Challenges And Coping Strategies Of English Teachers In Teaching English Subjects In The New Normal

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Abstract: Teaching English is a challenge at some point in the life of English teachers. Sometimes, English teachers' challenges are tough to deal with. This qualitative study employs a narrative inquiry as to the research design, which aims to determine English teachers' challenges and coping strategies in teaching English subjects in the new normal. A purposive sampling technique is carried out to identify the study participants from one of the secondary and public schools in Pagadian City. The researcher used a researcher-made interview guide questionnaire to gather all the data. Emerging themes were derived using thematic analysis. Results identified three themes regarding the challenges of English teachers; lack of resources such as books and materials, difficulty in providing the lesson contents to the students, and difficulty designing students' tasks suited to the students' cognition level. Some of the respondents coping strategies are the following: having an optimistic mindset for teaching English, using practical examples and providing simple explanations to the students, being flexible and facilitative in teaching English, being updated with the trends in teaching English, engaging in seminars and workshops, using technology in teaching, keeping the passion for teaching burning and ensuring the attainment of lesson objectives. The study suggests that English teachers must continue and maintain their enthusiasm to deliver quality education and make learning easy and more interactive.

Keywords— *challenges, coping strategies, narrative inquiry, teaching English*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is essential for an individual's improvement; it allows one to be prepared for the future and life experiences. Education is the key to success. Teachers are influential members of society. They are the ones who give purpose to their students by sharing their knowledge and setting up their students for success. Students and faculty members are adjusting to the new normal learning modality caused by the pandemic. Many students on social media are ranting about their stress because of the activities given by the teachers. However, teachers are also adjusting to the new learning modality. They are also experiencing challenges and problems in this new learning modality. Plenty of teachers don't have internet access in their homes which causes them to buy load for data connection deducted from their budget. Some teachers are not knowledgeable in modern technology, especially older ones, but the problem is that they must adjust to the new learning modality.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2007), some of the issues in the field of English education include the unavailability of textbooks and classroom resources, the preparation and training of English teachers, the need to meet standards, to prepare students for standardized examinations, and dramatically increasing use of the internet as a source of information.

In addition, teachers making English accessible to all students necessitates understanding how to deliver relevant English instruction and a variety of academic and social supports. Teachers must listen carefully to their students and develop instruction that responds to their needs in meaningful ways to provide an equitable English education (National Research Council, 2012).

Furthermore, the Department of Education (DepEd) provided schools with alternative learning techniques, including online and offline ways (blended learning), such as take-home reading and exercises. With these, teachers are challenged with the learning they impact, distance, internet connectivity, and salaries as they are part of the working people's uplifting standards. It was also a challenge for all teachers to find themselves, especially using unfamiliar tools, and there will be some adjustments. Teachers find it challenging to make English lessons exciting and engaging, knowing that the subject is naturally complex. Students are drawn more to English because it involves writing and comprehension learned in the classroom. The students can engage in English activities if there is a conducive environment to improve their English process skills (Safaah et al., 2017).

Another study revealed that teacher training is essential for this new modality of teaching and learning. Online learning may pose some serious problems. Thus,

several approaches must be considered. Educators need to understand the approach to learning in the new normal to carry out learning while still avoiding COVID-19 exposure (Mertayasa & Indraningsih, 2020). Since some schools have already conducted limited face-to-face classes, particularly in English, it is interesting to find the English teachers' experiences in preparation, teaching engagement, and challenges in a new normal modality.

The researchers also noticed that most research conducted by the other researchers focused only on the students as their respondents and few on the teachers. The researchers find it interesting to provide additional representations regarding teachers' challenges in the new normal, especially in teaching English subjects.

This study sought to explore how teachers respond to the challenges encountered in the new normal. More so, the researcher has taken an interest in discovering how teachers, especially in English, are making their way as flexible and innovative during the pandemic.

1.1 *Challenges Encountered in Teaching English*

The sudden change in the teaching and learning process amidst the global pandemic contributes to several challenges English language teachers and learners face. Atmojo and Nugroho (2020) stated that English language teachers in Indonesia faced difficulties in designing materials and providing feedback.

