



**THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF ENGLISH TEACHERS IN TECHNOLOGY
UTILIZATION IN THE NEW NORMAL EDUCATION: A BASIS
FOR INTERVENTION PLAN**

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ABSTRACT

Designed with qualitative-transcendental phenomenology, this study aimed at understanding the lived experience of Public High School English Teachers in Technology Utilization in the New Normal. The researcher utilized the framework of Moustakas (1994) and Creswell (2017) which consisted of bracketing, horizontalization, theme clustering, textural description, structural description, and essence. Eleven (11) themes emerged from the verbatim transcriptions. A comprehensive investigation of teachers' lived experiences focused on two specific issues: their experiences with technology utilization and how they responded to challenges and demands to improve their performance as English teachers. Among the lived experiences revealed were the absolute necessity of technology in a virtual environment, the lack of system support and technology access that hampered the teaching-learning process, the importance of technological knowledge as a fundamental factor in learning delivery, the view of technology as an empowering experience for both students and teachers and the utilization of technology as a galvanizing instrument for academic performance enhancement. The participating teachers face the challenges and demands of technology utilization by emphasizing adaptability as a precursor to effective technology utilization; highlighting technology as a catalyst for innovation and high-impact performance; the need to exercise DIY (Do-It-Yourself) Approach and collaboration; transforming roadblocks into opportunities; revitalizing student participation

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and engagement; and, most importantly, technology utilization has become a gateway to strengthen teaching competence. The findings indicate that in the changing landscape of education, particularly in the context of the new normal, technology utilization plays a crucial role in the instructional process, and positive learning outcomes for students. To effectively utilize technology, teachers must accentuate the significance of adaptability and adjustments as prerequisites in the educative process. It also necessitates the provision of technical assistance from school administrators and supervisors to increase teacher productivity and student engagement.

Keywords: *technology utilization, lived experience, new normal education, English teachers*

INTRODUCTION

Technology integration is the use of technology equipment in the classroom that may or may not impact students' learning ability. It includes not only training and learning how to use technology, but also integrating it into classroom lessons. Administrators learned that teachers need effective help to integrate technology into their classrooms. Riel & Polin (2018) postulated that the internet is seen by learning technology researchers not just as a delivery medium but also as a potential means to enhance the quality of learning experiences and outcomes. One widely held belief is that acquiring a complex body of knowledge efficiently necessitates a community of learners and that online technology may be used to grow and assist such communities, hence promoting "participatory" educational approaches (Barab, Squire, & Dueber, 2020). According to a US survey, while 90% of K-12 teachers believed that technology is vital for student success, 60% felt unprepared and lacked sufficient training on how to use and incorporate

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technology in their teaching (Roland, 2015) as cited by Aldred (2020). In another study, Bolkan (2017) affirms that nearly 78% of teachers agreed that they haven't received training to effectively use technology. Hence, teachers and even school principals need to be trained on how to effectively use technology in the classroom. Meanwhile, to keep up with the growing popularity of e-commerce, Pham (2019) reported that the Vietnamese government and the Ministry of Education and Training invested in IT and Internet infrastructures. In a developing country like Vietnam, these factors are critical. Ensuring student satisfaction and learning outcomes is important.

In the Philippines, educational leaders recognized the need for alternative instructional approaches through technology, and the concerns about the support that is provided to educators, in the context of the new normal education and beyond the Post-COVID period. Similarly, a lack of technology training among teachers and pupils prolongs the digital divide. As children get a greater understanding of technology, educators are left behind (Friedman & Alley, 2010; Gibson, 2001; Groff, 2013) as cited by Aldred (2020). In her article "Using Technology in the Classroom", Boles (2018) advises instructors to make the most of the technology they have and use it with students. This is intensified by the idea of Barshay (2019) on introducing technology to young children to prepare them for the future. Many teachers have introduced flipped learning in the classroom. A flipped classroom combines in-class activities with a home-based internet component. According to Westermann (2018), this approach is comparable to Levin and Heibsch's blended learning theories. The online component of a flipped classroom often consists of a video lesson sent home with students. The students would finish their homework at home and bring it to class the next day.

