



\*\*\*\*\*

## ONLINE TUTORS' CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES IN TEACHING BASIC ENGLISH TO KOREAN STUDENTS

**MA. MAE N. AVENTURA**  
**Language Instructor**  
English Walk Inc.  
ma.maeaventura99@gmail.com

### ABSTRACT

This qualitative study was conducted to explore the challenges encountered by online tutors in teaching basic English to Korean students enrolled in online classes. The findings revealed several key challenges, including: grammar structure and vocabulary difficulties, pronunciation and oral language difficulties, students' confidence and engagement, as well as language barriers, student diversity, and technical problems. To address these challenges, the online English tutors employed a variety of coping strategies. These included: simplifying instruction and clear explanations, scaffolding students' speaking development, creating a supportive learning environment, using interactive activities and visual aids, and adapting to technical issues during online instruction. Overall, the study highlights the importance of flexible teaching approaches and supportive strategies in enhancing the effectiveness of online English instruction for Korean students.

**Keywords:** *Online Tutors, Challenges, Coping Strategies, Basic English, Korean Students, Online Learning*

\*\*\*\*\*

### Editorial Team

**Editor-in-Chief:** Alvin B. Punongbayan

**Associate Editor:** Andro M. Bautista

**Managing Editor:** Raymart O. Basco

**Web Editor:** Nikko C. Panotes

### Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,  
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,  
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*



\*\*\*\*\*

## INTRODUCTION

Online tutoring is a form of virtual learning in which students receive academic support from tutors through digital platforms. This approach allows for flexible and personalized learning experiences for students from different parts of the world. Over the past few years, online education has become more accessible and widely used due to the continuous advancement of internet technologies. For language learners across the globe, this development opened opportunities to receive quality instruction regardless of geographical location. In particular, the increasing demand for English proficiency in -English-speaking countries, such as South Korea, contributed to the growing popularity of online English tutoring services.

South Korea placed great importance on English education. According to TEAST (2025), English played a significant role in academic achievement and career advancement, which encouraged Korean students to start learning the language at an early age. As a result, many Korean learners enrolled in additional online English classes beyond their regular school hours. This growing demand created employment opportunities for Filipino English tutors, particularly in the Philippines, where many professionals and educators work in online English as a Second Language (ESL) platforms. Filipino tutors were widely recognized for their strong communication skills in English, adaptability to different cultures, and cost-effective services.

As an online tutor to Korean students for 6 years the researcher experienced teaching basic English to beginner students she observed unique challenges that were not always addressed in existing studies. Many Korean students struggled with basic English

\*\*\*\*\*

### Editorial Team

**Editor-in-Chief:** Alvin B. Punongbayan

**Associate Editor:** Andro M. Bautista

**Managing Editor:** Raymart O. Basco

**Web Editor:** Nikko C. Panotes

### Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,  
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,  
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*



\*\*\*\*\*  
pronunciation and sentence formation, while some demonstrated low confidence in participating during class. At the same time, online tutoring platforms often provided limited training for new tutors, leaving them to adapt teaching strategies on their own. From these observations, gaps were identified in the structured support provided to tutors, particularly in areas such as managing diverse students' behaviors, addressing cultural differences in learning styles, and maintaining student engagement in virtual classrooms. These gaps highlights the need for better understanding of both the difficulties tutors face, and the strategies they employ to overcome them.

Filipino tutors, in particular, experience various challenges when teaching basic English to Korean students. These included language barriers, differences in cultural and educational expectations, technological limitations, and varying levels of learner motivation (TEFLCourse.net, 2024). For instance, some students rely heavily on rote memorization and are hesitant to speak, while others require repeated explanations to understand basic grammar. Technical issues such as unstable internet connections occasionally disrupted lessons, making consistent instruction difficult. Given these circumstances, it becomes essential to systematically examine both the challenges and coping strategies of online English tutors.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the challenges and coping strategies of online tutors in teaching basic English to Korean students.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Editorial Team**

**Editor-in-Chief:** Alvin B. Punongbayan

**Associate Editor:** Andro M. Bautista

**Managing Editor:** Raymart O. Basco

**Web Editor:** Nikko C. Panotes

### **Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:**

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,  
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,  
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*



\*\*\*\*\*

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Research Methodology

This chapter describes the fundamental procedures of phenomenological research and highlights the following components: Research Method, Research Design, Participants in the Study, Sampling Design, Research Instrument, Validity of the Research Instrument, Data-gathering Procedures, and Data Analyses.

