



## TURNING PAGES, TURNING STRATEGIES: EXPLORING TEACHERS' LIVED EXPERIENCES AND PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES IN LITERATURE INSTRUCTION

**Mac Rose B. Yangco<sup>i</sup>**

Faculty of Advanced International Studies (FAIS),  
Davao Oriental State University (DO<sup>r</sup>SU),  
Philippines

### **Abstract:**

This study explored the lived experiences and pedagogical approaches of higher education literature teachers from Davao de Oro State College and Davao Oriental State University. Grounded in a qualitative phenomenological design, the research utilized in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to examine how these educators construct meaning from their instruction, the specific strategies they employ, and the professional challenges they encounter. Findings reveal that literature teaching is perceived as a deeply humanizing and transformative educational experience. Teachers emphasized that literature fosters empathy, emotional awareness, self-reflection, and moral understanding among students by exposing them to diverse human struggles. Additionally, the discipline serves as a vital tool for intellectual development, enhancing critical thinking, creativity, and the ability to construct independent meaning from texts. Teachers reported employing adaptive, learner-centered pedagogical approaches, including scaffolding, differentiated instruction, and interactive discussions, while viewing students as active meaning-makers rather than passive recipients of knowledge. Although participants identified obstacles—such as limited instructional resources, varying student engagement, and institutional constraints—these were consistently framed as opportunities for reflective practice and professional growth. Ultimately, the study concludes that teaching literature is a dynamic and transformative practice defined by pedagogical adaptability, commitment, and the cultivation of meaningful human connections within the academic environment.

**Keywords:** constructivist learning, higher education, literature instruction, lived experiences, pedagogical strategies, phenomenological study, teacher reflection

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<sup>i</sup> Correspondence: email [yangcomacrose@gmail.com](mailto:yangcomacrose@gmail.com)

## 1. Introduction

Literature plays an important role in stimulating creativity, empathy, and critical thinking (Al-Matrafi, 2022). At the same time, the language and culture of literary texts are very complex, and students have difficulties understanding them (Hess, 2003), which requires the use of effective pedagogical strategies (Savvidou, 2004). Despite this, there is little research on the difficulties English teachers face, their coping strategies, and their best practices. This study investigates English teachers' everyday experiences to gain insights for pedagogical reflection in literature instruction.

Literature is an important but difficult area of global English, and it remains so. A study from Prince Sattam bin Abdulaziz University in Saudi Arabia (2021) revealed that 90% of students used translation to comprehend the material due to cultural and linguistic barriers and traditional approaches. Likewise, research conducted at the International Islamic University in Chittagong, Bangladesh, revealed that students' lack of proficiency in the language is a source of frustration for teachers in 2023 literature instruction. These results highlight the need to explore teachers' experiences and their adaptations to enhance engagement and teaching effectiveness.

While teachers make every effort to teach children effectively, many struggle to incorporate literature into their instruction because of children's varied learning styles. Research has highlighted that pedagogy needs to focus on teachers' and students' needs (Parojenog, 2020). Though studies conducted at the Philippine Normal University reveal a preference for an information-based approach, the Integrated Approach is found to be more effective in developing appreciation, critical thinking, and language skills. In addition, specific instructional techniques are implemented in literature instruction, such as differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, and the use of audiovisual aids (Mercado, 2025).

Davao de Oro State College (DDOSC) is an educational institution that trains future teachers in the locality, especially in the English language and literature. The BSEd-English course offers a wide range of literature, from poetry to prose and theatre, and is taught by professors with diverse teaching philosophies. In the provincial context, as in the national context, it is difficult for teachers to motivate students to read the literature itself due to students' language proficiency, limited resources, and lack of motivation. It is in this context that the study of English teachers' pedagogy at DDOSC is very relevant, as it relates the subject matter of the literary classroom to the local context. The same goes for English teachers in Montevista, Davao de Oro, who lack training and seminars on literature and have experienced difficulties teaching it (Patunob *et al.*, 2023).

Although the literature has acknowledged that literature promotes critical thinking and cultural awareness, research has tended to focus on student outcomes and curriculum design, with little attention paid to teachers' lived experiences. While there is considerable research done on the phenomenological side, which captures how teachers personally engage, adapt, and reflect on their teaching, there is a considerable gap in the Philippine provincial context that captures how teachers personally engage, adapt, and

reflect in their teaching. This study aims to fill this gap by employing the Heideggerian phenomenological approach to interpret the nature of literature teachers' experiences. The results of these findings will provide important inputs to teacher education and to curriculum development, directly contributing to SDG 4, inclusive and equitable education.

## 2. Research Questions

To achieve the objectives of this study, it was essential to examine how English teachers experienced the teaching of literature in their everyday practice. By attending closely to how this experience presented itself to teachers, this study sought to describe the essence of teaching literature as it was lived.

Guided by this focus, the study addressed the following research questions:

- 1) What are the lived experiences of English teachers in teaching literature?
- 2) How do teachers experience challenges in teaching literature?
- 3) How do teachers experience adapting their instructional practices in literature teaching?
- 4) How do teachers define and experience success in teaching literature?
- 5) What meanings and insights emerge from teachers' lived experiences of teaching literature?

