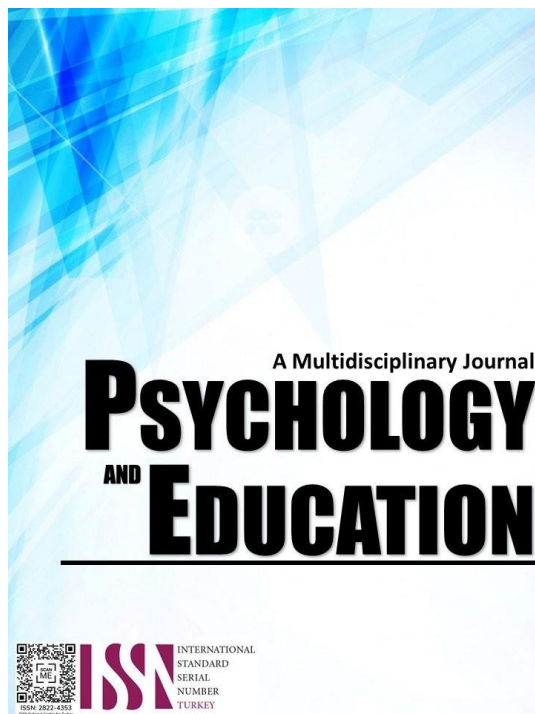


THE CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES OF TEACHERS TEACHING ENGLISH IN FAR-FLUNG SCHOOLS IN SULTAN KUDARAT



PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL

Volume: 39

Issue 6

Pages: 788-821

Document ID: 2025PEMJ3792

DOI: 10.70838/pemj.390606

Manuscript Accepted: 05-22-2025

The Challenges and Strategies of Teachers Teaching English in Far-Flung Schools in Sultan Kudarat

Glory Lou A. Mancenero,* Anna Liza C. Cerbo
For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

This study explored the challenges and strategies of teachers teaching English in far-flung schools in Sultan Kudarat. Using a qualitative research approach, data were gathered through online and face-to-face interviews with teachers who shared their challenges, strategies, and forms of support they needed from the Department of Education. The results revealed that teachers face significant challenges, including foundational learning gaps, cultural and linguistic challenges, socio-economic barriers, and resource and infrastructure limitations. To overcome these challenges, teachers employed various strategies such as employing innovative teaching strategies, culturally and linguistically responsive strategies, fostering supportive learning environment, and maximizing local resources and community support. The study also highlighted the needed support of teachers for educational resources and infrastructure, financial support and budget allocation, and teacher development through training and on-site support to address the challenges effectively. By shedding light on these issues, this research contributes on improving English education in far-flung schools.

Keywords: *Education, Challenges and Strategies, Far-Flung Schools, Teaching English, Philippines*

Introduction

The teachers teaching English in far-flung schools face unique challenges that differ from those encountered in more urban schools. The isolation or distance of these schools makes it difficult to implement standard curricula and engage students who lacks a strong foundation in English. Recognizing and understanding these challenges allow teachers to develop effective strategies and empower them to improve the quality of English education and ultimately improve students' outcomes in these remote locations.

Remote schools worldwide face a variety of challenges that hinder effective teaching and learning, including cultural differences, linguistic barriers, poor reading comprehension, limited access to professional development, and inadequate infrastructure, all of which affect the quality of education and require the need for innovative and targeted interventions to improve learning in underserved communities. For example, in Australia, cultural differences and language barriers create difficulties in teaching and learning (Schulz, 2017). Similarly, in South Africa, students in remote schools struggle with English proficiency, as most speak Indigenous languages as their first language, while teachers must use English as the sole medium of instruction (Mncwango & Makhathini, 2021). In addition, teachers in Mexico, particularly in rural and indigenous communities, have struggled with poor reading comprehension of the students. Sanchez (2024) also noted that schools in isolated regions such as Chiapas, Oaxaca, Guerrero, and the Yucatán Peninsula continue to face ongoing challenges with literacy.

Moreover, limited access to professional development, resource shortages, and inadequate infrastructure in remote schools across Ghana and the United States present additional layers of difficulty for teachers and students alike. In Ghana, rural teachers struggle to update their skills, particularly in integrating technology into the curriculum (Lynch, 2016; Jackson, 2017), while also facing severe resource shortages (Afriyie, 2024). Similarly, in the U.S., rural schools serving minority populations in high-poverty areas experience low student performance, reduced motivation, and a higher risk of failure (Farrigan, 2021), with inadequate infrastructure further worsening these challenges (Morris, 2020).

To mitigate these difficulties, teachers employ culturally responsive teaching strategies. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (2021) cited the role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators in teaching Indigenous languages, offering support, and bridging cultural divides. Likewise, Pretorius and Klapwijk (2016) emphasize the effectiveness of explicit reading comprehension strategies such as predicting, questioning, clarifying, and summarizing in enhancing students' understanding and engagement. These approaches help lessen challenges posed by cultural, linguistic, and literacy barriers in remote schools.

In addition, targeted policy initiatives have been implemented to enhance teacher development and address educational challenges in rural and low-income areas. In Ghana, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) promote collaboration among educators, fostering professional growth (Huusela, 2020). Tieken (2021) emphasized the need for policymakers to engage directly with rural communities to understand their unique challenges and equity concerns. Similarly, the U.S. Department of Education supports rural schools through the Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) program, which provides financial aid to improve student achievement. These initiatives illustrate the importance of contextualized policies and continuous support in addressing the unique challenges faced by remote schools, ultimately ensuring equitable access to quality education for all students.

Meanwhile, teachers in Asia face significant challenges in providing quality education due to linguistic barriers, cultural diversity, reading difficulties in English, and persistent resource limitations, demanding regionally adaptive strategies for improving language education and addressing systemic gaps in educational support. In Thailand, diverse student backgrounds complicate English

instruction (Assalihee & Boonsuk, 2022), while in Vietnam, language barriers and student illiteracy hinder learning outcomes in rural schools (Nguyen et al., 2024). In China, reading difficulties are influenced by socioeconomic status and parental education, affecting students' proficiency in remote areas (Gao et al., 2019).

