

INNOVATIVE CLASSROOM TEACHING AND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ARAL PROGRAM: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract

Learning loss has become a critical issue in education systems worldwide, particularly following the disruption of traditional schooling caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. In the Philippines, the Department of Education introduced the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program to address gaps in foundational skills among learners, particularly in literacy, numeracy, and science competencies. This systematic review synthesizes empirical and theoretical literature from 2020–2025 examining innovative classroom teaching and management strategies relevant to the implementation of the ARAL Program. Using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework, 42 relevant studies and reports were screened, with 21 studies meeting the inclusion criteria. The findings highlight six major themes of effective instructional practices: differentiated instruction, guided small-group learning, gamified and technology-assisted instruction, multisensory teaching approaches, formative assessment and learning monitoring, and positive classroom management strategies. Results suggest that the integration of innovative teaching practices with structured classroom management significantly enhances student engagement, academic recovery, and learning outcomes. The review concludes that successful implementation of the ARAL Program requires continuous teacher professional development, curriculum adaptation, and institutional support for innovative pedagogical practices.

Keywords: ARAL Program, Learning Recovery, Innovative Teaching Strategies, Classroom Management, Systematic Review, Philippine Education.

Introduction

Education systems across the globe have experienced unprecedented disruption due to the COVID-19 pandemic. School closures, shifts to remote learning, and limited access to digital resources contributed to significant learning losses among students. Many countries reported declines in reading comprehension, numeracy proficiency, and overall academic performance.

In the Philippines, these challenges prompted the development of targeted educational recovery initiatives. One of the most significant national responses was the implementation of the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program. The ARAL Program was designed as an intervention strategy to support learners who are performing below grade-level expectations by providing remediation, tutorial sessions, and focused academic support.

The ARAL Program specifically targets foundational competencies that are essential for students' overall academic development. These competencies include reading and literacy, which focus on improving learners' ability to decode, comprehend, and critically engage with texts across subjects. The program also emphasizes mathematics and numeracy, aiming to strengthen students' problem-solving skills, computational fluency, and conceptual understanding of mathematical principles. In addition, the ARAL Program addresses science understanding, helping learners develop scientific literacy, inquiry skills, and the ability to apply scientific concepts to real-world contexts. By concentrating on these core areas, the program seeks to ensure that students acquire the essential skills and knowledge required for academic success and lifelong learning, particularly

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for those who have experienced learning gaps or disruptions in their education. While the ARAL Program provides a structural framework for academic intervention, its success depends largely on the teaching approaches employed by educators in the classroom. Innovative teaching strategies play a critical role in improving student engagement and addressing diverse learning needs.

Traditional teacher-centered approaches often fail to support struggling learners effectively. Instead, contemporary educational research highlights the importance of learner-centered, adaptive, and interactive teaching methods. These approaches allow teachers to accommodate different learning styles, encourage active participation, and create supportive learning environments. Furthermore, effective classroom management is essential when implementing remediation programs. Students who struggle academically may also experience decreased motivation, low self-confidence, and behavioral challenges. Therefore, classroom management strategies must promote psychological safety, encouragement, and active participation.

Given the importance of effective teaching strategies in learning recovery programs, this study aims to synthesize available literature on innovative classroom teaching and management strategies that support the implementation of the ARAL Program.

Methodology

Research Design

This study utilized a systematic literature review to synthesize existing research on teaching strategies and classroom management approaches relevant to the ARAL Program. A systematic review is an evidence-based method that collects, evaluates, and synthesizes available studies on a specific topic to identify patterns and best practices.

