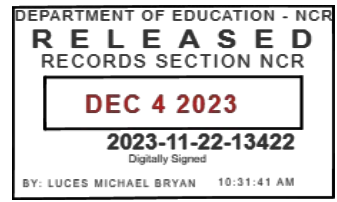





Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
 National Capital Region



REGIONAL MEMORANDUM
 ORD-2023- 1264

TO : **SCHOOLS DIVISION SUPERINTENDENTS**
 SPFL Mandarin Implementers

FROM : **JOCELYN DR ANDAYA**
 Director IV 

SUBJECT : **ONLINE FOLLOW THROUGH AND MENTORING SESSIONS FOR SPFL CHINESE MANDARIN TEACHERS BATCH 11**

DATE : December 1, 2023

This has reference to Memorandum No. BCD-SCPD-O-2023-055 dated October signed by ASEC. ALMA RUBY C. TORIO, Officer-In-Charge, Office of the Undersecretary for Curriculum and Teaching, relative to the above-captioned activity, contents self-explanatory, for information and appropriate action.

Immediate dissemination of this Memorandum is desired.

Encls: as stated CLMD/ACG2023



Address: Misamis St., Bago Bantay, Quezon
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Doc. Ref. Code	RO-ORD-F005	Rev	00
Effectivity	01.26.23	Page	1 of 1




Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
BUREAU OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Office of the Director
BCD-SCPD-O-2023- 0565

MEMORANDUM

FOR : **REGIONAL DIRECTORS**
Regions I, II, III, IV-A, IV-B, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII,
CAR, and NCR

FROM : **JOCELYN DR ANDAYA** 
Director IV

SUBJECT : **DISSEMINATION OF THE SPECIAL PROGRAM IN FOREIGN
LANGUAGE – CHINESE MANDARIN (SPFL-CHINESE
MANDARIN) STRATEGIC ROADMAP 2033 TO FIELD
IMPLEMENTERS**

DATE : November 14, 2023

With reference to the Department of Education's MATATAG Basic Education Agenda and the aim of providing quality basic education to Filipino learners, this Bureau announces the dissemination of the **Special Program in Foreign Language – Chinese Mandarin (SPFL-Chinese Mandarin) Strategic Roadmap 2033** to all SPFL implementers.

This comprehensive roadmap was collaboratively crafted by a team of esteemed Chinese and Philippine experts. The **Roadmap 2033** guarantees the alignment of future SPFL-Chinese Mandarin developments with the national educational targets outlined in the Department of Education's Basic Education Development Plan 2030 (BEDP 2030) and MATATAG Basic Education Agenda.

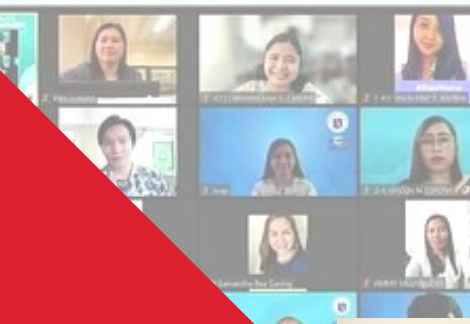
This shall serve as a reference document to guide plans and programs for the Special Program in Foreign Language (SPFL)-Chinese Mandarin in public secondary schools. Further, this encompasses crucial aspects of curriculum development and implementation, instructional materials development, and teachers' capacity building.

Attached is a copy of the **Roadmap 2033**, for your perusal.

Should you have clarifications and questions, you may contact **Dr. Riza C. Gusano**, SPFL Chinese Mandarin Focal Person, **Ms. Janinn Almeyda-Mendoza**, or **Dr. Mikael Sandino Andrey**, SPFL Lead Focal Persons, through these email addresses riza.gusano@deped.gov.ph / bcd.scpd.spfl@deped.gov.ph or this number (02) 8632 0170.

Immediate and wide dissemination of this memorandum is desired.

PHILIPPINE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
MANDARIN TEACHERS' FOLLOW



2022
SUMMER TRAINING

菲律宾红溪礼示大学孔子学院
2022全球“孔子学院日”





Special Program in Foreign Language-Chinese Mandarin Strategic Roadmap 2023-2033

菲律宾教育部中文项目 十年发展规划 2023-2033

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CHAPTER

01

INTRODUCTION

The Philippine constitution mandates the protection and promotion of the right of all its citizens to quality education at all levels and shall take appropriate steps to make such education accessible to all. Thus, to ensure the accessibility of relevant and responsive quality education to the Filipino learners, and to address the challenges brought by the drastically changing environment and other factors, the Department of Education launched the “*Sulong Edukalidad*” (Heading Forward) campaign in December 2019. The *Sulong Edukalidad* campaign aims to uplift the quality of education in the country by focusing on four aggressive reforms including:

01 K to 12 curriculum review and update

02 Improving learning environment

03 Teachers upskilling and reskilling

04 Engagement of stakeholders for support and collaboration

Briones (2019) admitted that addressing the challenge of education quality is a difficult and long-drawn process. Coincidentally, while confronting the challenge of education quality, the Philippines has experienced the widest disruption in education system of all times brought by the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, the Department of Education, through the Basic Education Development Plan 2030 (hereinafter BEDP 2030), aligned its strategies in facing challenge on quality education

and solving the impacts of the pandemic on teaching and learning. The BEDP 2030 is anchored from the *Sulong Edukalidad* Campaign 2019 framework and the DepEd’s first long-term plan that covers formal education including pre-school, elementary, junior high school, and senior high school, and non-formal education such as Alternative Learning System. The BEDP 2030 will be implemented to support the holistic development of Filipino learners and help them achieve their full potentials.



“Addressing the challenge of education quality is a difficult and long-drawn process.”

— Briones (2019)

In addition to the “*Sulong Edukalidad*” campaign 2019 and BEDP 2030, the Department of Education launched the MATATAG initiative on January 30, 2023, during the Basic Education Report highlighting the strategies of the education agency in addressing the challenges in the basic education of the country. According to the Department of Education, the MATATAG initiative has four critical components:

The graphic features the DepEd logo (Department of Education) at the top center. Below it, the word "MATATAG" is written in large, bold, red letters. Underneath "MATATAG", there are two phrases: "Bansang Makabata" on the left and "Batang Makabansa" on the right, separated by a stylized icon of two hands (one blue, one yellow) holding each other. The background is a collage of images showing students in classrooms and a teacher interacting with students.

- 1) Make the curriculum relevant to produce competent and job-ready, active, and responsible citizens;
- 2) Take steps to accelerate delivery of basic education facilities and services;
- 3) Take good care of learners by promoting learner well-being, inclusive education, and a positive learning environment;
- 4) Give support to teachers to teach better.

Under the MATATAG initiative, the Department of Education will work towards improving access, equity, equality, resiliency, and well-being in the basic education. To achieve these, the DepEd shall work towards improving the curriculum by focusing on foundational skills and embedding peace competencies, building more resilient schools and classrooms, strengthening inclusive education programs, advocating for teachers’ additional benefits, and providing professional development programs, and others.



In line with the newest reform policy of the Department of Education, the teaching and learning of the Chinese Language in the basic education of the Philippines shall be re-evaluated and determine its future directions that will further support the implementation of BEDP 2030 and MATATAG initiative. The DepEd's Special Program in Foreign Language is an essential platform that will equip the students with foreign language competencies necessary for effective and meaningful communication, contributing to the development of the students' 21st century skills. Therefore, SPFL, like any other disciplines of the country's K-12 Education Program, needs to be revisited to ensure its relevance to the DepEd's strategic plan for the next ten years. During the 2020 SPFL National Conference, the Bureau of Curriculum Development led the overall alignment of the programs of the SPFL to the *Sulong Edukalidad's* four priority

reforms. However, the specific alignment and re-evaluation of programs for each foreign language remains uncertain. Thus, it is essential that the implementation of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin be re-evaluated to ensure its alignment to the new thrusts of the Department of Education. Irrefutably, the vision of the Department of Education for SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is commendable, however, it is vital to craft relevant policies to ensure its sustainable development. To achieve this, it is necessary to identify the emerging problems directly involved in the implementation of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, resulting to a more contextualized policy-making process. Anchored from the priority development areas of the BEDP 2030, this project explored the best practices, challenges, and future directions of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin in the four aspects including:

- 01 Ensuring learners' attainment of standards through SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Review and Update.
- 02 Expanding access to Chinese language education across all levels of the basic education.
- 03 Empowering Chinese Mandarin teachers through training, reskilling, and upskilling programs.
- 04 Enhancing the overall Chinese language learning by engaging stakeholders.

The quantitative and qualitative data were gathered from the teachers, students, school heads, supervisors, and other stakeholders through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and documentary reviews, and were analyzed to describe the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin. Guided by the findings of the initial phase, this project recommended a 10-year strategic plan which can be adopted by the 160 public secondary schools implementing the program. This project served as the blueprint for the stakeholders in implementing programs and creating policies relevant to the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin. National policies served as backbone of any educational programs in the Philippines, thus, this project promotes an evidence-based policy development process, supporting the Philippine Republic Act 9155 or known as the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001, which mandates the Department of Education to conduct educational research and which findings will serve as one of the bases for necessary reforms and policy development. Furthermore, this project, focusing on teaching, learning, and governance of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, is included among the priority educational research of the DepEd's Basic Education Research Agenda (DepEd Order 36, 2016).

This project provides comprehensive report encompasses contents shown in Figure 1.





PHILIPPINE K-12 BASIC EDUCATION

2.1 The K to 12 Basic Education Program

2.2 The Salient Features of the K to 12 Basic Education Program

2.3 The Revised K-10 Curriculum (2023)

2.1 The K to 12 Basic Education Program

The 1987 Philippine Constitution mandates that the State establish, maintain, and support a complete, adequate, and integrated education system relevant and responsive to the needs of the people and society. According to Republic Act No. 10533, or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013, basic education is intended to meet basic learning needs, providing the foundation for subsequent learning. The State recognizes and adopts basic education as its primary instrument to attain educational and national development objectives. Among the most relevant breakthrough, Basic Education in the Philippines is compulsory.

Implementing the K to 12 Basic Education Program is considered one of the most significant educational reforms in the Philippines. It introduces programs and projects that aim to expand and improve the delivery of basic education in the country. It seeks to provide Filipino learners with the necessary skills and competence to prepare them to take on the challenges of the 21st century. It will make the basic education system in the Philippines at par with international standards by ensuring it is appropriate, responsive, and relevant to the learners.

The K to 12 Program covers Kindergarten and 12 years of basic education (six years of primary education, four years of Junior High School, and two

years of Senior High School [SHS]) to provide sufficient time for mastery of concepts and skills, develop lifelong learners, and prepare graduates for tertiary education.

The K to 12 Basic Education Program responds to the national and global community needs and demands through its mission to strengthen the values of the Filipino people, develop a strong sense of nationalism, develop productive citizens who contribute to the building of a progressive and humane society, ensure environmental cultivate global partnership for development.

The K to 12 graduate is a holistically developed Filipino who has built foundations for learning throughout life. They are individuals equipped with information, media, and technology skills, learning and innovation skills, life and career skills, and communication skills necessary to tackle the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities of the 21st century.

The implementation of the program is based on DepEd Order 21, s. 2019 “Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Program”. This issuance serves as the current policy in implementing all Special Curricular Programs under the K to 12 Basic Education Program.

2.2 The Salient Features of the K to 12 Basic Education Program

The following are the salient features of the K to 12 Basic Education Program that is implemented in the Philippines.

2.2.1

Strengthening Early Childhood Education (Universal Kindergarten)

Republic Act No. 10157, or the Kindergarten Education Act, institutionalizes Kindergarten as part of the basic education system and is a prerequisite for admission to Grade 1.

Every Filipino child now has access to early childhood education through Universal Kindergarten. At five years old, children start schooling and are given the means to adjust to formal education slowly. Research shows that children who underwent Kindergarten have better completion rates than those who did not. Children who complete a standards-based Kindergarten program are better

prepared for primary education.

Education for children in the early years lays the foundation for lifelong learning and a child's complete development. The early years of a human being, from 0 to 6 years, are the most critical period when the brain grows to at least 60-70 percent of adult size. Ref: [K to 12 Toolkit]

In Kindergarten, students learn the alphabet, numbers, shapes, and colors in their mother tongue through games, songs, and dances.

2.2.2

Making the Curriculum Relevant to Learners (Contextualization and Enhancement)

Activities, songs, poems, stories, and illustrations are based on local culture, history, and reality. This makes the lessons relevant to the learners and easy to understand. Students acquire in-depth knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes through continuity and consistency across all levels and subjects. Discussions on issues such as Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Climate Change Adaptation, and Information & Communication Technology (ICT) are included in the enhanced curriculum.



2.2.3 Building Proficiency through Language (Mother Tongue - based Multilingual Education)

Students learn best through their first language or Mother Tongue (MT). Twelve (12) MT languages have been introduced for SY 2012-2013 as follows: Bahasa Sug, Bikol, Cebuano, Chabacano, Hiligaynon, Iloko, Kapampangan, Maguindanaoan, Meranao, Pangasinense, Tagalog, and Waray. Other local languages will be added in succeeding school years.

Aside from the Mother Tongue, English and Filipino are taught as sub-

jects starting in Grade 1, focusing on oral fluency. From Grades 4 to 6, English and Filipino are gradually introduced as languages of instruction. Both will become primary languages of instruction in Junior High School (JHS) and Senior High School (SHS).

After Grade 1, every student can read in his or her Mother Tongue. Learning in Mother Tongue also serves as the foundation for students to learn Filipino and English quickly.

2.2.4 Ensuring Integrated and Seamless Learning (Spiral progression)

Subjects are taught from the simplest to complex concepts through grade levels in a spiral progression. As early as elementary, students gain knowledge in Biology, Geometry, Earth Science, Chemistry, and Algebra. This ensures a mastery of knowledge and skills after each level.

2.2.5 Gearing up for the future (Senior High School)

Senior High School is two years of specialized upper secondary education; students may choose a specialization based on aptitude, interests, and school capacity. The choice of career track will define the content of the subjects a student will take in Grades 11 and 12. SHS subjects fall under either the Core Curriculum or specific Tracks.

2.3 The Revised K-10 Curriculum (2023)



The implementation of the K–12 Curriculum has undergone rigorous scrutiny and revision to ensure that it is in line with the constantly changing educational landscape both domestically and internationally. The Department of Education launched the revised K–10 Curriculum in August 2023, marking a substantial advancement characterized by a streamlined curriculum and a heightened focus on specific learning competencies.

The term "K-10 curriculum" covers the educational journey from kindergarten through the first ten years of the basic education program. However, it's worth noting that the curriculum for Senior High School, covering Grades 11 to 12, is still undergoing careful review. As a result, the existing curriculum for Senior High School will continue to be implemented until the revised SHS curriculum is finalized and released. This approach underscores the department's commitment to ensuring that the education

provided to students remains relevant and responsive to their needs.

The pilot implementation of the Revised K-10 Curriculum will be on the school year 2024-2025, and will be implemented in SY 2024-2025 for Kindergarten, Grades 1, 4, and 7. In SY 2025-2026, Grades 2, 5, and 8 will be under the new curriculum with Grades 3, 6, and 9 in SY 2026-2027. Grade 10 learners will join them on SY 2027-2028.

Considering the latest revision on the basic education curriculum of the country, it is necessary that existing programs, including the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, be reviewed to ensure its full alignment to the revised curriculum. Though the old curriculum will still be implemented until 2028, there is a need to update the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin curriculum, especially for grade 7, which will start to implement the new curriculum in SY 2024-2025.



大学孔子学院
UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

CHAPTER

03

**SPECIAL PROGRAM IN
FOREIGN LANGUAGE**



3.1 Overview

3.2 Legal Bases

3.3 Vision, Mission, and Objectives

3.4 Program Framework

3.5 The SPFL Logo

3.6 The SPFL Current Situation

3.1 OVERVIEW

The Philippines' basic education envisions producing holistic Filipino learners imbued with 21st century skills necessary to be globally competitive. To fully achieve this vision, the Department of Education (DepEd) offers special curricular programs that are designed to enable students to understand their strengths, pursue their interests and develop their multiple intelligences (DepEd Memorandum No. 149, s. 2011). Among the different Special Curricular Programs offered by the DepEd is the Special Curricular Program in Foreign Language (SPFL). This program is intended to provide Filipino learners with educational opportunities to learn a foreign language. This program aims (1) to develop students' skills in listening, reading, writing, speaking, and viewing in a foreign language; (2) to develop their understanding of and appreciation for other people's cultures; and (3) to prepare them for meaningful interaction in a linguistically and culturally diverse workplace (DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2019). At present, there are six foreign languages that are offered under SPFL, namely, Chinese-Mandarin, French, German, Japanese, Korean, and Spanish.

Foreign language refers to a nonnative language outside of the environment where it is commonly spoken (Moeller & Catalano, 2015). It is also acquired, like a second language, after the first language; however, it is a language a person voluntarily chooses. It is not a vital means of communicating with other people in their homeland or country. The choice is usually based on the interests of the person and/or their plans to make use of the language acquired (Eddy, n.d.).

Language is transmitted culturally; that is, it is learned. Cultural transmission is the process of a language being passed on from one generation to the next. It is known as cultural learning and socio-cultural transmission. Cultural transmission is regarded as one of the critical characteristics distinguishing human language from animal communication (Lynch, 2022).

Learning a foreign language has various benefits to a person. Exposure to diverse languages and cultures is a critical component of quality education, and the benefits of language study are well-documented in many essential areas:

“Cultural transmission is regarded as one of the critical characteristics distinguishing human language from animal communication (Lynch, 2022).”



- It does not only broaden students' perspectives of the world, but also imparts a more profound understanding of their own cultures. Exposure to cultures with long histories builds a greater sense of the past within one's own culture as well.
- The study of foreign language is a distinct advantage in the professional world. Job candidates who are proficient in more than one language are extremely valuable and have a competitive edge in trade with foreign countries. Students who have studied foreign language have more job opportunities available to them both at home and abroad, in an increasingly global society.
- The study of foreign languages and cultures leads students to become more responsible and committed global citizens. It reduces the barriers to travel and, therefore, encourages continued exposure to other cultures and allows individuals to interact more fully with others.
- The study of diverse languages and cultures is a gateway to greater understanding and appreciation for a wide range of other subjects, including art, music, cuisine, film, science, and philosophy. It educates and

broadens the mind in limitless ways and is the true core of a liberal education.

