



**TUTORS' EXPERIENCES IN TEACHING ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS TO
KOREAN STUDENTS ENROLLED IN ONLINE CLASSES: BASES FOR
INTERVENTION MEASURES**

NESTLYN JOYCE BEJARE
TUTOR
TALKSTATION
bejarenestlynjoyce@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This qualitative research was conducted to determine the tutors' experiences in teaching the oral communication skills of Korean students enrolled in online classes as bases for intervention measures. The following themes were identified in terms of benefits and privileges: performance certificates and incentives, opportunities for cultural exchange, and government benefits and healthcare insurance; in terms of facilities: access to a wide range of teaching materials and access to functional and good quality equipment. Tutors' development themes were: improve English skills, improve teaching skills, establish confidence and self-worth, and training and competent trainers. Learning environment, the themes were: private space for tutors, personalized teaching materials, and accessible and hustle-free tutor's area. The themes were identified about challenges they encountered: language barrier, attitude problem, and accessible and technical difficulties. The coping strategies employed to overcome the challenges were: using plain language and examples, using translators, using visual aids and realia, and building

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wholesome teaching-learning environment. Intervention measures were proposed as a result of the study.

Keywords: *Tutors' Experiences, Oral Communication Skills, Korean Students, Online Classes, Intervention Measures*

INTRODUCTION

Learning English as a second language is an advantage since it is a universal language, but there are many grammar rules to master, sentence patterns to follow, and many vocabulary words to familiarize with. These are the reasons why there is a need to improve students' communication skills especially in oral communication, which nowadays is said to be a must in a person's social interaction. It helps students to transfer ideas and share information, messages, or emotion to others. However, it is not easy for beginners to learn a second language because they have to adapt their native language to the second language. It differs in sentence patterns, words, and pronunciation. If tutors of English as a second language do not know how to handle the subject, students may stop altogether and see English as a difficult subject.

According to the ETS Global (2020), multilingualism is becoming an increasingly valuable skill in today's environment. Speaking a foreign language is not only increases work options but also allows to connect with people and learn more about different cultures, places, and lifestyles.

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One of the things the nation does well that stimulates the economy is its proficiency in the English language. In 2012, it even surpassed India to make the Philippines the world's most popular destination for voice outsourcing. The number of international students studying English is also increasing as a result of higher-quality, more affordable English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. The ability Filipinos to provide flexibility and accountability to companies they have worked for makes them ideal candidates for teaching positions. As most of tutorial clients are from neighboring countries such as South Korea, Taiwan, Japan, and Vietnam, they take advantage of the little time zone difference (Pajuleras, 2020).

The main issue for Korean language learners is the difference between their native Korean and English. The two languages differ greatly in their grammatical structures, phonetics, and pronunciation. For Korean speakers learning English, this results in a variety of pronunciation issues since many English sounds are solely lacking from the Korean language (Dunsmore, 2018).

As an English Second Language tutor for five years, the researcher has observed that teaching beginners to learn a second language is quite challenging. Aside from comprehension skills and communication skills that are not yet polished, Korean students really need to learn basic sentence patterns which are totally different in their sentence patterns. Korean accent is very distinct because Koreans do not speak English on a daily basis nor practice speaking English in Korean society. In addition, there are English language sounds that do not exist in the Korean language; these hinder their oral communication. It requires much patience and energy to

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motivate and capture the student's interest. If the English as Second Language tutor does not know how to handle beginners, the students get bored in the class, become less motivated, and see English as difficult subject which may lead them to quit online classes.

Thus, the researcher conducted this study on tutors' experiences in teaching oral communication skills in English to Korean students enrolled in online classes as bases for intervention measures.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

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

Research Method

The descriptive research method was used in the study, with in-depth interviews to identify the tutors' experiences in teaching oral communication skills to Korean students enrolled in online classes.

The goal of a descriptive research design is to gather data in a methodical manner in order to assess a population, circumstance, or phenomenon. In particular, it helps in providing

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answers to the research problem's what, when, where, and how inquiries as opposed to its why.

