

Learning gap in Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal): An assessment

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to identify the learning gaps in Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal) during the first quarter of the 2022-2023 academic year. A quasi-experimental study using quantitative method with a design involving assessments before and after were utilized. The research was carried out with 33 TVL 12th Grade learners in the first quarter of the school year 2022-2023 at St. Paul University Surigao. The researcher administered an authenticated assessment for the preliminary and concluding evaluation, finding the disparities in learning in Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal). Significant improvement was observed in five competencies that were initially least mastered. Nevertheless, even with the interventions applied, the resulting mastery level was only partial. Regarding preliminary evaluation performance, most students scored in the fair range. After the interventions, most students achieved a satisfactory level in the concluding evaluation. Additionally, a notable distinction existed on the preliminary and concluding evaluation scores following the intervention. It is suggested that Filipino teachers at St. Paul University Surigao review the instructional areas that need further enhancement to close the ongoing learning gaps and attain full mastery, notwithstanding the implemented interventions.

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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has greatly influenced the educational landscape (Dellomos et al., 2023). As schools resume in-person classes, it is essential to evaluate the learning deficiencies and the pandemic's impact on teaching Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal). The disruption caused by the pandemic is anticipated to lead to substantial learning loss, which is expected to be especially severe for students from underprivileged backgrounds, thereby increasing opportunity gaps (Namkung et al., 2022). The extended period of remote learning may have created learning deficiencies and impeded students' language skills in Filipino sa Piling Larangan. Collins (2021) highlighted that the pandemic significantly widened learning gaps nationwide, disproportionately affecting students impacted by systemic inequities and exacerbating disparities within educational systems. Educators now face the challenge of meeting students' current needs while also addressing the learning gaps created by the pandemic (Gaddi et al., 2024).

The pandemic's disruption necessitates a thorough assessment of learning gaps in Filipino sa Piling Larangan to pinpoint specific areas where technical-vocational students might have struggled with language proficiency (Gaddi, 2024). Teachers often use diagnostic tests to identify these learning gaps. Educational assessment involves gathering information to inform choices concerning students, educators, curriculum, programs, institutions, funding, and various other elements of educational policy (NAE, 2021). By conducting a diagnostic test post-pandemic, educational stakeholders can identify areas needing improvement and implement appropriate measures to enhance language instruction. This could involve targeted interventions, additional support for students with learning gaps, and curriculum adjustments to address language competency deficiencies.

The assessment will also measure the effectiveness of strategies implemented during the pandemic to support language learning in the technical-vocational sector. Gaddi et al. (2024) suggest that this assessment aims to identify specific topics or concepts where students struggle, providing educators with valuable insights to design targeted interventions and instructional strategies to address these gaps effectively.

Additionally, Surigao del Norte faced another challenge with Typhoon Odette, which caused significant damage to Surigao City, including schools, and resulted in a three-month electricity outage (Languing et al., 2023; Gaddi et al., 2024). This super typhoon further disrupted education as there was no access to Wi-Fi or stable internet connections. Consequently, St. Paul University Surigao shifted from online classes to distributing printed modules to students and assessing their learning based on the provided materials (Gaddi et al., 2024).

This prompted the researcher to conduct a study on learning gap assessment in Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal). The study aims to address challenges and identify areas for improvement, helping educators support students in regaining and enhancing their language skills to ensure their success in vocational fields. Overall, this research contributes to ongoing efforts to recover from the pandemic's impact and improve language instruction in the technical-vocational sector. It underscores the importance of assessing and addressing learning gaps to equip technical-vocational students with the language skills necessary for success in their vocational careers.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This study aimed to identify the learning gaps in Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal) during the First Quarter of the 2022-2023 academic year. Specifically, it sought to address the following questions:

1. What are the identified learning gaps in Filipino within the specialized field of Technical-Vocational?
2. How do learners perform on the preliminary and concluding evaluations throughout the First Quarter in Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal)?
3. Is there a notable disparity between the preliminary and concluding evaluations performances of learners in the First Quarter for Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal)?
4. What interventions can be recommended?

METHODS

In this study, a quasi-experimental study using quantitative method with a design involving assessments before and after were utilized. The research was carried out with 33 TVL 12th Grade learners in the initial term of the 2022-2023 academic period at St. Paul University Surigao. The dependent variables were assessed before and after the intervention, focusing on learning gaps in Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal). A validated test was administered for both the initial and final assessment. Following intervention on identified least learned competencies, data were analyzed using statistical methods including frequency counts, percentage distributions, and paired t-tests as per Serato et al. (2024) and Cabrigas et al. (2024).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the findings and analysis of the data, organized according to the problem statement.

Identified learning gaps in Filipino within the specialized field of Technical-Vocational

Table 1 illustrates the identified gaps in Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal) for the First Quarter of the 2022-2023 academic year.