Furthermore, in other Asian countries, remote schools face significant challenges due to resource limitations, and limited access to professional development. In Pakistan, higher education institutions struggle with severe resource deficiencies, hindering quality learning experiences (Humbhi et al., 2022). Likewise, Indonesian primary school teachers have minimal access to professional development, limiting their skill enhancement (Kurniawati, 2021). In Malaysia, rural schools suffer from inadequate infrastructure, a lack of teaching tools, and a limited English-speaking environment, negatively affecting education quality (Aziz et al., 2019). True as well in Turkey the inadequate school facilities create major challenges for teachers in remote areas (Akar & Sen, 2017).

To overcome these challenges, the English for Integrated Studies (EIS) program in Thailand integrates English instruction into subjects like Science and Mathematics, creating an English-rich learning environment (Ngamsom, 2019). In Vietnam, teachers undergo professional development workshops to enhance their English proficiency and teaching strategies (Do et al., 2022). Likewise, in China, volunteer teaching programs bring native or fluent English speakers to under-resourced schools, exposing students to diverse teaching methodologies and improving language acquisition (Fang & Baker, 2018).

In the same way, several interventions have been implemented in other Asian countries, for instance, in Pakistan, where schools have partnered with various agencies to improve education access and improve school's infrastructure (Muhammad et al., 2024). In Indonesia, the Tanoto Foundation has played a key role in addressing the limited professional development opportunities for teachers in remote areas. Since 2010, the foundation has funded schools and facilitated teacher training programs in Riau, Jambi, and North Sumatra, aiming to improve instructional quality and support government education initiatives (Nidham & Rahayu, 2023).

In the Philippines, teachers in remote areas face numerous challenges including language barriers, cultural differences, and illiteracy all of which collectively hinder quality education necessitating strategies which are contextual and specific to address these challenges and improve student's outcomes. Specifically, in South Cotabato, teachers struggle to build harmonious relationships with students, parents, and the community primarily due to language barriers and cultural differences (Felongco et al., 2022). In Sarangani as well, communication barriers frequently hinder teaching, as many students are Indigenous Peoples (IPs) who do not understand the teachers' dialect, complicating instruction delivery (Lariosa et al., 2022). In Agusan del Sur, Saysi (2023) identified several challenges in improving reading comprehension, including linguistic differences, language anxiety, the lack of ICT-supported reading strategies, limited exposure to English—particularly at home, low motivation, negative perceptions of socio-economic status, poor vocabulary, and a fear of being criticized when speaking English.

In addition to these linguistic and cultural barriers, teachers in the Philippines also face difficulties in providing quality education due to insufficient facilities, teaching materials, and limited professional development. In Negros Island, the lack of electricity and internet further limits access to educational resources and modern teaching methods, exacerbating the resource constraints (Ucag et al., 2024). Also, in Davao Occidental, limited access to professional development opportunities further hampers teachers' ability to enhance their skills (Alcontin, 2024).

In order to resolve these issues, the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented Multilingual Education in 2012 under the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (RA 10533). This approach integrates indigenous knowledge, traditions, and cultural values into the curriculum. In Mindanao particularly, where linguistic diversity is vast, the mother tongue is used as the primary medium of instruction from kindergarten to Grade 3, gradually transitioning to Filipino and English in higher grades. DepEd collaborates with local communities and linguistic experts to develop culturally relevant learning materials (Fillmore, 2014). Additionally, extensive reading program is recommended to improve second-language proficiency, as it fosters a positive attitude toward reading by providing learners with accessible and engaging English texts (Mariano, et.al., 2020).

Complementing these curriculum-based and language-focused initiatives, the Department of Education also developed the Last Mile Schools Program that aims to address the gaps in resources and facilities of schools that are in geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas. The Last Mile Schools Program has transformed makeshift classrooms into standard ones, installed solar panels in those areas where electrification has not been provided, processed school site ownership that enabled unhampered school building constructions, and deployed several teachers to provide quality and sustainable education for the disadvantaged Filipino learners living in the most isolated and conflicted areas of the country (DepEd Order 59, s. 2019).

Moreover, the Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines has been implementing the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) Program since 2011 to promote culturally responsive education for Indigenous Peoples (IPs) communities. The program integrates their cultural heritage and knowledge into the curriculum. By October 2021, it had benefited around 2.529 million IP learners across 42,176 public schools. Institutionalized through DepEd Order No. 62, s. 2011, the program follows the National Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework, developed in collaboration with IP leaders and elders, ensuring a rights-based and culturally grounded approach to education.

Despite the extensive documentation of teachers' experiences in remote schools, there remains a significant gap in studies specifically exploring the unique experiences of English teachers in far-flung areas, particularly in Sultan Kudarat. The researcher's observations

and the shared experiences of teachers in far-flung schools in Sultan Kudarat revealed that they encounter distinct challenges compared to their counterparts in lowland areas.

These challenges include long travel distances, risky roads, and a student population predominantly composed of indigenous learners who speak different languages and have diverse cultural backgrounds. These circumstances have sparked the researcher's curiosity about how these teachers effectively deliver instruction and ensure quality education despite these obstacles. Given the linguistic and cultural differences, the researcher is particularly interested in understanding how English is taught to indigenous students in these settings.

This study aimed to explore the challenges faced by teachers in teaching English in far-flung schools and the strategies they employed to overcome these difficulties. Additionally, it sought to identify the specific support needed from the Department of Education to enhance teaching effectiveness and improve learning outcomes for students in far-flung schools. This research was conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the realities teachers face in remote areas, which can inform educational policies and interventions tailored to their needs. By addressing these challenges, the study hoped to contribute to the development of more effective support systems that empower teachers and foster better educational opportunities for students in far-flung schools.

This study is viewed from the lens of Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory in 1986. The theory claims that human behavior is shaped by the dynamic interplay of personal factors, behavioral patterns, and environment influences. The central concept is self-efficacy which refers to an individual's belief in their capacity to achieve desired outcomes. The theory posits that people learn not only through direct experiences but also by observing others in regulating their actions through self-reflections and adaptive mechanisms.

The theory is highly fit for this study because the teacher's challenges and strategies demonstrated their self-efficacy or their belief in their capacity to achieve desired outcomes. Teachers teaching English far-flung schools in Sultan Kudarat face challenges such as students' foundational learning gaps, cultural and linguistic challenges, socio-economic barriers, and resource and infrastructure limitations. Through observational learning, they adopt strategies by observing peers, accessing online resources, or engaging in professional learning development. Their self-efficacy influences their motivation to develop innovative teaching strategies, and culturally and linguistically responsive approaches, foster supportive learning environment, and maximize local resources and community support. This theory provides a framework for understanding how teachers in remote areas build resilience and adapt their teaching practices through social learning, self-efficacy, and environmental interactions.

Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions.

1. What are the challenges faced by teachers teaching English in far-flung schools in Sultan Kudarat?
2. What are the strategies they employed to overcome the challenges in teaching English in far-flung schools in Sultan Kudarat?
3. What forms of support do these teachers need from the Department of Education?

Methodology

Research Design

This study used phenomenological research design. As defined by Creswell (2014), phenomenology is a research approach that explores the core of human experiences related to a particular phenomenon, as expressed by the participants. This phenomenological approach aimed to explore and understand the lived experiences of teachers. It focused on the meanings they attached to their experiences, particularly how they perceived and made sense of their unique circumstances while teaching in remote areas, which differ from the experiences of other educators.

In the context of this study, phenomenological approach was highly suitable as it sought to capture the essence of the teacher's personal and shared experiences. This study determined the challenges and strategies as well as the support needed from the Department of Education by the teachers teaching English in far-flung schools in Sultan Kudarat. By prioritizing teachers' perspectives, this study provided in-depth insight into how they perceived and overcome challenges such as language and cultural barriers, resource scarcity, socio-economic barriers, and limited access to professional development.

Through detailed interviews, the phenomenological approach allowed for the identification of common themes. This method ensured that the results authentically represent the participants' realities, offering valuable insights to inform policies and support mechanisms from the Department of Education, such as tailored teacher training programs and improved resource allocation.

Participants

The participants of this study included ten (10) teachers who are currently teaching English in far-flung secondary schools within the Division of Sultan Kudarat. According to Diaz (2015), the ideal participant number for a phenomenological study range from three (3) to ten (10) participants. Given the limited number of identified secondary far-flung schools in Sultan Kudarat, the researcher had selected ten (10) participants for this study. The inclusion criteria for this study were as follows: the teacher must be a permanent employee, with at least three years of experience teaching English in far-flung schools within the Sultan Kudarat Division. Additionally,

the teacher must hold a Baccalaureate Degree in Secondary Education, major in English.

Teachers who did not meet the inclusion criteria were excluded from the study. These included newly hired teachers, teachers working in elementary schools, teachers who are not English majors but are teaching English subjects, and teachers who are located outside Sultan Kudarat. These exclusions ensured that the data collected were relevant to the specific focus of the study, representing only the experiences of qualified English teachers in the relevant secondary schools in Sultan Kudarat.

This research used purposive sampling techniques to select the desired participants. The term "purposeful sampling" describes a range of non-probability sampling procedures where units are chosen because they have the qualities that the researcher needs in the sample. In other words, in purposes, units are chosen "on purpose." This sampling technique, also known as judgmental sampling, focuses on the researcher's judgment when determining and choosing the people, cases, or events that can provide the greatest information to meet the study's objectives (Creswell, 2018).

In this study, purposive sampling was applied to select participants who met specific criteria relevant to the research objectives. It was used to ensure that the selected teachers have the expertise and experience necessary to provide in-depth insights into the challenges they faced and the strategies they employed in teaching English in far-flung schools, thus ensuring the data collected was relevant and directly addressed the study's research questions.

Instrument

The data gathered from the study was done through Key Informant Interview (KIIs). Creswell (2014) stated that KII is an in-depth, semi-structured or unstructured interview conducted with individuals who have specialized knowledge, experience, or insight into the research topic. Macfarlan (2018) said that it involved an in-depth interview of selected participants for their first-hand knowledge about the topic of interest where interviews are loosely structured and relied on a list of issues to be discussed. Key informant interviews resembled a conversation among acquaintances, allowing a free flow of ideas and information. Interviews framed questions spontaneously, probed for information, and took notes, which was later elaborated. The entire duration of interviews was properly recorded and transcribed. Other sources of information that supported this study were from online journal articles, and books.

Procedure

To gather the necessary data for this study, the researcher first identified individuals who met the criteria as suitable informants in the Sultan Kudarat Division, Philippines, following Creswell's (2014) guidelines and the established inclusion and exclusion criteria. Initially, a letter requesting permission to conduct the study was sent to the dean of Graduate Studies at Cor Jesus College, Inc. Then, the researcher obtained ethical clearance from the Research Ethics Committee. Subsequently, approval from the School Division Superintendent was sought, and permission letters were sent to district supervisors. Once approval was granted, permission letters were distributed to the school principals. The informed consent outlined the study's purpose, significance, and the role of participants, emphasizing the time commitment involved and assuring confidentiality throughout the study. Participants were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time during the interview process if they felt uncomfortable.

Furthermore, the researcher arranged a meeting with the interviewee based on the date, time, and location specified by the participant. In this study, some participants chose to be interviewed at their homes, while others preferred online interviews. Each interview lasted between 40 minutes to an hour. Prior to the interview, participants were required to sign an informed consent form as part of the interview protocol.

During the interview, the researcher documented the interviewee's comments and responses, as well as conducted an individual assessment, using both notetaking and audio recording methods. Further, the following conventions were taken into consideration: First, the participants were educated that the entire procedure of the interview was recorded through taking down notes and audio recorder for verification behind appropriate interpretation and later, on investigation. Second, they were informed that after the conduct of the interview, information derived from them was securely kept and their identity was properly preserved. Third, the transcribed data from the recorded interview was confirmed by the interviewee to observe precision and accuracy of the data. Fourth, on the conducted study, the researcher was the interviewer, transcriber, audio recording operator, and record keeper for the duration of the interview.

After the interview was conducted, the researcher transcribed the data, identified significant statements, formulated meanings, and organized them into cluster themes and emerging themes. To ensure accuracy and credibility, the results were then presented to the participants for verification and feedback. Additionally, the findings were disseminated to provide insights that could contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges and experiences of teachers in far-flung areas.

Data Analysis

In the data analysis and interpretation, the researcher used Colaizzi's (1978) method. It offers personal insights in presenting an auditable decision trail in a phenomenological research study and explored issues of rigor and trustworthiness. Colaizzi's method consists of a seven-step process, which involves transcribing the narratives, identifying significant statements, formulating meanings, grouping them into cluster and emerging themes, developing a detailed description, determining the fundamental structure, and seeking participant

validation. In this study, each step of the process is carefully contextualized to ensure a comprehensive analysis of the data.

