Article

Cultural and Linguistic Validation of the KAFILUM Dictionary in the Philippine K to 12 Curriculum

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Abstract

The study focused on the development and validation of the KAFILUM Dictionary, Kasangguni ng Filipinong Umuunlad as an instructional tool for the K–12 academic tracks in the Philippines. Grounded in a research and development (R&D) framework, the project aimed to create a discipline-based dictionary specifically tailored for senior high school learners. It sought to (1) craft the dictionary, (2) evaluate its content, structure, and style, (3) assess its relevance across various academic tracks, and (4) generate insights for instructional improvement. The dictionary featured 800 terms with concise, operational definitions,400 entries for food and sewingand 100 each for business and accountancy, computer science, communication arts, and general education. Expert validation was conducted by English teachers and linguists from three institutions, focusing on content accuracy, organization, and clarity of style. Results showed high acceptability in all domains, with particularly strong ratings in communication arts, dressmaking, and business-related disciplines. Computer science and general education received slightly lower,but still clearly acceptable scores. Written in standard Filipino orthography with straightforward, student-friendly definitions, the dictionary proved valuable for both teachers and learners. Conclusively, KAFILUM Dictionary serves as a much-needed bridge between subject-specific content and culturally grounded language use. It addresses the call for localized, contextualized, and discipline-sensitive educational resources. The study underscores the need for instructional materials that reflect the lived realities of Filipino students, reinforcing the role of language and culture in effective teaching and learning.

Keywords: KAFILUM Dictionary, K–12 curriculum, Filipino orthography, educational linguistics, validation study

Introduction

In the K to 12 curriculum, effective instructional materials are vital to support learner-centered instruction. Filipino is taught not only as a subject but also as a medium for learning across disciplines. The subject aims to develop holistic language proficiency, covering communication, critical thinking, and academic literacy while promoting cultural identity and national language development. As such, Filipino instruction must be supported by tools that enhance both comprehension and expression, particularly in academic contexts.

Teachers must adapt to 21st-century trends, where technology and learner diversity demand innovative strategies. As Nucasa and Dela Peña (2014) emphasized, continuous professional development is crucial for teachers to meet the needs of modern learners. Strong vocabulary is central to this, as learners' mastery of Filipino affects their academic achievement and ability to engage meaningfully with content and express ideas clearly.

This study was conducted in response to the challenges faced during the early K–12 curriculum implementation. At that time, the curriculum was still in its initial stages, and terminologies specific to senior high school tracks had yet to be fully established or standardized. There were no available glossaries or dictionaries to serve as references for students across the various strands of the K–12 curriculum. Additionally, due to a shortage of specialized teachers, some educators were assigned to teach subjects outside their areas of expertise.

To address this issue in the academic setting, the *KAFILUM Dictionary* was developed as instructional material and a reference tool to aid both teachers and students in understanding unfamiliar terms. The acronym *KAFILUM* stands for *Kasangguni ng Filipinong Umuunlad,* or *"Alliance of the Progressing Filipino."* This research focused on developing and validating the KAFILUM Dictionary to support Filipino language instruction in the K–12 curriculum. The dictionary aims to enhance vocabulary acquisition, reinforce academic learning, and strengthen the use of the Filipino language among Senior High School learners. As mandated by the 1987 Constitution (Art. XIV, Sec. 6), Filipino is the national language and must be cultivated to strengthen nationalism and preserve cultural heritage. This requires educational tools that support vocabulary development. As Lanulo (2014) and Goodman noted, reading and comprehension depend heavily on vocabulary acquisition, and the dictionary plays a key role in bridging gaps in understanding, especially in academic texts.

Globally, validated glossaries and instructional modules have been found to aid learning. For instance, the UNODC developed glossaries to promote clarity and

standardization in scientific fields. Similarly, studies by Adigue & Valentino (2022) and Francisco (2005) emphasize the need for relevant, culturally aligned, and comprehensible instructional materials in both content and language.

Several international studies, like Laufer & Levitzky-Aviad. (2006), Al-Jarf (2007), Mohamad (2012), Guido (2014), Rofii et al. (2018), Ramdani et al. (2019) affirm that modules and glossaries improve learning outcomes, especially when they are adaptive, contextualized, and aligned with learners' proficiency levels.

This study also seeks to benefit curriculum planners, administrators, and teachers by providing a validated tool that promotes meaningful instruction. For students, the dictionary will be a reference for understanding academic terms and improving self-expression. Moreover, it offers a foundation for future researchers interested in instructional material development in language education.

