



LIVED EXPERIENCES OF ENGLISH TEACHERS IN THE KOREAN TUTORIAL CENTERS: IMPLICATIONS ON EDUCATION LEARNING INSTITUTIONS

CHRISTOPHER S. ALCOS
PHINMA University of Iloilo
alcoschristopher27@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

This qualitative research was carried out to ascertain the actual experiences of English teachers in the Korean Tutorial Centers and its implications for educational learning institutions. The data were gathered using a researcher-made questionnaire through in-depth interviews. The collected qualitative data ran through thematic analysis. The challenges encountered by English Teachers were misbehaved students, demanding parents, language barriers, and dissimilar cultures and traditions. On the other hand, the coping strategies were class management techniques, differentiated instruction, building rapport, and technology integration. In addition, the implications on education learning institutions were curriculum development, professional development, workload and working environments on educator well-being, and language proficiency development in English education. From the insights of the narratives, the implications on educational learning institutions were identified based on the results of this study.

Keywords: *English Teacher, Korean tutorial Center, Education Learning Institutions, Implications*

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INTRODUCTION

Today's worldwide society has made teaching English as a second language (ESL) more important than ever in an era where language competency is commonly required for social, professional, and academic success. The need for qualified ESL teachers is rising on a worldwide scale. But nothing is known about teachers' experiences who choose to teach ESL. Several things influence a person's decision to become an ESL teacher, embracing their objectives, background in education, cultural milieu, and job possibilities. Some people may choose to become ESL teachers for pragmatic reasons, like stable work or the availability of jobs.

ESL tutors have a diverse array of experiences, both pleasant and negative, once they enter the profession of teaching ESL. Gaining great teaching experience, forming meaningful connections with kids from different backgrounds, and witnessing students' improvement in language proficiency are positive experiences. Language hurdles, cultural differences, problems with classroom management, a lack of resources, and the need to modify teaching methods to accommodate learners' various requirements are a few of these challenges. However, ESL teachers also have to deal with numerous more challenges, like communication gaps, cultural differences, problems with classroom management, a lack of resources, and a range of motivation and engagement levels from their students.

Teachers encountered several challenges when instructing students when teaching English to foreign students. Teachers teach these skills to their learners. Teaching competency in the English language to young students faces certain challenges for English teachers,

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according to Mukminin et al. (2022). They learned several strategies the teachers used to get past obstacles when teaching young pupils English. Regarding the instruction of listening skills, teachers faced little difficulties. Participants stated that even though learners merely needed to be able to listen, teaching speaking skills was more challenging than teaching listening skills (Mukminin et al. 2022).

Understanding the difficulties experienced by ESL tutors teaching English as a second language in Korean centers would be improved by the research. The purpose of this study is to examine ESL tutors' experiences with an emphasis on the challenges they face and their coping strategies working in the sector. By obtaining a more profound comprehension of these encounters, we can recognize their implications on educational learning institutions to improve training initiatives and assist prospective ESL instructors in their career advancement.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research method, research design, participants of the study, sampling design, data-gathering procedure, research instrument, and data analysis used in the study. The purpose of the study was to ascertain English teachers' actual experiences in the Korean Tutorial Centers and their implications on education learning institutions for the years 2024-2025.

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Research Method

The study included in-depth interviews as part of a qualitative research methodology to identify the lived experiences of English Teachers in the Korean Tutorial Centers and its implications on education learning institutions.

During the interview, the interviewee and the interviewer were permitted to sit apart and consider the questions regarding specific experiences as an English instructor. Through the participants' answers to the questions, the goal was to obtain the primary or essential opinions of the participants regarding a particular topic in a social setting (Patton, 2015).

Research Design

The phenomenological technique in the study, a qualitative research design was employed. According to Creswell (2013) and Fundal (2021), A qualitative research method called phenomenology highlights how similar living experiences are among a given population. Locating an explanation of the real nature of the particular phenomenon is the approach's main objective.