Furthermore, English teachers need help employing better methodologies and activities to make them more compelling. Teaching English is difficult in high school because of the more complicated English concepts. In an online classroom, English teachers need help teaching English as internet connectivity may be a barrier to teaching. Now, teachers require their students to do the activities and exercises in their respective houses with their teachers' online assistance that guides students in the learning processes. Preparing, discussing, and doing the activities are the challenges that English teachers experience. An article concluded that the re-orientation of the curriculum toward student-centeredness, in this case, positively affected student performance, learning experience, and subject evaluation. In particular, student-centered strategies helped create a robust social context for learning and gave students a common experiential framework to explore the technical components of the curriculum (Barraket, 2005).

Correlated to this, the Department of Education (DepEd,2020) emphasized that online learning as a new modality entails the use of technology and its challenges, such as (a) connectivity and access to the internet, (b) teachers' engagement and training, (c) parents' guidance and supervision, (d) hands-on sessions, and (e) systems preparation. Even though pedagogies are widely available, stakeholders responded to a call for online learning. Hence, teachers must rethink and re-tool themselves for what is to come. They make sure that online classes will achieve holistically, creatively, and with a personal touch (Gonzales et al., 2020).

In addition, transitioning from traditional classroom teaching to modular distance learning made delivering fundamental quality education more difficult for teachers. For that reason, DepEd officials are constantly looking for solutions to alleviate challenges and equip teachers and school administrators to be more effective in modular distance learning (Bagood, 2020).

Bagood (2020) also stated that some identified teaching personnel, with the help of the Education Program Supervisors, produced modules in all subjects for all grade year levels throughout four quarters following the "Most Essential Learning Competencies." These self-learning modules are learning packages with a pre-test, discussion, and evaluation/assessment questions. The learners will receive their self-learning modules on their modular learning class schedule. Teachers in public schools all around the Philippines have adopted this method of instruction. Teachers, specifically English teachers, are critical in maintaining quality education in the face of the pandemic. Teachers were well aware of the presence and repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic (Lapada et al., 2020). Despite the hazard posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers continue to assist students by developing modules that act as a learning guide. As a result, the teacher becomes a facilitator in the student's growth as a member of their community and society (Marineau et al., 2020). However, Malipot (2020) emphasized that teachers vent their problems regarding modular distance learning. As front-liners in the educational system, teachers have undergone significant training and seminars to provide better education amid the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a departmental policy to train teachers for professional growth and prepare them for unexpected events and circumstances (Bagood, 2020).

Several challenges face teachers teaching English at the Junior High School level. The challenges are associated with the nature of English teaching, English materials and textbooks, and students' attitude toward English. These

challenges include the loaded content of the English curriculum, inadequate English teaching materials, lack of English facilities such as speech laboratories, and translation of curriculum requirements into practice. The rest of the challenges that English teachers encountered include the following: loaded English examination papers for assessing student knowledge, the use of profile dimension to evaluate students' knowledge, the student perceived the complex nature of English, students' interest in knowing and learning examination-oriented topics only, and student's lack of preparedness for English lessons.

In the Philippines, English was used as the language of instruction (they use it as an official language in teaching the students, and have never been used as their local language). Except for the parents who are very consistent in teaching their kids the language, they speak English at home (O'Connor, 1955). It will be much easier for students who can speak the language to actively engage in the classroom since they also speak English at home. However, it would be challenging for the teachers to impart English as a second language to students who have just started learning it.

Another study revealed that despite the importance of the English language in the Philippines, teachers teaching English subjects face three significant challenges (Teacher Cel., 2016).

English teachers in the Philippines had to suffer from the previous school system; they had no choice but to substitute vernacular patterns for Standard English (and all other languages in the Philippines). Due to the lack of native-speaking models, they are also vernacularized in terms of sound, sentence structure, intonation, and even vocabulary.

According to Pena (2016), the current state of Philippine classroom English is a continuum of basilect, mesolect, and acrolect. She says that most students and teachers are basilectal, having wrong forms, but have already fossilized. Not just the learners but also the teachers who are teaching the language. Some teachers are unwilling to improve and resist adopting new teaching methods. If this is the case, it will be difficult for teachers to model appropriate teaching when they, too, are having problems learning.

