

Article Identifier: <https://identifier.visnav.in/1.0002/ijabs-21j-30001/>

Factors influencing the level of Filipino language proficiency among secondary students

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ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this research is to determine the relationship between students' perceptions and their Filipino language proficiency. This was done with 356 students from the eight specified public secondary schools in the Philippines' Division of Davao del Sur. The researcher utilized descriptive correlational and comparative designs. The students' perceptions were measured using a modified Survey Questionnaire Affecting Language Proficiency Acquisition. The Division Year-End Achievement Test provided information on pupils' competency levels. According to the findings, the teacher factor has the highest degree of perception among students, with a mean of 4.21, followed by motivation with a mean of 4.17, peer influence with a mean of 3.89, mass media with a mean of 3.87, and mother tongue with a mean of 3.48. This implies that teachers have the highest influence among other factors in the acquisition of Filipino language proficiency. However, majority of the respondents perceived that their ethno-language is far different from the Filipino language.

Keywords: Students' Perception, Language Proficiency, Filipino

1. INTRODUCTION

Many issues concerning the acquisition of second language focus on teaching methodologies, little emphasis is given to the contextual factors which are individual, social, and societal that affects students' learning. These contextual elements can be considered from the languages, the learner's, and the learning process's perspectives [1]. These

factors take up varied perspectives as they relate to learning a second language.

Several aspects related to students' first language spoken at home shape their second language learning. These include the linguistic distance between the two languages. The student's level of proficiency in his mother tongue and the societal attitude toward the

student's native language affects his knowledge of the second language [2].

Specific languages can be more difficult to learn based on how distinct or similar they are from the dialect that the learner is most familiar with, which is usually spoken at home and is the student's mother tongue. The student's training in formal and academic features of language use, his knowledge of rhetorical patterns, variations in genre and style affects acquisition of a second language. The more academically equipped the student in his mother tongue language knowledge and abilities, the easier it will be for him to learn a second language [3].

Research shows that there are 170 languages in the Philippines. Among those commonly used ethno-languages are: Tagalog (22 million speakers), Cebuano (18.5 million), Ilocano (7.7 million), Hiligaynon or Ilonggo (7 million), Bicolano 4.5 million, Waray (3 million), Kapampangan (2.3 million), Pangasinan (1.5), Kinaray-a (1.1 million), Tausug (1.0 million), Maguindanao (1.0 million) and Maranao (1.0 million) [4].

The acquisition of the Filipino language may come easy to students who live in the Tagalog Region. However, in consideration of myriads of dialects being spoken in diverse households in Visayas and Mindanao, students may find difficulty in using the Filipino language. It is vital that teachers examine and understand the different cultural background of students and use diverse strategies in effecting proper language acquisition to improve the Filipino language proficiency of the students [5].

President Benigno Simeon C. Aquino stipulated in item number 8, in his ten point agenda for Educational Reform in the Philippines, that the educational system must adopt the trilingual mode of instruction [6]. This means that students must learn English well to connect to the world. The Filipino language is stressed in order to establish solidarity among countrymen and in nationwide. According to the President, retaining the mother tongue will enable students to connect to one's heritage.

Here in the Division of Davao del Sur, the Test Performance of Students' in Filipino showed a dismal result as reflected in the National Achievement Test (NAT) result with an over-all rating of 50.53% among all the secondary schools tested in the entire division. The National Achievement Test (NAT) passing rate is 75% which reveals that the students' rating in Filipino is 24.47% dismal of the national standard. This shows a satisfactory picture of how students are faring in Communication Arts-Filipino. It is basically in this perception that the researcher will explore and examine the grade 8 students' predicament in learning the Filipino Language and delve deeper the factors that influence the level of Filipino language proficiency among the secondary students in the selected schools in Davao del Sur Division.

2. METHOD AND MATERIALS

2.1. Research Locale

This study was conducted at eight public secondary schools in the Division of Davao del Sur. These schools were the following: Barayong National High School in Magsaysay North

District, Matanao National High School in Matanao District, Sta Cruz National High School in Sta Cruz South District, Hagonoy National High School in Hagonoy 11 District, Molopolo National High School in Kiblawan District; Sulop National High School in Sulop District; Basiawan National High School in Sta. Maria District and Mariano Peralta National High School in Malita District.

2.2. Research participants

There were total 356 Grade 8 students respondents for this study, who were officially enrolled in the school for the academic year 2018-2019 in the Division of Davao del Sur.

2.3. Sampling Design and Technique

This study employed the random sampling technique to determine the student-respondents coming from the eight (8) big secondary schools in the Division of Davao del Sur.