Technology plays a critical role in the instructional process, student performance, and positive learning outcomes in the new normal education. Many educators and experts focused on blended learning in the secondary classroom. Barshay (2019) underscored the importance of introducing students to blended learning and technology to prepare them for the technological

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advances in our society. According to Rahmawati et al. (2020), the teacher's ability to guide the learning process through technology integration, students' communication, learning framework, self-efficacy, need, and interests, prior experience with technology, and advancement of technology, as well as access to various ICT Tools, are all important factors for PBL success. Sana et al. (2016) emphasized that OBE, the Philippine equivalent of Project-Based Learning (PBL), prepares students to meet the highest standards of a profession. These standards are incorporated into program outcomes, competencies, and instructional goals. These same components guide the selection of topics, teaching methods, and assessment criteria. The use of popular technology such as learning management systems and other online technology, or applications can help students learn more effectively. Therefore, teachers should use appropriate teaching strategies and techniques to help students achieve specific goals and level exit outcomes.

Several gaps were identified after a thorough review of the existing literature and studies. There haven't been nearly enough studies that thoroughly investigated the lived experiences of English teachers in technology utilization in the new normal education. The majority of the literature and studies on technology usage were from other countries. Similarly, there was no phenomenological research conducted on the topic considering the locale of the researcher, which was in Cabuyao City, Laguna, Philippines. Taking into account the foregoing, the researcher conducts this study to describe and understand the lived experiences of selected senior high school public teachers in technology utilization in the new normal education, intending to present the essence of the phenomenon that could shed light on this approach from a deeper qualitative analysis during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study aimed to examine the lived experiences of selected public senior high school teachers in technology utilization in the new normal education in the Schools Division of Cabuyao City, Laguna. Specifically, this study would answer the following questions: (1) What are the participants' lived experiences in technology utilization in the new normal education? (2) How do the participants face the challenges and demands of

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technology utilization in the new normal education? (3) From the findings of the study, what intervention program for English Teachers may be proposed?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is transcendental phenomenology by Moustaka's approach. It aimed at describing and understanding the lived experience of selected public senior high school teachers in technology utilization by focusing on two central problems: 1) the participants' lived experience in technology utilization in the new normal education, and 2) how the participants face the challenges and demands in technology utilization in the new normal education. The participants of this study were composed of ten (10) English senior high school teachers of Cabuyao Integrated National High School, Cabuyao City, Laguna. This number of participants was recommended by Polkinghorne (1989) as cited by Creswell (2017) suggesting that researchers need to interview 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon. These individuals were intentionally selected by the researcher by conducting preliminary interviews to make sure that there was accessibility to them during the duration of the study. The public school teachers who were purposively selected in this study were non-native speakers of the English language and speak Tagalog, which is the primary language of the place. The researcher made sure that the participants were comfortable and articulate in expressing themselves, thus they were encouraged to speak English or Tagalog, as preferred, so the language barrier was avoided.

The key instrument utilized by the researcher was the research-based interview guide questions that served as a protocol evaluation form for the teachers' lived experiences in technology utilization in the new normal education and how they faced the challenges and demands of technology utilization in the new normal education.

The data on the phenomenon under study were collected from ten (10) English senior high school teachers consisting of their experiences in technology utilization, and how they faced the challenges and demands in the new normal education that served as the basis for their

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competency enhancement. After which, the researcher retrieved the survey form and the results were tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted based on the comments, responses, and suggestions utilized for the proposed technology utilization enhancement of English teachers of Cabuyao Integrated National High School.

The researcher secured permission from the school head of Cabuyao Integrated National High School. Similarly, she explained its purpose and at the same time asked for approval to conduct this study among English senior high school teachers. The flow of the study was explained to them, and they were asked to answer it diligently and accurately as much as possible.

A researcher-made questionnaire was crafted. This was validated by the expert-researchers in the field members of the SDO Cabuyao Research Council/Committee. As part and parcel of the teaching process, teachers were required to utilize technology in the classroom, be it in blended learning or face-to-face modality-of learning. The interview protocol was given to teacher participants for them to answer. The researcher utilized Facebook Messenger and Google Meet to address queries and clarifications from the respondents which ensured the clarity and effectiveness of the questionnaire given. In addition, the respondents were given deadlines to answer the intended questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This qualitative phenomenological study examined the lived experiences of English teachers in technology utilization in the new normal education as a basis for an intervention plan.

(1) What are the participants' lived experiences in technology utilization in the new normal education?

Theme 1: An Absolute Inevitability in Virtual Environment. As disclosed by the participants' experiences, using technology in a virtual environment helps teachers become more creative in delivering lessons. Learning has become more interactive with applications like Nearpod and Wordwall. Technology aided in facilitating remote instruction and collaboration.

