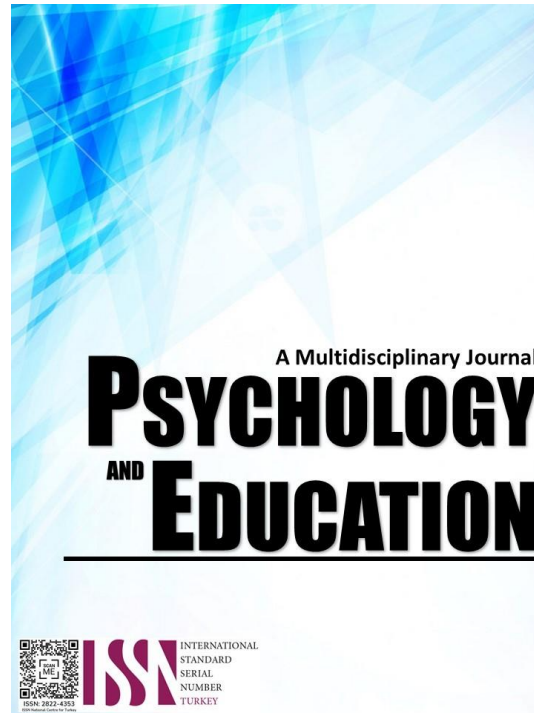


LEARNERS' ENGLISH LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE: THE AUTO-SOCIO LANGUAGELEARNING



PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL

2023

Volume: 9

Pages: 97-117

Document ID: 2023PEMJ735

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.7968571

Manuscript Accepted: 2023-25-5

Learners' English Language Experience: The Auto-Socio Language Learning

Michelle T. Viña*

For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

This descriptive phenomenological qualitative study aimed to explore the learners' lived experiences towards learning the English language to further generate a theory for second language learning among students. Twenty first year college enrollees who belong to the top 25 in the college entrance examination were purposively selected as the research participants of the study. They were asked to answer the semi-structured interview questions. Following the steps in data analysis of Braun and Clarke (2006), their responses were analyzed. Based on the responses of the research participants, there were 3 themes that emerged – *The Push*, *The Roller-Coaster Ride*, and *The Dream*. It was revealed that their English language learning experiences vary depending on the kind of motivation they have to either be interested or disinterested to learn the second language. Furthermore, their actual performance in their English classes differ basically because they were still influenced by their personal attitude towards the language being learned. In the end, the research participants still expressed their aspirations on the ideal language class they hope to have.

Keywords: *Language Learning, Motivation, Language Learning Experience*

Introduction

People learn new things every day. Learning is the relatively permanent change in a person's knowledge or behavior due to experience. It is a complex cognitive process of discovering about something. It was mentioned by Hansel and Gowing (2017) that learning is the acquisition of new information, methods and skills. These can be acquired by the learner's inquisitiveness, simply watching and copying others or being shown by a more experienced person. However, it is believed that there is a wider spectrum of learning as all learn in an individualistic way. In the classroom, learners vary their ways of learning. One learner may be a visual learner, another may be a kinesthetic or auditory learner. Hence, teachers of these learners face challenges as they need to adapt to all types of learning to ensure that all of them can learn in the way that is best for them and to allow progression in their learning (Gilakjani, 2012).

Part of becoming competitive in the global market is learning a global language, in this case English language. There are various ways for students to utilize for learning English as a second language. As presented by Navarro-Villaroel (2011), there are many benefits of learning a second language not just for the whole country but also to one's self. For obvious reasons, one has to learn English language. This may not be very difficult in the Philippines since Filipinos have been using English as a second language. In fact, in Kachru's (as cited in Kilickaya, 2009) Concentric Circle Model of World Englishes, English in the

Philippines is considered a second language. In addition, Espinosa (1997) explains that long before the children have gone to school, they have already been exposed to English language through their adult caregivers who are teaching them English words such as the body parts, fruits, animals, objects, action verbs (close, open, come here), adjectives (beautiful, good, bad, dirty), polite expressions (please, thank you), nursery rhymes and a lot more. It can be expected that the children have already gained simple English vocabulary at their early age.

Since English is the dominant language in the present scenario, it becomes necessary to learn and have mastery over such language. It is a global language which is used in the international communications, science, information technology, business, seafaring, aviation, entertainment, radio and diplomacy (Menakapriya, 2016). Yet, students are facing problems in the process of acquiring the English language. Language learning barriers appear in and out of students while they are learning the language, and the main barriers would be lack of motivation. In many cases, students are more focused on the grammar that they get nervous and never bother to learn English. Many students tend to give up before trying because they are afraid of being laughed at by outsiders (Gardner et al., 1983).

Although the results of the survey on the status of English illustrate that English is used as a second language in the Philippines and that a big percentage of the Filipinos are able to speak and understand English language (Choi & Lee, 2008), still many are

not proficient in using this, and not everybody learns English that easily. Even other countries are having such struggle. As presented by Al Zesjali (in Al Hosni, 2014), learners of English in Oman often do not have the opportunity to speak English language outside their classroom, and many of them encounter English only in their books. Thus, in the study of Mahmoudi and Mahmoudi (2015), it should be noted that included in the variables of learning English language are the learners themselves, their perspective, attitude and aspiration which are internal, while another very important variable is the external which include teachers and instruction.

This reality can be observed even among tertiary education. As observed, many of the college learners are having difficulty in both oral and written English. Even if this second language has been taught since their basic education, it still continues to be a pressing problem. The study of Laghari, Arshad and Kakepoto (2022) found out that university students struggle in learning the English language. According to this said study, effective teaching strategies can help address the problems, hence a learner-centered teaching approach should be adopted so that the learners will be more engaged in learning.

On the other hand, it is also evident that several learners are good in using English language in both oral and written communication. One of the many factors that can be attributed to the learners' proficiency of the English language is the instruction. This means how a teacher teaches the students. Al Nakhalah (2016) stated that in order to help students enhance their communication skills using English language, the teacher must help them improve their grammar, enrich their vocabulary, and guide them for their interactions with others. Teachers need to employ effective teaching methods and strategies for easier and better learning of English.

Because of the existing scenario in the English language learning of the learners, the researcher is determined to investigate their English learning experiences during their senior high school years that greatly affect their college performance in English.

Research Objective

The main objective of this study is to explore the learners' lived experiences towards learning the English language. This study further aims to generate a theory for second language learning among students.

Methodology

Design

The design used in this study is descriptive phenomenology. This study is descriptive qualitative as it revealed the essence of the phenomenon which is the English language learning, specifically the learners' motivations in learning English, their actual experiences, and their desires for their English classes. It is considered a phenomenon because naturally it is expected that college learners are already competent in using English language as this language has been taught to them since primary level and even during early childhood. However, as observed by the researcher, there are still college learners who find it difficult to articulate in English. This problem has been experienced not only by those learners who perform weak in the class, but also by those who are excelling.

Participants of the Study

For this particular study, there are 20 first year college enrollees purposively selected to constitute the learner-participants. The learner-participants belong to five different colleges or departments enrolled in the school year 2018-2019. They were selected because they were able to qualify in the selection using the following inclusion and exclusion criteria: (a) must be a first year college student; (b) must belong to the top 20 of the college freshmen entrance examination; and (c) has recently graduated from senior high school.

Instrumentation

The researcher is the primary instrument of this study as she was the one who personally conducted the in-depth interview with the learners. The questions asked and the manner of questioning done were made sure to be answering the domain of inquiry of this study. Interview with the participants is another instrument used with the help of the approved interview guide. This guide consists of three preliminary questions, six main questions, and one wrap-up question. This semi-structured interview was the source of information. The interviewer followed the guide, but was able to follow topical trajectories in the conversation that strayed from the guide when she felt this was appropriate. Before conducting the interview, the interview guide was submitted to the panel members for possible corrections and recommendations.

Approval of the questions was sought before it was utilized.

Data-Gathering Procedure

Before conducting the interview, approval of the research design was sought from the adviser and panel. After which, a letter was submitted to the Vice President for Academic Affairs of the academic institution asking permission to conduct interview to the students. There was also coordination with the College Guidance Office for the identification of Top 25 entrance examinees for first year college who would be the participants to answer the semi-structured interview questions. The college deans were also informed about the interview.

Prior to the interview, the participants were invited to be part of the study because it was very important that they willingly take part in it. After having selected the 20, those willing were given orientation and instructions. They were also asked to sign the Consent Form to prove their consent for their participation as well as their consent for the audio-recording of their responses in order to accurately capture their responses. After that, the actual interview which lasted for an hour was held. This took place inside the school campus, particularly in the Vice President's Conference Room. The place was chosen as venue since it was convenient and secluded which is necessary so that the interviewees would have the confidence to open up and share their experiences. It was made sure that they were composed during the individual interview, so that they could freely say and express themselves. Each interview session lasted for about 60 minutes including the validation of responses.