The Slovin Formula was used to determine the number of student-respondents at 5% margin of

error.

$$n = \frac{N + N(e)^2}{1} \quad \dots eq 1$$

Where:

n= sampling size
N= total population
e= margin of error

2.4. Research Instrument

The instrument was adapted from August & Hakuta's (2005) Survey Questionnaire Affecting Language Proficiency Acquisition [7]. This measured the level of students' perception on factors that affect their oral language proficiency in Filipino. Students test performance in Filipino was used as measure of their language proficiency level.

2.5. Data Collection

This investigation used the data from the result of the student questionnaires as based on students' perception on the factors that affect their language proficiency. Likewise, documents on students' test performance in Filipino were

Table 1. Distribution of Respondents by Schools

Secondary school	Total No. of Students	Sample Size
Barayong National High School	280	31
Hagonoy National High School	409	45
Matanao National High School	585	64
Molopolo National High School	156	18
Sta. Cruz National High School	557	60
Sulop National High School	498	55
Basiawan National High School	136	15
Mariano Peralta National High School	626	68
TOTAL	3,247	356

used to measure students' language proficiency in Communication Arts- Filipino.

2.6. Statistical Analysis

The statistical procedures were employed for the frequency distribution tables (used to present data on problem 1 and 2). Chi-Square test was used to determine significant relationship among variables.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Level of Student Perceptions on the Identified Factors

3.1.1. Student Perceptions on Peer Factor

The data presented on the level of student's perception on the peer factor in table 2 shows that the mean rating are as follows: Barayong National High School has 3.84 with a standard deviation of 0.72; Basiawan National High School has 4.09 with SD of 0.60, Hagonoy National School has 4.05 with SD of 0.69; Mariano Peralta National High School has 3.86 with SD of 0.79; Matanao National High School has 3.44 with SD of 0.71; Molopolo National High School has 3.57 with SD of 0.67; Sta. Cruz

National High School has 4.19 with SD of 0.74; and Sulop National High School has 3.80 with SD of 0.74. As reflected, all mean ratings obtain a qualitative description of high except for Matanao National High School which obtains a qualitative description of moderate.

The overall mean rating of 3.89 with standard of 0.79 is described as high. This indicates that the peer factor is perceived by students as an influential factor in many occasions. They agree that they are with their peers most of the times. Moreover, this implies that the students are sociable type of individuals since they expose themselves to others who are the same age with them. In addition, they agree that they have adopted the language used by their peers including the dialect and language they speak.

The peers can influence everything from what an adolescent chooses to wear, what language to speak, to whether or not adolescent engage in drugs related or other delinquent behavior [8]. he also stressed that peers can provide many positive elements in adolescent's life. it is important, however, to remove that peer influence can potentially have a deadly impact

Table 2. Level of Student Perceptions on Peer Factor Influencing their Language proficiency in Filipino

School	Mean	Standard deviation(sd)	Qualitative description
Barayong National High School	3.84	0.72	High
Basiawan National High School	4.09	0.60	High
Hagonoy National High School	4.05	0.69	High
Mariano Peralta National High School	3.86	0.79	High
Matanao National High School	3.44	0.71	Moderate
Molopolo National High School	3.57	0.67	High
Sta. Cruz National High School	4.19	0.65	High
Sulop National High School	3.80	0.74	High
Overall mean	3.89	0.79	High

or other various negative effects.

3.1.2. Student perceptions on Mother tongue factor

Table 3 presents the data on the level of student perceptions on the mother tongue factor. The mean ratings are as follows: Barayong National High School has 3.70 with SD of 0.61; Basiawan National High School has 4.04 with SD of 0.79; Hagonoy National High School has 4.19 with SD of 0.49; Mariano Peralta National High School has 3.67 with SD of 0.72; Matanao National High School has 3.56 with SD of 0.26; Molopolo National High School has 3.83 with SD of 0.55; Sta. Cruz National High School has 3.80 and SD of 0.70; and National High School has 3.80 with SD of 0.70 as reflected, all mean ratings obtain a

qualitative description of high.

The overall mean rating of 3.85 with standard deviation of 0.80 is described as high. This indicates that the mother tongue is perceived by the students as an influential factor in many occasions. Students most of the times use mother tongue as their means of communication at home and in school.

