

TEACHERS' LIVED EXPERIENCES IN EDUCATING INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

The study entitled "Teachers' Lived Experiences in Educating Indigenous Students" focus on the teaching experiences, challenges, and coping strategies that impact English language teacher in Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) settings. Data was collected via in-depth interviews with selected IPEd teachers, employing a qualitative study design, and analyzed through thematic analysis. The results showed themes that helped understand the pros and cons of teaching English in a way that is sensitive to other cultures. Two main themes came up for SOP 1: Assessment of Strategies, which included using performance tasks, reflective feedback, and experiential learning; and Teaching Strategies Used, which included context-based learning, differentiated instruction, culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy (CLRP), and communicative-constructivist approaches. SOP 2 identified four main problems that teachers had: not enough help, language and cultural barriers, delays in cognitive development, and language barriers. SOP 3, on the other hand, focused on the ways that teachers cope, such as using their first language, working together to learn, making materials more relevant to their students, relying on expert-developed and structured resources, and getting strong support from the school and the community.

Keywords: *lived experiences, Indigenous Students, IPEd teachers, teaching English*

INTRODUCTION

Indigenous learners face ongoing obstacles to equal learning opportunities, making Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) a major global concern (UNESCO, 2019). They continue to face high dropout rates, poor academic performance, and restricted access to culturally appropriate curriculum in a variety of settings. Deeply rooted injustices and the marginalization of indigenous knowledge in mainstream educational systems are frequently the causes of these difficulties faced by IPED students. The researcher acknowledges that in order to address these problems, educational strategies based on community involvement and cultural awareness are needed. This is further supported by research showing that culturally sensitive and community-based teaching

methods can improve student motivation and academic performance (UNESCO, 2019). Therefore, the researcher emphasizes the necessity of investigating efficient teaching methods that incorporate indigenous viewpoints and encourage academic achievement among Indigenous students in a variety of educational contexts.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution, which protects and preserves the rights of Indigenous Peoples and their ancestral lands, serves as the foundation for Indigenous education in the Philippines (Philippines, 1987). The Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Policy Framework, which offers thorough instructions for putting into practice IPEd programs that are community-based and culturally sensitive, was introduced by the Department of Education in order to formalize this constitutional requirement. The Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997 (Republic Act No. 8371) and the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (Republic Act No. 10533) provide the legal basis for this framework. The researcher recognizes that these legal foundations work together to guarantee the meaningful integration of Indigenous knowledge systems, educational methodologies, and cultural identities within the nation's foundational formal education system.

In her experience as an IPEd teacher, the researcher saw firsthand how educators included traditional food and cultural customs into their courses, which is a direct reflection of the Department of Education's goals for IPEd. In order to implement DepEd Order No. 62, s. The Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework was created by the Department of Education (DepEd) in 2011 to direct the execution of IPEd initiatives nationwide. The significance of community-based, culturally sensitive education that honors students' cultural heritage and local knowledge is emphasized in this IPEd education policy framework. Approximately 8.9 million students identify as Indigenous Peoples, with the majority residing in Mindanao, the Cordillera Administrative Region, and Caraga, according to DepEd's 2019 data. This figure demonstrates that in order for education to be genuinely inclusive, it must acknowledge both linguistic diversity and the close relationship between knowledge and ancestry. According to a study, Indigenous students still encounter difficulties in their education, such as low academic achievement and high dropout rates (Molina & Tadeo, 2019). Since English is a secondary language for the 96 "Dumagat Remontados" students enrolled in Canumay National High School in Antipolo City, Province of Rizal, the English language course is very difficult for them.

As a teacher watching English lessons at Canumay National High School, the author saw that some Indigenous students were reluctant to use English, not because they didn't understand, but rather because they were afraid of being misinterpreted or scrutinized. At this point, the researcher and teacher recognized the close connection between language acquisition and identity, culture, and confidence. This insight led to the need to investigate efficient teaching methods that can actually raise Indigenous students' English language competency. Therefore, the goal of this study is to find and evaluate strategies that respect students' cultural heritage while simultaneously improving academic performance. By doing this, the study intends to support ongoing enhancements to community-based, culturally sensitive IPEd programs that are infused with the real-life experiences of Indigenous students in the Philippines and may even serve as examples for comparable situations in other countries.

Background of the Study

The researcher was profoundly affected by how the cultural identity of Indigenous students in the Philippines influences their educational experiences. The National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP, 2019) estimates that there are between 14 and 17 million Indigenous Peoples (IPs) in the country, representing over 110 ethnolinguistic groups. From the Manobos and Lumads in Mindanao to the Ifugaos in the Cordilleras, their vast and rich cultural diversity is a source of pride, but it also presents unique educational obstacles. All things considered, a lot of IP students still struggle to get a good education that honors their customs and languages, frequently encountering structural obstacles that have an impact on their academic performance. These difficulties are not just intellectual in nature, as can be seen in local schools; they are a reflection of larger problems with representation, inclusiveness, and cultural sensitivity in the Philippine educational system.

According to the researcher's own attendance record of her Indigenous students, attendance progressively decreased during the academic year, particularly during the planting and harvest seasons. The statistics support this finding, which is alarming. According to the Department of Education (DepEd, 2019), 84.4% of non-Indigenous students in the Philippines completed high school, but only roughly 59.1% of Indigenous students did the same. In addition to reflecting academic difference, this large high school graduation percentage discrepancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students also shows deeper socio-cultural disadvantages that still impact Indigenous learners and communities. In order to provide the best research-based answer to the current problems, it is necessary to comprehend why IPED students are dropping out of school and how culturally responsive tactics can help them stay, prosper, and feel valued within the educational system.

The researcher-educator, who taught English in Antipolo's upland settlements, saw numerous Dumagat students who had to trek for hours to get to school. Although their experiences highlight a greater issue that many Indigenous communities face, their unmatched sacrifices to pursue more education impressed out. According to the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP, 2019), there are 110 recognized Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines, including the 30,000 Dumagat. They continue to be among the most disenfranchised, having little access to fundamental social services like schooling (UNDP, 2018). Furthermore, data from the Department of Education (2019) showed that just 51.2% of Indigenous students in the CALABARZON region—where many Dumagat settlements reside—complete basic education, which is significantly lower than the 74.6% national average. These figures highlight a pressing need for educational initiatives that adequately address the language, culture, everyday reality, and educational obstacles faced by the Dumagat and other Indigenous students nationwide. About 96 indigenous students, primarily from the Dumagat-remontados communities, are enrolled at Canumay National High School. Because of language obstacles and cultural dissonance, many students struggle in the English language course.

The researcher created this study to investigate useful and efficient teaching techniques that can enhance the English language competency of Indigenous students at Canumay National High School in response to these urgent issues. By establishing methods that respect their cultural identity and improve their English communication

abilities, this seeks to close that gap. The ultimate goal of this research is to support the continued creation of community-based, culturally sensitive IPED programs that can improve Indigenous students' academic performance; thus, the gap of this study.

Theoretical Framework

This study is based on two key hypotheses that describe and explain effective teaching approaches for IPED students and serve as the basis for this research. The first theory is **Stephen Krashen's Theory of Second Language Acquisition (2019)**, and the second is **Sociocultural Theory (2020)**. The Acquisition-Learning distinction is the most important aspect of Krashen's five hypotheses. It is also one of the most well-known and helpful ideas among linguists and language teachers. It is the main basis for understanding how language acquisition works. According to Krashen, learning a new language involves two distinct systems: the learnt system and the acquired system. A common term for the acquired system is acquisition, which initially originates from a subconscious process and is comparable to how children instinctively pick up their first language. It begins with prioritizing natural communication and engaging in meaningful interaction in the target language. At this point, learners are more focused on the communication's principal message, meaning, aims, and objectives than they are on the grammar or rules of what they are relating.

According to Krashen, the "learned system" or "learning" occurs through formal instruction and consists of intentional stages or procedures where learners intentionally learned language proficiency, such as comprehending sentence patterns and grammatical rules. Because of this, learning is usually promoted via a logical, teacher-centered method. On the other hand, a student-centered, inductive method encourages acquisition, which is more instinctive and natural.

Krashen stressed that acquisition, rather than conscious learning, is crucial to achieving true language mastery. The Information Processing Theory (IPT), which supports this viewpoint, explains that language acquisition is a continuous series of cognitive processes that transform input—also known as language exposure—from one's surroundings into intake, or mental images or representations in the learner's mind. Factors like memory, focus or attention, and the learner's current level of language proficiency all have a significant impact on this step or process.

This study focuses on IPT and emphasizes the significance of delivering intelligible input that corresponds with the learners' cognitive preparedness and skill level. Effective teaching methods should take into account the linguistic background and learning readiness, level, or capacity of IPED students in order to give them with relevant and meaningful language experiences.

Second, combining the Sociocultural Theory by Lev Vygotsky, this theory and the Information Processing Theory (IPT), both propose that in order to develop effective teaching strategies for improving IPED learners' English language competency, all stakeholders must acknowledge the learners' distinct cultural and linguistic backgrounds. It emphasized the need to deliver intelligible information through experiences that foster interpersonal communication and group learning. Additionally, students are given the chance to interact with the language in ways that are relevant to their culture. In order to create instructional approaches that are sensitive to the unique needs and contexts of IPED students at Canumay National High School and that other educational institutions

with comparable backgrounds can utilize, this research will meaningfully integrate and modify the guiding principles of three theoretical models, including SCT, IPT, and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP).

The study has also considered a number of other interconnected factors, such as the cultural backgrounds of the students, the general learning environment, and how well teaching strategies provide a meaningful language acquisition. It also emphasizes the necessity of intelligible input in fostering linguistic proficiency. Additionally, in addition to the more general socio-cultural dynamics in the classroom, cognitive traits such as working memory capacity, attention span, and individual learning variations were examined. All of these factors combined to offer a thorough grasp of the intricate relationships that exist between pedagogy, learner variety, and language development in IPED students.

The overall goal of this study is to investigate how teaching methods affect IPED learners' English language competency while taking into account the difficulties they encounter and potential influencing factors.

Conceptual Framework

The figure below shows the conceptual framework of this study.

