%	33%	30%	27%
Description	ANM	ANM	ANM	ANM	ANM	LM	LM	LM	LM	LM
General Weighted Average	0.27					0.46				
Statistical Limit	31%					31%				
Level	Absolutely No Mastery(ANM)					Low Mastery(LM)				

The provided table offers a comprehensive breakdown of pupils' language competence levels, improvements, and test item data, facilitating a thorough analysis of proficiency and progress. It

categorizes language competence into "Absolutely No Mastery (ANM)" and "Low Mastery (LM)," providing clarity in understanding proficiency levels. The transition from ANM to LM indicates improvement, although variations across test items suggest differing rates of progress. Each test item's raw scores, mean, and statistical limits allow for a detailed examination of individual competencies, aiding in identifying strengths and weaknesses. The statistical limit serves as an objective threshold for defining proficiency levels, while the description column succinctly summarizes competency levels. The general weighted average provides an overarching assessment of students' language competence. This points out a strong implication for educators that there must be an intervention to address the evident gap in vocabulary among learners. Programs that are focused on systematic vocabulary acquisition, engaging methods such as contextualized learning, and frequent assessments to monitor growth could be essential in raising the level of mastery. Such interventions would see pupils not only improve their vocabulary size but also their abilities in comprehension and problem-solving across the curriculum. Additionally, the importance of tracking proficiency levels over time, using data to inform instructional planning and customized learning. The results validate the study conducted by Virginal and Lipase that there is a direct influence of vocabulary mastery on reading comprehension and performance in mathematical problems. This indicates that vocabulary skills are integral not only to language-based subjects but also to understanding and solving problems in areas such as mathematics. Moreover, the findings agree to the study of Khan that without good vocabulary mastery, the message to be conveyed will not be well received, therefore the teacher must also be able to improve students' abilities in terms of vocabulary. Identifying areas of weakness and providing targeted support, educators can help students progress towards higher levels of mastery and academic achievement. Further, intervention and targeted instruction must implement to enhance their vocabulary skills and comprehension.

Table 03: Level of Improvement in Language Competence of the Learners on Reading along Fluency

Scale	Level of Language Competence					Level of Improvement				
Test Item No.	11	12	13	14	15	11	12	13	14	15
Raw Score	8	3	5	5	8	10	10	12	12	11
Mean	0.40	0.15	0.25	0.25	0.40	0.50	0.50	0.60	0.60	0.55
Statistical Limit	27%	10%	17%	17%	27%	33%	33%	40%	40%	37%
Description	ANM	ANM	ANM	ANM	ANM	LM	LM	LM	LM	LM
General Weighted Average	0.29					0.55				
Statistical Limit	20%					37%				
Level	Absolutely No Mastery(ANM)					Low Mastery(LM)				

The table shows the language competence and the subsequent improvement of grade school learners along fluency. Test items 11-15 is indicative of progress, though both sets of results remain within the lower proficiency levels of "Absolutely No Mastery" and "Low Mastery". The language competence among pupils initially, as measured by fluency skills, is at a stage of "Absolutely No Mastery." Across the five test items, the pupils consistently demonstrate a one-step level of improvement compared to the previous level of language proficiency. Their raw scores range from 10 to 12, with corresponding statistical limits between 33% and 40%. The general weighted mean of 11 falls below the statistical limit of 37%.The results are troubling since effective communication and general academic achievement depend heavily on language fluency. These findings indicate that the pupils have not yet achieved a satisfactory level of proficiency in fluency. The ability to read with fluency contributes to a deeper understanding of the text. The language competence assessment shows gaps in pupils' language skills,