Despite the learner-centered focus of the K to 12 curricula, there is a lack of validated instructional materials specifically aimed at enhancing Filipino vocabulary for academic use. Existing glossaries and dictionaries are often generic, English-based, or not aligned with Senior High School learners' linguistic and cultural needs. While studies have explored modular and digital tools, few address the creation of a Filipino dictionary tailored to subject-based learning. This gap highlights the need for a contextualized and validated resource like the KAFILUM Dictionary, which supports language development and national identity in Filipino education.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to develop and validate a dictionary based on the K to 12 Curriculum. Thus, the researcher sought to answer the following specific objectives: 1) to develop a dictionary as an instructional material of senior high school teachers under the academic tracks of the K to 12 program; 2) to validate a dictionary along the following components: 2.1 content; 2.2 organizations; and 2.3 style; 3) to know also the effectivity of the developed dictionary in the academic tracks of K to 12 program; and lastly 4) to identify the implications of the study in teaching academic tracks of K to 12 program.

Research Methodology

This study employed the Research and Development (R&D) method, which was appropriate for creating and validating an instructional material, the KAFILUM Dictionary. According to Rofii et al. (2018), developing a module or instructional material should follow a four-phase process in an R&D design. First is preliminary

research, during which the researcher surveyed to identify the difficulties in analyzing terminologies within the K–12 curriculum. Several teachers also expressed the need for assistance generating and defining key terms specific to each academic strand.

The second is model development planning. The researcher designed a solution to address the identified problem at this stage, creating the KAFILUM Dictionary. Terminologies were gathered from reliable sources, including books and online materials, focusing on the four strands of the academic track. A list of 800 frequently used academic words was compiled from the collected terms. These terms were translated into Filipino, and standard Filipino orthography was applied for those without direct equivalents. Each entry included synonyms, pronunciation guides, and clear, user-friendly definitions to ensure accessibility and classroom relevance.

The third phase involved validation, evaluation, and revision. The study was conducted in three senior high schools: Ecumenical Christian College (ECC), Osias College (OC), and Tarlac National High School (TNHS). Teachers from these institutions served as respondents: five (5) from ECC, ten (10) from OC, and fifteen (15) from TNHS. Additionally, three (3) linguist experts from Tarlac State University validated the dictionary. This diverse respondent group, representing public and private schools, ensured a balanced evaluation. A validated checklist was used as the primary tool, assessing the dictionary's content, organization, and style, along with a section for comments and suggestions. After thorough validation, the dictionary was revised based on the suggestions and comments provided by the validators, including modifications to the lexical terms incorporated in each strand of the curriculum.

The final phase was model implementation. To analyze the results, the weighted mean was used, computed as $X = \frac{\sum x}{N}$, where X is the arithmetic mean, $\sum x$ is the total score, and N is the number of validators. A Likert scale was used to interpret the results: 4.5–5.0 as Perfectly Acceptable, 3.5–4.49 as Highly Acceptable, 2.5–3.49 as Acceptable, 1.5–2.49 as Slightly Unacceptable, and 1.0–1.49 as Totally Unacceptable. After assessing its level of acceptability, the researcher proceeded to copyright the validated material with the National Library of the Philippines and submitted copies to the university library for use by both students and faculty. This methodological approach ensured that the KAFILUM Dictionary was carefully developed and rigorously validated, and resulted

in a culturally responsive and pedagogically sound resource to support Filipino language instruction within the K to 12 curricula.

Results and Discussion

The validated KAFILUM dictionary

KAFILUM came from the acronym "Kasangguni ng Filipinong Umuunlad," a Filipino phrase defined as Alliance for Development.

A total of 800 words were included in the dictionary list. The discipline of food and sewing comprises 400 words. While 100 words were given respectively to the following disciplines: business and accountancy, computer science, communication arts, and general education.

The words were chosen carefully based on the most frequently used senior high school curriculum terminologies. The function of the words and how they are used as parts of speech were also included. They were also defined operationally. The produced dictionary has been copyrighted to the National Library of the Philippines and has a registration number A2018-1264.
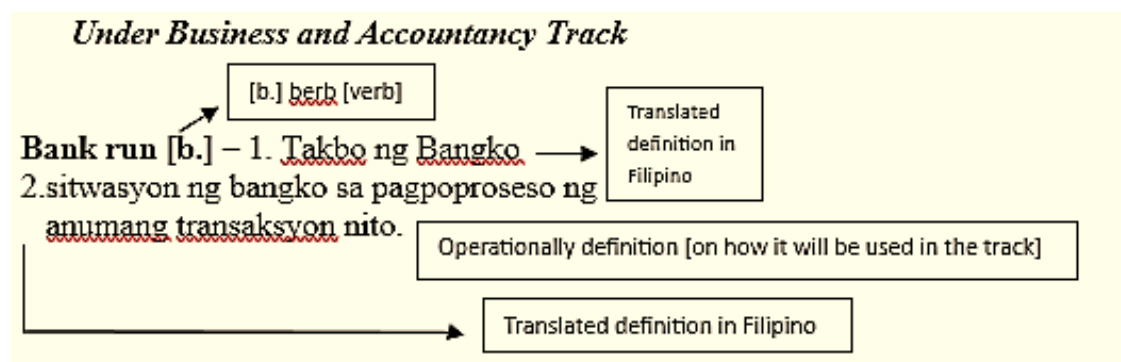