Teacher of Indigenous Students

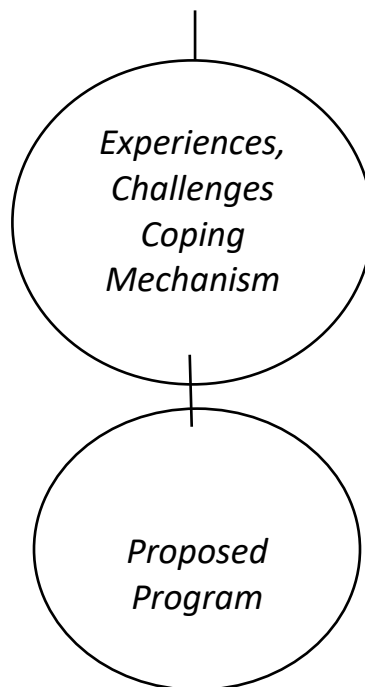


Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework

The figure above shows the teachers lived experiences in educating Indigenous students as the foundation for understanding the interconnected elements of their professional realities. These experiences reveal the cultural, instructional, and relational dimensions of teaching that are often shaped by challenges such as communication barriers, limited culturally relevant resources, and inadequate institutional support. As teachers navigate these challenges, they employ coping mechanisms that include adapting their teaching methods, seeking guidance from colleagues or community elders, engaging in self-directed learning, and building stronger relationships with students and their families. Together, these experiences, challenges, and coping strategies provide the basis for designing a proposed program that aims to enhance teachers' cultural competence, provide targeted support, and promote more inclusive and effective learning environments for Indigenous students.

Research Questions

The disparity between Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED) and non-IPED students in Antipolo City is still noticeable despite the Department of Education's and City Division Schools of Antipolo's ongoing attempts to raise the English language competency of IPED students. This study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What experience do the teachers have in instructing students with IPED?
2. What are the challenges encountered by teachers in teaching IPED students?
3. What coping mechanisms do the teacher employ when instructing English to IPED students?
4. What program can be proposed based on the findings of the study?

Scope and Delimitation

With special attention to the Dumagat-Remontado community, this study aims to find effective teaching practices that can improve the English language competency of Indigenous Peoples (IP) learners in a chosen IPED-implementing school. The study focused on the English subject area, which has been identified as a domain of difficulty for IP learners in the school, and was conducted over the 2023–2024 academic year. This goal is to comprehend how language training for students from Indigenous backgrounds may be made more inclusive, useful, and culturally grounded.

The study used a qualitative research design to accomplish this. Teachers who work directly with IPED students participated in focus groups (FGDs) and in-depth interviews with the researcher. Additionally, case studies and best practices on teaching English to Indigenous learners locally and internationally will be collected from the body of current literature. These observations will form the foundation for determining flexible tactics appropriate for the particular setting of schools implementing IPED.

It's crucial to acknowledge that there are some restrictions, though. First, Canumay National High School is the sole IPED-implementing school where the study was carried out, thus the results could not accurately reflect the experiences of educators and students in other IPED contexts in the Philippines or elsewhere. Second, the study just looked at English language instruction; it might not look at other educational obstacles that Indigenous students encounter in a variety of subject areas. Finally, because the results was mostly based on participants' self-reported experiences, replies may be

impacted by personal perspectives and biases, which is typical of many qualitative investigations.

Definitions of Terms

The following terms are operationally defined for better understanding of this study:

Academic Advancement. This refers to ongoing process of gaining the knowledge, abilities, and competences that result in better academic performance and greater levels of educational attainment is referred to as. The cognitive and affective development of Indigenous learners, particularly in the context of learning English, is the focus of this study.

Challenges Faced by IPED Learners in Learning English. These refer to obstacles and challenges that Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED) learners encounter when learning English. These include linguistic and cultural mismatches that impact understanding and expression, insufficient institutional or instructional support, affective issues including low motivation or self-confidence, and difficulty accessing relevant learning materials and resources.

Cognitive Processes in Language Learning. These refer to the internal mental processes that take place during the acquisition and use of a second language. These processes include perception, memory, attention, and problem-solving. IPED learners' interpretation, retention, and application of newly acquired language are influenced by these cognitive processes. Through meaningful learning experiences, Indigenous learners in this study make sense of English material and progressively improve their language skills. This may be understood by looking at the cognitive processes that underlie their learning.

Comprehensible Input. This refers to language input that is both understandable and meaningful in teaching IPED learners to naturally learn and strengthen their English language skills. This may involve the use of visual aids , simplified vocabulary, gestures, contextual cues and real-life examples, that help bridge linguistic gaps. Within the IPED context, it is adapting English instruction that aligns with learners' cultural background, prior knowledge, and lived experiences.

Dumagat-Remontados. These refer to children of intermarriages between the Dumagat people and other lowland ethnic groups, many of whom originated in Aklan and other Visayan regions. For this study, this group represents a unique and distinct blend of indigenous and lowland cultural traits, which influence their use of language, traditions, and learning language.

Effective Teaching Strategies. These refer to the procedures that educators use to help students learn, including approaches, techniques, and methods that help students grasp concepts and meet learning objectives. According to the study, addressing gaps in English language acquisition requires customized approaches due to learners' varied needs, learning preferences, and cultural backgrounds.

Effectiveness of Teaching Strategies. This refers to the degree to which teachers' methods, approaches, and strategies improved the motivation, classroom participation, and English language proficiency of IPED students. Effectiveness can be evaluated and measured through the use of performance evaluations, standardized test results, learner feedback obtained through surveys, and classroom observations.

Inadequate Support for the Unique Learning Needs of IPED Learners. This refers to the inadequate and inappropriate educational programs, interventions, and services that are provided to IPED pupils in order to meet their general learning needs. These interventions ought to have included academic support, socioemotional counseling, and specialized language help. When such requirements are not sufficiently met, it can result in decreased motivation and confidence among indigenous students, which is linked to worse academic performance and higher dropout rates.

Indigenous Learners. These refer to learners who originated from native cultural or ethnic communities within a specific region or nation are known as. Their unique worldviews, languages, customs, and cultures frequently influence how they learn in the classroom.

Indigenous Learners. These refer to learners within a particular region or country, who are originally from native cultural or ethnic communities. They possessed distinct traditions, languages, culture and worldviews that often dictates their learning behavior in the classroom setting.

IPED. This is a program of DepEd response to the right of indigenous communities and indigenous learners to an education that is responsive to their context. It respects their identities, and it values and promotes their knowledge systems, and their competencies, and the values that are important to them, and of course, the other parts of their heritage.

Language Proficiency. This refers to the capacity to which an individual can effectively use a language in different contexts. This includes competency in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and comprehension. Those competencies can be evaluated through standardized tests or other language assessments.

Learning Environment. This refers to the entirety of the context in which language acquisition takes place; it may include social, emotional, and physical elements that influence learning. It encompasses everything that affects how well pupils pick up language. For instance, elements include peer interactions, teaching methods, classroom organization, and the accessibility of resources and learning materials.

Limited Access to Quality Education. This refers to limitation that may stem from issues such as inadequate funding, large class sizes, shortage of well-trained teachers, and the scarcity of instructional materials or technological tools. For instance, the insufficient educational resources, facilities, and opportunities that restrict IPED learners from receiving an equitable and high-quality English language education.

Social Advancement. This refers to a social situation where the development of interpersonal skills and social competencies allow individuals to involve oneself meaningfully and confidently in various social settings such as learning in a school, establishing and maintaining relationships.

Socio-cultural Context of Learning. This refers to the interactions of IPED learners with teachers, classmates, and the wider community. Furthermore, it refers to the cultural and social environment that shapes how IPED learners acquire and use language. For instance, the influence of shared beliefs, traditions, and values in learning English language. More specifically, elements such as cultural practices, social expectations, and attitudes toward language learning interacts in various setting in shaping learners' engagement and success.

The Dumagats. These refer to Indigenous People mostly found in the provinces of Bulacan, Quezon, and Rizal. They are well-known for their hunting and gathering methods, strong physical and spiritual ties to the natural world, and in-depth familiarity with natural resources and medicinal herbs. But in this study, they are the ones found in Rizal.

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METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design, following the principles as explained by Creswell (2012), rationalizing those human experiences, perceptions, and beliefs cannot always be meaningfully deduce from numerical data. Instead, qualitative research seeks to explore and interpret the deeper meanings that individuals or groups assign to social and educational realities.

Through a qualitative approach, the study seeks to gain a richer insight into how 9 English teachers experience, perceive, and implement teaching strategies to meet the unique learning needs of 96 IPED learners at Canumay National High School. This qualitative approach is particularly suited for the conduct of this research.

Specifically, a qualitative descriptive design was used to examine how teachers plan, implement, and assessed different strategies in teaching English. It also seeks to document the depth and meaning of their personal experiences and draw a detailed image of how they approach instruction, focusing the practices and methods that most effectively support English language learning.

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews (See appendices) to participants with 4 questions for experiences of teacher in applying teaching strategies, 3 questions for current challenges and 3 questions for coping teaching strategies to collect qualitative data. The said interviews provided both structure and flexibility in exploring in depth the participants' perspectives. The qualitative responses were subjected to thematic analysis, which help the researcher identify recurring patterns, central themes, and effective instructional methodologies and strategies extracted from the teachers' experiences within the school setting.

Through this design, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the teaching strategies that effectively enhance English proficiency among IPED learners. The findings are expected to inform and improve English instruction practices at **Canumay National High School**, and potentially, in similar educational contexts.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at Canumay National High School, a selected IPED-implementing public school situated in Sitio San Ysiro, Barangay San Jose, Antipolo City, Philippines. The school is governed by the Department of Education and offers both junior and senior high school programs to learners from nearby "*purok*" at Sitio San Ysiro. The school mirrors the conditions and challenges typical of many rural public schools in the country, with a population of 1,500 students and a teacher-student ratio of 1:40.

The selection of this IPED-implementing school was chosen due to its significant population of IPED learners. It was decided that it is an appropriate setting for examining the effectiveness of different teaching strategies tailored to this group. Finally, the school's accessibility can also facilitate efficient and quick data collection for the study.

Antipolo City, the capital of Rizal Province in the Calabarzon region, hosts a mix of public and private educational institutions, including colleges and universities. Its proximity to Metro Manila makes it an attractive location for families seeking a peaceful environment while retaining access to the capital's resources and opportunities.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, it is important to pilot test a representative sample population by involving the experts feedback for content validity then administering the questionnaire to small group of intended respondents to check the consistency and accuracy of the result.

The study uses suitable research design, data collection, and analytic techniques to guarantee the validity and reliability of the findings. Selecting schools in Antipolo City that offers IPED is a targeted setting for analyzing English language instruction, enabling the results to provide insights that might be applicable to similar schools that are having trouble raising students' academic achievement and English proficiency.

The following page shows the vicinity map of the study.