Table 1. Identified learning gaps in Filipino within the specialized field of Technical-Vocational

Most Essential Learning Competencies	Initial Assessment		Final Assessment	
	%	Interpretation	%	Interpretation
<i>The learner...</i>				
Define technical and vocational writing. CS_FTV11/12PB-0a-c-105	30.30%	Least Mastered	64.65%	Partially Mastered
Pre-requisite:				
Identify the topic discussed in the different texts read. F11PB – IIIa – 98	27.27%	Least Mastered	64.65%	Partially Mastered
Distinguish the different vocational writings based on the objectives, uses, characteristics, form, and target user. CS_FTV11/12PT-0a-c-93	29.29%	Least Mastered	58.59%	Partially Mastered
Pre-requisites:				
Enumerate the steps in crafting significant research. F11PU – IIg – 88	32.32%	Least Mastered	40.40%	Partially Mastered
Enumerate the ways and appropriate process in writing research in Filipino based on the objectives, uses, method, and ethics of research. F11PU – IVef – 91	31.31%	Least Mastered	51.52%	Partially Mastered

Note: *The competencies were originally written in Filipino. However, the researcher has translated them into English for a wider understanding of each competency.*

In the table, competencies marked with least mastered in the initial assessment were identified as learning gaps addressed during the quarter. Specifically, competencies such as defining technical and vocational writing, identifying topics in various texts, distinguishing vocational writings based on objectives, uses, characteristics, form, and target users, enumerating steps in conducting meaningful research, and listing methods and proper processes in Filipino research writing based on objectives, use, method, and research ethics, got a low mastery level of approximately 30.30%, 27.27%, 29.29%, 32.32%, and 31.31%, respectively.

Performance of the Learners on Preliminary and Concluding Evaluations

The table below presents the students' performance in the preliminary and concluding evaluations for the Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal) during the First Quarter of the 2022-2023 academic year.

Table 2. *Learners' Preliminary and Concluding Evaluation Results for the First Quarter in Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal)*

Scores	Preliminary Evaluation		Concluding Evaluation	
	<i>f</i> (n=33)	%	<i>f</i> (n=33)	%
Low	5	15.15%	0	0.00%
Fair	14	42.42%	11	33.33%
Satisfactory	13	39.39%	17	51.52%
Outstanding	1	3.03%	5	15.15%

In the preliminary evaluation, the majority of learners fell into the 'Fair' category, with 42.42% (14 learners), followed closely by the 'Satisfactory' category with 39.39% (13 learners). Only a small portion of learners performed at a 'Low' level (15.15% or 5 learners), and an even smaller number achieved an 'Outstanding' score (3.03% or 1 learner).

In the concluding evaluation, the performance distribution shifted notably. The 'Satisfactory' category saw an increase to 51.52% (17 learners), making it the largest group. The 'Fair' category decreased to 33.33% (11 learners). Notably, the number of learners achieving 'Outstanding' scores increased to 15.15% (5 learners), while no learners were categorized as 'Low'.

The data suggests significant improvement in learners' performance from the preliminary to the concluding evaluation. The increase in the 'Satisfactory' and 'Outstanding' categories, coupled with the elimination of the 'Low' category in the final assessment, indicates a positive trend in learner achievement and comprehension in the Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal) course.

Several factors could have contributed to this improvement, including enhanced teaching methods, increased learner engagement, or more effective study materials. The reduction in the number of learners in the 'Fair' category from the preliminary to the concluding evaluation implies that many learners who initially had average performance improved their understanding and moved to higher performance levels.

Overall, the data reflects a successful quarter in terms of learner progress, highlighting the effectiveness of the instructional strategies employed during the course. Further investigation into the specific methods that led to these improvements could be beneficial for replicating this success in future quarters and other courses.

Table 3. *Notable Disparity in Learners' Preliminary and Concluding Evaluation Performance in Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal) for the First Quarter*

Comparison	t-value	Degrees of Freedom (df)	p-value	Conclusion
Preliminary vs Concluding	-3.04	64	0.0034	Reject the Null Hypothesis

The study's findings revealed a notable disparity between the preliminary and concluding outcomes following the implementation of an intervention, particularly among students with limited mastery levels ($p = 0.0034$), at a significance threshold of 0.05. This suggests that the teacher's intervention strategies, such as integrating less mastered competencies into reviews, facilitating collaborative tasks aimed at these competencies, and conducting assessments to track progress, significantly influenced the mastery of competencies in the initial quarter of Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal). Sewell (2021) emphasizes the importance of targeted interventions in addressing pandemic-induced learning gaps, as students who lag behind often show reluctance to engage in classroom activities. Providing personalized instruction through differentiated or individualized support from educators proves most effective in mitigating and closing these learning gaps.