### Research Method

The study used a qualitative approach, relying on in-depth interviews to explore tutors' challenges in teaching basic English to Korean students in online classes. A descriptive method focuses on systematically collecting information to gain a better understanding of a group, situation, or phenomenon. Rather than asking why something happens, it examines what, when, where, and how. Unlike experimental research, descriptive studies do not involve manipulating or controlling variables; the researcher simply identifies, observes, and measures them as they naturally occur (Voxcov, 2021).

### Research Design

The study employed a qualitative design with a phenomenological approach. As Tenny et al. (2022) explain, this type of research delves deeply into real-world issues to understand them more fully. Unlike quantitative research, which focuses on numbers, measurements, or interventions, qualitative research helps generate new insights and explore patterns behind the data. It seeks to understand the "how" and "why" of experiences rather than simply "how many" or "how much."

\*\*\*\*\*

### Editorial Team

**Editor-in-Chief:** Alvin B. Punongbayan

**Associate Editor:** Andro M. Bautista

**Managing Editor:** Raymart O. Basco

**Web Editor:** Nikko C. Panotes

### Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,  
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,  
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*



\*\*\*\*\*

This study used an in-depth interview guide to collect information about the challenges faced by tutors in teaching basic English to Korean students enrolled in online classes. The researcher encouraged participants to respond freely based on their experiences, allowing them to share their insights openly in their own words. This approach enabled the collection of rich and meaningful data relevant to the study.

### Participants in the Study

The participants in this study were selected through a purposeful sampling. As explained by Johnny Saldaña (2021), this method is commonly used in qualitative research to identify and select individuals who can provide rich and relevant insights about the phenomenon being studied. The study included ten (10) tenured English tutors who had at least six(6) months of experience teaching Korean students in Iloilo City. All participants held four-year degrees, passed an English proficiency test, completed a demonstration lesson, and were evaluated by their managers before being hired. They had also undergone training to meet the qualifications required for tenured status. To ensure confidentiality, the researcher assigned pseudonyms to all participants. Thus, they were identified as Participant 1, 2,3,4,5,6,7, and 8.

### Sampling Design

Purposive sampling was employed to select participants who met specific criteria, focusing on ten tenured tutors with experience teaching basic English to Korean students in online classes for over six months. All of these tutors had completed the required training and met the qualifications set by the ESL tutoring company.

\*\*\*\*\*

#### Editorial Team

**Editor-in-Chief:** Alvin B. Punongbayan

**Associate Editor:** Andro M. Bautista

**Managing Editor:** Raymart O. Basco

**Web Editor:** Nikko C. Panotes

#### Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,  
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,  
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*



\*\*\*\*\*

## Research Instrument

The researcher used a researcher-made interview guide as the primary tool to gather detailed information during the interviews. The guide contained key questions directly related to the study, focusing on the tutors' challenges in teaching basic English to Korean students for at least six (6) months. Participants were encouraged to share their responses openly and thoughtfully, providing meaningful insights based on their experiences.

The instrument consisted of questions about challenges faced in teaching basic English, and the coping strategies that they employed to overcome the challenges.

## Validity of Research Instrument

According to Creswell and Poth (2023), validity refers to how well the results from study participants reflect the actual experiences of similar individuals outside the study. To ensure clarity and maximize meaningful responses, the research instrument was carefully validated.

The researcher first presented the interview guide to the adviser for review and refinement. Additionally, a panel of experts evaluated the guide for both content and face validity. All feedback, suggestions, and corrections were carefully documented and incorporated to strengthen the instrument.

