DEFEATING LANGUAGE BARRIER: EXPLORING ELEMENTARY TEACHERS' STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

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Abstract:

This phenomenological study aimed to determine the strategies used by teachers to improve the communication skills of children and how they can help students who are English language learners successfully speak English. This study aimed to identify the challenges faced by elementary teachers with the language barriers of the students, the strategies to improve communication skills, and the insights they have on their experiences when improving their learners' communication. The study utilized a qualitative design using a descriptive Qualitative method approach, with fourteen elementary teachers selected through focus group discussion and in-depth interviews. The researchers used a qualitative interview method as a data analysis tool. The results revealed that the challenges of elementary teachers when teaching their non-English speaking students are associated with themes: Language Acquisition Difficulties and Emotional Behavioral Hindrances in Learning. Moreover, the study revealed the strategies they used when attempting to improve their learners with themes: Comprehensive and Adaptive Teaching Approaches for Language Learning, Positive Classroom Climate, and Cultural Adaptation. Furthermore, the elementary teachers' insights showed the themes: Personalized Guidance and Support in Education, Intrinsic Rewards of Teaching, and Continuous Growth and Excellence in Teaching Practice. The analyzed findings of this study unveil the various challenges and experiences that

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elementary teachers face. Thus, this study contributes significant knowledge to improve and examine how to approach non-English students in the future.

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1. Introduction

Communication is crucial to learning, but a significant educational challenge today is that children need help communicating in unfamiliar languages. In the 2018 Program for International Student Assessment, the Philippines had the lowest scores among 79 participating countries and economies (San Juan, 2019). Most Filipinos can speak English, but their reading comprehension skills are weaker, indicating that not all Filipinos are proficient. This increased focus on technology, instead of traditional reading, can contribute to language difficulties in communication. Stuttering due to the fear of ridicule or degradation by others is one of the outcomes of this challenging environment. Personal experiences of bullying related to pronunciation are daily, adding to the challenges students face in building their communication skills. Moreover, foreigners often need help communicating in rural areas due to a lack of English education, reflecting real-life scenarios where language barriers hinder effective interaction.

Today, students struggle to communicate due to pressure and loss of confidence. Many young people who are proficient in English mock those who make mistakes, and teachers sometimes embarrass students while correcting them. This fear and shame silence students and hinder effective communication (Adamson, 2022). Also, students are feeble in communication because they do not like to read, and technology takes some of their attention (Erkan, 2019). Because it is difficult to understand different types of words, it is necessary to know what methods and strategies teachers use to teach language to students who have difficulty communicating with others. More than 26 million people (about the population of Texas) in the United States do not speak English as their primary language and have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. People with limited English proficiency have a higher risk of experiencing healthcare disparities (Collins, 2022).

In terms of learning, reading comprehension is required by everyone because this is where we learn how to communicate, and it will help you learn to speak and understand languages that are new to your hearing. The acquisition of reading comprehension strategies has far-reaching positive impacts, helping adults thrive in their careers and helping children achieve academic excellence and develop essential cognitive skills in communication (Elizabeth, 2022). Concern has actively supported such initiatives through curriculum design, teacher training, and the provision of learning materials. These barriers encompass various aspects, including listening, perception, oral, and

cultural barriers; to facilitate effective classroom communication, educators must recognize and address these barriers, which can manifest as emotional reactions, distractions, misinterpretations, unclear oral communication, and cultural misunderstandings. Overcoming these barriers is essential for fostering productive classroom interactions and enhancing students' learning experiences because one common communication/ language barrier in the classroom is the challenge of effective listening; both teachers and students must engage in active listening, focusing on understanding the speaker's message rather than formulating a response and in that way, they can improve or practice their communication skills with the possibility to restore their self-confidence and to lose some shyness and nervousness to talk to others.

The journey to overcome language barriers unfolds intricately as we explore elementary teachers' strategies to improve their students' communication skills. This journey is anchored in Social Constructivism, where knowledgeable teachers can guide learning by providing tailored support based on each student's needs. This could entail setting an example of good communication techniques, offering advice on language use, and creating spaces for introspection and correction by Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which is a learning theory that holds that knowledge is built through social interaction and cooperation, with an emphasis on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

The ZPD represents the gap between what learners can do independently and what they can achieve with guidance and support from a more knowledgeable person, such as a teacher or peer (Vygotsky, 1968). It emphasizes the importance of cultural and social context in shaping communication and learning. By using constructive strategies, teachers will be more effective; they can promote communication and create flexibility to meet all students' needs because learning relationships in the constructivist classroom provide mutual benefits to both students and teachers (Kapur, 2019; Lev Vygotsky, 1968). It offers a profound lens through which we can appreciate the dynamic process of defeating the language barrier; by exploring the strategies employed by elementary teachers to improve communication skills, we have uncovered the significance of learner-centered, experiential approaches that acknowledge the unique backgrounds and perspectives of students (Ranido, 2023)

It will underscore the importance of fostering a collaborative and adaptable learning environment where teachers and students engage in a continuous dialogue, valuing the richness of diverse linguistic and cultural experiences (Mercer & Alexander, 2021). In this constructivist paradigm, language ceases to be a barrier and instead becomes a bridge to connect individuals from different backgrounds, enabling them to communicate, learn, and grow together. If everyone speaks the same language, surely we will all understand each other and communicate clearly, and combining these theories will help to better understand how elementary teachers can overcome their ongoing challenges so that their students can be seen improving.

A significant research gap exists in understanding how elementary teachers address language barriers in the classroom, prompting the need for an urgent study to equip educators with practical strategies to enhance students' language acquisition and

communication skills, especially in the context of learning English, ensuring their academic success and fostering a more inclusive learning environment, human communication, deeply embedded in social interactions, stands as a crucial element for the survival and well-being of individuals and societies (Seven, 2020). Language, both a bridge and a barrier in our interconnected world, impacts diverse sectors such as healthcare and education (Buarquob, 2019).

Challenges in intercultural communication arise from preconceived notions and prejudices, emphasizing the need for openness to diversity and effective communication (Kim & Williams, 2021). In the Philippines, international students grapple with communication barriers, finding motivation in family support and religious convictions; the two factors that have the most influence on being a foreigner are now religion and language culture. The findings indicated that language and attitude issues severely affected the respondents (Roxas & Vargas, 2021). In education, effective communication, encompassing verbal and non-verbal aspects, is pivotal in creating an environment conducive to academic growth and building trust among stakeholders (Salamondra, 2021).

The significance of this study lies in its capacity to uncover the strategies utilized by elementary teachers, especially in the context of English language acquisition, to empower their students and enhance their communication skills, particularly among non-English-speaking students. In a broader context, this research contributes significantly to the field of education by advancing language learning techniques within elementary settings, ultimately improving teacher-student communication and pedagogical practices. Moreover, this research carries social value as it has the potential to foster more inclusive classrooms, ensuring that students from diverse backgrounds receive essential support in overcoming language barriers and developing strong communication skills, thus encouraging social equity in the field of education, as students who develop strong communication skills become better equipped to navigate an increasingly interconnected world, this not only helps to create a more equitable educational environment but also aligns with larger societal goals of promoting diversity and understanding.

This study aimed to examine how teachers address language barriers in the classroom and explore the experiences of the challenges that teachers have encountered. Elementary school teachers mainly focus on strategies to enhance students' language acquisition, especially in English, thereby improving their communication skills, especially for those students who are feeble in understanding. The research centered around three key questions: firstly, what specific language barrier challenges do elementary school teachers face when communicating with non-English speaking students? secondly, what strategies do they use to improve communication skills effectively? and finally, what insights have they learned as a teacher in working with non-English-speaking students?

2. Method

The procedures used in this study, including the research participants, research materials, data gathering, data analysis, and ethics, are discussed in this section.

2.1 Research Participants

The research participants are public elementary school teachers in Sta. Maria West District, Davao Occidental, and Tawan-Tawan Baguio District, Calinan, Davao City, teach English and Filipino subjects. We had 7 participants for in-depth interviews from Sta. Maria West District, Davao Occidental, and seven teachers for focus group discussions from Tawan-Tawan Baguio District, Calinan, Davao City. So, all in all, we had 14 participants to gather information to understand the problem of this research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018); the research design is required to continue collecting data until the researcher has no longer discovered new information, with ages ranging from 28 and above with at least 5-20 years of background in teaching public schools that will undergo in-depth interviews and focus group discussions for this study.