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Google Meet for instance allows for live, synchronous instruction and online sharing of course materials. As the participants revealed in the following statement:

"The benefits of using technology in my virtual classroom have been numerous. I've been able to provide interactive and engaging instruction through the use of virtual whiteboards, breakout rooms, and interactive simulations. Additionally, I've been able to access a wider range of resources and materials to supplement my teaching. (P5) "

"It gives easy access to time and place when teaching. It allows us to search for students instead of being restricted by geographical boundaries. (P7)"

"In my experience, using technology in a virtual classroom has several advantages. One of the biggest advantages is the ability to conduct remote instruction and provide access to course materials remotely, which allows students to learn from anywhere. Likewise, using interactive tools such as virtual whiteboards, breakout rooms, and digital annotation software has helped to make instruction more interactive and appealing. (P10)"

The findings back up the study by Riel & Polin (2018) postulating that technology is seen by researchers not just as a delivery medium but also as a potential means to enhance the quality of learning experiences and outcomes. It acknowledges that technology utilization is crucial to ensure the effective delivery of learning outcomes to students. Furthermore, successfully obtaining a complex body of information needs the formation of a community of learners, and online technology may be used to foster and support such communities, hence boosting "participatory" educational practices in the classroom setting (Barab, Squire, & Dueber, 2020). In a sense, technology allows a shift from static learning materials to more dynamic interactive media content. Students frequently learn quicker and engage more when they are not simply passively listening to a teacher and reading textbooks but are also involved in interesting academic activities made possible by the use of technology.

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Theme 2: Lack of System Support and Technology Access As Deterrent to the Teaching-Learning Process. This theme underscored the participants' shared perception that the use of technology causes issues in the delivery of education since not all learners can relate to the technology that the teachers are employing. Virtual environments can be difficult to use effectively if someone is not tech-savvy. It requires a great deal of training and support systems coming from the school to completely equip teachers with digital literacy, which is essential in transmitting knowledge to students in this modern educational setup. Likewise, students must have access to reliable technology. It is a must that robust technical support for both students and teachers is provided. Correspondingly, arising issues include the cost of technology and its maintenance, lack of access to technology or the internet, and difficulties with the technical aspects. As stated by the participants:

"When it comes to technology utilization in the new normal education, one of the issues I find worth sharing is the importance of addressing the digital divide and ensuring that all students have access to the technology and internet required for remote learning. This is particularly important as we continue to rely on remote and hybrid learning models. (P5)"

Teachers should be well-equipped in using technology. If not, it's a struggle to deliver the lesson to students effectively. (P3)"

"A lack of training on the use of technology can also make me feel less confident in my ability to utilize technology in my teaching. Limited resources such as a lack of access to technology or the internet, can also hinder my ability to use technology in my instruction. Furthermore, troubleshooting technical issues or learning new technology can be time consuming, taking away time that could be spent on planning and delivering instruction. (P7)"

Supporting these statements, Bolkan (2017) affirmed that nearly 78% of teachers in the US agreed that they haven't received training to effectively use technology. Hence, teachers and even school principals need to be trained on how to effectively use technology in the classroom. Similarly, while 90% of K-12 teachers in the United States agree that technology is critical for

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student achievement, 60% feel unprepared and lack enough training on how to utilize and use technology in their teaching (Roland, 2015) as cited by Aldred, (2020). Computers, cellphones, laptops, and tablets have become essential tools for many students throughout the world to have access to study materials and help regarding their studies. As Mayol (2022) cited, the use of the internet and technology in education is more common than ever in the Philippines. Filipino students today require access to technology to learn effectively. Indeed, technology is a beneficial tool, no doubt and it has made a huge impact, but the major problem is that not every student has access to digital tools or technology. There are also students from lower-class families who cannot afford these tools. Along with this, these tech gadgets such as computers, laptops, smartphones, etc. can also be a distraction for students and it might even take them off their studies if they are not being regulated (Mayol, 2012).