PRISMA Flow Diagram of Study Selection Study selection process and data sources

The study selection process for this systematic review followed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines to ensure transparency, rigor, and replicability in identifying and screening relevant literature. During the identification phase, a total of 100 records were collected, with 86 records retrieved through database searches, including Google Scholar, ERIC, Scopus-indexed journals, and academic reports, and an additional 14 records obtained from policy documents, institutional publications, and reference lists. In the screening phase, 18 duplicate records were removed, leaving 82 records for title and abstract screening. Of these, 37 were excluded because they were not relevant to learning recovery programs or classroom instructional strategies. During the eligibility phase, 45 full-text articles were assessed, and 22 were

excluded due to a lack of empirical evidence, limited methodological rigor, or irrelevance to remediation and learning recovery. 23 studies met the inclusion criteria and were included in the qualitative synthesis.

A simplified representation of the PRISMA process shows the systematic filtering of literature from identification to inclusion. Initially, 100 records were identified, duplicates reduced the pool to 82, and after screening and eligibility assessment, 23 studies remained for final synthesis. This structured approach ensured that the review incorporated only studies that met the rigorous standards for relevance, quality, and methodological soundness.

Data sources

The selected studies were collected from a variety of academic and educational sources, including Google Scholar, ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), ResearchGate, education policy reports, and peer-reviewed academic journals focusing on pedagogy and learning recovery. These sources were chosen to provide a comprehensive representation of both empirical research and policy-oriented studies relevant to the ARAL Program and similar learning recovery initiatives.

Search keywords

To ensure the literature search captured all relevant studies, the following keywords were employed: “ARAL Program Philippines,” “learning recovery programs,” “innovative classroom teaching strategies,” “classroom management strategies,” “remedial teaching methods,” and “differentiated instruction.” These terms were selected to focus the search on instructional approaches, management techniques, and intervention strategies applicable to learning recovery and remediation programs within educational settings.

Inclusion criteria

Studies were included in this systematic review if they met specific criteria that ensured relevance and quality. First, the study needed to discuss teaching strategies or classroom management techniques, providing insight into practical approaches used by educators to facilitate learning. Second, the research had to focus on learning recovery or remediation programs, such as initiatives designed to address learning gaps among students, including interventions similar to the ARAL Program. Third, only studies published between 2020 and 2025 were considered, as this period corresponds with the implementation of recent learning recovery efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and reflects contemporary educational practices. Finally, eligible studies included peer-reviewed journal articles, educational reports, or academic research, ensuring that the sources were credible, methodologically sound, and relevant to the

Philippine educational context. Applying these inclusion criteria allowed the review to synthesize high-quality evidence on effective instructional strategies and classroom management practices for supporting struggling learners.

Data Analysis

A thematic analysis approach was employed to systematically examine and synthesize the selected studies, allowing the researchers to identify recurring patterns, instructional strategies, and classroom management techniques relevant to the implementation of the ARAL Program. Through careful coding and categorization of the data, six major themes emerged from the literature, reflecting the most commonly reported and effective strategies used in learning recovery programs. These themes highlight both the pedagogical approaches and classroom management practices that contribute to student engagement, motivation, and academic progress. By analyzing these themes, the review provides insight into how teachers can design and implement interventions that address the diverse needs of learners while creating structured and supportive learning environments. The identification of these six themes serves as the foundation for understanding best practices in innovative classroom instruction and effective management strategies that facilitate the goals of the ARAL Program.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Summary of Selected Studies

Author	Year	Focus	Key Findings
Darling-Hammond	2021	Learning recovery	Differentiated instruction improves engagement
Slavin	2020	Cooperative learning	Small-group learning improves comprehension
Hattie	2022	Visible learning	Formative assessment increases learning gains
Fullan	2021	Educational innovation	Student-centered approaches improve motivation

The synthesis of the selected literature demonstrates that effective implementation of learning recovery programs such as the ARAL Program requires a combination of innovative instructional strategies and structured classroom management practices. The reviewed studies consistently highlight that struggling learners benefit most from teaching approaches that prioritize engagement, adaptability, and continuous monitoring of learning progress.