which calls for focused intervention and instructional strategies. The results underscore the importance of ongoing assessment and intervention to support the development of language skills, particularly in areas such as fluency. By identifying specific areas of weakness and providing targeted support, educators can help students progress towards higher levels of mastery and academic success. The data also implies that without such interventions, pupils are at risk of persisting difficulties not just in language arts but in any subject that requires the processing and production of language. Therefore, teachers should consider these findings as a call to action for implementing evidence-based fluency programs within their literacy curricula. Fluency and the pupils' degree of language competency toward mastery constitute an area of vital relevance in education. This discovery is consistent with the research who highlighted the urgent need for a deeper comprehension of the long-term consequences of reading interventions. The importance of reading fluency interventions is highlighted in his study because it is essential for developing comprehension abilities in general. The results align with the study carried out which emphasized the significant role that fluency plays in comprehension, the main objective of reading. According to his study, fluency is a fundamental ability that makes comprehension easier and enables pupils to interact meaningfully with academic material.The table presents the results of the assessment of pupils' mastery level along the fluency dimension. Across the five test items, the pupils consistently demonstrate a one-step level of improvement compared to the previous level of language proficiency. Their raw scores range from 10 to 12, with corresponding statistical limits between 33% and 40%. The general weighted mean of 11 falls below the statistical limit of 37%.Based on the results, students still do not possess fluency at a level that is sufficient, which is consistent with Tindal. The significance of oral reading fluency as a basic ability that is required for comprehension was highlighted. This supports the findings that have been provided and emphasizes the importance of fluency in helping pupils comprehend and interact with academic material efficiently. Even while the students show some success in some areas, including reading quickly and easily, they are still not at the required level of mastery. This discovery aligns with the findings of Disallow and Rasinski's research, which indicated that 90% of comprehension issues are caused by oral fluency impairments.

Table 04: Level of Improvement in Language Competence of the Learners on Reading along Word Recognition

Scale	Level of Language Competence					Level of Improvement				
Test Item No.	16	17	18	19	20	16	17	18	19	20
Raw Score	6	4	7	8	8	13	13	13	11	12
Mean	0.30	0.20	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.55	0.60
Statistical Limit	20%	13%	23%	26%	26%	43%	43%	43%	37%	40%
Description	ANM	ANM	ANM	ANM	ANM	AM	AM	AM	LM	LM
General Weighted Average	0.33					0.49				
Statistical Limit	22%					41%				
Level	Absolutely No Mastery(ANM)					Average Mastery(AM)				

The data presented in Table 5 highlights a significant concern regarding students' word recognition skills, a foundational element of language proficiency. The scores across all test items indicate a level of "Absolutely No Mastery," meaning pupils are not meeting the minimum benchmarks for word recognition skills

Table 05: Occupation of the Respondents' Household

S.N.	Occupation	No. Of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1.	Agriculture	15	30.0
2.	Daily wages	7	14.0
3.	Business	3	6.0
4.	Jobs and Service	25	50.0
	Total	50	100.0

The above table shows the distribution of respondents' household with respect to their `occupational status, 30 percent of the total respondents' household are engaged in agriculture. Similarly, 14 percent are daily wages and 6 percent of the respondents are engaged in business and majority i.e. 50 percent respondent are from jobs and service. The above data shows that the women in the working areas are mostly rely on agriculture and service. Some of the respondents are depending upon daily wages it shows they have less access on land or physical assets. However, few respondents were engaged in business mainly on, own cosmetic shop/grocery shop, boutique and designing, Fruit shop, Diary etc.

Table 06: Overall Level of Improvement in Language Competence of the Learners on Reading

Skills	Raw Score	Mean	Statistical Limit (%)	Description
Schema	48	0.50	32%	Low Mastery
Vocabulary	46	0.46	31%	Low Mastery
Fluency	55	0.55	37%	Low Mastery
Word Recognition	62	0.49	41%	Average Mastery

General Weighted Mean= 0.50, Statistical Limit=35%, Level= Low Mastery

Along Schema, Vocabulary, Fluency, and Word Recognition

The data in Table 6 provides a summary of pupil's performance across different competencies, specifically their levels of improvement. *Schema* With a raw score of 48 and a mean of 0.50, this skill falls on a 32% statistical limit, which is categorized under "Low Mastery." This suggests that while there may have been some improvement in students' ability to understand and organize knowledge (schema), the level is still relatively low *Vocabulary* this skill has a slightly lower raw score of 46 and a mean of 0.46, corresponding to a 31% statistical limit. It is also rated as "Low Mastery," indicating a modest understanding of vocabulary but still below an average level of mastery. Here, a raw score of 55 translates to a mean of 0.55, with a statistical limit of 37%. The description is "Low Mastery" which means that students show some degree of improvement in the ability to read or speak smoothly, quickly, and with expression but have not reached a moderate level of proficiency. *Word Recognition* The raw score for word recognition is 62 with a mean of 0.49, which puts it at a 41% statistical limit. This is described as "Average Mastery," suggesting that of all the competencies listed, students have demonstrated a more moderate ability to identify words correctly. The General Weighted Mean for all these skills is 0.50, and the overall Statistical Limit is 35%, culminating in an overall "Low Mastery" level. This indicates that despite the average mastery in word recognition when all competencies are considered together, the cumulative performance level is still low.The overall findings show a need for improvement in several abilities, including vocabulary, fluency, and schema, which emphasizes the significance of assessing instructional strategies in these domains. These align with the findings of a study that that effectively enhance these competencies, it is imperative to implement explicit teaching methodologies and provide adequate practice opportunities. Targeted instructional approaches that emphasize explicit instruction and practice opportunities are crucial for raising student competency levels in schema construction, vocabulary acquisition, and reading fluency. Word recognition was

