

# Teaching English to Learners of Different Cultural Minority Groups

Joyce M. Suganob<sup>1</sup>, & Remedios C. Bacus<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Caraga State University, Ampayon, 8600, Butuan City, Philippines

<sup>2</sup> Cebu Normal University, Osmena Blvd., 6000 Cebu City, Philippines

Correspondence: Joyce M. Suganob, Caraga State University, Butuan City, Philippines.

Received: May 23, 2023

Accepted: July 27, 2023

Online Published: August 29, 2023

doi:10.5430/wjel.v13n7p524

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/wjel.v13n7p524>

## Abstract

English teachers' experiences handling mainstream classes and those with minority students differ as students' learning and communication styles vary. This study explored the lived experiences and teaching practices of purposively selected non-English majors teaching English to Filipino learners from different cultural minority groups: Mamanwa, Manobo, Hinigaon, Kamayo, Surigaonon, Muslim, and Bisaya. The in-depth investigation through a phenomenological inquiry was done using the Collazzi steps. Analysis of the teachers' narratives led to the indexed themes: teachers' psychological baggage; teachers' drive to be effective; teachers' desire for change. The meaning ascribed to the unique experience of the teachers provides the basis to critically examine and address issues relative to English language teaching. Teachers benefit from the assistance provided to them as they hurdle the challenges and sustain their enthusiasm despite being non-English majors. Such reality motivated them to develop learning materials, innovate in teaching, adopt strategies, and design authentic assessments to prepare learners to be practical problem solvers. Hence, policies may be instituted to address the teachers' content and pedagogical skills, as non-English majors, when assigned to diverse groups of learners. Periodic monitoring, educational fora, peer coaching, and mentoring may be considered to strengthen their content, technological, and pedagogical skills.

**Keywords:** cultural minority groups, diverse learners, non-English majors, teacher's experiences, teaching English, teaching practices

## 1. Introduction

Non-English majors teaching English in basic education have responsibilities that are considered complicated; hence it has peripheral tasks or activities that demand significant ways how to sustain one's commitment to being at school. Being learning facilitators, teachers have opportunities to contribute impact to each of the learners' lives as they can critically and creatively mold every life in classroom learning situations. Blömeke et al. (2022) examined the relationship between teachers' content and pedagogical competence and students' progress hypothesizing that instructional quality is contingent upon teacher quality and instructional decisions.

Teacher leadership involves making decisions. They are empowered to show initiatives to create daily lessons and to design instructional materials and learning activities in coherence with the evaluative tools for learners to produce significant outputs from their acquired knowledge. In addition, Moore (2015) stressed that teachers must have well-developed knowledge, good behavior worth emulating, and skills needed to direct learners and the community. In the study conducted by Domingo (2020), it was found that the challenges in teaching English in the Philippines are concerned basically with behavioral aspects and inspired motives of the students for learning, insufficiency of resources, the uncondusive to learning classrooms, and inaccessibility to stable internet. School administration support for the teacher's training and professional development, according to him, is also considered a challenge. The reasons felt challenges can serve as barriers to providing the resources needed by the teacher to excel in their roles and contribute to student success.

Furthermore, teachers must assert for advancement to respond to the challenges as educators and to direct students toward sustainable literacy development throughout the learning period. Subsequently, updated curricula, functional school facilities, upgraded instructional materials, and educational technology could be less significant without the teachers' influence on decision-making.

Students, characterized by varied learning needs, have experienced difficulties in terms of expressive language and social communication (The Understood Team, 2016). They have very limited vocabulary leading them to be confused when reading sentences. Other indigenous learners having trouble in English has caused them to feel anxious to process information and express ideas in spoken words. These learners having poor vocabulary are challenged to listen to stories that have longer sentences. Moreover, (Klochek and Foka 2022), stressed the influence of vocabulary in understanding units of utterance.

It is in the foregoing condition that this study was conceptualized. Using phenomenological inquiry, it sought to explore the experiences of non-English majors teaching English to diverse learners to obtain an in-depth understanding and meaning of their experiences. Thus, related professional training, relevant onboarding, and induction programs may be instituted to better assist them. It is hoped that designing with an essence of constructive, thematic, and integrative approach, and related legal issues and policy related to education to be implemented could be elements to consider for progressive planning, evaluation, and implementation.

### *1.1 Research Objective*

This study specifically aimed to explore the lived experiences of non-English majors teaching English to Filipino learners from different cultural minority groups: Mamanwa, Manobo, Hingaoon, Kamayo, Surigaonon, Muslim, and Bisaya.

## **2. Literature Review**

This literature review relates to teaching practices of non-English majors in teaching the English language and in facilitating learning with learners of diverse backgrounds. Organized into categories, this section covers issues in public school teaching, language, and performance as well as the challenges in out-of-field teaching.

### ***Public School Teaching***

In the Philippines, most teachers in public schools are known to have overloaded work (Esguerra 2018). With varied roles to facilitate learning, teachers become resourceful agents of learning. This, too, involves teachers in giving the impact of emerging technologies needing to be emphasized for the Fourth Industrial Revolution. This guides the teachers on how to be skillful in the fast-changing job market and the future skills strongly demanded by the credible and functional workforce of the country.

Newly hired teachers in public secondary schools have experienced unpredictable challenges, overloaded tasks, anxiety, social and emotional stress and power struggles, and a sense of satisfaction (Faciolan & Guhao, 2016). Basically, a beginning teacher is no excuse to stress. Housner and Griffey (2015), beginning teachers must experience stress because less experienced and neophyte teachers are more sensitive to dealing with social and personal aspects of teaching than with academics.