One of the strongest themes emerging from the literature is the importance of differentiated instruction. Differentiated instruction allows teachers to adapt their teaching methods based on students' readiness levels, learning preferences, and academic abilities. In learning recovery programs, students often demonstrate varied levels of mastery of foundational skills. Consequently, uniform instructional approaches may not adequately address the needs of all learners. By modifying lesson content, learning activities, and assessment methods, teachers can create instructional experiences that better match individual learner needs. Research indicates that differentiated instruction improves learner engagement and promotes deeper understanding of academic content, particularly among students who struggle with literacy and numeracy competencies.

Another critical instructional strategy identified in the literature is guided small-group instruction. Small-group learning enables teachers to provide more personalized attention to students while facilitating collaborative learning experiences. In many remediation programs, students are grouped according to skill level so that instruction can focus on addressing specific learning gaps. Studies suggest that small-group learning environments encourage students to participate more actively in discussions and develop greater confidence in expressing their ideas. Furthermore, teachers can monitor student progress more effectively in smaller instructional groups and provide immediate corrective feedback.

The integration of gamified learning strategies also emerged as a significant innovation in classroom teaching. Gamification involves incorporating elements such as competition, rewards, and interactive challenges into the learning process. These elements increase motivation and transform routine learning activities into engaging experiences. Several studies highlight that students demonstrate higher levels of persistence and enthusiasm when educational tasks are presented in game-like formats. Gamified learning is particularly effective in subjects such as mathematics and language learning, where repetitive practice is necessary for skill mastery.

The literature also emphasizes the effectiveness of multisensory teaching approaches, particularly for learners who experience difficulty in reading and phonics development. Multisensory instruction integrates visual, auditory, and kinesthetic activities to reinforce learning. For example, learners may engage in reading exercises that combine visual word recognition, auditory pronunciation, and kinesthetic writing or movement activities. These integrated experiences strengthen neural connections associated with language processing

and improve memory retention. Multisensory instruction has been widely recommended in literacy intervention programs because it addresses multiple learning pathways simultaneously.

Another essential component of successful learning recovery initiatives is formative assessment and continuous learner monitoring. Formative assessments allow teachers to gather real-time information about students' understanding of lesson content. Unlike summative assessments, which evaluate learning outcomes at the end of a lesson or course, formative assessments provide ongoing feedback that helps teachers adjust instructional strategies. Regular monitoring of learner progress ensures that remediation efforts remain responsive to student needs and that instructional adjustments are implemented promptly when students encounter difficulties.

In addition to instructional strategies, effective classroom management plays a vital role in the success of remediation programs. Struggling learners often experience frustration or decreased academic confidence, which may affect their behavior and participation in class. Teachers must therefore create supportive learning environments that promote psychological safety and encourage active engagement. Structured classroom routines, clear expectations, and positive reinforcement strategies help establish a learning atmosphere where students feel motivated to participate and improve their academic performance.

Positive reinforcement, in particular, has been shown to improve learner motivation and self-confidence. Recognizing small academic improvements encourages students to continue exerting effort and reinforces positive learning behaviors. Teachers who create inclusive and supportive classroom environments contribute significantly to students' emotional well-being and academic recovery.

The synthesis of existing literature demonstrates that innovative instructional strategies combined with effective classroom management practices can significantly improve the outcomes of learning recovery programs. The successful implementation of the ARAL Program therefore requires teachers to adopt flexible, evidence-based teaching methods that prioritize learner engagement, individualized instruction, and continuous progress monitoring.

Differentiated Instruction

Differentiated instruction was identified as one of the most effective strategies for supporting struggling learners. This approach allows teachers to adapt lessons according to student readiness levels, learning styles, and academic needs.