Table 4. Intervention provided for the competencies with the lowest mastery levels

Least Mastered Competencies	Interventions	Specific Activities	Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define technical and vocational writing. CS_FTV11/12PB-0a-c-105 	Utilized diverse teaching methods, including direct instruction on technical and vocational writing principles, demonstration followed by guided practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing Exhibit Case Studies 	The learners realized the idea of technical and vocational writing.
Pre-requisite: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the topic discussed in the different texts read. F11PB – IIIa – 98 	Implemented educational games to acquaint learners with essential concepts necessary for mastering the least proficient competency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Technical Writing Jeopardy Interactive Quiz with the use of Kahoot or Quizizz Storytelling Games 	Learners were required to fully participate in the activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distinguish the different vocational writings based on the objectives, uses, characteristics, form, and target user. CS_FTV11/12PT-0a-c-93 	Assigned authentic writing assignments relevant to their selected technical or vocational domain, such as drafting reports, instructions, procedures, and other pertinent documents encountered in real-world vocational contexts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instructional Manual Creation Procedural Writing Workshops Project Proposal Development 	The learners were interacting in different technical-vocational writing.
Pre-requisites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enumerate the steps in crafting significant research. F11PU – IIg – 88 	Facilitated collaborative activities aimed at addressing the least mastered competency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorming Jigsaw Fishbowl 	Learners easily understand the steps in crafting research.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enumerate the ways and appropriate process in writing research in Filipino based on the objectives, uses, method, and ethics of research. F11PU – IVef – 91 	Incorporated technology tools and resources to enhance proficiency in the identified least mastered competency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mentimeter ClassPoint Padlet 	The learners were participative, but it needs a strong internet connection.

Note: The competencies were originally written in Filipino. However, the researcher has translated them into English for a wider understanding of each competency.

The above information illustrates the teacher's interventions aimed at improving competencies with the lowest mastery levels. Specifically, five competencies were identified and targeted interventions were implemented to bridge the learning gap. Through diverse educational strategies and techniques, progress was made in addressing

these gaps. While most activities proved effective during implementation, the final assessment results indicate only a partial mastery levels achieved. One of the causes of the partial mastery is the language anxiety experienced by the students. As cited from the study of Galdonez (2023), language anxiety can lead students to feel insufficient in their language abilities, encounter self-doubt, and be concerned about the perceptions of others.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the study's results, the researcher deduced where different mastery levels and educational disparities were evident in the initial quarter of Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal). Significant progress was noted in improving five competencies that were least mastered. Nevertheless, despite the interventions applied, only partial mastery was achieved, indicating the need for additional attention and further interventions in these areas. The study offers valuable insights for educators, curriculum developers, and policymakers, providing direction in developing interventions and instructional strategies tailored to address the identified learning gaps. This initiative aims to enhance student learning outcomes and elevate the educational standards at St. Paul University Surigao, specifically within the domain of Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal).

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has several implications for curriculum development, teacher training, and educational policy in the Technical-Vocational track:

Curriculum Development

The identification of specific educational disparities in Filipino sa Piling Larangan (Teknikal-Bokasyunal) regarding Grade 12 TVL students highlights the need for a more targeted and focused curriculum. Curriculum developers can use these findings to refine the existing curriculum, ensuring that it adequately addresses the areas where students are struggling the most. There may be a need to incorporate more practical, hands-on learning experiences into the curriculum to better support the acquisition of Filipino language skills within the context of technical and vocational fields. Integrating real-world scenarios and industry-relevant content can enhance student engagement and comprehension.

Teacher Training

The study highlights the significance of continuous professional growth for educators teaching Filipino language in the technical-vocational track. Teachers should be equipped with strategies and resources to effectively address the identified learning gaps and facilitate student mastery. Training programs can focus on enhancing teachers' pedagogical skills, such as differentiated instruction techniques, formative assessment strategies, and the integration of technology in language instruction. Additionally, providing opportunities for collaboration and peer learning can enable teachers to share best practices and innovative approaches.

Educational Policy in the Technical-Vocational Track

Policymakers may consider allocating resources and support for targeted interventions aimed at improving Filipino language proficiency among technical-vocational students. This could include funding for additional instructional materials, professional development opportunities for teachers, and specialized support services for students who require extra assistance. There may be a need to revisit existing policies and standards related to language education in the technical-vocational track to ensure alignment with the needs and goals of students and educators. Flexibility in curriculum implementation and assessment practices can allow for more tailored approaches that accommodate the diverse learning styles and backgrounds of technical-vocational students.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and the significance of this study, the following recommendations were proposed:

1. Teachers specializing in Filipino at St. Paul University Surigao should review instructional delivery to pinpoint areas needing additional attention, aiming to bridge persistent learning gaps and achieve mastery despite previous interventions.
2. Continuing interventions, such as offering supplementary materials, facilitating collaborative activities, and conducting ongoing assessments to monitor student progress, should be customized to accommodate diverse learning styles and enhance mastery levels.
3. Future research could explore assessing learning gaps in Filipino subjects across various grade levels, broadening the investigation's scope to gain a thorough grasp of obstacles and prospects for enhancing Filipino language instruction. Furthermore, the education sector may investigate the learning gaps in Filipino language education.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

One limitation of this study is its restricted scope in terms of both the size of the sample and the geographical area. The study involved only from St. Paul University Surigao (Grade 12 students of Technical-Vocational Track), which restricts the applicability of the results to a wider population of technical-vocational students across the Philippines. Moreover, the study did not consider regional variations, socioeconomic backgrounds, or educational resources, which could significantly impact the learning gaps observed.

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