English has always been a complex subject to teach, and based on classroom observations, learning English has different barriers through various factors. Using student-centered techniques in the English curriculum will significantly impact English teachers' desired outcomes. It required the students to assess their learning through problem-solving activities, thinking skills and gathering information, and engaging students in an activity that can help them reflect upon their ideas and how they are using them. These are examples of having a student-centered technique in which the environments are likely to be collaborative, inquiry-based, and relevant. Online learning delivery as a new learning modality occurs in the online environment. It can be through asynchronous and synchronous meetings and activities. However, online learning also challenges all teachers, especially its uses and its different problems, such as access to the internet, teacher training, parents' supervision, hands-on sessions, and systems preparation.

1.2 *Coping Strategies in Teaching English*

Coping strategies to reduce stress are necessary for preventing prolonged stress's harmful effects (William et al., 2010). Coping strategies refer to the specific efforts people use to master, reduce or minimize stressful events.

In connection to that, an English teacher's positive belief can make a difference in the academic performance of the students by emphasizing academics and learning, trusting parents and students to cooperate in the process, and believing in their capacity to overcome difficulties and react to failure with resilience and perseverance (Hoy et al., 2006). Evidence suggests that trust impacts teacher commitment, and where trust is present, teachers are more willing to engage in vicarious learning (Bryk et al., 1999). Trust is a necessary ingredient that assists teachers in learning from one another about how to meet the needs of students in school. It allows teachers to be innovative without worrying about the parental response because cooperation between parents and teachers for the sake of the students is so strong (Hoy et al., 2006).

Furthermore, teachers provide necessary examples for better understanding of the students towards the lessons as samples play an essential role in teaching and learning English. The primary action in the classroom includes models to visualize the idea in the pedagogical content knowledge (Chick & Harris, 2007). Teachers find it hard to impart the lessons to the students, and as their coping strategies, they provide examples to explain the class effectively. Students engaged more in the learning process because they understood the lessons.

Moreover, passionate teachers who are strongly committed to their work can positively impact student achievement. In addition to being a motivating factor, passion can influence learning and teach positively by creating excitement and action (Konstantopoulos, 2005). When teachers commit, motivate and create a positive environment and well-being among themselves, it could foster improved academic performance and promote social and emotional

progress among students and teachers outside the classroom (Loveless, 2020).

Effective teachers can adjust, change and modify teaching methodologies depending on the student's needs, the availability of resources, and the context of the environment. They value student achievement rather than rigid practices (Christenbury, 2011).

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study is qualitative research employing narrative inquiry-based experience as the research design. The narrative inquiry will be employed to allow the participants to tell stories about their experiences without undue direction from the researchers. The narrative inquiry was suitable for this study since the participants were given the time to tell their experiences in teaching English.

According to Clandinin (2007), narrative inquiry is a "profoundly relational form of inquiry. Moreover, it is "sensitive to subtle textures of thought and feeling" at work in a narrative of lived experiences (Webster & Mertova, 2007, p. 7). It allows for the events of the most significance to be brought forth in the story participants tell.

2.1 Research Environment

The researchers conducted the study in one of the secondary schools in Pagadian City, Zamboanga Del Sur. This secondary school is one of the public schools in Pagadian City that was established to cater to primary and higher education for the people in the province.

2.2 Research Participants

In gathering the study participants, the researchers employed a purposive sampling technique. According to Foley (2018), the purposive sampling technique is a non-probability technique called judgment sampling. The researcher relies on judgment when selecting population participants to participate in the sample.

The identified participants of the study were the English teachers of one of the secondary and public institutions in the city of Pagadian. The researchers made inclusion criteria in choosing the participants of the study as follows: *(1) with a teaching experience minimum of one year in teaching English, (2) teaching English subjects within the school, and (3) English major teacher.*

2.3 Research Instruments

The main instruments in gathering the data were the researchers, with the open-ended interview guide questionnaire. Open-ended questions were used to collect information and motivate and inspire respondents (Porst, 2011). Interviewers can help respondents and encourage them to provide better and more comprehensive answers by providing additional information and asking follow-up questions (Dillman & Christian, 2005). On the other hand, interviewers are in charge of recording the responses – that is, researchers must input the respondents' answers into the questionnaire.