In contrast to experimental research, it is crucial to remember that when using a descriptive research approach, the researcher does not control or change any factors. Rather, only the variables are recognized, observed, and quantified (Voxcov, 2021).

Research Design

The study used the qualitative design using phenomenological approach. As explained by Tenny, et al. (2022), It's an area of study that looks deeper into issues facing the actual world. Qualitative research aids in the generation of hypotheses as well as the further investigation and understanding of quantitative data, as opposed to gathering numerical data points or intervening or introducing treatments as in quantitative research. Rather than addressing how many or how much, it addresses hows and whys.

This study used an in-depth interview guide to collect information about tutors' experiences in teaching oral communication skills to Korean students enrolled in online classes. The researcher asked the respondents to freely respond to the questions based on their experiences in order to gather relevant data.

Participants in the Study

The selection of the participants in the study was based on a strategy referred to as "purposeful selection" technique. According to Palinkas, et al. (2015), it is widely used in

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qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest. The participants were ten (10) tenured English tutors who had experience teaching Korean students in Iloilo City for not less than six months. They earned their four-year degree course, took English test with a passing score, did demonstration and evaluated by the managers before they were hired. They had undergone training and reached the qualifications to become tenured tutors. The researcher assigned pseudonyms to protect the privacy of the respondents.

Sampling Design

Purposive sampling was used in choosing the participants based on a set of criteria which were ten tenured tutors' experiences in teaching oral communication skills to Korean students enrolled in online classes at Talkstation for not less than six months. These tutors completed the training and acquired the required qualifications of Talkstation.

Research Instrument

The researcher used interview guide questions as research instrument to obtain thorough information throughout the interview process.

The interview guide questions had major questions related to the study, focusing only on the tutors' experiences in teaching oral communication skills to Korean students for not less than

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six months. Respondents were encouraged to freely and significantly respond to the questions asked.

Validity of Research Instrument

According to Patino and Ferreira (2018), the manner in which the results among study participants represent actual findings among similar individuals outside the study is referred to as the study's validity.

The research instrument was validated in order to remove the possibility of ambiguity among the questions and maximize the potential responses from participants.

The interview guide created by the researcher was presented to the adviser for assessment and revision. A panel of experts reviewed the prepared interview guide for content and face validation. Revisions were carefully documented and suggestions and corrections were thoroughly implemented.

Data Gathering Procedures

After the panel of experts gave the study its seal of approval, the data collection process started. Thereafter, the researcher secured permits to conduct the study from the manager of the facility.

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The researcher reached out to the respondents before or after their classes to ask them to answer the interview-guide questions. The researcher reassured the participants that their responses would be kept in absolute confidentiality.

The researcher recorded, assessed, and analyzed thoroughly all in-depth information acquired after the interviews.

Data Analyses

The data gathered for the study were written up, assessed, and analyzed using thematic analysis. Kelly (2023) defined data analysis as the procedure for transforming, cleansing, and processing unprocessed data in order to extract pertinent, usable information that aids in commercial decision-making. By providing helpful information and insights—which are frequently shown in the form of tables, graphs, charts, and images—the process helps lower the risks associated with making decisions. According to Maguire and Delahunt (2017), The purpose of thematic analysis is to identify themes, that are relevant or intriguing patterns in data, and then use these themes to address the research or make a statement about an issue. A strong thematic analysis does more than just summarize data; it analyzes and makes meaning of it.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study aimed at determining the tutors' experiences in teaching the oral communication skills to Korean students enrolled in online classes as bases for intervention measures.

This qualitative research involved ten English tutors teaching oral communication skills to Korean students at Talkstation for not less than six months.

The instrument used was a researcher-made in depth interview guide to elicit the tutors' experiences in teaching the oral communication skills to Korean students enrolled in online classes as bases for intervention measures. This instrument underwent validation from qualified experts.

To analyze the responses of the participants, the researcher used thematic analysis. Data were organized and relevant themes were selected and coded.

The study came up with the following findings:

Tutors had diverse views about teaching the oral communication skills to Korean students enrolled in online classes.