## 3. Theoretical Framework

In this study, Vygotsky's Constructivist Learning Theory and Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) were used as complementary theories to grasp the pedagogical field of literature teaching. Vygotsky's Constructivist Learning Theory (VYG) emphasizes that knowledge is socially constructed through interaction, collaboration, and the use of cultural tools, thereby placing the teacher in a facilitative role that guides students in deepening their understanding. In contrast, Shulman's PCK focuses on the specific knowledge and skills that teachers possess, where deep content knowledge and effective teaching come together. These theories, when combined, provide a strong platform for examining the challenges teachers face in teaching literature.

The three theories each bring a different aspect of the teacher's role to the fore in this study. The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is a concept by Vygotsky that directly resonates with the study's interest in scaffolding complex ideas in literature, such as symbolism and theme. The concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) by Vygotsky resonates directly with the study's interest in scaffolding complex ideas in literature, such as symbolism and theme, through guided social interaction. In the meantime, Shulman's PCK framework provides insight into the teacher's inner cognitive processes: how, over the years, by reflecting on their teaching experiences and adapting to pedagogical challenges, they can connect literary abstract content with the more

accessible classroom content. This view is important to recognize in order to understand how teachers identify students' problems, choose the genres they wish to teach, and adjust their teaching methods over time.

The combination of those frameworks provides a holistic picture of English teachers' pedagogical practices. Vygotsky's theory focuses on the interpersonal aspects of scaffolding and meaning-making, whereas PCK focuses on the professional knowledge and decisions that underlie those interactions. In this phenomenological study, these theories are not "rules" to be followed, but rather lenses through which one can interpret the collected data. They offer a conceptual framework for analyzing participants' narratives of their lived experiences, helping to keep the research grounded in the core of teachers' practice and to locate the personal narrative within the wider pedagogical context.

#### **4. Methodology**

A qualitative phenomenological design was used in this study to gain insights into the lived experiences of English teachers at Davao de Oro State College (Maragusan branch and Compostela branch) and Davao Oriental State University. The research adopts an interpretive phenomenological approach grounded in Heidegger's (1962) and Creswell's (2013) phenomenological philosophies to investigate the subjective meanings teachers give to their everyday pedagogical work. The study focuses on the literature lesson in its teaching context, rather than relying on numerical information, through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions that seek in-depth qualitative information (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018).

The subjects of this study were 10 English teachers who were purposively selected from the College of Education, Davao Oriental State University, and the Compostela and Maragusan branches of Davao de Oro State College. Six participants took part in a focus group discussion, and four in semi-structured interviews to ensure rich phenomenological data. The mix of approaches enabled dynamic group reflection and individualized stories.

To participate in the study, some inclusionary criteria were used, such as the teacher having to be teaching literature or have taught literature in the past, having three to five years of teaching experience, and being willing to invest in the study. However, those who taught only non-literature courses, those with less than 2 years of experience, and those in administrative positions only were excluded. This was a purposeful sampling, so that only those with sufficient experience to offer credible and comprehensive insights into the complexities of literature instruction were sampled.

In this study, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted to gather the lived experiences, philosophies, and instructional practices of English literature teachers. Ethical clearance was obtained from the Davao Oriental State University Research Ethics Committee and from the university's leadership at the Davao de Oro State College, Maragusan campus, and the Compostela campus. Data

collection was guided by a validated instrument, which was subjected to content validation by experts in the field to ensure that the questions about pedagogical strategies, challenges, and adaptations remained clear and pertinent.

Face-to-face or online semi-structured interviews were used to collect in-depth personal stories, which lasted 45-60 minutes each. A moderated discussion of the focus group was held as a supplement to these to enable participants to reflect together. The same instrument was employed across the two methods, enabling consistency and allowing the identification of commonalities and differences in the teachers' experiences, leading to a richer picture of their classroom realities and teaching journeys.

## 5. Results

This study employed in-depth, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with 10 English literature teachers from selected higher education institutions to explore their lived experiences. All the participants were trained specialists in the English program of the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED). They shared their experiences in teaching English, their teaching methods, the challenges they faced, and their success stories. The summary of their profiles is given in the following table.