Participant 1, at age 49, is a successful teacher with 20 years of service in DEPed. She can provide for her daughter's needs and send them to college while also being promoted to Teacher II. Participant 2, at Age 47, is a father, a good husband to his wife, and a very knowledgeable teacher with ten years of service. Participant 3, at age 59, made her two children graduate from college while teaching for 30 years of service. Participant 4, at age 35, is a good father of his only daughter and got promoted to Teacher II for 15 years of service. Participant 5, at age 37, is working on her master's degree while creating a positive atmosphere in her classroom as a teacher for more than ten years of service. Participant 6, age 50, can send her daughter to college and teach elementary students for 16 years of service. Participant 7, at age 36, was able to build a house, provide for the needs and expenses in life, and has taught students for six years in service. Teacher 1, at age 62, has saved up for their family in 28 years of service. Teacher 2, at age 61, within the 26 years of service in DepEd, they were able to send their child to school, who has now become a teacher in a public school, just like her. Teacher 3, at Age 28, in his five years of service, already has a family and has already bought their own house. Teacher 4, at age 30, has a complete family, and she acts as the rulemaker as a mother, wife, and teacher in 8 years of service. Teacher 5, at age 46, can provide for the needs of her family with 17 years of service. Teacher 6, at age 30, has a child, and she can now pay the bills by teaching students for eight years of service. Teacher 7, at age 61, has more than 26 years of service. She can buy the necessities for their home, like groceries, and has a kid who has already graduated from college.

These participants helped us answer questions about the strategies that must be undertaken in Teaching, especially for children with difficulty using different languages. We chose them as reference and information sources because their strategies are the focus of this study. These criteria were essential to maintain the relevance of the gathered data and focus on the specific strategies employed by experienced teachers in addressing

language-related challenges in the classroom. As researchers, we approached the research participants to personally inform them about the focus of this study and ask for their participation so that we could gather the information we needed. By giving them a letter personally so that they or we can also be informed if it is okay for them to be interviewed, we made sure that interviews took place in the respondents' preferred locations, in settings and environments in which they felt comfortable and what time the interview will be done, depending on availability time and date.

2.2 Research Instrument

In this qualitative research, a researcher-made questionnaire was designed to address the study's objectives. Additionally, we utilized a detailed interview guide aligned with the questionnaire to ensure a comprehensive exploration of teachers' experiences and approaches. This guide encouraged participants to share their strategies and experiences, providing rich, in-depth insights crucial to our research objectives. The research question has been validated by two studies: the first is about the teachers' challenging experience while teaching, and the second is about what they learned in teaching non-English speaking students, so they could provide various strategies. We validated it with validators and obtained approval before conducting interviews, which enhanced the quality of the questionnaire.

2.3 Design and Procedure

The descriptive qualitative method focuses on exploring the characteristics of a subject or topic rather than delving into the underlying causes or mechanisms. It involves collecting and analyzing data in the form of words, images, or other non-numerical forms of information. Using Interviews, the researchers let the teachers describe the strategies they employ to teach their students about language so that they can establish successful communication with their peers (Kalpan, 2019).

Qualitative interview is the primary tool in data gathering that identifies free basic types of qualitative interviewing for research and evaluation, which was heavily used in this current study (Patton, 1990). First, the free primary type of qualitative informal conversation interview was used in gathering data from elementary teachers. Second, observation methods are minimally carried out as substantial support to whatever factual data may be gathered. This technique is where the researcher gathered first-hand data on programs, processes, or behaviors being studied. It allows the researcher to collect data on a wide range of behaviors, capture a variety of interactions, and openly explore the research topic. Document and public analysis were also used as a means of a fathering technique, as this gave significant value in providing secondary data that proved helpful in the current study.

Before gathering the necessary data, they get permission from the professor in charge and ask for a signature as proof of his/her approval, which is necessary. Before commencing the interviews, the researchers took the necessary steps to secure a letter addressed to the school, requesting permission from the division office to conduct the

interviews with the public teachers. This letter has served as a formal request for collaboration and an expression of our commitment to ethical research practices. Also, sending a letter to the school where the public teacher is currently working is necessary, these are the teachers we are about to interview. After providing the letter, it is a must to immediately start the interview with permission from the interviewees to record with a screen time of 1 hour at most. After the interview, the researchers compiled and compared all participants' answers to our questions to determine and understand the different guides and strategies. The next step is that the researcher scheduled another meeting with the participants to ask if there are any problems with the compilation, if they have problems with it, or if they are not satisfied if none, then it is possible to proceed with analyzing the strategies given as an answer by the participants to the researchers as a way for the researchers to provide their insights and understanding to the given answers.

Ethical considerations are essential when conducting research. Some rules have been consistently applied during the study's duration. These considerations include the following: protection of research participants, honesty of research participants, informed consent, privacy protection, confidentiality, anonymity, avoidance of deceptions with regard to the purpose of the study, transparency in fund sources, honest communication, and avoidance of misleading information and data findings (Siegle, 2023).

The data analysis in this study is thematic analysis, where relevant themes and patterns are found in the data and then used to resolve the issues under investigation. If the participants are on board, the entire interview is digitally recorded, especially if the participants are from the province. Audio recordings were copied to the personal laptop and phone the day following the interview to ensure that there were multiple copies of the records. To make sure that the interviewer did the interview, he or she should take notes in case a more precise answer is needed from the respondents.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Language Barrier Challenges Elementary School Teachers Face When Communicating with Non-English Students

Presented in Table 1 is the set of emergent themes extracted from their cluster theme pertinent to the language barrier challenges elementary school teachers face when communicating with non-English students. Upon gathering information from the participants, the researchers collected various challenges that elementary school teachers face when communicating with non-English students. The emergent themes the researchers have established under the first research question are language acquisition difficulties and emotional and behavioral hindrances in learning.

Table 1: Language Barrier Challenges in Elementary School
Teachers Face When Communicating with Non-English Students

Emergent Theme	Cluster Theme	Formulated Meaning
Language Acquisition Difficulties	Language Comprehension	• The non-English speaking students need more understanding when discussing English. • The non-English speaking students are dealing with reading comprehension. • The non-English speaking students deal with words of understanding. • The non-English speaking students need help understanding even simple words.
	Delayed English Development	• Non-English's speaking students need to improve their speech development. • The non-English speaking students are delayed, especially in English subjects. • The non-English speaking students are unable to read a word or a sentence.
	Minimal Exposure to Language	• The non-English speaking students need to be exposed to English. • Non-English speaking students need help following even simple instructions. • The non-English speaking students need help to form complete sentences.
Emotional and Behavioral Hindrances in Learning	Limited Participation in Activities	• The non-English speaking students do not participate when doing group activities. • The non-English speaking students participate less when it comes to activities.
	Emotional Barriers to Expression	• The non-English-speaking students felt self-pity, so they were ashamed to answer questions. • The non-English speaking students feel fear. • The non-English speaking students cannot express themselves well when using English language. • Non-English speaking students are discriminated against, so they quickly become afraid of making mistakes, especially in communication.
	Behavioral Challenges in Learning	• The non-English speaking students quickly need to remember the lesson. • Ironically, the non-English speaking students can still be clever even though they are non-readers. • The non-English speaking students get distracted easily.

3.1.1 Language Acquisition Difficulties

This emergent theme pertains to the teacher's challenges when teaching non-English speaking students. The cluster themes that build this emergent theme are language comprehension, delayed English development, and minimal exposure to language, which the teacher needs to improve for the student's learning (Murphy, Arndt, Baffoe-Djan, Chalmers, Macaro, Rose, Vanderplank & Woore, 2020).

3.1.1.1 Language Comprehension

This cluster theme pertains to how elementary teachers faced challenges communicating with their students, especially in language comprehension and understanding. One of the challenges teachers face today is teaching their students how to understand a statement they are reading because comprehension or understanding is one of the issues they are currently grappling with (Abualzain, 2020). Due to a lack of understanding and comprehension, some lessons in teaching may be delayed, as observed by the following statement:

"Naglisud ko kay pag mag subject namo is English kuan siya kanang mag lisud silang sabot."