Theme 3: Technological Know-how as Crucial Factor to Learning Delivery. Prevailing in this cluster of statements, the participants described the significance of technology utilization in achieving the desired learning outcomes of the curriculum. Online interactive grammar games for instance allowed students to actively participate in the lesson about the tenses of verbs. It is a huge help in the instructional process which stimulates students' interest. Additionally, there was an evident deeper understanding of the material, and students' scores on the quizzes improved significantly. Technological knowledge allows teachers to enhance the instructional process by generating engaging and aesthetically attractive resources that can help to boost student engagement and learning outcomes. Most importantly, it serves as an opportunity to empower themselves and bring the impact to the forefront of the educative process. As four participants claimed:

"I realized that technology will always be a part of the teaching-learning process. As teachers, we must maximize our potential to help 21st-century learners. (P8)"

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"I believe technology utilization is essential in the modern-day classroom as it allows for greater opportunity for engagement, collaboration, and creativity. It also enables students to access a variety of resources. (P6)"

"The use of technology in the classroom nowadays, in my view, is crucial since it increases opportunities for participation, teamwork, and creativity. Additionally, it gives students access to a wide range of materials. (P10)"

"Technology utilization is very useful nowadays as it gives easy access to information and gives fun learning to the students. (P7)"

This is echoed in the study of Pham (2019) stipulating that the Vietnamese government and the Ministry of Education and Training invested in IT and Internet infrastructures. In a developing country like Vietnam, technological knowledge is crucial. Technological factors put significance on increasing student satisfaction and positive learning outcomes. According to Mayol (2021), teachers provide an alternative learning strategy and possibilities in the learning process, ensuring that technology does not produce burnout or stagnancy. The essential premise of this sort of technology is to create learning simpler. It's also useful in the classroom while teaching different subjects, and it's tailored to individual student's learning styles. Similarly, educational leaders in the Philippines have recognized the necessity for alternate teaching methodologies using technology, particularly in the context of the new normal education and beyond the Post-COVID period (Dayagbil et al. 2021). Having the appropriate set of digital skills is critical not just for learning and employment readiness, but also for fostering more open, secure, and inclusive education (Bandura & Leal, 2022).

Theme 4: Technology in its Entirety. Another theme revealed how the participants viewed technology utilization as a whole in terms of their experiences in light of the new landscape of education. Technology has enabled collaboration and peer-to-peer learning, allowing teachers to be more flexible in their pedagogical approaches. It has also provided tailored feedback and support methods, which are critical for student

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success. Notwithstanding the challenges, technology has shown to be a vital element in the teaching-learning process, paving the way for overall improvement in students' learning experiences. And as such, recognizing these problems necessitates teachers designing strategies to address them and attain the educational learning goals. As emphasized by the participants:

"Technology utilization provides benefits that will enable both educators and students to become flexible, efficient, and innovative. It has revealed to me that it can be used to greatly impact the engagement of learners and to improve the teaching-learning process. (P4)"

"In terms of my experience, technology utilization has had a positive impact on my instructional process and my student's learning experience. However, I have also faced challenges such as technical difficulties, lack of training and support, limited resources, and time-consuming troubleshooting. Technology utilization has required me to continually learn and adapt to new technologies and tools to be effective in my teaching. (P5)"

"Overall, my teaching experience has shown me that technology utilization can be a great asset when it comes to engaging students and providing them with an effective learning experience. (P6)"

Affirming these conclusions, in the article "Using Technology in the Classroom", Boles (2018) advised instructors to make the most of the technology they have and use it with students. This is reinforced by Barshay's (2019) idea to introduce technology to young children to prepare them for the future. In the new normal education, technology plays a critical role in the instructional process, student performance, and positive learning outcomes. According to Rahmawati et al (2020), teachers' ability to guide learning through technology integration, students' communication, learning framework, self-efficacy, need, and interests, prior experience with technology, and access to ICT tools are all important factors for PBL success. In addition, Sana et al. (2016) emphasized that Outcome-Based Education equips students to fulfill the highest professional requirements. Learning management systems and other online technologies or apps, for instance, can help students study more successfully. Therefore, teachers should

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employ suitable technologies and instructional practices to assist students in achieving specified goals and level exit outcomes.

Theme 5: Technology as Galvanizing Tool for Elevated Students' Academic Performance.