Salvatierra (2005) stated that the most fundamental requirement for the students' easy acquisition of the second language is the mastery of their native language [9]. Those students who sounded fluent in the use of mother tongue may understand easily the teacher's questions, instructions and directions and may converse better with their classmates

Table 3. Level of Student Perceptions on Mother Tongue Factor Influencing Language Proficiency in Filipino

School	Mean	Standard deviation	Qualitative description
Barayong National High School	3.70	0.61	High
Basiawan National High School	4.04	0.79	High
Hagonoy National High School	4.19	0.49	High
Mariano Peralta National High School	3.67	0.72	High
Matanao National High School	3.56	0.26	High
Molopolo National High School	3.83	0.55	High
Sta. Cruz National High School	4.03	0.49	High
Sulop National High School	3.80	0.70	High
Overall Mean	3.85	0.80	High

Table 4. Level of students Perception on Personal Motivation Factor

School	Mean	Standard Deviation	Qualitative Description
Barayong National High School	4.15	0.45	High
Basiawan National High School	4.33	0.65	High
Hagonoy National High School	4.40	0.53	High
Mariano Peralta National High School	4.17	0.66	High
Matanao National High School	3.55	0.83	High
Molopolo National High School	4.16	0.56	High
Sta. Cruz National High School	4.51	0.42	High
Sulop National High School	4.09	0.62	High
Overall Mean	4.17	0.66	High

using the Filipino language.

Moreover, DepEd has also realized the importance of the use of students' mother tongues from pre-school up to the third grade because mastery of this will help students in learning a second and third language like Filipino or English [10]. Educators believe that if a child can fully express himself, he will tend to ask more whys and participate more in classroom discussions.

3.1.3. Students perception on personal motivation factor

The level of student perceptions on the personal motivation factor is shown in Table 4. Barayong National High School has 4.15 with SD 0.46; Basiawan National High School has 4.33 with SD of 0.65; Hagonoy National High School has 4.40 with SD of 0.53; Mariano Peralta National High School has 4.17 with SD of 0.66; Matanao National High School has 3.55 with SD 0.83; Molopolo National High School has 4.16 with SD of 0.56; Sta. Cruz National High School has 4.51 with SD of 0.42 and Sulop National has 4.09 with SD of 0.62 all the mean ratings of the eight schools obtain qualitative description of high.

The overall mean rating of 4.17 with standard deviation of 0.66 is described as high. this indicates that personal motivation is perceived by students as an influential factor in many occasions. this meant that students are intrinsically motivated to perform well in everything they do including getting high scores in the quizzes and exams.

The students who lack the sufficient level of academic motivation exhibit in a week drive towards the pursuit academic goals [11]. Such students show signs and symptoms of school apathy and indifference.

3.1.4. Student perceptions on teacher factor

The level of student perceptions on the teacher factor is shown in Table 5. Barayong National High School has a mean rating of 4.23 with SD of 0.56; Basiawan National National High School has 4.32 with SD of 0.39; Hagonoy National High School has 4.40 with SD of 0.54; Mariano Peralta National High School has 4.14 with SD of 0.59; Matanao National High School has 3.45 with SD of 0.80; Molopolo National High School has 4.31 with SD of 0.52; Sta. Cruz National High School has 4.34 with SD of 0.43; and Sulop National High School has 4.09 with SD of 0.69. all mean ratings of the eight schools obtain a qualitative description of high except for Matanao National High School which has a qualitative description of moderate. this means that all students from the schools covered in this study except in Matanao National High National High School have observe the support of their teachers in their studies in many occasions. Moreover, Students of Matanao National High School have observed the presence and support of their teacher in some occasions.

The overall mean rating of 4.21 with the standard deviation of 0.56 is described as high. This indicates that teacher is perceived by the students as influential factor in many occasions. Students recognize teacher's effort in teaching them the necessary knowledge are very satisfied

with the support that they received from the teachers.

The motivation from teacher is very essential and played a big role in the students' achievements. Mendez (2006) added that knowing the students' level of language acquisition allows the teacher to work within the students' zone of proximal development that area between what the student are capable of at the moment and the point that the students should reach next [12]. The students' zone of proximal development maybe enhanced by scaffolding language development, or providing the support the student need as the progress onwards.

