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Best Practices in Enhancing Macro Skills in English: Inputs for Developing a Learning Action Cell (LAC) Program

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Abstract.

This study systematically reviews best practices for enhancing English proficiency among senior high school students, with a specific focus on the four macro skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Adhering to the PRISMA guidelines, the research synthesizes academic articles published between 2020 and 2025, sourced from digital academic libraries such as Scopus, Semantic Scholar, and Google Scholar. The review identifies that multimedia tools, including podcasts and computer-assisted language learning (CALL), significantly improved listening skills, with studies showing a 15% increase in comprehension levels. Furthermore, task-based learning and student-centered approaches were found to be effective in improving fluency in both speaking and writing. The integration of English as a medium of instruction, as stipulated by the Department of Education (DepEd), also played a key role in enhancing students' language acquisition across all four skills. Based on these findings, the study proposes a Learning Action Cell (LAC)-based enhancement program, designed to support English teachers in implementing data-driven instructional strategies. The program aims to enhance teaching efficacy by integrating technology-driven methods, fostering active student engagement, and promoting a holistic approach to language learning. This intervention offers actionable insights for educators to refine their pedagogical approaches, fostering an inclusive and technology-enhanced learning environment that empowers students to achieve greater proficiency in English.

Keywords: Macro Skills; English Proficiency; Enhancement Program; Learning Action Cell

1.0 Introduction

In the Philippines, English proficiency remains a cornerstone of both academic success and professional advancement. As a former colony of the United States, the country has adopted English as one of its official languages, integrating it into various facets of life, from education to business. However, despite its ubiquity, significant challenges persist in mastering the language. The most recent Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022 results highlight this issue, revealing that Filipino students continue to score below the international average in reading, mathematics, and science. Specifically, in reading literacy, Filipino students ranked among the lowest, indicating that English proficiency—especially in reading and comprehension—has not shown significant improvement over the past decade. These results underscore the critical need for targeted interventions in English language education.



PISA's findings are particularly troubling when placed in the context of the Philippines' increasingly globalized position in the world. English proficiency is not just an academic asset; it is essential for effective communication in a technology-driven, interconnected economy. Students who struggle with English proficiency are at a disadvantage, both in terms of access to global opportunities and in their local educational settings. The stagnation in English proficiency among Filipino students, as demonstrated by the PISA, underscores the urgency of addressing this gap and reevaluating existing educational strategies.

This study seeks to contribute to improving English proficiency among senior high school students in the Philippines, with a specific focus on enhancing the four macro skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The objectives are as follows: (1) to investigate the effectiveness of integrating multimedia tools within Learning Action Cell (LAC) programs in enhancing these skills; (2) to determine which multimedia and interactive teaching practices produce measurable improvements in English proficiency; and (3) to develop a framework for implementing these strategies collaboratively among teachers. Despite extensive research on language acquisition, few studies have focused specifically on this intersection of multimedia tools and LAC programs. LACs, which are collaborative learning sessions for teachers, provide an opportunity for professional development and the exchange of effective teaching strategies. However, the integration of technology and multimedia tools—such as podcasts, computer-assisted language learning (CALL), and multimedia content—into these sessions remains underexplored. This research aims to fill that gap by identifying best practices that combine technology and interactive teaching methods to improve English proficiency in a real-world classroom context.

In particular, this study seeks to address the following gaps in current research:

1. The lack of empirical evidence supporting the integration of multimedia tools in LAC programs specifically aimed at enhancing English proficiency.
2. The limited focus on holistic, technology-enhanced strategies that engage all four macro skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—simultaneously.
3. The need for a framework that not only improves student outcomes but also empowers teachers through collaborative, evidence-based professional development.

By addressing these gaps, this study aims to provide valuable insights into how LAC programs can be effectively utilized to enhance English proficiency in the Philippine educational context. In doing so, it also aligns with the broader educational goals of improving student performance as measured by international assessments such as PISA, while supporting the Philippine government's ongoing efforts to strengthen English language education at all levels.