Prevailing in this cluster of responses revealed the common thought shared by teachers that demonstrates the significant role played by technology use in addressing, if not improving, students' alarmingly poor academic performance. Many educators and graduate student researchers have attributed several factors to the low performance of Filipino students. It includes the quality of teachers, the teaching-learning process, the school curriculum, instructional materials, and administrative support (DOST-SEI, 2006). By far, the use of technology has assisted teachers in reducing the persistent issue of student low performance. It contributes to making teaching and learning more fascinating, dynamic, engaging, and enjoyable. As teachers, it is critical that they thoroughly explore and exhaust its potential to enhance the status of education in the community. As expressed by the participants:

"My experience with technology in a virtual has allowed me to create a more engaging and interactive learning environment for my students. For example, I've been able to use video conferencing tools (like Google Meet and Zoom) to facilitate group discussions. Further, I have been able to use technology to provide a more personalized learning experience for my students by tailoring my lessons to their specific needs and interests. (P1)"

"It makes students more engaged and helps them retain information. (P3)"

"Technology is undeniably important, but it should not hinder the poorer students to learn. Hence the government should provide this technology for students to utilize. It is a great instrument to effectively deliver the expected learning outcomes to students. (P10)"

"One significant benefit of integrating technology in teaching is that it helps to create a most engaging learning environment for including technology helps teachers to present the subject more interactively and creatively. (P9)"

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Technology improves information availability, accelerates learning, and helps students to put what they've learned into practice. It allows students to study new subjects and comprehend complex concepts (American University's School of Education Online, 2020). The capacity of the teacher to steer the process with technology is critical to the success of Project-Based Learning. Students' academic engagement is influenced by their usage of computer-based technologies (Rahmawati et al., 2020). Similarly, Schindler et al. (2017) stated that using technologies like web-conferencing software, blogs, wikis, social networking sites, and digital games has been shown to increase student engagement. Meanwhile, according to Nagel (2018), most experienced teachers employ technology. Teachers enjoy incorporating technology into the classroom because it encourages students to be more productive and creative. Technology benefits teachers and students alike.

(2) How do the participants face the challenges and demands of technology utilization in the new normal education?

Theme 6: Adaptability and Adjustment as Forerunner to Effective Technology

Utilization. Another theme that prevailed was the participants' recognition which highlights the importance of adaptability and adjustment as a pioneering reason to effectively utilize technology. Participants all agreed that as technology progresses, teachers should use digital tools as an intrinsic component of the curriculum. While the teacher controls the majority of technological decisions, they also lead the students in their independent use of the same digital tools. Such is essential as technology is always in a state of change since new developments are continually emerging. To get abreast with these developments, instructors must have the technical expertise to remain competitive and deliver the finest, if not the best, service to their students. As underscored by the participants:

"It is being important that teachers should be adaptive to the changing world of teaching. It entails the capacity to adjust, modify, and adapt one's pedagogical approach, styles, and strategies to address the needs of diverse learners. (P7)"

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"Every time I employ technology in the teaching-learning process, I realize the importance of being prepared for technical difficulties and being able to pivot and adapt when things don't go as planned. I've learned that despite the best preparations, there will always be challenges and it's important to have a backup plan to ensure that the learning can continue. (P5)"

"It is critical for us educators to be aware of the challenges in technology utilization and to devise strategies to address them such as acquiring training and support not only for us but more importantly to our learners and ensuring that all of them have access to the necessary technology and the internet. It's also worth noting that technology should not be viewed as a replacement for good teaching; rather, it should be viewed as a tool to support and improve the teaching-learning process. (P1)"

Supporting these accounts, Carstens (2021), expressed that there are several advantages and disadvantages of employing technology in the classroom. Teachers stated that classroom technology had a more favorable impact. Nonetheless, teachers believed they required more assistance to teach effectively. Teachers will need more personal training to become comfortable and competent with the technical and instructional components of using technology in the classroom. Similarly, more technological training is required for students to become more self-sufficient. Additionally, Rathore et. al (2015), underscores that technology, when properly used can help students develop the skills needed to survive in a complex, technologically driven knowledge-based economy. Teachers must constantly adapt to changing professional requirements, evolving educational technology resources, and varying needs across content disciplines and contexts (Guo, 2020). Kimmons, et. al. (2020) however noted that teachers can't foresee how their students will use educational technologies in the future or how technology will change over time. Hence, teachers' adaptability and adjustment to technology are critical for them to effectively deliver and accomplish the intended learning objectives of the lesson, despite the difficulties in integrating them into students' day-to-day learning engagement.