New teachers in need of scaffolding, according to Lombardozzi (2022) may experience relationship struggles despite their being neophytes and confident. During the induction period and in the first few years of their teaching career they would likely be self-assured when confronting classroom life. Perie and Baker (as cited in Sadeghi et al., 2021) purported that new teachers with less experience in teaching have been observed to be more satisfied compared to tenured teachers. As beginning teachers, they may experience a sense of novelty and excitement with new opportunities and challenges. Moreover, the new teachers may feel a sense of accomplishment when they see their students progress and achieve milestones, which can also contribute to a sense of satisfaction. Ideally, new or tenured teachers must be equipped to support the comprehensive growth of their students in their spiritual, cognitive, affective, and life skills domains, and are also prepared to deepen their understanding of their own professional development and challenges.

Relatively, the Department of Education of the Philippines has advanced programs and initiatives to cater to the various needs of all kinds of learners in the government naming a few like the ballooning growth of preschoolers; the K-12 issues; educating indigenous people and disadvantaged children, especially in far-flung areas; decreasing performance of learners in remote areas, multigrade-school issues, respectively. According to Racca and Lasaten (2016), students' proficiency in Science and Mathematics has a significant impact on their proficiency in the English language. Most students struggle with comprehension in Mathematics, resulting in poor performance in problem-solving, analysis, and computation skills. Based on the Grade VI pupils' performance, comprehension skills in English appeared to be the primary factor affecting their problem-solving skills, with only 53% proficiency, followed by analysis with 56%, and computation with 62%. In addition, the Science results were ranked fifth with a percentile rank of only 56.87%. Students' comprehension and analytical skills were necessary for Science and Mathematics, and these were the areas where most of them struggled.

### ***Language and Performance***

English is now indispensable that concerned much on global mobility including commerce, telecommunications, technology, and medicine. It is a way to communicate across global cultures of different nations and regions (Al-Mutairi, 2020). Moreover, Kirkpatrick (2012) stressed that there is a requirement to provide a balanced need for English as the language of modernization and international lingua franca. It is in the way that a local lingua franca is for the national language for national unity. And that local languages as languages for the identity of the community. These are the challenges that invite the language policymakers in Southeast Asia and the East that need to be revisited. A consensus is necessary to determine which language should be used for instruction media. It is essential to consider the linguistic background of the students and the goals of the instructional program in selecting an appropriate language.

In 2010, the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) administered an English proficiency test that assessed the language abilities of randomly selected people in 163 countries across the globe. The Philippines ranked 35th on the list with a score of 88, with Singapore being the only other Asian country in the top ranking, coming in third place with a score of 98. India was ranked 19th with a score of 92, higher than that of the Philippines. Several other Asian countries settled in the middle rankings, including Taiwan with a score of 76, Thailand with a score of 75, and Vietnam with a score of 73. However, many Asian countries were listed in the lower half of the rankings, with China scoring 77 and ranked 105th place, Japan placing 135th with a score of 70, and South Korea and North Korea ranked 80th and 96th place, respectively. The scores were based on four test categories: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. In terms of the individual category scores, the Philippines achieved similar scores of 21, 22, 23, and 22 for reading, listening, speaking, and writing, respectively. This demonstrates that the Philippines' competency in speaking the English language is the second-best in Asia after Singapore (which earned a score of 24), jointly with India and Pakistan.

Ebrahimi (2017) conducted a study aimed at assessing the student's level of vocabulary competence demonstrated by their usage of language. It was revealed that students may struggle with oral expression during the presentations or when completing written and oral assignments. The results were noted also in the study of Dadvand and Behzadpoor (2020). Similarly, such findings were supported by the

idea that teachers who teach subjects outside of their field may require additional support from colleagues and school leaders (Bacus & Alda, 2022).

Of the macro skills, Nguyen (2019) revealed that writing is commonly viewed as the most difficult to acquire. Due to its complexity, it is crucial for learners to receive adequate training and opportunities to practice writing. In so doing, they can develop the ability to use appropriate vocabulary, grammatical structures, written conventions, and mechanical techniques. However, developing this skill might result in students' overreliance on the teacher's corrections and guidance. Hence, a teacher's competence in teaching the language skills is of paramount importance.

### ***Challenges of Out-of-Field Teachers***

In the study conducted by Pham (2021), it was found that lack of facilities, shortage of funding, challenges of language education, decreased teaching staff, and proposed revisions of English curricula are the issues faced in Vietnam. The findings also revealed that these issues significantly affected the students' morale for learning in relation to developing their language-learning associations. These issues are influenced by inequities in educational policy, financial support, and discrepancies in endeavors that exist in different learning settings. Similar issues were also found in the study conducted by Ranganathan (2021). Furthermore, in the study by Madrunio et al. (2016), it was revealed that the English language education policies in the Philippines face a range of issues related to alignment, accuracy, and practical implementation of the English curriculum and assessment. Such challenges pave the way for the need for authentic reforms. On the other hand, despite the obstacles faced, their study also found that some teachers can have positive experiences, even though they may be vulnerable to stress and burnout. On the other hand, Robosa and Paras (2021) claimed that passion, established relationships, and a sense of fulfillment inspired teachers to be resilient. Enhancing teachers' well-being can not only have positive consequences for themselves but also for students, as teachers' well-being has been found to be significantly associated with students' academic performance.

The foregoing literature shed light on the study's intention to understand the milieu in which non-English teachers live and work as they design daily lesson plans, organize learning activities, and assess student performance. This further guides them on how to solve problems especially when meeting unfamiliar classroom struggles related to teaching English as they aim for active and meaningful learning while sustaining their commitment to achieve their teaching goals.