Figure 1: Sample Word from the KAFILUM Dictionary

Dictionary Validation

The developed dictionary was validated in terms of its content, organization, and style.

Content

Table 1. Mean Scores of KAFILUM Dictionary According to Its Content

Items	Mean	Verbal Description
1. The word list was chosen carefully and accordingly based on each discipline.	4.90	Perfectly acceptable
2. The developed dictionary is appropriate to the academic track.	4.90	Perfectly acceptable
3. The translation is easy to understand and is free from errors.	4.30	Highly acceptable
4. Orthography was used.	4.30	Highly acceptable
5. Each terminology was defined operationally.	4.90	Perfectly acceptable

Total	4.60	Perfectly acceptable

The table shows that the dictionary content received a total weighted mean score of 4.60, interpreted as "perfectly acceptable." This indicates that the dictionary is well-developed and suitable for senior high school students under the K–12 curriculum, potentially supporting both cooperative and independent learning. Using the KAFILUM Dictionary, students may engage in collaborative efforts that enhance their understanding. According to Rusmus (2012), cooperative learning is a form of instruction that utilizes small group strategies, enabling students to work together and optimize the learning environment to achieve educational goals. At its core, cooperative learning emphasizes that knowledge is constructed through students' active engagement, rather than passive reception of information.

Organization

Table 2. Mean Scores of KAFILUM Dictionary According to its Organization

Items	Mean	Verbal Description
1. The developed dictionary is based on other dictionaries and glossaries.	4.90	Perfectly acceptable
2. The words are arranged alphabetically.	4.90	Perfectly acceptable
3. There is organization in the use of each word.	4.90	Perfectly acceptable
4. The pictures were used appropriately.	4.30	Highly acceptable
5. There is an overall column for each discipline.	4.90	Perfectly acceptable
Total	4.78	Perfectly acceptable

The table shows the validation results within the organization. The overall weighted mean is 4.78, with a verbal description of perfectly acceptable. This proves the dictionary is well organized, patterned on other dictionaries, and arranged according to the disciplines.

The dictionary is also considered user-friendly since definitions are presented in their simplest form and words are arranged alphabetically.

The use of modern orthography was also reflected in the developed material. The technical terms underwent orthography based on the following conditions: 1. the word is the specific name of the original term, 2) the word is technical or internationally used, 3) the word originated from a tribal group, 4) the word does not have a consistent spelling, and 5) the word is a scientific or medical term.

Style

Table 3. Mean Scores of KAFILUM Dictionary According to Its Style

Items	Mean	Verbal Description
1. Excellent cover page.	4.90	Perfectly acceptable

2. The dictionary is appropriate for the disciplines in a senior high school	4.90	Perfectly acceptable
3. The designs and colors are suitable	4.90	Perfectly acceptable
4. Pictures are applicable	4.90	Perfectly acceptable
5. The style is of quality	4.30	Highly acceptable
Total	4.78	Perfectly acceptable

All the experts agreed on the sound quality of the cover page, color, and pictures. The dictionary was also believed to be appropriate for the different disciplines in the senior high school academic track.

The development of the dictionary was patterned after the style of several reputable dictionaries. The incorporation of blending techniques added a creative element to the final product. Through these stylistic approaches, and in response to the growing interest in pedagogical lexicography, particularly the study of dictionary design, the presentation of terms, definitions, and meanings in the KAFILUM Dictionary aligns with previous works in the field. Notably, similar stylistic and structural features can be found in the studies of Gavriilidou (2013), Wingate (2004), and Hartmann and James (2002).