After the conduct of the interview, recorded data were transcribed. Transcripts were carefully read and analyzed in order to get the exact message the participants wanted to convey. From these, a total of 358 significant statements were drawn, and meanings of the statements were formulated. Themes were constructed based on the codes and categories drawn through analysis of concepts.

Data Analysis

The most important activity in the analytical process is looking into the participants' responses and finding their similarities and differences. There are many ways to analyze data. In this study, the process that is similar to that of Colaizzi's (as cited in Morrow, Rodriguez and King, 2015) that introduced systematic and distinctive steps that provide a rigorous analysis of the

data was used. This similar process follows the six steps prescribed by Braun and Clark (2006) to carry out a thematic analysis. These steps became guidelines in analyzing the research data in relation to the domain of inquiry. The six steps to thematic analysis are as follows:

Familiarizing with data. This step is required to be fully immersed and actively engaged in the data firstly by transcribing the responses and then reading (and re-reading) the transcripts. It is important that the content of interaction is understood and is familiarized with all aspects of the data. In this first stage, the responses of the learners were transcribed. Transcripts were read and reread to attain familiarity of the data.

Generating initial codes. After familiarizing the data, then the preliminary codes which are the features of the data that are interesting and meaningful were identified. Based on the transcripts, significant statements were drawn from the data. From here, codes were generated that provided an indication of the context of the conversation.

Searching for themes. Interpretive analysis of the collated codes was done. Relevant data were sorted and categorized according to overarching themes.

At this point, codes which were observed to have similarities were categorized. The categorization done produced more than a single theme.

Reviewing themes. After categorization was done, themes were identified. After which, review of the themes was conducted in order to refine or discard initial themes. It was made sure that the data within themes were coherent and meaningful.

Defining and naming themes. This step involves 'refining and defining' the themes and potential subthemes within the data. This time, theme names and clear working definitions that capture the essence of each theme in a concise and forceful manner were provided. A unified story of the data emerged from the themes.

Producing the report. The last thing done was the transformation of the analysis into a piece of writing by using extracts that relate to the themes, domain of inquiry, and literature.

Ethical Considerations

This study about English language learning involved the learners' recollection of senior high school years

specifically their English classes. Basically, the study involved the learners' emotions that were brought up in the course of the research. Hence, ethical considerations were considered.

Informed Consent. Before the conduct of the interview, the researcher asked for the learners' consent for their involvement in my study. When they agreed to be part of the study, they were asked to sign the printed statement informing them of the nature of the study as well as their rights as participants.

Anonymity and Confidentiality. In this study, the participants were assured that no names of learners or teachers will be revealed, and that all their identities would be kept confidential. In order to keep the anonymity and confidentiality, codes were used upon discussing their responses. Also, it was clarified to them that information shared would be protected and would only be used as data of the research.

Trustworthiness and Reliability. To guarantee the trustworthiness and reliability of the study, there was a focus on the objective set throughout the interview. Main questions asked were all based on the interview guide approved by the panel. Follow-up questions were asked to support their answers to the main questions. After the interview, responses were carefully transcribed the recording. Transcriptions, notes and recorder were kept securely. The participants were given the opportunity to review the transcripts of the interview for them to check the accuracy of the transcribed data based on their answers.

Do No Harm. Prior to the conduct of the interview, it was made clear to the learner-participants that they would not be involved in any situation in which they might be harmed and that the study would be for academic purposes only. It is assumed that this investigation about English language learning is not putting them into any risk.

Rapport and Friendship. The researcher made sure to provide an environment that is trustworthy. Hence, sensitivity to the feelings and emotions of the learners was considered. Moreover, the atmosphere during the interview allowed the researcher to know more about the lived experiences of the learners as they felt more comfortable to disclose more information.

Intrusiveness. The term means intruding on the learners' time, intruding on their space, and intruding on their personal lives. As the research was designed, reasonable estimate of the amount of time participation of the learners was also planned so as not to intrude in

their class schedule.

Data Interpretation. The researcher is expected to analyze data in a manner that avoids misstatements, misinterpretations, or fraudulent analysis. This ethical issue became a guide to only use data with support and evidence to avoid possible pitfalls of misinterpretation or overinterpretation.

Results

The Journey toward English Language Learning

English language continues to be a strong thread that connects people in many parts of the world. It remains to be the lingua franca of the global setting. It is the language of science and technology, commerce and trade, and even academe. Hence, almost everybody is using the language to be able to communicate to the world.

In the Philippines, English is the second language of most Filipinos. Aside from their local language and the national language, English is also widely spoken. According to Wa-Mbaleka (2014), the Philippines remains to lead in English proficiency in Asia. In fact, even as a young child, a Filipino would have already acquired English vocabulary taught by the parents or caregivers. Words like ball, cat, dog, milk and a lot more are already taught to infants. Hence, it is safe to say that Filipinos are really exposed to this language. This is so because Filipino masses find the language helpful not only in usual conversations but more in seeking jobs in the country and abroad. Wa-Mbaleka even stated that English language contributes a lot in the educational and even economic success.

However, not everybody learns it immediately. Despite being taught to learners from primary to tertiary education, still, a lot of learners struggle in learning especially those with family and environment that rarely speak the language. Learning English language is not that easy especially for learners with limited exposure to English language. Some learners may have manifested good academic performance as measured by diagnostic tests, aptitude tests and other tools for measuring intelligence, yet learning of English as a second language has always been a challenge.

Although much is written about English language learning, listening directly from the lips of the English language learners themselves is giving me a different perspective about English language learning. As

learners have expressed their lived experiences in learning English, I am able to explore and understand their perspectives, experiences, emotions and even desires. From their answers to the main questions, I am able to have thorough exploration and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. This phenomenon will be analyzed through description and thematic development (Creswell in Daga-ang, 2016).

After reviewing the encoded transcripts, reading and re-reading them, and dwelling with them, there were recurring words/statements that were noted from the learners. Table 1 presents the phases of language learning along with the themes and subthemes. It gives a picture of English language learning of the learners – their perceptions and motivations, their actual experiences and their aspirations.

Table 1. *Phases of Language Learning and the Corresponding Themes*

<i>Phases</i>	<i>Themes And Subthemes</i>
Pre-task	The Push Right Here, Right Now All for Tomorrow
On-task	The Roller-Coaster Ride It's About Them and Me Let Me Do It It's My Climb
Post-task	The Dream Think of Me Involve Me Back Me Up

Theme 1: The Push

In the context of the study, push refers to the informants' motivation and perception regarding English language learning which makes learners do or say something as a result to immediate mental and emotional reaction. The push may come from the present motivations of the learner regarding English language which involves himself and other people; it may also be coming from the future motivations rooted from the practicality and usefulness of English language in our daily undertakings. Undeniably, whatever or whoever gives the push has something to do with one's achieving of success. Success may mean different things for different people. For some, success may be having more wealth, others on excellent career, others on performing well in their individual roles in the family and workplace, and others on developing the intellectual faculty. People work for different reasons. Some pursue their work for love, some for

personal fulfillment and for other reasons.

Becoming successful in language learning may be attributed to many factors either internal or external. If one is to do something, admittedly, he definitely has things that keep him going, also known as the driving force that inspires him to reach the set goal. As to English language learning, learners vary in their perception and even in the way they get motivated.

To further explain the motivations and perceptions of the learners regarding language learning, two subthemes are going to be discussed: "Right here, Right now" and "All for Tomorrow". The categorization is based on the coded responses from the interview conducted.

Right Here, Right Now

The subtheme "Right here, Right now" refers to the present motivations that encourage learners to learn English language. These were the motivations categorized to have been felt by them at the present or at times that they were still students. These became the reasons why they kept going though quite tough.

Based on the interview, some learners admitted that they admire people who are articulate in English. They are always fascinated with English language and are amazed with those who can speak the language with correct grammar and pronunciation. Also, learners think that English language is superior, and that when one is fluent it becomes his edge. For this reason, many really find the language prestigious. The following statements support the claim:

"Yes...of course to impress others. I always have that personality to impress others." (P05)

...so that I can show others that I would just stick there... (P8)

This aspect can be related to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (in Shutenko, 2015). Maslow is well-renowned for proposing this theory in 1943. This theory enumerates the different human needs: physiological, safety, social, self-esteem and self-actualization. Among the enumerated needs, the self-esteem which are of two types: internal esteem needs (self-respect, confidence, competence, achievement and freedom) and external esteem needs (recognition, power, status, attention and admiration) can be of interest to the study especially the external one. It further explains that our self-esteem might be based on what others have to say about us. Therefore, when we are able to perform well in certain conditions, we feel good about

ourselves and become filled with positivity. According to some learners, those who are fluent speakers of English sound highly intellectual.

I look up to those who major English and those English teachers. For me, they look superior. (P15)

I think a person, they say they are intelligent and knowledgeable, very fluent in English. (P17)

Others see you as highly-educated. (P19)

This is supported by Shutenko (2015) who thinks that learners feel fulfilled of their abilities as they develop their potentials. In the language learning process, there is a feeling of real advantage training, development of abilities, complete self-expression, and many others.