## Data Gathering Procedure

After receiving approval from the panel of experts, the researcher began the data collection process. Permissions to conduct the study were then obtained from Dean of the

\*\*\*\*\*

### Editorial Team

**Editor-in-Chief:** Alvin B. Punongbayan

**Associate Editor:** Andro M. Bautista

**Managing Editor:** Raymart O. Basco

**Web Editor:** Nikko C. Panotes

### Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,  
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,  
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*



\*\*\*\*\*

university and from the facility manager. Upon their approval the researcher then identified and selected participants who met the inclusion criteria.

The participants were approached before and/or after their classes, and were informed about the purpose of the study. Informed consent was obtained prior to the interviews to ensure that their participation was voluntary. Participants were assured that their responses would remain completely confidential, and would be used solely for academic purposes.

The data collection were conducted individually using a semi-structured, allow interview, allowing participants to freely express their responses while being guided by the interview questions. Each interview lasted approximately 10–15 minutes.

Following the interviews, the researcher transcribed the participants' responses verbatim and carefully reviewed all gathered data.

## Data Analyses

The data collected for this study were carefully documented, examined, and analyzed using thematic analysis. Kelly (2023) described data analysis as the process of organizing, cleaning, and interpreting raw data to extract meaningful and useful information that could guide decision-making. This process often presented insights through tables, graphs, charts, or images, helping to reduce uncertainty when making decisions. According to Nowell et al. (2022), thematic analysis aims to identify key themes or recurring patterns in the data, which are then used to address the research questions or highlight important issues. A thorough thematic analysis goes beyond simply summarizing data; it interprets and draws meaningful conclusions from it.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Editorial Team

**Editor-in-Chief:** Alvin B. Punongbayan

**Associate Editor:** Andro M. Bautista

**Managing Editor:** Raymart O. Basco

**Web Editor:** Nikko C. Panotes

### Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,  
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,  
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*



\*\*\*\*\*

In this study, the data were analyzed following the six-step framework of Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2006). First, the researcher familiarized themselves with the data by reading and re-reading the interview transcripts to gain a deeper understanding of the responses. Second, initial codes were generated by identifying significant statements and meaningful units related to the challenges and coping strategies of online tutors. Third, the codes were organized into potential themes by grouping similar patterns across participants' responses. Fourth, the identified themes were reviewed and refined to ensure that they accurately represented the data. Fifth, each theme was clearly defined and named to reflect its core meaning. Finally, the researcher produced the report by presenting the themes supported by relevant excerpts from the participants' responses.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study titled "Online Tutor's Challenges and Coping Strategies in Teaching Basic English to Korean Students" aimed to explore the difficulties experienced by online tutors when teaching basic English to Korean students and the coping strategies they use to address these challenges.

The participants of the study were eight online ESL tutors who were purposively selected based on their experience teaching Korean students in online English classes.

Data were collected using a researcher-made in-depth interview guide designed to gather information about the tutors' experiences, the challenges they encountered, and the coping strategies they used in teaching.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Editorial Team

**Editor-in-Chief:** Alvin B. Punongbayan

**Associate Editor:** Andro M. Bautista

**Managing Editor:** Raymart O. Basco

**Web Editor:** Nikko C. Panotes

### Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,  
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,  
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*



\*\*\*\*\*

To ensure the appropriateness of the instrument, the interview guide was validated by experts in the field of education. After the validation process, the researcher conducted the interviews with the selected participants. The responses gathered from the participants were transcribed, organized, and carefully analyzed.

The study used thematic analysis to identify common ideas and patterns in the participants' responses. Through this process, themes were generated to describe the challenges experienced by online tutors and the coping strategies they used when teaching basic English to Korean students.

The following were the findings of the Study:

The challenges faced by online tutors in teaching basic English to Korean students were: Grammar structure and vocabulary difficulties, pronunciation and oral language difficulties, students' confidence and engagement, and language barriers, student diversity, and technical issues.

The coping strategies employed by online English tutors to overcome the challenges were: simplifying instruction and clear explanations, scaffolding speaking development, creating a supportive learning environment, interactive activities and visual aids, and adaptation to technical issues.