This method was used in this study to explore the experiences of teachers teaching English in far-flung schools following the seven steps in analyzing and interpreting research data. The seven steps of Colaizzi's method were followed. First, the researcher transcribed all the narration in the recorded interview held in each participant. Second, the researcher read and re-read the transcript and then identified significant statements that directly relate to the investigated phenomenon. Third, the researcher attempted to formulate meanings for each identified significant statement extracted from the participant's narratives. Fourth, the researcher grouped the drawn meanings into cluster themes and emerging themes. Fifth, the researcher developed a detailed description or synthesis of everything generated in the first to fourth steps. Sixth, the researcher identified the fundamental structure that revealed by explication, and lastly, the seventh step required the researcher to reach out to all the participants for the verification of results by sending a letter of member checking with an attachment of the transcribed recorded interview, and secured verification form as the validation of the data gathered. By following these methods, it helped the researcher develop a sense of being a responsible researcher in this study.

Ethical Considerations

Given that this phenomenological study explored the private and personal aspects of participants' lives, adhering to established ethical principles was crucial. To protect participants' identities, necessary personal data and information were not disclosed. The ethical concerns that should be noted were informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality (Gajjar, 2013).

Anonymity. No names of participants were revealed to the readers. Instead of disseminating hints about the participants' identities, code names were used to represent their identity (Kaiser, 2009). In this study, participants' identities were not disclosed, and no background information was recorded. The only requirement was to ensure that they met the inclusion criteria. Additionally, no section of the paper contained any personal information about the participants.

Confidentiality. The researcher observed the Republic Act 10173 – Data Privacy Act of 2012 in section 8 about confidentiality. During the interview, all gathered information was kept confidential between the participants and the researcher. Upon the interview, a reflexive approach in conducting was undertaken considering its significant impact on the participants. The place for interview was chosen based on its availability and suitability to the participant's preferences, with clear communication to prioritize their privacy and comfort. The primary focus was to ensure that the participants felt secure and comfortable throughout the interview process. In this study, the confidentiality of the transcripts was strictly maintained. Once the participants had verified the results, the transcripts were securely disposed. No one else had access to the information shared during the interviews, ensuring that all details remained confidential and known only to the researcher.

Informed Consent. Before conducting interviews with participants, consent forms were provided to them. The researcher briefly explained the purpose of the consent form and discussed its contents with the participants. Subsequently, the participants' decisions regarding their participation in the study were respectfully acknowledged and accepted (Creswell, 2018). In this study, the researcher requested for the participants to sign an informed consent form in order to ensure that their participation was voluntary and non-coercive.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results and the discussion from the data gathered according to the study's research problems. The results addressing the research questions were organized into three key themes: the challenges of teachers teaching English in far-flung schools, the strategies employed by these teachers to overcome the challenges, and the forms of support these teachers needed from the Department of Education. Furthermore, each research question was examined in detail, with discussions on the results.

An in-depth interview was conducted with ten (10) teachers teaching English in far-flung schools to address the research questions. The participants were encouraged to openly share, recount, and reflect on their experiences using their own words and perspectives. The themes that emerged from their responses and narratives were analyzed using Colaizzi's (1978) descriptive phenomenological method.

Challenges of Teachers Teaching English in Far-Flung Schools in Sultan Kudarat

When the participants were asked about their challenges teaching English in far-flung schools, four themes emerged: Foundational Learning Gaps, Cultural and Linguistic Challenges, Socio-Economic Barriers, and Resource and Infrastructure Limitations.

Table 1. *Thematic Map on the Challenges of Teachers Teaching English in Far-Flung Schools in Sultan Kudarat*

<i>First Theme: Foundational Learning Gaps</i>	<i>Second Theme: Cultural And Linguistic Challenges</i>
Poor Reading Comprehension Skills of Students	Cultural Diversity
Teachers cannot teach well because of students' low comprehension skills, as some learners remain non-readers.	Teachers face the challenge of addressing the diverse cultural backgrounds of their students, including Cebuano and Manobo learners, which affects their language learning and classroom dynamics.
Teachers experience a deep sense of frustration and burden due to the gap between expectations and reality in students' reading abilities.	Teachers struggle to accommodate students' diverse backgrounds, as they must consider varying proficiency levels,
Teachers face the challenge of students' weak comprehension skills, as many struggle to understand what they read.	

Weak Foundational Knowledge and Skills of Students

Teachers struggle to implement grade-level competencies because students have a weak foundational knowledge, making it difficult for them to meet the required learning standards.

Teachers often face the challenge of having to reteach the very basics, as many students lack fundamental skills needed for their level.

Teachers struggle with students' weak comprehension skills, which stem from a poor foundational learning experience due to a lack of proper training from the beginning.

Competency Gaps

Teachers find it challenging to meet the required competencies as students' inconsistent attendance hinders their learning progress.

Teachers struggle with competency deficiencies, as many learning goals are not fully achieved in class due to students' academic challenges.

Teachers struggle to follow the expected competencies because students' weak foundational skills hinder their ability to grasp lessons effectively.

Writing Skills Deficiency

Teachers face challenges in teaching English as many students struggle with basic grammar, spelling, and sentence construction.

Teachers experience challenges in teaching English as students struggle to construct sentences due to limited language exposure and insufficient practice.

Teachers struggle to help students write in English, as many find it difficult to construct sentences and express their thoughts.

Limited English Proficiency in Communication

Teachers face the challenge of developing students' communication skills in English, because students prefer to use their native language.

Teachers struggle to enhance students' English-speaking skills, as they are not fluent due to a lack of practice in using the language.

Teachers find it challenging to communicate in full English, as students struggle to grasp the meaning of spoken English when used continuously.

Third Theme: Socio-Economic Barriers

Economic Challenges and Work Obligations

Teachers struggle with inconsistent student attendance because some learners attend school only on certain days due to farming responsibilities like planting crops.

Teachers struggle with student attendance since many learners miss school to help with harvesting corn and coffee or doing other work to earn money.

Teachers face challenges with student absenteeism, as many Manobo-Dulangan learners come from financially struggling families and often miss school to help harvest coffee for livelihood.

Lack of Parental Support in Education

Teachers face challenges in ensuring students complete their assignments since parents, who are often busy with work and uneducated, cannot provide academic support at home.

Teachers struggle with students' lack of parental support in their education, as many parents are not actively involved in their children's learning.