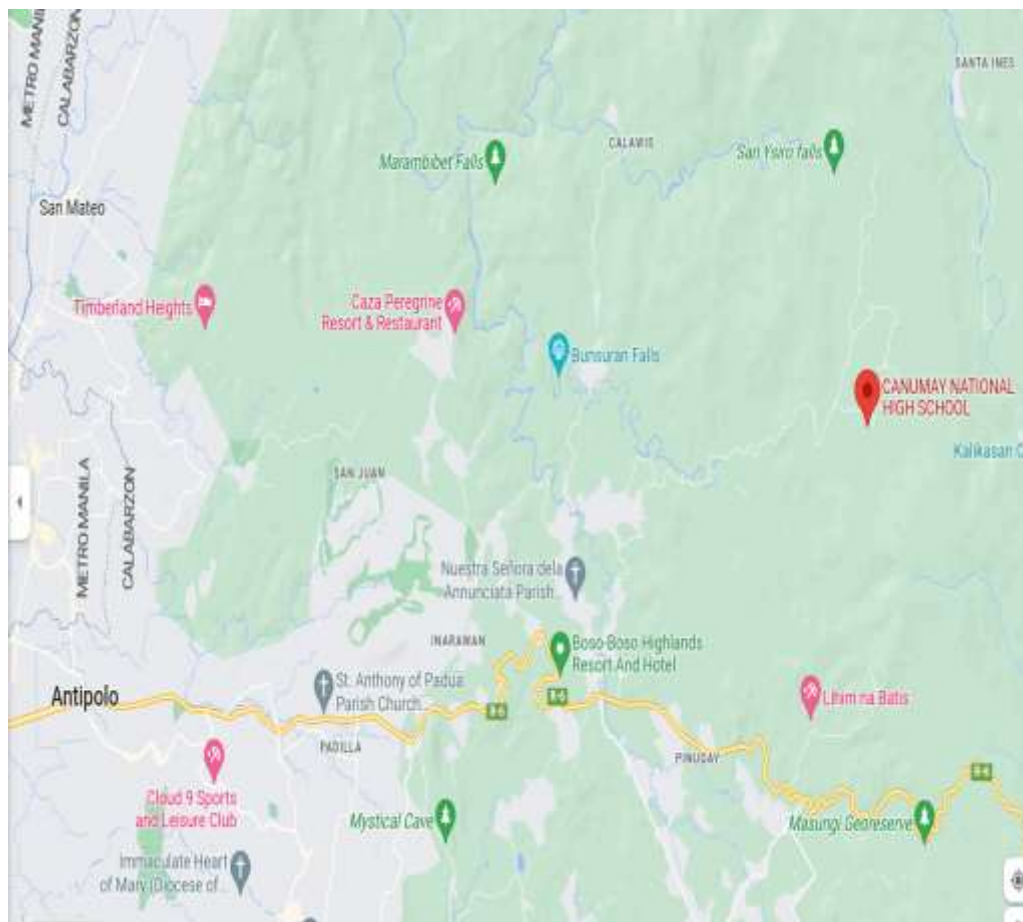


Figure 2. Vicinity Map

Participants of the Study

The study engaged a total of nine (9) participants, 2 males and 7 females from the selected IPED-implementing school in Antipolo City, Philippines. All nine (9) participants were Indigenous People Education (IPED) program English teachers who were parts of both the Junior and Senior High School levels. English teachers received an email invitation detailing the study and were also asked to sign a consent form prior to participation. All participants were assured of confidentiality, and their involvement in the study will be entirely voluntary.

Research Instrument

A researcher-made interview questionnaire served as one of the primary data-gathering instruments to determine the perceptions of respondents in line with the effective teaching strategies for English at CNHS and to design appropriate program addressing identified gaps and challenges.

The instrument was divided into three parts: **Part I** focused on identifying the experiences of teachers handling IPED learners; **Part II** captured data on the challenges encountered by respondents in teaching English; and **Part III** explored the coping strategies adopted by teachers in addressing these challenges.

In addition, **semi-structured interviews** were accomplished with English teachers to collect in-depth qualitative data on effective teaching strategies that improve English language proficiency among IPED learners. It aims to gather participants detailed personal insights, reflections, and classroom experiences through guided set of open-ended questions. To ensure accuracy and completeness of the data for subsequent thematic analysis, each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

To be sure it measured what it was intended to assess, the instrument used in this study underwent extensive validation. A small sample of participants tested the instrument to determine its reliability, and experts examined the items for relevance and clarity. Based on their feedback, minor adjustments were made. This procedure assisted in verifying that the device was suitable for the study.

Data Gathering Procedure

The study utilized a qualitative approach in collecting data so that a deeper understanding of the participants' experiences and perspectives is documented. Information was retrieved through semi-structured interviews.

A face-to-face or virtual interviews were conducted with IPED English teachers, depending on their availability and preference. With the consent of participants, all sessions were audio-recorded and transcribed to capture and document accurate data. The interview questions were open-ended, which encourage participants to share their insights and experiences about their teaching strategies and the broader context of English language teaching and learning.

The qualitative data compiled from interviews were investigated and scrutinized through **thematic analysis**, which help facilitate the identification of most common patterns and meaningful themes. Applying qualitative methods supported the study to examine the subject matter as a whole and helped draw clear interpretations of the teachers' lived experiences and instructional approaches (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Data Analysis

The data analysis for this study involved a phenomenological approach, beginning with thorough immersion in the collected data to understand the significance of fathers' experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms. This was followed by the systematic coding of transcripts to identify recurring themes, significant statements, and concepts related to physical aspects, mental well-being, emotional states, and social interactions. The next step was thematic analysis that involved grouping codes into coherent themes that reflected the experiences of fathers raising children with ASD. Member checking was then employed as a validation process, engaging participants to ensure the accuracy and credibility of the identified themes and interpretations, incorporating their feedback to refine and enhance the trustworthiness of the analysis and findings.

Finally, the interpretation and synthesis phase involved analyzing the identifying themes in relation to the research questions and objectives to gain deeper insights into fathers' experiences. Then, conclusions were based on the synthesized interpretation of the themes and provided recommendations for the development of support program.

Triangulation

Bhandari (2022) emphasized the value of triangulation in research as it involves the use of various data sources, methods, theoretical perspectives, and researchers to enhance validity, provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject, verify evidence, and minimize biases. Ensuring credibility in research requires solid data analysis, which is supported by investigator triangulation, a strategy that includes multiple investigators, interviewers, observers, and data analysts. Triangulation was crucial to prevent personal bias or influence based on their own experiences. Investigator triangulation specifically calls for the involvement of several observers to validate collected data. This study involved observing participant behavior, analyzing both in-person and audio-recorded data, and checking for inconsistencies to strengthen the study's findings (Bhandari, 2022). Following the interviews, the researcher consulted three (3) independent validators who reviewed the collected data. These validation meetings were conducted face-to-face, focusing on the study's objectives and ensuring the accuracy of the thematic analysis based on research questions, theoretical frameworks, transcripts, and identified themes. Based on the validators' collective feedback, the researcher made necessary revisions to uphold the study's validity and reliability.

Ethical Considerations

Because human subjects were used in this study, the researcher made sure that their rights, welfare, and dignity were always upheld. Important ethical guidelines, such as informed permission, non-invasive research techniques like classroom observations and voluntary interviews guaranteed little disruption and no risk to participants, confidentiality was preserved by anonymizing participants and limiting access to data. Based on the goals of the study, equitable participant selection was used to fairly represent all pertinent groups. The research was directed by the beneficence principle to minimize any possible harm and maximize benefits, such as bettering teaching methods for IPED students. To adhere to ethical and legal standards, institutional approval was

acquired from the school administration and pertinent authorities, and data protection was guaranteed through the safe storage of both electronic and physical records.

English teachers who chose to take part in the study will receive consent forms and be made aware that their involvement is completely voluntary to comply with informed consent norms. By replacing personal identifiers with codes to protect privacy, all participants will be guaranteed that their identities will remain anonymous and private.

To reduce any possible pain or interference with participants' normal routines, the study uses non-threatening research techniques, such as interviews. Purposive sampling, a non-probability strategy that guarantees all actively teaching English classes are included and minimizes selection bias, is used to fairly pick participants.

The purpose of this study is to determine the experiences and difficulties that IPED students encounter when learning English, as well as to investigate efficient teaching methods. It is anticipated that the results will enhance English teaching and learning outcomes in public schools. All information gathered will be safely kept, treated with the utmost confidentiality, and disposed of properly after the study is over.

Finally, to reduce any possible pain or interference with participants' everyday schedules, the study uses non-invasive research techniques like questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations. Purposive sampling, a non-probability technique that guarantees only those currently enrolled in the IPED program and taking English classes are included, reduces selection bias and ensures that participants are fairly chosen. The purpose of this study is to determine the difficulties IPED learners encounter when learning English and investigate efficient teaching methods. It is anticipated that the results will enhance English teaching and learning outcomes in public schools. All information gathered will be safely kept, treated with the utmost confidentiality, and disposed of properly after the study is over.

Lastly, to reduce any possible pain or interference with participants' everyday schedules, the study uses non-invasive research techniques like surveys, interviews, and classroom observations. Purposive sampling, a non-probability method that guarantees only individuals now enrolled in the IPED program and attending English classes are included, helps to minimize selection bias by ensuring that participants are chosen equitably.

The purpose of this study is to determine the difficulties IPED students encounter when learning English and investigate efficient teaching methods. It is anticipated that the results will enhance English teaching and learning outcomes in public schools. All information gathered will be safely kept, treated with the utmost confidentiality, and disposed of properly after the study is over.

Lastly, without the consent and oversight of the appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB) or ethical committee, the study would not be carried out. This guarantees that all research endeavors adhere to established ethical norms. Thus, the study prioritizes participant wellbeing while maintaining the validity and integrity of its findings by adhering to these ethical criteria.

Demographics of the Participants

The participants were identified using the alphanumeric code, T1 through T9. The complete transcript was compiled and included in the appendices.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Participant No.	Age	Gender	Years of Teaching English to IPED Learners	Number of IPED Learners Handled
R1	34	Male	8 years	30–34
R2	33	Female	13 years	40-45
R3	27	Female	1 year	20
R4	27	Female	6 years	20
R5	35	Male	6 years	15-20
R6	36	Female	11 years	40–50
R7	40	Female	11 years	30
R8	28	Female	6 years	24
R9	46	Female	17 years	45

The respondents of the study consist of nine teachers who have been teaching English to Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED) learners.

1. R1, 34 years old, a male teacher and has been teaching for eight years He handled 30 to 34 IPED learners.

2. R2, aged 33, has been teaching for 13 years with 40 to 45 learners, employing contextualization of lessons by relating them to learners' culture, traditions, and daily experiences.