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Theme 7: A Precursor for Innovation and High Impact Performance. As disclosed by the participants, technological innovation results in better performance. It increases teachers' productivity and brings students new and better learning opportunities that improve their holistic well-being. Additionally, technology in the classroom provides teachers with more tools to support students. Aside from the conventional textbooks and worksheets, technology equips teachers with various tools to help students develop a better understanding of the material. Notably, technology impacted education through increased interactivity and class engagement of students. And more significantly, it leads to better overall comprehension, practical learning, time management, and combined learning methodologies that manifest in their performance. As argued by the participants:

"Technology helped me create interactive and engaging activities such as online quizzes, games, and discussions that promote active learning and student engagement as well as providing personalized instruction and feedback, catering to their individual needs and learning styles. It also helped me to provide opportunities for collaboration and peer-to-peer learning to my learners. (P1)"

"Overall, my experience with technology utilization has been positive. While there have been some challenges such as technical difficulties and the need for additional training, I have found that technology has been beneficial for both me and my students. I have continuously learned and adapted to new technology and new ways of teaching. I have found that as I have used technology more, I have become more proficient and efficient in utilizing it in my classroom. And I believe that technology utilization has made a positive impact on my student's learning experience. (P5)"

"They help me better organize my teaching materials and improve my students' engagement. They also improve communication with students, parents, and other faculty members. (P6)"

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This was consistent with Hebert's (2021) findings that the use of technology in student learning engagement, such as Digital Game-Based Learning (DGBL), is one successful medium that promotes students' four Cs: creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking. Video games have been proven in studies to generate interesting and compelling learning environments for pupils (Connolly et al., 2012). Furthermore, games encouraged a range of learning methods, according to Kebritchi and Hirumi (2008), while Danby et al. (2017) asserted that games enhance peer learning and social engagement.

Theme 8: DIY (Do-It-Yourself) Approach and Collaboration as Coping Mechanisms.

Technology utilization poses challenges in all modes of learning, for both teachers and students. It comprises a lack of technical skills and expertise, particularly in pedagogy and classroom management. There are other institutional challenges to overcome, such as leadership, class schedules, and school planning. Teachers' attitudes and beliefs about technology's benefits and relevance matter. All these, according to some participants can be addressed by learning new things. It is vital to seek assistance and support from more knowledgeable individuals. Investing in training is another way of enhancing one's knowledge of technology. Taking time to explore new technologies that may be accessible to both educators and learners is also useful. As the participants expressed:

"I gave time to immerse myself in the technology by studying and understanding its complexity. I gave time to watch video tutorials and read manuals to use applications like Canva, Photoshop, InDesign, etc. (P1)"

"I coped with the challenges of utilizing technology in the new normal education by adapting, discovering new learnings, and acquiring skills through attending seminars, workshops, training, and seeking assistance from colleagues. In addition, I learned through experiences, reflections, and suggestions from other people around me. (P2)"

"Coping with the challenges of utilizing technology in the new normal education has been an ongoing process. One of the helpful things is the training and support I have received."

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Collaborating with peers and support staff has also been a valuable resource, as we have shared resources and strategies and troubleshoot technical difficulties together. (P5)"

"Through research, trial and error, and collaboration with colleagues, I have come up with solutions to those challenges. (P6)"

Advocating this was the study by Johnson (2016) stating that interesting new educational technologies are becoming available, offering teachers unique methods of presenting material to students despite the fact that technology integration creates major challenges to school districts, school administrators, and teachers alike. Hence collaboration is significant among teachers. According to Acer for Education Technology (2018), even with the best education technology available, educators will inevitably have to deal with the human side of teacher collaboration, such as establishing common goals to address concerns about students' progress and challenges and collaborate on solutions. Through the Do-It-Yourself Approach and collaboration, teachers' technical skills improve thus the organization as a whole flourish in a collaborative environment. When everyone works together as a team, processes become smoother, tasks can be completed more quickly and efficiently, good relationships can be developed, and productivity can be increased. With a plethora of technology, teachers have an unprecedented amount of support to overcome challenges and form a wide-reaching community.

Theme 9: Turning Roadblocks into Opportunities to Improve Oneself. Participants in this theme revealed that despite the emergence of technical issues in technology utilization, rather than seeing it as a hindrance, teachers regard it as an opportunity to equip themselves with the required skills and expertise to overcome it. They realized they needed to develop themselves as "21st-Century Educators" in the truest sense of the term. Hence, technical competence is a must-have arsenal in their pedagogical expertise. Technological challenges that cause disruptions in learning engagement and impediments to student engagement and effective instruction are seen favorably as an opportunity to upskill oneself. Teachers have continuously sought out professional development opportunities to improve their skills and knowledge in the use of technology. By

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being proactive in seeking out solutions and continuously learning, they were able to effectively utilize technology in the instructional process. As the participants remarked:

"Planning on how to deliver instruction and strategize what kind of motivation and learning activities will be suited to the needs of the learners is one of the key factors in addressing issues about technology utilization. In doing so, teachers we'll be able to prepare for any eventualities and adjust/modify their teaching approach to students when time warrants it. (P7)"

"The strategy that I use in utilizing technology amidst the new normal education is integrating the current trends that students are interested in such as Tiktok and some online games. (P2)"

"I began by identifying the students and curriculum's specific needs and goals. Then I'll evaluate whether the available technology resources will meet the curriculum's needs and mandate. To make everything possible, the next step will be to create a plan for integrating technology into instruction. And, if changes and challenges arise, being flexible and responsive to these events is essential. (P1)"

Sustaining this was the study of Sophonhiranrak (2019) emphasizing that technology provides students with easy-to-access information, accelerated learning, and fun opportunities to practice what they learn. Notwithstanding the constraints of technology use, teachers see it as a chance to develop their technological skills, if not fundamental knowledge, to use it for effective learning delivery. Turning challenges into opportunities, according to Armaou (2021), comprises peer learning walk-ins, peer discussion for conflict resolution with particular protocols, direct instruction video evaluations, and roundtables for technology use in education. Furthermore, Hore (2020) stressed that teachers should embrace new opportunities to focus on learning by innovating and meeting students' needs. They must be flexible in designing digital resources, presentations, and projects with other teachers and students that will make classroom activities more realistic. Teachers should learn to generate shareable resources and engage with others on multiple platforms to improve themselves.

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Theme 10: Harness Student Participation and Engagement. As disclosed by the participants, when students display high levels of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement, they are more likely to excel academically, form a stronger sense of connection with their school and have a more positive sense of social-emotional well-being. Such is one of the benefits ushered by technology when education shifted from the traditional approach to the massive utilization of digitized technology in the classroom. Recent studies of student engagement treat it as a predictor of academic achievement, inferring that being disengaged, or disaffected from school, causes poor academic achievement. Through technology utilization, however, students learning engagement is strengthened, hence they become more participative, productive, and creative. As the participants concurred:

"I think, the positive response of my learners to our everyday discussions and their excellent performance in their tasks are enough as the basis of success in utilizing technology in educating our learners. (P1)"

"Technology aids me to make learners engage in the learning process and achieve my lesson objectives. (P4)"

"The use of interactive activities and multimedia materials has improved student engagement and motivation, and technology has made it possible for me to provide each student with individualized feedback and assistance, which is crucial for their academic achievement. (P10)"

Backing up this was the study of Kolb (2018) which asserted that finding digital tools and instructional strategies that allow students to talk about what they're doing, and learning is critical. Smyth, & Casey (2018) affirm that students can catch up on courses using technology as a means to strengthen their engagement with the lesson and other activities provided by the teachers. According to Rathore et. al (2015), when students are permitted to access and use a variety of tools that are appropriate for the task at hand, they gain a deeper understanding of the content. Thus, rather than being an extra layer in the classroom, technology is embedded in

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the lesson plan and pedagogy. When utilized correctly, technology may assist students in developing the abilities required to thrive in a complex, technologically driven knowledge-based economy. Technology in the classroom is a natural way to engage students of all ages in meaningful learning (Drexel University School of Education, n.d.) Students are more engaged in the learning process when technology is used in the classroom, especially a virtual classroom. Technology also enables differentiated instruction to match the needs of each of the students in the classroom.

Theme 11: Technological Knowledge as Teaching Competence Booster. Participants in this theme revealed that with technology, teachers become more creative, innovative, resourceful, and competent in their craft when it comes to the delivery of the teaching-learning process aided by their newly acquired knowledge of technology. Also, it allowed them to establish and sustain an orderly environment that fosters a learner-centered and learner-friendly climate in the classroom. And more significantly, utilizing technology assisted teachers as regards improvement in terms of their teaching pedagogy. With technological aid, they became more efficient. As the participants posited:

"I think that I was quite competent and effective in delivering daily instruction to my learners through the use of instructional materials that introduced them to the new way of learning concepts and ideas made possible by technology utilization in the teaching-learning process. (P1)"

"In terms of my teaching competence when utilizing technology in the new normal education, I would describe myself as confident and competent. My experience and training in the use of technology have been beneficial in helping me to feel comfortable utilizing technology in my teaching. (P5)"

"Indulging myself in a variety of webinars and training concerning the utilization of technology has made me confident in my ability to use them in creating a positive and engaging