"I struggled because, during our subjects, especially in English, they had difficulty understanding." (IDI_P1, IDI_P7, FGD_T1, FGD_T4, FGD_T7)

"As an English teacher I find it more difficult. Lisud dyud kaayo siya pag ahh pag adjust labi na kaning mga studyante na mga dili kaayo sila maka communicate gyud ug English simple English. When it comes to communicating sa mga pupils nga dili gyud kabalo mo mo express ug English or even mag himo ug sentences."

"As an English teacher, I find it more difficult. It's challenging to adjust, especially with students who struggle to communicate in English, even simple English. When communicating with pupils who cannot express themselves in English or make sentences." (IDI_P2)

"Dili sila kaayo kasabot ug English. Kanang lisud sila pasabton walay comprehension. Ika duha, kanang murag dili dyud dayun matuhok ang lesson."

"I felt overwhelmed because it was difficult to communicate with the students if they needed help understanding English. It was hard for them to comprehend and grasp the lesson immediately." (IDI_P5)

"Lisud kaayo sila pasabton. Nag inenglish ka dinha, nag lutok ilang mga mata wala sila silay nasabtan sa imong gi sturya. So lisud dyud kaayo kung ang mga bata non-english speaking students."

"They need to be easier to engage. You speak in English, but their eyes stare blankly; they don't understand what you're talking about. So, it's challenging when dealing with non-English speaking students." (IDI_P6)

Language comprehension is indeed one of the most challenging experiences for teachers today. Participant 1, along with Participant 7, Teacher 1, Teacher 4, and Teacher

7, finds it challenging to make their students understand, especially when discussing topics related to the English subject. On the other hand, Participant 2 faced a challenge as an English teacher because their students struggled with reading English. Participant 5 experiences culture shock because they realize their students lack comprehension and cannot speak Cebuano. Finally, Participant 6 struggles because they speak English in front of the class, assuming their students understand, only to realize later that they don't comprehend anything. It's challenging when your students cannot understand English or even Cebuano. It has a significant impact when your students find it difficult to teach English, especially if their first language is a local dialect like Kaulo, Manobo, or even Cebuano (Lu, 2022). They are still struggling to understand the text of the reading materials, which includes drawing conclusions, figuring out the primary idea, and locating references. Several factors, such as inadequate reading comprehension strategies and insufficient focus during reading, contribute to this.

3.1.1.2 Delayed English Development

This cluster pertains to one of the challenges elementary teachers face with students struggling with communication skills. The challenge is delayed English development, where students, despite receiving gradual Instruction, still struggle to grasp the concepts (Hartnett, 2022). Even though they can put two words together, a child with a language delay may be able to speak. Though they may be difficult to understand, a child with a speech delay may use words and phrases to convey concepts. Due to delayed English development, elementary teachers struggled with how they teach their students the following statement:

"Lisud dyud kaayo kay delayed sila labi nag English subject."

"It's tough because they are delayed, especially in the English subject." (IDI_P2)

"Hasta dyung lisuda kay maski pagbasa ug word or sentence kay dili dyud o maglisud silage sturya."

"It's tough because they don't know or can't speak, even just read a word or sentence." (FDG_T6, FDG_T7, IDI_P2, IDI_P7)

Delayed English development is indeed one of the most challenging issues to address, especially for children who need opportunities for English conversation at home. This lack of practice hinders the development of their communication skills (Chand, 2021). Participant 2 is struggling because their student needs more time to improve communication skills, particularly in the English subject. On the other hand, teacher 6, teacher 7, participant 2, and participant 7 are experiencing difficulty because no matter how they teach or introduce reading, even just words or sentences, their students struggle to read because of delayed English development, especially when it

comes to storytelling. Indeed, many students today experience delayed communication development, especially in English, as Cebuano is often their first language at home.

3.1.1.3 Minimal Exposure to Language

This cluster pertains to the minimal exposure to language, where students are not exposed to English and need help to follow simple instructions or even form complete sentences. One reason why children may make mistakes in their tasks is that they need to gain an understanding of the instructions. No matter how slowly and clearly you explain, they struggle to comprehend because they lack exposure to the English language (San Juan, 2019). Due to their difficulty in following simple instructions and their inability to create complete sentences, it's evident that they need exposure to English. This can lead to frustration and challenges in the classroom or during lessons due to the difficulties the elementary teachers experience as stated below:

> *"Diri sa atoa labi na sa lugar nato na medyo kanang dili kaayo kuan sa English exposed sa English na language. Uuhhpp lisud gyud sa mga bata."*

> *"In our area, where children aren't exposed to the English language much, it's tough for them."* (IDI_P4)

> *"Lisud sila I instruct. Kay maski sayon sa instruction kay maglisud pa sila ug sabot."*

> *"They are difficult to instruct. They do not even immediately understand simple instructions."* (IDI_P5)

> *"Ang akong kasinatian sa pakipag communicate sakong students na dili kabalo mo form ug sentences kay medyo challenge."*

> *"My experience communicating with pupils who don't know how to form sentences has been quite challenging."* (IDI_P2)

Minimal exposure to the language is indeed one of the difficulties elementary teachers face, especially in areas where English is not commonly spoken. Indeed, based on what we know, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, every student learns a language to effectively communicate and interact with the Teacher and other students in the classroom. However, in the current situation, teachers struggle to adjust and deliver instructions clearly and effectively in activities due to this lack of exposure among students (Mansour, 2018). Participant 4 faces significant challenges because most of their students are not exposed to English, making it difficult to teach them how to construct instructions, similar to Participant 5. Meanwhile, Participant 2 also struggles because even when they try to form sentences, they cannot understand. This highlights the immense struggle teachers face with their non-English speaking students.

3.1.2 Emotional and Behavioral Hindrances in Learning

This emergent theme pertains to the teacher's observation during discussions with their non-English speaking students. The cluster themes that build this emergent theme are limited participation in activities, emotional barriers to expression, and behavioral challenges in learning. The teacher observes that students speak English because of these clusters (Murphy *et al.*, 2020).

3.1.2.1 Limited Participation in Activities

This cluster pertains to one of the challenges elementary teachers face because some students are not participating in activities. Some students nowadays are not totally participating in classroom activities or even group activities where their skills or talents may improve more, especially in oral recitation, where they can practice their communication, which might help improve their grades. Due to their limited participation in activities, the student can't practice their communication using English or different languages, as observed by the following statement:

"Uhhmm okay, in a classroom in a classroom scenario o labi na dyud sa during sa time discussion na ahhhh katong mga non-speaking students so dili dyud medyo hinay dyud sila. Hina dyud sila sa cooperation maong kaylangan gyud nilag guidance."

"Okay, those non-speaking students are slow in a classroom scenario, especially during discussions. So, they lack cooperation. They need guidance." (IDI_P2)

"Ahh diri, during discussion, less gyud ang participation sa mga non-english speaking students. Ngano man? Maglisud man sila ug kanang communicate. Soooo, dili gyud ka kakuha ug meaningful participation sa ilaha kung lisud sila maka isturya. So less ang participation ana nga time."

"Here, during discussions, the participation of non-English speaking students is less. Why? Because they struggle to communicate. So, you can't get meaningful participation from them if they struggle to express themselves. So, their participation is less during that time." (IDI_P6)

Limited participation in activities is indeed one of the challenges teachers face because they don't know how to express their thoughts. If they don't understand, they can't participate, so they have less participation during oral recitations or group activities (Rohi & Muslim, 2023). Participant 2 observed that the students need guidance because they lack cooperation when it comes to participation in class activities. Participant 6 observed that their students struggle to express themselves, so they participate less. I can tell that those students who did not participate in their classroom activities needed motivation and encouragement (Yarborough *et al.*, 2020; H. N., 2020).