The offering of SPFL is in recognition of the different benefits for Filipino learners in learning a foreign language. The following principles serve as guide in offering the Special Program in Foreign Language:

- Teaching foreign language is essential in the development of global citizenship.
- Understanding a foreign language develops deeper cultural literacy and cultural appreciation.
- Learning a foreign language is a tool for learners to develop deeper relationship with people from different nationalities.
- A skill in foreign language is essential in promoting meaningful economic and cultural collaboration with other nationalities.
- Learning a foreign language leads to the development of important values, thinking skills, and life skills.
- Competency in a foreign language strengthens individual learner's self-esteem, optimism, and commitment to personal fulfillment.

3.2 Legal Bases

The Department of Education (DepEd), through the then Bureau of Secondary Education (BSE), began the implementation of the Special Program in Foreign Language in 2009. The Program was continued by the Bureau of Curriculum Development (BCD) – Special Curricular Programs Division (SCPD) after the DepEd rationalization.

Among the legal bases for the inclusion of Foreign Language are:

- RA 10533 (Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013);
- 1987 Philippine Constitution; BP 232 (Education Act of 1982);
- RA 9155 (Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001);
- DepEd Order No. 88, s. 2010 the 2010 Revised Manual of Regulations for Private Schools in Basic Education;
- Vision and Mission statements of DepEd;
- Memorandum Order No. 276, s. 2007 (Directing the Department of Education [DepEd], the Commission on Higher Education [CHED], and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority [TESDA] to restore the Spanish language in Philippine Education);
- DepEd Memorandum No. 490, s. 2007 encouraging secondary schools, both public and private, to offer basic and advanced Spanish language as an elective in the 3rd and 4th year levels in Philippine education;
- DepEd Memorandum No. 560, s. 2008 ordering the offering of a Special Program in Foreign Language in public and private secondary schools.
- DepEd Order 55, s. 2009 the Guidelines on Offering Foreign Languages like Spanish, French, and Nihongo (Japanese) as Elective Subjects in the Third- and Fourth-Year Levels of High School
- DepEd Memorandum 149, 2. 2011 the Career Pathways for High School Students

The Special Program in Foreign Language (SPFL) is designed to provide learners with varied significant experiences in learning a foreign language through exposure to other cultures. This leads to a broader understanding of diversity, thus enhancing the social and global skills of the learners and making them more competitive in their future careers.

It also provides learners with opportunities to discover their potential. It also paves the way to reinforce a better understanding of diversity as significantly represented by language. From one's language to another, SPFL allows learners to have a sense of belonging by realizing they are part of a more significant community. The Program offers a variety of opportunities for

students not only to learn the basics of foreign languages, but also to heighten their global awareness by enhancing their social and cross-cultural skills and understanding. This awareness makes them more self-assured to explore the best career path for their personal and professional goals, making them more assertive, confident, and competent in fulfilling their dreams.

3.3 Vision, Mission, and Objectives

3.1 VISION

The SPFL envisions a multilingual Filipino learner who is globally competitive and equipped with 21st century skills in a culturally diverse environment while preserving his/her national identity.

3.2 MISSION

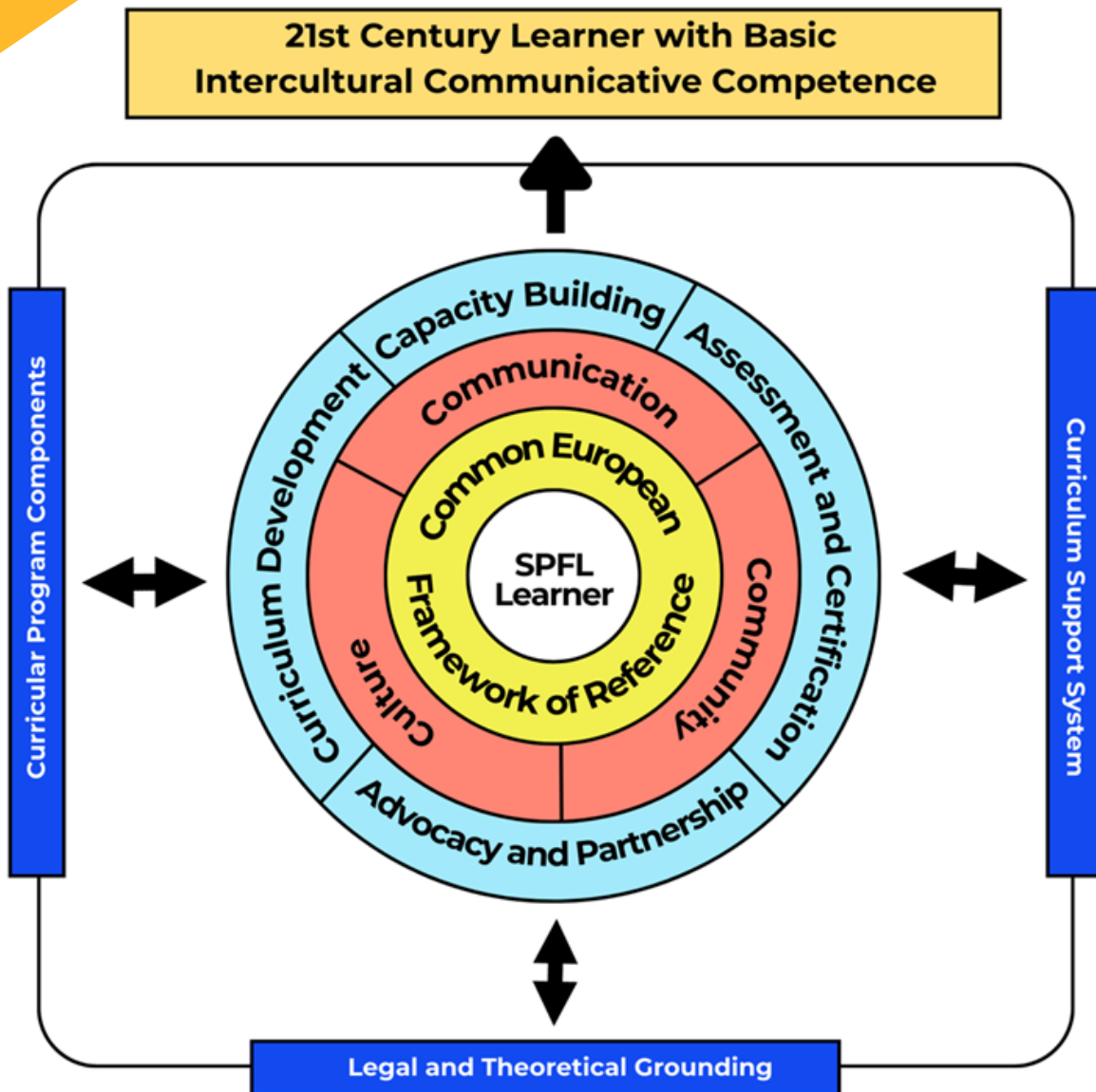
To equip learners with skills and competencies in a foreign language, providing them with greater opportunities through an enhanced research-based curriculum, a competent roster of teachers, supportive administrators, and strong collaboration with program partners.

3.3 OBJECTIVES

The Special Program in Foreign Language aims to:

- equip completers of junior high school for meaningful interaction in a linguistically and culturally diverse global community;
- prepare learners for senior high school tracks and strands ;
- prepare learners for senior high school tracks and strands;
- promote lifelong learning through the awareness of cultural diversity, making them more sensitive to the needs of others; and
- intensify partnership with various stakeholders to foster collaboration, support, resource-sharing for SPFL.

3.4 Program Framework



Aligned with the vision of the SPFL, its curriculum focuses on producing communicatively competent Filipino learners who are globally competitive and equipped with 21st century skills in a culturally diverse environment while preserving their national identity.

It is guided by the following principles:

- Teaching foreign languages is essential in the development of global citizenship.
- Understanding a foreign language develops deeper cultural literacy and cultural appreciation.
- Learning a foreign language is a tool for learners to develop deeper relationships with people with different nationalities.
- A skill in foreign language is essential in promoting meaningful economic and cultural collaboration with other nationalities.
- Foreign language leads to the development of important values, thinking skills, and life skills.
- Competency in a foreign language strengthens an individual learner's self-esteem, optimism, and commitment to personal fulfillment.

The Special Program for Foreign Language (SPFL) curriculum framework emphasizes learner-centeredness where learners are placed at its core, recognizing the fundamental importance of tailoring education to the individual needs and aspirations of each student. In a rapidly changing global landscape, this learner-centric approach is designed to empower students with the skills and knowledge required to excel in foreign language proficiency while fostering personal growth and cultural appreciation. The SPFL curriculum framework goes beyond traditional teaching methods, aiming to inspire a genuine passion for language learning and cross-cultural understanding, ultimately preparing students to thrive in a diverse and interconnected world. This introduction sets the stage for the innovative and dynamic educational experience that the SPFL program offers, where students are at the center of their own language learning

journey.

Adhering to the principles of learner-centered curriculum design, the SPFL program of DepEd adapts the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) in the development of the SPFL curriculum. This is a logical choice for several compelling reasons. The CEFR provides a globally recognized and standardized framework for assessing language proficiency. By aligning the SPFL curriculum with the CEFR, it ensures that the proficiency levels achieved by SPFL students can be easily understood and internationally recognized. Furthermore, the CEFR is a well-established tool for setting clear and achievable learning objectives, making it easier for educators to design effective lesson plans and assessments. It also promotes transparency in the teaching and learning process, allowing students to understand their language proficiency level and set clear goals for improvement. The CEFR's emphasis on communication and real-world language use aligns perfectly with the objectives of the SPFL program, which aims to equip students with practical language skills for global communication. Ultimately, the adoption of the CEFR in the SPFL curriculum facilitates a more structured, globally relevant, and student-centered approach to foreign language education, ensuring that students are well-prepared for linguistic and cultural engagement on a global scale.

In the implementation of the program framework for foreign language education in the Philippines, three guiding principles play a crucial role: communication, community, and culture. These principles are instrumental in shaping the learning experiences of students and ensuring a well-rounded foreign language education.

1. **Communication:** Communication is at the heart of foreign language learning. The curriculum framework places a strong emphasis on developing students' communicative competence, enabling them to effectively convey and comprehend messages in the target language. This principle recognizes that language acquisition goes beyond mastering vocabulary and grammar. It focuses on the practical application of language skills in real-life contexts, such as engaging in conversations, discussions, and presentations. By promoting meaningful communication, students develop their language proficiency and gain the ability to interact confidently and appropriately in various social and cultural settings.
2. **Community:** The curriculum framework acknowledges the importance of building a supportive learning community. It emphasizes collaborative learning, encouraging students to actively engage with their peers, instructors, and native speakers of the target language. This principle recognizes that language learning is a social and cooperative process. Students are encouraged to work together, engage in group activities, and participate in language-related events within the school and wider community. By fostering a sense of community, learners benefit from shared experiences, cultural exchanges, and increased motivation to succeed in their language learning journey.
3. **Culture:** Culture is an integral component of foreign language education. The curriculum framework acknowledges that language and culture are inherently intertwined and that an understanding of cultural context is crucial for effective communication. Students are exposed to the customs, traditions, literature, arts, and history of the countries in which the target language is spoken. They are encouraged to develop cultural sensitivity

and awareness, enabling them to navigate intercultural encounters with respect, empathy, and curiosity. By placing a strong emphasis on culture, learners gain a deeper understanding of the language they are studying and its cultural significance.

In addition to the guiding principles of communication, community, and culture, there are four other important foundations of the curriculum framework for foreign language education in the Philippines:

1. **Capacity Building:** This foundation focuses on equipping language teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills, and resources to effectively teach foreign languages. It includes professional development programs, training workshops, and continuous support to enhance teachers' pedagogical competencies and language proficiency. By investing in capacity building, the curriculum framework ensures that educators are well-prepared to deliver high-quality language instruction and create engaging learning experiences for their students.
2. **Assessment and Certification:** Assessment is an integral part of the curriculum framework and serves multiple purposes. It allows teachers to gauge students' progress, identify areas of improvement, and provide targeted feedback. It also provides learners with opportunities to demonstrate their language proficiency and receive recognition for their achievements. The framework incorporates various assessment methods, including formative and summative assessments, performance-based tasks, and internationally recognized language proficiency exams. By incorporating assessment and certification, the curriculum framework ensures that learning outcomes are measured effectively and learners receive credible recognition for their language skills.

3. **Curriculum Development:** Curriculum development is a continuous process aimed at designing and revising language curricula to remain relevant and aligned with educational goals and global language standards. The curriculum framework emphasizes the importance of research-based curriculum development, taking into account advancements in language education, changes in societal needs, and feedback from stakeholders. It promotes curriculum alignment across different educational levels and provides guidance on the selection of instructional materials, learning resources, and teaching methodologies. By focusing on curriculum development, the framework ensures that language instruction is up-to-date, effective, and responsive to the diverse needs of learners.

4. **Advocacy and Partnership:** Advocacy and partnership are essential foundations of the curriculum framework, promoting collaboration and engagement among stakeholders. This foundation involves fostering partnerships with government agencies, non-profit organizations, private sectors, and communities to support and enhance foreign language education. It includes advocacy efforts to promote the importance of foreign language learning, raise awareness about the benefits of multilingualism, and advocate for policies and resources that support language education. By prioritizing advocacy and partnership, the curriculum framework aims to create a conducive environment for foreign language education and ensure the sustainability and success of language learning initiatives.

Lastly, these principles and foundations work together to create a comprehensive and dynamic framework that supports high-quality language instruction and prepares students for language proficiency and intercultural competence, hence the out-

come – 21st Century Learner with Basic Intercultural Communicative Competence.

“In the implementation of the program framework for foreign language education in the Philippines, three guiding principles play a crucial role: communication, community, and culture. These principles are instrumental in shaping the learning experiences of students and ensuring a well-rounded foreign language education.”

3.5 The SPFL Logo

The SPFL is represented by a logo, with each symbol signifying a salient feature of the Program:

- 1) The SPFL logo serves as the visual identity of the Program. Its elements include the program name, its initials, the year it was established, and a torch.
- 2) The program name is written below the initials, while the torch bears the year the Program was established. The initials, SPFL, bear the colors of the Philippine flag—blue, white, yellow, and red. The choice of color signifies preserving national identity while learners develop knowledge of and appreciation for foreign languages and cultures.
- 3) Behind the initials is the torch with a burning flame, symbolizing quality foreign language education that serves as a beacon of light towards intercultural awareness, cultivation of respect for other nations, and development of values and 21st century skills.



3.6 The SPFL Current Situation

Since the establishment of the Special Program in Foreign Language in 2009, six (6) foreign languages have been offered in the public secondary schools. Initially, the languages offered under the SPFL are Spanish, Japanese, and French. The German language was included in 2010, followed by the addition of Chinese Mandarin in 2011. The most recent inclusion to the SPFL is the Korean language, introduced in 2017. The inclusion of the foreign languages in the basic education program of the country was made possible through partnerships with program partners such as the Embassy of Spain to the Philippines, Japan Foundation, Manila, Embassy of France to the Philippines, Goethe-Institut Philippinen, Confucius Institute at Angeles University Foundation, and Korean Cultural Center. The table below shows the statistical data in each language.

Table 1

LANGUAGE	SCHOOLS	TEACHERS	STUDENTS	REGION	YEAR STARTED	PARTNER INSTITUTION
Spanish	59	164	8,828	15	2009	Embassy of Spain to the Philippines
Japanese	55	131	6,615	12	2009	Japan Foundation, Manila
French	10	28	2,700	2	2009	Embassy of France to the Philippines
German	10	26	1,035	2	2010	Goethe-Institut Philippinen
Chinese	160	563	14,397	14	2011	Confucius Institute-AUF
Korean	52	120	3,899	6	2017	Korean Cultural Center
Total	346	1,032	36,781			

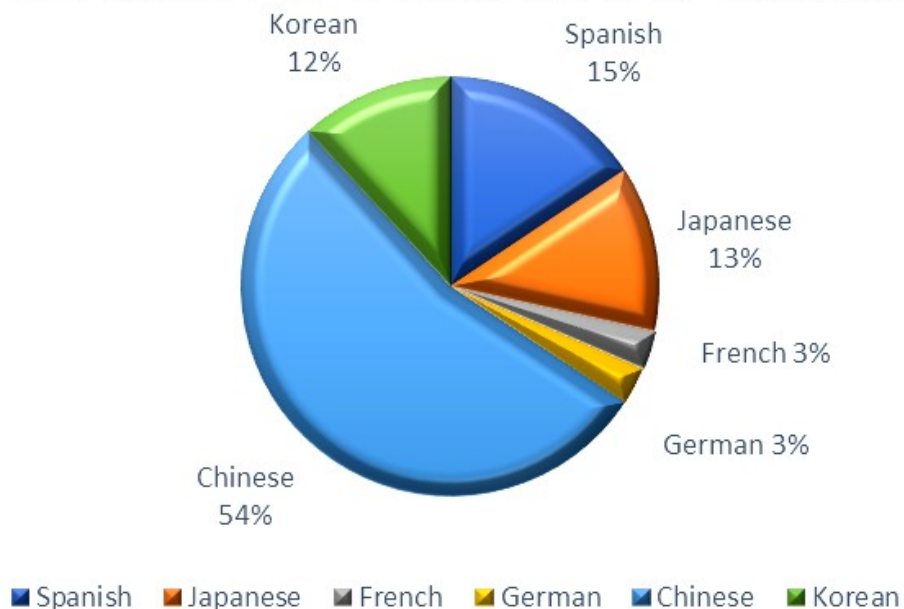
3.6.1 SPFL Teachers

The hiring of SPFL teachers shall adhere to Department of Education Order No. 7 of 2023 (Guidelines on Recruitment, Selection, and Appointment in the Department of Education). Further, the Chinese Mandarin teachers should meet the following requirements: (1) To be selected for their extensive experience in teaching English and Filipino and are highly knowledgeable of classroom management and language teaching; (2) To have a deep understanding of educational psychology, learning patterns, and the learning needs of students; (3) To possess proficiency in comparing language elements of foreign language and Filipino and cultural differences in teaching; (4) To be familiar with foreign language teaching methods, and can choose a more student-friendly approach to teach the foreign language and develop classroom activities; and (5) To teach the foreign language using English as the medium of instruction. The Filipino and Mother Tongue shall be used as auxiliary languages when needed.