### **3. Methodology**

This qualitative study used phenomenological inquiry to determine the teaching practices and meaning of the experiences of non-English majors in teaching English to learners of diverse needs. Phenomenology, according to Smith (2018), is an in-depth inquiry into the subjectively experienced structures of the participant's consciousness of their experiences, in this case, the non-English majors handling English classes. An experience is directed toward an object due to its content or meaning. The inquiry is focused on the fundamental nature and meaning of the experiences as they appear to the research participants. To arrive at the themes, Colaizzi's method was used. This method in the descriptive phenomenological inquiry was utilized to identify significant statements, formulate meanings, analysis, and interpret themes from the data sets. It then led to establishing an exhaustive description of the phenomena addressing the challenges experienced by non-English majors teaching English at the basic level of education. This methodology is being selected to highlight the teachers' perspective on how they provided learning in English as a second language to learners despite the challenging yet significant exposures to diverse situations. The teachers (also referred to as participants) who are exposed to the phenomenon relived in their minds the unique experiences they have had. Significant statements were analyzed which resulted in integrated themes forming the narrative description of a phenomenon.

#### ***3.1 Locale and Participants***

The northern part of Mindanao specifically in the six provinces of Caraga Region, Philippines is the research locale. This region is known to have different cultural minorities namely, Mamanwa, Manobo, Hingnaon, Kamayo, Surigaonon, Muslim, Bisaya, and others. The 19 participants include non-English majors handling English classes with diverse learners from Grades 4-6. They were selected based on the inclusion criteria: with at least five years of teaching experience, with learners from different cultural minority groups, willing to articulate their experiences. Data saturation was observed at Participant 18 and an additional interview (Participant 19) was done to establish the rigor of the data collection. The participants were coded (FT- for female teachers and MT- for male teachers) to ensure confidentiality.

#### ***3.2 Instruments***

To capture the rich and unique experiences of the teachers to ascribe meaning to the experiences, the lead researcher, as the main instrument, plays an active role as an interviewer during the one-on-one and in-depth interviews with the 19 participants. The researcher reflects on one's own and each other's interviews, thus creating conversational styles. During the interview, a researcher-made and expert-validated interview guide was used consisting of three parts namely: preliminary, main, and wrap-up.

#### ***3.3 Data Collection***

The preliminary step of this study includes the identification and selection of the teacher participants based on the inclusion criteria. Permission was sought from them after having explained to them the nature and purpose of the study. The participants were given the freedom they demanded to disclose personal information only if they chose to do so.

The study selected the participants who had previously expressed their willingness to be part of it. They were provided with a letter containing the details and nature of the study. Prior to data collection, they were asked to read and sign the informed consent form (ICF) which included the study’s purpose, time commitment, reasons for choosing them, potential risks, confidentiality, voluntariness, debriefing process, and contact information. Each of them was given a copy of the ICF as a reference.

The interview commenced after the participants’ confirmation. All utterances were audio recorded to document the verbatim language and detailed voice inflections. Then careful transcribing of the participants’ utterances from the digital recordings was done to ensure the quality and authenticity of the data to be analyzed. Participants were given a copy of their transcribed statements from the interview and read through the transcripts for understanding to guarantee precision and had affixed their signatures therein after to validate the accuracy and approval of their shared narratives.

3.4 Data Analysis

Reflections and analysis with the initial interview were initially done and continued until open coding. Major ideas were then established to identify the subthemes which were narrowed down into descriptions resulting in initial themes of the phenomenon in focus. The core categories, developed through critical analysis of the concept relationships and comparison with the data collection memo, were integrated to form a cohesive framework. Thematic analysis was then conducted to derive meaning from the data sets, focusing on the significant statements. The resulting major themes were thoughtfully labeled to accurately represent the participants’ lived experiences. To ensure the study’s credibility, the research adviser and the data analyst examined the audit trail, validating the trustworthiness of the study findings.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

To protect and uphold the participants’ rights, ethical issues were addressed in the conduct of the study. These include: (a) The issue of possible conflict of interest where experts’ basic concern is participants’ well-being or in terms of the acceptability level of the study that appears to be unduly influenced by a secondary interest may it be financial or non-financial gain. There was no observance of financial gain interest. Basically, the research goal and interest were to clearly produce sensible output in tracing the lived experiences of non-English majors teaching English, where their possible challenges could be ground for scaffolding toward faculty advancement and further studies.; (b) Privacy and confidentiality is being emphasized in this study through which the information being collected from the participants’ utterances is cautiously handled. The real identity of each participant is hidden using code names.; (c) Relative to the informed consent process, this standard can be manifested by giving the consent forms to participants before the interview started. Their comments and suggestions are considered to improve the idea of the consent form. The right of the participants to refuse from participating in the study at any time was considered by the researcher.; (d) Vulnerability is the possible exposure of participants to organizational and community pressures due to their honest and candid criticisms about the educational system practices and the community’s ways of support to the school system. It is the main reason why the researchers of this study are motivated to have a strong determination to pay attention with utmost cautiousness by using pseudonyms. This study excludes children, ethnic and minority groups, the elderly, the homeless, prisoners, and people with serious illnesses. Hence, the main participants of the study are basically selected professional teachers. Through this, consent of participation was shown to all participants before letting them commit an interview where protection against abuses was emphasized; (e) Recruitment is a manner of selecting and convincing potential research participants for a particular study. Professional and experienced teachers who are non-English majors teaching English with diverse learners were carefully selected as participants, and (f) For incentives or compensation that were given out to participants are simple and inexpensive tokens together with notes of gratitude from the researchers.

4. Results and Discussion

The study is focused on the lived experiences of non-English majors teaching English to diverse learners at the elementary level. Table 1 presents the themes and subthemes derived from the data sets and following the phenomenological steps espoused by Collaizzi.

