

The Insights of Teachers on the Impact of the Revised K to 12 Curriculum on Literacy Development

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Abstract: This study explored the insights of teachers regarding the impact of the Revised K to 12 Curriculum on English literacy development among learners, focusing specifically on the English teachers from the 20 schools of the Gubat South District. The investigation examined teachers' perspectives on how English literacy skills are reflected and supported in the curriculum, the classroom activities implemented to promote literacy, teachers' perceptions of the curriculum's effectiveness in enhancing literacy development, and the challenges they encounter in its implementation. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were gathered through teacher surveys and interviews to capture both quantitative trends and qualitative experiences.

Findings revealed that most teachers acknowledge that the Revised Basic K to 12 Curriculum provides a clearer literacy progression and emphasizes foundational competencies such as reading comprehension, vocabulary development, and written expression. Teachers reported utilizing a variety of instructional activities including guided reading, peer discussions, phonics-based tasks, and interactive learning strategies to strengthen literacy engagement.

Although English teachers generally perceived the revised curriculum as effective, many noted gaps between curriculum expectations and actual classroom realities. Challenges identified include limited instructional time, insufficient learning materials, varying learner readiness, large class sizes, and the need for continuous professional development aligned with curriculum reforms. These challenges were consistently echoed across the participating schools in the Gubat South District.

Based on the results, a Learning Literacy Development Map is proposed to support curriculum implementation. The map outlines a structured progression of literacy skills—beginning with phonological awareness and decoding, followed by vocabulary building and fluency, and culminating in comprehension, analytical thinking, and purposeful writing. This framework aligns curriculum standards with developmentally appropriate classroom practices and provides teachers with a clear, step-by-step guide for literacy instruction.

Overall, the study highlights the importance of responsive teaching practices, sustained teacher support, and well-aligned instructional resources to maximize the positive impact of the Revised K to 12 Curriculum on learners' literacy growth, especially within the context of the 20 schools in the Gubat South District.

Keywords: Revised K To 12 Curriculum, Literacy Development, Teachers' Insights, Learning Literacy Development Map.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The quality of basic education plays a crucial role in shaping a child's future skills, especially in helping them in literacy. Over the years, the Department of Education (DepEd) has continuously restructured the curriculum to better respond to the evolving needs of Filipino learners. One of the latest developments under the Revised K to 12

Curriculum is the introduction of the MATATAG Curriculum—a reform aimed at strengthening foundational skills in literacy, numeracy, and character development, particularly in the early grade levels, and also develop basic skills like reading, writing, and speaking.

In the Philippines, English is one of the core subjects taught in schools, and it is important not only for academic

success but also for communication and future opportunities. However, many Filipino learners continue to struggle with English literacy, prompting the government and educators to rethink how English is taught in schools.

English literacy is one of the most important skills that young learners need. In today's fast-changing world, being able to read, write, speak, and understand English are valuable skills. For young learners, especially those in elementary school, English literacy lays the foundation for future learning and success. In the Philippines, English is not just a subject in school; it is also used in many other areas like science, math, and social studies. This makes learning English an essential part of every child's education.

In return to this need, the Philippine government enacted Republic Act No. 10533, also known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, which formally established the K-12 program. This law aimed to improve the quality of education by adding Kindergarten and Senior High School, and by updating the curriculum to be more learner-centered, relevant, and responsive to students' real-life needs. Under this law, the Department of Education (DepEd) was tasked to continuously review and improve the curriculum; this led to the development of the MATATAG Curriculum.

Curriculum reform is a national issue since it is supposed to identify the skills and information that are most valued in a community and need to prepare for the future. However, globalization and other global developments might have an impact on it. In the Philippines, the performance of the learner is somehow low based from the PISA. Based on the K-12 review, it revealed that there are various problems and issues in the implementation of such curriculum, one of these are overcrowded curriculum, non-essential learning competencies, and imbalanced learning phases that really affects the performance of the pupils. As a resolution to these arising problems and issues faced by the former curriculum, the DepEd proposed and introduced the MATATAG Curriculum to combat the maladies in learner's learning and holistic performance.

In accordance with DepEd Order No. 010s.2024, the MATATAG Curriculum promotes inclusivity by incorporating global citizenship and respect for diversity. It is in line with the nation's goals for Filipino learners as stated in AMBISYON Natin 2040 and is backed by the National Learning Recovery Plan (NLRP) and Basic Education Plan (BEDP)2030. It encourages students to have an optimistic outlook on the future and gives them the tools they need to welcome and influence change while valuing their sense of national identity. DepEd decided it was essential to revamp the basic education curriculum by improving teaching-learning standards and knowledge acquisition through high-quality educational experiences and opportunities for all students in light of the current national situation and international demands. In order to satisfy the various needs of the learners and work towards its main objectives, the MATATAG Curriculum employs pedagogical concepts and instructional ideas that have been proven effective by research.

In response to the continuing challenges in foundation MATATAG Curriculum is DepEd's latest initiative to simplify lessons, focus on essential skills, and lessen overload in the learning content. It emphasizes foundational competencies in reading. To improve the quality of basic education, the Department of Education introduced the Revised K to 12 Curriculum. This curriculum was designed to make learning more student-centered, practical, and meaningful. It focuses on helping learners develop critical thinking skills, communication abilities, and deeper understanding in English.

For Grade 4 pupils, this shift in the curriculum plays an important role in how they develop their English literacy. At this level, students are expected to go beyond basic reading and writing. They must learn how to express ideas clearly, understand stories or text, and apply grammar rules correctly. However, the real question is: How well is the revised curriculum helping pupils achieve these goals? English is not just a subject for Grade 4 pupils. It is a tool they use to understand other lessons, express their thoughts, and communicate effectively. With the revised curriculum, new teaching methods and learning materials were introduced to help pupils develop their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in English.

However, while the goals of the curriculum are clear, there is a need to look into how it is actually applied in real classroom. Are teachers using the new features of the curriculum? Are teachers improving in their English literacy? What difficulties do teachers face? This study aims to answer these questions by focusing on Grade 4 pupils and their Revised K to 12 Curriculum.

While the Revised K to 12 Curriculum has clear objectives, the way it is applied in actual classroom can differ based on teachers' understanding, the availability of resources, and the learning needs of students. There may also be challenges that affect how English is taught and how pupils learn. Some teachers may struggle with large class sizes, lack of materials, or difficulty in shifting to new methods. These realities can influence how well the curriculum works in practice.

This study aimed to understand how the Revised K to 12 Curriculum affects Grade 4 pupils' English Literacy performance. It looks at what features of the curriculum are most useful, how teachers bring them to life in the classroom, what challenges they face, and what can be done to make teaching and learning English more effective.

In Sorsogon, and in many parts of the country, the MATATAG Curriculum was implemented with good intentions but faced real challenges on the ground. Teachers received a one-week training to familiarize themselves with the changes, but many found this period too short to fully prepare. Lesson planning, contextualizing learning materials, and adjusting to the new approaches became overwhelming—especially for teachers handling key transition levels like Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 4 and Grade 7. These difficulties raised concerns about how such abrupt changes

could affect not just teaching quality, but also pupils' academic performance- most especially in English where many struggle with reading comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency.

Despite these challenges, many educators remain hopeful. They believe that if implemented well, the MATATAG Curriculum as part of the broader Revised K to 12 Curriculum-holds the potential to improve learners' critical thinking, communication skills, and real- world problem solving abilities. However, to truly understand its impact, especially in language development, there is a need to examine how this curriculum reform affects pupils at the classroom level.

This study aimed to explore how the Revised K to 12 Curriculum influence Grade 4 pupils in English literacy performance. By focusing on actual classroom experiences, teaching strategies, and learning outcomes, this study hope to provide a clearer picture and result of whether these curriculum reforms are making a meaningful difference in learners' academic growth.