**Table 4.1:** Profile of the Participants

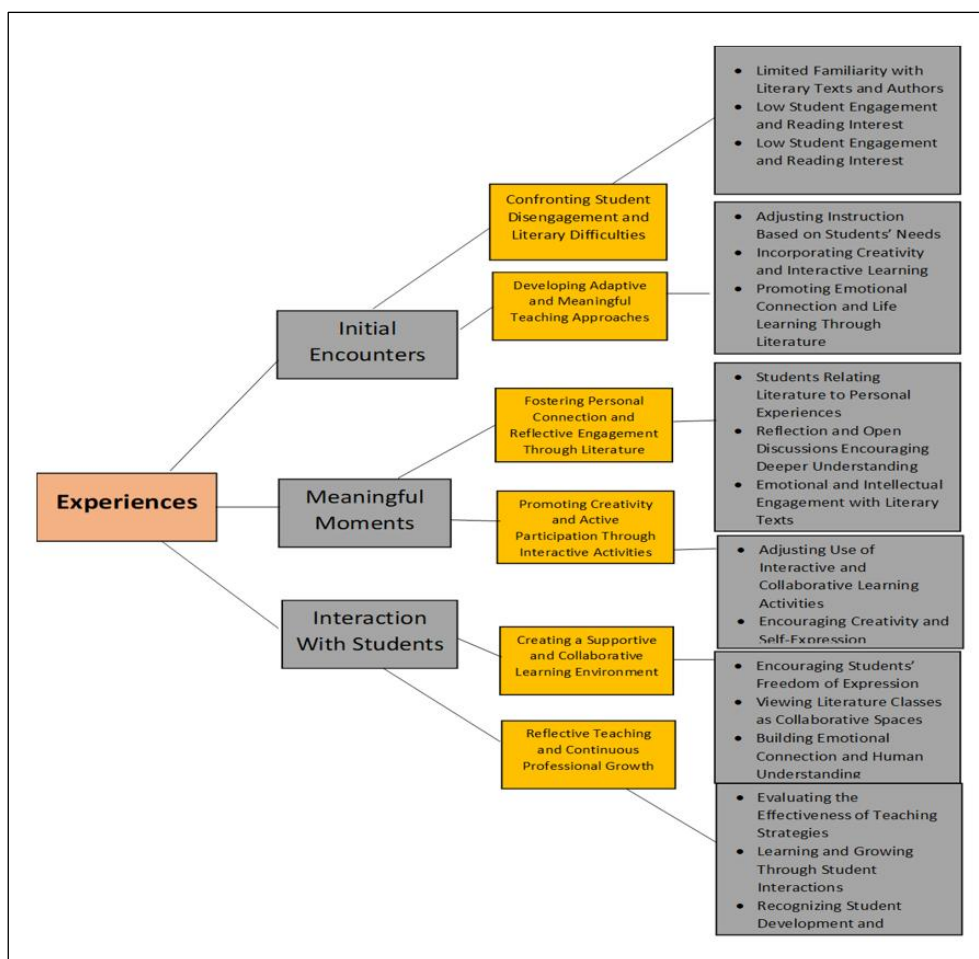
Participant Pseudonym	Sex	Age	Years in Service	Program/Course	School
Ma'am Gemvie	Female	35	12	BSED- English	DDOSC - Maragusan
Ma'am Marieta	Female	36	10	BSED- English	DDOSC - Maragusan
Ma'am Krystelle	Female	29	5	BSED- English	DDOSC - Maragusan
Ma'am Kei	Female	30	8	BSED- English	DDOSC - Maragusan
Lit 10 Teacher	Female	32	10	BSED- English	DOrSU - Main
Jane Austen's Fan	Female	30	8	BSED- English	DOrSU - Main
Ma'am Anne	Female	28	3	BSED- English	DDOSC - Main
Ma'am D	Female	27	2	BSED- English	DDOSC - Main
Ma'am Liz	Female	32	6	BSED- English	DDOSC - Main
Ma'am SR	Female	55	34	BSED- English	DDOSC - Main

The participants comprise 10 female English educators from Davao de Oro State College (Maragusan and Main campuses) and Davao Oriental State University. Representing a blend of youthful innovation and seasoned wisdom, the group ranges in age from 27 to 55, with teaching experience spanning 2 to 34 years. As all participants are faculty members or graduates of the BSED-English program, their diverse professional backgrounds and institutional affiliations provide a comprehensive perspective on the lived experiences of literature instruction.

### 5.1 The Lived Experiences of English Teachers in Teaching Literature

The lived experiences of these educators reveal a continuous journey of navigating student disengagement and the complexities of literary texts through constant pedagogical adaptation and critical reflection. While teaching literature in higher

education presents persistent challenges, success lies in fostering meaningful, interactive classroom environments that encourage personal and creative engagement. Ultimately, these teachers find profound fulfillment in facilitating moments where students move beyond mere comprehension to respond to literature with genuine emotion and critical insight.



**Figure 4.1:** The Lived Experiences of English Teachers in Teaching Literature

Literature teachers in higher education frequently navigate the challenge of student disengagement, often rooted in limited exposure to literary texts and reliance on traditional, passive instructional methods. As noted by Simene (2014), literature is often perceived as dull and difficult, creating immediate barriers to appreciation. Furthermore, He and Yin (2024) observe that educators must proactively manage student passivity and text-induced anxiety when introducing complex material. This necessitates a shift from authoritative content delivery to a constructivist approach, in which teachers—acting as facilitators—scaffold learning to bridge the gap between students' background knowledge and textual interpretation (Del Rosario, 2022).

To address these hurdles, educators are increasingly adopting adaptive, student-centered pedagogies that replace rigid lectures with interactive, collaborative frameworks. By integrating creative activities like dramatization and role-playing,

teachers move beyond simple text-based instruction to stimulate multiple intelligences and critical thinking (Abed, 2021). These strategies align with Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory, enabling instructors to meet students where they are in their individual Zones of Proximal Development (ZPD). This transformation of the classroom into a dynamic, social space helps dismantle learner resistance. It fosters an environment where literature becomes a lived, relatable experience rather than an intimidating academic chore.

Ultimately, the most effective literature instruction relies on fostering personal connection and continuous pedagogical reflection. By encouraging students to link literary themes to their own realities, educators leverage reader-response models to boost motivation and facilitate deeper critical evaluation (Gomez & Rodriguez, 2022). This process is sustained by ongoing self-auditing, as teachers recognize that their professional growth is deeply tied to student feedback and the evolution of learner profiles (Fikray *et al.*, 2022; Toquero *et al.*, 2024). Through this lens, Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) becomes a dynamic, evolving capacity, transforming the classroom into a collaborative hermeneutic space where meaning is co-constructed through authentic human encounters.