Interest is another present motivation that encourages learners to learn the English language. Interest in something means that we care about it, we find it important, and we have positive feeling about it. John Dewey (in Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010) described interest as “being engaged, engrossed or entirely taken up with something”. When someone has an interest on something, it becomes easier and more enjoyable to learn a lesson and do a task. Even if at first you may be struggling, things will just turn out well eventually. This shows that we are capable of learning when there is interest in doing it.

From the utterances, I realized that many of them are passionate towards English language learning. Falling in love with the language could mean being comfortable with it. For some learners who have good background of this language, they have tried joining different activities and even competitions that make use of English.

“I always love English and I’m very curious in how the English culture, the English language is formed, or the words or the ideologies of the word.” (P05)

Since elementary I started storytelling and joining competitions. In my heart I feel that I am really into this. (P06)

I love reading stories, ma’am, especially novels. I love Greek mythology. I am motivated because English seems a wonderful aspect...there’s no instance that I haven’t liked English. (P07)

“I can’t remember a time that I was discouraged to learn English.” (P09)

Many of the interviewed learners have the heart for English language learning. It may be because English has already been part of every single Filipino’s life. However, this learner interest should not be

generalized among Filipino learners. It was pointed in TESOL (2017) that sometimes we treat learners like homogeneous group having similar likes and dislikes. However, learners vary considerably in terms of interests in the areas of discipline, learning styles, and in some other aspects. It is for obvious reason that not everyone is into English language learning. Hence, teachers have to be more creative in the class to make all these diverse learners engage into language learning. They have to find ways on how to keep learners interested and motivated.

Since this theme focuses on motivation that is getting a person to do his work willingly and well, it was also mentioned by the learners that they have self-motivation. Motivating one’s self is about setting the direction independently and then taking a course of action that will ensure that you get there. The concept of self-motivation is very much connected to the concept of “learner autonomy” which is defined by Holec in Boyadzsheva (2016) as the ability on the part of the learner to take charge of his own learning. The two concepts are very much related as we can say that the more motivated are the learners, the more they become autonomous or the other way around which is increased autonomous results to increased motivation. Hence, it is made clear that they have strong relation.

In the locality where the study was conducted, there are limited circumstances where English communication is used. Apart from the very few households which are using English in their conversations and few business establishments utilize English in their day to day operations such as in keeping records, memos and other written communications. It is only in school where one can get exposed to using English both in oral or written form.

Despite the exposure to the language, learners continue to strive and motivate themselves. However, although the interviewees belong to the top 20 entrance examinees, still they have admitted that learning English is indeed difficult for them. Nevertheless, they become more progressive when motivation starts from within themselves.

...to persevere and work even harder to improve performance in the classroom not only for personal satisfaction but also to prove others that they can still improve...so it is challenging for me to strive harder to improve my grades in senior high. It’s fun because I can learn new words, new things about English language. (P8)

I have set myself as motivation. (P11)

I have to learn ma’am so that I will not be left behind,

when there are words that I don't understand. That's why I really have to read. (P17)

I need to learn English lesson and read books, so I will know the meaning of words. (P18)

Just as self-motivation causes one to do things to achieve his goals, social influence is another strong force that makes one persevere. Hence, this is another example of present motivation.

Many of the learners shared that they have been striving hard to learn English because of the people that directly or indirectly influence them – their parents, teachers, peers and even mass media such as internet and television programs.

Parents are the children's first teachers. From their parents, children acquired and learned many things. It is with their parents that they experienced the many 'firsts' in their lives such as the first step, first word, and even first lesson. Parents are seen to be a major influence in the lives of their children. So, whatever values and knowledge we have, much is owed from them.

Starting from childhood, our mother taught us to speak English. When we watch cartoons, we watch the ones that are in English. That's why for me learning English is not that difficult anymore. (P2)

Influence of my mother ma'am. She is also an English teacher in DepEd. (P6)

It has been established that parents are influential in a child's academic success. Moreso, parents also influence the child's cognitive and emotional development (Harper, n.d.). Similarly, teachers perform the role of parents when the learners are in school. They guide the learners as they give them advice, discipline them, commend them for their accomplishments and teach them lessons. These are but few of the many roles teachers play. Undoubtedly, having spent much time in school, the learners find teachers very influential in their lives; sometimes even more influential than their own parents. As explained by the learners, some of their teachers are inspiring.

Through their teachers' motivations and the school environment in general, learners become interested towards learning their lessons. The accounts herein provide support to the claim.

"Some of the teachers are inspiring...which help me to be interested on what they are teaching... it depends if how the teacher will teach the students or how my

teachers motivated me to learn his or her subject." (P01)

It is because of the school environment that brought me where I am now. Teachers, the school required that instruction is in English. (P03)

Even the peers are as influential as the other people that surround the learners. Not only in language learning but also in other aspects, peers contribute to the actions of a certain individual. As mentioned by one learner:

When your classmates are very good in English that you feel pressured to also master it, so you need to improve. (P08)

In this generation of technological advancement, internet web sites and television programs are getting more and more appealing to young people. Whenever they need to learn something, they would actually visit a web site or view the television. A lot of their time is spent with this technology, hence, making these inventions strong forces that influence their learning, in this case, of English language.

"That I love English because we always watch television and we don't watch it in the channel that is Tagalog." (P05)

"During my childhood days, I am fond of watching cartoons until now. Then of course, when I was a child and we were watching a show that speaks in English, you tend to want to understand the show, not just by the pictures, the video that is shown but also to their the words they speak and that's why I quite adapt their way of speaking, their enunciation like that one." (P09)

In the movies I watched. I usually like the ones with subtitle, then there is no subtitle in Chinese, and you could not also read it. It should really be in English. I really need to learn English so that I could understand what I am watching because it's very hard to watch something you don't understand. (P16)

Based on the study of Al-Harbi (2015), educational television programs are undeniably useful tools for learning. Watching television programs and even movies are seen to have a lot of benefits which includes exposure to a new culture or new language. This finding is congruent to what the participants said regarding their learning of English language by viewing tv programs and movies.

The idea about present and future motivations implies

the importance of the roles each one portrays (self and environment) in order to awaken the interest of the students to learn English language. How and what the learners think, see and feel about learning can cause them to either be highly spirited or dispirited. Thus, the aspect on motivation is very vital.

All for Tomorrow

This subtheme discusses about future motivations that cause learners to strive for English language proficiency. This pertains to the practical reason why they learn English. It is considered future motivations because learners think that by becoming good communicators using English language, they will be able to do good in their respective jobs as English proficiency is really one of the requirements in this aspect.

It's nice to learn it because you can use this not only in the Philippines but also in the whole world. (P6)

It is necessity ma'am because you know English is a universal language ma'am. It is useful especially when you go to other places you use English; when you read instructions, you also use English. (P13)

English language is the universal language. Them everywhere you go, English is really useful anywhere. It can provide explanations about things, and you can interact with people because many use English in almost everything. (P14)

You go abroad, ma'am. Example you interact with foreign people, so you can use the English you have learned. (P19)

The responses of the learners are manifestations that they agree on the idea that learning English language is definitely a must for employment whether in the Philippines or in any parts of the world.

Philippines is recognized globally as one of the largest English-speaking countries, and majority of the population is having at least some degree of fluency in the language. Aside from Filipino language, English has always been one of the official languages of the Philippines. It is the language of commerce and law, as well as the primary medium of instruction in education (Cabigon, n.d.). Filipinos therefore find learning English language a necessity.

As early as infancy, parents already expose their children to English language. It is because they believe that the earlier the children are exposed to English, the better speaker they will become, and it becomes advantageous for them when they grow older. A

learner even said that if you are not able to speak English, then it is as if you do not know anything or you feel out of place. So, not being able to use English is really a disadvantage because it is definitely a part of life –

English is like our second language, so it motivates me because if you don't know about it then you seem dumb. (P01)

It really helps in our daily life ma'am. Maybe you can still use this in the future. (P04)

In terms of employability, white collar job seekers in the country do not only need their academic credentials in applying for a job. It has always been part of the major requirements that you have good communication skills, very specifically using English language. More so in the different professions, English language has always been so useful. The learners said:

Because I really want to learn it for my future and for my dream to become a CPA because in the business world you need to learn English language for your investors, clients and customers. (P08)

My mother has a plan of taking me to another country. Then, English is the international language anywhere you go. (P10)

Because it is needed among millennials. Also, if you will have jobs in the future, you need to learn so that you have something to answer. So you don't only need Bisaya or Tagalog. (P18)

The statements of the learners regarding learning of English for future use manifest their being goal oriented. This implies that they see English language as an important tool to succeed in their career, and as learners they are responsible to motivate their own selves to learn in order to achieve the set career goals.