The researchers formulated an open-ended interview questionnaire, which consisted of a series of questions relative to the predicaments raised in this study. In addition, audio recorder gadgets were used in recording and documenting the interview of the participants and the researchers to ensure the validity and reliability of the data acquired in this study. Thus, this will help the researchers demonstrate an understanding of English teachers' lived experiences in their teaching process amidst pandemics.

2.4 Data Gathering procedure

Before conducting the study, the researchers obtained permission to conduct the study from the President of one of the tertiary schools in Pagadian City through the Dean of the College of Teacher Education. After this, the researchers also notified the Research Director regarding the approval of the conduction of the study.

The interview was conducted face-to-face on the time availability and convenience of the identified participants. The researchers also followed Health and Safety Protocols during the interview. The interview ranged from 10 to 20 minutes, depending on the participants' responses. Then, the data collected was analyzed.

The researchers wanted to study the phenomenon of teachers' challenges and coping strategies for handling English subjects to determine how these teachers address the challenges encountered in teaching English. In addition, purposive sampling may prove effective because the research participants were mutually affected by their difficulties during the pandemic.

2.5 Data Analysis

The researchers used thematic analysis to analyze the data gathered from the interview. The researchers closely examined the data and identified the common themes – topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly. According to Braun & Clarke (2006), there are various approaches to conducting thematic analysis. However, the most common form follows a six-step process: familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up.

An external audit specializing in qualitative research will be consulted to validate the available codes. The external

auditor is a graduate of a doctor of philosophy in educational management, a research director of one of the well-known tertiary institutions in Pagadian, and research in higher education, educational management, and educational assessment.

2.6 Ethical considerations

In this study, researchers observed some ethical principles and procedures before conducting the research. The researchers acknowledged the voluntary and full participation of the identified participants. However, the participants have the right to withdraw their participation in the study if they wish to do so. The participants attained written informed consent. The researchers considered the anonymity and privacy of the participants under the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Aside from that, there were no discriminatory, offensive, or other unrelated unacceptable words used in the interview guide questionnaire.

Specifically, the following were observed in this study:

Integrity. The researchers observed honesty at all times and verified answers from the study's identified participants.

Justice. The researcher also implemented the fairness of the participants in the study. The researcher assumed that the English teachers' benefits and contributions to the study would be recognized.

Respect for people's rights and dignity. The participants' identities remained confidential, hidden, and not exposed. The participants' anonymity and privacy were ensured to avoid problems in the conduct and outcome of the study.

Informed consent. The identified participants were given all the information they needed in this study.

They were withholding information and deception. Informed consent was provided to the participants before the actual interview.

Fraud. The researchers ensure no fabrications of the data in this study, whatever findings would formulate.

Plagiarism. The researchers observed the APA 7th edition format in referencing the publication system. They acknowledged the Author's work in their published articles on some parts being corroborated.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study observed three (3) essential categories: Challenges of English teachers in teaching English subjects, coping strategies of teachers in addressing the challenges, and the implication of the study.

3.1 Challenges of English Teachers in teaching English subjects

As teachers aim to promote positive and stimulating learning experiences, they experience numerous challenges in preparing students to accomplish deep-rooted learning instruction. Teacher participants faced many challenges in delivering English instructions. *Challenges of English*

Teachers in teaching English Subjects presents the themes and the frequency of utterances on teachers' Challenges in teaching English in providing quality education among students. Three core themes were identified about their challenges in teaching English: *Lack of resources: books and materials to be used, difficulty in providing the lesson's contents to the students, and difficulty in designing students' tasks suited to students' cognition level.*

There are two significant statements on the first theme: *Lack of resources: Books and materials."* A school with limited facilities, textbooks, and materials adversely affects teachers' effectiveness and performance, and consequently, student achievement is negatively affected (Lyons, 2001). This theme comprises specific reasons such as lack of resources and insufficient English-related textbooks and materials. Participants narrated,

"Akong challenges nga na experienced kay kanang wala koy personal books related sa akoang subject and another is deficiency in content in delivering the lesson sa mga istudyate". [The challenges I experienced were the lack of resources, such as books and materials related to my subject, and the deficiency in content in delivering the lesson to my students.] – RP2

"Usa jud sa problema nako no, kay kanang walay kay enough resources or books nga imong magamit, then if manghulam kas library dili available ang book." [One of my problems is when you need more resources or books to be used and the unavailability of books in the library.] – RP4

Many teachers who go into the field of education have a passion for teaching students. They want to make a difference, and they want to help those who need extra help. However, studies show that teachers are challenged because of the stress of teaching in a school with insufficient resources. Textbooks play a vital role in language classrooms in all educational institutions. Students learn what is presented in the textbook; in other words, the way the textbooks present materials is the way the students learn them. The educational philosophy of the textbook influences the class and the learning process. However, in some schools, textbooks and other materials are not available, which delays the learning process and becomes one of the challenges for the teachers.