3. R3, 27 years old, has one year of experience teaching 20 IPED learners and relates her topics to the learners' everyday life.

4. R4, 27 years old has six years of experience and teaches 20 IPED learners using culturally relevant lessons that connect to their traditions and experiences.

5. R5, 35 years old with six years of teaching experience, handles 15 to 20 IPED learners and utilizes the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach by incorporating videos, visuals, and text.

6. R6, 36 years old with 11 years of teaching experience and 40 to 50 IPED learners, contextualizes learning materials to reflect indigenous practices such as farming and planting.

7. R7, aged 40, also with 11 years of experience teaching 30 learners, integrates lessons with indigenous culture through the use of indigenous materials.

8. R8, 28 years old with six years of experience and 24 IPED learners, incorporates games as a teaching strategy.

9. R9, 46, a Teacher II under the Department of Education with 17 years of experience handling 45 IPED learners, applies differentiated instruction that allows learners to participate according to their abilities.

Table 2: Themes Generated from the Raw Data

Experiences	Challenges	Coping Strategies
Theme 1: Teaching Strategies Used Sub-theme 1: Context-based learning Sub-theme 2: Differentiated Instruction Sub-theme 3: Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy (CLRP) Sub-theme 4: Communicative and Constructivist Pedagogy Theme 2: Assessment of Strategies Sub-theme 1: Performance Task Sub-theme 2: Reflective Feedback Sub-theme 3: Experiential Learning	Theme 1: Language Barrier Sub-theme 1: Limited Exposure Sub-theme 2: Lack of Instructional Materials Sub-theme 3: Emotional Problem Theme 2: Delay in Cognitive Development Theme 3: Language and Cultural Gap Theme 4: Lack of Support	Theme 1: Localization of Teaching Materials Theme 2: Use of Mother-tongue Theme 3: Collaborative Learning Activities Theme 4: Expert-developed and Structured Instructional Materials Them 5: Institutional and Community Support

The table above shows the generated themes from the responses of the participants who are teachers of Indigenous Peoples (IP) learners in Antipolo. For SOP 1, experiences of the teachers, there were two themes generated, and they were Teaching Strategies Used with four sub-themes: Context-based learning, Differentiated Instruction, Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy (CLRP) and Communicative and Constructivist Pedagogy. The second theme was Assessment of Strategies with the sub-themes: Performance Task, Reflective Feedback and Experiential Learning.

For SOP 2, Challenges, there were four main themes generated, and the first theme was Language Barrier with the sub-themes Limited Exposure, Lack of Instructional Materials and Emotional Problem. The second main theme was Delay in Cognitive Development followed by Language and Cultural Gap and lastly Lack of Support.

For Research Question 3, Coping Strategies, there were five themes generated. First, was Localization of Teaching Materials, Use of Mother-tongue, Collaborative Learning Activities, Expert-developed and Structured Instructional Materials and Institutional and Community Support.

Proposed Professional Development Program

Table 3. Culturally Responsive English Teaching Program (CRETP): Integrating Effective Teaching Strategies for IPED Learners

Name of Program	Objectives	Mechanics of Implementation (Activities)	Resources	Time Frame
Culturally Responsive English Teaching Program (CRETP)	Integrate Effective Teaching Strategies • Strengthen teachers' capacity to apply identified effective strategies—contextualization, localization, reflection, performance-based learning, collaboration, and cultural integration—into classroom instruction.	Pre-Implementation Activities: • The school head sent a memo. • Committee formation. • Tribal elders and IPED resource persons are identified. • Setting up the venue and preparing localized materials.	Memo • Committee list • Projector/LED TV • Training materials • Venue setup	1 week before training
Day 1- Opening Program	Enhance Teacher Competence: • Equip teachers with culturally responsive and context-based English teaching strategies. • Train teachers to design localized,	Opening Program Opening prayer & national anthem • Welcome message • Orientation on objectives, guidelines, and program flow	• Sound system • Program flow • Participant checklist	Day 1 8:00–8:30 AM

Name of Program	Objectives	Mechanics of Implementation (Activities)	Resources	Time Frame
	experiential, and performance-based instructional materials. • Apply learner-centered approaches that promote engagement and confidence.			
Revisiting the IPED Framework	Expand knowledge about cultural diversity and IPED principles.	IPED philosophy, values, and indigenous worldviews are presented. • Led a conversation with the elder and IPED main person.	• LED TV/projector • Presentation slides	Day 1 8:30–10:00 AM
Cultural Mapping	Determine the language and cultural profiles of the students.	Listing the customs, languages, and learning methods of the learners; group cultural and linguistic mapping; and output consolidation	• Manila paper / charts • Markers • Data forms	Day 1 10:15–12:00 nn
Teachers' Lived Experiences	Reflect on the classroom challenges and strategies or method used.	Sharing in reflection circles; recognizing contextualized tactics; and documenting successful practices collectively	• Reflection sheets • Facilitator guide	Day 1 1:00–2:30 pm

Name of Program	Objectives	Mechanics of Implementation (Activities)	Resources	Time Frame
Learning from Elders	Learn how to teach English by drawing on indigenous wisdom.	Elder storytelling session; discussion on conventional methods of communication and learning; Teachers keep reflection journals.	• Cultural artifacts • Journals • Microphone	Day 1 2:45–4:30 PM
Day 2 – Contextualization Workshop	Use contextualization when teaching English.	A talk and demonstration about connecting lessons to local experiences • Mini-task: Make an outline for a contextualized English lesson	• Sample lessons • Handouts • Laptop/projector	Day 2 8:00–9:00 am
Localized Material Development	Make educational resources with a cultural foundation.	Workshop adapting songs and stories from the area • Collaboration between teachers and elders • Result: An illustration of a localized lesson	• Local stories & texts • Art supplies • Printing materials	Day 2 9:15–11:45 am
Performance-Based Strategies	Encourage participation with hands-on activities.	Display of cultural games, storytelling, and dramatization • Teachers create assignments that	• Costumes/props (optional) • Activity guides	Day 2 1:00–2:30 pm

Name of Program	Objectives	Mechanics of Implementation (Activities)	Resources	Time Frame
		are performance-based.		
Peer Review Workshop	Improve results by working together.	Lesson plan review and critique; peer mentorship sessions; and output revision	• Evaluation rubric • Printed outputs	Day 2 2:45–4:30 PM
Day 3 – Interactive & Learner-Centered Approaches	Use engaging and anxiety-reducing strategies.	Activities for cooperative learning, language games, and paired conversation	• Game materials • Handouts	Day 3 8:00–9:00 am
Reflective Teaching Practices	Develop more introspective behaviors for ongoing development.	Journaling under guidance; exchanging thoughts; and synthesizing thoughtful themes	• Journals • Reflection prompts	Day 3 9:15–11:00 am
Teacher Wellness Session	Encourage teachers to maintain emotional equilibrium and resilience.	Gratitude circles, mindfulness exercises, and personal wellness planning	• Music/audio • Wellness guide	Day 3 11:00 am–12:00 nn
Action Planning	Create workable ideas for classroom integration.	Development of a classroom action plan; • Workshop on incorporating methods into regular instruction	• Templates • Action plan forms	Day 3 1:00–2:30 pm

Name of Program	Objectives	Mechanics of Implementation (Activities)	Resources	Time Frame
Closing Program & Evaluation	Conclude the training and get input.	• Completion of evaluation tools • Awarding of certificates • Elder's closing message	• Certificates • Evaluation forms	Day 3 2:45–4:00 pm
Post-Implementation	Assure integration and ongoing assistance.	IPED focal person and elder mentoring; classroom observation; and sharing best practices in learning circles	• Monitoring tools • Mentoring guide	1–3 months after training

DISCUSSION

Research Question 1: What are the Experiences of the Teachers Teaching IPED Learners?

Theme 1: Teaching Strategies Used

According to the results, teachers of Indigenous People Education (IPED) students in Antipolo use a variety of culturally sensitive and contextualized teaching techniques to help them become more fluent in English. Most teachers affirm the importance of using diverse teaching strategies to address the linguistic and cultural differences among their learners. Through integrating community traditions, stories, and everyday practices into classroom discussions, teachers can make their lessons more meaningful and relatable to their IPED learners. Teachers mostly rely on mother tongue-based instruction to facilitate understanding English lesson and help learners fully grasp new concepts before shifting completely to English. In addition, they also use engaging and interactive activities such as games, songs, rhymes, and storytelling to get and sustain students' interest so that learning experience becomes more enjoyable.

Furthermore, teachers integrate communicative and participatory approaches in their lessons, which may include activities like role-playing, group projects, and practical applications of English. These pedagogies improve learners' vocabulary, confidence, interest and promote dynamic engagement and meaningful application of language. By using localized reading materials, bilingual storybooks, and visual aids assist learners in

comprehension and retention of their lesson. Thus, teachers deliberate effort to make English instruction more inclusive and culturally responsive can address unique learning needs while honoring their linguistic roots and cultural identity.

Sub-theme 1: Context-Based Learning

In Antipolo, context-based learning has become an important part of teaching English to students under the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED) program. Teachers, for example, design lessons that connect English concepts with what learners already know from their culture, community, and daily life. They often use local stories, customs, and livelihood activities as examples to make lessons more relatable. Through this approach, learners find it easier to understand new words and ideas while also valuing their own heritage.

Teachers explained that this approach helps them adjust lessons according to their learners' backgrounds and language levels. Activities like storytelling, role-playing community events, or discussing traditional practices in English help fill the gap between real-life experiences and classroom learning. In this way, learners improve their communication skills while staying rooted in their culture.

Therefore, context-based learning makes English instruction more inclusive and culturally meaningful. It builds learners' language skills and strengthens their identity as members of the indigenous community.

The following IPED English teachers highlighted the importance of context-based learning in their classrooms:

R2: *"In our school the teaching strategies that we used are the Contextualized and Culture-Based Instruction – Lessons are connected to the learners' cultural practices, local stories, and community life to make learning relevant ..."*

R5: *"Contextualized, culturally relevant instruction or integrate local materials. Example: storybooks, reading modules, illustrations..."*

The responses of the English teachers shows that the context-based learning is the center of their teaching practices. English lessons that integrate learners' cultural, linguistic backgrounds, and everyday experiences are considered more effective and meaningful. Teachers can help students engage in acquiring English proficiency by connecting instruction to familiar environments, customs, and community life. Through context-based learning IPED learners experience their lessons to be more relevant rather than abstract or disconnected from their world.