examined as a relative strength. The results of the current study are consistent with their acknowledgment of the findings of Jones & Smith on the importance of resolving shortcomings in other areas to achieve total competency. Even though word recognition was shown to be one of the tested skills' relative strengths, it wasn't good enough to make up for the other skills' poor scores and raise the overall average to a moderate or high level of competence. This supports the idea that, although word recognition is crucial, obtaining overall language competency requires thorough expertise in several domains.The findings of Brown with the implications drawn from the current study, strengthen the argument for the importance of revising educational strategies. Incorporating more effective instructional practices, such as interactive and student-centered approaches, can facilitate better engagement and learning outcomes among students. Additionally, providing individualized support where necessary can address the diverse needs of learners and improve overall performance.

Discussion

On the level of improvement scale, the raw scores are higher, ranging from 8 to 12, with means from 0.40 to 0.60 and statistical limits between 26% and 40%. These scores represent a "Low Mastery" level, suggesting some advancement in language competencies, yet still below an average level of proficiency [21]. The General Weighted Average mean has increased to 0.50, which is above the 32% statistical limit, indicating an overall "Low Mastery". The data indicates critical deficiencies in initial language skills, as evidenced by scores indicating "Absolutely No Mastery [22]." However, there is a notable progression to "Low Mastery," demonstrating some positive effects of current educational strategies. Nevertheless, the overall "Low Mastery" status calls for sustained and targeted educational support to reinforce language learning [23]. Personalized teaching strategies that address specific weaknesses identified by the test results can enhance learning outcomes. Though the improvement trend is promising, it emphasizes the ongoing requirement for strategic educational interventions to bolster language proficiency among students. The findings on the language competence agreed with Dang. That when connecting concepts within graphical representations like knowledge graphs, there is a potential to create a more interconnected understanding of academic concepts [24]. The use of structured visual aids can help address the gaps in learners' schema skills, as identified in the table related to schema competencies. The findings reinforce the idea that a complete reading process requires learners to construct various schemata including cultural, linguistic, content, and embedding schema instruction into daily lesson plans and using graphic organizers or concept maps might support knowledge integration, thereby directly addressing the gaps identified in learners' schema skills as stated in the study. The findings on the level of improvement emphasized the importance of tailored instructional approaches as Srinivasan & Murthy, stated in their study. To meet specific student needs technology interventions are designed to improve reading and comprehension showing the potential for integrating technology into interventions aimed at improving schema skills. Further, the findings on the level of improvement align with Ding Yuan's assertion regarding content schema, which refers to the framework of knowledge and experiential background stored in one's mind related to a topic. It suggests that using culturally relevant materials and technology in education can improve student understanding and engagement. Tailored interventions and personalized teaching methods are recommended to address diverse learning needs and assist students with schema-related challenges, in line with educational research supporting adaptive instruction based on individual student profiles [25].

4. CONCLUSION

According to the K-12 English Curriculum Guide 2016, language is an important part of human life. People attempt to obtain, learn, and utilise language as a way to communicate and at the same time as a social emblem of being human. Through the use of language, a person can make assertions, share

facts and knowledge, explain or report something, and maintain social relationships with other language users. These demonstrate that humans are able to communicate their thoughts, emotions, information, and other things through the use of language. This is the reason that curriculum planners in the Philippines decided that English should be a required subject in elementary schools. Language is essential for communicating meaning and interpretation since it has a complex system of rules and standards. Culture is important for socialisation, personal identity, interpersonal relationships, and expanding experiences. Language is a tool for reflection that allows people to think about their actions and thoughts, which helps improve society. Its widespread impact may be seen in many academic fields, highlighting its importance in holistic education and the advancement of humanity. The Department of Education emphasises the need of maintaining access to and quality of education, particularly during times of crisis, echoing the position of UNESCO. The study highlights the urgent need for teaching methods that focus on improving students' vocabulary, fluency, word recognition, and schema. Learners consistently show low command of the core competences that are necessary for language acquisition and comprehension. This might have a long-term influence on their overall academic path.

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