The second theme, the "difficulty in delivering the lesson contents to the students' cognition level," has one significant statement from the research participant. Even English teachers can be complex, given that this level of abstraction is necessary. Teachers need to understand the subject deeply and flexibly to help students relate one idea to another, attack an alternative conception, and even create cognitive maps useful for learning (Chavan, 2013). In Krashen's theory of the Natural Order Hypothesis (1982), the teacher should know that some language structures are more accessible to learn than others. English Language structures should be taught in a learning-friendly order. Teachers should begin by teaching children relatively simple and basic

concepts and then utilize scaffolding to introduce increasingly complex ideas. This statement involved difficulty in making the ideas easy for the students. Participant 1 mentioned,

"It is difficult to make the concept easier for the learner's tungod sa spiral curriculum. Kung ang studyante nakapasar without knowing the subject matter, mas mag lisud na silag sabut sa higher concepts. It would be a challenge sa akoa in a way nga kailangan ko mag gahin og oras para mag revisit sa lower-level concepts. In short, ang mga studyante dili pa ready to learn the concepts nga among gina tudlo sa Grade 9 since wala silay pre-requisite knowledge." [Because of the spiral curriculum, I find it difficult to teach higher concepts because students do not even know the simpler concepts. It is challenging for me as I need to reteach and provide enough time to the students. In short, the learners are not ready to learn the concepts that we are giving them in Grade 9 since they do not have the pre-requisite knowledge.] – RP1

Difficulties are often an unavoidable but important part of the learning process. Teachers are challenged to make their lessons effective for everyone if some students have yet to gain prior knowledge of the lessons. As class sizes in education are increasing and technology is impacting education at all levels and because of the new learning modalities, these trends create significant challenges for teachers as they attempt to support individual students. Technology undoubtedly provides substantial advantages for students, enabling them to access information quickly. ABS-CBN News reporter Jaehwa Bernardo interviewed Ms. Rowen Ursolina, one of the teachers at Alabat Island National High School. In the interview, Ms. Ursolina said, "We are not sure if students are answering the activity sheet that we sent, so we're going to find a way to address that." It is now a challenge for every teacher if students pass on to the next grade level without knowing and understanding the lessons in the previous grade.

The last theme pertains to "difficulty in designing students' tasks suited to the students' cognition level" and has one significant statement from the research participants. To design instruction in this way, a teacher must first identify key learning goals to focus the lesson and then choose a vital task to support students thinking and learning in the discipline. After selecting (or designing) a task, the teacher must then imagine in detail how her students must engage with the task and design appropriate tools and scaffolds to support and direct that engagement, and plan for ways to monitor student's work during the task (Cotton, 1998 & Ross et al., 2013). These statements involved the difficulty in designing students' tasks suited to the level of the students. Participant 3 narrated,

"Tungod sa kalisud sa subject, ang pagtudlo og English is challenging nga trabaho jud ever. Kanan bitaw maghuna-huna kag mga pamagi to bring English happen in a limited face-to face classroom. I constantly have a hard time designing activities, guided practices in their modules, and lain-lain nga tasks nga ma swak sa level of learning sakong mga students considering pajud sa availability sa learning resources." [Teaching English subjects have been a difficult job, especially in bringing English in limited face-to-face classes. I also find it hard to design activities, modules, and other related tasks suited to the student's level of learning, considering the availability of learning resources.] – RP3

English involves writing, comprehension, and even bigger concepts that should be learned in the classroom. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Philippines adopted a new educational system, which most of us are greatly affected. Conversely, teachers are challenged to make their lessons effective, knowing that the subject is naturally complex. Teachers tailor learning tasks daily based on their perception of what students are prepared to accomplish. When they teach students who still need to be at grade level, they often choose simpler, less demanding work that they can complete independently, eliminating opportunities for them to engage with sophisticated content and complex cognitive task. During class, teachers may cut short moments of struggle and lead students to a correct answer to keep the discussion moving (Short & Hirsh, 2022). Yet research shows that when teachers hold students to high expectations, including those not yet performing at grade level, they rise to the challenge.