The findings of Samonte and Vizconde (2019) noted that indigenous learners often exhibit lack of interest and poor motivation in school compared to non-indigenous peers. The study pointed out that learners distinct expectations and priorities and cultural differences can influence students' attitudes toward learning. With these, there is a need for teachers to consider students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds when designing instruction, ensuring that lessons are both meaningful and supportive of positive attitudes toward education and language acquisition.

Sub-Theme 2: Differentiated Instruction

It appeared that one of the most important tool utilized by Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED) teachers differentiated English instruction is differentiated instruction. Teachers perceived it as very essential to adjust the way they deliver instruction based

on IP learners' language exposure, learning speed, literacy readiness, and cultural background. This provided students to learn at a level where they feel capable, supported, and respected. For the teachers, differentiation is not merely an instructional technique, it is also an act of cultural sensitivity and acceptance which ensure that every child can participate in learning without fear or shame.

Teachers revealed that there is intentional adaptation of their approaches so learners can acquire language skills at their own pacing. To help each learner experiencing difficulty many teachers group learners based on ability, while some use meaningful visual aids, manipulatives, or simplified explanations.

R3: "I adjust activities based on the capacity of my learners. Some need simpler tasks so they will not be left behind."

R6: "I group them according to their level so they can help each other. The fast learners support those who still need more guidance."

R2: "I use different ways of explaining because some children learn faster while others need more examples and illustrations."

The teachers' experiences mirrored Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and the concept of scaffolding. He explained that when teachers' instruction matches the learners' current level of understanding and gradually supports them toward more complex tasks, learners develop more effectively. The interview showed that teachers in the study naturally use these framework as they adjust tasks, reorganize groupings, and provide varying levels of support.

The responses of the participants affirmed that differentiation is a basic instructional necessity. The varied linguistic backgrounds, learning readiness, and inconsistent foundational skills of learners make common instructional mode unsuitable and therefore useless in the given context of IPED learners. Lessening the emotional strain many IP learners experience through differentiating tasks, teachers help them make English lessons less intimidating and more accessible.

Recent literature strengthens the claim of these findings. Tomlinson (2019) emphasized that differentiated instruction responds to individual differences in readiness and learning styles, thereby supporting equal opportunities in linguistically diverse classrooms. Similarly, Hall (2020) affirmed that where learners with multicultural contexts bring varied linguistic and cultural experiences, necessitates differentiation of instruction. In addition, another study found that differentiated tasks significantly improve engagement and reduce anxiety among learners who have limited exposure to English (Cardoso and Smith, 2021).

These studies reverberate the important premise of many IPED teachers shared with regards to differentiated instruction. Learners participate more confidently and meaningfully, when instruction is varied and responsive. Thus, differentiation is a culturally responsive act that respects and accommodates the unique identities and learning journeys of indigenous learners.

Sub-theme 3: Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy (CLRP)

Culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy (CLRP) commonly appeared in the teachers' qualitative responses as they characterized how they adapt their English lessons to the cultural identity and environment of their IPED learners. Teaching English is not simply a matter of introducing new vocabulary or grammatical structures. Teachers

agreed that it requires sensitivity to culture and language, and a deep respect for the community's values, practices, and ways of learning. For them, English becomes less foreign and more connected to the children's everyday world when they integrate familiar stories, local examples, and the learners' own experiences into the lesson.

Teachers shared their experiences on different steps of including culture and language into their lesson. They underscored the importance of using the mother tongue as a bridge, in explaining abstract ideas in English that they find it difficult to understand. Many bring in local and traditional stories and myths, practices, and familiar contexts when introducing reading passages or vocabulary.

R4: *"I include their culture in the lesson so they can relate better. When the examples reflect their daily life, they understand faster."*

R7: *"I explain first in their mother tongue so they can follow the lesson before shifting to English."*

R1: *"Using their stories and traditions makes them more active. They feel proud when they see their culture in the lesson."*

The teachers shared responses promoted the essence of Culturally Responsive Teaching Theory, which clarified the function of culture in influencing how students learn new knowledge and skills. Gay (2000) stressed that when instruction affirmed and include learners' cultural backgrounds, learning becomes more permanent and meaningful. Thus, CLRP becomes more essential in teaching because IPED students' learning process are often influenced by encountered incongruence of their indigenous identity and mainstream English instruction.

Consistently, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, pointed out the principle of learning as a social and cultural process. The use of the mother tongue, cultural stories, and familiar experiences serves as scaffolds that help learners move from what they already know to what they have yet to learn. As if by intuition, teachers in the study applied this principle by allowing learners to build new knowledge on top of their existing schema through grounding English lessons in indigenous culture.

Aligning lessons with the community's way of knowing, teachers helped learners feel seen, valued, and capable, thereby reducing anxiety and promoting confidence in English learning. Therefore, teachers confirmed that CLRP is an essential first aide strategy in classrooms where language exposure varies widely that becomes a threat on learning English effectively.

In a multicultural and indigenous background, recent studies raised the value of culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy. One research explained that the need to affirm learners' identities and fosters deeper engagement requires culturally responsive teaching (Ladson-Billings, 2018). Similarly, Hammond (2020) affirmed that learners who struggle with understanding unfamiliar content can be assisted by integrating cultural relevance in their lesson. This approach reduces cognitive load, allowing them to process information more effectively. Meanwhile, another research found that learners' participation, confidence, and academic performance significantly improve, when cultural and linguistic backgrounds are acknowledged in instruction (Kanno and Norton, 2019).

These findings mirror the teachers' experiences in this study, affirming that classroom engagement increases, comprehension improves, and English learning becomes more meaningful and less intimidating, when lessons recognize and honor the cultural world of the learners. In this contexts, CLRP is not only a strategy, but it also

becomes an essential bridge that links language learning with cultural identity and respect.

Theme 2: Assessment of Strategies

This theme explores how teachers assess the effectiveness of their strategies in teaching Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED) learners. For many of them, assessment is not simply about grades or numbers. It is a way of understanding how much learners have improved, how they apply what they have learned, and how they make sense of lessons in their daily lives. As one teacher put it, the goal is to see “how learning shows up in real situations, not just on paper.”

Teachers shared that they prefer to see assessment as an ongoing and holistic process. Instead of focusing solely on correctness, they pay close attention to effort, participation, and the learner’s ability to relate classroom lessons to cultural and community experiences. For instance, several teachers mentioned that when learners express their understanding through storytelling, projects, or role-playing, it reflects deeper learning than traditional tests could ever show.

In this light, evaluation becomes more than a measure of performance. It is now a reflection of learner’s growth and identity. The evaluation process encourages both teachers and learners to recognize learning as a living process, one that continues beyond the classroom. Based on the teachers’ accounts, three main sub-themes emerged that describe their assessment practices: Performance Task, Reflective Feedback, and Experiential Learning. Each sub-theme represents a unique way teachers gauge how effectively their teaching strategies foster understanding, engagement, and connection among their IPED learners.

Sub-theme 1: Performance Task

Teachers use performance-based tasks to assess how their learners understand their lessons in English. Their evaluation style is not focus solely on written exams but instead allow their students opportunities to express their understanding through activities like simulations of situations, storytelling, and speaking presentations. Instead of a mere recalling of what they heard from their teachers and classmates and read from textbooks or modules, learners exemplified what they have learned by applying it on a task they have to perform.

The following teachers shared their ideas on performance-based task:

R4: *“Performance tasks such as storytelling, dramatization, and role-playing are used to evaluate learners’ understanding because these activities allow them to express themselves using English.”*

R7: *“We assess them through presentations and performances that mirror real-life communication”*

R2: *“We base their grades on how they can apply what they learned in real situations.”*

All these elucidations align with Vygotsky’s (1978) sociocultural theory, which gives prime importance on social interaction in learning. Learners with the use of their own context, when they accomplish certain task such as dramatizations or presentations usually do it within their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which serve as a guide in applying what they have learned. Similarly, Krashen’s (2019) concept of comprehensible

input affirms this view, proposing that students learn language optimally when they apply it their own most authentic and meaningful context.

Similarly, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy point of view, exemplify these performance tasks as avenue for learners to express their own indigenous traditions of oral storytelling and community expression. The acceptance and acknowledgement of learner's culture and oral tradition through performance-based tasks affirm their own cultural ways of knowing while allowing teachers monitor and evaluate linguistic growth in a non-threatening and most familiar way.

Local research supports this practice. De Vera (2019) affirmed that by letting students show their understanding through application in real-life simulation through performance-based assessments, teachers could inspire unique learning. Morales and Reyes (2021) findings revealed that experience-based tasks sparks interest and improve proficiency in English because students can link learnings to their everyday life. In this light, Dela Cruz and Palomar (2021) approved that context-based assessments assist in strengthening confidence and motivation among IPED learners, by acknowledging their unique expression of their own creativity and cultural relevance more than their accuracy based on what was written on textbooks.

In short, performance tasks offer a socially and culturally aligned tool for teachers to evaluate IPED learners, helping them apply English in ways that matter to their everyday lives.

Sub-theme 2: Reflective Feedback

With assessment as part of the essential process of instruction, teachers choose to integrate reflection in measuring what they have learned. Instead of perceiving evaluation as subjective judgment of the teacher, they encourage learners to examine what they have learned and how this can be related to their experiences in their family and community. Some reflection activities used by teachers in teaching take different forms. For instance, classroom discussions using reflective guide questions, journals, or even creative expressions like drawing or storytelling. These activities act as internal lenses to help teachers magnify the internal dynamics of students with regards to what they have learn. In other words, it reflection provides a clearer picture on how they feel and think about what they are learning.

Here teacher explained different reflection activities they have used in the classroom:

R6: *"I ask my pupils what they learned and how they can apply it in real life. This helps me see if they understood the lesson and its purpose."*

R3: *"After every lesson, we let them share their realizations and connect it to their experiences."*

R8: *"Sometimes, I let them express through short talks or drawings what they felt during our lesson."*

The above-mentioned statements of teachers mirror a profound view of assessment as a mutual learning experience. It is when students become an active participant in their own learning process and not passive recipients of feedback. These reflective practices are parallel with Vygotsky's (1978) principle that learning occurs through exchanging of ideas with in social and cultural interaction. Through inspiring learners to communicate their realizations and insights, teachers can vividly picture their

understanding in a more internal and personal way. This is also tied to Krashen's (2019) theory which explained that improve language skills necessitates an insightful communication of learnings in a relax environment. If learners express themselves freely without fear of being judge and given reprimands for being wrong, they tend to use language naturally. This gained freedom of expression helps them internalize what they learn in a deeper and more lasting way.

In the view of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, reflective feedback recognizes the voice and experiences of each learner. It appreciates the knowledge that students bring from their everyday lives, making assessment not just a measure of performance but also an act of respect for their culture. In practice, this approach helps turn the classroom into a space of shared dialogue, where learning becomes a collaborative process rather than something simply handed down by the teacher.