Teachers struggle with low parental involvement, as only a few parents attend school meetings, especially during quarterly meetings.

cultural differences, beliefs, and individual circumstances in their teaching approach.

Teachers find it challenging to teach English due to students' diverse cultural backgrounds, which influence their language learning and comprehension.

Language Barrier

Teachers face the challenge of English instruction because students are more accustomed to their native languages, such as IP languages and Ilonggo, which serve as their primary means of communication.

Teachers are disheartened to face the reality that they cannot fully use English as the medium of instruction.

Teacher's challenge is language barrier, as many students have weak proficiency in English, making comprehension and communication difficult.

Teachers struggle with students' difficulty in keeping up with lessons taught entirely in English, as language barriers make comprehension challenging for them.

Fourth Theme: Resource And Infrastructure Limitations

Insufficient Learning Materials

Teachers struggle with a lack of learning resources, as there are insufficient books and reading materials to support students' learning.

Teachers struggle with incomplete instructional materials and limited resources, making it challenging to support effective learning.

Teachers struggle to integrate ICT in instruction due to a lack of resources, despite its importance in 21st-century learning.

Teachers struggle with the limited access to technology, reducing students' exposure to English and affecting their language development.

Teachers rely solely on chalkboards for instruction, as their classroom lacks a TV, and even those available in other rooms are not accessible for use.

Inadequate Classroom Infrastructures

Teachers struggle with the makeshift nature of the classroom and the lack of proper mounting for television.

Teachers struggle with makeshift classroom which does not have a TV for instructional use.

Teachers face significant challenges due to the lack of a proper classroom, relying on a makeshift structure built with the help of parents, which also lacks essential resources like a TV for instruction.

Foundational Learning Gaps. The results of the study revealed the significant challenges teachers face regarding students' Foundational Learning Gaps in far-flung schools. Teachers frequently encounter difficulties in addressing students' poor reading comprehension skills, weak foundational knowledge and skills, competency gaps, writing skills deficiency, and limited English proficiency in communication. These deficiencies make it difficult for the teachers to handle the students effectively and to foster

meaningful engagement and comprehension in the classroom.

Teachers faced significant challenges due to students' low reading comprehension skills, making it difficult to deliver lessons effectively and ensure meaningful learning. Many students struggled to understand texts, follow discussions, and grasp key concepts, which hindered their overall academic progress. This lack of comprehension made teaching even more challenging, as some learners remained non-readers, further limiting their ability to engage with lesson materials and classroom activities. As KII1:

Isa sa pinakaproblema gid maam is ang ila nga low comprehension. May mga non-readers kag may mgamaka graduate bisan hindi kabalo magbasa. (KII1, Transcript 1, Lines 3-4)

(One of the biggest problems, ma'am, is their low comprehension. There are non-readers, and some even graduate without knowing how to read.)

This struggle in reading comprehension not only hindered academic progress but also contributed to teachers' feelings of frustration and burden, as the gap between expectations and reality in student's reading abilities became increasingly evident. KII4 articulated:

Kaya parang it's a burden, very frustrating din sya sa part ko as teacher, kasi nga yung expectation na sana ay marunong na silang magbasa, pero may mga students pa rin na hindi talaga ganon kagaling magbasa, or yung sa frustration level of reading. (KII4, Transcript 2, Lines 28-31)

(So, it feels like a burden, and it is very frustrating for me as a teacher because there is an expectation that they should already know how to read. However, there are still students who are not very good at reading or are at the frustration level of reading.)

This frustration stems not only from students' struggles with reading fluency but also from students' weak comprehension skills because many struggle to understand what they read. KII9 stated:

Ang mga bata, mahina po talaga sa comprehension, so comprehension talaga ang challenge namin, kasi nahihirapan talaga ang mga bata mag intindi ng binabasa nila. (KII9, Transcript 3, Lines 3, 5-6)

(The children really have weak comprehension skills, so comprehension is truly our challenge because they struggle to understand what they are reading.)

Moreover, teachers face significant challenges in addressing students' weak foundational knowledge and skills, particularly in far-flung schools where learning gaps are more evident. The study revealed that many students struggle to grasp new concepts and keep up with lessons due to deficiencies in essential learning competencies. This lack of foundational knowledge and skills makes it difficult for teachers to deliver effective instruction. With students unable to build on prior knowledge, teachers struggle to implement grade-level competencies because students have a weak foundational knowledge, making it difficult for them to meet the required learning standards. KII7 narrated:

Ang competency nga intended na daad para sa level nila is kinanglan sang basic foundation, which is amo ng mahina sa ila, hina gid ang foundation nila maam. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 93-94)

(The competency intended for their level requires a basic foundation, which is something they lack. Their foundation is really weak, ma'am.)

This situation forces teachers to adjust their instruction, as many students are unable to meet the expected learning standards for their grade level. Instead of proceeding to the next lesson, teachers often have to go back and teach basic concepts that should have already been mastered. Teachers often face the challenge of having to reteach the very basics, as many students lack fundamental skills needed for their level. KII4 mentioned:

Most of the time we really need to go back to the very basic dahil kulang talaga sila sa mga basic skills. (KII4, Transcript 2, Lines 87-88)

(Most of the time, we really need to go back to the very basics because they truly lack basic skills.)

This constant need to reteach basic concepts not only slows down the learning process but also pose a deeper issue in students' educational background. Many of these difficulties can be traced back to gaps in early learning, where students did not receive adequate training in essential skills. With this, teachers struggle with students' weak comprehension skills, which arises from a poor foundational learning experience due to a lack of proper training from the beginning. KII1 articulated:

Ng budlay sya kay like diba kung ang bata di gid sya well-trained from the very beginning, kay kumbaga ang foundation nila weak. (KII1, Transcript 1, Lines 24-25)

(It's difficult because, for example, if a child is not well-trained from the very beginning, their foundation becomes weak.)

This weak foundation makes it even more difficult for students to catch up with the expected learning standards, placing an additional burden on teachers. Even when teachers try to bridge these gaps, inconsistent student attendance further disrupts the learning process,

preventing continuous skill development. Additionally, teachers find it challenging to meet the required competencies as students' inconsistent attendance hinders their learning progress. KII2 added:

Daw na neglect ang competency tungod sa mga absences sang mga bata. Hindi na gid ma meet ang mga competencies. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 40-41)

(It seems that the competency is neglected due to the students' absences. The competencies can no longer be met.)