Looking into the statistics for the school year 2022-2023, it was revealed that there is a total of 1,032 SPFL teachers covering various foreign languages. Based on the data provided above, it was found out that the school to teacher ratio ranges from one (1) school is to two (2) to four (4) teachers. It was revealed that there are two (2) SPFL teachers in every school offering Japanese and Korean, three (3) SPFL teachers in every school offering Spanish, French, and German, and four (4) SPFL teachers in every school offering Chinese.

In terms of the distribution of the teachers by language, Korean teachers account for 12%, Spanish teachers account for 15%, Japanese teachers account for 13%, French teachers account for 3%, German teachers account for 3%, and the Chinese language teachers account for 54%. See the figure below for the percentage of teachers per language.

PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS PER LANGUAGE



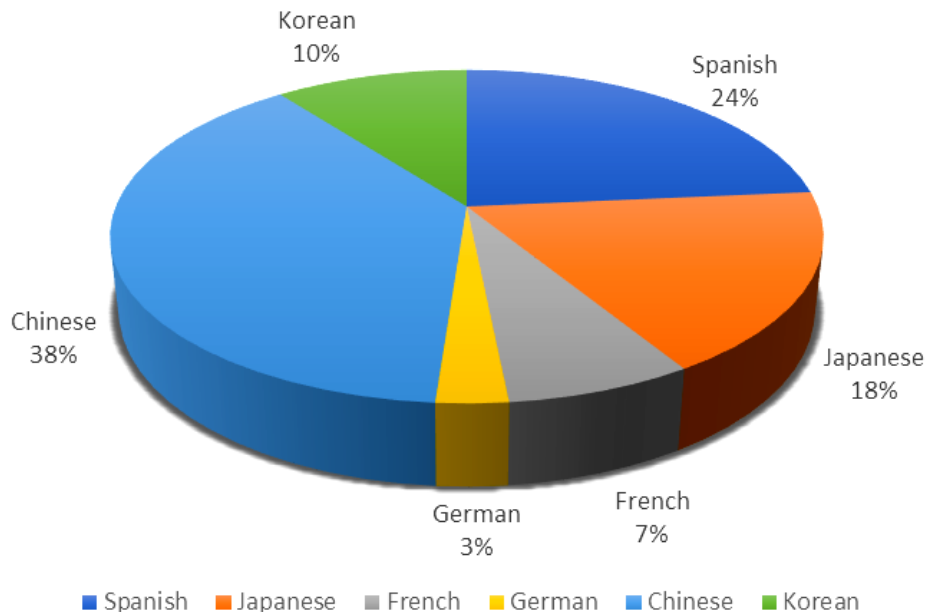
3.6.2 SPFL Learners

The Philippine Department of Education sets the qualifications for admission to the Special Program in Foreign Language. The SPFL is open to students from grade 7 to 10. The SPFL students are expected to meet the following requirements: (a) To be proficient in English before learning the foreign language. Students must have at least an average grade of 85% for language subjects and has an average grade of 83% in other subjects; (b) To pass a qualifying interview and test which focus on English, Filipino, and General Knowledge; and (c) To have a clear and strong motivation to learn the

foreign language, be willing to learn other country's culture.

Concerning the student population under the SPFL, the data for the School Year 2022-2023 shows that there are 36,781 students from grades seven (7) to ten (10) taking up foreign language courses. The data shows that among the SPFL students, 24% are studying Spanish, 18% are studying Japanese, 7% are studying French, 3% are studying German, 11% are studying Korean, and 39% are studying Chinese Mandarin.

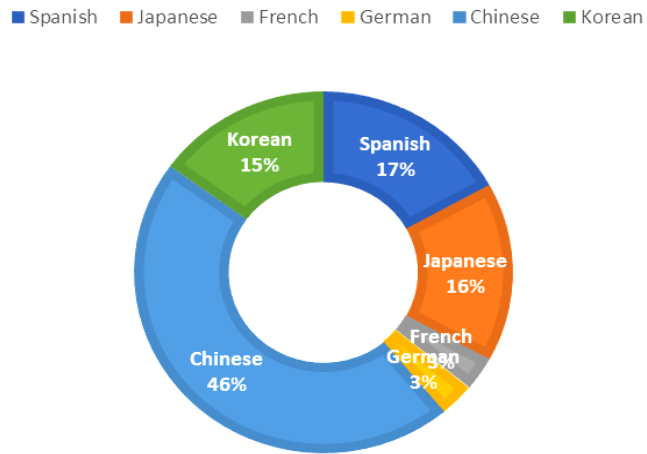
Percentage of STUDENT POPULATION BY Language



3.6.3 SPFL Scope of Implementation

In terms of the scope of the SPFL, the data for the School Year 2022-2023 shows that there are 346 schools across 16 regions of the country offering the SPFL. The data reveals that among these schools, 17% are offering Spanish, 16% are offering Japanese, 3% are offering French, 3% are offering German, and 46% are offering Chinese. See the figure below for the percentage of student population per language.

PERCENTAGE OF SCHOOL BY LANGUAGE

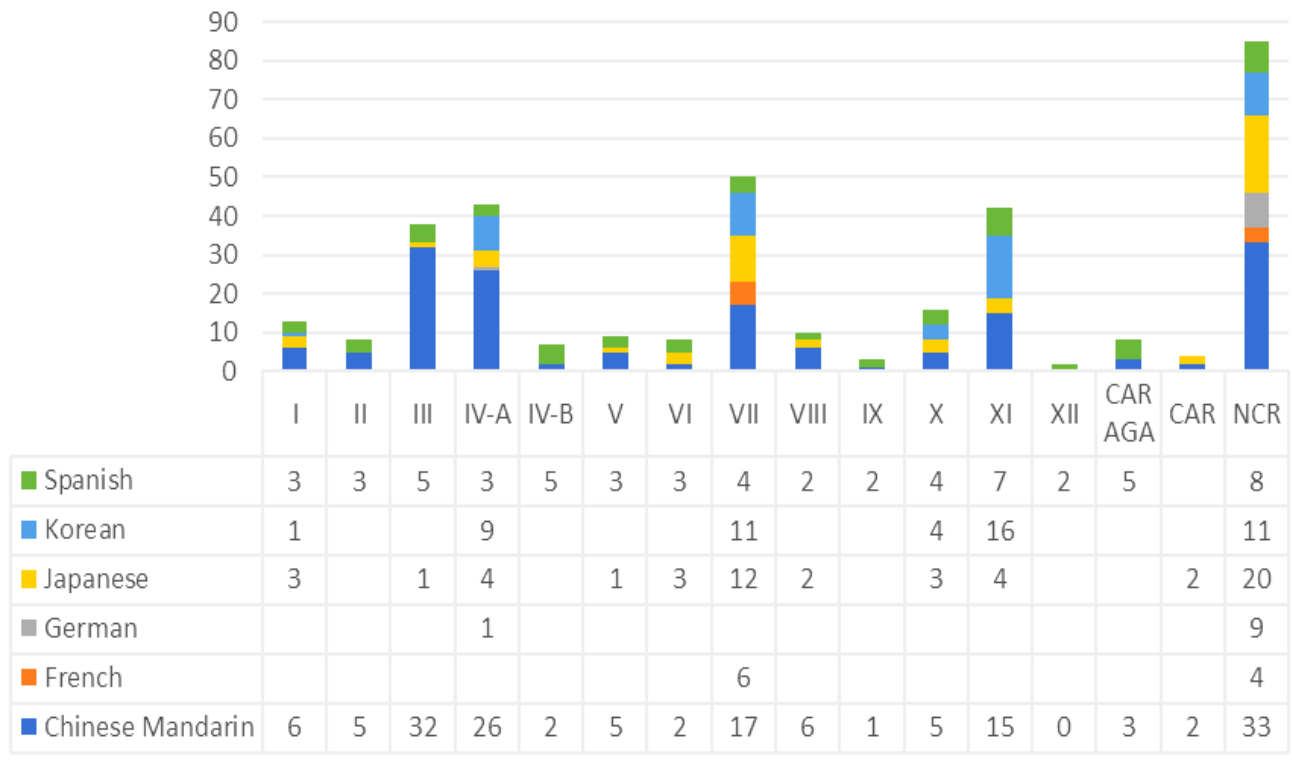


3.6.3 SPFL Scope of Implementation

Furthermore, the data revealed that among the 16 regions of the country, the National Capital Region (NCR) is the only region which offers all of the six (6) foreign languages of the SPFL. In addition, it's worth noting that Chinese and Spanish has achieved the widest coverage in terms of regions where it is offered, encompassing an impressive total of 15 regions. In contrast, both French and German have a more restricted presence, being offered in only two regions each. See the figure below for the distribution of the SPFL across different regions of the country.

Region	Chinese	French	German	Japanese	Korean	Spanish
I						
II						
III						
IV-A						
IV-B						
V						
VI						
VII						
VIII						
IX						
X						
XI						
XII						
CARAGA						
CAR						
NCR						
Number of Regions	15	2	2	12	6	15

DISTRIBUTION OF SPFL SCHOOLS BY REGION



The figure above shows the distribution of SPFL schools across the regions of the country. The data revealed that among the 16 regions of the country, the National Capital Region (NCR) has the greatest number of SPFL schools, encompassing 85 schools. This is followed by Region VII with 50 schools, Region IV-A with 43 schools, Region XI with 42 schools, and Region III with 38 schools. It is important to note that these regions, hosting a substantial concentration of SPFL schools, are strategically situated across the Philippines' three major island groups: Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. In contrast, Regions II, IVB, V, VI, IX, XII, CARAGA, and CAR have a more restricted presence of SPFL schools with only less than 10 schools in each region. Further, Regions I and X have 13 and 16 SPFL schools respectively. Among the country's 16 regions with SPFL schools, a notable pattern emerges: 10 regions have a dominant

number of schools offering Chinese Mandarin, while another 6 regions have a dominant number of schools offering Spanish.

The SPFL situational analysis revealed that the program is being implemented across all regions of the country. The historical analysis of the SPFL's development revealed that the pioneer languages included were Spanish, Japanese, and French, with Korean being the most recent addition. In terms of quantity Chinese Mandarin has the greatest number of teachers, students, and schools. On the other hand, French and German have the least number of schools, teachers, and students.

CHAPTER

04

SPECIAL PROGRAM IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE- CHINESE MANDARIN

4.1 Overview

4.2 The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin
Current Situation

4.1 Overview

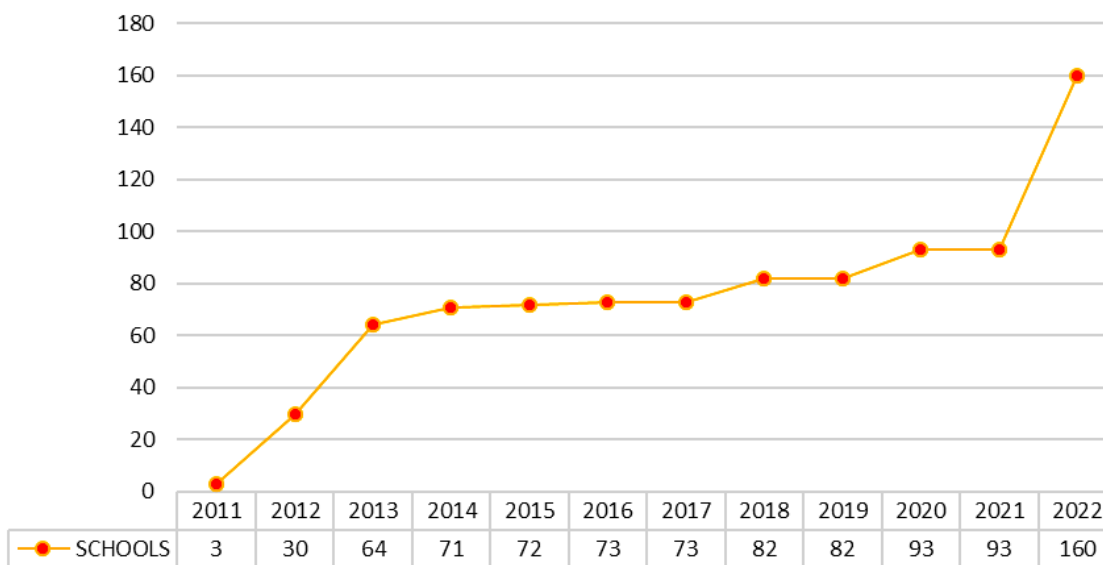
The origins of Chinese language teaching in the Philippines can be traced back to the establishment of the country's first Chinese school, known as the Tiong Se Academy, which was founded in 1899. However, the Chinese language was primarily confined to private and Chinese schools, making it inaccessible by the students in the public school system. Unlike private schools which have the freedom to modify their curricula, the public-school system requires a national policy for the inclusion of any discipline to its curriculum, including the foreign language. The Chinese language was included in the public-school system in 2011 through the issuance of DepEd Memorandum No. 94, series of 2011, which formally announces the start of the training of Filipino teachers to teach Chinese as a foreign language in the three (3) select secondary schools for the pilot implementation of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin. This was the first time that the Chinese language will be offered in the public-school system after 112 years since it was offered among the private schools. Moreover, the Philippines stands alongside nations such as the UK, Russia, South Africa, Japan, South Korea, and Australia, being among the 75 countries that have issued and implemented policies, laws, or regulations incorporating the Chinese language into their respective national education systems (China Daily, 2021). This section presents the integration of the Chinese language into the country's K-12 basic education program, while highlighting the historical development of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin.

4.2 The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Current Situation

4.2.1 The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Schools

There is an exponential growth in terms of number of schools offering SPFL-Chinese Mandarin for the past years. The statistical data reveals a substantial leap from three (3) pilot schools in 2011 to an impressive tally of 160 schools currently offering SPFL-Chinese Mandarin. In 2022, the highest number of new schools was recorded, accounting to additional of 67 schools. This can be attributed with the COVID-19 pandemic when the expansion of the program was not permitted so that schools can focus more on ensuring the continuous delivery of basic education services amidst the challenges of the pandemic.

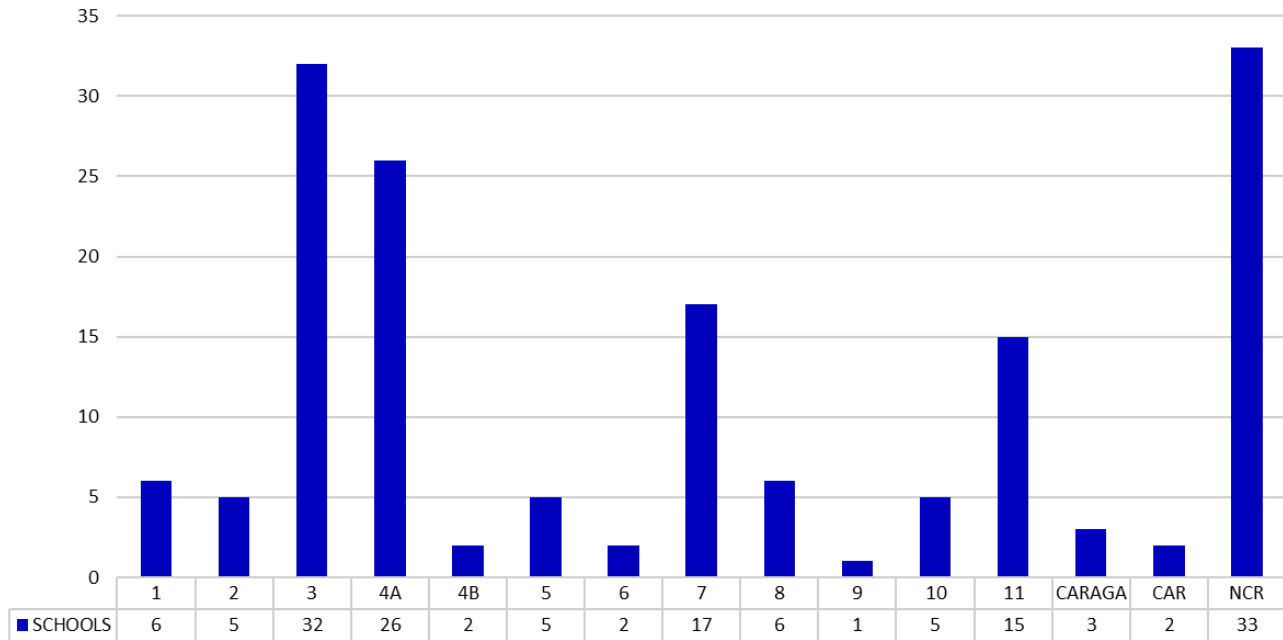
SPFL-CHINESE MANDARIN SCHOOLS DISTRIBUTION BY YEAR



Conversely, the 160 schools offering SPFL-Chinese Mandarin are strategically located across a wide expanse of 29 provinces within 15 regions across the country. Among the regions, the National Capital region has the greatest number of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin schools with a total of 33 schools, followed by the Region 3 with 32 schools., and Region 4A with 26 schools. In contrast, Regions 1, 2, 4B, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, CARAGA, and CAR have a more restricted presence of SPFL schools with only less than 10 schools in each region. On a contrasting note, Regions 7 and 11 exhibit notable concentrations, with 17 schools situated in Region 7 and an additional 15 schools in Region 11. The Region 12 (SOCCSKSARGEN) and Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) are the remaining two (2) regions with no SPFL-Chinese Mandarin schools.