Some studies point to the same thing. Flores (2020) mentioned that reflective assessment really helps make learning more inclusive because it looks at both the thinking and feeling sides of students. Delos Reyes (2021) also noted that when learners think about lessons in relation to their own experiences, it seems to help them understand better and remember more. Torres and Aquino (2022) pointed out that guided reflection can boost self-awareness and even strengthen critical thinking in indigenous learners. In this way, reflective feedback becomes more than a tool for evaluation. It turns into a bridge between knowledge and experience, helping IPED learners see the relevance of their education in their own lives.

Sub-theme 3: Experiential Learning

This sub-theme deals with teachers design learning activities wherein students are given avenues to use English in practical and daily experiences or situations. This aims to establish linkage between what they have learned in the classrooms and in the community. These is exemplified with what the teachers explained below:

R5: *"We involve learners in real-life tasks such as describing their surroundings or narrating their daily routines using English."*

R9: *"Learners apply English through community-based tasks like interviews and storytelling."*

R7: *"We assess through activities that are related to their everyday experiences, so they understand the lesson better."*

Learners are given realistic avenues by their teachers to apply English in ways that are meaningful to them. Teachers related that when learners share stories, talk about their daily home activities and interview people in their community, they are not only practicing English, but they are making meaningful connection to their own lives. This line of thought follows Vygotsky's findings, that learning occur through meaningful social experiences of the world around you. Culturally responsive pedagogies complementing this idea, discussed that these activities honors students' context. Through respecting their experiences and treating it as valuable, teachers help them strengthen their English proficiency. In some cases, teachers observed that learners seem to pick up vocabulary more naturally especially when it is related to common things they know and deeply care about.

Local studies strongly affirm this sub-theme and its connection to acquiring English proficiency. Samonte and Vizconde (2019) observed that experiential learning enhances

language proficiency and cultural appreciation among IPED learners. Another research added that task-and-community-based assessments can improve confidence of learners and make it more meaningful (De Vera, 2019). Similarly, Ball and McIvor (2019) affirmed that use of learners' cultural context help them engage and feel more self-assured. Altogether, these studies proposed that experiential learning does not just improve English proficiency but it also honor students' sense of cultural identity.

Research Question 2: What are the Challenges Encountered by the Teachers in Teaching IPED Learners?

In teaching IPED learners, teachers often find great satisfaction when their students learn. In contrast, when face with unique impasse, teachers' flexibility and persistence are continually challenge that slowly turns into frustration. From their responses, many of these difficulties don't come from the students themselves but from outside factors. These include limited exposure to English, a shortage of appropriate learning materials, minimal support from parents, and gaps in professional development opportunities for teachers.

Theme 1: Language Barriers

One identified hurdle many teachers experienced is the obvious difference between English and the learners' native languages. Most IPED learners primarily speak their local dialects, thus, they experience difficulty understanding and communicating ideas in English.

Below, the teachers expressed their view about this theme:

R3, *"Some of the learners find it hard to understand English because they only use their dialect at home."*

R6, *"It takes more time to explain the lessons since most of them are not familiar with English words."*

R7, *"We have to translate everything first in their dialect before they can grasp the meaning."*

Teachers are prompted to modify their discussions that is contextually congruent with the learners, when challenge post by language barrier dampen comprehension. It also reveals the value of using learners' mother tongue as a bridge to support comprehension while gradually introducing English concepts.

One of the researchers explaining its views about this challenge by teachers, Krashen (2019) argued that when lessons feel real and relatable, learners pick up language at its best. For many IPED learners, English is not part of their natural environment, so, teachers often must pause, explain, and translate using examples from the students' own world. Vygotsky (1978) also reminded us that through regular social and cultural interaction, language continually improves. So, if learners rarely hear or use English outside classroom, their progress can be slower. Applying Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (Gay, 2018), teachers turn this challenge into a resource by making the students' first language becomes a steppingstone, not a stumbling block. Adding to this, Ball and McIvor (2019) affirmed that integrating learners' first language in instruction enhances comprehension and confidence. De Vera (2019) noted that switching language through translation is an effective strategy in multilingual classrooms. Completing the

discussion on this, Torres and Aquino (2022) concluded that beginning instruction in the native language builds strong cognitive and cultural foundations. This research findings explained above concretized the teachers' strategies to fill-in linguistic gaps through the application of bilingual and culturally grounded teaching in classroom lessons.

Sub-theme 1: Limited Exposure

One of the most persistent challenges identified by IPED teachers is the learners' limited exposure to the English language. For many children in indigenous communities, English is not used at home or within the community, making it a language they encounter almost exclusively in school. As a result, learners often struggle to understand classroom discussions, follow instructions, or participate confidently in English-based activities. Teachers described this challenge not as a lack of ability on the part of the learners, but as a simple consequence of their environment—an environment where English has little functional use in daily life.

With so much concern, several teachers shared how the minimal English exposure affects learners' confidence and comprehension. They observed that the students scarcely listen nor practice the language outside school that is why, even basic English terms often need translation or oversimplification.

R5: "The learners have very limited exposure to English. They only hear it in the classroom, so they find it difficult to follow lessons."

R2: "They rarely use English at home or in the community, so they tend to be shy when asked to speak."

R8: "Because they seldom hear English, they need more time to understand the lesson. We always need to break down the instructions."

The limited exposure described by teachers aligns with Krashen's Input Hypothesis. Krashen emphasized that, language acquisition necessitates continuous and regular access to comprehensible input. The more exposure to English language IPED learner experienced, the more it builds familiarity and confidence. This explains why IPED learners should received enough meaningful input to support comfortable language use to avoid hesitation to speak or participate.

In the context of IPED communities, this challenge becomes even more pronounced. In their natural cultural and linguistic environment, the mother tongue and local languages are prioritized. English, therefore, remains distant and unfamiliar. Teachers compensate through classroom strategies such as translation, contextualization, and simplified explanations. These highlight how difficult it is to teach a language that is seldom encountered outside the school setting.

According to Bautista and Bernardo (2018), limited exposure to English significantly impacts learners' confidence and comprehension, especially in rural and indigenous contexts. Another study found that in communities learners require more support and time to learn new language concepts, where English is not used in daily communication, (Llurda, 2019). Likely, de Dios and Trinidad (2021) noted that it was not the lack of ability but with small opportunities to use the language outside school, that resulted into indigenous learners often lagging behind in English proficiency.

These studies confirmed that limited exposure leads to slower processing, reduced confidence, and increased dependence on the mother tongue. Addressing limited

exposure is not simply a matter of teaching harder. It requires thoughtful, culturally grounded strategies that help learners build comfort and familiarity with English in ways that respect their linguistic realities.

Sub-theme 2: Lack of Instructional Materials

Few learning resources genuinely represent the stories, traditions, and realities of the community of IPED students is another persistent struggle that teachers encounter in teaching English. Many of the existing textbooks and visual aids are intended for mainstream classrooms. Because of this, teachers find themselves constantly adapting lessons or creating their own learning resources just to make the content meaningful.

Expressing their struggle on the lack of teaching materials, teachers revealed that:

R4: *“We have limited materials that represent the learners’ culture and environment. We often create our own to make lessons relatable.”*

R5: *“There are few books or visual aids suited to IPED learners. We improvise and use local stories and materials instead.”*

R8: *“Sometimes, we rely on self-made materials or community resources since the ones provided are not appropriate.”*

This situation affirms that learning is like a mirror, it becomes effective and meaningful when students see themselves – their true image and identity in what they learn. When instructional content or materials do not resonate with their lived realities, active participation and deep understanding tend to be dampen. From the lens of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (Gay, 2018), locally developed and contextualized materials are not just substitutes, they are vital tools that affirm unique cultural identity and inspire a deeper sense of belonging in the classroom.

Researchers such as De Vera (2019) and Ball and Mclvor (2019) supported this idea, noting that culture-based materials add flavor to the learning experience, making it more relatable and inspiring for indigenous students. In the same spirit, Torres and Aquino (2022) observed that instructional materials seasoned with local stories and traditions cultivate learners’ taste for language and provide the essential ingredients for keeping their culture alive.

Sub-theme 3: Emotional Problem

Together with the linguistic difficulties that IPED learners face, teachers also observed that many learners experience emotional difficulties when dealing with English lessons. These emotional stirrings often originate from fear, embarrassment, or the belief that English is “too difficult” for them. Many IPED learners sometimes remain quiet, aloof or avoid participating altogether because the language sounds unfamiliar and feels intimidating. These emotional reactions are not signs of disinterest but teachers viewed it as expressions of insecurity brought about by unfamiliarity with the language.

When they cannot easily understand the lesson or respond to questions, teachers shared that learners often feel anxious when English is introduced. This emotional imbalance becomes a an additional load that slows down learning and disengage learners from active participation.

R3: *“Some of them feel embarrassed to speak because they might be wrong. They get shy when they hear English.”*

R6: *“They lose confidence when they don’t understand right away. Sometimes they just keep quiet during the activity.”*

R1: *“When they struggle, they get frustrated easily. Their difficulty in English affects their self-esteem.”*

These emotional turmoil’s reflect the theory in Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis, which discussed how feelings of anxiety, fear, or lack of confidence negatively affect learner’s potential to process and learn language. Their “affective filter” grows enough to decrease their ability to learn new information when students feel overpowered or embarrassed. This finding aligns with the teachers’ experiences of the emotional discomfort experienced by learners as another barrier just like limited exposure.

As part of the theoretical framework, Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory, supported the role of emotions in significantly molding the students learning. When they feel safe, supported, and understood, they are more capable of moving from dependence to independence. Since learning is a social experience, the emotional strain caused by linguistic difficulty can disrupt this developmental process, slow down progress and discouraging participation of IPED learners.

The emotional impasse reported by teachers is oftentimes caused by the incongruence between learners’ cultural-linguistic backgrounds and the demands of English instruction. The learners pairing of the subject with failure, discomfort, or embarrassment can contribute to the feeling of English being too distant from their lived experiences. This signals the need for strategies that nurture emotional safety and build learner confidence.

Recent studies confirmed the strong relationship between language learning and emotional well-being. According to Navarro and Tibon (2019), anxiety and low self-confidence significantly hinder the performance of Filipino learners in English, particularly those from marginalized communities. Similarly, Yeni (2020) explained that students often experience heightened fear of making mistakes due to limited English exposure, which most often lead to withdrawal and reduced participation. Complementary, Afrianto (2021) declared that emotional baggage is common among learners who view English as foreign or “superior” language, and this perception affects their willingness to communicate.