## **5.2 Teachers Experience Challenges in Teaching Literature**

Teaching literature presents multifaceted challenges that shape educators' instructional practices and classroom realities. These include difficulties in fostering deep literary comprehension, overcoming student disengagement, and managing time constraints. Furthermore, teachers must navigate institutional limitations and resource scarcity while balancing the need for creative, differentiated strategies with the demands of their academic environment.

Teaching literature in higher education involves navigating a complex landscape of instructional barriers that directly shape the classroom experience. Research highlights that students often enter these courses with limited literary exposure and low reading motivation, which frequently leads to passivity and text-induced anxiety when encountering complex works (Simene, 2014; He & Yin, 2024). Consequently, educators face the significant challenge of moving beyond traditional, lecture-based delivery to foster a more inclusive and active learning environment that can bridge these engagement gaps.

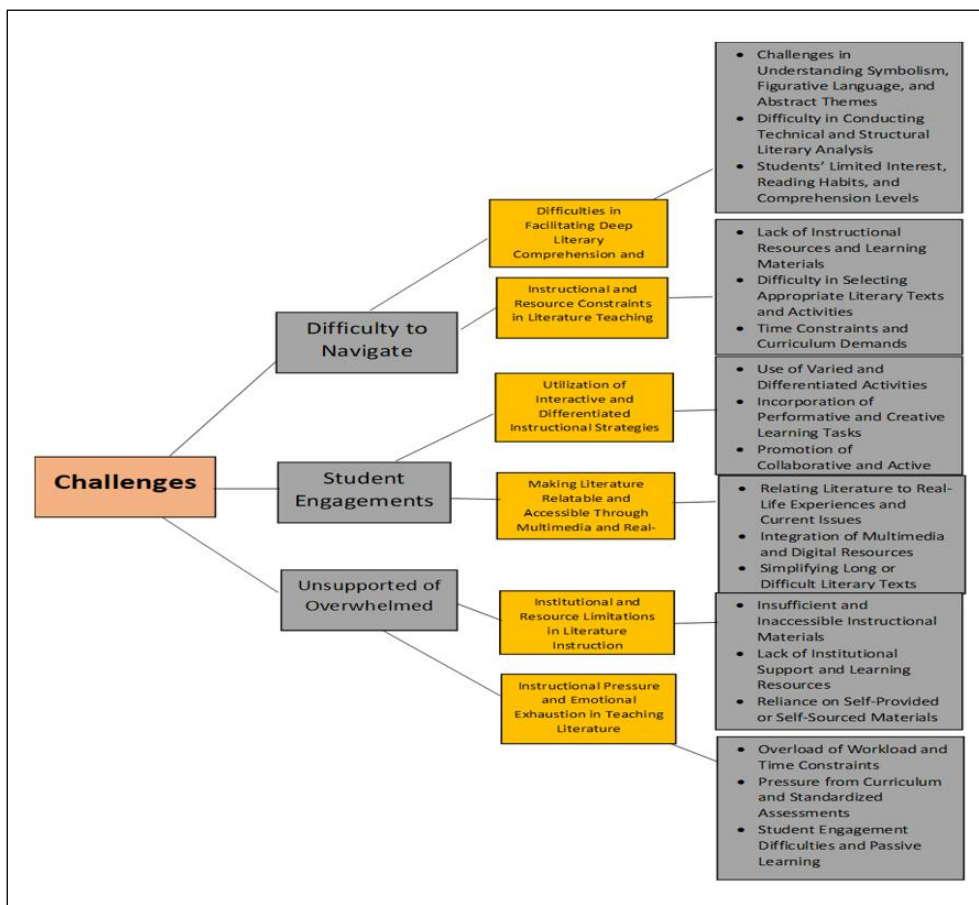


Figure 4.2: Teachers' Experience Challenges in Teaching Literature

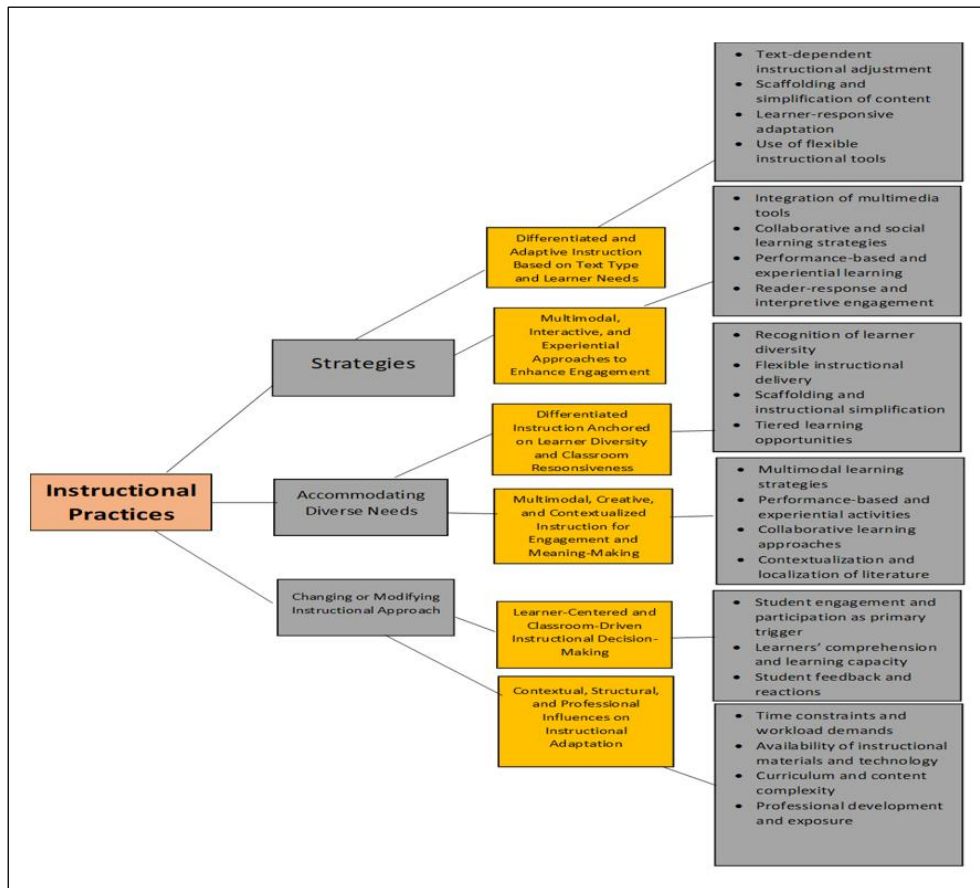
In response to these systemic hurdles, teachers are increasingly adopting adaptive, student-centered pedagogies. Rather than relying on rigid, content-heavy approaches, modern instructors prioritize interactive strategies—such as collaborative analysis and creative dramatization—to meet students where they are in their specific Zones of Proximal Development (Vygotsky). By integrating these diverse methodologies, educators can dismantle learner resistance and transform literature from an intimidating academic chore into a relatable, collaborative space (Abed, 2021; Del Rosario, 2022).

Ultimately, successful literature instruction requires a continuous cycle of pedagogical reflection and professional growth. Teachers must actively evaluate their practices based on student interaction, recognizing that effective teaching is a dynamic, evolving craft rather than a static skill set (Fikray *et al.*, 2022; Toquero *et al.*, 2024). By cultivating personal connections between literary themes and students' lived experiences, instructors not only enhance textual comprehension but also develop their own Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), ensuring that the classroom remains a site of meaningful, co-constructed knowledge.