II. OBJECTIVES

This study explored the insights of teachers on the impact of the Revised K to 12 Curriculum on literacy development.

Specifically, it seeks to:

- Identify the insights of teachers regarding English literacy development as reflected in the Revised K to 12 Curriculum.
- Determine the activities implemented by teachers to promote literacy development.
- Examine the teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the Revised Basic Curriculum in enhancing literacy development.
- Identify the challenges teachers face in implementing the Revised K to 12 Curriculum for literacy development.
- Propose a learning literacy development map based on the findings of the study.

III. METHODS

This study utilized a mixed-methods research design, specifically an explanatory descriptive approach, to obtain both measurable and in-depth insights on how the Revised K to 12 Curriculum influences Grade 4 pupils' literacy performance in English. The quantitative component consisted of converting teachers' narrative responses into frequencies and percentages to identify dominant patterns, while the qualitative component involved thematic analysis to explore teachers' experiences, instructional practices, and observations of learner progress.

The respondents of this study were 20 Grade 4 English teachers from the participating public elementary schools in the Gubat South District. These teachers were specifically selected because they are directly responsible for

implementing the literacy competencies outlined in the Revised K to 12 Curriculum and possess first-hand knowledge of their learners' academic performance.

IV. RESULTS

The data collected from the respondents about the implementation of the Revised K to 12 Curriculum and its impact on Grade 4 students' English literacy performance is analyzed and interpreted.

➤ *Teachers' Insights on English Literacy Development Within the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum*

These reflect how teachers perceive the curriculum's effectiveness in building foundational literacy skills aligned with learner-centered, constructivist, and outcome-based approaches.

• *Supporting Learners' Comprehension through Differentiated Literacy Instruction*

Teachers shared that the Revised K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum allows them to adjust their teaching strategies depending on what their pupils need. They explained that the curriculum gives room for flexibility, especially when it comes to supporting learners who have different interests, backgrounds, and levels of comprehension. Because of this, teachers can apply approaches that are more learner-centered and responsive to how their pupils learn best.

Participant 1 expressed this by saying, "The Revised K to 12 Curriculum is structured to promote holistic English literacy development through integrated skills, critical thinking, and continuous assessment." This shows the teacher's belief that the curriculum promotes balanced and interconnected literacy skills something they try to reflect in their classroom practices.

Participant 5 supported this idea, stating that "the Revised K to 12 Curriculum provides a strong foundation for promoting English literacy development because it is designed to gradually build learners' language skills across grade levels." This response highlights teachers' recognition that the curriculum follows a developmental approach, allowing skills to grow over time.

Participant 12, however, pointed out that "while it teaches reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, pupils sometimes need extra guidance to fully understand the content." This reminds us that even with a well-designed curriculum, children learn at different speeds and may require extra support to grasp lessons fully.

The teachers' responses reveal how essential differentiated instruction is in developing pupils' comprehension under the Revised Curriculum. Although the curriculum provides a clear framework for building literacy skills, the teachers see firsthand that learners do not absorb lessons in the same way or at the same time. Some pupils catch on quickly, while others need more time, additional

examples, or simpler tasks before they can fully understand the concepts.

This is where differentiated instruction becomes most visible. Teachers adapt their lessons sometimes by adjusting reading materials, forming smaller learning groups, or giving individual guidance so that every learner has a fair chance of understanding the lesson. Their experiences show that flexibility in teaching is not just an option but a necessity in supporting the diverse comprehension levels found in Grade 4 classrooms.

Because of this, the Revised Curriculum's learner-centered nature is strengthened through the teachers' efforts to adjust their methods. Their actions show a deep awareness of their pupils' needs and a genuine desire to help each child succeed. In the end, differentiated instruction becomes a bridge that connects the curriculum's goals with pupils' actual learning needs, making comprehension more attainable for everyone.

- *Integrating Oral Language Activities in Early Literacy*

Teachers recognized the significance of oral language as the foundation of literacy learning. They observed that the Revised Curriculum integrates oral communication activities that builds learners' confidence and fluency in English before advancing to reading and writing.

Participant 2 shared that "It helps learners become more confident and proficient in the language by striking a balance between exposure to English and foundational learning in the mother tongue."

Participant 8 stated that "It would be best if there is a strong and well-developed foundation in oral language, prioritize the first language of the child to achieve initial literacy development."

Participant 15 emphasized that "It focuses in making learners read with understanding, write with clarity, and communicate confidently".

These insights highlight that oral language activities are crucial for developing communicative competence and overall language fluency. When learners are actively engaged in speaking and listening, they not only gain confidence in using the language but also strengthen their cognitive skills that support reading and writing. By prioritizing oral proficiency first, learners can build a strong linguistic foundation, which in turn facilitates clearer expression, better comprehension, and more effective communication in both English and their mother tongue.

Scaffolding Reading Comprehension through Contextualized Texts
Teachers shared that the use of contextualized learning materials makes reading

comprehension more meaningful. By relating texts to local culture, real-life experiences, and learners' interests, pupils develop deeper understanding and retention of what they read.

Participant 7: "It is best in promoting literacy development through spiral progression because competencies were introduced from simple to complex."

Participant 10: "It aims to improve learning outcomes, align with international standards, and broader education to include life skills."

Participant 16: "The curriculum focuses more on holistic development, encouraging the use of real-life situations so pupils can easily connect English skills with their daily experiences."

These responses indicate that contextualized texts not only support the step-by-step development of reading skills but also connect classroom learning to the pupils' everyday lives. By using materials that are familiar and meaningful, teachers can make lessons more engaging and relevant. Pupils are more likely to internalize concepts, retain information, and apply their literacy skills in practical ways, which contributes to a more holistic and effective approach to reading comprehension.

➤ *Instructional Activities Employed by Teachers to Promote Literacy Development*

The data presented in Table 1 reveal the instructional activities that teachers commonly used to promote literacy development among Grade 4 pupils. The results highlight how teachers combine traditional reading strategies with interactive and technology-based approaches to strengthen pupils' English literacy skills.

Guided Reading was identified as the most used strategy, with 19 teachers (95%) reporting that they use it regularly in their classes. This suggests that teachers strongly value small-group and differentiated instruction, as it allows them to pay closer attention to each pupil's reading development. Through guided reading, pupils can read texts that match their ability level while receiving guidance and support from the teacher. This approach helps learners feel more confident as readers and supports better understanding of what they read.

In the same way, the Think-Aloud strategy was also used by 19 teachers (95%). By thinking aloud, teachers show pupils how good readers make sense of a text by sharing their thoughts while reading. This practice helps pupils understand that reading is an active process that involves questioning, predicting, and reflecting. As pupils become more aware of how they think while reading, they gradually develop stronger comprehension and higher-order thinking skills.

Table 1 Instructional Activities Employed by Teachers to Promote Literacy Development

Instructional Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Guided Reading	19	95
Think Aloud	19	95

Phonics/Decoding Drills	17	85
Storytelling	17	85
Read Aloud	17	85
Vocabulary Games	17	85
Shared Reading	16	80
Integration of Multimedia	16	80
Group Discussion	14	70

Meanwhile, Phonics or Decoding Drills, reported by 17 teachers (85%), remain a vital part of early literacy instruction. Teachers still value phonics-based activities as they help pupils recognize letter-sound relationships and decode unfamiliar words. These foundational skills support accurate reading and prepare pupils for more advanced comprehension tasks.

The same percentage (85%) was recorded for Storytelling, Read Aloud, and Vocabulary Games, indicating that teachers balance skill-building exercises. Storytelling enhances imagination and listening comprehension, while Read Aloud session exposes learners to fluent reading and varied vocabulary. Vocabulary Games, on the other hand, make learning enjoyable and interactive, helping pupils retain new words through play and participation.