Theme 2: Delay in Cognitive Development

Teachers highlighted that some IPED learners experience delays in cognitive development that affect their performance in English. Usually this is manifested by slower processing of information, challenges in connecting new concepts with prior knowledge, and difficulty in retaining lessons. They viewed this not as a matter of learners being incapable. But instead, it reflects the broader developmental and environmental realities of children who grow up with limited exposure to formal schooling materials, diverse language input, and enriched literacy experiences.

Since this is unfamiliar domain for the learners, teachers shared that some learners need more time to grasp basic English concepts. Furthermore, it would often require repeated explanations or simplified examples. Their struggles go beyond language because they affect memory, attention, sequencing, and comprehension.

R2: *“Some learners take a longer time before they understand the lesson. They need repeated reminders.”*

R5: “Their thinking process is slower, and they have difficulty recalling previous lessons.”

R6: “There are pupils who struggle in following lessons because their cognitive level is not yet ready for abstract English concepts.”

The reports of teachers reflected the essence of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which recognizes that learners vary in how much support they need before they can work independently. Learners with cognitive delays require more scaffolding, more time, and more contextual support before they can fully grasp English concepts. Their cognitive developmental stage shapes their readiness for school-based tasks, especially those involving abstract thinking and foreign language structures.

The study's methodology also emphasized that cognitive differences among learners influence how teachers design their strategies. Limited early childhood educational resources, such as reading materials, enrichment activities, and structured pre-school experiences can delay cognitive readiness. This makes it difficult for IPED learners to engage with English, a language that requires symbolic thinking, decoding skills, and sustained attention.

Additionally, cognitive development is deeply influenced by cultural and environmental factors. Learners in indigenous communities often develop strengths in practical, experiential tasks grounded in their culture. But may provide limited opportunities for tasks that mirror school-based cognitive demands. Such dissonance can make English learning feel overwhelming.

Recent research helped these findings to be grounded to the context of IPED learners. Pangilinan and Tarrayo (2018) affirmed that indigenous learners often demonstrate uneven cognitive readiness due to limited access to early literacy materials and structured pre-school programs. Similarly, Quijano and Dela Cruz (2020) noted that cognitive delays among rural learners impact their ability to engage with second-language instruction, particularly in abstract and unfamiliar linguistic tasks. Complementing this findings, Tupas (2021) highlighted those children with limited academic exposure require enriched, scaffolded learning environments to support cognitive growth and prevent further academic gaps.

These studies reinforced the experiences of the teachers that cognitive delay is not an isolated issue. It is influenced by linguistic, cultural, and environmental factors that shape how learners process information. This underscores the importance of differentiated instruction, culturally responsive materials, and supportive learning environments that align with the learner's developmental stage.

Theme 3: Language and Cultural Gap

Teachers identified the language and cultural gap as one of the most persistent challenges in teaching English to IPED learners. This gap is not only linguistic—it reflects a deeper disconnect between the learners' cultural worldview and the academic expectations of English instruction. In many cases, the concepts, texts, and examples used in English lessons do not align with the learners' lived experiences, making the subject feel distant, unfamiliar, and sometimes irrelevant. Teachers emphasized that when learners cannot relate to the content being taught, their engagement decreases, and comprehension becomes more difficult.

Teachers shared those English lessons are often rooted in contexts unfamiliar to indigenous learners. The themes, vocabulary, and situations found in textbooks do not reflect the culture, environment, or daily life of the community, creating a barrier to understanding.

R7: “The examples in English lessons are too far from their culture. They cannot relate, so it is harder for them to understand.”

R4: “Some topics in the book are not familiar to them. They have no background knowledge, so we need to explain more.”

R1: “The gap between their culture and the English lessons affects their interest. They do not see themselves in the stories.”

The teachers’ experiences reflect the heart of Culturally Responsive Teaching Theory. This framework highlights that learning improves when instruction connects to learners’ cultural identities. When English materials are disconnected from indigenous knowledge, the learners face a double burden: understanding the language and interpreting unfamiliar cultural contexts.

Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory, also part of the theoretical foundation, explains that learning is mediated by culture. If the cultural tools used in instruction do not match the learners’ experiences, comprehension becomes less meaningful. The teachers’ accounts illustrate this mismatch clearly: unfamiliar examples create cognitive and emotional distance, making English harder to grasp.

This challenge emerges naturally from the learners’ linguistic and cultural environment. The home and community context is rich in indigenous knowledge, oral traditions, and practical skills—yet much of the English curriculum draws from urban, Western, or mainstream Filipino settings. The gap between the learners’ world and the textbook world becomes a barrier that teachers must bridge each day.

Recent studies strengthen the teachers’ observations. Gay (2018) argues that when learning materials exclude learners’ cultural backgrounds, they create cognitive disconnects that hinder understanding. Tuazon (2019) found that indigenous learners struggle with English texts because the content often reflects urbanized or non-indigenous contexts. Meanwhile, Cabalquinto (2021) emphasized that culturally unfamiliar examples reduce learner engagement and contribute to lower performance in language subjects.

In addition, Santiago and Dizon (2020) noted that integrating local culture into English lessons improves comprehension and motivation among indigenous learners. Their findings echo what teachers in this study expressed: when learners do not see themselves in the lesson, learning becomes harder; but when lessons reflect their culture, learning becomes meaningful and empowering.

Theme 4: Lack of Support

In the sharing of teachers, lack of support in teaching English to IPED learners also appeared as another major concern. This is manifested in different ways, like insufficient materials, and minimal parental involvement. Furthermore, limited institutional assistance, and the absence of sustained professional development programs geared toward indigenous contexts aggravated the situation. For many teachers, the weight of making English meaningful and accessible falls entirely on their shoulders. This would

include, lack of instructional resources, community collaboration, or administrative backing needed to respond effectively to the unique needs of IP learners.

Teachers explained that matching the learners' cultural and linguistic realities are often times considered as a challenge because they often work with limited or outdated materials, making it difficult to prepare lessons. Furthermore, they revealed that institutional support, such as specialized training or access to culturally aligned resources, is often lacking. They also observed that some parents cannot assist their children academically because English is equally *unfamiliar to them*.

R2: *"We don't have enough materials that fit the needs of IP learners. Sometimes we have to make our own resources."*

R6: *"Some parents cannot help with English lessons because they don't understand the language either."*

R4: *"We need more training and support to handle IPED classes better, but seminars specific to our needs are limited."*

The lack of support described by teachers binded strongly with the Sociocultural Theory, which emphasized that the interactions and tools available within the environment shape learning. When support systems such as materials, community involvement, institutional assistance are weak or absent, learners receive fewer opportunities to engage meaningfully with English. This results in a deeper reliance on the teacher alone, which is not sustainable.

The challenge also reinforced findings, where the context of IPED classrooms shows structural limitations: scarce culturally relevant textbooks, minimal exposure to English outside school, and limited access to professional capacity-building programs. These factors directly influence the teacher's ability to create a responsive and inclusive learning environment. Without adequate support, even the most dedicated teachers struggle to bridge the cultural and linguistic gap effectively.

Moreover, the lack of parent involvement is not due to neglect but due to parents' own limited exposure to English. This underscores the need for community-based approaches—involving elders, leaders, and cultural bearers—who can help enrich the learning context and provide cultural alignment.

Current research confirms the teachers' experiences. Tupas and Salonga (2018) highlight that systemic gap in materials, infrastructure, and training weaken the delivery of language instruction in marginalized communities. Dampil and Santiago (2020) found that inadequate institutional support significantly affects teachers' ability to implement culturally relevant pedagogy, leading to increased workload and instructional challenges. Meanwhile, Diez and Ponce (2021) emphasize that the lack of parental familiarity with English contributes to lower learner performance and reduced reinforcement at home.

These studies echo the reality expressed by teachers in this research: IPED teachers are committed and resourceful, but their work becomes increasingly difficult without the necessary support systems. Strengthening community involvement, providing culturally aligned instructional materials, and offering sustained professional development are essential steps toward addressing this gap.

Research Question 3: What coping mechanisms or strategies are employed by the teachers to address the challenges encountered in teaching IPED learners?

Theme 1: Localization of Teaching Materials

Teachers often go extra mile to make instructional materials become familiar and meaningful to their students. So that lessons reflect the learners' everyday lives and cultural background, they adapt stories, illustrations, and examples.

Sharing their efforts on localizing their materials, teacher identified ways to accomplish it:

R4: "We localize the materials that we use to make them relatable to the learners."

R2: "We use stories from their community so that learners can connect easily with the lessons."

R6: "When materials are lacking, we create our own, using resources from the surroundings or experiences of the learners."

By doing this patiently, teachers are applying what Culturally Responsive Pedagogy emphasized, which is teaching that is based on the learner's culture and language (Gay, 2018). Similarly, Vygotsky (1978) highlighted that learning is enhance by culturally meaningful tools, like localized materials, that act as linkage between classroom concepts and students' real experience of real world. Krashen's (2019) point of view, concluded that these materials provide comprehensible input that learners can understand and use naturally.

Recent studies supported this approach too. Nolasco (2020) and Morales and Reyes (2021) observed that instructional materials adapted to local culture, help students stay engaged, motivated and understand their lessons better. Flores (2020) noted that contextualized teaching aids also promotes cultural inclusion and pride, while De Vera (2019) pointed out that teachers' creativity and innovation in contextualizing materials ensures that culture-based learning is maintained beyond limited resources.

Theme 2: Use of Mother Tongue

Teachers shared in the interview that learners comprehend English lessons more easily and with less pressure using the mother tongue. By ensuring that learning is less intimidating using familiar language, it allows students to connect new ideas to what they already know. In addition, translation, bilingual explanations, and culturally relevant examples further support comprehension.

Mother-tongue use gives them a comfortable starting point and builds their confidence to participate. Learners become more responsive and willing to try speaking English once meaning has been established in their own language. Teachers through this approach, not only supports academic learning, but also affirms the learners' cultural identity.

Theme 3: Collaborative Learning Activities

IPED learners who practice English through collaborative learning activities such as role-playing, shared reading, games, and small-group tasks help in providing a more relaxed and supportive environment. Group work reduces the pressure of answering alone and encourages shy learners to participate. Teachers observed that these activities make lessons more enjoyable and interactive.

Furthermore, peer support plays a significant role in these collaborative tasks. Teachers explained that grouping students by ability levels ensure that stronger learners guide their peers, which promotes cooperation and teamwork. Similarly, it encourage learners to help each other follow instructions, reinforce vocabulary, and model correct language use. The communal culture of Indigenous learners mirrors this practice and motivate them to use English more confidently.