Table 1. Summary of Themes and Subthemes

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Subthemes</i>
1. Teachers’ psychological baggage	1.1. being trained inadequately to teach English 1.2. being exhausted multitaskers 1.3. being confused learning facilitators
2. Teachers’ drive to be effective	2.1. focusing on innovation and pragmatic teaching 2.2. striving to be pedagogically and technologically- competent
3. Teachers’ desire for change	3.1. mentoring to grow 3.2. leading to inspire

4.1 Teachers’ Psychological Baggage

One of the major reasons which made the non-English majors’ teachings particularly laborious is the fact that they are vulnerable to experiencing different levels of struggles. Beating anxiety and confusion over complicated tasks are added to daily challenges. Consequently, they become overworked. Many of the teachers are overburdened with their teaching tasks both curricular and extra-curricular activities. Their teaching tasks are extended to doing research, getting engaged in unfamiliar tasks, and other varied

responsibilities in school. Thus, the researchers are led to establish Theme 1, which is identified as the teachers' psychological baggage. Analysis of the responses led to the following axial codes: being untrained to teach English, being exhausted by multitaskers, and being confused about learning facilitators. Below is a detailed description of each.

#### 4.1.1 Being Trained Inadequately to Teach English

All teachers in English need upgraded training as a guide to innovate to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in teaching. Various kinds of research show that learners' motivation may vary from one person to another depending on their demographic profile. For instance, in the study conducted by Wen (2011), it was found that learners from different heritage backgrounds differ in their motivations. Henceforth, handling diverse learners of different tribal groups with multicultural engagements and multilingual dealings namely, Mamanwa, Manobo, Kamayo, Higaonon, Banwaon, Surigaonon, Mandaya, Muslims, and others may invite prejudgments of complexities. All teachers are broadly exposed to all sorts of queries more than usual due to their daily tasks: being planners of daily activities for the learners; as second parents of the learners; as facilitators and evaluators of learning; as researchers; and even getting connected with any community activities. Capacitating these teachers should be done by encouraging them to attend seminars and pieces of training related to teaching diverse classrooms with the essence of authenticity and innovativeness. The utterances from different participants are extracted from the field noted. Shown on succeeding pages of manifested utterances are coded names used for each participant in which FT stands for a female teacher, MT for a male teacher, a number after FT or MT refers to the age of the participant, and a number after each dash refers to representing a number of each participant.

*They are multilingual, I have a problem myself because I cannot understand their language ...I have a pupil who speaks....  
hmm... Muslim... Kamayo.... Bol-anon, Leyteno, Surigaonon. There is also Tagalog. (FT50 -19)*

*Maybe...the use of... of different strategies, because sometimes ..uhh, there are strategies that don't fit the level of learners.  
(FT29-10)*

*Yes, I also studied again...hence before there was no K to12, no mother tongue from grades 1 they have English subject, recently  
this transition from mother tongue, no English from grades 1 to 3 but in grade 4 they already have English. (FT27-12).*

*It's very difficult to teach English especially if you're a non-expert of this area. (MT29-5)*

*I really don't know some spelling, sentence, and paragraph construction, especially in arranging coherent thoughts...I did some  
inversions of thought patterns...hmmm..it caused me to have some doubts... I don't know....uhm... I really need to do research  
before meeting my class". (MT42-2)*

According to Seven (2020), motivation is a factor in the realm of learning a language. Therefore, teachers in the English language should pay attention to their learners' personalities as this would help them come up with appropriate strategies and/or materials that would eventually cater to the needs of the students. Similarly, being fully aware of the influence of motivation to scaffold, their learners become more motivated. Henceforth, once learning motivation is strengthened, an active attitude to learn, express keen interest in learning, and well-focused attention in class to master knowledge can be manifested (Long et al., 2013). The rigid exploration and discovery from the angles of the human mind ignite feelings of fulfillment leading individuals to be more productive. Similarly, the study of Bacus (2021) revealed the teachers' continual engagement in the cycle of personal assessment guided by the pedagogic parameters of practicality and particularity. Every experience in teaching becomes a guiding post on how to teach effectively.

#### 4.1.2 Being Exhausted Multitaskers

Cambridge English Dictionary defines "multitasking" as the ability of a person to do more than one thing at a time. For teachers of diverse learners, these tasks involve: preparing daily lessons; catering to the varied needs of learners; assessing learning; implementing disciplines; doing extra-curricular activities; and even outstretching linkages to peers, parents, and the community as well. Dealing with learners of varied and special needs infused in regular classes; learners of multilingual and multicultural backgrounds; learners of different problem behaviors are observed in some learning scenarios in the Philippine setting. Evidence of their utterances is shown below:

*We have multigrade lesson plans; competencies of different grade levels are just similar, so I applied a thematic approach for me  
not to get exhausted at the end of the day. I made some indicators if I've achieved a particular objective. (MT29-5 )*

*Due to many English competencies, I cannot say it's easy to teach English. There are writing, reading listening, and speaking  
tasks...There are also underlying micro-skills for each. I need to find ways in teaching to develop their communicative  
competence, though simple but at least not ungrammatically sound...and it's very difficult. (FT40-3)*

*...I'm already short of my time ...no time to go back to previous lessons especially if I'll do it in a hurried phase because pupils  
will just be confused, I'm overburdened, I don't even know how to solve this problem at my level. ( FT42-4))*

*I have remedial after class. I used to call them after class. I found them having difficulty speaking. (MT29-6)*

But despite being too tired, there are really some teachers who can do extra things for their learners. Teachers' vulnerability to experiencing being burnout is bound to get engaged in schoolwork unprepared, thus affecting the quality of education that supposedly be enjoyed by the students (Vandenberghe & Huberman, 2011).