Shared Reading, practiced by 16 teachers or 80%, reflects a collaborative approach where both teachers and pupils read together. This activity builds reading fluency and confidence, especially among struggling readers. Similarly, the Integration of Multimedia, also used by 80% of teachers shows that educators are now incorporating digital tools such as videos, audio clips, and interactive reading applications to support diverse learning styles and sustain pupils' interest in reading.

Finally, Group Discussion received the lowest frequency with 14 teachers (70%) utilizing it. Although it ranks last, this activity remains crucial for developing communication and critical thinking skills. It provides pupils with opportunities to share interpretations, express opinions, and engage in meaningful exchanges about text. The slightly lower frequency may be attributed to time constraints or the need for effective classroom management during group activities.

➤ *Teachers' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum in Promoting English Literacy Development*

Teachers generally see the Enhanced Basic Education curriculum as a positive step toward improving pupils' English literacy. They appreciate how it helps build reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension skills gradually through its spiral and competency-based design. Many teachers believe it makes learning more meaningful and connected to real-life situations.

• *A Supportive Curriculum to Multilingual Education*

Based on the response of the three teacher participants, the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum is perceived as a supportive framework that promotes multilingual education

and strengthens learners' English literacy through linguistic inclusivity.

Participant 1 explained that "starting literacy instruction with the mother tongue helps learner grasp lessons more effectively before transitioning to English". She shared that pupils "gain confidence in expressing ideas when they first learn in a language they are comfortable with". This, in turn, builds a strong foundation for English literacy.

Participant 3 added that "the use of multilingual instruction serves as a bridge for comprehension, particularly among pupils who initially struggle with English. She noticed that integrating the mother and Filipino helps pupils "connect meanings more easily", making English learning less intimidating.

Similarly, Participant 5 emphasized that "the curriculum fosters cultural inclusion and respect for diversity. According to her, "using multiple language in the classroom helps children feel valued and seen, creating a supportive environment for language learning".

Overall, participants agreed that the curriculum's multilingual approach enhances comprehension and encourages positive attitudes toward English literacy. It provides learners with meaningful opportunities to transition from familiar language to English, thus promoting both understanding and cultural appreciation.

• *A Meaningful Component that Uses Learners' Experiences to Support Their Literacy Growth*

The second theme highlights how the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum integrates learners' real-life experiences as a foundation for English literacy development. The three participants unanimously agreed that connecting lessons to students' lived experiences makes learning more meaningful and effective.

Participant 4 pointed out that "when lessons reflect real-life situations, pupils become more engaged and better able to understand reading and writing tasks. She mentioned that pupils respond with enthusiasm when texts are relatable to their community or family life". She shared that pupils respond with enthusiasm when texts are relatable to their community or family life. According to her, these familiar situations help pupils connect more easily with the lesson, making reading more meaningful and writing less intimidating. She observed that when pupils see themselves in the stories they read, they participate more actively and show a deeper understanding of the tasks.

Participant 6 described that “experiential learning activities such as storytelling, role-playing, and journaling – allow pupils to use English in authentic contexts. She explained, “When children talk or write about things they know, English becomes a tool for expression, not just a subject to study”. Through these activities, pupils become more comfortable using the language and are more willing to share their ideas. She noted that connecting lessons to pupils’ own experiences helps them communicate more confidently and meaningfully in English.

Meanwhile, Participant 2 emphasized that “drawing from learners’ experiences promotes critical thinking and comprehension. She noted that relating prior knowledge to new concepts helps pupils “build stronger reading and writing connections”. Participant 2 emphasized that drawing from learners’ experiences promotes critical thinking and comprehension. She noted that relating prior knowledge to new concepts helps pupils “build stronger reading and writing connections.” According to her, when pupils are encouraged to link what they already know to what they are learning, they are able to understand texts better and express their ideas more clearly. She believed that this approach supports deeper learning and strengthens pupils’ overall literacy skills.

In summary, the teachers believed that the curriculum’s use of learners’ experiences creates a meaningful bridge between knowledge and application, allowing pupils to develop both literacy skills and confidence in using English as a medium for communication.

- *Using Instructional Adjustments to Scaffold Learners’ Literacy Development*

The third theme focuses on how teachers implement instructional adjustments and scaffolding strategies to support diverse literacy needs in the classroom. The participants described the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum as flexible, enabling teachers to modify lessons according to learners’ proficiency levels.

Participant 8 shared that she often “makes lesson modifications for pupils who find English challenging, using simplified materials, guided reading sessions, and visual aids. She stated, “Adjusting the lesson ensures that no learner is left behind.”

Participant 11 emphasized “the use of differentiated instruction and gradual release of responsibility, saying that scaffolding “helps pupils become independent readers and writers over time”. He also noted that varying strategies such as modeling, prompting, and group work encourages active learning.

Participant 15 mentioned that “ongoing assessment and feedback guide her in making necessary adjustments. She explained, “When I see that pupils struggle with a task, I redesign the activity to fit their level while keeping the same learning goal.”

Collectively, the participants underscored that scaffolding is not about simplifying learning but rather providing the right level of support to ensure progress. The curriculum, therefore, allows teachers to adapt instruction effectively, helping all pupils reach their literacy potential.

➤ *Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Literacy Development Under the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum*

Table 2 presents the challenges encountered by teachers in literacy development under the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum. As shown in the data, the most frequently cited challenge was learners’ reading readiness gaps ($F = 17$, rank 1). This indicates that many pupils enter the classroom without sufficient foundational literacy skills, such as letter recognition, phonemic awareness, and vocabulary. Teachers often find it difficult to move forward with the prescribed lessons when pupils are still struggling with basic reading concepts. As a result, instruction tends to slow down as teachers need to revisit earlier competencies to ensure learners’ understanding.

Table 2 Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Literacy Development

Challenges	Frequency	Rank
Limited time to engage in the suggested literacy activities	17	1
Learners’ reading readiness gaps	15	2.5
Lack of funds needed to craft materials	15	2.5
Limited materials that are developmentally appropriate and intended for literacy skills development	14	5
Language transition difficulties	14	5
Parental limited involvement in learners’ literacy development		
Lack of training on how to actualize the suggested literacy activities	12	7

The next most common challenges reported were learners’ reading readiness gaps and the lack of funds needed to create materials for literacy development, each with a frequency of 15 and a rank of 2.5. These findings point to the ongoing problem of limited resources in schools. Many teachers shared that they do not have enough financial support to make or buy teaching aids that could effectively help students develop their reading skills. On top of that, the materials that are available are often not suitable for the developmental needs of Grade 4 pupils, which makes it

harder to keep them interested and engaged in reading activities.

Teachers identified several interrelated challenges that affect Grade 4 pupils’ English literacy performance, with limited time for literacy activities, difficulties in language transition, and low parental involvement emerging as particularly significant ($f = 14$, rank 5). The limited time allotted for literacy sessions often restricts learners’ engagement in interactive activities such as reading circles,

group discussions, and comprehension exercises opportunities that are essential for developing critical reading and language skills. At the same time, pupils face the challenge of shifting from using their mother tongue in earlier grades to English as the medium of instruction. This transition can lead to confusion and comprehension difficulties, making it harder for learners to fully understand lessons and participate confidently in classroom activities. Adding to these challenges, limited parental involvement in literacy development means that learners may not receive reinforcement at home, which is crucial for supporting classroom learning. Together, these factors can slow pupils' progress in English literacy, affecting their comprehension, confidence, and overall academic performance.

Lastly, lack of training on how to actualize the suggested literacy activities which is the last least cited challenge ($f = 12$, rank 7). Overall, the findings suggest that teachers face combination of learner-related, resource-related, and contextual challenges in implementing literacy development under the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum. Addressing these issues through targeted interventions such as early reading programs, provision of adequate materials, and stronger home-school collaboration can significantly enhance the literacy outcomes of Grade 4 pupils.