The Appropriateness of the Disciplines According to the Academic Track of the K-12 Curriculum

Table 4. Teachers' Acceptability of the Developed Dictionary under Business Administration and Accountancy

Item	Mean	Verbal Description
Content	4.5	Perfectly acceptable
Organization	4.5	Perfectly acceptable
Style	4.6	Perfectly acceptable
Total	4.53	Perfectly acceptable

The teachers teaching business and accountancy gave a perfectly acceptable rating of the developed dictionary with a total weighted mean of 4.53. They agreed that the content is sufficient to attain learning goals and aligned with the articulated learning competencies and curriculum standards. Also, the style and layout are appropriate for such a dictionary, which was intended for students, and the style is of high quality. According to Rofii et al. (2018), using instructional material is feasible, practical, and effective, especially if the content motivates students to actively learn independently or in groups. It only proved that the words used and opted in the

dictionary were in line and appropriate in the discipline where students can learn independently. Studying in this discipline would be easier with this learning tool.

Table 5. Teachers' Acceptability of the Developed Dictionary under Food and Dressmaking

Item	Mean	Verbal Description
Content	4.5	Perfectly acceptable
Organization	4.5	Perfectly acceptable
Style	4.9	Perfectly acceptable
Total	4.63	Perfectly acceptable

The mean score was 4.63, with a verbal interpretation of perfectly acceptable. The terms included in the dictionary were deemed appropriate for the vocational disciplines of food and dressmaking, indicating that teachers found the developed dictionary suitable for student learning. This suggests its conventional value in the educational context.

Furthermore, Laufer and Levitzky-Aviad (2006) examined the effectiveness of L1-L2-L2 mini-dictionaries, where sentences contained a target word defined as either "simple" or "complex," using Hebrew as the L1 and English as both the target language and the language for meaning options. Their findings demonstrated that L1-L2-L2 dictionaries were superior in both production task effectiveness and learner preference. Similarly, many students in the present study were initially unfamiliar with the terminology used in food and dressmaking; however, the dictionary helped ease their understanding, reducing cognitive burden and supporting learning.

Table 6. Teachers' Acceptability of the Developed Dictionary under Computer and Technology

Item	Mean	Verbal Description
Content	3.6	Highly acceptable
Organization	4.0	Highly acceptable
Style	3.5	Highly acceptable
Total	3.70	Highly acceptable

The table indicates that the KAFILUM Dictionary is highly acceptable, receiving a general weighted mean score of 3.70 from teachers in the Computer Technology discipline. Teachers at Ecumenical Christian College expressed strong appreciation for the research, noting that many of the terms they frequently used in class previously lacked accurate or context-appropriate translations. This often led to uncertainty in delivering lessons. The development of the KAFILUM Dictionary addressed this issue

by presenting concepts clearly and concisely, effectively distinguishing essential information from less relevant content. As a result, the dictionary has become a practical and valuable instructional tool in their teaching practice.

Table 7. Teachers' Acceptability of the Developed Dictionary under Communication and Arts

Item	Mean	Verbal Description
Content	4.50	Perfectly acceptable
Organization	4.00	Perfectly acceptable
Style	4.50	Perfectly acceptable
Total	4.63	Perfectly acceptable

Table 7 presents the teachers' acceptability of the developed dictionary under Communication and Arts. The general weighted mean is 4.63, with a perfectly acceptable verbal description.

The Tarlac National High School teachers acknowledge the importance of the dictionary, specifically in mass media. They specified that the dictionary adequately covers relevant learning in the competencies, concepts are sufficiently nuanced to avoid misconceptions, and the dictionary is sufficient to attain learning goals. This proved to be a perfectly acceptable material as a reference to the K-12 Curriculum.

The Implications of results for the senior high school teachers of the k-12 curriculum

The developed dictionary is a sign of progress and development in education. Implementing the K-12 curriculum paved the way for students to discern the specialization they should pursue. Scholars and teachers alike believe that learning comes when students love what they are doing. The onset of senior high school prepares students for the real business world. Opportunities are also a stone's throw

away for those who can not afford to pursue tertiary education. However, this is impossible if the student has poor comprehension of the lessons.

Using the KAFILUM dictionary will not only bridge the comprehension gap among students, but it will also greatly help the senior high school teachers. The use of orthography also sets standards for the development of the dictionary.

A better future will be ahead for students if they understand the lessons with a dictionary.

School administrators are overwhelmed with the new addition of learning materials for students. The foreign words are made easier through the translation.

This study was the gateway for other teacher researchers to create another dictionary for other disciplines.

Discussion

The validated KAFILUM Dictionary "*KA*sangguni ng *FIL*ipinong *UM*uunlad," which means "*Alliance of the Progressing Filipino*," is both a contextually bound instructional material primarily intended to aid the specialists, who are the senior high school learners, towards grappling complex terminologies in their area of specialization. The dictionary, which featured 800 carefully selected words, namely: 400 for the technical-vocational strand (contributed by food and dressmaking), and 100 each for the other four tracks, namely: business and accountancy, computer science, communication arts, and general education, was developed to suit the real linguistic needs not only of students but also of teachers of the K–12 curriculum.