Theme 2: The Roller-Coaster Ride

“Life is a roller coaster” a famous line says. Life is totally giving you the shakes, the twists and turns as well. Varied emotions are felt -- happy, nervous, scared, amazed and other feelings one can possibly feel. At times you seem to be going up; the next time you seem to be going down. At times you can be optimistic, yet at times you can also be pessimistic.

Just as we see life as a roller-coaster ride, our journey in English language learning is perceived to be the same - ups and downs, twists and turns, high and low. In line with this theme, three subthemes have been formulated and will be discussed: *It's About Them and*

Me, Let Me Do It and It's My Climb.

It's About Them and Me

Learning a second language is not as easy as eating peanuts. It requires conscious effort unlike how one acquires a first language. This subtheme explains how learning is affected by both teachers and learners. It is about how the teachers go about with the teaching of lesson, and how learners feel, react and behave.

Attitude is an individual's personal preferences and choices under certain circumstances. Similarly, Gardner in Anuradja and Ringaraj (2017) defined attitude as the overall feelings of a person towards any particular thing. Sometimes, attitude is related to self-efficacy. According to Bandura (1994), self-efficacy refers to "people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives". These beliefs contribute to one's feeling, thinking, motivating oneself and even behaving. As explained in this theory, people with a high level of self-efficacy engage in tasks with the conviction that they possess the capabilities needed to succeed in them. On the other hand, a person with a low level of self-efficacy avoids or restrains himself from difficult tasks and cites their weaknesses as reason for their lack of effort to pursue certain goals. Self-efficacy beliefs affect performance. Specifically, positive self-efficacy feelings brings positive results as we tend to give our best effort in order to achieve specific goals (in Lopez and Aguilar, 2013).

In language learning, people involved in language teaching often say that learners who really want to learn will succeed whatever the circumstances in which they study. Some learners study a language because they have an idea of something which they wish to achieve. Many other factors have an impact upon a learner's level of extrinsic motivation and most of these have to do with his or her attitude towards the language (Ahmed, 2015). The fact is revealed that most of them have positive attitudes towards the social value and educational status of English. Besides, the findings show their positive orientation toward the English language (Bobkina & de Caleyá Dalmau, n.d) In addition, Zhao (2015) discussed that there are many factors that need to be considered with respect to the learning attitudes, such as the evaluation of the teaching environment, the English class and classmates.

Learning attitude is concerned with a learner's learning experiences, beliefs, values as well as a

learner's educational background. The attitude of learning is one of the important individual factors that plays a vital role in the learning behaviors. It has great effect on the learning process and learning outcomes because of one's optimism towards achieving something whether big or small. It is called positive thinking or having an optimistic state of mind which sees the bright side of life. A positive frame of mind brings more harmony and happiness, improves relationships and attracts success in life. Also bringing successful result is one's grit to get whatever is aspired. As Rome was not built in a day, so is learning. Perseverance therefore becomes the major factor to get over weaknesses and continue to strive harder (Duckworth in Long, 2015).

As English language learners, most of the participants have expressed their interest to learn English as a second language. Despite the fact that they are currently taking different courses which do not specialize in English, they have always seen it as a language that is very interesting in grammar and usage.

"There was none because I always love English and I'm very curious in how the English culture, the English language is formed, or the words or the ideologies of the word." (P05)

There were no instances ma'am because to be honest ma'am I am not good in any subject except English. I took up General Science as my major because it is my weakness. So there was no instance that I did not like English. (P07)

None actually because I really like to learn English language. (P11)

However, somebody also mentioned that learners should be focusing to learn both English and Filipino as second languages, and not English alone. This is for easier communication with the locals.

We just don't focus in English and make it as priority. For me, if we would learn English, we need to also match it with Filipino language so that it is easier to understand. Lessons should also be related to Filipino so that other students will not be having a hard time. (P2)

The learners have greatly emphasized their determination to achieve proficiency of the language. Hence, initiatives to achieve the goal are done such as reading a lot and studying a lot despite the times that many seem to be disinterested with the subject.

English is mostly used in teaching. That's why I should learn so that I will not be left behind. There are words that I do not understand, so I read. (P17)

Nevertheless, some learners remained to be mediocre in the tasks done in relation to English class. They expressed their lack of interest to listen and learn the language although they have admitted its importance.

I didn't like it [English] that much. Just fine. I really liked another subject. However, everything is still associated with English. (P16)

My interest is somewhat in the middle. It is because it's required from us, and I quite like it, or it's just like that, so I could also learn. (P18)

When asked why they did not like learning lessons, there was a mention of boredom felt by the learners.

Maybe I just feel bored or maybe not in the mood to listen to the English teacher. (P04)

The feeling of boredom has something to do with human emotions. Emotions seem to rule us – our decisions, our choices, our activities. It is a mental state variously associated with thoughts, feelings, behavioral responses, and a degree of pleasure or displeasure. It is said to be the driving force of motivation. According to psychologist Paul Eckman, there are six basic emotions that are universal among humans. These are *fear, disgust, anger, surprise, happiness* and *sadness*. Later, he expanded the list of emotions by adding *embarrassment, excitement, contempt, shame, pride, satisfaction* and *amusement*. It is also possible that emotions can be combined or mixed depending on the experienced situation.

The learners expressed their feelings or emotions towards English classes. Positive emotions were felt by them. They felt fun, excited, happy, interested, wonderful and amazed in learning English language. More so, learners also felt that it is very helpful in their life.

My English class during my senior high school years is fun. I have experienced doing something new like painting, role playing, and dressing like gods and goddesses. Yes, somewhat exciting because we have done different tricks that are not usual in a classroom setting. (P01)

Quite fun and lively ma'am. Our teachers let us do some activities related to our topics ma'am. So it was fun because she presented us different kind of activities

to be performed. (P03)

I can describe it with two words – typical but fun. Typical, ma'am, because of the usual activities like reporting, role playing, oral recitations. Then it's fun, ma'am, in a way that it's really fun especially in role playing because you can discover new talents of your classmates. (P11)

I found it fun because the teachers that taught me about English was very well-educated and they have the answers, they have the answers when we ask some questions, ma'am, they could provide the appropriate answer. (P12)

My English class experience during my senior high school years was amazing. Why? For the reason that my teachers there seemed very competent. They're very focused in teaching. But if there were activities, we really do a lot of it. If there's a class, we really focus on it without any disruptions. You really can learn. (P15)

Our thoughts and emotions can strongly affect motivation, and it is the motivation that compels us to do something. Emotions and learning occur in the brain. Learning means acquiring knowledge or skills. Learning requires thinking. Our thoughts influence how we feel. How we feel influences how we think (Lawson, 2002). But just as some have good feelings about learning English, there were also those who revealed that learning is a combination of fun, difficult, interesting, boring, and challenging.

Our English class then was fun but hard because sometimes the teacher was not available, so were required to do self-study. (P02)

It was quite challenging because I'm not really good in English so it was a challenge for me, ma'am." (P03)

Sometimes the topics are interesting because of the teachers, but some are not interesting because there are things that we are asked to do which aren't applicable. (P06)

Teachers take on a role of authority in the eyes of the learners which greatly influences pupils' learning process. Aside from parents, they play a very crucial role in molding a child – his attitude, values, and intellect. There are even situations when children spend longer period of time with teachers rather than with parents, so it is very possible that teachers can really create a great impact in the lives of the children. Therefore, a teacher needs to become somebody who is worthy of emulation, respect and trust.

Inside the classroom, teachers take responsibility over their learners through their way of disciplining and, of course, instruction. Hence, they have to be that personality in the classroom who have the competence and proficiency to give the learners the knowledge they need. They have to be equipped with tools and information necessary to educate the learners not only with theories and concepts but also with relevant and meaningful circumstances in life (Archana & Rani, 2017). They added that teachers have multiple roles in the classroom. These include being a learner, facilitator, assessor, manager and evaluator. Because of the roles, much is expected from them not only by the students but also by the learners' parents, colleagues, superiors, and the community in general. Therefore, teachers' professional traits create a great impact in the society.

The learners who were interviewed had much to say about their teachers when asked questions. According to the learners who were asked if there were instances that they got less interested with the lessons, they responded that it all depends on the teacher and how he motivates his learners through his teaching personality as well as the interactive strategies employed in the class which made the class more fun and exciting. Even those supposed to be plain lessons become very enticing when the teacher incorporates creativity.

It depends on how the teacher teaches the students or how my teacher motivated me to learn his or her subject. (P01)

Our experience was fine because our teacher was good. (P06)

He presented his lessons creatively. He had two subjects with us...so he made our activities from the book creative such as having drama and also paragraphs and stories. (P10)

Moreover, many of the learners appreciated their teachers who have strictly implemented rules about English and at the same time let the learners become involved in the class. Because of this, learners were motivated to learn English more, thus, making a positive result.