3.1.2.2 Emotional Barriers to Expression

This cluster pertains to the emotions of the students of elementary teachers that may cause a barrier to their learning (Harappa, 2021). This emotional barrier is one of the challenges that elementary teachers face. They struggle to motivate their students because it's overshadowed by fear or embarrassment that they might make mistakes in answering questions, which the teacher and their classmates might laugh at. These emotional barriers to expression pose challenges to teachers the following statement below:

"Oo, naka experience jud ko ana na situation kay naa koy bata na katong ingun nako kagaina na kanang late siya nianhi diri tapos late siya na transfer tapos sige pajud og absent tungod sa kana bitawng kalayo sa ilang balay. Unya naa mi mga activity na kanang dili siya na Makita niya na oii lahi ko kay tungod dili siya kay kaulo jud to sila."

"Yes, I have experienced that situation where I had a child who, as I mentioned earlier, arrived late and kept being absent because their house was far away. And when there were activities where you couldn't see them participating because they felt different due to being Kaulo speakers." (IDI_P1)

"Kuan jud siya, so naay panahon nga ang bata katong dili gud kabalo mo English maulaw jud siya. Noh? Maulaw jud siya makig mingle sa uban na kahibalo na bitaw."

"There are times when a child who doesn't know English feels embarrassed. Right? They might feel shy to mingle with others who know the language." (IDI_P3)

"Yes! Most of the time gyud na ma experience sa mga bata kay ma feel man gud nila nga "di man ko kahibalo oyy" ana ba soo… kasagaran gyud na mahitabo."

"Yes! Most of the time, that's what the kids experience because they feel like, 'I don't know anything, oh.' That's common to happen, especially during group." (IDI_P6)

"Yes! Kanang naa dyud na siya especially sa grouping kay sometimes katong mga non-english speaking students kay ma feel dyud nila nga isolated sila or there is a barrier between na English speaking students kay pag once nga maka dungog na sila nga nag speaking na or nag talk na using English language ang is ang ilahang classmates so ma hesitate na sila nga mo voice out or mo eh mo mo unsa na siya mom o voice out or mo hatag sa ilahang idea."

"Yes! That's a concern, especially in grouping activities, because sometimes non-English speaking students feel isolated or sense a barrier between them and English-speaking students. Once they hear their classmates speaking or talking in English, they might hesitate to voice out or express their ideas." (IDI_P7)

"Ohh naa gyud na siya ma'am, dili gyud namo, dili gyud na siya maiwasan puro ikaw nga teacher kung mapansin nimo nga murag gi discriminate siya."

"Oh, that's a concern, Ma'am. We shouldn't allow that to happen. If you notice that, it seems like she's being discriminated against." (FDG_T1)

Emotional barriers to expression are indeed one of the difficulties teachers face nowadays when their students hesitate, especially when answering questions. They feel embarrassed that they might be wrong or just give random answers, even though they have the right to voice out their ideas. Sometimes, students experience a mental block, and then they get laughed at by their classmates, which is why the emotional barriers start there, where the child is afraid of making mistakes. Participant 1, Participant 3, and Participant 6 have almost the same sentiment, as they all mentioned that their students hesitate to answer or join activities because they are afraid of making mistakes or feeling like they don't belong.

On the other hand, participant 7 said that because of the embarrassment of their classmate speaking in English when answering, they prefer not to answer or participate because they don't know how to express their thoughts or ideas in English. While teacher 1 said that discrimination is difficult to avoid (Council of Europe, 2024). If it persists for a long time, the emotional barrier remains, and they continue to feel shy about giving ideas, even if they are correct, as they grow up.

3.1.2.3 Behavioral Challenges in Learning

This cluster pertains to one of the challenges elementary teachers face when teaching children's behavior (Alakashee *et al.*, 2022). Some easily forget the lesson because they need to study or pay attention, and some struggle with communication because they are often reprimanded at home or even at school. Another reason is that they are easily distracted by their surroundings. The teacher struggles the most in getting their attention when it comes to discussing, and this is the following statement:

"Constant follow-up pud sa kadtong vocabulary nga imuhang ginahatag sa ilaha daily kay kung dili mang gud to ma follow-up tong vocabulary daily, malimtan man gud sa bata so kailangan nimo nga contants follow-up sa ilaha kung asa nataman ang ilahang vocabulary."

"There should be constant follow-up on the vocabulary you're giving them daily. Follow up on the vocabulary daily to ensure the children remember, so you need constant follow-up to see where they stand with their vocabulary." (IDI_P6)

"So para sa akoa ah the challen isa sa mga challenge is yung kuan interaction and then second is yung mastery of the topic kay English ka mag sige kag yawyaw ug ininglish

imong bata wa kasabot so yun, interaction di pud siya maka interact sa imoha dili pud siya maka master sa imong topic kay wala man siya kasabot."

"For me, one of the challenges is the interaction and mastery of the topic because if you keep speaking in English and the child needs help understanding, they can't interact with you. They also can't master the topic because they don't understand it." (FDG_T3)

Behavioral challenges in learning are indeed one of the difficulties that teachers face today. The children should ideally be disciplined right from home, but now, the Teacher has to adjust how to discipline and teach them proper behavior, because sometimes, the children listen more to the teacher than to their parents. In an ideal scenario, children should already know how to communicate effectively from home, but nowadays, even the parents may not know how to speak English. Therefore, it becomes essential for the teacher to try to teach their students properly (Continental, 2023). If the teacher allows their students to not listen to them while they are teaching, they might get used to it and not learn or improve their learning, especially their communication skills.

3.2 Strategies that Elementary School Teachers Use to Effectively Improve Communication Skills with Non-English Speaking Students

Presented in Table 2 is the set of emergent themes extracted from their cluster theme pertinent to the Strategies Elementary school teachers use to effectively improve communication skills with non-English speaking students. Upon gathering information from the participants, the researchers collected various challenges that elementary school teachers face when communicating with non-English students. The emergent themes the researchers have established under the second research question are Comprehensive and Adaptive Teaching Approaches for Language Learning and Positive Classroom Climate.

Table 2: Language Barrier Challenges Elementary School
Teachers Face When Communicating with Non-English Students

Emergent Theme	Cluster Theme	Formulated Meaning
Comprehensive and Adaptive Teaching Approaches for Language Learning	Multimodal Teaching	• The teacher used flashcards and essential sight words as a strategy for reinforcement. • The teacher used pictures, videos, and constructive visuals. • The teacher used gestures.
	Reading Assessment	• The teacher used MPRE (Modified Parallel Reading Experience). • The teacher used PHIL-IRI to determine who couldn't read or understand English. • The teacher has a formal assessment.
	Differentiated Instruction	• The teacher's strategies include differentiated instruction, instructional materials, reading tools, and templates. • The teacher translates the words for them if they don't understand.

		• The teacher implements an "I do, we do, and you do." • The teacher used rubrics and visual aids for their strategies. • The teacher used real-life scenarios when discussing. • The teacher maintains teaching them to read. • The teacher provides activities that are compatible and applicable to their level.
	Sequential Learning Strategies	• The teacher starts with the alphabet and its sounds. • The teacher consistently follows up on the students' vocabulary daily. • The teacher adds additional vocabulary for daily learning.
Positive Classroom Climate	Positive Reinforcement	• The teacher encourages a good atmosphere in the classroom. • The teacher encourages students by appreciating their work or giving them rewards. • The teacher motivates the students by offering additional points. • The teacher gives the students special attention to motivate them. • The teacher gives them surprise exams or tests as encouragement.
	Practical Teacher Guidance and Correction	• The teacher always guides the students. • If the students make mistakes, the teacher corrects them correctly.
	Supportive Teacher Communication	• Good communication is one of the teachers' tools because they don't want their students to be afraid. • Teachers communicate with their students as if they were friends to avoid pressure. • The teacher gives enough time to the children. • The teacher learned to observe their reactions when teaching.
	Cultural Adaptation	• Teachers need to respect the beliefs of their students. • The teacher must practice their language. • The teacher should adapt to the culture of their students. • The teacher must use vernacular or adapt their language to teach the language better to their students.

3.2.1 Comprehensive and Adaptive Teaching Approaches for Language Learning

This emergent theme pertains to how teachers can teach lessons in a way that they can plan and ensure no child will be left behind. The cluster themes that build these emergent themes are broadly understanding one's mind and accommodating each learner's needs. In order to succeed, students need various levels of support from their teachers, as they learn at different rates. The level and pace of support will change based on the requirements of each child. Therefore, teachers must be aware of the many needs in their classroom and any obstacles to learning that students can encounter (Hawthorne, 2023).