**SPFL-CHINESE MANDARIN SCHOOLS
DISTRIBUTION BY REGION**

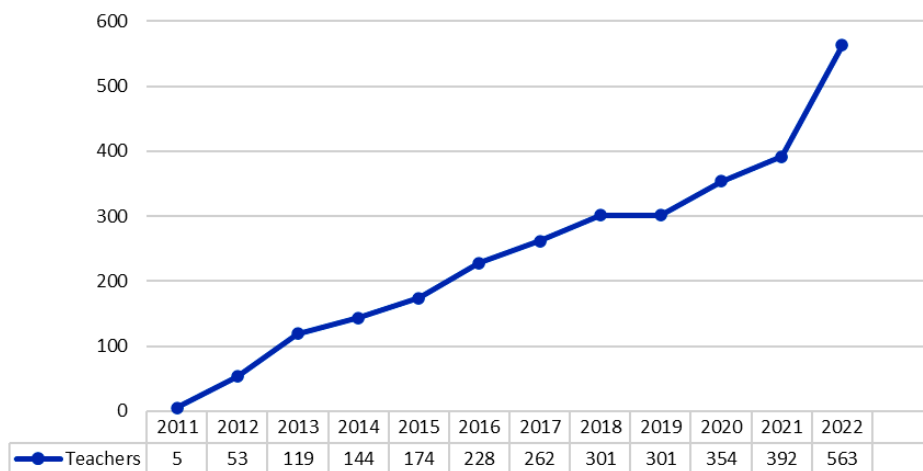


4.2.2 The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Teachers

To carry out the implementation of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, the Department of Education has developed a training scheme that provides sufficient training to in-service teachers for the purpose of teaching SPFL-Chinese Mandarin. Following the training scheme, the select SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teachers were already in the public-school system and teaching other subjects. Among the primary considerations in choosing SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teachers is that they shall display a keen interest in both learning and teaching the Chinese language and its cultural aspects. Further, the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teacher must hold a valid Philippine teaching license issued by the Professional Regulatory Commission and demonstrate exceptional proficiency in the English language. Lastly, the appointed SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teacher should successfully complete the three-year training program and attain a minimum of HSK 3 (CEFR B1-level) certification. The teacher's competence level and performance in SPFL-Chinese Mandarin will undergo continuous evaluation by the program partner and the program coordinator, respectively.

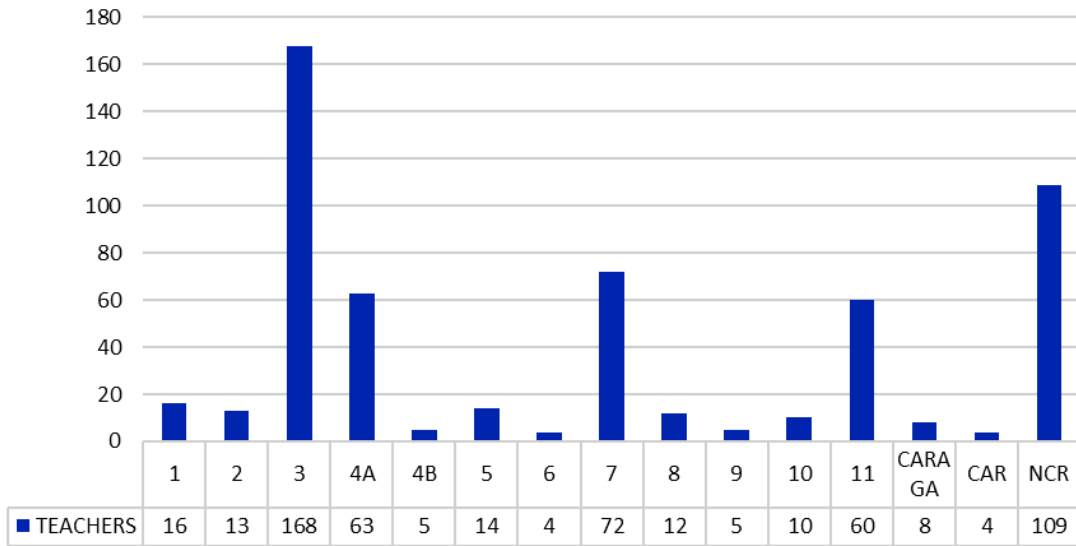
According to the latest statistical data, there are 563 teachers trained under the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin. Similar to the pattern observed in the data of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin schools, the big increase was noted in 2022 with additional 171 teachers. Taking into account the presence of 563 teachers distributed among the 160 schools, an insightful metric emerges: the school-to-teacher ratio stands at an impressive 1:3.5. This statistic indicates that within each SPFL-Chinese Mandarin school, a cohort of three (3) to four (4) SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teachers can be found. Given the fact that the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is being offered from grades seven (7) to ten (10), the ideal number of teachers in every school is four (4), or one (1) teacher in each grade level. However, depending on the number of classes in each grade level, one (1) teacher can handle classes in different grade levels as long as he/she satisfy the required language proficiency.

**SPFL-CHINESE MANDARIN TEACHERS
DISTRIBUTION BY YEAR**



Concerning the distribution of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teachers in terms of geographical location, the 563 teachers are assigned to the 160 schools in 15 regions across the country. Among the regions, the region 3 has the greatest number of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teachers with 168 teachers, followed by the National Capital Region with 109 teachers, Region 7 with 72 teachers, Region 4A with 63 teachers, and Region 11 with 60 teachers. In contrast, Regions 1, 2, 4B, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, CARAGA, and CAR have a more restricted presence of SPFL schools with only four (4) to sixteen (16) teachers in each region. As for Region 12 (SOCCSKSARGEN) and the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), it's important to note that the implementation of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin has yet to be initiated. Consequently, there have been no teachers trained in these regions thus far.

SPFL-CHINESE MANDARIN TEACHERS DISTRIBUTION BY REGION



4.2.3 The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Learners

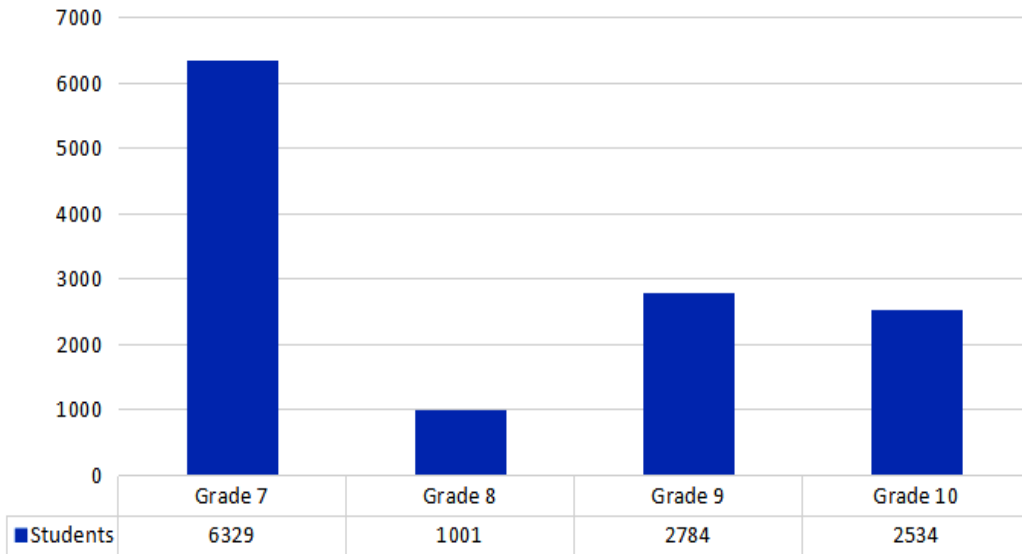
To ensure maximum learning in SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, the Department of Education set the students' eligibility for admission in SPFL-Chinese Mandarin. The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is offered among public junior high school students whose ages range from 12 to 16 years old. Only students who demonstrated mastery and proficiency in Filipino and English languages will be accepted in the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin. Furthermore, the student's academic performance in their previous year should also be outstanding to be accepted into the program. Failure to meet or maintain one or more of the program's requirements will lead to the exclusion of the student from the program.

According to a survey conducted by DepEd in 2021, the three primary motivations of students for enrolling in the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin course are (a) a desire to learn more about the Chinese language and culture, (b) being ready for better work opportunities in the future, and (c) showing one's skills or sense of fulfillment. This was further supported by the teachers polled which claimed that teaching SPFL-Chinese Mandarin to students is crucial to preparing them for the future. This can be attributed with the growing demand for Chinese speakers in the country, and with the increasing popularity of Chinese dramas and pop music. As a result, more students are becoming interested in enrolling to SPFL-Chinese Mandarin class.

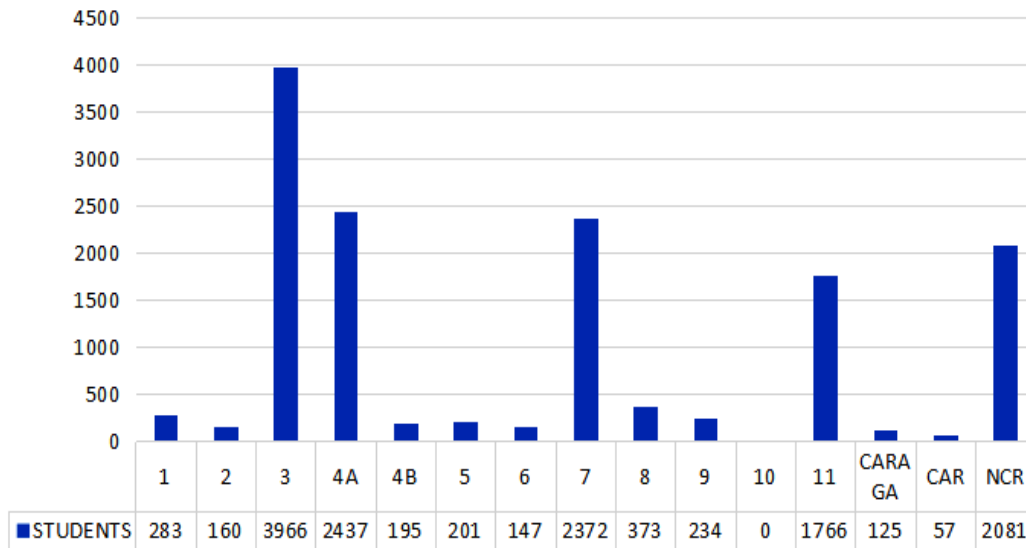
According to the data for the school year 2022-2023, there are 14,397 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin students across 160 public secondary schools in the Philippines, comprising of 6329 Grade 7 students, 2627 Grade 8 students, 2784 Grade 9 students, and 2534 Grade 10 students. Concerning the distribution of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin students in terms of geographical location, the region 3 has the greatest number of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin students with 3966 students, followed by the Region 4A with 2437 students, Region 7 with 2372 students, National Capital Region with 2081 students, and region 11 with 1766 students. In contrast, Regions 1, 2, 4B, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, CARAG, and CAR have a lesser number of students with only less than 400 students in each region.



SPFL-CHINESE MANDARIN LEARNERS DISTRIBUTION BY GRADE LEVEL



SPFL-CHINESE MANDARIN LEARNERS DISTRIBUTION BY REGION



4.2.4 The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum

To support the holistic development of the Filipino learners further, the Department of Education offered various programs in the Secondary Education Curriculum, including the Special Curricular Programs (SCPs), to which the Special Program in Foreign Language is under. The DepEd Memorandum No. 149, series of 2011 (Career Pathways for High School Students) described SCPs as platforms to enable high school learners to understand their strengths, pursue their interests, and develop their multiple intelligences. Guided by this principle, the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin shall provide the students with language knowledge and linguistic skills aligned with their career pathways. To further give importance to the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin and other co-curricular programs, the DepEd issued the DepEd Order No. 21, series of 2019 (Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Program), which treats SPFL-Chinese Mandarin as an additional subject, giving it the importance similar to other subjects of the curriculum.

Prior to the issuance of this policy, The DepEd Order No. 46, series of 2012 (Policy Guidelines on the implementation of the Special Curricular Programs at the Secondary Level) mandates that the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is offered in place of the Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) of the core curriculum. It means that students who wish to pursue SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, will no longer take the TLE subject, which may result to knowledge gap between SPFL and non-SPFL students. The discretion on the curriculum of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is given to the schools, provided that the required core curriculum will be adopted and that pre-requisites for add-ons such as SPFL-Chinese Mandarin are met. Considering that the TLE subject is a component of the core curriculum, it shall not be replaced by any other subjects or add

-ons. The DepEd Order No. 21, series of 2019 ensures that both the SPFL and non-SPFL students will take the TLE subject.

Guided with the latest policy of the DepEd for the implementation of SCPs, including the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, it is necessary that each add-on program shall have its own curriculum. In the context of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, the curriculum will function as a blueprint for teaching and learning the Chinese language in the country's secondary schools. Its primary focus will be on enhancing students' proficiency in the Chinese language and fostering cross-cultural understanding. Thus, it is necessary to develop SPFL-Chinese Mandarin curriculum that embodies Chinese language and cultural knowledge. In the early development of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, the Chinese language teaching and learning is primarily based on the instructional materials provided by the partner institution. Moreover, the teaching and learning are supplemented with proficiency test materials such as Youth Chinese Test syllabus and review materials to allow students to be familiarized with the content and structure of the proficiency test. During the initial years of implementing SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, this approach is perceived as practical. However, as students progress in their Chinese language learning in their upper years, teachers have started to recognize the necessity for a more systematic content delivery to support the sustainability of students' Chinese language learning. Furthermore, SPFL-Chinese Mandarin students across different schools, despite of being at the same year level, exhibit disparities in their level knowledge. This manifests the lack of a general standard in terms of the Chinese language teaching in the country.

To address the challenges brought by the absence of a national standard

curriculum for SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, the DepEd, through its Bureau of Curriculum Development, initiated the development, validation, and finalization of a general Curriculum Guide in 2017. The ultimate goal of the general SPFL curriculum guide is to observe uniformity in the learning competencies among the foreign languages in the SPFL. The DepEd invited teachers, school heads, language experts, and program partners from different languages to participate in the process of SPFL curriculum guide construction to ensure that each language will be taken into account. The general curriculum guide was released in 2020 through the Memorandum DM-CI-2020-00261 titled Curriculum Guides (CGs) and Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) for the Special Curricular Programs (SCPs). The general curriculum guide serves as the overall blueprint for the implementation of the SPFL. Considering that each language in the SPFL has its own unique features, the DepEd gave the program partners with the discretion to localize the general curriculum guide to each language, resulting to the development of language-specific curriculum guides. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that among the salient features of the K to 12 Basic Education Program is making the curriculum relevant to learners, thus, it is a mandate for all the subjects across all levels to ensure the contextualization of the learning process.

In response to the construction of the SPFL general curriculum guide and the requirements of the K-12 Basic Education Program, the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, along with other foreign languages under the SPFL, shall consider Filipino learners' social context when presenting the foreign language. To reflect the unique features of the Chinese language in the curriculum, the DepEd and Center for Lan-

guage Education & Cooperation partnered in the development of the Curriculum Guide for SPFL-Chinese Mandarin. The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Guide is anchored from the "Special Program in Foreign Language Curriculum Guide" of the Philippine Department of Education and the "Chinese Proficiency Grading Standards for International Chinese Language Education" of the Center for Language Education and Cooperation of the Chinese Ministry of Education. It focuses on the foreign language learning process relevant and responsive to the needs and interests of Filipino learners and their respective social contexts, and at the same time targeting international standards for Chinese language learning. Among its main features is the inclusion of topics related to local values, arts, traditions, and customs can significantly bring Chinese Mandarin closer to the lives of Filipino learners, thus, further enhancing the students' intercultural communication skills in Chinese Mandarin. Further, the standards and the corresponding learning competencies in the curriculum were adopted from the existing international standards for Chinese language learning to ensure that the learners' proficiency at the end of the program is aligned with global standards.

The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Guide serves as reference material for the relevant decision-making of the stakeholders and policy-makers. It provides an overall blueprint for implementing Chinese language teaching in the Philippines by setting and describing the target language proficiency. The emphasis is placed on the development of interdependent and interrelated receptive (listening, reading, and viewing) and productive (speaking, writing, and creating) macro skills, which, in turn, allow learners to tap into higher-order thinking skills (critical thinking, creative thinking, and metacognition) to make meaning through language. The ultimate goal of the curriculum guide is to provide a systematic and organized learning of the Chinese language that would allow them to achieve competencies for the Elementary-level 3 of the Chinese Proficiency Grading Standards for International Chinese Language Education.

The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin curriculum is specifically designed for four levels of the Junior High School (Grade 7-10). Similar to other curriculum subjects, the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is being offered for the whole duration of one academic year, which is equivalent to 32 weeks. The lessons offered in the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin were divided into four major units, which correspond to four quarters of the academic year. The allotted time for the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is four hours or 240 minutes a week. The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is being taught using English as the medium of instruction and with the help of Filipino and mother tongue as auxiliary languages. Below is an overview of the target standards and contents of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Guide. The curriculum guide is presented into four levels which correspond to the year levels (Grades 7 to 10) of the secondary school. The second column refers to the target level of the standard based on the "Chinese Proficiency Grading Standards for International Chinese Language Education." While the remaining three columns specify the quantitative indicators for content in Chinese character, vocabulary, and grammar.

Year Level	Level of the Standard	Chinese characters	Vocabulary	Grammar
Grade 7	Elementary-Level 1	225	495 + 300 special vocabulary*	45
Grade 8	Elementary-Level 2	225/450	746/1241 + 450 special vocabulary*	60/105
Grade 9	Elementary-Level 3	225/675	500/1741 + 700 special vocabulary*	60/165
Grade 10		225/900	473/2245 + 850 special vocabulary*	60/225

*Refers to the special words and phrases involved in Chinese Mandarin teaching, such as names, names of places, or unique things of the Philippines.

4.2.5 The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum

The instructional materials play an important role in any foreign language teaching. Considering the lack of linguistic environment in the foreign language teaching, the instructional materials serve as the first window of the students to view the foreign country and its culture. However, instructional development is not an easy task to accomplish and that varied factors shall be considered including the local context, teachers' training, curriculum, targeted competencies of the students, assessment, and evaluation. In addition to this, each country may have their own policies on the development of instructional materials intended for the students of the public-school system.