Participants in the Study

The participants were ten (10) English as a Secondary Language (ESL) teachers, Five (5) were employed at Talkstation, Mapa St, Iloilo City Proper, two males, and three females. Two female participants are licensed teachers and earned a Bachelor of Secondary Education degree with English as a major. With a Master of Arts in Education and a focus on teaching English as a second language, one of the female participants holds a teaching credential. A Bachelor of Science degree in psychology was obtained by one of the male participants, while

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another degree in architecture was obtained by another. The other five (5) participants were employed at BoxTalk Hub (Inspring Inc.), Quezon St, Iloilo City Proper: all female tutors. Three of the participants were graduates of Bachelor of Education and were all licensed teachers. The other two respondents were graduates of Business Management and Industrial Education. Their age range was 24–41. Four of them were single and one was married. Their length of experience in the ESL industry ranged from four months to more than five years and all of them had experience with other ESL companies. A participant with thirteen (13) years of experience was one of them as an ESL tutor, including her previous companies. A technique known as purposive sampling served as the foundation for choosing study participants.

Sampling Design

A technique known as purposive sampling served as the foundation for choosing study participants. One kind of non-random sampling method is purposeful sampling. According to Hassan (2022), purposeful sampling is the intentional choosing a sample that will most likely produce information that will solve the research problem. This type of sampling strategy is frequently used in qualitative research because it enables the researcher to choose individuals who have direct experience with the topic being studied.

According to Ellis (2016), as cited in Wounds UK (2016), various textbooks recommend various sample sizes for phenomenological studies, although in practice, a sample of 6 to 20 respondents is sufficient. As a result, only ten people were recruited for the study.

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Research Instrument

The research tool for the study was an interview guide that the researcher had written. Given that the study needed qualitative data—which are primarily narrative—this was the right tool to utilize.

According to DeCarlo (2018), in-depth or intensive interviews are other names for qualitative interviews. Because the researcher has a certain theme in mind for the respondent, these interviews are categorized as semi-structured. However, because the questions are open-ended, it is possible that each respondent will not receive the same format or sequence of questions. Finding out what respondents believe to be significant about the subject at hand, in their own words, is the main objective of an in-depth interview. The interview guide was validated by an expert panel.

Validity of the Research Instrument

The panel of experts was requested to validate the researcher-made interview guide. The panel of experts was composed of a research expert, an English major, and a qualitative research expert. Before the study instrument was finalized, all feedback and recommendations about its validity were taken into account.

Data-gathering Procedures

Permission was given to the researcher to conduct the investigation by the English as a Secondary Language (ESL) teachers at Talkstation and BoxTalk Hub (Inspiring Inc.). A letter of consent was obtained from the office of the Human Resource Department of Talkstation,

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Iloilo, and BoxTalk Hub (Inspiring Inc.). A consent letter was also secured from each of the participants. The interview, carried out in person while maintaining appropriate distance and following the right procedures, started asking for the personal information of the participants, which was followed by the main questions.

The researcher set a convenient schedule with the participants, gathered them in one classroom, and asked them to answer the provided interview-guide questions. The participants were given the researcher's word that their responses would be kept completely private.

After the interview, the researcher wrote down, interpreted, and analyzed all the comprehensive and in-depth information which were collected.

Data Analyses

The data gathered for the study was interpreted, transcribed, and examined using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis, as stated by Braun and Clarke (2006) in Blanza (2022), is "a qualitative analytic method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data." Enabling the data set to be richly detailed and minimally organized. As a result, the researcher used the six-step thematic analysis method because it is the most influential and widely accepted approach (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Understanding the data, creating preliminary codes, searching for patterns, assessing themes, recognizing and labeling themes, and creating the report are some of these steps.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research was carried out to find out the lived experiences of English Teachers in the Korean Tutorial Centers and its implications on education learning institutions for the school year 2024-2025.

The phenomenological approach was employed in this study as part of qualitative research. This strategy worked well since the researcher looked at a group of people to learn more about their lives in general and certain parts of their lives in particular, with an emphasis on practices.

The respondents of the study were five (5) ESL tutors from Talkstation under the Happy Edu Corporation and five (5) ESL tutors from BoxTalk Hub (Inspring Inc.) throughout the academic year 2024-2025.

The research instrument used in the investigation was a researcher-made questionnaire. This underwent validation from qualified experts in the field.

The researcher employed theme analysis to examine the participants' responses. The information was arranged, and pertinent themes were chosen and classified.

The study came up with the following findings:

The study involved ten ESL tutors. Five participants were from Talkstation (Happy Edu), including two BSEd-English graduates, one MAED-TESL graduate, one BS Psychology graduate, and one BS Architecture graduate. The other five tutors were from BoxTalk Hub

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(Inspiring Inc.), with three holding education degrees and two holding degrees in business management and industrial education.