### 5.3 Teachers' Experience Adapting Their Instructional Practices in Literature Teaching

As this study aimed to explore teachers' experiences in adapting their instructional practices in literature teaching, the findings revealed that participants continuously

adjust their approaches in response to students' diverse needs, classroom situations, and the varying demands of literary texts. Teachers emphasized the importance of flexibility, creativity, and learner-centered instruction in making literature more engaging and meaningful.



**Figure 4.3:** Teachers' Experience Adapting Their Instructional Practices in Literature Teaching

Higher education literature instructors utilize differentiated and adaptive instruction to address the distinct textures of literary genres and the diverse capabilities of their students. By shifting strategies—such as employing visualization for poetry or structural analysis for prose—teachers avoid the failures of "one-size-fits-all" approaches. This responsiveness is supported by scaffolding and localized background materials, which lower entry barriers to complex concepts and allow students of varying reading levels to engage with the text. Such pedagogical flexibility aligns with research suggesting that task-based scaffolding and multidimensional interactive tasks effectively dismantle learner passivity and text-induced anxiety (Abed, 2021).

To enhance engagement, instructors increasingly incorporate multimodal, experiential, and collaborative strategies that move beyond print-based traditions. By integrating cinematic adaptations, digital context-building, and performative activities like role-playing or puppetry, teachers transform the classroom into a dynamic site of discovery. These methods not only cater to diverse learning styles but also leverage peer interaction, which allows students to co-construct meaning and uncover diverse

interpretations through dialogue. This shift reflects a move toward student-centered frameworks that facilitate a transition from passive consumption to active, thematic critique, bridging the gap between abstract literary themes and the digital habits of modern learners (He & Yin, 2024).