The respondents had positive views about the benefits and privileges that they got from the company. The company gave the tutors the needs they were expecting for. The following themes were identified in terms of benefits and privileges: performance certificates and incentives, opportunities for cultural change, and government benefits and healthcare insurance.

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Most of the tutors were satisfied with facilities. They had a broad range of sources and the equipment were very functional in helping them conduct classes very well. The English tutor's experiences in terms of facilities were: access to a wide range of teaching materials and access to functional and good quality and equipment.

Furthermore, tutors gained confidence and improved their skills through trainings with the help of the managers. The tutors' experiences in terms of tutor's development were: improve English skills, improve teaching skills, establish confidence and self-worth, and training and competent trainers.

Tutors found learning environment as stress free and privacy in their own cubicles. Having freedom to make their own materials for their own students, made them more creative and gave the best and needs of the students. In terms of learning environment, the English tutor's experiences were: private space for tutors, personalized teaching materials, and accessible and hustle free tutor's area.

Communication difficulty was one of the top challenges tutors had experience in teaching Koreans. In addition, negative attitude of the students measured the patience of the tutors, followed by the computer problems which were unpredictable and greatly affected the class. The following themes were identified when the tutors were asked about their challenges encountered: language barrier, attitude problem and accessible and technical difficulties.

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Tutors found that simplifying the lesson made the class easily absorbed with the help of pictures and learning materials. Catching the attention with the interests of the students, and making good relationship, could strengthen the relationship of the tutor and the student. The coping strategies employed to overcome the challenges experienced by English tutors were: using plain language and examples, using translators, using visual aids and realia, and build wholesome teaching-learning environment.

Based on the findings, the following insights were drawn:

The benefits and privileges have a big impact in motivating the English tutors to strive harder and to earn more. They felt appreciated for their hard work.

Satisfaction with the facilities boosts the performance of the English tutors. Access to a large selection of instructional resources and to well-functioning, high-quality equipment are important factors.

The professional growth of tutors enhances their English abilities, teaching skills, confidence and self-worth. Skillful and helpful trainers have meaningful contribution to the development of the English tutors.

The English tutors' performance is significantly affected by their learning environment. If tutors are placed in a quiet, private space conducive to learning and equipped with personalized and customized plans for teaching, they become efficient and effective.

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Teaching is quite difficult, particularly when students are not highly proficient. More perseverance, effort, and consideration for the circumstances of the students are required. In addition, it is difficult to completely eliminate technical issues. It is the kind of situation where the tutor needs to be ready.

Simplifying lessons is very helpful for the tutors in overcoming obstacles in teaching oral communication skills to Korean students. Providing examples is one of the best ways so that students would have ideas to share their own thoughts. Utilizing translators especially for beginners has a big impact on effective to communication. Using visual aids enables students to absorb and apply for better understanding of English lessons. There are slow learners so tutors have to simplifying everything. Tutors must understand and allot much patience and effort for the improvement of the students.

CONCLUSION

In light of the findings and insights arrived at in this study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

- Tutors must be trained on Korean culture especially in introducing the topics to which Koreans are sensitive to avoid complaints from students or parents.
- Tutors should tell the Korean students to refrain from relying solely on Papago as a translator, because it could result in lack of motivation to think and answer in English.

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•Trainers should monitor the class if tutors follow the set rules. The trainings should not be only for the tutors' eyes and ears; they must be undertaken with actions.

•The headquarters in Korea must be informed about the case of tutors who have students with attitude issues, particularly those who have undesirable behavior.

•IT experts must conduct workshops about technical problems on how to address the issues. A power-point presentation basic guide should be available in fixing them.

•The company must provide fine hand puppets or character headbands, trending toys in Korea, or other play things for the students.

•Tutors should encourage students to speak more in class in order to improve their oral skills.

•Trips to Korea to learn Korean culture and to see Korea in reality may be given to the best performers for their hard work and consistency.

•Management should arrange for an exchange program to be participated in by the tutors.

•Similar studies may be undertaken to confirm the findings of this study in terms of the tutors' experiences in teaching oral communication skills to Korean students enrolled in online classes in order to deepen one's understanding of the themes revealed in the study.

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