3.1.5. Student perception on mass media factor

The level of student perceptions on the mass media factor is shown in Table 6. Barayong National High School has a mean rating of 3.85 with a standard deviation of 0.68; Basiawan National High School has 4.03 with SD of 0.73; Hagonoy National High School has 4.03 with SD of 0.55; Mariano Peralta National High School has 3.87 with SD of 0.74; Matanao National High School has 3.37 with SD of 0.64; Molopolo National High School has 4.06 with SD of 0.69; Sta. Cruz National High School has 4.03 with SD of 0.62; and Sulop National High School has 3.69 with SD of 0.77. All the mean ratings of the eight schools obtain a qualitative description of high except of Matanao National High School which has a qualitative description of moderate. This means that all students from the schools covered in this study have observed mass media

Table 5. Level of Student Perceptions on Teacher Factor Influencing their language Proficiency in Filipino

School	Mean	Standard Deviation	Qualitative Description
Barayong National High School	4.23	0.56	High
Basiawan Naional High School	4.32	0.39	High
Hagonoy National High School	4.40	0.54	High
Mariano Peralta National High School	4.14	0.59	High
Matanao National High School	4.45	0.80	High
Molopolo National High School	4.31	0.52	High
Sta. Cruz National High School	4.34	0.43	High
Sulop National High School	4.09	0.69	High
Overall Mean	4.21	0.56	High

Table 6. Level of Student Perceptions on Mass Media Factor Influencing their Language Proficiency in Filipino

School	Mean	Standard deviation	Qualitative Description
Barayong National High School	3.85	0.68	High
Basiawan National High School	4.03	0.73	High
Hagonoy National High School	4.03	0.55	High
Marioano Peralta National High School	3.87	0.74	High
Matanao National High School	3.37	0.64	Moderate
Molopolo National High School	4.06	0.69	High
Sta. Cruz National High School	4.03	0.62	High
Sulop National High School	3.69	0.77	High
Overall Mean	3.87	0.62	High

in many occasions except the students from Matanao National High School who have observed the use of mass media in some occasions. This may be because there are few internet Cafes in Matanao locality due and radio stations are limited due to low frequency signals.

The overall mean rating of 3.87 with standard deviation of 0.61 is described as high. This indicates that mass media is perceived by the students in many occasions. this means that students exposed themselves in utilizing new technologies such as surfing the internet, listening to radio, watching television shows and movies and reading magazines and newspaper. Moreover, as observation was made on Facebook website that guests are already confident in using Filipino language in expressing their feelings in the shout outs and in communicating to their Facebook friends, thus showing the confidence of Filipinos to their native tongue [13].

According to DeFleur and Ball- Rokeach (1975), the greater the need society has for the information provided by the media and the more functions the media serve, the greater dependence individuals on that society. They also added that mass media have cognitive and behavioral effects on the society it serves [14].

3.1.6. Summary on the level of student perceptions on the identified factors

The summary on the level of student perceptions on the identified factors influencing their language proficiency is reflected in Table 7.

The following are the mean ratings for the following factors: peer has a mean rating of 3.89 with standard deviation of 0.79; mother tongue has 3.48 with standard deviation of 0.66; personal motivation has 4.17 with standard deviation of 0.80; teacher has 4.21 with the standard deviation of 0.61; and mass media has 3.87 with the standard deviation of 0.61.

Among the factors, teacher factor obtains the highest mean rating followed by personal motivation, peer, mass media and the least is mother tongue. As can be gleaned, all the identified factors have qualitative description of high which indicates that students observed and manifested the stated factor in many instances.

The overall mean of 3.85 with a standard deviation of 0.80 is described high. This implies that students perceived the factors as influential to them in many occasions. They recognized these factors as part of their lives as students. This means that the students engage themselves in mingling with their peers, utilizing mother tongue language, motivating themselves to excel more in school more particularly in the Filipino Subject, establishing and maintaining good relationship with their teachers, and are exposing themselves to the use of mass media [15].

3.2. Level of Filipino language proficiency of students

Table 8 shows the level of students' proficiency in Filipino language. The following are the mean scores for each school: Sta. Cruz National High School has a mean score of 49.50 which is described as average; Barayong National High School has 46.84 which is described as average;

Matanao National High School has 46.53 which is described as average; Hagonoy National High School has 47.82 which is average; Sulop National High School has 62.58 which is described as approaching to above average; Basiawan National High School has 78.67 which is above average; Mariano Perralta National High School has 54.44 which is described as average; and Molopolo National High School has 55.00 which is described as average.