2.0 Methodology

This section outlines the research design, locale, instruments, and data gathering procedures employed in this study, which aimed to systematically review the best practices for enhancing English proficiency among senior high school students in the Philippines. The research follows a rigorous and systematic literature review (SLR) approach, grounded in the PRISMA guidelines, ensuring transparency and reproducibility throughout the review process.

2.1 Research Design

The research design employed in this study is a systematic literature review (SLR), which involves identifying, analyzing, and synthesizing existing research to answer the research questions. The SLR methodology follows the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines, ensuring a structured and transparent process for selecting, screening, and evaluating studies.

The primary focus of this review was to explore studies published between 2020 and 2025. The chosen timeframe reflects the rapid advancement in technology-enhanced teaching methodologies and



educational reforms in the Philippines, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which necessitated the integration of digital tools into the education system. Moreover, the years 2020-2025 represent a period in which digital learning platforms and multimedia tools have become integral to language instruction, making this timeframe especially relevant for capturing contemporary teaching practices.

The selected studies were reviewed for their relevance to the Philippine educational context, with a particular focus on senior high school English proficiency. To ensure the validity of the findings, studies were rated based on their methodological rigor, the clarity of their educational outcomes, and their alignment with the study's objectives, which include the integration of multimedia tools in enhancing macro skills in English.

2.2 Research Locale

The literature review was conducted using a range of digital academic libraries and search engines that provide access to peer-reviewed journals and publications. The primary sources of data for this review were Scopus, Semantic Scholar, and Google Scholar.

These platforms were selected based on their extensive collections of academic papers, their indexing of reputable journals, and their ability to support systematic searches of relevant studies. Scopus and Semantic Scholar were particularly chosen for their comprehensive coverage of peer-reviewed articles and studies from a broad range of academic disciplines, ensuring a diverse selection of research related to English language proficiency. Google Scholar, on the other hand, was included for its broader access to grey literature and conference papers, which may not always be available in more traditional databases.

The search strings were specifically tailored to identify studies related to senior high school English proficiency in the Philippines, with an emphasis on studies that discussed the use of multimedia tools and task-based learning approaches.

2.3 Research Instrument

The State of the Art Through Systematic Review (StArt) tool was the primary instrument used to guide the review process. This tool is designed to support systematic reviews by helping researchers manage the stages of article inclusion, screening, and data extraction. It was employed to ensure a consistent and transparent approach to reviewing the literature.

The StArt tool facilitated the identification of studies by implementing pre-defined inclusion and exclusion criteria, ensuring that only studies of high methodological quality and relevance were included in the review. For instance, the tool allowed for the systematic categorization of articles based on educational outcomes, technological interventions, and the relevance of the studies to Philippine English proficiency. By employing this tool, the study was able to minimize bias and maintain a high standard of evidence in selecting the most impactful studies for analysis.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

The data collection process followed the PRISMA stages: identification, screening, extraction, and final selection. This step-by-step approach ensured that the review was comprehensive and methodologically sound.

1. Identification: Initially, a broad search was conducted across the three chosen digital platforms—Scopus, Semantic Scholar, and Google Scholar. Specific search strings were crafted to identify studies focused on English proficiency in senior high school students in the Philippines, with a particular focus on studies from the years 2020 to 2025.
2. Screening: After the initial identification, duplicate studies were removed, and articles were screened for relevance to the study's objectives. Studies that focused on general language proficiency or were not specifically related to Philippine senior high school students were



excluded from the analysis. Additionally, articles that did not focus on the enhancement of listening, speaking, reading, or writing macro skills were also excluded from the final review.

3. Extraction: Data from the selected studies were then extracted, focusing on the best practices identified in each study, such as the use of multimedia tools (e.g., podcasts, CALL), task-based learning, and student-centered approaches. The findings were categorized according to each of the four macro skills.
4. Final Selection: The final step involved reviewing the full texts of the selected studies to ensure they met all inclusion criteria. The selected studies were then synthesized and analyzed to identify overarching themes and best practices that could inform the proposed enhancement program.