With students frequently missing classes, teachers find it increasingly difficult to cover all the necessary lessons and ensure that learning objectives are met. The continuous disruption in students' learning progress leads to gaps in knowledge and skills, making it harder for them to achieve the expected competencies. Consequently, teachers struggle with competency deficiencies, as many learning goals are not fully achieved in class due to students' academic challenges. KII4 shared:

I can say that there is already deficiency in the competency kasi it is not really achieved talaga sa klase. (KII4, Transcript 2, Line 87)

(I can say that there is already a deficiency in the competency because it is not really achieved in class.)

The unachieved competencies further complicate the teaching process, as teachers are unable to move forward with the curriculum at the expected pace. Instead of progressing with new lessons, they often have to go back and address students' learning gaps. Teachers struggle to follow the expected competencies because students' weak foundational skills hinder their ability to grasp lessons effectively. KII2 shared:

Daw ma paralyzed ang competency kay hindi sya masunod dayon kay ang foundation sang bata is medyo mahina gid. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 66-67)

(It seems that the competency is paralyzed because it cannot be followed immediately since the child's foundation is quite weak.)

With students struggling to meet the expected competencies, the challenges in teaching English become even more apparent. Weak foundational skills not only hinder comprehension but also affect other essential language skills. Teachers face challenges in teaching English as many students struggle with basic grammar, spelling, and sentence construction. KII2 stated:

They cannot even write po one simple sentence. Mahina sila sa subject verb-agreement, even sa spelling mahina talaga sila. Yung mga basic sa English, ang noun, ahm and ang pronoun, and verb, d po nila maremember. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 23-25)

(They cannot even write one simple sentence. They are weak in subject-verb agreement, and even in spelling, they really struggle. The basics of English, like nouns, pronouns, and verbs, they cannot remember.)

These fundamental struggles in writing and grammar present the deeper issue of students' limited exposure to the English language. Without consistent practice and reinforcement, students find it difficult to apply basic language rules, further hindering their ability to express themselves effectively. Teachers experience challenges in teaching English as students struggle to construct sentences due to limited language exposure and insufficient practice. KII5 mentioned:

Medyo nahihirapan din po ang mga bata na mag construct ng mga sentences, maybe dahil kulang sa practice at hindi din sila expose kasi sa English. (KII5, Transcript 2, Lines 15-16)

(The students also have difficulty constructing sentences, maybe because they lack practice and are not exposed to English.)

With minimal exposure to English and a lack of regular practice, students continue to struggle with sentence construction and written expression. Their difficulty in forming coherent sentences makes it even more challenging for teachers to guide them in developing their writing skills. Teachers struggle to help students write in English, as many find it difficult to construct sentences and express their thoughts. KII6 shared:

Pag magsulat sila ng sentences maam, struggling gid gihapon. Kay say for example diba, sa mga lessons gid man maam more on English, t mga essay, mahambal na sila nga pwedi Filipino maam? (KII6, Transcript 2, Lines 22-24)

(When they write sentences, ma'am, they still struggle. For example, in lessons that are mostly in English, like essays, they would ask, 'Can we write in Filipino, ma'am?')

Moreover, students' reluctance to write in English reflects a broader challenge in their language development. Their preference for using their native language instead of English highlights their discomfort and lack of confidence in expressing their thoughts in a second language. Teachers face the challenge of developing students' communication skills in English because students prefer to use their native language. KII7 stated:

Ang communications skills sang mga bata maam, maka storya man sila maam, pero hindi English kay mas makastorya sila gamit ila nga native language. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 75-76)

(The communication skills of the students, ma'am, they can speak, but not in English because they can speak well using native language.)

This preference for their native language further limits students' ability to develop fluency in English, as they are not regularly exposed to or required to use it in conversations. Without consistent practice, their ability to articulate thoughts in English remains underdeveloped, making it even more difficult for teachers to strengthen their language proficiency. Teachers struggle to enhance students' English-speaking skills, as they are not fluent due to a lack of practice in using the language. KII4 narrated:

Sa speaking, hindi talaga sila fluent in terms of speaking English, kasi I think hindi naman talaga nila napapractice yung pagsasalita ng English. (KII4, Transcript 2, Lines 34-36)

(In speaking, they are not really fluent in English because I think they do not actually practice speaking in English.)

Furthermore, this lack of fluency not only affects students' ability to express themselves but also poses challenges in classroom communication. When English is spoken continuously, many students struggle to grasp its meaning, making it difficult for teachers to conduct discussions entirely in English. As a result, teachers find it challenging to communicate in full English, as students struggle to understand spoken English when used consistently. KII3 shared:

Pero kung diredirectso ang English or ang sentence mo, hindi na talaga maam, hindi gid nila ma grasp ang imo nga ginahambal. (KII3, Transcript 1, Lines 17-18)

(But if you speak in continuous English or in full sentences, ma'am, they really can't grasp what you are saying.)

Teachers in far-flung schools face significant challenges due to students' foundational learning gaps, particularly in reading comprehension and English proficiency. Many students struggle with basic literacy skills, with some remaining non-readers, forcing teachers to reteach fundamental concepts instead of progressing with grade-level lessons. Inconsistent attendance further disrupts learning, preventing students from fully grasping lessons and meeting academic standards. Additionally, teaching English becomes more difficult as students struggle with grammar, spelling, and sentence construction due to limited exposure and practice. Their preference for using their native language hinders their fluency in English, making communication and comprehension more challenging. These barriers place a heavy burden on teachers, requiring them to continuously adjust their teaching strategies to accommodate learning deficiencies while striving to meet curriculum expectations.

Cultural and Linguistic Challenges. The results revealed that teachers in far-flung schools face significant cultural and linguistic challenges that impact teaching and learning process. Cultural diversity influences students' learning styles and interactions, enriching the classroom but also complicating inclusive teaching. Also, language barrier is also a challenge because students have limited exposure to English which greatly affects comprehension and communication. This makes it difficult for teachers to address the gap between native languages and English proficiency, adding difficulty to delivering instruction.

This challenge becomes a major problem because teachers deal with students from diverse cultural backgrounds, such as Teduray and Manobo learners. The cultural differences among these students further impact language acquisition and classroom interactions, making it even more difficult for teachers to implement effective instruction that caters to the different needs of the students. KII4 said:

Students has different backgrounds, I mean cultures. Iba-iba sila tribo maam, there are some students na Teduray, and there are some na Manobo rin. (KII4, Transcript 2, Lines 6-7)

(Students have different backgrounds, I mean cultures. They come from various tribes, ma'am, some students are Teduray, and some are also Manobo.)