For the past years, Chinese instructional and learning materials intended for foreign students have been developed in China. However, the content of the materials shall be further supplemented in accordance with the unique features of the Chinese language learners in the country. Ideally, the Chinese materials shall be presented in accordance to the actual local

setting, making the content of the material closer to the lives of the students, contributing in further sustaining the students' interest.


In the early implementation of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, teachers depend on the materials they have used in their training, thus, resulting to the absence of a uniformed standards and lack of continuity of learning across year levels. To further establish teaching the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, the teachers have developed their teaching matrices, which identified what topics to be taught in a particular period. The Happy Chinese Textbook was later adopted as the primary learning materials in the teaching of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin in the public-school system. Further, the Filipino Version or the Tagalized Version was undergone contextualization to further enhance its relevance to the Philippine context. The strategic framework for this aspect of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin will be presented in the succeeding part of this plan.



CHAPTER

05

**ISSUES AND CHALLENGES
IN THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE SPFL-MANDARIN**



5.1 Addressing the Issues and Challenges

5.2 Issues and Challenges Encountered in Implementing MELCs within the SPFL-Mandarin

5.3 Strategies Employed in Implementing MELCs within the SPFL-Mandarin Program

5.4 Teacher Training for SPFL-Mandarin

5.1 Addressing the Issues and Challenges

The transformative impact of the global pandemic over the past two years has not only reshaped our societal norms but has also posed unprecedented challenges across various spheres of life and in different sectors of the society. Education, as a critical pillar of societal development, bore the brunt of these unprecedented challenges, forcing institutions worldwide to adapt rapidly to the new normal. This period witnessed an abrupt shift to remote and hybrid learning models, triggering a myriad of issues ranging from technological disparities to pedagogical adjustments.

In the Philippines, the outbreak of the COVID-19 had led to better opportunities and stronger alliance with both public and private institutions to cater the learning needs of the Filipino students. Amidst the on-going turbulence brought by the pandemic, the resilient spirit of educators and educational institutions has emerged as a guiding force, steering the course toward innovative solutions and opportunities for growth in the face of adversity. Within this context, the Confucius Institute at the Angeles University Foundation (CI-AUF) and the Department of Education have forged a robust partnership, standing at the forefront of addressing the unique challenges that emerged in the realm of education during the pandemic.

As the world grappled with the pandemic's fallout in 2020, the Department of Education responded proactively by releasing DO No. 12, s. 2020 Adoption of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan for the School Year 2020-2021 in Light of the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency. This strategic policy framework provided a foundation for educational institutions to adapt to the challenges posed by the public health emergency. This has provided measures to use the Essential Learning Competencies to help the

basic education sector continue amidst the pandemic.

In alignment with DO 12, s. 2020, the Office of the Undersecretary for Curriculum and Instruction issued DM-CI-2020-00261 on September 16, 2020. This directive focused on Curriculum Guides (CGs) and Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) for Special Curricular Programs (SCPs), including the Special Program for Foreign Language (SPFL). The comprehensive guidelines outlined in this document served as the blueprint for schools implementing special curricular programs such as Special Program in the Arts (SPA); Special Program in Foreign Language (SPFL); Special Program in Journalism (Filipino and English); Special Program in Sports (SPS); Special Program in Technical-Vocational Education (SPTVE); Special Science Program (SSP), laying down the framework for curriculum development and competency attainment.

Furthermore, the cited issuance provides appendices, available through the DepEd LRMS portal, for the SCP implementing schools including Curriculum Guides (CGs) for Special Curricular Programs (SCPs); Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) for SCPs; and Guidelines on the Use of the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) for SCPs.

Specifically, within this dynamic context, the implementation of the Special Program for Foreign Language - Mandarin stands out as a distinctive initiative aimed at fortifying foreign language education against the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. However, to fully comprehend the nuances of SPFL-Mandarin's implementation during this pivotal period, it is crucial to explore the challenges encountered by schools offering SPFL-Mandarin, and the need to review the Most Essential Learning

Competencies implementation is essential to provide new perspectives in the delivery of basic education curriculum for special curricular programs.

These challenges encountered in implementing the MELCs within the SPFL-Mandarin includes:

- Renewal of Memorandum of Understanding/Agreement
- Additional Center for Excellence
- Passing the Proficiency Tests
- Completion of the Teacher-Training Cycle
- Monitoring and Evaluation of Implementing Schools
- Class Scheduling and Subject Offering
- Availability of Learning Resources and Materials
- Sustainability of the Program
- Additional Teachers to be trained
- Revision of the SPFL Curriculum
- Additional SPFL-Mandarin classrooms
- Inadequate SPFL audio visual rooms
- Continuous Professional Development of Teachers
- Immersion for SPFL Supervisors, School heads and Teachers
- Expansion of the Program
- SPFL-Mandarin Research management and development
- Strengthening support system to the SPFL
- Reinforcing collaboration of various stakeholders

In 2021, the Special Curricular Programs Division (SCPD) of the Bureau of Curriculum Development (BCD) at the Department of Education (DepEd) initiated a survey to assess the implementation of the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) within the Special Program for Foreign Language (SPFL) across the Philippines. This survey aimed to gather insights into how the MELCs were being utilized by implementing schools and teachers, providing a comprehensive understanding of their impact on the SPFL. The findings from this survey shed light on the effectiveness of the MELCs in guiding the implementation of SPFL during the pandemic and offered valuable data for further refinement and enhancement of the SPFL curriculum. Additionally, this survey served as a crucial foundation for ongoing discussions and initiatives focused on improving the quality and adaptability of foreign language programs within the educational landscape.

“The transformative impact of the global pandemic over the past two years has not only reshaped our societal norms but has also posed unprecedented challenges across various spheres of life and in different sectors of the society.”

5.2 Issues and Challenges Encountered in Implementing MELCs within the SPFL-Mandarin

Table 1. Themes Generated in the Issues and Challenges Encountered in Implementing MELCs within the SPFL-Mandarin Program

Themes	Definition
Online accessibility of the copies of the MELCs	This theme describes the challenges related to accessing MELCs, encompassing issues of online access, gadget availability, and internet connectivity.
Timeliness of MELCs dissemination	This theme describes the issues concerning the prompt dissemination of MELCs, emphasizing the timeliness of providing guidance to educational fields.
Time-allotment for the mastery of the learning competencies	This theme describes the challenges associated with effectively managing the educational timeline for mastering MELC-outlined competencies.
Complexity and difficulty of learning competencies	This theme describes the issues pertaining to the intricate nature and difficulty levels of MELC-outlined learning competencies.
Alignment with program partners' prescribed competencies	This theme describes the challenges related to aligning MELCs with the prescribed learning competencies provided by program partners.
Availability of aligned learning materials	This theme describes the issues surrounding the accessibility of learning materials that align with MELC-outlined competencies.
Assessment practices for the mastery of the learning competencies	This theme describes the challenges in assessment practices aimed at determining the mastery of learning competencies outlined in MELCs.
Sequence and arrangement of learning competencies	This theme describes the issues concerning the organization and arrangement of learning competencies in MELCs in comparison to the standards set by program partners.



Table 1 shows the themes derived from the qualitative responses of the respondents who answered the MELCs survey for SPFL. These qualitative responses of the participants were categorized and coded based on the thematic analysis framework of Braun and Clarke (2006). The comprehensive analysis presented in the table 1 unveils the intricate web of challenges faced by teachers in the implementation of the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) within the Special Program for Foreign Language (SPFL)-Mandarin during the school year 2020-2021. The identified themes encapsulate the multifaceted dimensions of the issues, offering a nuanced understanding of the hurdles confronted by educators engaged in foreign language instruction.

Based on the thematic analysis, there were eight themes that describe the issues and challenges encountered by teachers during the pandemic period. These themes are *Online Accessibility of the copies of the MELCs*, *Time of Disseminating the MELCs*, *Time-allotment for the mastery of the learning competencies*, *Complexity of the Learning Competencies*, *Alignment of the Learning Competencies with the prescribed Learning Competencies of the Program Partners*, *Availability of Learning Materials Aligned with the MELCs*, *Assessment of Mastery of the Learning Competencies*, and *Sequence and Arrangement of the LCs in the MELCs*.

Theme 1: Online accessibility of the copies of the MELCs

The challenges in the online accessibility of the Most Essential Learning Compe-

tencies (MELCs) during the pandemic underscore the deep-seated digital disparities in the Philippines. Issues like limited internet connectivity, a scarcity of electronic devices, and overall accessibility challenges have been recognized as critical barriers.

In the case of the Special Program for Foreign Language (SPFL)-Mandarin, particularly Mandarin, where digital platforms are integral, the impact of these challenges on the dissemination and utilization of MELCs deserves careful examination. The disparities in online access may have led to differential engagement levels among students and educators with Mandarin language learning materials, thereby potentially affecting the overall effectiveness of the program. Understanding these challenges is essential for formulating targeted interventions and ensuring equitable access to language education during times of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Theme 2: Timeliness of MELCs dissemination

This theme has garnered significance, emphasizing the urgency in providing educational institutions with essential guidance, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Delays in disseminating MELCs have had cascading effects on instructional planning, teacher preparation, and student engagement.

For SPFL-Mandarin, where proficiency development relies on consistent and structured learning, any hindrance due to delays in MELCs distribution might have im-

peded the program's adaptability to the rapidly changing educational landscape during the pandemic. This delay has been associated to limited mobility and connectivity brought by the pandemic. Moreover, the abrupt outbreak has caught leaders and implementors off guard and had to adjust in the situation at a rapid pace. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to delays and the formulation of strategies to ensure timely and efficient distribution of educational resources during crisis situations.

Theme 3: Time-allotment for the mastery of the learning competencies

This sheds light on the challenges related to managing the educational timeline effectively for mastering the learning competencies outlined in the MELCs. SPFL-Mandarin, requiring a gradual and comprehensive approach to language acquisition, faced disruptions to the planned time-allotment due to the uncertainties brought about by the pandemic. The adaptive strategies in scheduling, influenced by these uncertainties, may have affected the pace and depth of Mandarin language instruction. Understanding and addressing these challenges is crucial for maintaining a balance between the depth of learning and the adaptability required in times of uncertainty just like the pandemic.

Theme 4: Complexity and difficulty of learning competencies

The complexity and difficulty of the learning competencies, particularly in the context of SPFL-Mandarin, have always been a consideration not only by program planners but most of all, implementors and teachers. Mandarin's intricate writing system and tonal nature make it inherently challenging, and the shift to remote learning during the pandemic may have intensified these difficulties. Students might not have received the same level of hands-on guid-

ance required for mastering the complexities of Mandarin, necessitating innovative strategies to address these intricacies during remote instruction. Ensuring effective pedagogical approaches that accommodate the unique challenges posed by the complexity of Mandarin is essential for sustaining meaningful and effective learning outcomes during crises.

Theme 5: Alignment with program partners' prescribed competencies

The alignment of MELCs with the prescribed learning competencies of program partners is indicative of the collaborative efforts between educational institutions and external stakeholders. In the case of SPFL-Mandarin, collaboration with program partners is crucial for providing authentic language experiences. Misalignment in learning competencies may have hindered the holistic development of language skills, impacting the real-world applicability of Mandarin proficiency in the Philippine context.

Examining this theme offers valuable insights into the effectiveness of collaborative efforts in ensuring program relevance and success, emphasizing the need for continuous communication and coordination between educational institutions and external partners during crises.

Theme 6: Availability of aligned learning materials

This theme emphasizes the tangible resources required for effective implementation of MELCs in SPFL-Mandarin. Access to quality learning materials aligned with the outlined competencies is essential for a comprehensive learning experience. Challenges related to the availability, distribution, and adaptation of such materials during the pandemic may have influenced the depth and breadth of Mandarin language instruction. In the case of Mandarin, teachers were compelled to explore other resources online due to scarcity of materials provided together with the MELCs. Navigating these chal-

lenges necessitates a detailed exploration of the strategies employed to overcome material-related obstacles and ensure a robust learning environment in SPFL-Mandarin, particularly during unprecedented disruptions in education.

Theme 7: Assessment practices for the mastery of the learning competencies

The assessment of mastery in the context of SPFL-Mandarin is crucial in determining the efficacy of the implemented MELCs. The transition to remote or hybrid learning during the pandemic introduced challenges in assessing language proficiency accurately. Scrutinizing the methods used to evaluate Mandarin language competency, considering both formative and summative assessment practices, is essential for refining assessment strategies and ensuring the valid measurement of students' language proficiency in a remote or hybrid learning environment. Insights gained from exploring this theme contribute to the ongoing discourse on innovative assessment practices in language

education during crisis situations.

Theme 8: Sequence and arrangement of learning competencies

The sequence and arrangement of learning competencies in the MELCs hold significance for providing a structured and scaffolded learning experience for SPFL-Mandarin students. The pandemic may have disrupted the traditional learning sequence, necessitating adaptations to maintain the logical progression of language skills. Understanding how these adjustments impact student progression and overall program outcomes is vital for maintaining the integrity of SPFL-Mandarin during unprecedented disruptions in education. This theme sheds light on the challenges and strategies employed in ensuring that the sequence and arrangement of learning competencies align with the standards of program partners and contribute to a cohesive and effective Mandarin language learning experience.



5.3 Strategies Employed in Implementing MELCs within the SPFL-Mandarin Program

Aside from the themes that summarize the issues and challenges in implementing the MELCS, themes about the strategies that teachers and implementors has undertaken were generated from the qualitative data gathered. These themes are presented in table 2.

Table 2. Themes Generated for the Strategies in Implementing the MELCS within the SPFL-Mandarin Program

Themes	Definition
Communication and collaboration with colleagues	This theme is a description of the strategies employed in accessing the MELCs that shows teachers' continuous collaboration and communication with colleagues and partners.
Resourcefulness and adaptation with the needs	This theme is a description of the strategies employed in accessing the MELCs that shows teachers' resourcefulness and adaptation with the needs of their work.
Securing copies of the MELCs in advance	This theme is a description of the strategies employed in accessing the MELCs that shows teachers' effort to secure advance copies of their work.
Utilization of media and technology	This theme describes the innovations of teachers to address the issues in utilizing the MELCs with the use of different media and technology.
Alignment and sequencing of lessons with the MELCs	This theme describes the innovations of teachers to address the issues in utilizing the MECLs by aligning and sequencing the MELCs with the standards of the program partners.
Application of diverse teaching strategies and approaches	This theme describes the innovations of teachers to address the issues in utilizing the MECLs by applying different teaching strategies and approaches which helps the learners master the learning competencies.
Craft and develop localized materials aligned with the MELCs	This theme describes the efforts of teachers to address the issues in utilizing the MECLs by creating SLMs and LAS aligned with the MELCs.
Unpacking the MELCs	This theme describes the activities done by teachers to address the issues in utilizing the MELCs by unpacking them and adding enabling learning competencies.

The table shows the emerging themes that illustrate the strategies employed by the teachers to address the issues and challenges regarding the sufficiency of MELCs and/or the learning delivery for the school year 2020-2021. Following the thematic analysis framework of Braun and Clarke (2006), the responses were categorized and coded to come up with the themes. These are eight themes that emerged, describing the strategies employed and applied by the teachers to address the issues and challenges that they encountered. These themes are *Communication and Collaboration with Colleagues*, *Resourcefulness and Adaptation with the Needs*, *Securing of the Copy of the MELCs in Advance*, *Use of Media and Technology*, *Align and Sequence Lessons with the MELCs*, *Apply Different Teaching Strategies and Approaches*, *Craft and Develop Localized Materials Aligned with the MELCs*, and *Unpack the MELCs*.

Theme 1: Communication and collaboration with colleagues

During the COVID-19 pandemic, communication and collaboration with colleagues became pivotal for the successful implementation of the Special Program for Foreign Language (SPFL)-Mandarin. Teachers engaged in continuous collaboration, leveraging digital communication tools to share insights, strategies, and best practices. The abrupt transition to remote learning required a collective effort to navigate challenges, adapt teaching methods, and ensure a cohesive educational approach.

Collaborative platforms facilitated the exchange of experiences, allowing teachers to collectively address obstacles related to accessing Mandarin Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs). This collaborative spirit not only enhanced professional development but also contributed to the resilience of the SPFL-Mandarin program amid unprecedented circumstances.

Theme 2: Resourcefulness and adapta-

tion with the needs

Resourcefulness and adaptation emerged as crucial themes, reflecting teachers' ability to navigate the dynamic needs of remote education in the SPFL context. Teachers showcased resourcefulness by exploring alternative methods to access MELCs, considering limited resources, and adapting instructional strategies to suit the online learning environment. This adaptability was particularly significant in a foreign language program, where the tactile and immersive nature of language learning faced considerable challenges. Teachers, driven by a commitment to student success, demonstrated resilience by tailoring lessons to the unique needs of virtual classrooms, ensuring the continued effectiveness of SPFL-Mandarin despite resource constraints.

Theme 3: Securing copies of the MELCs in advance

This theme underscored teachers' proactive approach to instructional planning despite the prevalence of the pandemic. With uncertainties surrounding the duration and impact of the crisis, teachers in the SPFL-Mandarin recognized the importance of early access to MELCs. This strategic effort allowed educators to prepare comprehensive lesson plans, anticipate challenges, and align instructional activities with the prescribed competencies. The timely acquisition of MELCs in advance served as a foundation for effective teaching strategies, demonstrating the commitment of teachers to maintain program continuity and quality language education in the face of unprecedented disruptions.

Theme 4: Utilization of Media and Technology

Amid the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, this theme emerged as a cornerstone in the SPFL-Mandarin. Teachers showcased innovative approaches to address MELCs-related issues by leveraging various digital tools and platforms. The 21st

century teachers recognized and made use of the extension of their classroom – the Internet. Interactive online resources, virtual classrooms, and multimedia elements were incorporated to enhance engagement and provide authentic language experiences. The strategic integration of technology not only mitigated access challenges but also opened avenues for dynamic and interactive Mandarin language instruction. This theme reflects the adaptability of teachers in harnessing the potential of digital resources to enrich the SPFL-Mandarin learning experience, despite the constraints imposed by the pandemic.