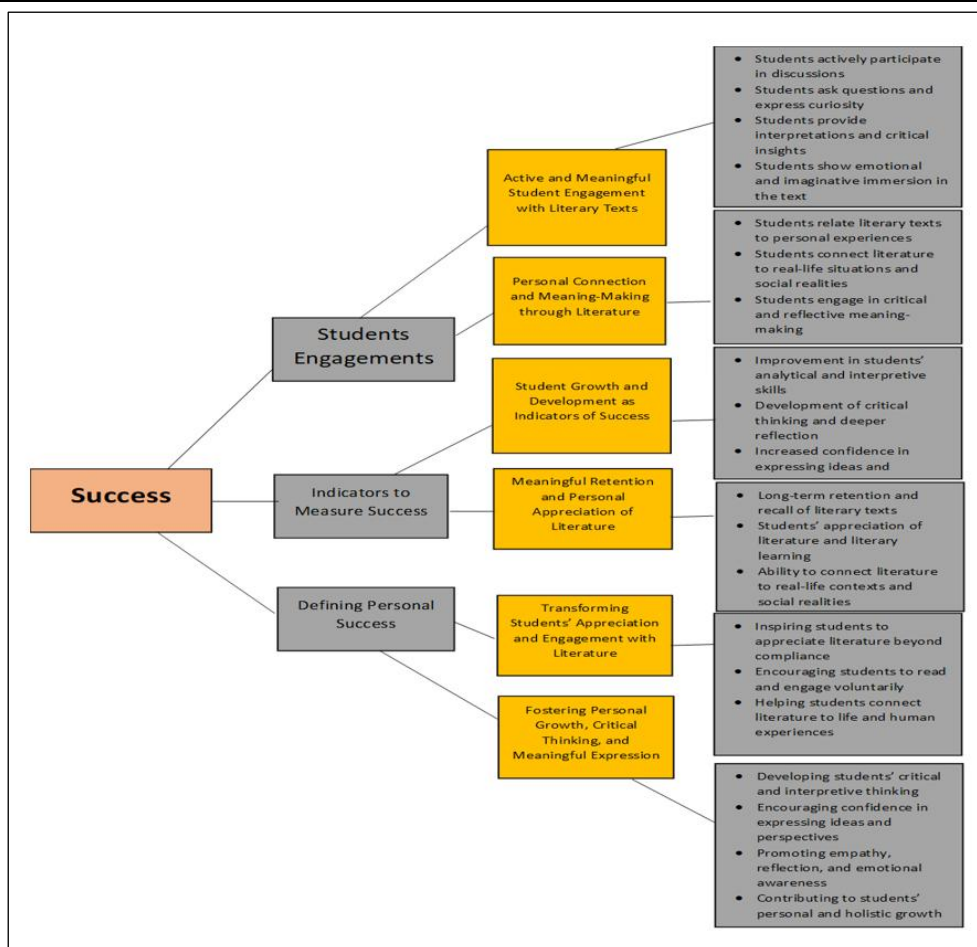
Ultimately, these instructional decisions are guided by real-time classroom monitoring and the need to balance professional goals with institutional constraints. Teachers treat student feedback—such as confusion or disengagement—as an immediate diagnostic signal, allowing them to adjust their pace or simplify terminology on the spot. Because instruction is also influenced by resource availability and curriculum pressure, professional growth and peer collaboration remain essential for refining these adaptive capabilities. By operationalizing these responsive practices, educators maintain a functional Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) where literature serves as a shared, humanizing experience, demonstrating that effective pedagogy is an ongoing, hermeneutic journey (Toquero *et al.*, 2024).

#### **5.4 Teachers' Definitions of Success in Teaching Literature**

As this study aims to explore teachers' lived experiences and pedagogical approaches in literature instruction, understanding how they define success is essential in revealing the meanings they attach to their practice. For teachers, success in literature teaching goes beyond grades and is often reflected in student engagement, interpretation, and personal growth through literary texts.

Active engagement with literary texts occurs when students transition from passive consumption to deep intellectual and emotional involvement. Teachers recognize this shift through unprompted dialogue, spontaneous questioning, and the ability to provide independent, critical interpretations that link literary symbols to broader societal issues. This level of participation is supported by instructional frameworks that validate student-generated inquiries, which research identifies as a primary driver of sustained interest and higher-order thinking (Reschly & Christenson, 2022). By moving beyond superficial decoding toward collaborative interpretive strategies, students effectively transform the classroom into a space for profound thematic critique.

Success is further measured by students' ability to integrate literature into their lived experiences and maintain long-term retention of these connections. Instructors observe that authentic learning is achieved when students use literature as a mirror to understand their personal histories, choices, and relationships, naturally incorporating these parallels into class discussions. This personal relevance acts as a powerful catalyst for engagement, as students move away from memorizing plot points to analyzing the underlying human dilemmas within a text. Consequently, educators emphasize that this transformation is not a fleeting state, but a lasting shift that allows students to perceive literature as a dynamic, relevant companion to their daily lives (Carracedo, 2025).