The group included eight females and two males, with nine being single and one married. Their work experience ranged from over four months to five years, and eight participants had experience with other ESL companies. One participant had a total of 15 years of ESL experience, including their current role.

The following themes were identified when the participants were asked about their experiences: minimal workload, language proficiency development, working environments, and adaptability. The challenges were misbehaved students, demanding parents, language barriers, and dissimilar cultures and traditions.

Given the results, the following insights were drawn: ESL teachers have positive and negative experiences in their workplace. The positive working environment has also a big impact on why some ESL teachers stay in their workplace; not being pressured by the managers about deadlines and paperwork and also the people they are working with. One possible strategy for enhancing teacher well-being is to concentrate on relational working environments. Teachers must be culturally sensitive, culturally aware teachers can prevent miscommunications and promote an inclusive classroom atmosphere.

In addition, ESL teachers must adopt different class management techniques because some students are distracted in class. Teachers should use different ways of delivering the lessons because each student learns differently. To successfully accommodate a variety of

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learning methods, ethnic backgrounds, and language competency levels, ESL teachers must implement a variety of classroom management strategies. This helps to foster a welcoming and supportive educational setting for all students. Open communication between the teachers and parents is also essential for the child's improvement. Open communication between parents and teachers is crucial because it promotes understanding between the two parties, aids in student learning, tackles issues early, and helps establish a reliable support network for students at home and school.

The following themes were identified when the participants were asked about their coping strategies: class management techniques, differentiated instruction, building rapport; and technology integration.

The implications on education learning institutions were workload and working environments on educator well-being to keep instructors on staff, educational institutions need to address these issues; language proficiency development in English education to develop student's academic and professional success, as English, is a global language; professional development and support for teachers in developing their English language proficiency training; curriculum development that would allow educators to modify their lessons to meet the needs of each pupil focusing on the student's improvement, not on paperwork only; integration of technology has to be integrated into lessons knowing that the learners nowadays are more engaged in technologies; and navigating parental expectations through open communication and mutual respect, individuals can foster a supportive environment where both sides feel heard and valued.

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CONCLUSION

The following suggestions are made in light of the conclusions and revelations from this study.

To foster a positive learning environment, ESL teachers ought to get comprehensive instruction on how to handle disruptive conduct in online classrooms. Virtual classroom management strategies including establishing clear expectations, involving students in debates, and coolly handling difficult circumstances should all be included in this training. Tutors must learn how to deal with distractions, such as using a smartphone, and see the early warning signs of misbehavior. Monitoring students' focus regularly might help them develop responsibility. To avoid misconceptions, teachers should gently handle problems and keep lines of communication open. If misconduct continues, they should also let parents know. The ESL industry should set realistic goals and development expectations for their students to allay the worries of picky parents. Managing expectations requires clear communication, which includes frequent progress reports. Setting limits is just as vital as listening to parents and demonstrating empathy. Teachers and businesses must strike a balance between being attentive and setting reasonable expectations because parents pay for the service. To make parents feel appreciated, ESL teachers should be proactive, helpful, and equipped with answers when responding to their concerns. In addition to explicitly outlining the goals of the course, teachers should stress that language acquisition is a gradual, personalized process. By emphasizing student achievement, these tactics provide a positive and encouraging approach to dealing with demanding parents.

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Since the ESL industry is teaching foreign students, ESL teachers should be educated about cultural sensitivity. The ESL industry should give workshops to teachers about cultures and traditions so that teachers are aware of what to teach in class.

Giving minimal workload to ESL teachers. The majority of the responses in the study mentioned being not overworked in the ESL industry made them stay. People in higher positions should give only needed at work that benefits the learners and teachers. Giving positive working environments to the workers by having building or tea time to respect boundaries and to know each other's personalities.

ESL is a one-on-one class. Each student has a different learning ability. ESL teachers should be trained by the company to undergo training and workshops about the different teaching styles or how to conduct differentiated instruction based on the level of the students.

Another research study is encouraged to be conducted to confirm the study's conclusions in terms of the challenges and coping strategies of ESL teachers to deepen one's understanding of the mentioned themes.

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