#### 4.1.3 Being Confused Learning Facilitators

Teachers' initiatives in difficult situations are encouraged by the administrators. The findings of this study revealed that the participants' nature of teaching is overloaded coupled with the challenges of insufficient instructional materials and other learning resources. The teachers are in a quandary on how to deliver learner-centered English language teaching. This has led to their ingenuity to design learning tasks suited to the learners' needs and context amid uncertainty. According to them,

*If I don't know a topic sometimes, I've just laughed at it. Or maybe because it's new to me. I intended to just follow what I want to teach rather than follow the sequence of the book. (FT42-4)*

*The weakness of K to12 is its insufficiency with regards to authentic training for teachers ...and even facilities and..... materials. (MT29-5)*

*Then..... I exert effort to design activities to fit their needs...because I pitied the learners ....I made materials for them from my research, but honestly.....I need more training on this. (FT28-16)*

*I realized that I need to group them according to their interests. But sometimes...uhm.... I need to force them to be motivated to try doing unfamiliar tasks. (FT30-14)*

*I really don't know. I must deepen my orientation in all aspects of grammar rules for me to be more confident in teaching English in organized ways. (FT42-4)*

There are also participants that are considered good planners who can address the actual needs of every learner in their own real context of learning. They find ways to motivate their students. Despite their exposure to different levels of difficult tasks, there are really who can make wise decisions just to fill in the actual needs of learners. Bustos-Orosa (2008) highlights the significance of teachers' self-awareness, confidence, and a good sense of humor. Additionally, the teaching behavior patterns of teachers correspond to deliberately held perspectives, beliefs, and preferences that act as motivating forces, which influence the development of their behavior.

#### 4.2 Teachers' Drive to Be Effective

Identifying contributing factors that need teachers to improve teaching is considered significant. When connections among teachers, learners, and the contents are established, meaningful learning can take place. As they trudge into the different domains of learning, there are limitless possibilities to learn. Moreover, schools need to collaborate with stakeholders for flexibility purposes. Darling-Hammond (2006) specified that the unsettled limitations of the personal and cultural perspectives of each person bring a more complex task of teaching to deal with. This difficult process of helping people learn in complex settings is one of the things to be considered crucial to teacher education. The study by Cabal (2017) emphasized that cultural incongruence, challenging classroom setup, unsustained development for language, incompetent cultural practices, and irrelevant cultural-related teaching materials were the identified challenges for non-indigenous teachers teaching English to Talaingod-Manobo students. Teachers used multilingual instruction, strategies, professional culture, digital immersion, classroom climate, and cultural sensitivity to overcome instructional issues and challenges. Informants discussed reciprocal learning, student acceptance, and cultural diversity.

Their drive to be effective in teaching fuel them in their day-to-day teaching. As revealed in their narratives, the teachers expressed that they are focused on innovation and pragmatic teaching and striving to be pedagogically and technologically competent.

##### 4.2.1 Focusing on Innovation and Pragmatic Teaching

Practical and realistic scaffolding for teachers may mean support for emotional, personal, social, intellectual, or even professional aspects. More likely, in teaching scenarios, teachers are learning among coworkers how to be innovative in teaching. Teachers as learners are convinced by what Sawyer in Reiser and Tabak (2014) believed, that is, "there is always a challenge between having learners engage with meaningful complex tasks that maximize the potential for growth and providing sufficient support so that learners are neither overwhelmed nor under-challenged." Accordingly, they mentioned that:

*I learned from my pupils and that we both learned at the same time. (MT42-2)*

*We integrated functions and rules of political structures. We even requested the tribal leaders to be our resource speakers in social studies subjects paid for by the local government unit. (MT29-6)*

*I availed of Community of Practice, I asked for help from our master teachers. (FT27-7)*

*There is an online portal where the teachers can download activity sheets. -( FT50 -19)*

In line with a constructivist grounded theory approach, literature as a possible source of inspiration, creative associations, critical reflections, and multiple lenses can be utilized (Thornberg, 2012). Teachers have employed various ways to make learning more engaging. Internal and external sources of information were considered to counter traditional language instruction.

#### 4.2.2 Striving to be Pedagogically and Technologically Competent

As facilitators of learning, the teachers made their way to achieving their daily teaching goals amid the challenges. Some teachers shared experiences of having undeveloped pedagogies in teaching English and insufficient training in technology. Some teachers made even courageous moves just to manipulate the learning competencies and recreate the learning competencies while looking for solutions to match every detailed step of strategies fitting for the varied needs of learners. Most of them designed learning that made things easy for the learners. When teachers do their very best, their students would certainly be motivated to learn English. Furthermore, when teachers are able to motivate and inspire students, they can also influence students' abilities to learn English (Indriani, 2020). In addition, Ahmadi (2018) stated that the use of technology is a significant learning process in and out of the class. Every language class usually uses some form of technology it helps improve language learning. Also, technology continues to grow in importance as a tool to help teachers facilitate language learning for their learners.

In addition, to implement active learning, some teachers hired resource speakers that can be considered experts for a particular topic. Besides, it is known to English teachers that English has different macro-skills (i.e., reading, listening, speaking, writing, and viewing) with its corresponding micro-skills (i.e., noting details, sequencing events, summarizing, outlining, etc.). Teachers find ways to recreate learning strategies to facilitate learning for individual learners. Furthermore, the complexities in finding strategies to translate learning from L3 (English) to L2 (Tagalog) to L1 (e.g., Mamanwa / Kamayo / Hinigaon / Surigaonon / Bisaya / Muslim) with all the learning areas to teach (i.e., English, Science, Math, etc.) are difficult tasks being experienced by the teachers. Non-English majors handling English subjects in the elementary grade levels are not deeply oriented on the grammatical rules and other aspects of teaching language contrary to teachers in junior high and senior high schools. Consequently, accessibility to committing biases during learning evaluation is considered irresistible for them. In addition, due to overpopulated classrooms, complexities of varied differences, exhausting learning and behavioral problems of learners, and insufficient training are challenges to consider. Despite the facts, the teachers expressed their initiative, saying,

