

**Hope.** With the continuing rollout of vaccines and the declining number of COVID-19 cases, we are ending 2021 with hopeful hearts. In the Philippine education sector, we are also filled with hope. As a number of schools are pilot-testing for face-to-face learning and schools are already transitioning to a blended setup, we hope for the return of “normal” or we hope for a “better normal”.

Alipato is driven by **hope**. For twenty-five years now, it has been hoping to elevate basic education by serving as a platform for research findings of academicians and classroom teachers. It continuously hopes to inspire teachers to not just be practitioners but also theory-testers and builders. As its name suggests, it hopes to create embers that will kindle passion among educators to strive for evidence-based and data-driven practices and policies. This year’s issue features ten articles, ten embers in pedagogy.

Five articles cater to the early and intermediate grades and their various stakeholders. In the first study, **Who’s the Boss? Exploring the Academic Leadership Styles of Principals in Non-traditional Preschools**, **Lissa Aireen L. Moti** proposes the Finger Puppet Management theory to systematize the leadership styles of heads of non-traditional preschools gleaned from various themes of collaborative culture, collaborative visioning, developing lifelong learners, and innovation in pedagogy. **Angela Ray M. Abarquez and Leonor E. Diaz** explored the effect of Developmental Physical Education (DPE) on the perceived physical competence of early graders. They put forward the exploration of DPE in various contexts and constructs to promote involvement in physical activities whatever children’s actual physical competence may be in their article, **Developmental Physical Education and Perceived Physical Competence of First Graders**. In the third study, **Jennica L. Gan and Dina S. Ocampo** investigated how a community-based literacy program transformed students’ reading engagement and the significant factors that shaped the transformation. This article, **Transforming Student’s Reading Engagement through a Community-based Literacy Program** puts forward that community-based programs are potentially effective in influencing students’ reading development and recommends that such programs be done in other communities to respond to students’ literacy needs. The fourth study by **Antoniette A. Danieles-Cortez**, titled **Cross-lingual Transfer of Literacy Skills Among Pupils Speaking Same and Different Home and School Languages** investigated if cross-

lingual transfer occurred in the vocabulary knowledge and listening comprehension skills of students with the same home and school language and students with different home and school languages and which skills are transferred across languages. It was revealed that listening comprehension and vocabulary knowledge sub-concepts can be transferred across languages. Based on the results of the study, it was concluded that home language is not the only main variable in learning another language after the first language. Finally, **Portia P. Padilla** determined the **Effects of Sustained Silent Reading on Elementary Students' L1, L2, and L3 Reading Skills**. The results of her study suggest that reading practice can enhance reading skills and that reading skills can retroactively transfer. Furthermore, it is put forward that reading habit in any language can improve reading skills in all the child's languages.

The other five articles are for the secondary level. The first study, **Self-Efficacy and Performance in Mathematics of Science High School Students** by **Sarah Alviar-Eisma and Lizamarie Campoamor-Olegario** tried to identify which sources of mathematics self-efficacy (MSE) contributed to the MSE of science high school students, if there was a significant relationship between MSE and mathematics performance (MP), and if MSE can predict MP. They found out that mastery and vicarious experiences influenced the students' MSE, there was no significant relationship between MSE and MP, and that it is mastery experiences and efforts in learning math skills that predict MP. The second study investigated the **Effects of Manipulative Game-Based Learning on Students' Achievement in Chemistry**. **Edwin B. Conel** puts forward the potential of Manipulative Game-Based Learning (MGBL) as a strategy to improve the knowledge and conceptual understanding of students. This is supported by the significant difference in the pretest and posttest mean scores of students who underwent MGBL and their feedback on how they became active in class and were more interested in the lesson. Another study that proposes a strategy is **Eleanor Alma D. Jugueta's** research on the **Effects of Diminishing Problem-solving Prompts (DPP) on Students' Conceptual Understanding and Problem-solving Skills in Physics**. Although there was no significant difference between the mean posttest scores of students who underwent the DPP intervention and the students who were exposed to Conventional Problem-solving, high-performing DPP students demonstrated expert-like behaviors. There was also a strong positive correlation between students' conceptual understanding and problem-solving skills in physics which could be attributed to the use of problem-solving strategies and prompts. The fourth study by **Alfred A. Lozanta Jr.** looked into the

**Improved Students' Level of Achievement, Autonomy of Learning, and Metacognitive Strategies through Teaching Social Studies Using New Media.** In this study, the new media technologies were explored to assess and improve the students' level of achievement and use of metacognitive strategies. Based on the results, the use of new media technologies had a significant effect on students' level of achievement and there was a considerable change in their autonomy of learning. Their use of metacognitive strategies was also significantly affected and there was a positive-weak correlation between their level of achievement and autonomy of learning. The last article, **A Fondness for Lexical Teddy Bears: A Contrastive Analysis of Filipino Adjectives and their English Translations by Senior High School Students** by Darwin Z. Reyes, utilized contrastive analysis of high-frequency Filipino adjectives and their English translations made by Grade 11 students. The study revealed that students had a high inclination to rely on high-frequency words notwithstanding the appropriateness and relation to their collocates and that the semantic flexibility of Filipino adjectives may have contributed to the lexical dissonance of the translations. Furthermore, the study puts forward how the reluctance of students to step out of their lexical comfort zones may have resulted in their deficiency in both vocabulary breadth and depth.

Amidst the challenges brought about by the pandemic, these articles prove that educators continue to strive for the improvement of basic education in both practice and research. As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Alipato, we continue to **hope** that it would be given yet another 25 years and more to serve as a forum for educators, researchers, and academicians to share relevant findings in teaching and learning. We **hope** that these articles produced during such challenging times would inspire teachers to conduct and share their own research as we all **hope** for a "better normal" for the Philippine basic education.

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