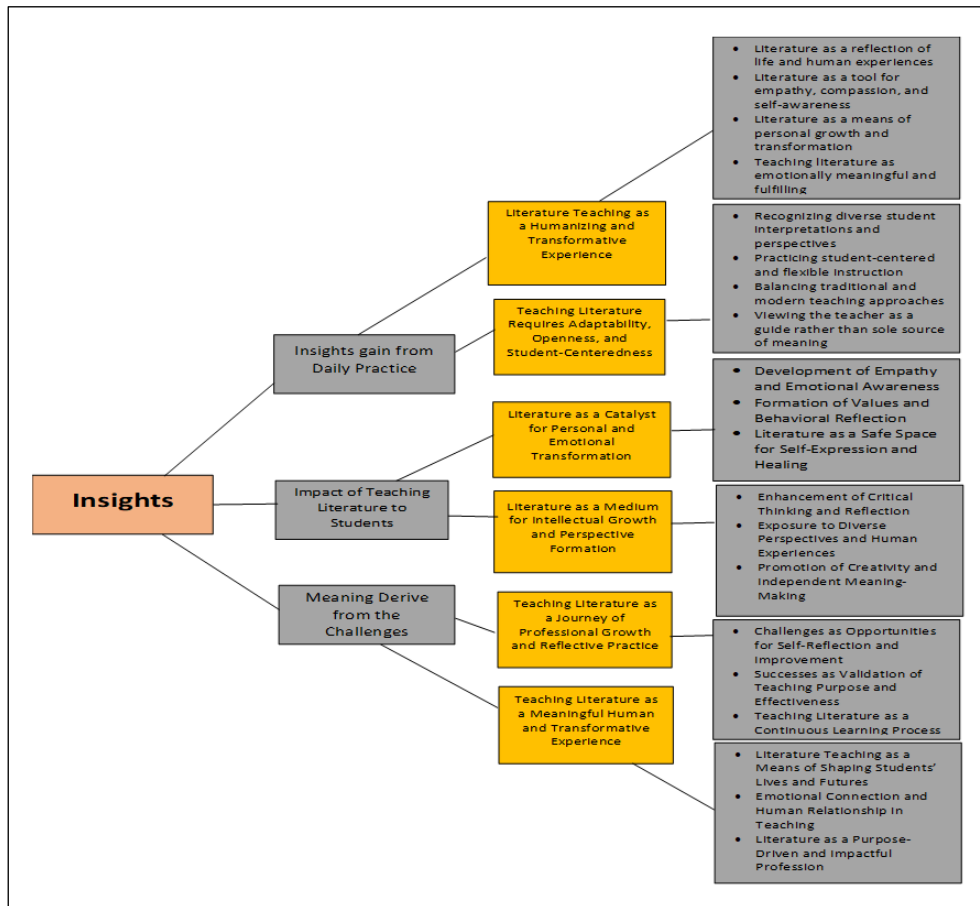
**Figure 4.4:** Teachers Define and Experience Success in Teaching Literature

Ultimately, the goal of literature instruction is the holistic development of students' critical thinking, confidence, and empathy. Teachers view success through the gradual evolution of learners who shift from seeking validation to boldly expressing original ideas and defending them with textual evidence. By facilitating this growth, educators guide students to use character analysis as a training ground for navigating real-world complexities, effectively dismantling their initial perceptions of literature as an intimidating academic chore. This developmental journey confirms that engagement is an ongoing hermeneutic practice, where the learner's progressive independence validates the teacher's adaptive, constructivist strategies (Vygotsky, 1978).

### 5.5 Meanings and Insights Emerging from Teachers' Lived Experiences in Teaching Literature

This study aims to explore the meanings and insights that emerge from teachers' lived experiences of teaching literature, particularly in relation to the challenges and successes they encounter in the classroom. It seeks to understand how literature educators make sense of these experiences and how such moments shape their professional identities, instructional practices, and personal growth. By examining their reflections, the study highlights how teachers derive significance from both difficulties and achievements,

viewing them as integral parts of their continuous development as educators and as individuals engaged in meaningful literary instruction.



**Figure 4.5:** Meanings and Insights Emerge from Teachers' Lived Experiences of Teaching Literature

Authentic student engagement in literature classrooms is evidenced by active participation, intellectual curiosity, and emotional immersion. Rather than maintaining a clinical detachment, engaged learners demonstrate "text ownership" by volunteering insights, challenging narrative boundaries, and questioning human dilemmas. This shift from passive observation to active investigation is a crucial pedagogical outcome, as it empowers students to move beyond surface-level recall toward independent, critical interpretation. Such engagement is supported by student-centered frameworks that validate personal inquiry, which serves as a primary driver for higher-order thinking and sustained interest (Reschly & Christenson, 2022).

Successful instruction is further characterized by the student's ability to connect literary themes to lived experiences and contemporary social issues. When learners view literature as a mirror to their own choices, relationships, and histories, they transcend abstract comprehension, turning the text into a tool for analyzing their own reality. This meaning-making process is essential for deep literary analysis, as it transforms the classroom into a collaborative space where diverse interpretations are co-constructed. By

tailoring tasks to students' unique interests and validating their voices, instructors effectively bridge the gap between academic content and personal relevance (Ocatviyanti *et al.*, 2025).

Ultimately, teachers define instructional success through the long-term cognitive and personal development of their students. This progress is marked by a gradual evolution in analytical skill, increased confidence in public expression, and a lasting appreciation for literature that persists beyond the course conclusion. By dismantling the perception of literature as an intimidating obstacle and replacing it with experiential, reflective tasks, educators cultivate empathy and mature worldview shifts in their learners. Viewed through Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory, this growth represents an ongoing hermeneutic journey where the teacher serves as a facilitator, scaffolding students toward autonomous critical thinking and a shared, profound understanding of the human condition (Vygotsky, 1978).

## 6. Discussion

This study reveals that literature instruction is a multifaceted, transformative practice that transcends traditional academic boundaries, becoming a deeply relational and reflective experience. Findings show that effective teaching is anchored in student-centered, adaptive strategies, with educators acting as facilitators who scaffold learning to bridge the gap between abstract texts and students' lived realities. By moving away from rigid, lecture-heavy models toward collaborative, reader-response frameworks, teachers dismantle text-induced anxiety and foster an environment where students transition from passive observers to active investigators (Gomez & Rodriguez, 2022). This shift aligns with Vygotsky's Social Constructivist Theory, as teachers provide the support learners need to navigate complex cultural subtexts within their Zone of Proximal Development, ultimately turning the classroom into a vibrant space for intellectual discovery. Furthermore, as Sener and Ulucan (2022) observe, this transition from passive consumption to active interpretation is essential for university students to bridge the gap between basic language acquisition and advanced literary appreciation, ensuring that literature remains a dynamic and personally relevant field.