Some teachers serve as role model in English because they are very proficient, so the students strive hard to cope with the teacher. (P17)

We were required by our teacher to speak in English. (P03)

"Very particular in speaking in English in every department or every room and in our English class

especially our English teacher when I was Grade 11. She was very strict and of course we must follow the rules and that was her rule." (P05)

This is really a great help in their improvement. Activities done in the class provided them with opportunities to apply whatever they have learned. Moreover, another commendable trait of some teachers is being concerned with the learners. They listened and gave support to the learners especially when the latter were having hard time with their lessons.

First, ma'am, she presented to us the lessons, and after that she let us explore by doing activities. (P01)

Our own opinion at first. Then, when we say our opinion she corrects. (P05)

They explain, for example, how to create paragraphs. They teach us the step by step process, how to arrange thoughts. They teach us in terms of using technology like projector. (P08)

If there were teachers who manifested positive traits liked by learners, there were also those who seemed to be disliked by them due to some reasons.

Examples are the lessons that seem diverted. You seem to be lost. Also, those naughty students who are trying to ask irrelevant questions, ma'am. You lose interest. (P02)

"Some of them are fond of just reading the book and making us take down notes. And some of them are also giving us activities - writing, reading...like that activity. (P09)

Very fast in explaining. It's very fast that you can't follow and understand anymore. I feel bored. (P19)

At first you also become so serious. If he's so formal, then you also become very attentive, but sometimes you feel sleepy because there is no joke at all. (P15)

There was one learner who shared that her reason for not liking the English subject and doing the activities designed for the class is having a "harsh" teacher.

I think it is teacher factor. Maybe the teacher is so harsh. I easily get affected. So if the teacher is choosy, then I won't like him anymore. If I don't like the teacher, I wouldn't want to listen to him. (P18)

The responses of the learners would give us an idea that English language learning in the classroom can be so much fun and exciting. However, it can be as boring too depending on how learners perceive it, how

learners see their activities and how they see their teachers. Thus, for classes to be effective, it has to be full of interaction and engaging opportunities considering as well the varied learning styles of the learners such as visual, aural, verbal and kinesthetic. These styles are often categorized by sensory approaches.

Let Me Do It

Educational facilities are facilities provided to learners so that they can use every opportunity to develop fully their potentials. Educational facilities include buildings, fixtures, and equipment necessary for the effective and efficient operation of the program of education, classrooms, libraries, rooms and space for physical education, space for fine arts, restrooms, specialized laboratories, cafeterias, media centers, building equipment, building fixtures, furnishings, related exterior facilities, landscaping and paving, and similar items which schools may determine necessary. The traditional idea of classroom as an instructor focused learning space has changed. The growth of computer-based instruction, video projection, and other telecommunication requirements changed the nature of educational facilities.

Instructional materials, on the other hand, are the content or information conveyed within a course. These include the lectures, readings, textbooks, multimedia components, and other resources in a course. These materials can be used in both face-to-face and online classrooms; however, these must be modified or redesigned to be effective for whichever situation. Ahmadi (2017) stated that one of the important elements for learning is the method that instructors use in their classes to facilitate language learning process.

As clearly observed, school facilities help to facilitate teaching and learning activities. Having inadequate classrooms and facilities, computers projectors, library and laboratory services have a negative impact on teaching and learning activities as well as teacher and student motivation, among others. Therefore, facilities and materials have to be considered in order to realize the schools' pursuit of quality and relevant education.

According to Becker (2000), computers are regarded as an important instructional instrument in language classes in which teachers have convenient access, are sufficiently prepared, and have some freedom in the curriculum. Computer technology is regarded by a lot of teachers to be a significant part of providing a high-quality education. In addition, Bull and Ma (2001)

stated that technology provides unlimited resources to language learning.

The participants shared that they were able to utilize the school library which is very helpful in their learning. The library as the heart of an academic institution gave them the chance to read a lot of books although the policy is that reading materials should just be read inside the facility. Some were also able to use the audio visual room and speech laboratory for several sessions. This laboratory makes a great venue to learn oral communication.

As to the use of instructional materials, in response to the modernized society, many teachers make use of modern instructional materials which most students favor. It was narrated by the learners that compared to traditional materials which are less appealing, the modern ones help arouse the learners' interest.

"When learning English, it's not about presenting really creative instructional materials. But in our generation...I can say that it is more appropriate to use projectors or powerpoint presentations to present English lessons." (P09)

If there is no powerpoint, ma'am, the class seems boring on the part of the students for they are not interested in books, with words on bond paper and photocopies. If there is powerpoint presentation, students become more interested to listen to the teachers. (P08)

I think it is better with technology because it can encourage me to listen to the teacher. (P11)

The visual aid is not that visually appealing compared to projector that you will enjoy reading. (P14)

Aside from the fact that modern instructional materials are more appealing in terms of visual and audio presentations, these materials are more helpful in making learners become attentive in the class, thus helping them improve their language skills.

It is very helpful using powerpoint because it is clearer unlike when written on the board which is sometimes hard to understand and not clear from the back. When I sit at the back I couldn't see it clearly unlike using modern [equipment] that I could read. When it comes to movie marathon, it makes the class more attentive to the teacher. Another thing also is when the teacher uses lapel, the whole class could really hear him. (P01)

It really helped because of course they used it for their lessons, and and I always sit in front so I could read it

and I could listen intently to the teacher. So having something to read and something to look at because I tend to have a what they call photographic memory something like that because if I will try to remember something...about the lesson I would always close my eyes and remember what I saw in the projector. So it really helped me personally. (P05)

If there is powerpoint, the teacher can continuously talk, but in blackboard it will take time to discuss the lesson because he will still be writing. Sometimes he would be writing less and sometimes more than what is in the book. (P10)

It [projector] is helpful. You can also write more, have more examples. There are pictures and handouts. Yes ma'am, handouts are also helpful because we can take it and use it for studying. We can see what the teacher was talking about. (P16)

It is easier to take information through the powerpoint because it is more organized. Sample videos can also be included for each topic. (P20)

Moreover, incorporating technology in instruction such as the use of Powerpoint makes the class more organized; it makes lessons easier to remember and understand; it is even more helpful in trying to emphasize topics because discussions can be done without disruptions unlike when using chalkboard where the teacher stops and writes; more information is learned and saved for future use.

In the study of Costley (2014), he stated that incorporating technology in discussions causes learners to become more engaged in the class. As a result, learners are able to absorb more information easily and retain the information in mind. This is saying that technology is a powerful contributor to learning.

Interestingly, not everybody wants the instructional materials modern. Few learners revealed that they still opt for traditional ones such as books, manila paper, cartolina, flash cards among others. Even colorful and creative traditional materials such as colored cartolina and pictures can also be as appealing as modern IMs.

If just writing on the board, it's very dull and uninteresting. You feel drowsy. But if you see colorful materials on the board, you will become interested to study. Seeing colored paper like the cartolina makes your mind alive and interested to listen. So I find it effective also. (P02)

Traditional materials also allow teachers to sustain

connection with the learners because they will not be distracted by concerns like quality of powerpoint slides or equipment or electricity in case of power outage.

For me chalkboard is better for you can catch the attention of the students. If with projector, it seems that there will just be reading most of the time, and others will just be idle. Unlike if chalkboard is used. It is more interactive. (P06)

Sometimes with projectors, everyone is focused there. If with fact sheets, ma'am, the teacher could focus in us. When with projector, he faces it most of the time that others are no longer listening. (P07)

Using projector is a waste of electricity consumption. (P2)

It's somehow physically unhealthy due to radiation. Also those students with bad eye conditions are not interested. (P18)

Some learners pointed that it is best to have both traditional and modern instructional materials. For books which are very expensive, photocopied materials could be an alternative. Regardless if traditional or modern, there would still be learning that takes place, and this learning may be used in the realities of life. Materials, without the teacher's facilitation skills, will not be effective tools in learning. School facilities and instructional materials hold the power to either motivate or demotivate learners. Therefore, utilization of these must be carefully planned, prepared and organized for optimal results.

Also part of the discussion of the lived experiences of the learners are the strategies and activities done by them in the classroom. Since, it has been observed that there have been differences as to how learners acquire learning, a lot of research studies tried to identify strategies and activities which can really be beneficial. Part of the learning process is engaging the learners into meaningful activities that would give them opportunities to apply whatever is learnt and allow them to have favorable learning experiences. Thus, a learning environment has to be created by the teachers with learners to do relevant tasks. Having well-designed and well-executed activities can help turn the English classroom into an active, safe, and enjoyable place where learners can learn what they need and want to learn.

Based on the interview conducted, the senior high school English teachers of the learners gave the following activities: reporting, group discussion, role

playing, oral recitation, presentation of outputs, explanation, poetry recitation, singing, impromptu speaking, extemporaneous speaking, interview, advertisement, news reporting, pronunciation exercises, tongue twisters, riddles, games, storytelling, declamation, speech choir, jazz chant, rap writing, yells, oration, radio broadcasting, group reporting.