Theme 5: Application of diverse teaching strategies and approaches

This theme highlights the importance of maintaining program standards during the pandemic. Teachers in the SPFL-Mandarin program faced the challenge of ensuring that instructional content adhered to the defined competencies and program partner expectations. Teachers reviewed and made use of new strategies and approaches that are most effective in online learning such as the use of online gaming platforms, online games, etc. The strategic alignment and sequencing of lessons allowed for a structured and coherent progression of language learning, promoting a holistic understanding of Mandarin. Despite the disruptions, teachers exhibited a commitment to upholding the integrity of the SPFL-Mandarin curriculum, providing students with a consistent and well-structured language learning journey.

Theme 6: Application of diverse teaching strategies and approaches

In response to the challenges posed by the pandemic, teachers in the SPFL-Mandarin program demonstrated innovation through the application of diverse teaching strategies and approaches. Recognizing the diverse learning needs of students in virtual settings, educators employed varied method-

ologies to master MELCs. These approaches went beyond traditional classroom strategies, incorporating interactive online activities, virtual language immersion experiences, and adaptive teaching techniques. This theme signifies the adaptability of teachers in tailoring their pedagogical approaches to suit the unique demands of remote Mandarin language instruction, contributing to a more comprehensive and engaging learning experience.

Theme 7: Craft and develop localized materials aligned with the MELCs

This theme shows the efforts of teachers to address the challenges of remote instruction in the SPFL-Mandarin program. Teachers engaged in the creation of Supplementary Learning Materials (SLMs) and Learning Activity Sheets (LAS) tailored to the specific competencies outlined in MELCs. This localized approach not only ensured the relevance of materials to the Philippine context but also provided students with resources that resonate with their cultural and linguistic background. The emphasis on localized materials reflects a proactive stance in overcoming challenges, fostering a more meaningful and contextually relevant Mandarin language learning experience. Moreover, this also showcases the creativity and resourcefulness of the teachers in handling and designing their lessons despite limited physical interaction.

Theme 8: Unpacking the MELCs

This reflects the proactive activities undertaken by teachers to address challenges in utilizing the curriculum during the pandemic. Unpacking involved a detailed analysis of MELCs, with a focus on identifying enabling learning competencies. This strategic approach aimed to enhance the adaptability of the SPFL-Mandarin program, ensuring that students received comprehensive support in mastering language competencies. By unpacking MELCs, teachers demonstrated a commitment to holistic

language education, emphasizing not only the attainment of specific competencies but also the development of foundational skills that contribute to overall language proficiency. Furthermore, this theme also showcased the critical thinking of the teachers. Teachers scrutinized the MELCs to align it to the learning competencies in order to attain them.

5.4 Teacher Training for SPFL-Mandarin

Aside from the mentioned challenges above, another biggest bottleneck in implementing the Chinese Mandarin program in Philippine public high schools is the need for qualified teachers to teach the said foreign language. As per the Philippine law, foreigners are not allowed to teach in the public school system; thus, the Volunteer Chinese Teachers (CVT) of the Confucius Institute (CI) are not allowed to teach in public schools.

To address this challenge, the Department of Education and CI-AUF jointly trained in-service teachers through summer trainings, mentoring sessions, and immersion programs. The Volunteer Chinese Teachers and Chinese Professional Teachers of CI-AUF served as trainers for public school teachers. Moreover, to ensure the smooth implementation of the program, the Department of Education appointed Dr. Zhang Shifang as the Overseas Advisor of the Special Program in Foreign Language-Chinese Mandarin in 2013. As a result of this fruitful collaboration, 360 Filipino teachers from the 11 implementing regions of the Philippines were already trained to teach Chinese Mandarin and currently catering 11,000 students nationwide.

To further deepen and strengthen the localization of Chinese teachers in the Philippines, the Center for Language Education and Cooperation (formerly Confucius Institute Headquarters / Hanban) of China and the Department of Education of the Philippines signed a Memorandum of Agreement for the Joint Training of local teachers for the Master of Arts in Education-Major in Chinese Language Teaching (MAEd CLT) on

December 3, 2019. The program aims to support the sustainable development of the Special Program in Foreign Language (SPFL)-Chinese Mandarin in public secondary schools. The program is designed further to enhance local teachers' language proficiency and pedagogical skills. The MAEd CLT is a two-year program that aims to develop competent and effective teachers of Chinese as foreign language teachers imbued with the necessary knowledge, skills, and values. The program, which targets to upskill 300 teachers in the next five years, starting 2020 until 2025, will be implemented by the Angeles University Foundation of the Philippines and the Fujian Normal University of China.

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of Education and the Angeles University Foundation implemented the program and successfully recruited 52 students for the first batch in August 2020. Students will attend four semesters at the Angeles University Foundation, Philippines, and two semesters at the Fujian Normal University, China. The educational cooperation between the government of China and the Philippines paved the way for the professionalization of local Chinese teachers in the Philippines. Through the said partnership, a master's degree in Chinese Language Teaching will be conferred to teachers who will complete the two-year program. This initiative contributes to the efforts of the Philippine government in upskilling and reskilling teachers to achieve an improved quality of education.

With the continued support from the Center for Language Education and Cooperation, the Fujian Normal University, and the Angeles University Foundation, the following developments for the Chinese Mandarin program of the Philippine Basic Education System can be explored in the future:

- Localization/Contextualization of Instructional Materials for Chinese Mandarin
 - After achieving the goal of producing 300 teachers with a high level of Chinese language competence, there would be enough qualified teachers to collaborate with in designing localized/contextualized instructional materials for Filipino learners learning Chinese Mandarin. The localization of instructional materials shall support making education relevant and responsive to the needs of Filipino learners.
- Inclusion of the Chinese Mandarin as an Elective Interest Program in the Elementary Level
 - To provide extra learning activities for elementary learners interested in exploring the Chinese language and culture, including Chinese Mandarin as an Elective Interest Program may be considered in the future. The said initiative shall promote intercultural awareness among Filipino learners at a young age.
- Inclusion of the Chinese Mandarin in the Senior High School Level
 - Chinese Mandarin can be an essential job qualification for learners who wish to pursue a career after graduating from Senior High School. Including Chinese Mandarin in Senior High School shall

provide Filipino learners with the necessary language skills for their future careers.

- Student Exchange Program for Senior High School
 - The possibility of having a student exchange program for senior high school to promote closer and deeper friendly relations, cultural awareness and understanding is highly welcome.
- Joint Research Program
 - The possibility of collaboration in Chinese language research may also be explored. Experts from both countries can establish academic partnerships to implement research programs, which will aid in further enhancing the Chinese Mandarin Program of the DepEd.

With these initiatives, the Department of Education looks forward to more meaningful collaborations with the Center for Language Education and Cooperation to afford Filipino learners opportunities for greater participation in society.

SPFL-CHINESE MANDARIN 10-YEAR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

6.1 Overview

6.2 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Strategic Framework towards the BEDP 2030 and MATATAG agenda

6.3 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Strategic Framework

6.1 Overview

To ensure the sustainable development of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin in the next ten (10) years, it is essential that its strategic framework is aligned with the national development plan. In the context of the Philippine education, the strategic framework for SPFL-Chinese Mandarin shall be anchored from the strategic goals of the Department of Education, which were explicitly enumerated in its Basic Education Development Plan 2030 and MATATAG agenda. This chapter will explore the strategic framework of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin. The emphasis is placed on Curriculum Development and Implementation, Learning Resources Development, Teachers' Capacity Building, and Program Evaluation.

6.2 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Strategic Framework towards the BEDP 2030 and MATATAG agenda

Guided by the overall vision of the K to 12 Basic Education Program of the country, that is to produce globally competitive and holistically developed Filipino learners imbued with 21st century skills, the BEDP 2030 and MATATAG agenda explicitly outlined the national targets in the field of education. The MATATAG agenda focuses on four critical components:

- **MA**ke the curriculum relevant to produce competent and job-ready, active, and responsible citizens. This component focuses on enhancing the school curriculum, making it more relevant and responsive to the needs of the Filipino learners. The emphasis is placed on providing strong foundational skills in literacy and numeracy in the early grades, particularly among disadvantaged students;
- **TA**ke steps to accelerate delivery of basic education facilities and services. This component focuses on the continuous improvement of school facilities and services, contributing in providing an environment conducive for teaching and learning;
- **TA**ke good care of learners by promoting learner well-being, inclusive education, and a positive learning environment. This component focuses on the promotion of inclusive education which shall benefit the Filipino learners from different backgrounds;
- **GI**ve support to teachers to teach better. This component focuses on providing the teachers with platforms for both personal and professional development. This component provides teachers with opportunities for upskilling and reskilling, resulting to the achievement of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST).

In addition to the MATATAG agenda, the strategic framework of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is likewise anchored on the Basic Education Development Plan 2030 (BEDP 2030) which was issued through DepEd Order No. 24, s. 2022. The BEDP 2030 has four intermediate outcomes as indicators to achieve the goal of DepEd, which is to ensure that “All Filipinos are able to realize their full potential and contribute meaningfully to a cohesive nation.” These intermediate outcomes include Access, Equity, Quality, Resiliency, and Well-being.

- **Access** - All school-age children, out-of-school youth and adults accessed relevant basic learning opportunities. This indicator focuses on providing a universal access to education by all learners including school-age children and out-of-school youth and adults.
- **Equity** - Disadvantaged school-age children and youth, and adults benefited from appropriate equity initiatives. The DepEd acknowledges the fact that the Filipino learners are of different background, thus, this indicator focuses on making initiatives to further address the needs of learners in situations of disadvantage.
- **Quality** - Learners complete K to 12 basic education, having successfully attained all learning standards that equip them with the necessary skills and attributes to pursue their chosen paths. This indicator focuses on initiatives that aim to uplift the quality of both teaching and learning.
- **Resiliency and Well-being** - Learners are resilient and know their rights and have the life skills to protect themselves and exercise their education related rights, while being aware of their responsibilities as individuals and as members of society. This indicator focuses on building resilience among learners and capacitating them to exercise their rights

in a positive learning environment, while being aware of their responsibilities as individuals and as members of society (DO 24, s. 2022).

Further, the BEDP 2030 serves as a blueprint for the Department of Education (DepEd) in the next decade, guiding the formulation, implementation, coordination, monitoring, evaluation, and supervision of policies, plans, programs, and projects in formal and non-formal basic education. It aims to improve the delivery and quality of basic education, enhance students' learning experiences, and address the immediate impacts of the pandemic on learning and participation. The BEDP 2030 focuses on addressing learning loss, deepening learning gains, closing access gaps, improving education quality, anticipating the future of education, fostering resiliency, and ensuring the rights of children and youth in education are embedded.

The MATATAG agenda and the BEDP 2030 serve as the foundational frameworks of the **Strategic Roadmap for Chinese Language Education in the Basic Education of the Philippines**, hereinafter refer to the Roadmap 2033 (Roadmap 2033). The Roadmap 2033 encompasses components that are aligned with the objectives of the MATATAG agenda and the BEDP2020. The Roadmap covers strategic thrusts in the aspects of Curriculum Development, Learning Resources Development, Exchanges, Activities, Teachers' Capacity Building, and Evaluation. To ensure the alignment of the Roadmap 2033 to MATATAG agenda and BEDP 2030, the table below shows the mapping of the components between the three frameworks.

Roadmap 2033	MATATAG Agenda	BEDP 2030
Curriculum Development and Implementation	MAke the curriculum relevant to produce competent and job-ready, active, and responsible citizens.	Quality
Learning Resources Development	TAke steps to accelerate delivery of basic education facilities and services.	Access, Equity, Quality
Expansion Initiatives and Targets	<p>MAke the curriculum relevant to produce competent and job-ready, active, and responsible citizens.</p> <p>TAke steps to accelerate delivery of basic education facilities and services.</p>	Access, Equity, Quality
Activities	TAke good care of learners by promoting learner well-being, inclusive education, and a positive learning environment.	Equity, Quality
Teachers' Capacity Building	Give support to teachers to teach better.	Access, Quality
Program Evaluation	MATATAG	Quality

The table shows the explicit connection and alignment of the Roadmap 2033 with the targets of the Philippine Department of Education. The six components of the Roadmap 2033 covers the four targets of the MATATAG Agenda, and the four targets of the BEDP 2030. This clearly demonstrates the relevance of the Roadmap 2033 to both frameworks.

6.3 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Strategic Framework

6.3.1 Curriculum Development and Implementation

In the early stage of the implementation of the SPFL, the DepEd developed and used a unified curriculum guide for all the foreign languages in the SPFL. The unified curriculum serves as the basis of the different languages in drafting their language-specific curriculum guide. The SPFL Curriculum is anchored with the philosophical foundation of the K-12 basic education program, a learner-centered philosophy of education. It focuses on the foreign language learning process relevant and responsive to the needs and interests of Filipino learners and their respective social contexts. The goals of the SPFL are achieved through the development of interdependent and interrelated receptive (listening, reading, and viewing) and productive (speaking, writing, and creating) macro skills, which, in turn, allow learners to tap into higher-order thinking skills (critical thinking, creative thinking, and metacognition) to make meaning through language. These are further detailed in the standards and the corresponding learning competencies in the curriculum, which were adapted from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) to ensure that the learners' proficiency at the end of the program is aligned with international or global standards.

The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin curriculum is specifically designed for four levels of the Junior High School (Grade 7-10). Similar to other curriculum subjects, the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is being offered for the whole duration of one academic year, which is equivalent to 32 weeks. The lessons offered in the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin were divided into four major units, which correspond to four quarters of the academic year. The allotted time for the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is four hours or 240 minutes a week.

The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is being taught using English as the medium of instruction and with the help of Filipino and mother tongue as auxiliary languages.

To align the program with the K to 12 Basic Education Curriculum, which salient features include making the curriculum relevant to learners, it is a mandate for all the subjects across all levels to ensure the contextualization of the learning process. In response to this, the Bureau of Curriculum Development, in partnership with the Center for Language Education and Cooperation, developed a curriculum guide specific for the implementation of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin. The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Guide was completed in July 2022, which features contents related to the Filipino learners' social context, including local values, arts, traditions, and customs, contributing in bringing Chinese Mandarin closer to the lives of Filipino learners.

In August 2023, the DepEd launched the recalibrated curriculum for the first 10 years of the K-12 basic education program. Covered in the revision of the curriculum is the junior high school level in which the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is being offered. Given the revisions in the K to 12 curriculum, the SPFL curriculum and the other curriculum guides for the Special Curricular Programs shall also be revised accordingly to maintain curricular alignment. The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin curriculum guide that was developed in 2022 shall be revisited to ensure its alignment to the revised curriculum of the country. The DepEd curriculum alignment process includes evaluation, revision, validation, finalization, and refinement.

Currently, the Special Program in Foreign Language is offered in Key Stage 3 or Grades 7-10 of the Philippine basic edu-

cation. The implementation of SPFL shall be extended until Key Stage 4 or the Senior High School (Grades 11 and 12) of the Philippine basic education. The feasibility of implementing SPFL in the Senior High School program may have two pathways. One is SPFL as a strand, and the other one is as an elective for the Technical Vocational Strand. Regardless of the pathways, the graduates of the SPFL SHS may take any of the four exits of the K to 12 curriculum, which are higher education, middle-level skills development, entrepreneurship, and/or employment.

Relative to this is DepEd Memorandum 149, s. 2011 or the Career Pathways for High School Students. This issuance provided the different career pathways that a learner enrolled in a Special Curricular Program, including SPFL, may take after high school. As per DM 149, s. 2011, SPFL graduates may have the following fields of work after graduation: call center agent, tour guide, concierge in hotels, interpreter, and translator. On the other hand, SPFL graduates may pursue the following degree programs in higher education: Bachelor of Science in Tourism, Tourism Management, Foreign Studies, Foreign Service, and International Relations, and Bachelor of Arts in Integrated Communications and Public Relations.

In the first path of implementing SPFL in the SHS, SPFL in Junior High School or Key Stage 3 shall be continued to Key Stage 4 or in Senior High School under the academic track. This means that the

completers of SPFL in existing JHS implementers will continue to the SPFL SHS strand. Under this pathway, the standards expected from a completer of SPFL SHS are comparable with that of the B1 based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

In the second path, there will be select SHS that offer the Technical Vocational track will offer SPFL as an elective subject for their learners. In this path, the standards expected from a completer of this program are comparable with that of the A2 based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

The policy for the implementation of SPFL in the Senior High School is targeted to be released in 2026 or after the release of the policy for the implementation of the Special Curricular Programs. However, conducting a feasibility study is imperative to develop a sound policy for the implementation of SPFL in SHS.

Nevertheless, Chinese Mandarin shall be targeted as the pilot foreign language to be implemented in the Senior High School program. This is because of the strong position of the SPFL Chinese Mandarin in terms of the number of existing implementers, teachers, and learners. The table below outlines the proposed implementation of the revised SPFL curriculum for junior high school and the expansion of SPFL into the senior high school level.

Grades	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
7		(G7 Revised CG)									
8			(G8 Revised CG)								
9				(G9 Revised CG)							
10					(G10 Revised CG)						
11				(G11-2 CG)	(G11-1 CG)	(G11-2 CG)			(G11-2 Revised CG)		
						(G11-1 CG)			(G11-1 Revised CG)		
12					(G12-2 CG)	(G12-1 CG)	(G12-2 CG)		Review of SHS SPFL Curriculum		(G12-2 Revised CG)
							(G12-1 CG)			(G12-1 Revised CG)	

The table provides a comprehensive overview of the schematic timeline for the implementation of the revised curriculum and its expansion in the two senior high school levels. First, a graduate of the new curriculum (Grades 7-10) is expected to finish on 2028. Second, the graduate of old curriculum who pursue 2nd path of SPFL in the SHS are expected to finish on 2028. Third, the graduate of old curriculum who pursue 1st path of SPFL in the SHS are expected to finish on 2029. Fourth, the graduate of the new curriculum who pursue 2nd path of SPFL in the SHS are expected to finish on 2030. Fifth, the graduate of the new curriculum who pursue 1st path of SPFL in the SHS are expected to finish on 2030. Sixth, the

2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Curriculum Review, Revision, Validation, Finalization, and Refinement	Implementation of the Revised SPFL Curriculum (Grade 7)	Implementation of the Revised SPFL Curriculum (Grades 7 and 8)	Implementation of the Revised SPFL Curriculum (Grades 7, 8, and 9)	Implementation of the Revised SPFL Curriculum (Grades 7, 8, 9, and 10)
Release of the Revised SPFL Curriculum	Evaluation of the Revised SPFL Curriculum (Grade 7)	Evaluation of the Revised SPFL Curriculum (Grade 8)	Evaluation of the Revised SPFL Curriculum (Grade 9)	Evaluation of the Revised SPFL Curriculum (Grade 10)
Orientation & Training of SPFL Teachers for the revised SPFL Curriculum	Alignment of the Revised SPFL Curriculum and the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Guide (Grade 7)	Alignment of the Revised SPFL Curriculum and the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Guide (Grade 8)	Alignment of the Revised SPFL Curriculum and the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Guide (Grade 9)	Alignment of the Revised SPFL Curriculum and the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Guide (Grade 10)
	Training of the Teachers for Implementing SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Guide (Grade 7)	Training of the Teachers for Implementing SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Guide (Grade 8)	Training of the Teachers for Implementing SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Guide (Grade 9)	Training of the Teachers for Implementing SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Guide (Grade 10)
		Development and Issuance of Policy Guidelines for Senior High School	Implementation of the SPFL in the SHS for 2 nd path. (Grade 11-2)	Implementation of the SPFL in the SHS for 2 nd path. (Grade 12-2)
				Implementation of the SPFL in the SHS for 1 st path. (Grade 11-1)

graduate of the new curriculum who pursue 1st and 2nd path of the Revised SPFL in the SHS are expected to finish on 2033.