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learning environment for my students. Hence, my competence and expertise in technology utilization in my respective classes have been elevated significantly. (P8)

Supporting this was the study of the World Economic Forum (2020) highlighting that many sectors of the global economy are evolving with technology. With this reality comes an increasing necessity of “upskilling” the workforce. In addition, Shearer, and Park (2018) underscore that digital knowledge allows teachers to train students to become more self-reliant in achieving their e-learning and distance learning goals. This finding is in line with (McGarry et al., 2015) who state that flexible learning design incorporating technology can improve learning outcomes. Similarly, Nagel (2018) asserts that most teachers love using technology in the classroom because it helps students be more productive and creative while Kolb (2018) argues that teachers who recognize computers as problem-solving tools change the way they teach. Meanwhile, Aldred (2020) stressed the importance of teacher training in utilizing technology in the classroom for them to better transform students. Additionally, it is incumbent that teachers must constantly adapt to changing professional requirements, evolving educational technology resources, and varying needs across content disciplines and contexts (Guo, 2020).

Essence. Collectively, delving deeper into the participants' narratives discloses a clear picture of their experiences with the challenges in technology utilization and how they face these challenges and demands in the new normal education in delivering a quality performance for their students. Teachers recognized the significance of technology as a tool for more creative delivery of lessons to students. Likewise, it facilitated remote instruction and collaboration. However, they underscore that technology utilization entails difficulties in the delivery of instruction since not all learners can relate to the technology that the teachers are using. In addition, not all teachers, themselves are appropriately oriented on how to utilize them effectively. Corollary to this, teachers emphasized digital knowledge as a crucial factor in effective learning delivery to the learners. It allows teachers to enhance the instructional process and serves as an opportunity to capacitate themselves and bring positive impact at the forefront of the teaching-learning process.

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Additionally, teachers considered technology as a powerful means to strengthen learners' learning experiences through the provision of opportunities for interactive and engaging activities. By far, technology utilization helped teachers reduce the perennial issue of low performance of students. It is instrumental in making the teaching and learning process more interesting, interactive, engaging, and enjoyable.

Insofar as to how participants face challenges and demands in technology utilization in the new normal, majority mentioned adaptability and adjustment as pioneering reasons for teachers to effectively utilize technology in different learning modalities. Teachers acknowledge that technology has become an integral part of the lesson. Technological innovation results in high-impact performance of students and teachers since technology in the classroom provide teachers with more tools to support students. According to the participants, amidst barriers to technology use in whatever modalities of learning both for teachers and students, the former's attitudes and beliefs about technology's benefits and relevance matter. Undeniably, teacher's productivity increases and brings students new and better learning opportunities that improve their holistic well-being. Likewise, technical issues in technology utilization are viewed as a catalyst to equip themselves with the necessary tools and knowledge rather than seeing it as an impediment to the instructional process. And more importantly, it is instrumental in the display of high levels of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement of students. Eventually, it leads to boosting teachers' teaching competence as it enables teachers to become more creative, innovative, resourceful, and competent in their craft and at the same time, establish and sustain an orderly environment that fosters a learner-centered and learner-friendly climate in the classroom.

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CONCLUSION:

Technology plays a vital role in the instructional process, student performance, and positive learning outcomes in the new normal education. It is a potent tool that enables teachers to use a variety of devices to facilitate peer communication and the delivery of learning activities, assessments, and feedback to students. Teachers' ability to guide the learning process through technology utilization, students' communication, learning framework, self-efficacy, need, and interests, as well as access to various ICT Tools, are all important factors for an effective learning engagement (Rahmawati et al. 2020). Technology allows students to learn new subjects and understand difficult concepts (American University's School of Education Online, 2020). Moreover, it facilitates information access, accelerates learning, and allows students to practice what they learn.

The participating high school English teachers addressed the challenges and demands of technology utilization by emphasizing the importance of adaptability and adjustments as a prerequisite for effective technology use and viewing technology as a means of innovation and high-impact performance. Moreover, it underscores the need for DIY (Do-It-Yourself) approach and collaboration as coping mechanisms for the aforesaid challenges, translating technical issues and difficulties into opportunities to improve oneself, harness student participation and engagement, and finally, utilizing technology as a competence booster among English teachers in the context of the new normal education.

The findings suggest that teachers may fully recognize the benefits of technology if they are equipped with the appropriate skills on how to design and implement via the establishment of robust system support and upskilling opportunities required for the efficient delivery of learning to students.

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