➤ *Proposed Learning Literacy Development Map*

• *Rationale*

The implementation of the Revised K to 12 Curriculum (MATATAG Curriculum) aims to strengthen foundational skills, foster learner engagement, and ensure holistic development among Filipino pupils. However, based on the data gathered from the 20 teacher respondents, several literacy-related challenges were observed among Grade 4 pupils, particularly in English. These include weak phonemic awareness, limited vocabulary exposure, poor reading fluency, low comprehension levels, and difficulty relating lessons to real-life contexts. Such issues highlight the urgent need for a systematic, developmental, and context-sensitive literacy intervention.

The Proposed Literacy Development Map was conceptualized as a strategic framework to address these challenges and to support teachers in implementing effective literacy instruction aligned with the principles of the MATATAG Curriculum. Grounded in the Constructivist Learning Theory, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, and Outcome-Based Education (OBE), this literacy map promotes a learner-centered and progressive approach to language development. It recognizes that literacy growth occurs in stages from emergent to critical literacy and that effective interventions should be tailored to each stage of learners' development.

Moreover, the framework emphasizes the integration of contextualized and culturally responsive instruction, sustained teacher capacity-building, and home-school collaboration. Through this developmental literacy plan, schools can ensure that English learning becomes not only a

cognitive process but also a meaningful and socially relevant experience that prepares learners for lifelong literacy and communication competence.

• *Goal*

The primary goal of the Proposed Literacy Development Map is to enhance Grade 4 pupils' English literacy performance through a systematic, stage-based, and contextually grounded framework that aligns with the goals of the MATATAG Curriculum. Specifically, it aims to:

- ✓ Strengthen foundational literacy skills necessary for reading, writing, and comprehension.
- ✓ Foster critical, functional, and expressive literacy competencies among learners.
- ✓ Encourage contextualized and culturally responsive literacy practices that make learning relevant and engaging.
- ✓ Promote sustainability in literacy development through continuous teacher training and active home-school collaboration.
- ✓ Ultimately, this Literacy Development Map envisions a community of proficient, motivated, and culturally aware readers and writers who can apply their literacy skills in academic, social, and real-world contexts

V. DISCUSSION

➤ *Teachers' Insights on English Literacy Development within the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum*

• *Supporting Learners' Comprehension through Differentiated Literacy Instruction*

The teachers in this study highlighted that the Revised K to 12 Curriculum provides a flexible framework that supports differentiated instruction, enabling teachers to tailor lessons according to learners' needs, interests, and comprehension levels. One participant emphasized that the curriculum promotes "holistic English literacy through integrated skills, critical thinking, and continuous assessment," while another noted that it is "designed to gradually build language skills across grade levels." Another teacher acknowledged that "pupils sometimes need extra guidance to fully understand the content," underscoring the importance of instructional scaffolding. These insights indicate that teachers recognize the value of addressing diverse learning needs to facilitate comprehension and mastery of English literacy skills.

These practices align with Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development, which underscores the role of the teacher in scaffolding learning and supporting students as they progress beyond their current abilities. Moreover, from an outcome-based education perspective (Spady, 1994), differentiated instruction is essential in ensuring that all learners attain the desired competencies, allowing each child to achieve proficiency at their own pace. The principles of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) are also reflected in these approaches, as teachers create varied tasks and learning experiences that actively engage students, prompting reflection and application of skills.

Empirical studies conducted in the Philippine context support the efficacy of differentiated instruction. A 2023 study on reading comprehension revealed that students exposed to differentiated instructional strategies significantly outperformed their peers in conventional settings. Similarly, a 2024 study on Grade 5 learners found that tailoring instruction based on learning styles and multiple intelligences improved comprehension outcomes, demonstrating that differentiated approaches can enhance literacy even beyond English-focused subjects. However, literature also notes that effective implementation depends on enabling conditions; challenges such as limited resources, class sizes, and teacher training remain barriers to fully optimized differentiated instruction (Gatcho, Manuel, & Hajan, 2024; Ferrer, 2025).

Across the Philippines and even in classrooms abroad, many educators share a similar observation: when lessons are adjusted to fit how learners actually learn, students tend to thrive. This idea lies at the heart of differentiated instruction (DI), and a growing number of studies have explored how it supports English literacy and reading comprehension among basic education learners.

One example is the work of Potot, Kyamko, Reponte-Sereño, and Bustrillo (2023) in Cebu. They compared two groups of Grade 7 students—one taught through traditional, one-size-fits-all methods, and the other through differentiated tasks. The difference was striking. Students who received DI performed significantly better in comprehension. According to the researchers, this improvement happened because the lessons were adjusted to what learners could handle. Instead of forcing everyone to move at the same pace, DI allowed students to work through activities that matched their current level of understanding. Teachers in the study also noticed how scaffolding—step-by-step support—helped students feel more confident with reading tasks.

A similar pattern appeared in Batangas, where Lojo (2020) worked with low-achieving Grade 5 English learners. After a series of differentiated lessons, many struggling readers improved considerably. DI helped them not because the tasks were made “easier,” but because the activities were designed to be more accessible. This idea strongly reflects Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development: children learn best when tasks are just beyond what they can do alone but achievable with guided support.

Other Filipino researchers have also emphasized the importance of acknowledging learners’ unique strengths. Suson and colleagues (2020) found that when teachers considered students’ multiple intelligences such as musical, spatial, or interpersonal strengths reading comprehension improved. Instead of relying only on text-heavy worksheets, teachers used activities that allowed students to process meaning in ways that felt natural to them. This mirrors Kolb’s experiential learning theory, which suggests learning becomes more meaningful when students experience it in personally relevant ways.

More recent studies continue to highlight DI’s impact on learner engagement. For instance, Ramilo and Ting (2025)

reported that DI significantly boosted students’ enthusiasm in inclusive classrooms in Calamba City. Learners were more active, more focused, and more willing to participate. Although the study found that engagement does not always translate immediately into higher academic scores, it points to an important truth: meaningful learning begins with motivation.

Teachers themselves echo these insights. In a study by Talain and Mercado (2023), 160 elementary English teachers from various schools and teaching backgrounds shared that they consistently use DI in their classrooms. They believed it was essential for handling diverse learning needs. Many admitted that DI can be time-consuming or challenging when resources are limited, but they also recognized its power to make lessons more inclusive and meaningful.

Even at the senior high school level, DI continues to show strong potential. Ocampo (2018) demonstrated that Grade 11 students exposed to differentiated reading tasks achieved notably higher comprehension scores. This reinforces the idea that DI is not just for young learners—students at all levels benefit when instruction is flexible and responsive.

Some studies have also looked at DI from a psychological perspective. Jopia (2025), for example, explored how DI affects students’ sense of coherence their feeling that learning is understandable, manageable, and meaningful. The findings revealed that differentiated assessments, in particular, helped students feel more in control of their learning. This directly supports Outcome-Based Education (Spady), which emphasized clarity of learning goals and meaningful assessment tasks.

Likewise, Labordo (2024) showed that DI increases motivation when students are allowed to work through reading tasks that match their preferred learning styles. This suggests that when teachers really “see” their students how they think, what they enjoy, what challenges them learners respond with greater effort and interest.

Even in resource-limited contexts, teachers still find ways to make DI work. Valencia and colleagues (2025) discovered that English teachers in Dumangas used DI frequently, regardless of teaching experience or technology in the classroom. Their consistent use of DI shows that the approach isn’t just a trend, but a developing norm in Philippine English teaching.

Finally, research from Pandami National High School (2025) highlighted how DI can build motivation among English learners. When students were given activities that matched their strengths and learning pace, they became more eager to participate. This supports Kolb’s experiential learning theory once more: meaningful experiences allow students to process learning more deeply, leading to stronger literacy skills.

Across all these studies, one message stands out: differentiated instruction makes learning more humane. It

acknowledges that children are different each with unique needs, pace, strengths, and challenges. And when teachers design lessons with these differences in mind, students not only perform better academically, but also participate more actively, feel more confident, and find learning more meaningful.