For the written skills enhancement, these were the activities provided: script writing, song composition, poetry writing, story writing, essay, reaction paper, reflection paper, speech writing, letter writing, paragraph writing, poem analysis, biography writing and research. In addition to the mentioned activities, there were also other activities like movie reviews, reading activities, group activities, speaker of the day, discussions, short film making, spelling, film viewing, puppetry and brainstorming.

The non-human resources, the instructional materials and activities, are as equally important as human resources. These resources give reinforcement to students' learning. What the teacher discusses are supplemented by these materials and activities. They give more life to the learning environment.

It's My Climb

Achieving a goal is like climbing a mountain; it is never easy to do it. There are possibilities of encountering challenges and difficulties, but a determined climber does not quit because the best part happens once the destination is reached. The situation is very similar to language learning where learners face struggles and challenges while learning English language.

Learning starts from childhood. During that stage, children get to discover a lot of things through time. In terms of language, they acquire the first language, for this is the language learned without much conscious effort and any special teaching. However, Menakapriya (2016) stated that as the child enters school, he may start to experience problems related to learning, specifically learning a second language that is considered the global language – English. The child needs to master this language which is used in the international communications, science, information technology, business, seafaring, aviation, entertainment, radio, diplomacy and many others. When competency of the language is attained, it is because of the conscious efforts done by the learners with the guidance of the teacher as English is a compulsory subject that is part of the curriculum from pre-school until college. Indeed, learning is never an

easy task for most young Filipino learners, and they are really spending a long period of time to study this subject. Yet, in spite of the immense effort to achieve competency and proficiency, many learners are still encountering problems or challenges brought about by the requirements of the English subject and of the forced utilization of English.

As explained by the learners, learning English is indeed challenging. From among the many cited problems or struggles, most of them are having problems with regard to sentence and paragraph construction, grammar, vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation.

When composing paragraphs, there are errors in grammar and choice of words which are not accurate for that particular sentence. (P08)

Spelling, then sometimes the correct conjunctions, adverbs...I already forgot. (P14)

In the pronunciation of words, and appropriate words also...correct placement of period. (P14)

The meaning of words that are very deep that I could not understand sometimes, ma'am. Then sentence construction. I'm really confused about grammar. (P16)

The difficulty learners experience in the grammar of the second language may have stemmed from mother tongue influence. Similar problem has been encountered by young learners of Myanmar where they have also experienced some grammatical challenges in constructing English statements (Kyaw San & Thandasoe, n.d.). Also shown in the research result of Widianingsih and Gulo (2016) that the major kinds of errors made by their respondents are related to plural markers, articles, verbs, and tenses. Consequently, because of grammatical problems, learners are also having problems in communication specifically in the oral aspect.

Communication skills because although I like English, sometimes I do not know how to construct sentences in English. (P15)

There are many challenges, ma'am, especially for me in speaking... In writing, ma'am, I think it's easier than speaking, ma'am. (P20)

In addition to the problems on structure and meaning, many also mentioned that they are having hard time to speak in English because of the lack of self-confidence. They explained that:

I'm not good in acting during role playing. I am shy. I don't have confidence when there is role playing.

(P01)

I feel nervous when presenting in front, but during one on one conversation I can do it. However, during impromptu presentation, I really felt nervous in front. I couldn't speak anymore...I was sweating. I just moved my hands so I could start speaking. (P10)

I feel nervous when in front of many people. Example during reporting, I feel ashamed. (P19)

While many feel comfortable in using English as a second language, others are having problems. Their feeling of being pressured and demotivated to listen to classroom discussion and participate in classroom activities become impediments to effective learning.

It's just in the student himself, ma'am. The students around you, if they don't feel interested to listen to the topic in English they tend to distract your attention, too. They try to divert your attention. So, learning English is not really on the teacher but more on the students, ma'am. It's their peers and in himself. (P02)

You also feel pressured when you know your teacher is holding high position in school. You will be pressured the way they teach which has very high standard. (P12)

I feel pressured because almost everybody uses English. (P17)

The challenge is within myself only. (P20)

Sometimes the inattentiveness is caused by peers who are noisy and misbehaving, and at the same time pressure is also felt because of peers who are good speakers of English language and teachers who are intimidating. Other learners mentioned problems such as: having too many tasks given by the teachers, time constraint in submitting class requirements, complex lessons, less-explained lessons, illegible handwriting, difficulty in organizing thoughts, uncomfortable in using English language, limited references, teaching style and misconception about English language as the measure of intelligence.

Our English teacher asked us to do many tasks like poems, stories...Then one of my classmates asked if he reads our work. He told my classmate that he's not reading it. I felt bad because we exerted time and effort for those but were not read. (P06)

When task is given and would be submitted immediately. It's hard. Our tasks are more on written or printouts. Since our place is always experiencing power outage and is quite far, no computer shops are available. (P12)

I thought English is just all about grammar. But when I was in Grade 12, ma'am, there was already linguistics, socio-linguistics, a lot of things added. There were terms, phonetics. That's why I got confused. I got deeper understanding about English and at the same time I became more confused. (P07)

One time we had a teacher who gave examination with items very different from what he taught us. It's like he just gave fact sheets, but he never explained the contents. (P11)

When you could no longer think of anything to write. When you seem to experience mental block. When you feel you have used all the words you know. (P07)

The way the teacher teaches, ma'am. There was a teacher who explains very fast. Then we were not given the chance to clarify. No questions. (P19)

When they consider English as the basis of intelligence. (P17)

The trials and problems met by the learners along the way somehow caused the learners to be demotivated. Their stories about their struggles give us a clear picture of a typical classroom scenario having limitations in terms of teachers' personality, learners' attitude, activities and materials used. However, academic institutions must find ways and work harder to address these deficiencies inside the classroom.

Theme 3: The Dream

Humans tend to live with dreams. These dreams pertain to the desires of their hearts, their aspirations and their hopes. Some desires are for themselves, while some are for others like for family and friends. In relation to English language learning I found out that the learners, though given instruction that is thought to be enough, still think that some things need to be improved, and some things are to be added for whatever is lacking. To further explain the dreams of the second language learners, three subthemes are going to be discussed: *Think of Me*, *Involve Me* and *Back Me Up*.

Think of Me

As learners desire for improved teaching environment, this includes their yearning of some teacher traits. As the second parents, teachers are perceived to motivate their learners rather than put them down when they seem to have poor classroom performance.

On the teacher, on how he motivates the students to learn English. (P13)

The teacher, ma'am, his approach with the students, ma'am, should not be very frightening because students will be ashamed and frightened, so there will be a barrier between you and your students that hinder learning. (P04)

There should be fair treatment among students because that's what I have observed before that whoever is close with the teacher, he gets better grade that I have but with the same performance. (P12)

It was mentioned by the learner-participants that teachers have to be passionate in teaching and sensitive about the needs of their learners. The learners hoped that their teachers show concern and give more time to reach out to them, understanding their individual capacity as well as their limitations as learners.

I really like teachers who are very hands on with students. Example when he sees his student is struggling, then he would be paired with others who are good in English, those who are good will be the only ones who will participate. (P02)

They [teachers] should give more time to explain because there are some teachers who rely much on their students' initiative to comprehend that they tend not to explain anymore. (P11)

Teachers should be considerate of the capabilities of the students, ma'am. They should not give too much pressure to the students. (P12)

They [teachers] have to give attention to students who are struggling especially in writing essay. (P12)

Never leave a student behind, ma'am, because there are students who are not good in English, so they will be left behind. So I think a teacher must always empathize with the students with different learning pace. Sometimes the students need to be observed. (P20)

I have included as many desires or aspirations on the kind of teachers that learners have hoped to encounter inside the classroom such as being passionate in teaching, creative in presenting lessons, concerned with the learners, considerate of the learners' needs and many more. These were the attributes that are sometimes overlooked by us teachers as we keep ourselves busy with a lot of work, prepare our lessons, and do extra loads. We sometimes tend to look at things at our very own perspective, and not from the point of view of the learners.

Involve Me

One of the subthemes this theme has formulated is *Involve Me* which discusses about the desire of the learners to be given the chance to be engaged in the class and find each session meaningful and fun. For the activities, there were learners who desired to have more interesting, fun and relevant classroom activities.

They will have activities that interest students. Let the students have fun while they are learning. (P01)
Activities which are related to the lesson. (P11)
Enhance the oral skills of the students. (P03)

It should be more on writing, more on oral recitation to help improve the skills of the students in terms of using English language. This should be the focus. (P08)

Writing because oral can just be taken from the internet. In writing, you should have your own idea. (P14)

They have to use simple words when they teach so that students can easily catch up. But in the activities, there should be activities that involve vocabulary in order to improve students. (P17)

It was also emphasized by some learners that activities like watching English television programs and reading different English materials may be done by themselves. Doing these can actually help them improve and enhance English skills.