Among the schools, students of Basiawan National High School obtain the highest level of

Filipino Language proficiency which means that their students got the highest ratings during the Division Achievement test in Filipino. This result can be validated with the high perception of students towards their teachers. Teachers of Basiawan National High School are in Master Teacher I, Teacher III and Teacher I positions in which promotion to Master Teacher I and Teacher III requires advance studies, very satisfactory performance rating, and attendance to various trainings related to teaching. Another proof to show the excellence of the students of

Table 7. Summary on the level of Student Perceptions on Factors Influencing Language Proficiency in Filipino

Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation	Qualitative description
Peer	3.89	0.79	high
Mother Tongue	3.85	0.66	High
Personal Motivation	4.17	0.80	High
Teacher	4.21	0.56	High
Mass Media	3.87	0.61	High
Overall mean	3.85	0.80	High

Table 8. Level of Filipino Language Proficiency Among Students of Secondary Schools in Davao del Sur

SCHOOLS	Mean	Standard deviation	Qualitative description
Sta. Cruz National High School	49.50	13.23	Average
Barayong National High School	46.84	9.82	Average
Matanao National High School	46.53	15.34	Average
Sulop National High School	62.58	14.83	Average
Hagonoy National High School	47.82	10.95	Approaching to average
Basiawan National High School	78.76	5.54	Above average
Mariano Perralta National High School	54.44	8.46	Average
Molopolo National High School	55.00	8.87	Average
Overall	51.98	13.29	Average

Table 9. Influence of Identified Factor on Language Proficiency of Students in Filipino

Factors	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Qualitative description	P- value
Peer	0.42	Negligible relationship	0.43 ^{NS}
Mother Tongue	0.31	Negligible relationship	0.56 ^{NS}
Personal Motivation	0.07	Negligible relationship	0.16 ^{NS}
Teacher	0.02	Negligible relationship	0.69 ^{NS}
Mass media	0.000	Negligible relationship	1.00 ^{NS}

Basiawan National High School was their exposure and participation to various Division level competitions related to Filipino such as Balagtasan, Talumpati, Pagsulat ng Tula which helped a lot in developing their confidence in skill in the use of Filipino languag.

The overall mean score of 51.98 is described as average. This further implies that Filipino Language proficiency level of students is average based on their rating in the Filipino Division Achievement Test.

Suarez and Orozco (2008) emphasized that students need to master Filipino language and must read, understand, analyze and interpret the meaning of Filipino selections. In this manner, students will be able to appreciate Filipino language better [16].

Llamas (2005) also elucidated that without a mastery of academic Filipino, students cannot develop the critical thinking and higher-order thinking skills needed to understand and express the new abstract concepts taught in the classroom [17].

3.3. *Influence of the identified factors on the level of Filipino language proficiency of students*

The Influence of Identified factors on the level of Filipino language proficiency of students is shown in Table 9. The following are the r values for each factor with corresponding p-values: peer has r value of 0.42 with p-value 0.43; mother tongue has r value of 0.31 with p-value 0.56; personal motivation has r value of 0.07 with p-value of 0.16; teacher has r value of 0.02 with p-value of 0.69; and mass media r value of 0.000 and p-value of 1.00.

As revealed, all correlation coefficients show a negligible relationship which can be validated through the computed p-values which are all lesser than alpha .05. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the identified factors such as peer, mother tongue, personal motivation, teacher and mass media and the level of Filipino language proficiency of students is accepted. This further connotes that the high level of perception of students towards the identified factors do not affect their language proficiency in Filipino. There may be other Factors not included in this study that influence students in their Filipino language fluency.

This result supports the contention of Yahaya *et al* (2011) that significant others are not significant contributors to language proficiency but they do not contribute to the positive attitude and perception towards the language that the students have [18].

However, results contradict to Johnson's (2010) view that children as well as adults can have a great impact on a broad range of issues in child's life, including achievement in school. Children's conduct, including study habits and personal academic growth, is influenced and motivated not just by their classmates, but also by their parents, teachers, and others with whom they come into intimate contact [19].

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were divided:

- The level of students' perception on the identified factors was high.

- The level of the Filipino language proficiency of students was average.
- Peer, mother tongue, personal motivation, teacher and mass media factors had no significant influence on the level of Filipino language proficiency of students.

5. RECOMMENDATION

- Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that assessment evaluation tools and the conduct of assessment on the proficiency level of students must be reviewed. Moreover, factor like extrinsic motivation maybe given emphasis so that the student can feel the importance of Filipino proficiency in attaining concrete rewards. Moreover, inclusion of curriculum and classroom environment as factor is also recommended. Lastly, similar study shall be conducted to validate results but survey questionnaire should be in Filipino.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to extend my utmost appreciation and immense gratitude to all the people, who contributed for the success of this study. To my ever supportive and generous spouse, Rodelia Samoranos Tana; my children Neo Christian S. Tana and Blessy Andrea S. Tana; to my brother, Felimon R. Tana, Ronnie R. Tana and Sister Gina T. Vandenburg and Veronica R. Tana and niece Jennylyn R. Tana; and to all who shared their time, talent and treasure in the finishing this piece of work.

7. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author has declared that there is no conflict of interest.

8. SOURCE/S OF FUNDING

NA

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