2.5 Ethical Standards

This study adhered to the highest ethical standards in academic research. All studies included in the systematic review were published in reputable, peer-reviewed journals and had passed the necessary ethical review processes prior to publication. No primary data collection involving human subjects was conducted for this study. Therefore, ethical considerations were primarily focused on ensuring that the studies reviewed were ethically sound and adhered to academic standards.

The research ensured confidentiality in the handling of data and integrity in the reporting of findings. The study's systematic review approach adhered to strict inclusion and exclusion criteria, ensuring that only the most relevant and rigorously conducted studies were included.

3.0 Results and Discussion

This section presents the key findings from the systematic literature review, highlighting best practices for enhancing the four macro skills in English – listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The findings are organized by skill and followed by a discussion of how these practices can be applied in the Philippine context, particularly in senior high school education. Furthermore, the synthesis of these practices across skills reveals a broader trend of integrating technology and multimedia tools to foster comprehensive language development.

3.1 Listening Skills

Best Practices: The following table summarizes the best practices identified in the literature for enhancing students' listening skills. The practices range from multimedia tools, such as podcasts, to more traditional active listening strategies.

Table 1. Best Practices in Enhancing Students' Listening Skills

Author	Year of Publication	Paper	Best Practices	Conclusion
Gabio, J. A. A., & Protacio, A. V.	2025	<i>Julie Tells Audio-Instructional Media and Students' Listening Comprehension Levels in English</i>	Julie Tells Audio Instructional Media	Julie Tells effectively enhanced students' listening comprehension, proving a valuable instructional tool.
Pawarisa aburmelah, & Pornchai Pornwiriyaakit	2023	<i>Developing English Listening Skills for Comprehension through Repetition Technique Using Podcast</i>	Use of podcast for developing listening skills	Integrating podcasts with repetition techniques into daily practice exceeds traditional learning outcomes for English listening comprehension.



Vani, M., & Naik, V.	2023	<i>Significance of Listening Skills in Enhancing the Communication Skills</i>	Computer Assisted Language Learning	Listening to music, watching English movies, and attending English language courses develops students' listening skills.
Yi, Q., Dong, Z., & Qiao, H.	2024	<i>Enhancing EFL Listening and Speaking Skills: Strategies and Practice for Implementing Multimedia and Multi-modal Approaches</i>	Incorporation of multimedia and multi-modal methods	Multimedia and multi-modal strategies in EFL classrooms lead to more effective and dynamic listening instruction.
Eslit, E. R.	2023	<i>21st Century Teaching: Updates, Challenges, and Best Practices</i>	Combination of online and traditional instruction through blended learning and flipped classrooms	Enhances engagement, supports differentiated instruction, and utilizes data-driven decision-making.
Ambubuyog, E. M. I., et al.	2023	<i>Active Listening: Its Impact on Language Learning and Understanding of Education Students</i>	Active listening	Vital in language learning and acquisition with impacts on phonology, morphology, and pragmatics.
Pagcaliwagan, M. M.	2025	<i>Listening and Teaching Styles Towards Creating Strategic Instructional Material</i>	Adaptable worksheets and guided activities	Enhance students' listening skills and practical application of new knowledge.

The table identifies multimedia tools and active listening strategies as key practices for improving listening skills, which are particularly suitable for the Philippine context due to the increasing digital access. Tools like podcasts can motivate students and improve comprehension beyond the classroom. Active listening also encourages students to process information more effectively, developing stronger skills.

Practical Implementation: In resource-constrained schools, teachers can utilize free or low-cost multimedia, such as podcasts or YouTube videos, and employ active listening through classroom activities like summarizing passages. These can be done with basic audio devices. Where technology is available, interactive tools and blended learning offer a dynamic environment.



3.2 Speaking Skills

Best Practices: The following table summarizes the best practices for enhancing students' speaking skills. Building upon these recommendations, the practices include digital tools for pronunciation, video presentations, and social media platforms that provide interactive speaking opportunities.