In order to achieve the implementation of the revised curriculum and expansion to the senior high school of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, it is imperative to plan strategically to ensure smooth transition and uninterrupted implementation of the program. The table below outlines the actions to be taken for the next ten years.

2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
	Full implementation of SPFL Curriculum from grade 7 to grade 12	Curriculum Review			Graduate of the revised SPFL Curriculum
			Revision of G11-2 CG	Revision of G12-2 CG	
Implementation of the SPFL in the SHS for 2 nd path. (Grade 12-1)			Revision of G11-1 CG	Revision of G12-1 CG	

6.3.2 Learning Resources Development

The curriculum and the instructional resources are two inseparable elements of teaching. Considering that Chinese Mandarin is being taught as a foreign language, it is essential that the instructional materials captivate students' critical and creative thinking, and at the same time encourage active engagement among them. Among the challenges of foreign language teaching is the absence of a linguistic environment where the students can practice what they have learned inside the classroom, thus, it is crucial that instructional materials promote individual or group practice.

Another consideration in developing the instructional materials for SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is the alignment between teachers' training, curriculum, targeted competencies of the students, instructional materials, assessment, and evaluation. The Center for Language Education and Cooperation provided materials that were translated in the local language, however, localization does not only involve translation of the instructional materials, but also incorporating elements that are important to the local culture. Thus, in the early development of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, further revisions were made in the translated instructional materials to make it more relevant to the actual local setting, thus, making the

2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Mapping of the existing instructional materials with the revised curriculum.	Integration of the Grade 7 SPFL Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Integration of the Grade 8 SPFL Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Integration of the Grade 9 SPFL Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Integration of the Grade 10 SPFL Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.
Development of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials for Grades 7 to 10, including teacher's guide, student's textbook, and student's workbook.	Evaluation of the Grade 7 SPFL Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Evaluation of the Grade 8 SPFL Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Evaluation of the Grade 9 SPFL Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Evaluation of the Grade 10 SPFL Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.
Orientation & Training of SPFL Teachers for the Grade 7 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Alignment of the Revised SPFL Curriculum and the Grade 8 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Alignment of the Revised SPFL Curriculum and the Grade 9 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Alignment of the Revised SPFL Curriculum and the Grade 10 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	
	Orientation & Training of SPFL Teachers for the Grade 8 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Orientation & Training of SPFL Teachers for the Grade 9 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Orientation & Training of SPFL Teachers for the Grade 10 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	
		Development of Grade 11-2 (2 nd path) SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Integration of the Grade 11-2 SPFL Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Integration of the Grade 12-2 SPFL Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.
		Orientation & Training of SPFL Teachers for the Grade 11-2 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Development of SHS (G11-1 and G12-2) SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Integration of the Grade 11-1 SPFL Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.
			Orientation & Training of SPFL Teachers for the Grades 11-1 and 12-2 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.	Development of SHS (G12-1 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.
				Orientation & Training of SPFL Teachers for the Grade 12-1 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.

diverse cultural background of learners can be used to enrich the materials for the whole class. The revisions in the materials were reflected in the lesson matrices, which served as the teachers' lesson guides in the early stage of implementing the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin. The same problem was reflected in Yang (2014), which raised the concern of non-uniformed and diversified teaching materials within Chinese language education in the Philippines. Therefore, in order to fully support the teaching of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, it is essential that the instructional materials be developed in accordance with both national and, where relevant, international standards.

The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Curriculum Guide jointly developed by the Bureau of Curriculum Development and Center for Language Education and Cooperation promotes the development of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin instructional materials that are scientific, flexible, engaging, and practical. The recent revision on the K-12 basic education program calls the revisiting of the existing SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teaching and learning materials, and if relevant, revise it according to new standards. The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teaching and learning materials shall comprise the targeted learning competences of the revised curriculum. To ensure alignment of the revised curriculum and of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teaching and learning materials, the following actions will be taken.

2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
	Full integration of SPFL Instructional Materials from grade 7 to grade 12	Curriculum Review			Graduate of the revised SPFL Curriculum
		SHS SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Instructional Materials Review	Revision of G11-2 CG	Revision of G12-2 CG	
Integration of the Grade 1 SPFL Chinese Mandarin instructional materials.			Revision of G11-1 CG	Revision of G12-1 CG	

6.3.3 Teachers' Capacity Building

Relative to the different activities enumerated in the previous section, capacity, and capability building is one of the priorities of the ROADMAP 2033, in congruence with the MATATAG agenda and the BEDP 2030 DepEd.

Building the capacity of teachers is essential to achieving the quality of education and academic experience of the learners. The key is to provide learners with the tools to think for themselves. So, there is a need to instill a sense of commitment in teachers and ensure that they have the skills to bring the best out of the learners while understanding the varied learning methods required to meet the needs of every learner. Through extensive regular capacity building, teachers receive training on learner-centered teaching methodology and social and emotional learning, as well as training that enables them to make effective use of equipment, teaching aids, and technology to ensure that each child gains as much as they can from the learning center. In addition, teachers undergo subject-specific refresher courses and receive training on subjects that are part of the national curriculum.

While the curriculum can be conceptualized in several ways, the notions of “intended” and “implemented” are helpful for curriculum developers. The intended curriculum is expressed in policy documents, curriculum frameworks or guidelines, standards and assessment frameworks, syllabi, textbooks, and other instructional materials. Clearly, it defines the structure, content, and methods of intended learning experiences. This “intended” curriculum is then implemented through real teachers interacting with real students in real schools. The “real” or “implemented” curriculum shapes students’ learning experiences and determines their learning outcomes.

Given these, teachers play a para-

mount role in transferring the intended curriculum into the implemented curriculum. Thus, capacity building is essential for teachers to facilitate teaching and learning. This is evident in the statement of the Vice President of the Republic of the Philippines and Secretary of the Department of Education Sara Z. Duterte, who mentioned in the 2023 Basic Education Report that “We will continuously provide professional development programs, including graduate degree scholarship programs to teachers focusing on their learning area specialization and graduate certificate programs for nonmajors.” DepEd also plans to upscale the National Educator’s Academy of the Philippines and knowledge sharing from the partners in their expertise as their priority intervention programs.

Capacity building is defined as “the process of assisting an individual or group to gain insights, knowledge, and experiences needed to solve problems and implement change.” As well as developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of individuals and groups engaged in curriculum reform, it is crucial to empower them in policy formulation, curriculum design, textbook development and evaluation, piloting and innovation, implementation, and curriculum monitoring and evaluation.

Various policies are issued for the Department of Education to address and promote teachers’ professional development through capacity building. One of the primary issuances for teachers’ professional development is DepEd Order 42, s. 2017 the National Adoption and Implementation of the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST). The PPST aims to:

1. set out clear expectations of teachers along well-defined career stages of professional development from beginning to distinguished practice;

2. engage teachers to actively embrace a continuing effort to attain proficiency; and
3. apply a uniform measure to assess teacher performance, identify needs, and provide support for professional development.

Similarly, DepEd also issued DO 35, s. 2016 The Learning Action Cell as A K to 12 Basic Education Program School-Based Continuing Professional Development Strategy for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning. This issuance is a manifestation that DepEd fully supports the continuing professional development of its teaching personnel based on the principle of lifelong learning and DepEd’s commitment to developing teachers’ potential aimed toward their success in the profession.

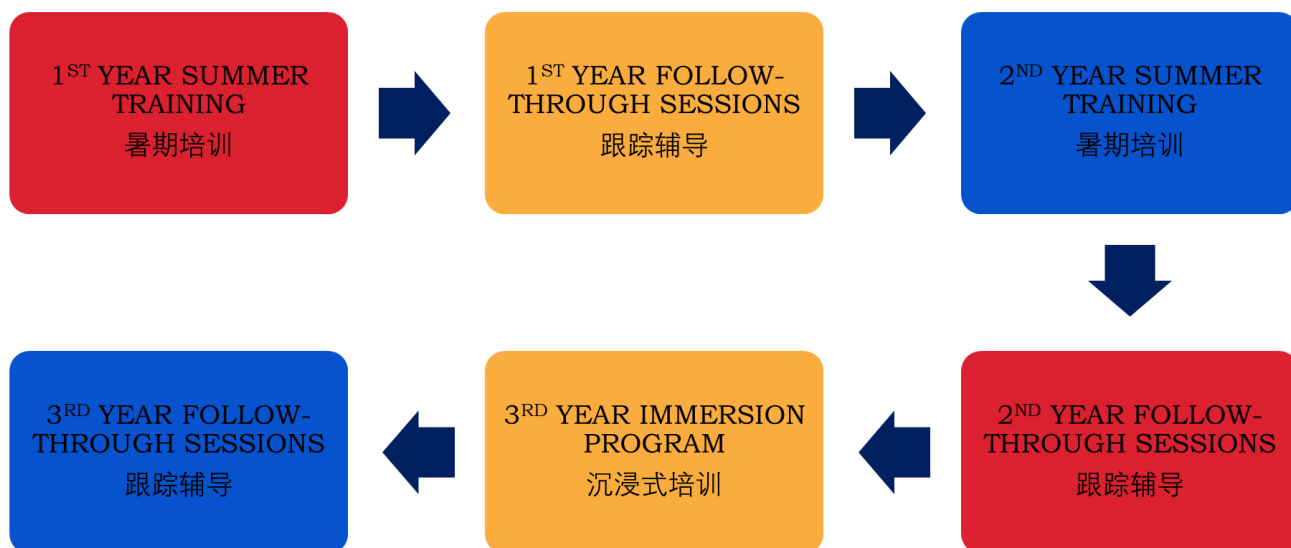
In the context of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, considering that the subject matter is not the field of specialization of the teachers, the more that capacity building is necessary. The capacity building programs for SPFL-Chinese Mandarin focuses on three important dimensions, including (a) understanding the core concepts of the education

system; (b) improving competence and positive attitudes; and (c) developing innovative pedagogical approaches and models. Thus, a SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teacher is expected to have curricular, content, and pedagogical knowledge. The curricular knowledge covers understanding of core concepts such as education frameworks, local curricula, and curriculum implementation cycle. On the other hand, content knowledge covers the language and linguistic knowledge of the Chinese Mandarin. The SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teacher shall demonstrate proficiency that is atleast one level higher to the target proficiency level of the grade level he is handling. Lastly, the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teacher shall be possessed with both theoretical and practical knowledge on how teaching and learning take place.

To equip the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teachers with curricular, content, and pedagogical knowledge, the DepEd, in partnership with the partner institutions, conducts training, workshops, conferences, and seminars. Below are the training programs that address the needs of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teachers in the aspects of content, pedagogy, and curriculum.



In order to equip the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teachers with strong Content Knowledge, the DepEd designed in-service teacher training program that spans three years. The Chinese Volunteer Teachers play the role of trainers for prospective Chinese Mandarin teachers. The training program incorporates a mix of on-campus, in-house, and overseas training, comprising three main components: summer training, follow-through sessions, and an immersion program. Below is the training cycle of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teachers.



Training Cycle for SPFL-Chinese Mandarin Teachers

Prospective teachers will undergo summer training and follow-through sessions in their first year of training. In the initial summer training, they will receive intensive on-campus instruction by the partner institution, totaling 160 hours. The focus is on equipping them with the basics of the Chinese language and culture that are essential in passing the HSK 1 (CEFR A1).

Upon completion of the first summer training, these prospective teachers will continue their training in their respective schools, where Chinese Volunteer Teachers (CVTs) will be assigned. The follow-through training involves the supervision of local Chinese teachers' instruction and further enhancement of their foreign language proficiency. This phase spans thirty-two (32) Saturdays, covering a minimum of 64 hours. The CVTs will observe classes taught by qualified teachers of Chinese Mandarin, offer feedback, and conduct weekend Chinese

language classes to boost the proficiency of local teachers. This approach aims to maintain teachers' proficiency and prepare them for the second summer training in the subsequent year.

In the second year of the program, participants undergo an additional 160-hour on-campus training and a minimum of 64-hour in-house training. The targeted competency level after this second summer training is HSK 2 (CEFR A2), with coverage extending into some aspects of HSK 3 (CEFR B1). Simultaneously, follow-through sessions during the second year aim to prepare prospective teachers for HSK 3 (CEFR B1) proficiency before the subsequent immersion program.

In the third year, the training advances to an overseas program where prospective teachers spend one month in China. The Local Chinese Language Teachers' Training

Program is designed to support the professional development of local Chinese language teachers in foreign countries through short-term professional training in China (CLEC, 2020). This provides them with an opportunity to apply their Chinese language skills in a real-world context, enhancing fluency from HSK 3 (CEFR B1) to HSK 4 (CEFR B2).

Over the past decade, the DepEd has successfully trained 560 SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teachers from 160 public high schools. For the next 10 years, the DepEd aims to further expand the implementation of SPFL-Chinese Mandarin by training more teachers from additional schools, contributing in further widening the reach of the program.

Roadmap 2033 Implementation Plan		2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033
Schools	Additional Number	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
	Cumulative Number	210	260	310	360	410	460	510	560	610	660
Teachers	Additional Number	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50	50
	Cumulative Number	613	663	713	763	813	863	913	963	1013	1063
Students	Additional Number	1250	2500	3750	3750	3750	3750	3750	3750	3750	3750
	Cumulative Number	15647	18147	21897	25647	29397	33147	36897	40647	44397	48147

According to the data provided, additional 50 schools will be targeted to implement the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin every year for the next ten years, totaling to 500 additional schools for the next decade. This number will correspond to the 4% of total number of secondary schools in the country. The expansion of schools implementing SPFL-Chinese Mandarin is poised to yield a favorable outcome on teacher numbers. For every new school implementing SPFL-Chinese Mandarin, a minimum of one teacher will undergo training in Chinese Mandarin. This entails an annual training target of at least 50 teachers, culminating in the addition of 500 proficient SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teachers for the next ten years. At the

end of 2033, more than 1000 teachers will be teaching under the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin. The growth of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin initiative will not only broaden its reach but also extend access to a greater number of secondary school students. In the pioneer year of implementation of the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin at a new school, it will be introduced at the grade 7 level, with each class accommodating 25 students. Subsequent years will witness the program's expansion to higher grade levels, thereby augmenting the overall student enrollment in the program. At the end of 2033, at least 48,000 students will be under the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin.

6.3.4 Implementation of the ROADMAP 2033

6.3.4.1 Roles and Responsibilities in the Implementation of the ROADMAP 2033

The following are the different roles and responsibilities per governance level:

A. Central Office and Confucius Institute

1. Provide overall policy directions to support the implementation of the ROADMAP 2033.
2. Formulate national guidelines and standards to operationalize the ROADMAP 2033.
3. Assess the achievement of the objectives of the ROADMAP 2033.
4. Formulating strategic plans in the implementation of the ROADMAP 2033.

B. Regional Office

1. Oversee the implementation of the ROADMAP 2033 in the region.
2. Engage stakeholders and partners in implementing the ROADMAP 2033.
3. Provide technical assistance to SDOs in implementing the ROADMAP 2033.
4. Submit a monitoring and evaluation report of the ROADMAP 2033 to the Central Office.

C. Schools Division Office

1. Oversee the implementation of ROADMAP 2033 in SPFL Chinese Mandarin implementing schools.
2. Engage stakeholders and partners in implementing the ROADMAP 2033.
3. Provide technical assistance to SPFL Chinese Mandarin implementing schools in implementing the ROADMAP 2033.
4. Submit a monitoring and evaluation report of the ROADMAP 2033 to the Regional Office.

D. Schools

1. Implement the ROADMAP 2033.
2. Engage stakeholders and partners in implementing the ROADMAP 2033.
3. Submit an evaluation report of the ROADMAP 2033 to the Schools Division Office.

6.3.4.2 Operationalization of the ROADMAP 2033

The following shall be the steps to operationalize the SPFL Chinese Mandarin Roadmap 2033. DepEd and Confucius Institute shall have joint responsibilities on the following:

1. Identify possible schools for program expansions following the policy guidelines and standards;
2. Expand SPFL Chinese Mandarin in other regions and schools division offices;
3. Ensure that the activities under the ROADMAP 2033 are carried out;
4. Safeguard that the program and curriculum standards will develop the competencies needed in careers where knowledge in Chinese Mandarin language and culture will be useful;
5. Guide, review, and approve the training and curriculum design and instructional support for SPFL Chinese Mandarin teachers;
6. Guarantee the regular participation of the teachers in the full cycle of summer training, follow-through training, and immersion program in Chinese Mandarin, and other related SPFL-Chinese Mandarin training and events;
7. Explore a tie-up with teachers and higher education institutions in recognizing

teacher training and professional development courses;

8. Create mechanisms in collaboration with the Regional and Division offices and participating schools to make sure that the SPFL-Chinese Mandarin teachers will abide by the contract to teach Chinese Mandarin in at least two classes per school for at least three (3) years provided they attended the full cycle of the training;
9. Direct the schools to include SPFL activities in their School Improvement Plans (SIPs), the divisions in their Division Education Development Plans (DEDPs), and the regions in their regional plans to ensure provision for financial support, but not limited to the reproduction of instructional materials, subject to the

availability of funds and government accounting and auditing rules and regulations; and

10. Notwithstanding the monitoring and evaluation activities conducted by each party, a monitoring and evaluation tool shall be jointly developed by both parties to be used in the annual review of the program to monitor and evaluate the SPFL program's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. The output of the review shall be written in a report to be submitted to the Secretary of the Department of Education and the Confucius Institute for reference in the continuation and improvement of the program and other future programs and projects to be jointly undertaken by both parties.