Theme 4: Expert-developed and Structured Instructional Materials

Teachers highlighted that their efforts in teaching English to IPED learners can be supported by having expert-developed and structured instructional materials. Through these materials, teachers who are already face by constraints in time, training, and classroom support, can help them reduce the burden of creating resources from scratch. Many shared that well-designed storybooks, bilingual dictionaries, visual aids, and culturally aligned modules help provide clearer guidance for both teachers and students. One respondent noted the importance of “learning materials from experts” in ensuring that lessons remain organized and purposeful (R1), while others highlighted the need for textbooks, localized reading passages, and visual aids that reflect community life and indigenous identity (R2).

Participants also explained that structured materials, such as detailed lesson plans, teacher guides, and organized instructional sequences, helped them maintain consistency in delivering lessons. For instance, one teacher pointed out that structured plans ensure “clear goals, appropriate methods, and successful evaluation,” which helps keep instruction focused and manageable (R6). These resources give teachers a clearer direction on how to introduce, develop, and assess language concepts. Materials such as bilingual dictionaries, charts, videos, and culturally relevant examples serve as essential tools for bridging learners’ gaps in vocabulary and comprehension, making English lessons more accessible.

Therefore, the use of expert-developed and structured instructional materials helps create a more supportive and organized learning environment. It assists teachers to focus on adapting lessons to the learners’ cultural background rather than struggling with incomplete or mismatched materials. In this way, instructional resources become not only teaching aids but also practical solutions to classroom challenges. With this, IPED learners engage with meaningful, accurate, and culturally sensitive content.

Theme 5: Institutional and Community Support

Teachers explained that having administrators who provide culturally grounded materials, reproduce needed resources, and offer training opportunities makes their work more manageable. Many shared that the support they receive from the school and the wider community has a major influence on how well they can meet the needs of IPED learners, particularly in teaching English. explained that having administrators who provide culturally grounded materials, reproduce needed resources, and offer training opportunities makes their work more manageable. Teachers feel more equipped and motivated to deliver instruction that truly fits their learners’ backgrounds, when education leaders proactively provide contextualized and localized dictionaries, visual aids, or translation guides and scaffold it with IPED-focused programs and seminars,

In addition, respondents emphasized how valuable the involvement of the Indigenous community in shaping meaningful learning experiences. Teachers noted ensuring classroom strategies honor cultural traditions and avoid practices that might be insensitive or misaligned can be done through the guidance of elders, parents, and local partners. One teacher mentioned that consulting elders helps check whether lessons reflect the community's identity. While others shared that drawing from local stories, customs, and shared experiences strengthens students' interest and sense of belonging.

Taken together, the accounts of the teachers showed that when these stakeholders work in partnership, they are in a much better position to create lessons that are both responsive and empowering for Indigenous students. Sharing of resources, offering guidance, and grounding instruction in cultural understanding translate into an effective English instruction for IPED learners. Thus, a cooperative network of support that brings together the school, the community, and the cultural knowledge of the learners themselves ensure a successful language learning.

Research Question 4: What proposed program can be recommended based on the findings

of the study?

Based on the study's findings, a professional development initiative called the "Culturally Responsive English Teaching Program (CRETPE): Integrating Effective Teaching Strategies for IPED Learners" is proposed. The research showed that teachers of IPED learners often rely on creativity and adaptability, employing strategies such as contextualized lessons, localized materials, reflective practice, performance-based tasks, collaboration, and the integration of cultural knowledge. Yet, these practices tend to arise from individual initiative rather than consistent institutional support. The proposed program seeks to organize and strengthen these approaches through school-based training that combines indigenous knowledge with modern teaching methods. By involving tribal elders as cultural facilitators and promoting reflective, learner-centered instruction, the program aims to make English teaching more inclusive, meaningful, and closely connected to the lived experiences of indigenous learners.

Summary of Findings

Using a qualitative research design, the study gathered insights through interviews with selected IPED teachers. The responses were analyzed through thematic analysis, leading to the identification of interconnected themes that reflect both the challenges and effective strategies practiced in the field. The following are the findings:

1. For SOP 1, there were two themes generated, and they were Teaching Strategies Used with four sub-themes: Context-based learning, Differentiated Instruction, Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Pedagogy (CLRP) and Communicative and Constructivist Pedagogy. The second theme was Assessment of Strategies with the sub-themes: Performance Task, Reflective Feedback and Experiential Learning.

2. For SOP 2, Challenges, there were four main themes generated, and the first theme was Language Barrier with the sub-themes Limited Exposure, Lack of Instructional Materials and Emotional Problem. The second main theme was Delay in Cognitive Development followed by Language and Cultural Gap and lastly Lack of Support.

3. For SOP 3, Coping Strategies, there were five themes generated. First, was Localization of Teaching Materials, Use of Mother-tongue, Collaborative Learning Activities, Expert-developed and Structured Instructional Materials and Institutional and Community Support.

4. Proposed Program: The Culturally Responsive English Proficiency Training (CREPT) Program – Based on the study's findings, this proposed program aims to enhance teachers' capacity to deliver contextualized English instruction. It focuses on the development of localized instructional materials, continuous professional learning, and stronger school-community partnerships.

In summary, the findings affirm that effective English language instruction among IPED learners must be grounded in cultural relevance, community engagement, and adaptive teaching strategies. Teachers play a vital role as both language facilitators and cultural advocates, ensuring that English learning does not replace identity but rather supports it. By integrating culturally meaningful practices with effective pedagogical approaches, IPED teachers create learning experiences that are not only educational but also empowering.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn in alignment with the study's statement of the problem:

1. The results for SOP 1 demonstrate how teachers use learner-centered, culturally grounded tactics and genuine assessment techniques to assist the English language development of Indigenous students. Teachers adapt instruction to students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds using communicative-constructivist methods, differentiated instruction, CLRP, and context-based learning. Similarly, learners can demonstrate comprehension in meaningful ways through performance activities, reflective feedback, and experience assessments. Overall, the findings demonstrate instructors' deliberate attempts to provide Indigenous students with effective, responsive, and culturally relevant learning opportunities.

2. Teachers face recurring barriers such as language differences, insufficient culturally appropriate materials, limited parental involvement, and inadequate training opportunities. These issues reveal systemic gaps that hinder consistent language development among IPED learners and underscore the necessity of institutional support and culturally aligned instructional resources.

3. Teachers exhibit adaptability and resilience by localizing lessons, collaborating with peers, engaging community members, and pursuing continuous self-improvement. Their capacity to innovate and reflect in the face of limitations illustrates the strength of culturally responsive pedagogy in transforming classroom challenges into opportunities for growth and empowerment.

4. The Culturally Responsive English Proficiency Training (CREPT) Program addresses the identified needs through a structured approach focusing on teacher capacity building, localized material development, community involvement, and sustained professional mentoring. This program serves as a comprehensive framework to improve the quality and relevance of English instruction for IPED learners.

Recommendations

Considering the findings and conclusions of the study the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Continuous professional learning must be institutionalized for teachers handling IPED learners. In line with DepEd Orders 62, 32, and 22, schools are encouraged to intensify regular in-service trainings (INSETs), learning action cells (LACs), and mentoring programs focused on culture-based pedagogy, contextualization, and the use of the mother tongue as a bridge toward English proficiency. Teacher development should not be limited to one-time seminars but should form part of an ongoing cycle of reflective, classroom-based learning experiences. This is based on the study's results of teachers interview, which showed that teachers of IPED students need continuous help to use culturally responsive teaching methods well.

2. Consistent with the IPed Curriculum Framework (DO 32, s. 2015), schools should promote the creation and use of localized and culture-relevant instructional materials in English. Teachers may collaborate with elders, cultural bearers, and community resource persons to produce materials that mirror local stories, values, and traditions.

This initiative can be supported through the IPed Program Support Fund (DO 22, s. 2016) or through local partnerships, ensuring that learners engage with content that is both linguistically appropriate and culturally meaningful. The results showed that students are more engaged when the materials reflect their cultural background and local context, which makes it easier for them to understand and connect with learning English. This is based on the study's results, which revealed that IPED learners are more interested and understand better when the materials they use in class reflect their culture and the area where they live.

3. As emphasized in DepEd Order No. 62, s. 2011, partnerships with local IP communities are essential to sustain IPED programs. Schools should formalize collaboration through participatory planning, regular consultations, and active involvement of community members in curriculum contextualization and classroom activities.

Engaging elders as cultural consultants ensures that English instruction remains anchored in indigenous knowledge systems, fostering identity, pride, and community participation. Teachers reported it was hard to include indigenous knowledge in English lessons without help from people in the community. Partnerships help make sure that lessons are culturally relevant and help students feel good about who they are.

4. In line with DepEd Order No. 22, s. 2016, schools should ensure efficient utilization of the IPed Program Support Fund to meet the needs of teachers and learners. Priority areas should include capacity building, contextualized resource development, and implementation of the proposed *Culturally Responsive English Teaching Program (CRETP)*. Transparent planning and reporting will sustain these initiatives and strengthen accountability in delivering quality IPED programs. The research demonstrated that resource accessibility and organized funding are essential for maintaining culturally responsive programs and enhancing teachers' instructional efficacy.

5. Establish professional learning communities and mentoring programs that enable teachers to share ideas, materials, and strategies. Since collaboration emerged as a key coping mechanism, formalizing this support system will enhance teamwork and

innovation in culturally responsive practices. Collaboration became an essential coping and professional support strategy, assisting teachers in innovating and navigating the complexities of culture-based English instruction.

6. Conduct regular assessments of localized materials to ensure they remain accurate, culturally appropriate, and aligned with the IPED curriculum. This guarantees that instructional tools stay responsive to learners' evolving contexts and community realities. The study showed that instructional tools can become less effective if they aren't regularly reviewed, because they may not fit the changing needs of learners.

7. Provide opportunities for teachers to attend trainings, conferences, and workshops related to language education and cultural integration. Such engagements broaden teachers' pedagogical repertoire and expose them to updated methodologies in inclusive and culture-based instruction. Teachers reported they needed to learn about new methods and best practices for teaching that are based on culture and inclusion in order to improve their teaching skills.

8. Implement the Culturally Responsive English Teaching Program (CRETTP) by integrating the CRETTP as a component of school-based professional development. A three-day in-service program under the supervision of the School Head and IPED Focal Person may focus on contextualization, localization, and learner-centered English instruction. This ensures sustained alignment with DepEd's culture-based education framework. The study indicated that structured programs integrating CRETTP principles can systematically improve teachers' competence in culturally responsive English instruction while preserving compliance with DepEd's culture-based framework.

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