Moreover, the participant's responses in this study stated numerous challenges in teaching English subjects during the pandemic. I strongly agree that teachers are also challenged in teaching English because students may not internalize the lessons in the same way as all students since they have a natural order in acquiring information, which occurs when they are ready. The findings of this study agree with the Natural Order Hypothesis introduced by Krashen (1982) states that children acquire their first language in grammatical structures in the natural order, some received earlier than others.

3.2 Coping Strategies of English teachers in teaching English subjects

Coping strategies of teachers in teaching English help teachers tolerate, minimize, and deal with stressful situations. *Coping Strategies of English teachers in teaching English subjects* shows the five core themes identified about their coping strategies in teaching English and categorized into two: Problem-Focused strategies, *Using practical examples and providing simple explanations to the students, being flexible and facilitative in teaching English, and engaging seminars and workshop, using technology in teaching* and Emotional-Focused coping strategies; *having an optimistic mindset for teaching English, and ensuring the attainment of lesson objectives.*

The first theme has three significant statements: *"Having an optimistic mindset for teaching English."* This theme comprises specific reasons: setting the mindset, being optimistic, aiming for transformation, and having a positive attitude. An English teacher's optimistic belief that they can make a difference in the academic performance of students by emphasizing academics and learning, by trusting parents and students to cooperate in the process, and by believing in their capacity to overcome

difficulties and react to failure with resilience and perseverance (Hoy et al., 2006). Participants mentioned,

"I think English teachers just need to have a positive mindset, especially in dealing with learners that are lagging in skills and knowledge." – RP1

"Always be positive; we should keep our students with a positive attitude. As teachers, we should keep students thinking actively and prepared, especially sa course material, then i-organized. Kaylangan nato planohon kung unsa atong itudlo sa ila and lastly dapat we should be clear because an effective teacher can explain complex ideas in simple ways." [I need to be positive and keep my students with a positive attitude. Also, we need to let them think actively and be prepared and organized, especially in the course material. We must plan for what we want to teach and be clear about complex ideas in simple ways.] – RP2

"To keep me in this profession for a long time, I have to stay relevan and I need to be healthyt. I need to show that this profession needed me more than I needed it. I could do it if I always fit in myself to this profession by continually learning and accordingly indulging myself to advancement opportunities where I could improve myself." – RP3

The participant's positive well-being contributes to addressing the challenges of teaching English subjects in the new normal. Encouraging outlook, self-confidence gained from encouragement and motivation, healthy lifestyle, and stress reduction allow them to continue performing their duties and responsibilities despite the challenges of these trying times. When teachers create a positive environment and well-being among themselves, it could foster improved academic performance and promote social and emotional progress among students and teachers even outside the classroom (Loveless, 2020).

The second theme, *"using practical examples and providing simple explanations to the students,"* has two significant statements from the research participants. In teaching and learning English, examples play an important role. The teacher uses particular measures to explain and give understanding to the students. The primary action in the classroom includes examples used to visualize the idea in the pedagogical content knowledge (Chick & Hariss, 2007). This statement involved using practical examples and giving more examples to students. Participants shared,

[It is always best to give more examples that students can relate to. If students still cannot understand the topic, then reteach with a different strategy.] – RP3

"It would be better nga mag provide kag detailed, clear and simple nga explanation on that certain topic. Tabangan ang students nga makamugna og firm foundation sa concept or topic, and eventually, makasabut na sila." [It

would be better to provide students with a detailed, clear, and simple explanation of that topic. Help the students to establish a firm foundation of that concept or topic, and eventually, the students will be able to understand.] – RP1

Teachers need to understand the subject matter deeply and flexibly to help students create useful cognitive maps, relate ideas to one another, and address misconceptions. Teachers must see how ideas connect across fields and everyday life (Shulman, 1987). In addressing these challenges, English teachers provided necessary explanations for the students to understand the lesson. Teachers should also clearly articulate the expectations of the assignment or task. Explaining what students must do, how they must do it, and when they must complete it can help them understand and follow directions. Providing a robust and detailed rubric with the assignment can also make both the teacher's and the student's job clearer and more manageable.