The findings in this study reinforced these observations. Teachers clearly value the capacity to adjust instruction to meet learners' diverse needs, but they also face practical challenges in operationalizing these strategies. In the context of Grade 4 English literacy, understanding the ways in which teachers differentiate instruction, the types of scaffolding employed, and the constraints they encounter is critical to evaluating how the curriculum translates into tangible learning outcomes.

- *Integrating Oral Language Activities in Early Literacy*

Teachers also highlighted the foundational role of oral language in supporting literacy development. One participant explained that oral activities help learners "become more confident and proficient... balancing exposure to English with foundational learning in the mother tongue," while another stressed the importance of establishing a strong oral language foundation, prioritizing the child's first language. A third participant noted that the curriculum "focuses on making learners read with understanding, write with clarity, and communicate confidently." These observations suggest that oral language activities serve as an essential bridge between comprehension and expressive literacy.

This emphasis is supported by Piaget's constructivist theory, which posits that children actively construct meaning through interaction, and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which considers language as a primary tool for cognitive development. Oral language enables learners to engage in social interactions that foster thinking, reflection, and the internalization of language skills, which subsequently support reading and writing proficiency. Empirical evidence further affirms this connection. For instance, studies on Filipino families have shown that children's oral language and print knowledge are positively influenced by home literacy environments, while broader literature underscores oral language as a strong predictor of later reading and writing performance (Calergin, 2015; Roskos, Christie, & Richgels, 2003).

In the context of this study, these findings suggest the importance of examining how Grade 4 teachers operationalize oral language instruction. This includes understanding how oral activities are scaffolded, the integration of the mother tongue to support comprehension, and the extent to which these activities feed into reading and writing tasks. Given that much of the existing literature focuses on early childhood and preschool learners, exploring oral language development at Grade 4 presents an opportunity to contribute new insights into how oral proficiency supports literacy in later stages of learning under the RBE curriculum.

One such study by Cullamar and Maghuyop (2024) stands out: they developed a reading manipulative a set of

tangible, physical tools specifically for Grade 4 students who were struggling with reading (i.e., "frustration level" readers). ICCE These manipulatives guided learners through core phonological awareness tasks: counting syllables, recognizing rhymes, and blending phonemes to make words. After the intervention, they assessed students with the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) and found significant gains in both word reading and comprehension. ICCE What's powerful about this is how it shows that even older early-grade learners benefit from oral/language-based scaffolding not just decoding tasks, but metalinguistic work (rhymes, phonemes) that supports their understanding.

In a different but complementary vein, Camohoy, Osias, and Corpuz (2025) tested the PQ4R strategy (Preview, Question, Read, Reflect, Recite, Review) specifically for oral reading comprehension with Grade 4 pupils. lorojournals.com Their quasi-experimental design revealed that learners who used PQ4R performed significantly better in oral reading comprehension than those who did not. Additionally, the students' attitudes toward reading improved they grew more positive about oral reading over the course of the study. lorojournals.com This matters deeply: PQ4R isn't just a decoding support strategy, but a cognitive scaffold, prompting learners to think about meaning, reflect on what they read, and even recite all through oral processing.

Another study, conducted by Casingal, De Vera, and De Vera (2025), implemented a school-based reading intervention among Grade 4 struggling readers in Makati City. ResearchGate What's truly striking is the magnitude of their improvement: before the program, many of these students were at the "frustration" level on the Phil-IRI; afterward, more than half reached the "independent" reading level, and others were at the "instructional" level. ResearchGate The intervention involved consistent reading practices (likely including oral reading), and through scaffolding, it transformed learners who once struggled into "accelerated readers." This provides strong, real-world evidence that structured reading support (which includes oral components) can radically uplift comprehension capacity, even for students who are behind.

There's also a study by Tabanera and Barrios (2023-2024), who took a design-based research approach to develop reading instructional materials tailored to Grade 4 pupils. IIARI They began by assessing learners' comprehension levels (finding them generally low), then created supplemental materials full of interactive scaffolds: word boxes, missing-letter puzzles, visual aids, collaborative group activities, and games. After using these new materials, learners' comprehension rose from "low" to "moderate." IIARI This matters not just because of the gains, but because it shows how contextualized, scaffolded text-based activities (many of them oral or interactive) can make comprehension more achievable and engaging for Grade 4 learners.

Another piece that underscores the role of oral instruction is a study evaluating a learning recovery program in 2023. Dianela, Mercado, Vale, & Paterno (2023) ran an 8-week literacy intervention aimed at mitigating learning loss,

and they focused on three languages: mother tongue, Filipino, and English. RSIS International Their program included a variety of oral and written activities, and they reported improvements in reading competencies across the board. RSIS International This is a timely example of how oral-literate interventions can be deployed in recovery contexts and how language scaffolding in multiple languages (including L1) can support comprehension resilience.

Meanwhile, Germino (2023) studied mother-tongue reading among Grade 3 (close to early-grade) learners in a rural area. Int. Journal of Advanced Research He found that learners performed strongly on segmental sounds (like individual phonemes), but struggled more with suprasegmental features (like stress or intonation), citing lack of localized materials, vocabulary lists, and proper linguistic support. Int. Journal of Advanced Research Although this isn't Grade 4, the findings resonate: when scaffolding is limited — especially in the mother tongue learners may find certain linguistic features challenging, which can hamper comprehension. For your study, this suggests that scaffolding oral language (especially at suprasegmental levels) and contextualizing materials may be vital for deeper comprehension.

Lastly, there's a study by Dianela et al. (2024) that looked into the perceptions of Grade 4 reading skills (phonological awareness, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension) from both teachers and parents. IJSRP They found that parents and teachers differ in how they view learners' strengths: for example, teachers rated phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, and vocabulary differently than parents did. IJSRP Interestingly, both groups saw comprehension as moderate — which signals that even stakeholders see comprehension as an area that needs more support. This tells us that any scaffolding practices (oral or otherwise) must consider not just the learners' needs, but also how parents and teachers perceive and support reading development.

- *Scaffolding Reading Comprehension through Contextualized Texts*

Another significant theme emerging from teacher interviews is the value of contextualized learning materials in promoting reading comprehension. Teachers noted that materials connected to local culture, learners' experiences, and real-life contexts facilitate deeper understanding and engagement. One participant remarked that literacy development is promoted through "spiral progression... from simple to complex," while another highlighted the curriculum's aim to align learning outcomes with international standards and incorporate life skills. A third participant observed that contextualized texts help learners connect English skills to daily experiences, enhancing relevance and motivation.

This practice aligns with Kolb's experiential learning theory, which emphasizes learning through authentic experiences, reflection, and application, and with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which recognizes that learners construct knowledge within meaningful social and cultural contexts.

Connecting texts to learners' lived experiences provides scaffolding that bridges familiar knowledge with new concepts, making comprehension more accessible and retention stronger.

Philippine studies corroborate these observations. Recent research has shown that learners exposed to locally contextualized texts outperform peers in reading comprehension assessments, while other studies demonstrate the positive effects of culturally relevant and experience-based learning materials on engagement and understanding. Despite the strong evidence from upper grade levels, fewer studies focus specifically on Grade 4 learners, highlighting a research gap that this study addresses.

For this study, examined how Grade 4 teachers incorporate contextualized texts — whether adapted, locally created, or modified — and how they scaffold comprehension is critical. It is also important to explore differences in classroom implementation, such as variation in resource availability, teacher preparedness, and student engagement. Understanding these dynamics provides insight into how contextualized learning supports literacy development within the K to 12 curriculum.