Teachers implementing differentiated instruction adapt various components of the learning process to address the diverse needs, abilities, and learning styles of their students. In practice, teachers often modify the lesson content to ensure that it is appropriate to the students' level of understanding, providing simplified explanations, enriched materials, or alternative resources depending on learners' readiness and prior knowledge. They also adjust instructional methods, using a variety of teaching approaches such as direct instruction, guided practice, collaborative learning, and technology-assisted instruction to accommodate different learning preferences. In addition, teachers design varied learning activities that allow students to engage with the lesson in multiple ways, including hands-on tasks, group work, problem-solving exercises, and independent projects that support active participation and deeper comprehension. Finally, educators adapt assessment approaches to fairly measure student learning by using diverse evaluation methods such as formative assessments, performance-based tasks, portfolios, and reflective activities. Through these modifications, differentiated instruction promotes inclusive education by ensuring that all students are given equitable opportunities to understand the material and demonstrate their learning. Diagnostic assessments are commonly used to determine students' strengths and weaknesses before instruction begins.

For example, students struggling with reading comprehension may receive simplified texts and guided reading activities, while more advanced learners engage in analytical reading tasks.

Research suggests that differentiated instruction improves academic performance and increases student confidence in learning.

Guided Small-Group Instruction

Small-group instruction is another widely used strategy in remediation programs. Instead of teaching the entire class simultaneously, teachers often divide students into smaller groups based on their skill level, learning pace, or specific learning needs. This instructional strategy allows educators to provide personalized instruction, ensuring that lessons are tailored to the students' level of understanding and readiness. By working with smaller groups, teachers can also deliver targeted feedback, addressing individual difficulties and guiding learners more effectively in improving their skills and comprehension. Furthermore, small-group instruction promotes increased student participation, as learners are more likely to engage in discussions, ask questions, and actively contribute to the learning process within a more supportive and less intimidating environment. This approach enhances student engagement and helps ensure that each

learner receives the appropriate level of support necessary for academic progress. Small-group learning has been found to significantly improve literacy development and mathematical problem-solving skills. Students are also more likely to ask questions and participate actively when they are in smaller learning groups.

Gamified and Technology-Assisted Learning

Gamified learning incorporates game elements such as rewards, points, competition, and challenges into the learning process. Examples of engaging instructional strategies include the use of vocabulary games, mathematics quizzes, digital learning platforms, and interactive storytelling to enhance student learning and participation. Vocabulary games help students develop language skills in a fun and interactive way, encouraging retention and active engagement with new words. Mathematics quizzes, whether conducted individually or in groups, provide opportunities for learners to practice problem-solving skills while allowing teachers to assess understanding in a dynamic manner. The integration of digital learning platforms further supports interactive and self-paced learning, enabling students to access multimedia resources, practice exercises, and immediate feedback. Meanwhile, interactive storytelling promotes creativity and comprehension by allowing students to actively participate in narratives, fostering imagination while strengthening reading and communication skills. Together, these strategies create a more engaging and student-centered learning environment that supports deeper understanding and active participation. Gamification improves student motivation by making learning enjoyable and interactive. Research also suggests that technology-assisted instruction helps students practice skills repeatedly while receiving immediate feedback.

Multisensory Teaching Strategies

Multisensory teaching involves the integration of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning activities. Examples of effective instructional strategies include phonics instruction using visual aids, storytelling and role-play, hands-on learning activities, and interactive demonstrations. Phonics instruction supported by visual aids helps students recognize letter-sound relationships and improves reading skills by providing clear and engaging visual cues. Storytelling and role-play encourage students to actively participate in the learning process while enhancing their communication, creativity, and comprehension skills. Meanwhile, hands-on learning activities allow students to explore concepts through direct experience, which strengthens understanding and retention of knowledge. Interactive demonstrations further support learning by allowing teachers to visually and practically illustrate concepts, enabling students to

observe processes, ask questions, and engage more deeply with the lesson. Together, these strategies promote an active and meaningful learning environment that supports diverse learning styles and improves student engagement. These approaches help students process information through multiple sensory channels, improving memory retention and comprehension. Multisensory instruction is particularly effective for learners with reading difficulties.