3.2.2.1 Multimodal Teaching

This cluster theme pertains to how teachers deliver or teach different methods in various ways to help students learn and understand concepts easily.

A multimodal instructional method emphasizes the utilization of diverse forms of communication, linguistic, visual, auditory, spatial, and gestural—to engage students in multiple sensory experiences, facilitating comprehension. Educators choose materials from a range of mediums, such as videos, blogs, news articles, video games, and short films, to enhance learning (Yang, 2022). Through the help of the various modes as a strategy in teaching, understanding, and learning can be gained by the students as it is observed in the following statements:

"Hangtud karun flashcards dyud akong ginagamit. Kaylangan nako ang flashcards man gud labi na karun na naga sugod dyud ta sa sa basic sight words ug karun no kay naabot nag 200 para sa reinforcement."

"Until now, I've been using flashcards. I need flashcards, especially now that we're starting with basic sight words, and there are already many, around 200, for reinforcement." (IDI_P1, FDG_T3)

"Nag gamit mig pictures, videos, and constructive visuals."

"I used pictures, videos, and constructive visuals." (FDG_T1, FDG_T3, FDG_T4, FDG_T5, FDG_T6, IDI_P3)

"Naga gamit mi ug gestures."

"I used gestures." (FDG_T4, FDG_T7)

In teaching elementary grades, a teacher must know how to employ diverse methods in delivering information to the students, it is essential that the students can easily understand the method used in teaching. Multimodal pedagogies refer to how teachers design learning experiences using various multimodal resources (Lim *et al.*, 2022). P1 and T3 use flashcards as their strategy in teaching, while T1, T3, T4, T5, T6, and P3 employ pictures, videos, and visuals as a teaching mode. Lastly, T4 and T7 use gestures when teaching their students.

3.2.2.2 Reading Assessment

This Cluster pertains to the goal of determining whether the teachers' instructional practices are helping students make enough progress toward the development of reading abilities. Educators recognize the importance of using assessment strategically to monitor progress and communicate achievements (Wright, 2019). With the help of these

strategies, enable Teachers and students to understand the English Language as observed by the following statements below:

"Naay mi gitawag na kanang ahh empre bana oo unsay tawag ana empre. Ahhhh… para para ma I test namo ang bata na through reading naay gitawag nila ngab asa sila mabelong sa frustration ba, sa independent ba or ahh non-reader."

"They have what they call that, umm, MPRE (Modified Parallel Reading Experience), yes, what do they call that, MPRE (Modified Parallel Reading Experience). Ahhhh... so that we can test the child through reading, they call it belonging to frustration, independence, or non-reader. (IDI_P2)

Naa mi ginagamit nga Phil-IRI sa English nga kuan ginagamitan namo sila ana para Makita dyud namo ang unsa, o masukod namo o ma assess namo ang bata ang iyahang iyahang abilidad nga musabot, mubasa, ug kanang unsay tawag ana mo sabot, mubasa, ug kanang mo kuan sa English terms."

"We have been using Phil-IRI in English to effectively see, measure, or assess the child's abilities in understanding, reading, and what do you call that, in understanding, reading, and in terms of, you know, their skills." (FDG_T5, FDG_T7, IDI_P5)

"Okay ang assessment na ginabuhat namo kay ang sa akoa lang dili gyud siya ingun nga formal assessment kanang based lang sa kanang ilahang kanang unsa unsay Makita nako sa ilaha kung halimbawa dili kaayo sila ka responds sa unsay kanang kung mag sturyag English unya dili gyud sila ka responds, dili sila ka sabot so naga conduct mig formal assessment."

"Okay, the assessment we are conducting is not like a formal assessment; it's just based on what I can see from them; for example, if they are not very responsive, you know, if we're conversing in English. They're not very responsive; they don't understand, so I'm just conducting a formal assessment." (IDI_P4, IDI_P7)

Letting your students assess their reading skills allows them to recognize words and statements they struggle to speak and pronounce. Through reading assessments, a teacher will know whether a student has already made progress in their reading abilities or if they still need to try and improve in that ability. P2 employs MPRE (Modified Parallel Reading Experience) as a strategy for assessing students' reading skills, while for T5, T7, and P5, they use PHIL-IRI to identify their students' reading skills. However, for P4 and P7, conducting a formal assessment is their technique for determining students' responsiveness in a classroom environment.

3.2.2.3 Differentiated Instructions

This cluster pertains to the strategy or approach for effective teaching that includes providing all students within their distinct classroom community of learners with an array of different methods for learning new content. Differentiated Instruction means tailoring Instruction to meet individual needs. It involves using various teaching strategies that provide students with instruction and tasks appropriate to their working level. When teachers differentiate work, they prepare information, modeling, and tasks for each student, individually or in groups, according to their ability (Cleaver, 2024). Diverse methods of instruction help students to cope easily with the words they find challenging to read and understand; with the help of differentiated instruction, they can cope with the barriers of the English language, as observed by the following statements below:

"Ooo okay… so of what I've mention. Usa sa mga one of the criteria or assessments ang gigamit sa mga teachers ahh naa silay mga reading tools or ahh ngaa para, para ma access ang mga bata. Unsa bagyud sila o how fast they read the material or how how poor they read the material so mao to sila ang naa silay mga mgaaaa criteria mgaaa tools or mga templates nga basihan or para ma access ang mga bata."

"Okay... So, one of the criteria or assessments teachers use is having reading tools or materials to access the children. It helps determine how fast they read the material or how poorly they read it. So, they have these criteria, tools, or templates for assessing the children." (IDI_P2, IDI_P6, IDI_T6, FDG__T4, FDG_P7)

"Inig mag tudlo kog English, gina translate dyud nako na siya word for word sa Bisaya para mas masabtan nilag mayo. Tapos gina make sure pud nako na makasabot sila sa kung unsa nan ga meaning."

"If I teach English, I translate word for word into our local language so they can understand better. Then, I make sure they understand the meaning of it." (FDG_T3, FDG_T5, FDG_T7, IDI_P6, IDI_P5, IDI_P4, FDG_T4, IDI_P1, IDI_P3)

"Gina gamitan dyud nako na silage kaning "I do, we do, ug you do.""

"Teachers implement an "I do, we do, and you do" approach." (FDG_T4)

"Sa among strategies kay ginagamit namo dyud ang rubics ug visual aids."

"We used rubrics and visual aids to develop our strategies." (IDI_P6, FDG_T1, IDI_P5, FDG_T7)

"Paras mas masabtan nila tapos hinay hinayon kung mahimo mugamit ta ug mga mga instances or kanang mga real life mga scenarios."

"To better understand, I used real-life scenarios when discussing." (IDI_P5)

"Maintain lang dyud ang pagtudlo ug pagpractice ug basa ang akong ginabuhat."

"I just maintain teaching and reading practice." (IDI_P4)

P2, P6, T6, T4, and P7 implied that they use differentiated instruction, instructional materials, reading tools, and templates to determine if their students are improving. At the same time, T3, T5, T7, P6, P5, P4, T4, P1, and P3 translate the English words into their local language to better understand them. P6, T1, P5, and T7 employ rubrics and visual aids. In addition, T4 implements I do, we do, and you do, real-life scenarios when discussing is used by P5, maintains teaching and reading practice for P4, and lastly, P5 provides compatible and applicable activities to their grade level. All of the students have one common learning objective. However, education differs depending on students' interests, preferences, capabilities, and challenges. In teaching elementary, you have to adjust and adapt to the students' learning styles. For you to be successful in teaching or delivering information, you must think of strategies that can be used to let students understand lessons easily. Differentiated instruction allows us to tailor our teaching to the needs of individual students (Martirena, 2021).