Read books, ma'am. If you encounter some new or unfamiliar words, try to understand the meaning and the usage. For my classmates, they just have to read a lot of books or buy books that can help them use or speak English fluently. That's it. Browse anything that you can read. (P04)

It's an effective way of letting the students watch movies, English movies because it's an effective way of learning English especially in your speaking because you can adapt their speaking styles, so I think that is what others need to incorporate in their teaching style...Letting the students read books, but I would like the teachers to find better ways, effective ways to motivate students to read books. (P09)

Peer mentoring is another activity recommended. This kind of mentoring allows those learners who are not performing very well in the class to be helped by a well-performing classmate. This was suggested in response to an instance where learners fear to seek help from the teacher.

Peer mentoring, ma'am, because sometimes during

Grade 11, students were scared to ask the teacher. Example what is the synonym of this word, what better word to use in the sentence. It is better if the classmate will teach. Someone who is more knowledgeable in English will teach the one who is not so knowledgeable. This is even more comfortable. (P07).

As teachers present their lessons, the learners aspire that they vary their styles. One of the recommendations expressed by the learner is that when there would be times that profound English words are used, teachers need to explain or unlock the meaning of the complex terms rather than just use them in sentences without considering the capacity of the learners. The learners also find it beneficial for them when teachers do introduce English words that are new to them.

It is better if the teacher will have explanation. Example is before the start of class, there should be a review of the past lesson. (P10)

In the presentation of lesson teachers tend to do lecture or discussion most of the time. Discussion of lesson is important. However, some teachers fail to discuss effectively. As expressed during the interview, some teachers explain very fast that they were having a hard time catching up. Also, they felt that quizzes were scheduled so untimely that they were forced to study their notes even if they have not fully understood the lesson. It was articulated by the learner that discussions should be done comprehensively. Aside from that, lessons need to be made meaningful and relevant so that learners see the importance of learning such knowledge.

In learning English, for me teaching should be detailed so that it can be understood easier. Then, if questions will be asked by the students, they should give the right answer. (P19)

After the lecture and discussion, it is best to do meaningful activities that would make them apply whatever they have learned in class.

It should really be application, ma'am...sometimes other teachers teach very fast. Then as they schedule quizzes, that's the time I am forced to study. It must really be applied, like in this scene or situation in the English class. If applied, then, it would be retained unlike if it's just purely lesson, and the teacher will just give quiz the next meeting, we will just be forcing ourselves. It won't really be retained in our mind. (P06)

The responses of the learners regarding activities to be done in the classroom suggests that they should be treated not just recipient of whatever is fed to them during lectures, rather they would want to get involved in the process of learning. Furthermore, their answers imply that through enticing, engaging and relevant activities, learning is more meaningful.

Back Me Up

It has been observed and experienced that life inside the classroom is never that easy for the learners. There are difficult lessons, thought-provoking activities and numerous quizzes and assignments that learners need to endure. That is why, learners definitely need back up. In the context of this research, Back Me Up has something to do with the activities and instructional materials used to reinforce learning. In a way, learning becomes more possible and is strengthened with the use of effective back-ups. Thus, learners did aspire for enhanced instructional materials and activities.

There should be powerpoint. (P10)

They should be using materials which are available [to students]. (P12)

It has been desired by the learners to have instructional materials which are appealing and accessible. Their responses imply that this modern generation of learners would really go for more innovative and more creative supplement to their learning given the fact that many of the learners now are interested in attractive visual materials.

On top of those that are considered to be backing up the learners while studying is the teacher support. In the learning process, it was explained by Jagtap (2016) that teachers just do not act as a lecturer in the classroom. They are facilitators of learning that act as a mentor, a counsel, an information provider and many other roles that guide learners and ensure their learning. They are there to walk with the learners side by side in their journey toward English language learning.

Discussion

Learning a second language is a complex process that requires the three domains – cognitive, affective and psychomotor. It is never easy to learn another language that you rarely use in the community during casual conversations. Thus, learners need to have a push or be motivated and self-directed when it comes to learning of a second language.

Brown (in Mirhadizadeh, 2016) explained that internal factors come from inside the individual such as the individual learner's motivation, attitude, personal practice and study habits. Unknowingly, these factors may be individual element of learners' ability to acquire a foreign language but each component also interacts with another. External factors, on the other hand, are factors that come from outside the individual. Still based on Browns' definition, external factors vary depending on the individual, but what is common is that they are based solely on the circumstances outside of the control and influence of the learner. Both factors may be categorized either in the present motivation which refers to the motivation brought about by current situations such as admiration to fluent speakers, personal interest, social influence, and the future motivation referring to what the participants see as the usability of English language for future opportunities. As observed, the present motivation is already a combination of internal and external factors, while the future motivation is more on the practicability and usability of English in the social aspect. Even Koreans believe that English competence is a key component in job market. Based on the analysis of new employment advertising, 45 out of the upper 90 companies in Korea test various aspects of applicant capacities including English competence (Chang, n.d.). This is definitely a proof that English language use is widespread.

Theme 2, *The Roller-coaster Ride*, arrived at the notion that fun-filled teacher-learner interaction optimizes language learning. Learning of a language is an emotional experience, and the feelings that the learning process evokes will have a crucial bearing on the success or failure of the learning (Hutchinson and Waters in Hum, [n.d.]). From this statement, it can easily be concluded that for a learner to learn, he must have a heart on what he is doing. This starts from having a classroom that is fun-filled and interactive, from having a classroom where the learners are the focus, and that instruction is learner centered and learning centered to ensure learner involvement.

This idea was formulated based on the learners' shared information of what is happening inside their classroom during their English class. When learners are taught in a conventional way, when materials used are conventional, when lecture and very usual activities are provided, learners no longer find a learning opportunity from those. As expressed by the learners, they become more enthusiastic in the classroom when there is something novel and interesting in the way they are taught, in the activities given, and in the materials used. Thus, it would be best

to provide them a fun-filled classroom where learners become engaged with the lesson, and everybody becomes connected with one another through classroom interaction. According to Merry and Moyles (as cited in Kennewell, n.d.), there is widespread agreement that high quality interaction in the classroom is an important element of effective teaching.

Theme 3, *The Dream*, states that holistic/optimized language learning experiences are needed for learners' success. The desire of having a learner and learning centered classroom indicates the desire of having a more engaged learners as they react to the stimuli in the classroom environment provided by the teacher. However, some teachers still deliver that kind of instruction which sticks to the tradition. Dr. C. Naresh (in Charyulu, 2017) explained that: "Language is not static, it is dynamic, it changes day to day and generation to generation. It is the ability of the teacher to adopt a suitable method..."

As the kind of learners in this generation differ from the previous, it is just right to give them what suits them, something that would help them develop holistically. This includes the different aspects of the learners. In terms of desires, there have been statements from the participants that speak about having improved human resources such as teachers, classmates, peers and even self, and the non-human resources such as instructional materials. For their teachers, they desire that they may possess positive professional traits such as coming to class regularly, treating the students kindly and fairly, and becoming more considerate of the capacity of the learners. Also expressed are the participants' needs of engaging in activities that would be meaningful and relevant to their everyday life. In terms of instructional materials, it was noted that many prefer the use of modern technology.

This generation of learners acquire information that is deemed significant or meaningful to them, and presented in a format that is easy to assimilate, allow transfer of knowledge attained to knowledge-in-use, and consider the learners' individual learning styles. An addition to the difference is that the learner population today is accustomed to rapid acquisition of information brought about by the advancement of technology (Eubank & Pitts, 2011). All of these optimizes learning and provide learners with holistic development.

Conclusion

As an English language teacher, I have always devoted myself into teaching my learners English lessons that can help them improve their communication skills – both oral and written – which they can apply in their daily living. In my years of teaching, I have made observations in my classes which helped me in the planning of approaches and strategies to be used that can possibly result to something positive. I have always based everything I do in the classroom from my point of view as a teacher.

Assessing the learners' performance in the class is one thing a language teacher can do to help the learners improve; listening to them and their stories not as a teacher but as a researcher is another thing. At that time, I tried to understand their words in the point of view of an outsider wanting to get information regarding their English class experiences. Detached from my role as an English teacher, my personal conversation with the learners of our institution was very enlightening as I got to know their feelings and emotions in the course of learning English language. Even if all participants were selected based on their ranks in the college entrance examination, it cannot be denied that not everyone is performing excellently in academics, more so not all have the heart for English language learning. Some may have considered learning English as easy as eating peanuts, while others have found it to be so challenging and boring.

In the classroom, they had varied experiences and varied emotions during English language learning. Nevertheless, despite the good and the not-so-good experiences they have had, all of them agreed about the importance of English language in their life. In fact, their agreement on the importance of English language has become one of their motivations to pursue learning English aside from the other motivations mentioned. As many teachers focus only on the lessons to be covered, this becomes an eye opener that in order for the learners to succeed inside the classroom they have to be motivated.