Philippine studies corroborate these insights. Santuya (2025) investigated the use of Contextualized Reading Materials (CRMs) with Grade 3 learners, finding that students exposed to locally relevant texts significantly improved their reading comprehension. Students were more engaged and demonstrated higher confidence as the materials reflected situations familiar to them, showing how scaffolding through contextualization facilitates learning at a foundational stage. Similarly, Acedillo and Saro (2023) conducted a quasi-experimental study with Grade 5 pupils and found that those using localized and context-rich reading materials showed substantial gains in comprehension, reducing the number of non-readers and moving more learners toward mastery.

Even studies in higher grade levels underscore the benefits of contextualization. Manlapaz, Cabahug, Divina, and Saro (2022) found that Grade 7 learners performed better in reading comprehension when learning materials reflected real-life situations, particularly during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mede (2024), focused on secondary learners, highlighted that culturally and locally grounded materials enhanced student engagement and made content more relatable, reinforcing the principle that learners connect more deeply with texts when they mirror their social and cultural realities. Furthermore, Valerozo and Aggabao (2020) demonstrated that reading strategies paired with culture-based texts significantly improved comprehension, indicating that scaffolding is most effective when teachers actively guide learners in processing and understanding contextually rich materials.

These studies collectively suggest that contextualized texts are not merely about content they serve as scaffolds that connect learners' prior knowledge and everyday experiences to new concepts. They align closely with Kolb's experiential learning model, allowed learners to encounter knowledge in

authentic forms, reflect on it, and apply it meaningfully. They also reflect Vygotsky's sociocultural perspective, emphasized that comprehension develops most effectively in socially and culturally meaningful contexts.

Despite these insights, research specifically targeting Grade 4 learners remains limited. Many studies focus on upper elementary, secondary, or even tertiary levels, leaving a gap in understanding how contextualized materials and teacher scaffolding strategies affect this crucial stage of literacy development. Additionally, while existing research often examines the creation and validation of contextualized materials, fewer studies explore how teachers implement scaffolding strategies in real classroom settings, including variations in resource availability, teacher preparedness, and student engagement.

This study seeks to address these gaps by examining how Grade 4 teachers incorporate contextualized texts whether adapted, locally created, or modified and how they scaffold comprehension. By linking teachers' perceptions and classroom practices with student outcomes, this research provides a nuanced understanding of how differentiated, scaffolded, and contextually meaningful instruction supports literacy development within the Philippine educational context. The study highlights that beyond curriculum design, meaningful engagement with learners' experiences and culture is central to fostering comprehension, motivation, and long-term reading skills.

Collectively, the three themes differentiated instruction, oral language activities, and contextualized texts illustrate a holistic approach to English literacy development under the RBE curriculum. Teachers' insights indicate that the curriculum supports flexible, learner-centered strategies that foster comprehension, engagement, and skill mastery. The findings also demonstrate alignment with key theoretical frameworks: constructivist theory, sociocultural theory, experiential learning, and outcome-based education, showing that these instructional strategies are theoretically sound and practically relevant.

While the literature confirms the value of these approaches, implementation challenges remain, including limited resources, training, and class sizes. Moreover, gaps exist in research focusing specifically on Grade 4 learners' English literacy performance. This study contributes by linking teachers' perceptions and practices to learners' outcomes, offering a nuanced understanding of how differentiated, scaffolded, and contextually meaningful instruction supports literacy development within the Philippine educational context.

➤ *Instructional Activities Employed by Teachers to Promote Literacy Development*

The data presented in Table 1 reveal the range of instructional activities that Grade 4 teachers employ to promote literacy development. The results demonstrate that teachers strategically combine traditional reading strategies with interactive and technology-based approaches, creating a

balanced and engaging literacy program that addresses various aspects of English proficiency.

Among the activities, Guided Reading emerged as the most frequently used strategy of teachers indicating its regular application in the classroom. This high frequency underscores teachers' commitment to small-group or differentiated instruction, which allows them to monitor each pupil's reading progress closely. Guided Reading provides learners with the opportunity to engage with texts at their own level while receiving immediate support from the teacher, fostering both confidence and comprehension skills. This finding aligns with the constructivist and sociocultural perspectives, where teachers scaffold learning to meet students' individual needs and facilitate skill development within the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1978).

Closely following Guided Reading is the Think Aloud method, utilized by teachers. This strategy enables teachers to model the cognitive processes of proficient readers by verbalizing their thoughts while reading. By observing this process, pupils become more aware of strategies for understanding text, reflecting on their own comprehension, and developing higher-order thinking skills. The frequent use of Think Aloud suggests that teachers value metacognitive development as a key component of literacy instruction.

Phonics or Decoding Drills, reported by teachers, remain a foundational element in early literacy instruction. These activities reinforce letter-sound relationships and decoding skills, equipping pupils to approach unfamiliar words confidently and accurately. Such skills are crucial for establishing a strong reading foundation that supports the transition to more complex comprehension tasks.

Equally prioritized by teachers are Storytelling, Read Aloud, and Vocabulary Games. Storytelling engages pupils' imagination while enhancing listening comprehension and narrative understanding. Read Aloud sessions expose learners to fluent reading, intonation, and diverse vocabulary, promoting both oral and written language skills. Vocabulary Games, meanwhile, make learning interactive and enjoyable, helping pupils internalize new words through participation and playful engagement. Collectively, these activities illustrate teachers' efforts to integrate skill-building with engagement, supporting holistic literacy development.

Shared Reading, practiced by teachers, represents a collaborative approach in which both teacher and pupils read together. This activity fosters fluency, comprehension, and confidence, particularly for struggling readers. Likewise, Integration of Multimedia, also utilized by teachers, reflects the increasing use of digital tools such as videos, audio recordings, and interactive applications to cater to diverse learning styles and sustain pupil interest in reading. The use of multimedia demonstrates teachers' responsiveness to contemporary learning contexts, where technology serves as a valuable scaffold for comprehension and engagement.

Finally, Group Discussion, while the least frequently used activity, continues to hold an important role in literacy

instruction. By encouraging pupils to articulate interpretations, express opinions, and engage in dialogue about texts, this strategy promotes critical thinking and communicative competence. The relatively lower frequency may be attributed to practical challenges, such as time constraints or the need for effective classroom management during collaborative discussions. Nonetheless, its inclusion highlights teachers' recognition of the importance of interaction and reflection in literacy development.

In summary, the instructional strategies employed by Grade 4 teachers reflect a deliberate blend of foundational skills, metacognitive development, collaborative learning, and technological integration. This balanced approach aligns with contemporary theories of literacy instruction, demonstrating that teachers leverage multiple pathways to strengthen pupils' reading, writing, and comprehension abilities. The data suggest that while some strategies, such as Guided Reading and Think Aloud, are widely adopted, other interactive approaches, including Group Discussion and multimedia integration, are emerging as valuable complements to traditional literacy instruction.

➤ *Teachers' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum in Promoting English Literacy Development*

The teachers in this study generally viewed the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum (EBEC) as a significant step forward in promoting English literacy among Grade 4 learners. They noted that the curriculum's spiral and competency-based design allows for gradual skill development across reading, writing, speaking, and comprehension. Teachers also highlighted how the curriculum makes learning meaningful by connecting lessons to real-life situations, fostering engagement, and supporting learners' holistic literacy growth.

• *A Supportive Curriculum for Multilingual Education*

A prominent theme emerging from teacher responses is the EBEC's support for multilingual education. Participants emphasized that beginning literacy instruction in the learners' mother tongue creates a strong foundation for English acquisition. One teacher observed that pupils "gain confidence in expressing ideas when they first learn in a language they are comfortable with," highlighting how linguistic familiarity builds understanding and self-assurance. Another teacher noted that integrating Filipino alongside English facilitates comprehension, particularly for students who initially struggle with English, allowing them to "connect meanings more easily" and making the learning process less intimidating.