## Conclusion

The findings of the study suggest that teaching basic English in an online environment requires tutors to go beyond traditional teaching methods. Tutors need to be flexible, patient,

\*\*\*\*\*

### Editorial Team

**Editor-in-Chief:** Alvin B. Punongbayan

**Associate Editor:** Andro M. Bautista

**Managing Editor:** Raymart O. Basco

**Web Editor:** Nikko C. Panotes

### Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,  
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,  
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*



\*\*\*\*\*

and responsive to the diverse learning needs of students. The differences between the Korean and English language create unique learning barriers, which require tutors to adjust their instructional approaches and provide clear guidance for students.

The study also highlights the importance of building a positive and supportive learning environment where students feel comfortable participating in speaking activities. When tutors encourage students and provide constructive feedback, students are more likely to develop confidence in using the English language.

Another insight from the study is that online teaching presents both opportunities and challenges. While online platforms allow tutors to connect with students from different parts of the world, they also require tutors to be prepared for technical issues and to find creative ways to keep students engaged during lessons. Effective online teaching therefore requires tutors to continuously adapt their strategies and develop innovative approaches to support student learning.

Overall, the findings indicate that successful online English instruction depends on the tutors' ability to combine effective teaching strategies, supportive communication, and adaptability in handling the dynamic nature of online learning.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **Editorial Team**

**Editor-in-Chief:** Alvin B. Punongbayan

**Associate Editor:** Andro M. Bautista

**Managing Editor:** Raymart O. Basco

**Web Editor:** Nikko C. Panotes

### **Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:**

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,  
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,  
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*



## References

- Bauman, N.R. (2023). Effects of pronunciation training using automatic speech recognition on pronunciation accuracy of Korean EFL learners. *English Teaching*, 78(1), 3–23.
- Bolliger, D.U., & Halupa, C. (2021). An investigation of instructors' online teaching readiness. Retrieved from <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8405040/>
- Cahyaningrum, A. (2023). English pronunciation by Korean EFL learners on Hilokal language educational application. *ELSYA: Journal of English Language Studies*.
- Chun, S., Jeon, H., & Shin, S. (2025). Reading.help: Supporting EFL readers with proactive and on-demand explanation of English grammar and semantics. *arXiv*.
- Financial Times*. (2025). South Korea's English education boom.
- Ho, T.T.H., & Truong, V. (2022). Students' speaking anxiety in English as a foreign language classroom. *HNUE Journal of Science*.
- Jang, H. (2024). Online teaching stress among Korean EFL teachers: A three-year study. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Language Education*.
- Jeffery, P. (2022). Cultural norms in Korean classrooms. *TESOL Journal*, 13(2), 45–58.
- Kim, S. (2025). Engaging with language play in Korean EFL classrooms. *Applied Linguistics*.
- Lee, J. (2012). Reassessment of English-only approach in EFL context. *Multilingual Education*.
- Lee, S. (2024). Challenging native speakerism in Korean college English courses. *ELT Journal*.
- Luton, T., & Luton, K. (2011). Structured speaking prompts for Korean EFL learners. *Journal of Language Teaching*, 6(3), 34–52.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Editorial Team

**Editor-in-Chief:** Alvin B. Punongbayan

**Associate Editor:** Andro M. Bautista

**Managing Editor:** Raymart O. Basco

**Web Editor:** Nikko C. Panotes

### Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,  
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,  
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*



\*\*\*\*\*

Martin, F., Xie, K., & Bolliger, D.U. (2022). Engaging learners in the emergency transition to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/15391523.2021.1991703>

Moskowitz, S., & Dewaele, J.-M. (2021). Is teacher happiness contagious? The link between teacher happiness and student attitudes toward language learning. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*.

Namaziandost, E., & Çakmak, F. (2020). An account of EFL learners' self-efficacy and gender in the flipped classroom model. *Education and Information Technologies*, 25, 4041–4055. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10639-020-10167-7>

Park, S.-Y., & Lee, S. (2019). Korean EFL learners' identification of English consonant contrasts. *Journal of Studies in Language*, 11(2), 67–82.

ResearchGate. (2025). Practitioner challenges in online ESL tutoring.

Song, J. (2023). Teacher vulnerability and professional identity in Korean language classrooms. *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education*.