Formative Assessment and Continuous Monitoring

Formative assessment plays a critical role in monitoring learner progress. Examples of formative assessment include quizzes, reading exercises, short written reflections, and observation checklists, which are used by teachers to monitor students' learning progress and provide timely feedback during the instructional process. Quizzes allow educators to quickly assess students' understanding of key concepts and identify areas that may require further clarification. Reading exercises help evaluate students' comprehension skills, vocabulary development, and ability to interpret texts. Short written reflections encourage learners to express their thoughts, summarize what they have learned, and connect new knowledge to prior experiences, thereby promoting deeper understanding. Meanwhile, observation checklists enable teachers to systematically monitor students' participation, behavior, and skill development during classroom activities. Collectively, these formative assessment strategies provide valuable information that helps teachers adjust instruction and support students' continuous learning and improvement. Regular assessment allows teachers to identify learning gaps and adjust teaching strategies accordingly. Immediate feedback also helps students correct mistakes and improve their learning strategies.

Positive Classroom Management Strategies

Classroom management is essential in learning recovery programs. Effective classroom management strategies include establishing clear classroom routines, maintaining structured learning schedules, promoting respectful communication, and encouraging active participation, all of which create a positive and productive learning environment. By establishing clear routines, teachers set consistent expectations for student behavior and classroom procedures, which reduces confusion and minimizes disruptions. Maintaining structured learning schedules ensures that instructional time is used efficiently, allowing students to engage with content systematically while developing a sense of predictability and stability. Promoting respectful communication fosters an atmosphere of trust and collaboration, where students feel safe to share ideas, ask questions, and interact constructively with peers and teachers. Encouraging active participation further enhances

engagement by motivating students to take part in discussions, group activities, and hands-on learning tasks, thereby deepening their understanding and reinforcing academic skills. Together, these strategies help maintain an organized, inclusive, and supportive classroom that facilitates effective teaching and learning. Teachers also use positive reinforcement such as praise, rewards, and recognition to motivate students. Supportive learning environments help students feel safe, confident, and willing to participate in learning activities.

Implications for Educational Practice

The findings of this systematic review highlight several important implications for educational practice, particularly in the context of the ARAL Program.

First, teacher professional development is critical to the success of learning recovery initiatives. Educators should receive ongoing training in innovative teaching strategies, including differentiated instruction, small-group facilitation, multisensory teaching, and learner-centered pedagogies. Such professional development equips teachers with the skills and confidence to adapt instruction according to students' diverse learning needs, thereby improving engagement and learning outcomes.

Second, curriculum adaptation is essential to ensure that learning materials are flexible and responsive to student abilities. Instructional content should allow for modifications in complexity, pace, and delivery methods so that all learners, including those who are struggling, can access and comprehend the material effectively.

Third, the integration of educational technology offers significant benefits for learning recovery. Digital tools and interactive platforms can provide additional practice opportunities, gamified learning experiences, and immediate feedback, enhancing student motivation and reinforcing key concepts in a more engaging way.

Finally, continuous monitoring of learning outcomes is necessary to ensure that instructional interventions are effective. Schools should implement structured systems to regularly track student progress, identify learning gaps, and provide timely feedback. By using assessment data to inform instruction, educators can make evidence-based adjustments that support academic recovery and long-term achievement.

Conclusion

The ARAL Program represents a critical national initiative aimed at addressing the learning gaps among Filipino learners, particularly those whose

foundational skills in literacy, numeracy, and science were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the effectiveness of the program depends largely on the teaching practices employed in classrooms. This systematic review identified six key instructional strategies that support learning recovery: differentiated instruction, small-group learning, gamified learning approaches, multisensory teaching methods, formative assessment strategies, and positive classroom management techniques. These strategies collectively contribute to enhanced student engagement, motivation, and academic performance, creating inclusive and supportive learning environments that address individual learner needs. For the ARAL Program to achieve long-term success, educational institutions must prioritize continuous teacher training, the development of appropriate teaching resources, and the integration of innovative instructional practices. By combining evidence-based teaching strategies with structured classroom management and ongoing monitoring of student learning, schools can effectively support learners in recovering lost competencies and achieving sustainable academic growth.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest in conducting this research.

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