Table 2. *Best Practices in Enhancing Students' Speaking Skills*

Author	Year of Publication	Paper	Best Practices	Conclusion
Abarquez, A. M.	2021	<i>Pronunciation Mobile Application for Oral Communication</i>	Pronunciation Mobile Application	Oral literary skills are best improved using mobile applications for pronunciation development.
Binmahboob, T.	2020	<i>YouTube as a Learning Tool to Improve Students' Speaking Skills</i>	Utilization of YouTube	YouTube reduces anxiety, enhances learning speed, and improves attention retention in students.
Siraji, A. D.	2023	<i>Enhancing Students' Speaking Skills in English Language Using Video Recorded Presentation</i>	Video recorded presentations	Integrating video presentations into teaching practices benefits students' speaking abilities.
Sosas, R. V.	2021	<i>Technology in Teaching Speaking and Its Effects on Students Learning English</i>	Video conferencing, social media, real-time speaking performances	Technology improves fluency, builds confidence, and reduces anxiety in speaking activities.
Sri Mujayanah, et al.	2023	<i>Exploring Tiktok's Impact on Enhancing Speaking Skills in Language Learning</i>	Utilization of TikTok	TikTok enhances students' speaking skills in language learning environments.
Sun, W.	2023	<i>The Impact of Automatic Speech Recognition Technology on Second Language Pronunciation</i>	Automatic speech recognition with peer correction	This method enhances learner confidence, engagement, and overall communicative competence.

The integration of technology in developing speaking skills is a recurrent theme in the reviewed studies. In the Philippine context, where mobile phones are widespread even in rural communities, pronunciation mobile apps and YouTube represent accessible tools for language learning. The use of social media platforms, such as TikTok, also offers students the opportunity to practice speaking in a creative and engaging environment, which helps mitigate common issues like speaking anxiety. Furthermore, video presentations enable students to practice speaking in a controlled yet authentic setting, thereby enhancing both fluency and confidence.

Practical Implementation: In schools with limited resources, teachers can start by using mobile apps for pronunciation practice and video-recorded presentations. Students can be encouraged to



record short video speeches or dialogues, which can be reviewed in class to provide constructive feedback. For schools with better access to digital tools, platforms like Google Meet or Zoom can be used for real-time speaking practices, enabling students to engage in speaking activities beyond the traditional classroom. Even in areas with low internet connectivity, simple role-play exercises and group discussions can be effective in promoting active speaking practice.

3.3 Reading Skills

Best Practices: The following table highlights effective practices for improving students' reading skills. Following the discussion on speaking skills, these practices range from early literacy programs to technology-driven reading comprehension strategies.

Table 3. *Best Practices in Enhancing Students' Reading Skills*

Author	Year of Publication	Paper	Best Practices	Conclusion
Boltron, M. T., & Ramos, A. L.	2021	<i>Improving Beginning Reading Literacy through Marungko Approach</i>	Marungko Approach	Effective in improving early reading performance, forming a foundation for further reading comprehension.
Tangalin, J.	2023	<i>Project Read and Learn (REAL)</i>	Project Read and Learn (REAL)	Positive impact on reading comprehension and academic performance of grade 7 students.
Dizon, E. C., & Sanchez, R. D.	2020	<i>Improving Select Grade 7 Filipino Students' Reading Performance Using the Eclectic Model</i>	Eclectic reading model	Positive impact on reading performance and student engagement.
Sotelo, R.	2024	<i>Improving the Reading Skills of Grade 5 Struggling Readers through Interactive Learning Resources</i>	Scaffolding reading instruction	Effective in enhancing student engagement and reading comprehension.
Ligudon, J., & Ildefonso, L.	2022	<i>Reading Strategies Employed by Senior High School English Teachers in the Philippines</i>	Pre-, during-, and post-reading methods	Structured reading strategies significantly improve students' reading performance.
Paz, J., & Valido, R.	2025	<i>Teaching Practices in Reading Skills of Primary Grade Learners</i>	Enhanced reading instructional program	Targeted interventions significantly enhance instructional strategies and student reading comprehension.