Xie, C., & Lan, G. (2025). The effectiveness of task-based language teaching in improving communicative competence. *International Journal of Advanced and Applied Sciences*, 12(1), 263–273. <https://doi.org/10.21833/ijaas.2025.01.025>

Xie, F., & Derakhshan, A. (2021). A conceptual review of positive teacher interpersonal communication behaviors in the instructional context. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 708490. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.708490>

\*\*\*\*\*

## Editorial Team

**Editor-in-Chief:** Alvin B. Punongbayan

**Associate Editor:** Andro M. Bautista

**Managing Editor:** Raymart O. Basco

**Web Editor:** Nikko C. Panotes

## Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez, Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas, Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*

# INSTABRIGHT e-GAZETTE

ISSN: 2704-3010

Volume VII, Issue III

February 2026

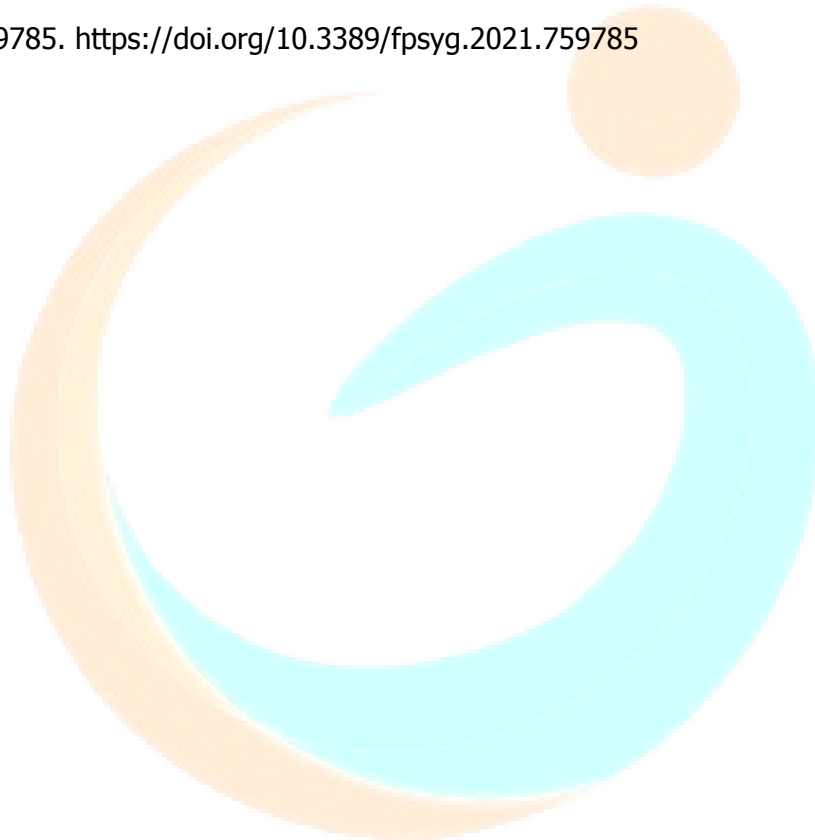
Available online at <https://www.instabrightgazette.com>



\*\*\*\*\*

Zhao, H., & Yang, X. (2023). Enhancing Chinese students' academic engagement: The effect of teacher support and teacher–student rapport. *Frontiers in Psychology, 14*, 1188507. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1188507>

Zhou, X. (2021). Toward the positive consequences of teacher–student rapport for students' academic engagement in the practical instruction classrooms. *Frontiers in Psychology, 12*, 759785. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.759785>



\*\*\*\*\*

## Editorial Team

**Editor-in-Chief:** Alvin B. Punongbayan

**Associate Editor:** Andro M. Bautista

**Managing Editor:** Raymart O. Basco

**Web Editor:** Nikko C. Panotes

### Manuscript Editors / Reviewers:

Chin Wen Cong, Christopher DC. Francisco, Camille P. Alicaway, Pinky Jane A. Perez,  
Mary Jane B. Custodio, Irene H. Andino, Mark-Jhon R. Prestoza, Ma. Rhoda E. Panganiban, Rjay C. Calaguas,  
Mario A. Cudiamat, Jesson L. Hero, Albert Bulawat, Cris T. Zita, Allan M. Manaloto, Jerico N. Mendoza

\*\*\*\*\*