Also very necessary in the learning process is providing the learners with opportunities where they can maximize their abilities and skills. Thus, learning experiences have to really be meaningful and helpful for them, that even if they struggle sometimes, they would always see these hardships as part of learning.

Also, as teachers and second parents, we have the role to make sure that our learners' needs are addressed for we would only want what is best for them.

Interviewing them made me realize how important it is to consider their desires for an English class as I believe these are the same desires my very own learners would probably tell me if they will just be given a chance to express what they think and feel about our English classes. It is because of this that we are expected to help our learners fulfill their dreams. The theory that was formulated summarizes the role each factor plays in the holistic development of the learners.

It really feels good to have conversed with these young learners. I got to know a little about them while we were talking, I got to reflect on my style in teaching, the activities I give, and the instructional materials I provide my learners. Talking to them served as a reminder to all teachers that teaching is beyond contents and theories; it is beyond lecturing what is written on books and internet. Rather, teaching is touching our learners; it is preparing and ensuring them that they become prepared when it is time to face life ahead of them. In the course of this venture as a researcher, I feel so happy that I am able to go through the English language learning experiences of our very own learners who in a way become the voice of other learners in our institution.

References

- Abadiano, M. et al. (2014). The dynamics of netizens' information-sharing in social media: Why do we share information in social media. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research and Innovations*, Vol. 2, Issue 3, pp: (30-55).
- Ahmed, A. (n.d.). Ontological, epistemological and methodological assumptions: qualitative versus quantitative.
- Ahmed, S. (2015). Attitudes towards English language learning among EFL learners at UMSKAL. *Journal of Education and Practice*, Vol.6, No.18.
- Al Hosni, S. (2014). Speaking difficulties encountered by young EFL learners article. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature (IJSELL)* Volume 2, Issue 6.
- Al Nakhalah, AM (n.d.). Problems and difficulties of speaking that encounter English language students at Al Quds Open University.
- Anuradha, V. and Rengaraj, M. (2017). Students' attitude towards English language learning and their academic achievement among first year engineering graduates: A case study. *Indian Journal of Science and Technology*, Vol 10(29).
- Archana, S. & Rani, K. (2017). Role of a teacher in English language teaching (ELT). *International Journal of Educational Science and Research (IJESR)*, Vol. 7, Issue 1, 1-4.
- Azar, A.S. & Tanggaraju, D. (2020). Motivation in second language acquisition among learners in Malaysia. *Studies in English Language and Education*, 7(2), 323-333.

- Blair, E. (2015). A reflexive exploration of two qualitative data coding techniques. *Journal of Methods and Measurement in the Social Sciences*, Vol.6, No. 1, 14-29, 2015.
- Bohm, A. (2004). Theoretical coding: Text analysis in grounded theory. London: SAGE Publications.
- Boyadzhievaa, E. (2016). Learner-centered teaching and learner autonomy. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 232, 35 – 40.
- Bobkina, J., & Fernandez de Caleyá Dalmau, M. (n.d.) Motivation and attitudes towards learning English: A study of engineering undergraduates at the Technical University of Madrid. Retrieved from <https://library.iated.org/view/BOBKINA2012MOT>. Retrieved on February 2019.
- Braun & Clark (2006). Retrieved from <https://jvrafricagroup.co.za/six-simple-steps-to-conduct-a-thematic-analysis/>. Retrieved on February 2019.
- Chang, KS (n.d.). Retrieved at www.oecd.org/edu/ceri/41506521.pdf. Retrieved on March 20, 2019.
- Charyulu, G. (2017). New perspective in learner-centered language teaching: A study on the new curriculum adopted by K L University. *International Journal of English and Literature (IJEL)*, Vol. 7, Issue 5, 25-28.
- Christensen, M., Welch, A. and Barr, J. (2017). Husserlian descriptive phenomenology: A review of intentionality, reduction and the natural attitude. *Journal of Nursing Education and Practice* 2017, Vol. 7, No. 8.
- Colorafi, K. & Evans, B. (2016). Retrieved from <https://worldwidescience.org/topicpages/q/qualitative+descriptive+research.html>. Retrieved on February 2019.
- Daw, C. & Kyaw, S. (n.d.) Grammatical difficulties with English morphemes encountered by undergraduate students in the context of Myanmar. University of Mandalay Open Access Repository.
- Douglas, D. (2003). Inductive theory generation: A grounded approach to business inquiry. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, Volume 2 Issue 1, 47-54.
- Gilakjani, AP. (2012). Visual, auditory, kinaesthetic learning styles and their impacts on English language teaching. *Journal of Studies in Education*, Vol. 2, No. 1.
- Hansell, K. & Gowing, M. (2017). https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/cte/students-partners/academictechnology/learningtheories/whatislearning/?post=8a17841a5e5cec_fb015e8_495a931604c. Retrieved on February 2019.
- Harackiewicz and Hulleman (2010). The importance of interest: The role of achievement goals and task values in promoting the development of interest. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*, 42-52.
- Harris T. (2015) Grounded theory. *Nursing Standard*, 29, 35, 32-39.
- Hussein, G., Mukaddes, M. and Uzunboyly, H. (2008). Undergraduate student's attitudes towards English language. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 431–433.
- Jagtap, P. (2016). Teachers' role as facilitator in learning. *Scholarly Research Journal for Humanity Science and English Language*, Vol. 3/17.
- Jugder, N. (2016). The thematic analysis of interview data: an approach used to examine the influence of the market on curricular provision in Mongolian higher education institutions. Hillary Place Papers, 3rd edition.
- Kennewell, S. (n.d.) Interactive Teaching with Interactive Technology. Retrieved at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/267953098_Interactive_teaching_with_interactive_technology. Retrieved on March 20, 2019.
- Kilickaya, F. (2009). World Englishes, English as an International Language and Applied Linguistics. Retrieved at www.ccsenet.org/journal.html.
- Khan, S. (2014). Qualitative research method – phenomenology. *Asian Social Science*; Vol. 10, No. 21.
- Liao, J. & Zhao, D. (2012). Grounded theory approach to beginning teachers' perspectives of communicative language teaching practice. *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching*, Vol. 9, No. 1, pp. 76–90.
- López, M. & Aguilar, A. (2013). Emotions as learning enhancers of foreign language learning motivation. *PROFILE* Vol. 15, No. 1, pages 109-124.
- Mahmoudi, S. & Mahmoudi, A. (2015). Internal and external factors affecting learning English as a foreign language. *International Journal of Language and Linguistics*, Volume 3, Issue 5.
- McTaggart, R. & Curro, G. (2009). Book language as a foreign language – ESL strategies for indigenous learners. Report of Research Commissioned by Queensland College of Teachers.
- Menakapriya, P. (2016). Challenges in learning English as a second language. *South Asian Journal of Engineering and Technology* Vol.2, No.14, 22–25.
- Mirhadizadeh, N. (2016). Internal and external factors in language learning. *International Journal of Modern Language Teaching and Learning*, Vol. 1, Issue 5, 2016, pp.188-196.
- Mitchell & Myles (2004). Second language learning theories second edition. New York: Oxford University Press Inc.
- Morrow, R., Rodriguez, A. & King, N. (2015). Colaizzi's descriptive phenomenological method. *The Psychologist*, 28(8), 643-644.
- Navarro-Villaroel, C. (2011). Young students' attitudes toward languages.
- Padilla-Díaz, M. (2015). Phenomenology in educational qualitative research: Philosophy as science or philosophical science? *International Journal of Educational Excellence*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 101-110.
- Radu, L. (2011). John Dewey and progressivism in American education. *Bulletin of the Transilvania University of Brasov Series VII: Social Sciences*, Vol. 4 (53) No. 2.
- Reiners, G. (2012). Understanding the differences between Husserl's (descriptive) and Heidegger's (interpretive) phenomenological research. *Nurse Care*, 1:5, 119.



Rose, S., Spinks, N. & Canhoto, AI. (2015). Management Research: Applying the Principles.

Salwa S. Al-Harbi, S. (2015). The influence of media in children's language development. *Journal of Educational & Developmental Psychology*; Vol. 5, No. 1.

Shutenko, E. (2015). Motivational and conceptual aspects of students' self-fulfillment in university education. *Worldwide trends in the development of education and academic research*, 15 – 18

Tressa F. Eubank, T. & Pitts, J. (2011). A Comparison of Learning Styles Across the Decades. Retrieved at https://journal.opted.org/articles/Volume_36_Number_2_Article2.pdf.

Valmori, L. (2014). How do foreign language teachers maintain their proficiency. *MSU Working Papers in SLS*, Vol. 5.

Wa-Mbaleka, S. (2014). Teaching English to speakers of other languages: The case of the Philippines. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (Special Issue).

Widianingsih, N. & Gulö, I. (2016). Grammatical difficulties encountered by second language learners of English.

Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Michelle T. Viña

Notre Dame of Midsayap College - Philippines