The third theme, "Being flexible and facilitative in teaching English," has two significant statements from the research participants. A teacher with a better understanding of English content asked more challenging questions and interacted more with their students. These interactions allowed students to participate in content-related dialogue (Newton & Newton, 2001). This theme comprises the specific reasons that promote interaction among the students and assist students. Participants uttered,

"The time nga mapansin nako nga naglisud sila. Gina sure nako nga mo respond sailang pangutana og clarifications. Also, maminaw jud ko sa ilahang concerns og muhatag og assistance pog guidance nga ilang ginapangayo, sir". [Every time I notice that they are struggling, I respond to them and listen to their concerns to provide for their needs.] – RP3

[Being an English teacher is not an easy job since people around you expect that teachers are effective in all areas of English, there is an area of English that is difficult to explore, and there are easy to teach. That is always the main goals of any schools. And I always do my best to meet this demand to be flexible and facilitative in the teaching-learning process.] – RP4

Effective teachers are great at being flexible, which means they can balance several responsibilities and make students feel good about themselves. As stated above, English teachers in the new normal are trying to be flexible and facilitative to the students' needs. During the new normal, teachers guide, instigate, and motivate students to learn. As such, the teacher is the facilitator rather than the source of learning (Silberman, 1970). Furthermore, teachers effectively implement appropriate instructional strategies and create a positive learning environment in the classroom (Purkey & Novak, 1984).

The fourth theme is *"Engaging in seminars and workshops, using technology in teaching,"* which has two

significant statements: engaging in seminars and workshops and using technology in teaching. Modern technology is student-centered because it instantly turns the teacher into a secondary source of information. Moreover, with the added benefit of leaving a lasting impression on the learner's brain, simplifying the teaching process and reinforcing what has been learned, particularly in education, also implies that a relationship exists with modern technology teaching material in English education (Boumoya, 2008). Participants said,

"Engage in seminars and workshops that will hasten my knowledge and skills in teaching English." –RP2

"Tungod sa nagka taas nga demands, gina evaluate nako akong kaugalingon to ensure nga nag grow og nag improve ko ani nga profession. Gina engage nako akong kaugalingon sa mga bag-ong trends in English aspects, og we all know that a change in English education is constant jud. I have been keeping my eye in the world today because I know naay mga bag ong studies that will have unveiled in time." [I evaluated myself to ensure I was growing and improving. I engaged in English trends, knowing that English education is constant. I am engaged in what is happening in the world because I know new studies will be unveiled in time.] – RP4

Improving teaching skills is a crucial component of improving education. Teachers stated that they could benefit from seminars and workshops in many ways. They enhance their skills in specific areas, such as dealing with challenging students. New skills are also acquired, like understanding how to incorporate technology into the classroom. Teachers are challenged to have the tools they are unfamiliar with during the start of the new learning modality. Engaging in seminars and workshops is the teachers' coping strategy for learning and incorporating technology into the classroom. As an added benefit, teachers constantly learning new skills also enhance their careers.

The last and fifth theme is *"keeping the passion for teaching,"* which has two significant statements that keep the passion for teaching despite the challenges. Passionate teachers who are strongly committed to their work can positively impact student achievement. In addition to being a motivating factor, passion can influence learning and teach positively by creating excitement and action (Konstantopoulos, 2005). Participants shared,

"Even bitaw bata pako ani nga profession, na realized nako nga ang pag tudlo og English noh kay challenging kayo. So, I would like to inspire my co-English teachers to take these challenges as motivation to keep on going. We were already brave enough nga gipili namo ni nga profession and facing the challenges that this profession has brought us is making us braver. Unta our passion for teaching kay kanunay nga magdilaab despite sa mga challenges nga among na encounter karung panahona, be in technical or

personal man." [I am still young in this profession, and I've realized that teaching English is challenging. So, I would like my co-English teacher to take these challenges as motivation. The challenges we are facing right now make us even braver. We will keep passionate about teaching despite the challenges we may encounter.] – RP4