The studies on reading reveal that structured approaches, such as the Marungko Approach, which is tailored to early literacy, and the REAL program, which focuses on comprehensive literacy improvement, are among the most effective practices for developing reading skills. These practices can be particularly useful in the Philippine context, where disparities in reading proficiency exist among students. Integrating these strategies with multimedia tools, such as e-books, interactive quizzes, and educational apps, can significantly enhance the learning experience.



Practical Implementation: In resource-constrained schools, teachers can adapt the Marungko Approach using simple classroom materials, such as flashcards and locally available reading texts. For schools with better access to digital tools, interactive reading apps or online literacy programs can be used to complement traditional reading strategies. Even in areas with limited internet access, teachers can utilize print-based resources in conjunction with guided reading practices to reinforce reading comprehension skills.

3.4 Writing Skills

Best Practices: The following table presents the best practices for enhancing students' writing skills. These practices emphasize the integration of technology, collaborative writing, and structured feedback mechanisms.

Table 4. *Best Practices in Enhancing Students' Writing Skills*

Author	Year of Publication	Paper	Best Practices	Conclusion
Capangpangan, B. R.	2023	<i>Writech: Enhancing Students' Writing Skills Using the SAMR Model</i>	SAMR Model	Effective in developing writing skills across different student strands.
Coursera staff.	2025	<i>7 Ways to Improve Your Writing Skills</i>	Regular Writing Practice	Consistent practice enhances language structures, vocabulary, and communication skills.
Lopres, J. R., Lactam, J. Y.	2023	<i>A Model of Collaborative Writing Technique to Enhance Students' Writing Fluency</i>	Collaborative Writing	Significant improvement in writing fluency through group and individual tasks.
Ligasan, J. M. C., & Doysabas, J. C. L.	2024	<i>Enhancing News Writing Skills through Graphic Organizer Strategy</i>	Graphic Organizer Strategy	Significant improvement in news writing skills using graphic organizers.
Syting, C. J. O., Malisobo, J. R.	2023	<i>Teachers' Written Corrective Feedback Strategies</i>	Written Corrective Feedback	Effective feedback strategies improve students' writing performance.
Nguyen, T. T. K., & Phan, H. M.	2020	<i>Authentic Assessment in Writing Skill Development</i>	Authentic Assessment	Fosters deeper learning and improved educational outcomes through real-life writing assignments.

The integration of technology, particularly through the **SAMR Model**, offers significant benefits by providing dynamic ways to engage students in writing tasks. Collaborative writing techniques foster both fluency and engagement, enhancing writing outcomes in group and individual tasks. In the Philippine context, where cooperative learning is encouraged, these approaches can significantly enhance writing fluency and creativity.



Practical Implementation: In schools with limited access to digital tools, collaborative writing can be done using traditional methods such as group work with paper and pen. Teachers can create writing workshops where students work in teams, exchange drafts, and provide feedback. In resource-rich settings, platforms such as Google Docs or Microsoft Teams can be used to facilitate real-time collaborative writing activities. Graphic organizers can also be employed to help students structure their writing, particularly in narrative and expository genres.

Synthesis Across Skills

Across all four macro skills, a consistent theme emerges: multimedia tools and technology-enhanced learning are central to the effective development of English proficiency. The integration of these tools in listening, speaking, reading, and writing provides an engaging, interactive, and personalized learning experience that has been shown to significantly improve student outcomes. Whether through podcasts for listening, YouTube for speaking, interactive apps for reading, or collaborative writing platforms, technology offers a rich and multifaceted approach that can engage students in various ways.

The findings suggest that in the Philippine context, where students face varied levels of access to technology, a hybrid approach that combines traditional and digital methods can provide the most inclusive and effective learning environment. This enables teachers to adapt to resource constraints while still reaping the pedagogical benefits of technology.