Teachers also recognized the curriculum's role in fostering cultural inclusion and respect for linguistic diversity. By using multiple languages in classroom instruction, learners feel valued and seen, creating a supportive environment for language learning. These perspectives align with sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978), which emphasizes the social and cultural mediation of learning, as well as the constructivist view that learners build understanding through familiar contexts and interactions. In

the Philippine context, the multilingual approach of EBEC thus enhances comprehension, encourages positive attitudes toward English literacy, and allows learners to transition meaningfully from familiar languages to English.

These observations are supported by numerous studies on multilingual education in the Philippine context. Bularon (2021), in a quasi-experimental study, found that pupils taught through mother tongue-based instruction performed significantly better in English literacy assessments compared to peers taught solely in English. Similarly, Villaruz and Perez (2020) highlighted that using learners' indigenous languages in early instruction not only enhances cognitive development but also strengthens learners' confidence and sense of inclusion in the classroom. Such findings reinforce the notion that mother tongue instruction serves as a scaffold, bridging learners' familiar linguistic environment with the acquisition of English.

Teachers' beliefs and practices also play a critical role in implementing a multilingual curriculum effectively. Velasco (2024) emphasized that while national policy mandates the use of mother tongue in early grades, teachers often adapt instruction based on their perceptions of learner needs, balancing mother tongue, Filipino, and English. This reflects the sociocultural principle that learning is mediated through social interactions and cultural contexts (Vygotsky, 1978), suggested that the curriculum's effectiveness depends not only on policy design but also on teacher agency in the classroom.

Despite its benefits, multilingual education in the Philippines is not without challenges. Namanya (2017) cautioned that while mother tongue instruction strengthens early comprehension, insufficient planning in transitioning to English may hinder literacy development in later grades. Likewise, Mahboob and Cruz (2013) argued that societal attitudes favoring English as a prestigious language can influence both teaching practices and learners' motivation, highlighting the importance of fostering positive attitudes toward both local languages and English.

Nonetheless, multilingual approaches have been shown to support cultural inclusion and respect for linguistic diversity. Cruz and Mahboob (2018) noted that by integrating multiple languages into classroom instruction, learners feel valued and seen, creating a supportive environment that encourages participation and engagement. Technology also plays a role in operationalizing multilingual education, as evidenced by initiatives that provide digital resources and primers in 19 mother tongues, enabling learners to access content in languages they understand and promoting confidence in early literacy (RTI / SharEd, 2020).

In the Philippine context, these studies collectively underscore the advantages of EBEC's multilingual approach. By beginning instruction in the mother tongue and gradually incorporating Filipino and English, learners not only develop strong foundational skills but also cultivate positive attitudes toward literacy and language learning. This approach aligns with sociocultural theory and constructivist perspectives,

which emphasize that learners build understanding through familiar contexts and social interactions. Ultimately, EBEC's multilingual curriculum supports both cognitive and affective development, allowing learners to transition meaningfully from familiar languages to English while feeling included and respected in their learning environment.

- *A Meaningful Component that Uses Learners' Experiences to Support Literacy Growth*

Teachers also highlighted the importance of integrating learners' real-life experiences into literacy instruction. They agreed that when lessons reflect students' daily lives, learning becomes more relevant, engaging, and effective. One participant pointed out that texts connected to community or family experiences increase pupils' motivation and understanding of reading and writing tasks. Another described experiential learning strategies, such as storytelling, role-playing, and journaling, as opportunities for learners to use English authentically: "When children talk or write about things they know, English becomes a tool for expression, not just a subject to study."

Several studies support the idea that integrating learners' real-life experiences into literacy instruction can significantly enhance reading and writing skills. For instance, Guthrie and colleagues developed the Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI) framework, which emphasizes connecting lessons to students' prior knowledge and interests. Research on CORI has shown that when reading instruction is tied to familiar concepts, pupils not only improve comprehension but also develop a stronger motivation to engage with texts. The framework encourages students to observe, personalize, retrieve information, and communicate ideas, making reading meaningful and relevant to their everyday lives (Guthrie, 1999).

Similarly, the Language Experience Approach (LEA) featured the power of personal experiences in literacy development. In this approach, learners dictate stories based on events from their own lives, which teachers then transcribe into text for reading and writing activities. Studies indicate that LEA strengthens vocabulary, reading comprehension, and the connection between spoken and written language, as learners see firsthand that print can express their thoughts and experiences. Recent research also suggests that this approach fosters higher engagement, as pupils recognize the relevance of literacy to their daily lives (Retnaningtyas et al., 2024).

Drama and role-play have also been identified as effective strategies for linking literacy with lived experiences. Research has demonstrated that integrating drama into reading and writing activities can enhance comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and overall motivation. For example, Güngör (2008) found that role-playing scenarios based on familiar contexts allows students to internalize narratives more deeply and express themselves confidently in writing. Contemporary studies further confirmed that process drama provides learners opportunities to experiment with language in meaningful ways, bridging the gap between classroom texts and real-life experiences.

Teachers further noted that drawing on learners' prior knowledge fosters critical thinking and strengthens comprehension. By linking new concepts to what pupils already know, they help learners build more robust reading and writing connections. These insights resonate with Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984), where learners actively engaged with concrete experiences, reflect on them, and apply knowledge in meaningful ways. Constructivist perspectives also support this approach, emphasizing that connecting new information to prior knowledge enables learners to construct understanding. Through these strategies, the curriculum encourages learners not only to acquire literacy skills but also to apply English confidently as a medium for communication.

- *Using Instructional Adjustments to Scaffold Learners' Literacy Development*

A third theme that emerged from teacher interviews concerns the flexible and adaptive nature of instruction under the K to 12. Teachers reported using scaffolding and instructional adjustments to support learners with diverse literacy needs. One teacher described modifying lessons for pupils who struggle with English, using simplified materials, guided reading sessions, and visual aids, explaining that "adjusting the lesson ensures that no learner is left behind." Another emphasized differentiated instruction and the gradual release of responsibility, noting that modeling, prompting, and group work help pupils become independent readers and writers over time.

Ongoing assessment also guides teachers' instructional adjustments. When pupils encounter difficulties, teachers redesign tasks while maintaining the same learning goals, providing the right level of support without lowering expectations. These practices align with Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development, highlighting the role of scaffolding in bridging learners' current abilities with higher-level competencies. They also reflect outcome-based education principles, ensuring that all pupils progress toward the intended literacy outcomes.

Overall, teachers perceived the K to 12 Curriculum as effective because it provides both structure and flexibility, supporting differentiated and scaffolded instruction while promoting meaningful learning experiences. By integrating multilingual strategies, real-life contexts, and adaptive scaffolding, the curriculum enables teachers to foster comprehensive literacy development and empowers pupils to become confident and competent users of English.

Several studies support the use of instructional adjustments and scaffolding as effective strategies for enhancing literacy development, particularly for learners with diverse needs. In the Philippine context, Galanida and Ciruela (2025) explored the use of literature circles with Grade 6 students to scaffold reading comprehension. By allowing students to work collaboratively in small groups and providing structured guidance, teachers were able to help learners engage deeply with texts while gradually increasing their independence. This study highlighted the importance of teacher support in bridging learners' current abilities to

higher-level competencies, echoing Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

Similarly, in Malaysia, Wong Min Ying and Azlina Abdul Aziz examined the effects of a scaffolding approach combined with explicit reading strategies for rural Year 3 ESL learners. Through guided pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading activities, teachers were able to tailor instruction to individual student needs, helping struggling readers improve comprehension without lowering academic expectations. This aligns closely with the experiences of teachers under the K to 12, who described modifying lessons, simplifying materials, and using visual aids to ensure that no learner is left behind.

The role of scaffolding in literacy development extends beyond reading comprehension. Rattana Yawiloeng (2022) investigated the use of multimodal texts combining visuals, text, and other media alongside scaffolded instruction to enhance reading comprehension in EFL learners. Students reported greater engagement and understanding when teachers provided step-by-step support while gradually reducing assistance, reflecting the principle of the gradual release of responsibility observed in the K to 12 classrooms.