6.3.5 Monitoring and Evaluation of the Roadmap 2033

To further guide the Department of Education in monitoring the implementation of the Roadmap 2033, the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework is anchored on DepEd Order 29, s. 2022, the Adaption of the Basic Education Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (BEMEF) shall be adopted. The M&E framework reflects the expected results of the interventions and strategies aligned to the needs of the learners during emergencies. The strategies and interventions stipulated in this guideline shall enable the learners to recover their lost learning during an emergency and continue and complete the basic education curriculum.

The Field Operations, in collaboration with the Planning Service, will collect data, information, and feedback from internal and external stakeholders to evaluate the performance of policies. Periodic reviews and assessments will be conducted to align them with the Department's priorities. The collaboration of the Curriculum and Learning Management Division (CLMD) and Quality Assurance Division (QAD), Curriculum Im-

plementation Division (CID) and School Governance Operations Division (SGOD), and school heads will monitor the roadmap implementation within their respective levels and provide input for improving these guidelines.

All DepEd operating units and personnel are responsible for conducting monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities in accordance with DepEd Order 29, s. 2022. This ensures that the interventions and strategies outlined in the guidelines align with the expected results. The M&E process owner at each level of governance may offer technical assistance for M&E-related activities upon request.

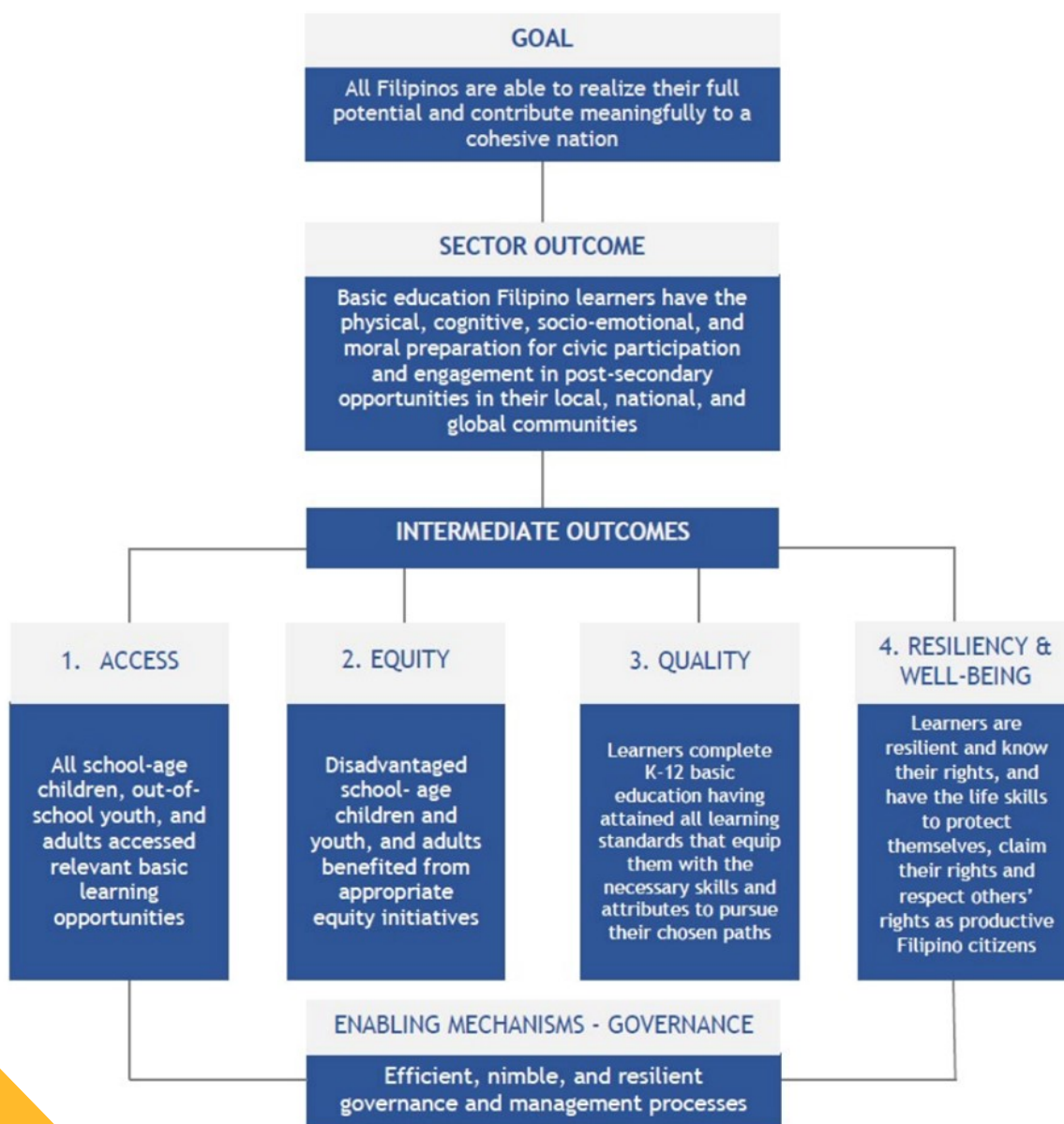
The BEMEF shall guide the conduct of M&E in DepEd. To identify the appropriate M&E mechanisms, tools, and approaches to use, it is important to have a clear understanding of the difference between monitoring and evaluation and the different types of M&E being conducted at each stage of programs, projects, and significant activities implementation.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) refer to measuring the performance of an organization, a program, a project, or an individual. These are complementary yet distinct processes depending on the purpose, focus, and approach used when they are conducted. The activities involved in monitoring and evaluation are often intertwined, but clear distinctions exist between the two.

Monitoring explains the efficiency and effectiveness of operations, while evaluation provides information on the benefits

achieved. Monitoring results provide bases for critical management decisions such as resource allocation, realignment, target setting, remedial/corrective actions, or strategy development. On the other hand, evaluation results provide valuable lessons and insights that managers can use in crafting future strategic decisions, such as designing organizational changes or future programs and/or projects.

The M&E of the ROADMAP 2033 shall follow this framework of the:



BEMEF: Basic Education Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

The BEMEF, as illustrated in Figure 1, links the means and ends as well as interrelationships of various programs, structures, and systems. It is organized in four levels: (i) Goal, (ii) sector outcome, (iii) Intermediate Outcome (IO), and (iv) Enabling mechanisms (EM). The goal represents the contribution of the Department in achieving societal aspirations in terms of improving the state of education in the country and global community. The sector outcome represents the result that DepEd would like to attain as an organization. It also encompasses the strategic directions and agenda of the Department as an agency.

It describes the condition and characteristics of the learners the organization wants to produce – what we want our learn-

ers to be after they complete basic education. DepEd aims to develop Filipino learners with physical, cognitive, socio-emotional, and moral preparation for civic participation and engagement in post-secondary opportunities in the local, national, and global communities. It seeks to reinforce current measures of learning outcomes to recognize diversity of talents and intelligence. It ensures that policies and programs aimed at addressing the holistic needs of learners are implemented. The IO represents what the DepEd as an organization endeavors the learners to be while inside the basic education system in terms of access and quality.

The following IOs shall be monitored in the ROADMAP 2033 using this matrix:

Intermediate Outcomes	Performance Indicators	Description	Frequency of Data Reporting	Disaggregated by	Data Source
IO #1. All school-age children, out-of-school youth, and adults accessed relevant basic learning opportunities	Net Enrollment Rate (NER)	NER refers to the ratio of the enrolment for the age group corresponding to the official school age in the secondary level to the population of the same age group in a given year. Also known as Participation Rate.	Annual	Governance Level (National, Region, Division) Grade 7-10 Sex (Male, Female) Gender parity index for NER	CO: PS, BCD RO: PPRD, CLMD SDO: SGOD, CID School: SH
	Gross Enrollment Rate (GER)	GER refers to the total enrollment in a given level of education, regardless of age, as a percentage of the population who according to the national regulations should be enrolled at this level.	Annual	Governance Level (National, Region, Division) Grade 7-10 Sex (Male, Female) Gender parity index for GER	CO: PS, BCD RO: PPRD, CLMD SDO: SGOD, CID School: SH
IO 1.2: All learners will stay in school and finish key stages	Retention Rate (RR)	RR refers to the percentage of enrollees in the secondary level in a given school year who continue to be in school the following year.	Annual	Governance Level (National, Region, Division) Grade 7-10 Sex (Male, Female) Gender parity index for RR	CO: PS, BCD RO: PPRD, CLMD SDO: SGOD, CID School: SH
	Dropout Rate (DR)	DR refers to the percentage of learners who leave the program for any reason as well as those who complete the previous year level but fail to enroll in the next grade level the following school year to the total number of learners enrolled.	Annual	Governance Level (National, Region, Division) Grade 7-10 Sex (Male, Female) Gender parity index for DR	CO: PS, BCD RO: PPRD, CLMD SDO: SGOD, CID School: SH

IO 1.3: All learners transition to the next key stages	Transition Rate (TR)	TR refers to the percentage of learners who graduate from one level of education and move on to the next higher level.	Annual	Governance Level (National, Region, Division) Grade 7-10 Sex (Male, Female) Gender parity index for TR	CO: PS, BCD RO: PPRD, CLMD SDO: SGOD, CID School: SH
IO #3. Learners complete K-12 basic education having attained all learning standards that equip them with the necessary skills and attribute to pursue their chosen paths	Completion Rate (CR)	CR refers to the percentage of first grade level entrants in a level of education who graduate the level in accordance with the required number of years of study	Annual	Governance Level (National, Region, Division) Grade 7-10 Sex (Male, Female) Gender parity index for CR	CO: PS, BCD RO: PPRD, CLMD SDO: SGOD, CID School: SH

There shall be two (2) intermediate outcomes enumerated under the BEMEF that shall be the focus of the M&E for the ROADMAP 2033. These are IO 1 and IO 3. These IOs are defined as follow:

IO 1. All school-age children, out-of-school youth, and adults accessed relevant basic learning opportunities - All learners, regardless of sex, religion, geography, financial disposition, have access to and are encouraged to attend schools and learning centers. This ensures that schools and learning facilities are made accessible to all types of learners.

IO 3. Learners complete K-12 basic education having attained all learning standards that equip them with the necessary skills and attributes to pursue their chosen paths - Programs and initiatives aimed at ensuring learners benefit from their completion of the basic education cycle and from any other educational interventions, and are learning/ gaining knowledge are implemented. It recognizes that attendance to school and learning centers is not sufficient to deliver quality basic education.

The abovementioned indicators are

agency-level indicators that reflect our global and national commitments and DepEd’s strategic directions. All operating units shall ensure that their plans, programs, and policies contribute towards attaining these indicators. In their M&E, each governance level shall ensure the alignment of their performance indicators with the agency-level indicators (DO 29, s. 2022).

SPFL Chinese Mandarin Roadmap 2033 Program Evaluation

Program evaluation is concerned with the systematic collection of evidence to determine a program’s merit, worth, and significance. Evaluation provides a systematic method to study a program, practice, intervention, or initiative to understand how well it achieves its goals. This helps determine what works well and what could be improved in a program or initiative.

Under the ROADMAP 2033, the program evaluation shall be anchored on data and research to make sound decisions. Thus, education research shall be an integral part of the program evaluation of the SPFL Chinese Mandarin Roadmap 2033 implementation. Education research systematically assesses the worth or merit of time, money, effort, and resources spent to achieve a goal.

Evaluation research is closely related to but slightly different from conventional social research. It uses many of the same methods used in traditional social research. However, because it takes place within an organizational context, it requires team skills, interpersonal skills, management skills, political smartness, and other research skills that social research only needs a little. Evaluation research also requires one to consider the stakeholders' interests.

Benefits of Conducting Evaluation Research

- *Gain insights about a project or program and its operations*

Evaluation Research allows one to understand what works and what doesn't, where we were, where we are and where we are headed towards. One can find out the areas of improvement and identify strengths. So, it will help one to figure out what needs to focus more on.

- *Improve practice*

It is essential to gauge a program's past performance and understand what went wrong in order to deliver better services. Unless it is a two-way communication, there is no way to improve on what a program have to offer. Evaluation research gives an opportunity to SPFL implementers to express how they feel and if there's anything they would like to change. It also lets a program modify or adopt a practice such that it increases the chances of success.

- *Assess the effects*

After evaluating the efforts, one can see how well the program is meeting objectives and targets. Evaluations allow one measure if the intended benefits are really reaching the tar-

geted audience and if yes, then how effectively.

- *Build capacity*

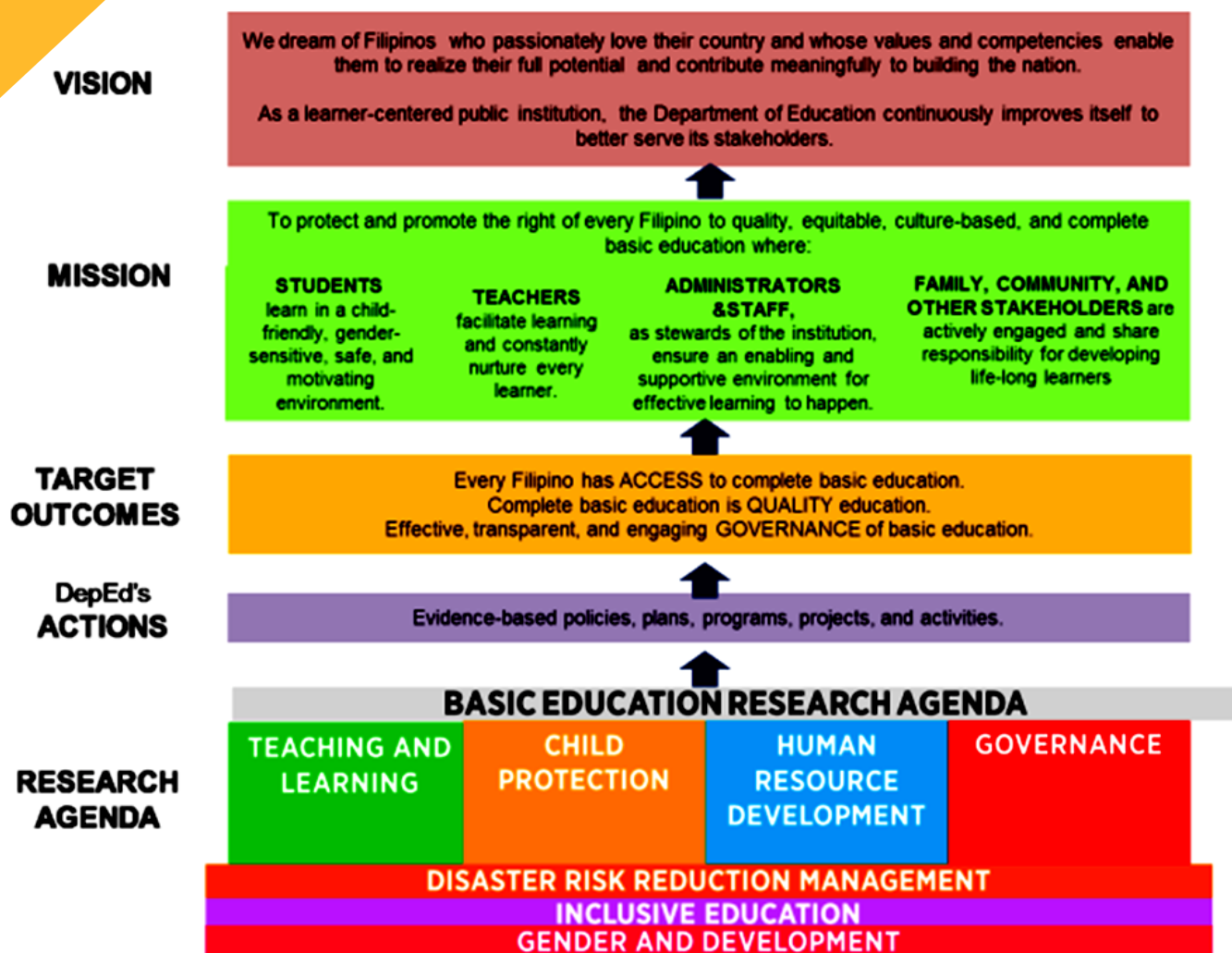
Evaluations help one to analyze the demand pattern and predict if the program will need more funds, upgrade skills and improve the efficiency of operations. It allows to find the gaps in the production to delivery chain and possible ways to fill them.

Given these, research activities and initiatives shall be utilized to evaluate the implementation of SPFL Chinese Mandarin. This will be conducted through research presentations from SPFL Chinese Mandarin Teachers, School Heads, and Supervisors.

DepEd shall initiate the activities that will showcase the research initiatives and collect the outputs of such research papers. This will be following DepEd Order 39, s. 2016 that is the Adoption of the Basic Education Research Agenda.

“Evaluation provides a systematic method to study a program, practice, intervention, or initiative to understand how well it achieves its goals. This helps determine what works well and what could be improved in a program or initiative.”

Conceptual Framework of the Basic Education Research Agenda



Should there be new Basic Education Research Agenda released that are aligned with the MATATAG Agenda and the Basic Education Development Plan 2030, that shall be adapted by this roadmap.



References

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- DepEd Memorandum No. 490, s. 2007. *“Encouraging Secondary Schools, both Public and Private, to Offer Basic and Advanced Spanish Language as an Elective in the 3rd and 4th Year Levels in Philippine Education”*
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