3.2.2.4 Sequential Learning Strategies

This cluster theme pertains to the approaches that may provide students with exciting and meaningful experiences as they learn. The teacher follows the established order with adjustments to meet individual needs. Skills are taught based on what has been previously taught, the child's previous knowledge, repeated structured spiraling review, and aiming for mastery (Gibbons, 2021). Different strategies can help students to freely understand the struggle of speaking English words, as observed by the following statements:

"Kaylangan mo start ka ug alphabet, letter sound. Kaylangan dyud hina-hinay ang pag explain sa ilaha og dapat kanang follow up dyud ka sa ilang vocabulary. Then dapat taga adlaw kay mag add ka ug lahi napud na vocabulary para makasabot sila dayun."

"I started with the Alphabet and its sounds. I take it slow with them in explaining and follow up constantly on their vocabulary. Additionally, I add more vocabulary daily for them to understand more easily." (IDI_P6)

Recalling concepts is crucial before starting new lessons; allowing your students to remember what they had encountered in the past makes it easy for them to remember what they have learned; adding new words can also help prepare them to learn ideas and make them try to pronounce and speak them. P6 shared that the strategy she uses is to start with the alphabet and its sounds. Additionally, she takes it slow with them in explaining and also makes sure to constantly follow up on their vocabulary. Every day, she adds more vocabulary for them to understand more easily.

3.2.3 Positive Classroom Climate

This emergent theme pertains to how teachers manage or interact with a classroom and the student's behavior. A classroom climate has been viewed as a collective and subjective perception of the class, its features, actors (those involved), and their social interactions (Weber, 2021).

3.2.3.1 Positive Reinforcement

This cluster theme is one of the teachers' most effective strategies to keep students interested and determined to learn. Some examples of these activities would include giving verbal praise for effort, using reward stickers to acknowledge participation, giving high-fives for good work, publicly recognizing achievements, and even offering extra recess for completing tasks. These activities encourage students to continue putting in their best effort and help foster a positive and collaborative atmosphere in the classroom (Yussif, 2023). Awarding students simple gifts and giving them positive praises makes them strive more and participate more in classroom activities, as observed by the following statements:

> *"Gina encourages dyed nako ang good atmosphere sa sulod sa classroom."*

> *"I really encourage creating a good atmosphere in the classroom."* (IDI_P5)

> *"Gina encourage nako ang students nako sa paagi na I appreciate ang ilang gina buhat kundili kay maghatag ug rewards. For example, kung mutubag sila sa question, gina ingun dyud nako na kanang "very good, good job.""*

> *"I encourage students by appreciating their work or giving them rewards. For example, if they answer a question, I always say, "Excellent, good job.""* (IDI_P1, IDI_P3, FDG_T4, IDI_P4)

> *"I motivate them by offering additional points as incentives."* (FDG_T6)

> *"Okay, so I encourage nako sila nga mag kuan by giving them exam surprises. By giving them some awards, ug umm, those people who participated in the classroom, I will give them a surprise, uh hmm candies, biscuits, or anything that makes them happy."*

"Okay, so I encourage them to speak by giving them exam surprises. I give rewards like candies, biscuits, or anything that makes them happy to those who participate in the classroom activities." (IDI_P3)

A positive classroom environment allows students to feel comfortable and express themselves freely. By establishing these kinds of strategies, students are motivated to participate and learn more. Positive Reinforcement is one of the teachers' most effective tools to keep students engaged in class and motivated to learn (Banks, 2022). Encouragement through creating a good atmosphere in the classroom is the technique used by P5, appreciating their students' work or giving them rewards, like saying, "Excellent, good job." This is what P1, P3, T4, and P4 do while motivating their students by offering additional points, as T6 employs incentives. In addition, P3 gives the students special attention to motivate them or gives them surprise exams or tests as encouragement.

3.2.3.2 Practical Teacher Guidance and Correction

This Cluster pertains to how teachers give helpful feedback and advice to the students, enabling them to feel secure and not isolated or different from others. Feedback helps students correct their work and allows them to see where they stand versus what the Teacher wants students to learn in any specific lesson or unit (Lipnevich & Panadero, 2021). Allowing students to be corrected in the right way makes them feel that they are not being discriminated against and they will take that correction as positive feedback for the things they did; this can be observed by the following statements below:

"Gina guide nako sila maong sa sunod inig makabuhat silage mali kay kabalo na sila kung unsa ang tama."

"I guide them so that next time when they make a mistake, they already know what is correct." (IDI_P1, IDI_P5)

"Kung magkamali ang bata kay gina correct dyud nako sila sa tamang paagi."

"If the students make mistakes, I correct them in the right way." (IDI_P4)

When students commit mistakes, a teacher's action must be appropriate to the level of the student. No one must be angry because a child gets into trouble. A teacher must guide her/his students on the right path by giving advice, talking to them, and saying what the do's and don'ts are. Children experience your attention and guidance as a caring embrace, holding everything together. They know you engage in for them (Dolgoff, 2023). P1 and P5 guide their students so that they know what is correct next time they make a mistake. If the students of P4 make mistakes, she/he correct them correctly.

3.2.3.3 Supportive Teacher Communication

This cluster theme pertains to how a teacher communicates with her/his students. Positive and open communication is essential, especially when teaching elementary students, because you, as a teacher, are a part of their developing self, and the way you communicate with them may help them adapt. Such communication techniques improve learner behavior and enhance self-regulation, the ability to manage one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in different situations. This, in turn, promotes deep learning and social and emotional development (Ma, 2023). Good and open communication with the students is a crucial part of Teaching and learning because you will provide them with a teacher-student relationship so they will not be afraid to talk and express themselves freely. This can be observed by the following statements:

"Good communication is one of my tools because dili ko gusto na mahadlok and among students."

"Good communication is one of my tools because I don't want my students to be afraid." (IDI_P3)

"I communicate to my students as if na magbarkada lang mi para dili sila maka bati ug pressure."

"To avoid pressure, I communicate with my students as if we are just friends. (FDG_T3)

Nagahatag dyud ko ug sapat na time para sa mga bata."

"I give enough time to the children." (IDI_P7)

"Kailangan dyud mahibal an kung unsa ilang mga gina huna-huna ug reaction. Kung wala sila kasabot, para makaingun ka kung maka comprehend dadyud sila o dili."

"So, it's important to understand their thoughts and reactions. If they don't understand, you'll be able to tell whether they comprehend or not." (FDG_T1)

Having open and healthy communication with your students is vital because this allows the students to freely be themselves, and they will not hesitate to approach you as a teacher if something bothers them. Communication and understanding are vital components of teaching elementary students, for they are just starting to know more about their environment or surroundings. According to P3, good communication is one of her/his tools because she/he doesn't want the students to be afraid, while in T3, communicating with students as if they are just friends is used to avoid pressure. Giving enough time to the children is emphasised by P7, while the importance of understanding the thoughts and reactions is highlighted by T1.

3.2.3.4 Cultural Adaptation

This cluster theme pertains to a teacher's adaptability to students' distinct cultures. They respect and acknowledge students' cultures, languages, and experiences—and employ them in classroom learning. Culturally responsive teaching is an approach that "*empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes*" (Betts, 2023). Respecting and adapting to a student's cultural differences is crucial in teaching elementary grades. For a teacher to deliver the lesson clearly, she/he must learn to speak the language the student uses. This can be observed by the following statements:

"Gina encourage dyud nako sila na makasabot ug value and respect kay gikan man sila sa lahi-lahi na background. As a teacher, kailangan pud nako mag repect sa ilang beliefs and practices."

"I encourage them to understand the value of respect because they come from different backgrounds. As a teacher, I also respect their beliefs and practices." (IDI_P2, IDI_P4)

"Kailangan nako ma practice ilang language bilang isa ka teacher nila."

"As a Teacher, I must practice their language." (IDI_P4, FDG_T1)

"So ang ang gikuan dyud nako is ni adapt ko sa ilang culture. Murag gidawat nako kay ako man gud ang niadto sa ilang community. So ang nahitabo, ako ang ni adapt man dyud kay ako man ang niadto didto. So murag ako pung gidawat ang ilahang tribe, gi respeto nako, kanang murag ning sunod pud ko sa ilahang mga dili gud ingun nga kanang mo apil naka sa ilahang tribe kundili mo respeto lang ka."

"So, I ended up adopting because I was the one who went there. It's like I joined their tribe and respected them, and it's as if I followed their customs, not because I had to, but out of respect." (IDI_P5)

"Kailangan mag gamut dyed log vernacular or adapt their language para ka nang maudlin og better language and among students as a teacher."