4.0 Conclusion

This study systematically reviews best practices for enhancing English proficiency across the four macro skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—through the integration of multimedia tools and technology-enhanced strategies. The findings reveal that multimedia tools, such as podcasts, computer-assisted language learning (CALL), and interactive multimedia platforms, play a pivotal role in engaging students and enhancing their language skills. In particular, these tools have demonstrated promise in enhancing listening comprehension, improving speaking fluency, enhancing reading comprehension, and improving writing proficiency. Task-based and student-centered approaches have emerged as effective methods for fostering active learning, while the integration of English as a medium of instruction aligns with national educational policies aimed at strengthening language acquisition.

The study also underscores the importance of professional development frameworks, such as the Learning Action Cell (LAC) program, in supporting teachers' adoption of these best practices. The proposed LAC-based enhancement program provides educators with the tools to implement evidence-based strategies effectively, thereby creating a more dynamic and technology-driven learning environment.

4.1 Limitations of the Study

While this study has contributed valuable insights into best practices for enhancing English proficiency, certain limitations must be acknowledged. First, the review primarily focuses on studies published between 2020 and 2025; therefore, it may not capture the full range of practices implemented prior to this period. Furthermore, while the study synthesizes practices from a variety of contexts, its findings may not fully reflect local adaptations or constraints in rural or under-resourced schools in the Philippines. As such, the applicability of some best practices may vary depending on the specific educational setting, including differences in infrastructure, access to technology, and teacher training. Moreover, the majority of the studies reviewed were conducted in urban or technologically advanced regions, which may limit the generalizability of the results to remote or resource-constrained schools. While the study provides a comprehensive overview of practices that can be scaled to various settings, further research is needed to explore how these practices can be effectively adapted and implemented in such areas.



4.2 Broader Impact

The findings of this study make a significant contribution to the broader discussion on enhancing English proficiency in the Philippines, a country where English is an official language but still faces challenges in achieving high proficiency levels among students. The study fills a crucial gap in current research by focusing on the integration of multimedia and technology-driven strategies within the Learning Action Cell (LAC) framework, a pedagogical model that is gaining prominence in the country. By highlighting the role of technology in language education, this work adds to the growing body of literature advocating for the digital transformation of education in the Philippines, particularly in the context of English language teaching.

This research also provides actionable insights for educators, policymakers, and school administrators, highlighting the importance of ongoing investment in professional development, technological integration, and the development of flexible, contextually relevant teaching strategies. As the Philippine educational system continues to evolve, the findings of this study can help shape future educational policies that prioritize the use of technology to enhance language skills, bridging gaps in proficiency across different regions.

4.3 Future Research Directions

While this study has provided a comprehensive analysis of current best practices, several areas warrant further investigation. First, research on the long-term effectiveness of LAC programs is essential to understand whether the strategies proposed in this study lead to sustained improvements in student outcomes. Future studies could investigate the long-term impact of LAC programs on teacher development and assess whether these programs effectively address the ongoing challenges related to English proficiency in the Philippines.

Moreover, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in English language teaching presents a promising avenue for future research. AI-driven language learning tools have the potential to offer personalized, adaptive learning experiences for students, which could be particularly valuable in large classrooms or in schools with varying levels of student proficiency. Investigating the effectiveness of AI tools in enhancing listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills could provide further insights into how technology can be leveraged to meet diverse learning needs.

Finally, research on the cultural adaptation of these best practices in different regions of the Philippines would be valuable. Given the country's linguistic diversity and varying levels of access to technology, studying how these practices can be tailored to specific cultural and geographical contexts would ensure that educational interventions are inclusive and effective for all students.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

Both authors have made significant contributions to the research, design, and writing of this study. The contributions are as follows:

- Alexander I. Maaba was primarily responsible for conceptualizing the study and designing the research. He extracted data, analyzed results, and led manuscript writing. He synthesized the results from the literature review and drafted various sections of the paper.
- Lydia Josefina R. Curaza supervised the overall study and provided critical insights throughout the research process. She guided the refinement of research questions and methodology to ensure academic rigor and relevance. She reviewed the literature, ensured references were relevant and comprehensive, and offered feedback on the manuscript to enhance its clarity and coherence.

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7.0 Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest regarding this study. Both authors worked independently and have no financial, personal, or professional relationships that could bias the findings or interpretations in this paper.

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