*Usually cooperative....(thinking)....learning activities, brainstorming, the original group then pupils will have to share... hmmm using.... KWL – What I know, What I want, What I learned. My pupils like to touch on previous learning. ( FT40-3)*

*We implemented several activities like 'A Paragraph a Day.' We also have to Drop Everything and Read. (FT50 -19)*

*Catering to the needs of learners' needs on aspects of auditory, tactile, kinesthetic, and visual being emphasized coupled with a touch of technology. (FT37-15)*

*I need to make some shortcuts by teaching fast-phased easy topics and lengthening time for difficult ones, at least no time is wasted. (MT42-2)*

*We should know how to personally diagnose the individual learning abilities of pupils especially those in mountainous areas. (FT48-18)*

*And some even showed concern for children who are having traumatic experiences. We found out that some pupils were experiencing trauma from critical areas. But as a teacher, I always think about how I can be of help to them. Actually, I adopted a child. When I passed the principal test, I confirmed, I have a mission – to touch the lives of children. (MT28-1)*

Novice teachers need mentors who can access hands-on immediate help on how to facilitate realistic experiences, thus meeting success (Radford, 2013). Moreover, Giebelhaus and Bowman (2002) as cited by Rusell and Rusell (2007) emphasized six characteristics that a mentor should be: (1) motivated to share knowledge, (2) credible and competent, (3) honest, (4) willingness to facilitate growth, (5) willingness to give critical and constructive feedback, and (6) skillful to deal directly with the protégé. In this preparatory scenario, the decision-making skills of teachers to facilitate meaningful and critical learning should be enhanced through sustained exposure to new learnings. Moreover, Rusell and Rusell (2011) stressed that mentoring is one of the major aspects of teacher education programs, often a collaborative effort among university supervisors, teacher educators, school administrators, supervising teachers, and preservice teachers to prepare better teachers for the increasingly classroom-changing environment.

#### 4.3 Teachers' Desire for Change

Certainly, valuing diligence, inner motivation, and certitude should not be set aside when facilitating learning. The third theme of this study is identified as "teachers' desire for change." Protacio (2022), revealed that the teachers recognize the significance of English to academic and professional success. Considering the significance of teaching English, it should be set as a priority. Due to students' lack of knowledge and the teachers' desire for the provision of better learning, the study reveals the substantial role of code-switching in addressing students' problems to be better understood when communicating during teaching-learning scenarios. Thus, teachers' ability to code switch from L1 (first language) to L2 (English as a second language) makes them both still connected. Consequently, this impacted the lives of the indigenous learners and the community as a whole. In addition, this refers to a state when teachers experience breaking barriers of challenges with inner motivation, love for work, dedication, commitment, and response to the call of service and not just merely by any influential forces.

The third theme, teachers' desire for change, has two axial codes: mentoring to grow and leading to inspire. The former stressed becoming an innovator as an offshoot of mentoring while the latter is on the personal conviction to effect change in others leading them, modeling excellence and high regard for English language teaching.

#### 4.3.1 Mentoring to Grow

The participants in this study are non-English majors teaching English at the intermediate level of elementary education. Getting immersed in some unfamiliar tasks, like being engrossed with English learning competencies, and learning processes, and selecting authentic assessments to assess learner's performance were considered real struggles. Despite the fact of experiencing many challenges in the field, the teachers managed to be optimistic acknowledging that through mentoring one can grow. Below are utterances that validated their shared experiences of commitment, hard work, and fulfillment.

*I need to think of ways to motivate myself ... I need to work for children because they are needing to be taught properly...It's my responsibility. I need to relax so I can regain more energy to serve my learners. I am motivated also by them. (MT29-6)*

*We all need to know. God has a purpose. The Lord connects them to me. I consider dealing with them as a mission". (FT38-8)*

*You can really maximize the multiple intelligences of the learners. I let them select their favorite lines of the poem... then others will create a poster by some artist, some made jingles, some were into verse choir... some were into interviewing... newscasting, and reporting with the crew. Through this, I believe I made a difference. (FT29-10)*

*We tried developing the cultural minorities' learning comprehension. That included localization, contextualization, then globalization. It should be known by learners. But we need to mold them starting with what can be found in the locality, that's localization. (FT32-13)*

Academic optimism refers to a group of beliefs that portray a positive image of a school's potential strengths and capacities. It is comprised of three key components: teacher efficacy, trust, and academic emphasis. In academically optimistic schools, educators possess a strong sense of confidence that they can make an impact on their students' learning outcomes, an unwavering belief that students have the potential to learn successfully and that good academic performance is achievable.

When teachers have a high level of morale, they exhibit increased productivity, stability and innovativeness, and produce work of superior quality. Conversely, unmotivated educators tend to evade their responsibilities display reduced loyalty towards their schools, and produce work that lacks quality (Wigfield, Guthrie, Tonks, & Perencevich, 2004). It is vital for teachers to establish positive relationships with both students and parents through genuineness, transparency, and honesty. If teachers fail to establish trust by making and breaking promises or by engaging in suspicious behavior, it can lead to a loss of trust from their students and parents (Cristine et al., 2022)

#### 4.3.2 Leading to Inspire

Generosity and kindness are prerequisites for fostering resiliency, especially in difficult circumstances. It is at the heart of learning and teaching. In other words, being compassionate is the human quality of being empathetic with others coupled with a desire to help (Wolpov, Johnson, Hertel, & Kincaid, 2016). Thus, discipline, planning, order, teamwork, and self-sacrificing be emphasized and sustained. Below are utterances from inspired teacher leaders. Through their actions, the teacher inspires their students and is inspired also in the process.