According to Guido (2014), instructional materials must be contextually associated with future and immediate learners' needs and offer a comprehensive testing of what has been taught. This principle shaped the choice and arrangement of the words, which were thoroughly translated, orthographically modernized whenever appropriate, and accurately described in their function to be easy to understand. Following this, the validated KAFILUM Dictionary is perfectly accepted by the validators in shaping and molding the student's vocabulary terms in the K-12 Curriculum because it offers comprehensive definitions and context under the curriculum's tracks.

In addition, Calaminos (2024) noted the value of well-designed materials for keeping learners engaged in instructional materials in terms of design, format, and OBE alignment. This observation is evident in the validators' high ratings on the

KAFILUM Dictionary for content (M = 4.60), organization (M = 4.78), and style (M = 4.78).

In line with this, the study by Ramdani et al. (2019) focused on module development and emphasized that three key criteria must be met: validity, practicality, and effectiveness. Similarly, Dela Peña (2023) developed an online module, evaluating its effectiveness based on validation, purpose, content, presentation, acceptance level, organization, and testing and training. In contrast, the present study concentrated on developing a dictionary, which was formally validated in terms of its content, organization, and style. This validation process was conducted to ensure the overall quality and validity of the final product.

The use of various forms of orthography to resolve terms that have no specific Filipino equivalents is consistent with the advice of the *Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino* that it would be best to enrich and at the same time preserve the national language without negating the inclusion of scientific and technical concepts (Anunuevo, 2013). This made it possible for words from tribal, scientific, or worldwide sources to be added without violating users' linguistic principles or understanding. This is based on the study of Whissell & Charuk (1985), which validated their *"Dictionary of Affect in Language."* Based on ratings from the provided list, the mean scores for Pleasantness and Activation across different situations revealed significant situation-related differences. The Pleasantness results fully aligned with the a priori predictions, whereas the Activation results were somewhat less consistent. Of the 2,676 words generated by participants, only 14% (173 unique words) were absent in the original list.

Along with it, teachers from other strands validated the dictionary. Teachers of business and accountancy (M = 4.53), food and dressmaking (M = 4.63), and communication arts (M = 4.63) rated the dictionary as perfectly acceptable. These ratings typify the dictionary's coverage of specific lexical gaps in these domains, gaps that were so frequently linked to obstacles to successful instruction and student performance (Adigue & Valentino, 2022). Teachers appreciated how the dictionary helped define and clarify language used often but falsely understood.

Although very acceptable, a little lower mean (M = 3.70) by computer science teachers showed that language could not account for time-evolving digital vocabulary. This is consistent with Al-Jarf's (2007) observation that digital and EFL learning support vocabulary tools because of rapid technological innovations and unfamiliar

terminology. Based on these results, the future version of the KAFILUM Dictionary should comprise even more dynamic or adaptive content for digital learning subjects.

Concerning organization, the validators indicated that the structure of the KAFILUM Dictionary (alphabetic order, discipline-focused clusters, inclusion of graphics) reflected best practices.

Conclusion

The KAFILUM Dictionary, derived from the acronym *"Kasangguni ng Filipinong Umuunlad,"* was conceptualized to enhance accessibility and usability for its intended users through a Filipino term that resonates with progress and support. The dictionary includes a comprehensive compilation of 800 operationally defined terms, with 400 entries focusing on the disciplines of food and sewing, and 100 terms each allocated to business and accountancy, computer science, communication arts, and general education. In terms of validation, the developed dictionary was assessed using three primary criteria: content, organization, and style. All criteria received high acceptability ratings from expert validators, with content earning a mean of 4.60 and organization and style achieving an even higher mean of 4.78, indicating strong alignment with academic expectations. Furthermore, the dictionary's appropriateness across K–12 academic tracks was evaluated, revealing a weighted mean of 4.63 for business, accountancy, communication, and arts.

In contrast, computer technology and general education received 3.70 and 3.91, respectively. These findings affirm that the KAFILUM Dictionary is highly acceptable and appropriate for student use, addressing the language-related challenges teachers and learners face within the K–12 curriculum. Its content and structure effectively support learning, and its discipline-based organization plays a crucial role in classroom instruction. Ultimately, the dictionary facilitates comprehension and serves as a significant pedagogical tool that inspires improvements in teaching and learning practices.

Acknowledgement

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