"As a teacher, I must use vernacular or adapt their language to teach the language better to their students." (IDI_P7)

Knowing how to adjust and adapt to the native language of the students is crucial, as it enables a teacher to better deliver and teach students English words that they struggle with. Learning a broad range of languages may be challenging because you will study and practice them individually. However, it will be a big help for you and your students to understand each other easily. It incorporates attributes and knowledge from

each student's cultural background into instructional strategies and curricula to improve educational outcomes (Howard, 2020). P2 and P4 encourage them to understand the value of respect because they come from different backgrounds. And as a teacher, they also respect their beliefs and practices. "*As a Teacher, I must practice their language,*" stated P4 and T1, while P5 ended up adopting what they had there as a tribe because she/he was the one who went there, not because she/he had to, but rather she/he wanted to do. Lastly, P7 highlighted that they use vernacular or adapt their language to teach the language better to their students.

3.3 Insight Shared by the Elementary Teachers Derived from Their Interactions while Working with Non-English Speaking Students

Presented in Table 3 is the set of emergent themes extracted from their cluster theme pertinent to the language barrier challenges elementary school teachers face when communicating with non-English students. Upon gathering information from the participants, the researchers collected various insights that elementary school teachers face when communicating with non-English students.

The emergent themes the researchers have established under the first research question are personalized guidance and support in education and intrinsic rewards of teaching.

Table 3: Language Barrier Challenges Elementary School
Teachers Face When Communicating with Non-English Students

Emergent Theme	Cluster Theme	Formulated Meaning
Personalized Guidance and Support in Education	Recognizing and Respecting Individuality	• The teacher realized that every child is unique. • The teacher realized the need to stop comparing the learners' different learning styles and talents. • The teacher realized that teaching is touching the lives of their students. • The teacher realized that being a teacher is molding a learner's character and personality. • The teacher realized the profound impact educators can have on shaping young minds.
	The Role of Teachers as Mentors and Motivators	• The teacher realized that being a teacher should set a positive example for the learners. • The teacher realized that being a teacher is needed to inspire young ones to be more fruitful and thrive in the future. • The teacher learned to be flexible in any instance on their journey. • The teacher learned to stay tough and dedicated.
Intrinsic Rewards of Teaching	Loving One's Work and Finding Contentment	• The teacher learned to love their work and be content with what they have, so they will be happy working with others. • The teacher learned that to make your job easy is to love it.

		• The teacher learned to respect because it builds feelings of trust, safety, and well-being between co-workers and as well as with learners.
	Satisfaction and Fulfillment Derived from Teaching	• The teacher realized that teaching is the most satisfying and fulfilling career. • The teacher learned that knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values are significant lessons. • The teacher learned to be a magnet of love, generosity, and charity to others because this is worth sharing and modeling. • The teacher learned to listen to others' opinions, which would help them to grow. • The teacher realized that teaching is not just a job; it's a vocation with compassion and commitment. • The teacher learned to have the power of resilience.
Continuous Growth and Excellence in Teaching Practice	Essential Traits and Attributes for Effective Teaching	• The teacher learned to be compassionate • The teacher learned to be innovative • The teacher learned to be a person who motivates, encourages, and inspires. • The teacher realized that patience is well-needed when teaching • The teacher realized the importance of perseverance • The teacher realized the importance of understanding • The teacher realized that teaching requires complete dedication • The teacher realized that teaching requires love and compassion • The teacher realized the importance of adaptability • The teacher realized the importance of empathy in fostering student growth
	Importance Professional Development	• The teacher learned that continuous learning is not only for the learners but also applies to teachers. • The teacher learned to actively seek opportunities for professional growth • The teacher realized that teaching is not an easy job • The teacher realized the difficulty of teaching children • The teacher learned to hold and believe in the saying, "*Have faith that your effort will be rewarded*."

3.3.1 Personalized Guidance and Support in Education

This emergent theme pertains to the teacher's way of knowing individuality, the role of teaching, and being contented. The cluster themes that build this emergent theme are the vitality of having unique instructions individually and support when it comes to teaching, and the importance of having personalized guidance in education. Personalized education is the tailored adjustment of instructional practices based on individual learner characteristics to optimize learning outcomes (Tetzlaff *et al.*, 2021).

3.3.1.1 Recognizing and Respecting Individuality

This cluster theme pertains to recognizing and respecting the diversity of the students. Recognizing and respecting individuality in education involves actively getting to know each student's unique interests, values, and background to tailor Instruction accordingly (Fievre, 2021). The vitality of recognizing and respecting individuality is one of the insights that the participants learn during their experience when communicating with non-English students, as is observed by the following statements below:

"I realized that every child is unique. As teachers, we should not compare our learners, for they have different learning styles and different talents." (P1)

"Teaching is touching the children's lives, helping them become the best version of themselves." (P2)

"We are modeling our learners' characters and personalities by providing support to make them the best citizens of our country." (P4)

"I've realized the profound impact educators can have on shaping young minds." (T4)

Participants 1, 2, 4, and Teacher 4 stated that recognizing and respecting individuality would help. Individuality, empathy, mentorship, and influence would reciprocate the effort.

3.3.1.2 The Role of Teachers as Mentors and Motivators

This cluster theme pertains to the guidance and inspiration provided by educators in shaping students' aspirations and fostering their drive toward achievement. Teachers are pivotal as mentors and motivators, fostering trust, guidance, and belief in students' abilities, enhancing their academic performance and overall well-being (Will, 2023). The vitality of having the role of mentors and motivators is one of the insights that the participants learn during their experience when communicating with non-English students, as is observed by the following statements below:

"Ones to more fruitful and thriving in the future. Teachers should set a positive example for the learners and inspire young ones to be more fruitful and thriving in the future." (P3)

"The lesson I may share with others is to be flexible in any situation in your teaching journey. You have to stay tough and dedicated." (P7)

Participant 3 reflected that embodying positivity and inspiration as a teacher sets a powerful example for learners while also recognizing the role of inspiring young minds toward future success. Additionally, Participant 7 embraced flexibility and resilience, understanding the need to adapt to challenges and maintain unwavering dedication in

their teaching journey. Being a teacher entails recognizing and addressing the diverse factors influencing student motivation while implementing practical strategies to enhance engagement and foster a conducive learning environment (Yarborough & Fedesco, 2020).

3.3.2 Intrinsic Rewards of Teaching

This emergent theme pertains to educators deriving profound satisfaction and fulfillment from their role and finding intrinsic value in teaching and nurturing young minds. Cluster themes contributing to this emergence include Loving One's Work and Finding Contentment, Satisfaction, and Fulfillment Derived from Teaching, Essential Traits and Attributes for Effective Teaching, and the Importance of Professional Development. Intrinsic rewards are vital as they come from the inherent satisfaction of an activity, motivating individuals for personal fulfillment rather than external incentives (Cherry, 2023).

3.3.2.1 You are Loving One's Work and Finding Contentment

This cluster theme emphasizes educators finding fulfillment in their roles, fostering positivity, and nurturing harmonious relationships for effective collaboration with colleagues and students. Contentment and other factors can contribute to someone's behaviors and decisions at work (Agbanyim, 2021). Having Contentment and loving your work is vital to perform your best, as is observed by the following statements below:

> *"Love your work and be content with what you have now so that you will be happy working with others."* (P3)

> *"To make your job easy for you to do is to love it. If you love your job, especially in teaching your pupils, you will find it easy to find ways how to help your pupils become better."* (P4)

> *"I have learned that it is worth sharing with others respect because it builds feelings of trust, safety, and well-being between co-workers and learners."* (P6)

Participants 3, 4, and 6 highlighted the importance of finding fulfillment in their work, emphasizing that cultivating a love for their profession leads to happiness in collaborating with others and facilitates the creation of trusting and supportive environments for colleagues and students.