*Most of my classroom rules are active participation, love and care for others, speak clearly and consistently. (MT28-1)*

*We've heard that if the school will vanish, trouble comes in this place, so there's a need to strengthen the school. (MT29-5)*

*We did home visits for those IP (Indigenous People) learners who are always absent. We discovered that they have valid reasons. They took care of their younger siblings because their parents have livelihoods. I just give special exams for them without scolding them. (FT33-17)*

Besides being compassionate, courageous act matters too. A risk taker- teacher opened her amazing experiences in remote and dangerous areas. According to her,

*I need mind setting..... I didn't want to be assigned to the mountainous area... because I know it is dangerous. But observing the needs of the children... That was the time that I realized that I exerted my utmost effort to help them. It's so gratifying and fulfilling. This is my call..... to help them. (FT48-18)*

Compassion necessitates empathy, which entails being attuned to and sensitive toward the needs of others. Furthermore, compassion extends beyond mere feelings and encompasses taking action in ways that are comforting, caring, accepting, helpful, and/or protective (Wolpov, Johnson, Hertel, & Kincaid, 2016). Additionally, a harmonious relationship between students and teachers fosters increased learning within the classroom, as noted by Downey (2008). Teachers recognize the significance of providing scaffolding and compassionate leadership in teaching and learning scenarios, leading to a sense of fulfillment and enhanced productivity (Wolpov, et al, 2016).

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The unique experiences of non-English majors teaching English to diverse learners encompass a multifaceted journey that involves recognizing both barriers and scaffolds essential for effective teaching. The teachers, despite encountering numerous challenges in teaching, have developed initiatives, skills, and attitudes which demonstrated a sustained commitment to shaping their learners' language skill set. Through practical teaching experiences, the non-English major teachers, gain valuable insights into their own strengths and areas needing improvement. They embrace critical and creative approaches to guide their learners who come from various cultural backgrounds and with

diverse learning situations. Their unwavering dedication coupled with a growth mindset is evident in their application of theoretical knowledge in practical content.

The themes on psychological baggage, drive to be effective, and desire to change provide input to institutions in charting professional development and collaborative opportunities to non-English majors handling English classes. By addressing their specific needs and fostering the development of essential skills and resilience, these teachers can effectively fulfill their roles as curriculum designers and facilitators of learning.

Despite their preservice training, teachers require ongoing support and development opportunities that will hone their content and pedagogical skills necessary to transform learners into functional and contributing members of society. To address learning gaps, directives, and policies may be instituted to ensure teachers' continuous professional growth and competence in out-of-field teaching. This can include periodic monitoring and peer coaching to strengthen teacher quality. In so doing, they will develop their ingenuity to deal with learners from various cultural backgrounds.

## References

- Ahmadi, M. R. (2018). The use of technology in English language learning: a literature review. *International Journal of English Education. International Journal of Research in English Education*, 3(2). <https://doi.org/10.29252/ijree.3.2.115>
- Al-Mutairi, M. A. (2020). Kachru's three concentric circles model of English language: An overview of criticism & the place of Kuwait in It. *English Language Teaching*, 13(1), 85-88. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v13n1p85>
- Bacus, R. (2021). Teachers' beliefs, praxes, and post-method pedagogy in English language teaching. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 20(1). <https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.20.1.5>
- Bacus, R. & Alda, R. (2022). Senior high school teaching: A phenomenological inquiry. *Malaysian Journal of Learning & Instruction*, 19(1), 242-276. <https://doi.org/10.32890/mjli2022.19.1.9>
- Blömeke, S., Jentsch, A., Ross, N., Kaiser, G., & Johannes König. (2022). Opening up the black box: Teacher competence, instructional quality, and students' learning progress. *Learning and Instruction*, 79, 101600-101600. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2022.101600>
- Bustos-Orosa, M. (2008). Inquiring into Filipino teachers' conceptions of good teaching: A qualitative research study. *The Asia-Pacific Education Researcher*, 17(2), 157-171. Education Week. (n.d.) Teacher Quality. <https://doi.org/10.3860/taper.v17i2.729>
- Cabal, J. H. (2017). Lived experiences of English teachers of Talaingod Manobo students: Pedagogical challenges in Focus. *Tin-Aw*, 1(1), 1-1. Retrieved from <https://ejournals.ph/article.php?id=13462>
- Coristine, S., Russo, S., Fitzmorris, R., Beninato, P., & Rivolta, G. (2022, April 1). *The importance of student-teacher relationships. Classroom Practice in 2022*. Retrieved from <https://ecampusontario.pressbooks.pub/educ5202/chapter/the-importance-of-student-teacher-relationships/>
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4th ed.). Boston, MA Pearson. Retrieved from [https://www.scirp.org/\(S\(351jmbntvnsjt1aadkpozje\)\)/reference/ReferencesPapers.aspx?ReferenceID=757162](https://www.scirp.org/(S(351jmbntvnsjt1aadkpozje))/reference/ReferencesPapers.aspx?ReferenceID=757162)
- Dadvand, B., & Behzadpoor, F. (2020). Pedagogical knowledge in English language teaching: A lifelong-learning, complex-system perspective. *London Review of Education*, 18(1), 107-125. <https://doi.org/10.18546/LRE.18.1.08>
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). Powerful teacher education lessons from exemplary programs. San Francisco John Wiley and Sons, Inc. - References - *Scientific Research Publishing*. (2015). Scirp.org. Retrieved from <https://scirp.org/reference/ReferencesPapers.aspx?ReferenceID=1626627>
- Domingo, P. (2020). Triumphs and struggles in teaching the English language. *International Journal of Studies in Education and Science (IJSES)*, 1(1), 59-79.
- Ebrahimi, A. (2017). Measuring Productive Depth of Vocabulary Knowledge of the Most Frequent Words. *Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository*. Western University. Retrieved from <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=6336&context=etd>
- Ellis, K. (2004). The impact of perceived teacher confirmation on receiver apprehension, motivation, and learning. *Communication Education*, 53(1), 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0363452032000135742>
- Evans, S., & Green, C. (2007). Why EAP is necessary: A survey of Hong Kong tertiary students. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 6(1), 3-17. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2006.11.005>
- Faciolan, M., & Guhao, E. (2016) Pedagogical journey of newly-hired teachers: Stories to tell. *International Journal of Scientific & Engineering Research*, 7(9). Retrieved from <https://www.ijser.org/researchpaper/PEDAGOGICAL-JOURNEY-OF-NEWLY-HIRED-TEACHERS-STORIES-TO-TELL.pdf>
- Giebelhaus, C., & Bowman, C. (2023). Teaching mentors: Is it worth the effort?. *Journal of Educational Research*, 95(4), 246-254. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220670209596597>