Research also identified the benefits of differentiated instruction as a complement to scaffolding. Deborah Davidsen (2018) found that third graders who received instruction tailored to their reading levels demonstrated higher reading comprehension than those in traditional classrooms. Importantly, these differentiated approaches maintained the same learning objectives, supporting the notion that learners can achieve intended outcomes when given the right level of support—a principle central to outcome-based education.

Scaffolding has also been applied successfully to writing development. Lin Xiao (2024) and Wu and Wang (2024) highlighted how structured, scaffolded tasks in reading-for-writing and English writing lessons, combined with modeling, guided practice, and gradual withdrawal of support, can help learners develop confidence and independence as writers. These findings mirror the EBEC teachers' emphasized on using group work, prompts, and modeling to foster autonomous readers and writers over time.

Furthermore, collaborative learning combined with scaffolding can enhance both literacy skills and learner motivation. A 2023 study in *Language Testing in Asia* demonstrated that scaffolding integrated with collaborative strategic reading and self-assessment helped learners improve comprehension, reduce anxiety, and take greater ownership of their learning. This reinforces the idea that scaffolding is not only about providing support but also about empowering learners to become confident, independent users of language.

Even neuroscientific evidence supports the effectiveness of scaffolded instruction. A study published in *MDPI* (2022) showed that EFL learners who received scaffolded writing instruction demonstrated more efficient brain activation patterns compared to those who did not,

suggesting that scaffolding facilitates cognitive processing and skill development.

Collectively, these studies illustrated that instructional adjustments and scaffolding are powerful tools for promoting literacy development. They show that by tailoring support to learners' needs, providing structured guidance, and gradually releasing responsibility, teachers can help all learners progress toward intended learning outcomes while fostering confidence, independence, and a love for reading and writing. These findings align closely with the experiences of teachers implementing the K to 12, highlighting the curriculum's capacity to provide both structure and flexibility in support of meaningful, differentiated learning.

➤ *Challenges Encountered by Teachers in Literacy Development under the Enhanced K to 12 Curriculum*

The implementation of the Enhanced K to 12 Curriculum in Grade 4 classrooms is not without challenges. Table 2 highlighted the difficulties of teachers encountered in promoting literacy development, reflecting a combination of learner-related, resource-related, and contextual constraints.

Foremost among these challenges are learners' reading readiness gaps, identified by teachers as the most frequent obstacle. Many pupils enter Grade 4 without adequate foundational literacy skills, such as letter recognition, phonemic awareness, and basic vocabulary. Teachers often find it difficult to progress with the curriculum when pupils struggle with these essential skills, requiring them to revisit earlier competencies before advancing to the prescribed lessons. This adjustment inevitably slows the pace of instruction and can create gaps in achieving the intended learning outcomes.

Closely following in frequency are challenges related to insufficient resources. Fifteen teachers cited the lack of funds for crafting teaching materials, while an equal number highlighted the limited availability of developmentally appropriate literacy resources. These issues reflect persistent financial and logistical constraints in Philippine schools. Teachers reported that existing materials often fail to align with the developmental needs of Grade 4 pupils, making it difficult to sustain learners' engagement in reading and comprehension activities. Without adequate support and materials, literacy instruction risks being less effective, regardless of teacher effort or instructional strategies.

Other notable challenges include limited instructional time and language transition difficulties, each cited by teachers. The restricted time allocated for literacy activities limits opportunities for interactive and scaffolded approaches, such as guided reading, group discussions, and comprehension exercises. Meanwhile, the transition from mother tongue instruction in earlier grades to English as the medium of instruction presents additional hurdles. Pupils often experience confusion and comprehension difficulties as they adjust to English-language lessons, which can impede their progress in literacy development.

While less frequently cited, parental limited involvement and lack of teacher training also emerged as important concerns. Five teachers pointed out that when parents do not actively support literacy practices at home, learners miss valuable reinforcement that could enhance reading and writing skills. Meanwhile, teachers acknowledged that inadequate training on implementing suggested literacy activities hinders their ability to fully operationalize EBEC strategies. These findings underscore the importance of not only in-class instructional support but also broader systemic and community involvement in literacy development.

Overall, the data suggested that Grade 4 teachers navigate multiple, intersecting challenges in fostering English literacy under the EBEC. Addressing these issues requires targeted interventions, including early reading programs to bridge foundational gaps, provision of adequate and developmentally appropriate materials, professional development opportunities for teachers, and stronger home-school collaboration to engage parents in learners' literacy growth. By tackling these barriers, schools can enhance the effectiveness of the curriculum and support more equitable literacy outcomes for all pupils.

➤ *Proposed Literacy Development Map*

The implementation of the Revised K to 12 Curriculum, also known as the MATATAG Curriculum, seeks to strengthen foundational skills, foster learner engagement, and promote holistic development among Filipino pupils. However, insights from the teacher respondents revealed persistent literacy challenges among Grade 4 learners, particularly in English. These include weak phonemic awareness, limited vocabulary exposure, poor reading fluency, low comprehension levels, and difficulty connecting lessons to real-life contexts. These findings underscore the need for a systematic, stage-based, and context-sensitive literacy intervention to support both learners and teachers in achieving the curriculum's goals.

The Proposed Literacy Development Map was conceptualized as a strategic framework to address these challenges. Grounded in Constructivist Learning Theory, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, and Outcome-Based Education (OBE), the map promotes a learner-centered, progressive approach to literacy development. It recognized that literacy growth occurs in stages—from emergent to critical literacy—and that effective interventions should align with the developmental needs of learners. Moreover, the framework emphasized the integration of contextualized instruction, culturally responsive teaching, sustained teacher capacity-building, and active home-school collaboration. Through this approach, English learning is framed not merely as a cognitive exercise but as a meaningful and socially relevant experience that prepares learners for lifelong literacy and communication competence.

- *Goal of the Literacy Development Map*

The primary aim of the map is to enhance Grade 4 pupils' English literacy performance through a systematic, stage-based framework aligned with the MATATAG Curriculum. Specifically, it seeks to:

Strengthen foundational literacy skills necessary for reading, writing, and comprehension.

- Foster critical, functional, and expressive literacy competencies among learners.
- Encourage contextualized and culturally responsive literacy practices that make learning relevant and engaging.
- Promote sustainability in literacy development through continuous teacher training and active home-school collaboration.

Ultimately, the map envisions learners as proficient, motivated, and culturally aware readers and writers capable of applying their literacy skills in academic, social, and real-world contexts.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings the researcher drew the following conclusions: The Grade 4 teachers have varied insights on how the enhance K to 12 Curriculum develop the literacy of the learners. These teachers appreciate how this curriculum promotes holistic literacy development among learners.; Teachers employ diverse activities that integrate reading, writing, oral language and technology to enhance literacy skills.; The curriculum is effective but requires adjustments to address time and training constraints.; The challenges encountered include time constraint, resource gaps, large class sizes and limited instructional materials.; A structured literacy development map can serve as practical guide for systematic and sustainable literacy instruction.

Based on the findings of this study regarding the implementation of the Revised K to 12 Curriculum and its impact on Grade 4 pupils' English literacy development, the following recommendations are proposed for teachers, school administrators, curriculum developers, and future researchers. (1) Conduct regular professional development programs focused on differentiated and interactive literacy strategies. (2) Integrates diverse evidence- based literacy activities into the curriculum and provide adequate teaching resources. (3) Gather teacher feedbacks to refine curriculum phasing content and assessment tools for practical implementation. (4) Address implementation challenges, it is recommended to provide adequate resources, support teachers, and adopt strategies to manage large class sizes effectively. (5) Develop and implement a structured literacy map outlining competencies, activities and assessment for learners.

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