Similarly, these cultural differences create additional challenges for teachers, as they must tailor their instructional approaches to accommodate students' varying levels of proficiency, cultural backgrounds, beliefs, and individual circumstances. This makes it even more difficult to ensure that all learners receive effective and inclusive education. KII7 narrated:

Ang budlay pagid ab maam, kay kailangan mog yapon iconsider and level nila, ang culture nila, ang beliefs nila, ang situations nila. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 86-87)

(It's even more difficult, ma'am, because you still need to consider their level, their culture, their beliefs, and their situations.)

In addition, teachers face significant difficulties in teaching English because of students' diverse cultural backgrounds in which students cannot directly relate to the topic. These differences affect how students process and understand the lessons, making it even more challenging for teachers to deliver effective instruction. KII4 shared:

I can say that it's hard to teach English since students have different background, I mean cultures. Hindi sila dali makaintindi, kay hindi sila dali makarelate sa topic. (KII4, Transcript 2, 4-6)

(I can say that it's hard to teach English since students have different backgrounds, I mean cultures. They don't easily understand because they can't easily relate to the topic.)

This struggle is worsened by the fact that students are more accustomed to their native languages, such as IP languages and Ilonggo, which serve as their primary means of communication. Consequently, teachers find it even more challenging to engage students in English instruction and help them develop proficiency in the language. KII1 noted:

Actually, ang amon nga medium ma'am is IP's and Ilonggo. Daw amo na ang ila nga official language na gigagamit mag communicate. (KII1, Transcript 1, Lines 7-8)

(Actually, our medium, ma'am, is IP languages and Ilonggo. It seems to be their official language for communication.)

This language barrier not only affects students' learning but also leaves teachers feeling discouraged because they cannot fully use English as the medium of instruction. KII4 added:

Ahm, it affects my teaching of the English subject, because, actually sad to say but it is the reality gid, na we cannot use English as medium of our instruction. (KII4, Transcript 2, Lines 79-80)

(Ahm, it affects my teaching of the English subject because, sadly, it is the reality that we cannot use English as the medium of our instruction.)

The inability to use English as the primary medium of instruction is just one part of the challenge; teachers also struggle with students' weak English skills, which further hampers comprehension and effective communication in the classroom. KII10 narrated:

Diri sa amon sa far-flung area maam, I have identified 3 challenges, first is language barrier, like mahina po mga bata sa vocabulary sa English, iba yung native language nila sa English. (KII10, Transcript 3, 3-5)

(Here in our far-flung area, ma'am, I have identified three challenges. First is the language barrier, students have a weak vocabulary in English, and their native language is different from English.)

Teachers also admit that they do not primarily use English as the medium of instruction. Although the subject is English, they seldom use the language in the classroom, and when they do, it is only to a limited extent. With this, teachers find it challenging to reinforce English usage in class, as interactions often take place in the students' native language despite the subject is English. KII4 shared:

Although our subject is English, we are not mostly using the language in our interaction. (KII4, Transcript 4, Lines 80-81)

(Although our subject is English, we do not mostly use the language in our interactions.)

Teachers in far-flung schools encounter significant cultural and linguistic challenges that complicate the teaching and learning process. With students coming from diverse backgrounds such as Teduray, Manobo, and Ilonggo communities, language acquisition and classroom interactions become more complex. Additionally, students' strong preference for their native languages limits their English proficiency, affecting their ability to communicate and comprehend lessons. Even in English classes, teachers struggle to enforce the language as students naturally revert to their mother tongue. As a result, these cultural and linguistic barriers pose a significant challenge for teachers in delivering effective English instruction and in ensuring meaningful learning experiences for students.

Socio-Economic Barriers. Teachers faced challenges where economic constraints hinder access to quality education. These barriers not only affected students' ability to succeed academically but also created obstacles for teachers trying to provide effective instruction. Many students encountered financial difficulties, work obligations, and lack of parental support in education making it challenging for teachers to instill the importance of education in them.

One of the significant challenges teachers faced is the students' absenteeism, as many Manobo-Dulangan learners come from financially struggling families and often miss school to help harvest coffee for their livelihood. The need to contribute to their family's income takes priority over education, leading to frequent absences and learning gaps. As a result, teachers struggle to keep students engaged, ensure learning continuity, and help them catch up with missed lessons. KII6 stated:

Ang amon diri na students maam, kay diba Manobo-Dulangan, hindi gid sila financially okay bala haw. Ng damo damo gid absent maam kay harvest naman ab, so naga harvest sang mga kape. (KII6, Transcript 2, Lines 61-62, 65)

(Our students here, ma'am, since they are Manobo-Dulangan, are not really financially stable. Many of them are frequently absent because it's harvest season again, so they go to harvest coffee.)

Likewise, many learners miss school to help with harvesting corn and coffee or doing other work to earn money. Their families' financial struggles force them to prioritize work over education, making it even more difficult for teachers to maintain regular student attendance and ensure consistent learning progress. KII7 shared:

Problema gyapon ang attendance nila maam, kay kis a ang mga bata mag absent gid kay mangharvest sang mais, sang kape, mag ubra kung ano ano para kakwarta sila. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 100-101)

(Attendance is still a problem, ma'am, because sometimes the students really miss classes to harvest corn, coffee, or do other work to earn money.)

Similarly, teachers continue to struggle with inconsistent student attendance, as some learners can only attend school on certain days because of their farming responsibilities. The need to plant and harvest crops further limits their time for education, making it challenging for teachers to ensure continuous learning and student progress. KII1 articulated:

Sa attendance, may ara sang moment maam nga hindi gid always, kay ang iban naga inadlaw, nagapanggas. (KII1, Transcript 1, Lines 28-29)

(In terms of attendance, ma'am, there are moments when it's not consistent because some students attend every other day as they are planting crops.)

In addition to this, many parents are not actively involved in their children's learning because they are also engaged in farming and other livelihood activities, as a result, teachers face additional challenges in encouraging students to prioritize their education and stay committed to their studies. KII5 stated:

Kasi yung mga students po dito, based lang sa observation ko, lack support from the parents, parang hindi ganon ka supportive yung mga parents nila sa pag aaral nila. (KII5, Transcript 2, Lines 44-46)

(Because the students here, based on my observation, lack support from their parents. It seems that their parents are not very supportive of their education.)