- Housner, L., & Griffey, D. (2015). Teacher cognition: differences in planning and interactive decision making between experienced and inexperienced teachers. 45-53. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02701367.1985.10608430>
- Hoy, W., Tarter, C., & Hoy, A. (2006a). Academic optimism of schools: A force for student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 43(3), 425-446. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312043003425>
- Indriani, K. (2020). Factors influencing motivation in learning English of Mangusada Badung General Hospital staff. *OKARA: Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra*, 14(1), 13-22. <https://doi.org/10.19105/ojbs.v14i1.2972>
- Kirkpatrick, A. (2012). English as an Asian Lingua Franca: the 'Lingua Franca Approach and implications for language education policy. *Journal of English as a Lingua Franca*, 1(1), 121-139. <https://doi.org/10.1515/jelf-2012-0006>
- Kloček, H., & Foka, M. (2022). The interaction of receptive poetics and psycholinguistics: On the way to the synergetic effect. *Pertanika Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.47836/pjssh.30.3.09>
- Long, C., Ming, Z., & Chen, L. (2013). The study of student motivation on English learning in junior middle school--A case study of No. 5 Middle School in Gejiu. *English Language Teaching*, 6(9), 136-145. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v6n9p136>
- Madrunio, M. R., Martin, I. P., & Plata, S. M. (2016). English language education in the Philippines: Policies, problems, and prospects. In *English language education policy in Asia* (pp. 245-264). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-22464-0\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-22464-0_11)
- Moore, D. (2015.). Master Teachers as Instructional Leaders: An Instrumental Case Study. *Scholars Crossing*. Retrieved from <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/58826302.pdf>
- Nguyen, L. (2019). A case study of teacher feedback on Thai university students' essay writing. *GEMA Online® Journal of Language Studies*, 19(2), 121-138. <https://doi.org/10.17576/gema-2019-1902-08>
- Pham V. (2021). English language education in rural areas: Current issues, complexities and ways forward. *Education Research*, 37(4). <https://doi.org/10.25073/2588-1159/vnuer.4538>
- Protacio, A. (2021). Teaching culturally diverse students in English as a language of instruction: Teachers lived experiences. *Globus Journal of Progressive Education*, 12(1), 7-12. Retrieved from <https://www.globusedujournal.in/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/GE-JJ22-ADRIAN-V-PROTACIO.pdf>
- Renganathan, S. (2021). English language education in rural schools in Malaysia: A systematic review of research. *Educational Review*, 75(4). <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2021.1931041>
- Robosa, J., Paras, N., Perante, L., Alvez, T., & Tus, J. (2021). The experiences and challenges faced of the public school teachers amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Advance Research and Innovative Ideas in Education*, 7(1). <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.14028833.v1>
- Racca, R., & Candy, R. (2016). English language proficiency and academic performance of Philippine Science High School Students. *International Journal of Languages, Literature and Linguistics*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.18178/IJLLL.2016.2.2.65>
- Russell, M., & Russell, J. (2023). Mentoring relationships: Cooperating teachers' perspectives on mentoring student interns. *Professional Educator*, 35(1). Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ988202>
- Lombardozzi, C. (2015). *Scaffolding Learning in the Flow of Work | ATD*. *Td.org*. Retrieved from <https://www.td.org/insights/scaffolding-learning-in-the-flow-of-work>
- Sadeghi, K., Ghaderi, F., & Abdollahpour, Z. (2021). Self-reported teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction among teachers: the role of subject matter and other demographic variables. *Heliyon*, 7(6), e07193-e07193. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2021.e07193>
- Seven, M. (2020). Motivation in language learning and teaching. *African Educational Research Journal*, 8(2), S62-S71. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1274645>
- Smith, D. (2018). *Phenomenology*. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy/ Summer 2018 Edition*. Retrieved from <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2018/entries/phenomenology/>
- The Understood Team. (2016). *Understanding your child's trouble with spoken language*. Retrieved from <http://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/child-learning-disabilities/issues-involving-spoken-language/understanding-your-child-trouble-with-spoken-language>
- Thornberg, R. (2012). Informed grounded theory. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 56(3), 243-259. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2011.581686>
- Vandenberghe, R., & Huberman, A. M. (Eds.). (1999). *Understanding and preventing teacher burnout: A sourcebook of international research and practice*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511527784>
- Wen, X. (2023). Chinese Language Learning Motivation: A Comparative study of heritage and non-heritage learners. *Heritage Language Journal*, 8(3), 41-66. <https://doi.org/10.46538/hlj.8.3.3>
- Wigfield, A., Guthrie, J., Tonks, S., & Perencevich, K. (2023). Children's Motivation for Reading: Domain Specificity and Instructional

Influences. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 97(6). <https://doi.org/10.3200/JOER.97.6.299-310>

Wolpov, R., Johnson, M., Hertel, R., & Kincaid, S. (2016). *The Heart of Learning and Teaching*. Retrieved from <https://www.k12.wa.us/sites/default/files/public/compassionateschools/pubdocs/theheartoflearningandteaching.pdf>

### **Copyrights**

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).