3.3.2.2 Satisfaction and Fulfillment in Teaching

This cluster theme revolves around educators finding deep satisfaction and fulfillment in their profession, highlighting the intrinsic rewards of Teaching and the joy derived from nurturing young minds. Teachers' job satisfaction and fulfillment significantly impact student achievement, with highly satisfied educators demonstrating a commitment to student success through dedicated Instruction and personalized attention (Hoque *et al.*,

2023). Satisfaction and fulfillment will give good results, as observed by the following statements:

"As time went by, Teaching became the most satisfying and fulfilling career." (P1)

"Sharing what you have, like your knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values, are significant lessons that you can share with others and be a magnet of love, generosity, and charity to others because this is worth sharing and worth modeling." (P2)

"You have to listen to others' opinions, which will help you grow, develop, and become more knowledgeable." (P3)

"I realized that Teaching is not just a job but a vocation with compassion and commitment." (P4)

"One important lesson I have learned is the power of resilience." (T4)

Participant 1 reflected on the profound satisfaction and fulfillment found in Teaching, while Participant 2 highlighted the significance of imparting knowledge and embodying virtues like love and generosity in shaping students' development. Additionally, Participant 3 emphasized the importance of listening to others for personal growth, and Participant 4 recognized Teaching as a vocation driven by compassion and commitment. Lastly, Teacher 4 emphasized the necessity of resilience in overcoming challenges in teaching. Teachers' satisfaction significantly influences educational results by cultivating a positive environment that supports the success of both teachers and students (Ortan *et al.*, 2021).

3.3.2.2 Continuous Growth and Excellence in Teaching Practice

This emergent theme underscores educators' commitment to ongoing improvement and excellence in their teaching practice, with cluster themes including the essential traits and attributes necessary for effective Teaching and the importance of professional development in facilitating continuous growth. An effective teacher embodies clarity, empathy, and inspiration, fostering a supportive learning environment, nurturing students' social-emotional development, and instilling a lifelong love of learning beyond the classroom (Djoub, 2024)

3.3.3.1 Essential Traits and Attributes for Effective Teaching

This cluster theme pertains to fundamental characteristics crucial for students' successful learning experiences and academic achievement. Effective Teaching relies on empathy, adaptability, communication, and a passion for continual improvement, fostering a supportive learning environment where students thrive (Graham *et al.*, 2022). Essential

characteristics for effective Teaching will create good results, as observed in the following statements:

> *"I have also learned how to be innovative, where I have been able to create something into nothing because that is what a teacher should be, especially to our students."* (P1)

> *"Be a person who motivates, encourages, and inspires."* (P2)

> *"Patience is needed when teaching young learners because some learners need more time and effort to learn. You have to adjust your young self, especially if they have different behavior and attitudes towards you and the people/learners around him."* (P3)

> *"I have realized the importance of perseverance and understanding that every learner is unique."* (P5)

> *"I realized that Teaching is a challenging job. It requires our full dedication, love, and compassion in our chosen profession and to the learners."* (P6)

> *"I have learned the importance of adaptability and empathy in fostering student growth."* (T4)

Participant 1 highlighted the significance of innovative teaching methods, Participant 2 stressed the pivotal role of being a motivating and encouraging figure, Participant 3 emphasized the necessity of patience, and Participant 5 underscored the importance of perseverance and understanding. Similarly, Participant 6 recognized the indispensable qualities of dedication, love, and compassion in teaching, while Teacher 4 emphasized adaptability and empathy in fostering a supportive learning atmosphere. Effective teachers foster positive relationships, employ diverse instructional strategies, and positively accommodate student differences to shape future generations (Young, 2021).

3.3.3.2 Importance of Professional Development

This cluster theme pertains to the teachers' realization that continuous learning is essential for their growth and success in teaching. The quality of teacher professional development is essential for improving teaching and learning outcomes, retaining effective teachers, and scaling educational innovations effectively and equitably (Olsen & Wyss, 2022). Professional development is crucial for educators, as it is observed by the following statements:

"As teachers, we should actively seek opportunities for professional growth to stay updated and equipped, ensuring that we can provide the best education that every learner deserves." (P5)

"I realize that teaching is not a challenging job. I believe this saying: "Have faith that your efforts will be rewarded"." (T3)

"It is not easy to teach children, especially in this generation." (P7)

The teachers' insights collectively highlight a deep recognition of the importance of continuous learning and professional growth, exemplified by a newfound commitment to seeking opportunities for personal development (Participant 5). They also acknowledge the inherent challenges of teaching, particularly the difficulty of working with children (Participant 7), leading to a realization of the necessity for perseverance and faith in one's efforts (Teacher 3). Teacher professional development is vital for empowering educators with essential skills and knowledge to excel in their teaching roles (Schwartz, 2023).

4. Conclusion

The study's findings indicate that many children struggle to grasp English for various reasons, the most common being that they are not exposed to it at home until they go to school, making them fearful of being made fun of. In light of all the information we learned from the participants' answers, we educators concluded that, for students to catch up to their more advanced peers when they reach a higher level, we must adapt our teaching methods gradually. It is good to teach children how to count, but it is ideal to teach them what counts. We all know that communication is one of the most significant foundations in our education, so we all need to educate our students for a better future. yes, teaching children their ABCs and 123s is just one of the many responsibilities that fall on our shoulders as instructors. However, our daily acts of compassion, love, and kindness in the classroom also significantly impact us. It gives our pupils a better idea of the individuals they can become. Everyone can change with the proper education. Everything may change with the right teacher!

Teachers help people discover their abilities, cry less, face their fears, and defeat demons. Our position is crucial in our students' lives because sometimes they spend more time with us than with their families. As a result, we ought to be just and cherish each day. Teaching is a very patient and passionate profession. A good teacher does not provide all the solutions to their students; instead, they are compassionate toward their needs and difficulties and provide resources to support the success of others. They should be allowed to maintain their individuality and speak distinct languages since each of our kids is unique. Language obstacles exist, but as educators, we are responsible for overcoming them by treating students fairly and showing an appreciation for their

customs and cultures. This information is beneficial for teachers and especially for novice educators who will know how to improve their students in the future.

We can beat the language barrier. The people we asked said that to do this, we need to help students get better at talking with others and feeling sure of themselves. When students feel confident enough to ask questions and speak up, it shows they are learning. So, how do we do this? Well, it is about more than just learning words and grammar. It is also about getting better at talking with others. When students are good at this, they are not just better at speaking the language; they are also better at feeling good about themselves. Feeling good about themselves is super essential when learning a language. When students feel good about speaking up, they learn better. That is why it is essential to help them feel confident and make sure they feel safe asking questions.

In short, beating the language barrier is not just about learning words. It is about helping students feel good about themselves and be confident in speaking up. When we do this, everyone gets a better chance to learn, no matter where they come from or how well they speak. Teaching elementary students is a journey of exploration and growth, affecting both students and educators. Teachers' actions significantly influence self-esteem and drive in young children. Teachers can instill belief in abilities and commitment to excellence by creating a supportive learning environment. Even small achievements can spark a thirst for knowledge beyond the classroom. Empathy and understanding are crucial, as each child brings unique experiences and challenges. Building trust and camaraderie fosters a secure environment for students.

A cooperative approach focusing on inclusivity, communication, and comprehension is crucial to overcome language barriers in elementary education. This involves creating a nurturing classroom environment, using visual aids and technology, providing tailored Instruction, and fostering strong connections with families and communities. This approach ensures that every student feels valued, empowered, and capable of success.

4.1 Implications of the Study

The study found that elementary teachers need help helping students who do not speak English well. These students need help with understanding English and joining class activities. They need help to read, understand words, and make sentences. Also, they feel they need to be more confident about participating in group activities because they worry they might make mistakes.

To address these challenges effectively, educators can implement a multifaceted approach. They can begin by integrating interactive games into their lesson plans, carefully selecting games that reinforce vocabulary, grammar, and language structures while making learning enjoyable. Additionally, introducing role-playing exercises enables students to engage in simulated real-life scenarios, practice English communication skills in context, and boost confidence in verbal expression. Furthermore, facilitating collaborative learning activities, such as group projects or discussions,

provides a supportive environment for practicing English language skills through peer interaction.

Creating a classroom where everyone feels welcome and encouraged is essential, too. Teachers should celebrate the differences in languages and encourage students to take risks. This way, students feel better about learning English and are more likely to succeed in school.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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