"Walay perfect nga strategies and methods sa pagtudlo, no one has the monopoly of knowledge, and do not be afraid to explore new ways of teaching. Ana pa si Ganguly, teacher is like a candle that burns itself to light the world of others." [There are no perfect teaching strategies and methods in teaching. We should not be afraid to explore. As Ganguly said, the teacher is like a candle that burns itself to light the world of others.] – RP3

Teachers are challenged in teaching for different reasons, but they have this one reason for continuing to teach students: their passion for teaching. Crosswell and Elliot (2004) have examined instructors' "passion" for teaching as an essential variable in teacher commitment and engagement. Mart (2013) agrees that one's passion for teaching would lead one to be more committed and therefore be more motivated to teach. Research has shown that teachers' passion directly influences students' passion, which affects students' motivation and achievement.

As mentioned, the participants' responses in this study strongly agree that despite their challenges, they can still find ways to cope with the challenges they have experienced. It agrees with the coping theory introduced by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) based on a person's physical and behavioral approach to managing stressful events in life.

Implications of the Study

Krashen's Natural Order Hypothesis (1982) is employed as one of the study's theoretical frameworks. Krashen's theory, the Natural Order Hypothesis, assumes that children learn their first language to acquire grammatical structures in the natural order, some being acquired earlier than others.

In the classroom, teachers should be aware that the sequence of teaching English and grammar, for example, may be internalized differently by all students since they have a natural order in acquiring information, which occurs when they are ready. However, this does not imply that the syllabus should be taught in predetermined grammar order. The most excellent technique to teach language acquisition is to provide comprehensible input and meaningful exposure to the second language. As a result, learners can recognize and assimilate language structures based on context.

When English teachers deliberately prepare, manage and respond to students' responses considering the variety of the students and their natural way of learning. Teachers are

challenged, considering that the students have a natural way of understanding and acquiring knowledge. English teachers have challenges in promoting quality education, *like lack of resources: books and materials, difficulty in providing the lesson contents to the students, and difficulty in designing students' tasks suited to the student's cognition level*. Regarding their challenges in teaching English, teachers have their coping strategies.

In connection to the English teachers coping strategies, the coping theory by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) was also employed as the study's theoretical framework. Lazarus and Folkman's theories are based on a person's physical and behavioral approach to managing stressful events in life. Teachers have their coping strategies, like *using practical examples and providing simple explanations to the students, being flexible and facilitative in teaching English, engaging in seminars and workshops, using technology in teaching, having an optimistic mindset for teaching English, and keeping the passion for the teaching.*

English educators in the 21st century are facing a myriad of issues. Some of the complex problems in the field of English education included the availability of appropriate textbooks and classroom resources; the preparation and training of English teachers (including both pre-service training and in-service professional development); the need to meet the standard and prepare students for standardized examinations; and the dramatically increasing use of the internet as a source of information (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007).

Moreover, academic stakeholders must show their support in providing quality education.

CONCLUSION

This study reveals that Krashen's theory of Natural Order Hypothesis (1982) is significant in this study. It shows that teachers should be aware that students have their natural way of acquiring information, which occurs when they are ready. Also, when English teachers promote a positive and meaningful learning outcome for the students, desirable challenges significantly affect their teaching process, especially in the New Normal. This include lack of resources: books and materials to be used, Difficulty in delivering the lesson contents to the students, and Difficulty designing students' tasks suited to the students' cognition level. However, English teachers able to cope with the challenges they have encountered in teaching English subjects.

The Lazarus and Folkman's coping theory (19840 based on a person's physical and behavioural approach in managing stressful events in life. It shows that English teachers still able to manage and cope with their challenges by having an optimistic mind set in teaching English—using practical examples and providing simple explanations to the students, being flexible and facilitative in teaching English, being

updated with teaching English trends: Engaging in seminars and workshops, using technology in teaching, keeping the passion for teaching burning, and ensuring lesson objectives. School authorities should continue to provide teachers with an opportunity for professional development.

Because there has been an increase in the range of knowledge required for English teaching that cannot be mastered by any one teacher, and the fact that there is diversity in the ways that students learn, which demand English teachers to show continual adaptation, it is necessary that in the preparation of English teachers, they are equipped with research and also collaboration skills so that they learn from each other (Hammond, 2006).

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