Furthermore, literature teaching serves as a powerful humanizing force, fostering emotional maturity, critical consciousness, and personal growth. Educators skillfully apply their Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) to navigate institutional constraints and classroom challenges, reframing setbacks as opportunities for professional reflection and methodological evolution (Shulman, 1987). As noted by Regmi (2021), effective literature instruction significantly enhances cognitive abilities—including analysis, evaluation, and synthesis—while also providing a safe, therapeutic space for students to process personal struggles. By validating student-generated inquiries and personal interpretations, instructors do more than impart literary history; they cultivate lifelong critical thinkers who are equipped to connect literature to broader social realities,

reinforcing the classroom as a site of profound human connection and sustained academic development (Reschly & Christenson, 2022).

## **7. Summary, Conclusions, and Implications**

### **7.1 Summary**

This chapter synthesizes the pedagogical landscape of literature instructors, highlighting the transition from traditional, lecture-based methods to reflective, student-centered practices. Through their lived experiences, teachers navigate the tension between systemic institutional pressures—such as resource scarcity and curriculum mandates—and the need to overcome student resistance to complex texts. By actively adapting instructional strategies to match student profiles and real-time classroom dynamics, instructors successfully bridge the gap between abstract literary narratives and students' personal, lived realities.

Ultimately, success is defined not by completing a syllabus but by the emergence of independent critical thinking and genuine engagement. The findings reveal that literature instruction is fundamentally a collaborative and humanizing practice rooted in emotional labor and pedagogical adaptability. By remaining responsive to student needs, teachers transform literature from an intimidating academic requirement into a relevant, transformative space for deep cognitive and personal growth.

### **7.2 Conclusion**

This study reveals that teaching literature in higher education is a challenging yet transformative journey requiring constant instructional adaptability and reflective practice. Despite obstacles like limited student engagement and institutional constraints, educators effectively bridge the gap between complex texts and students' lived realities by employing interactive, learner-centered strategies. This approach fosters critical thinking, emotional maturity, and personal reflection, shifting the classroom from a site of passive knowledge transmission to one of collaborative discovery.

Ultimately, the study concludes that effective literature instruction is a deeply human practice rooted in empathy, flexibility, and pedagogical responsiveness. By nurturing meaningful connections and encouraging independent meaning-making, teachers can make literature a relevant and lasting influence on students. To sustain this, the findings underscore the need for stronger institutional support, enhanced resources, and continuous professional development to empower educators further and elevate the quality of literature instruction.

### **7.3 Recommendations**

To enhance literature instruction, higher education institutions should provide robust access to updated resources and advanced teaching technologies, thereby alleviating the systemic burdens that currently force faculty to rely on self-sourced materials. By investing in comprehensive programs that promote reflective and constructivist

methodologies, institutions can empower educators to move beyond traditional, lecture-based constraints and cultivate the student-centered, adaptive pedagogies necessary for deep cognitive development. In parallel, educational leaders are encouraged to foster a culture of instructional flexibility and autonomy. By prioritizing professional development in interpretive teaching strategies, leaders provide the essential support needed to sustain the creativity and patience required to navigate complex and diverse classroom dynamics.

For practitioners, English literature teachers should embrace consistent reflective practice, balancing traditional analysis with interactive and experiential approaches to effectively bridge the gap between complex texts and students' lived realities. Students, in turn, are encouraged to move beyond passive observation by actively sharing personal interpretations and connecting literary themes to their own social experiences; this engagement is crucial for achieving both academic success and personal growth. Finally, future researchers should continue to explore these pedagogical landscapes through diverse qualitative and mixed-method approaches, particularly examining the impact of digital technologies and culturally responsive strategies to ensure that teaching practices remain reflective of the evolving realities in higher education.

#### **7.4 Implications for Practice**

This study demonstrates that enhancing literature instruction in higher education requires a collaborative commitment to stronger institutional support, adaptive pedagogy, and active student participation. Institutions are urged to provide updated resources and professional development on learner-centered strategies, while educational leaders should prioritize flexible, reflective supervision that encourages classroom innovation rather than rigid traditionalism.

For practitioners, teachers should continue to integrate experiential and discussion-based activities that balance analysis with creative engagement, meeting diverse student needs through constant self-reflection. Simultaneously, students are encouraged to move beyond passive reading by connecting literary themes to their own lives and valuing multiple perspectives. Ultimately, by fostering a more responsive and collaborative learning environment, these stakeholders can ensure that literature remains a transformative force for both academic and personal growth.

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### Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

### About the Author

Mac Rose B. Yangco is a researcher affiliated with Davao Oriental State University (DOrSU), Faculty of Advanced and International Studies (FAIS). Her research focuses on literature instruction in educational contexts, particularly exploring teachers' lived experiences and pedagogical approaches in teaching literature. Her study, *Turning Pages, Turning Strategies: Exploring Teachers' Lived Experiences and Pedagogical Approaches in Literature Instruction*, examines how educators navigate instructional challenges and employ diverse teaching strategies to enhance students' engagement, comprehension, and appreciation of literary texts.

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-3852-2079>

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