Parents are not also attending meetings at school, further limiting their involvement in their children's education. This lack of participation makes it even more difficult for teachers to communicate important information or address issues related to the students' performance in school. KII1 articulated:

Kung meeting, may naga attend man, pero hindi kaayo damo lalo na ng quarterly meeting. (KII1, Transcript 1, Lines 59-60)

(There are some who attend the meetings, but not many, especially during the quarterly meetings.)

Moreover, when teachers give assignments to the students, there is no follow-up at home because their parents are busy working and are also uneducated. This lack of parental involvement makes it difficult for teachers to reinforce learning beyond the classroom, as students do not receive the necessary guidance and support at home. KII6 mentioned:

Maghatag kami ka assignment, hindi man bi sila mafollow up sa balay kay ang ila man nga parents kay busy man sa work, kag uneducated man ang ila nga parents. (KII6, Transcript 2, Lines 11-13)

(When we give assignments, they can't be followed up at home because their parents are busy with work and are also uneducated.)

The parents also did not complete their education, and some entered early marriages, which has led to financial instability, preventing them from being able to support their children's education. With this, teachers face the challenge of addressing the consequences of this lack of educational background, as many parents are unable to assist their children with schoolwork or encourage them to stay in school. KII3 shared:

Ang parents wala din naman sila naka school, hanggang Grade 3 lang then maaga nag asawa, support from the parents talaga maam. (KII3, Transcript 1, Lines 29-30)

(The parents also did not finish school; they only reached Grade 3 and got married at a young age, so there's really a lack of support from the parents, ma'am.)

Teachers in far-flung schools struggle with socioeconomic challenges that affect students' learning outcomes and make instruction more difficult. Many students come from financially struggling families and prioritize work over education, often missing school to help with farming or other labor. This absenteeism results in learning gaps, making it difficult for teachers to maintain students' progress.

Additionally, the lack of parental support worsens the situation. Many parents, having limited education themselves, struggle to provide academic guidance. Teachers note that homework is rarely reinforced at home, as parents are either too busy working or lack the necessary knowledge to assist their children. This weak home-school connection adds to teachers' burdens, making it harder to engage students and support their learning. Despite teachers' efforts, economic hardships remain a major barrier to effective education.

Resource and Infrastructure Limitations. The results revealed that far-flung schools often lack essential materials such as textbooks, technology, and learning tools, which can severely hinder students' learning experiences. These limitations create an environment where both teachers and students struggle to meet educational goals, making it difficult to provide quality learning experience.

Teachers struggle with a lack of learning resources, as insufficient books and reading materials make it difficult to support students' learning. KII2 shared:

Sa learning materials, kulang kami sa books maam kag sa mga reading materials. (KII2, Transcript 1, Line 29)

(In terms of learning materials, we lack books, ma'am, and reading materials.)

Likewise, this shortage of books and reading materials is one of the major problems teachers face. Teachers struggle with incomplete instructional materials and limited resources, making it challenging to support effective learning. KII6 articulated:

Sa materials, wala kami ganon ka kumpletong gamit or resources kaya mas mahirap sa part namin as teachers. (KII6, Transcript 2, Line 53)

(In terms of materials, we don't have complete supplies or resources, which makes it more difficult for us as teachers.)

The lack of essential learning materials not only affects traditional instruction but also extends to the integration of technology in teaching. Teachers struggle to integrate ICT in instruction due to a lack of resources, despite its importance in 21st-century learning. KII2 stated:

Hindi kaayo maapply ang ICT po. I know this is very needed especially sa 21st century, but yun nga po, lack kami ng resources dito. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 35-36)

(We cannot fully apply ICT. I know this is very important, especially in the 21st century, but we lack resources here.)

The difficulty in integrating ICT due to a lack of resources also limits students' exposure to technology, which is essential for language development. Teachers further shared that they struggle with the limited access to technology, reducing students' exposure to English and affecting their language development. KII5 narrated:

May limited access din po yung mga bata sa technology kaya hindi ganon ka anong tawag dyan, kumbaga hindi masyado sila nakakarinig or exposed sa English. (KII5, Transcript 2, Lines 48-49)

(The students also have limited access to technology, so they are not very, what do you call it, let's say, they are not very exposed to or do not hear much English.)

This lack of technological access not only limits students' exposure to English but also affects the teaching methods available to educators. Teachers rely solely on chalkboards for instruction, as their classroom lacks a TV, and even those available in other rooms are not accessible for use. KII8 stated

Kung TV maam, wala po. Meron din naman sa ibang classroom maam, pero hindi rin naming magamit. So wala talaga maam, chalkboard lang po kamit namin. KII8, (Transcript 8, Lines 41-42)

(If it's a TV, ma'am, we don't have one. There are some in other classrooms, ma'am, but we can't use them either. So, we really have nothing, ma'am, we only use the chalkboard.)

Teachers also struggle with the makeshift nature of the classroom and the lack of proper mounting for television. The lack of proper mounting for televisions further complicates lessons and limits the integration of technology in teaching. The instability of the setup makes teachers have difficulty maintaining an engaging and structured learning environment. KII1 said:

May TV maam, pero not all the time ginagamit sya kay hindi sya naka wall mounted kay classroom namon is makeshift lang. (KII1, Transcript 1, Lines 15-16)

(There is a TV, ma'am, but it's not used all the time because it is not wall-mounted, and our classroom is just makeshift.)

This challenge highlights the bigger concern of inadequate classroom infrastructure, which extends beyond technology accessibility. Teachers face significant challenges due to the lack of a proper classroom, relying on a makeshift structure built with the help of parents, which also lacks essential resources like a TV for instruction. KII10 stated:

Sa amin maam, sa totoo lang, wala kami talaga classroom sa senior high. So yung mga parents ng senior high, bumuo kami ng makeshift na classroom, then wala pa talagang tv. (KII10, Transcript 3, Lines 47-48)

(In our case, ma'am, to be honest, we don't have a classroom for senior high. So, the parents of the senior high students and we built a makeshift classroom, but we still don't have a TV.)

Teachers in far-flung schools struggle with inadequate resources and infrastructure, affecting both instruction and student learning. Many schools lack proper classrooms, forcing teachers and parents to build unstable makeshift classrooms. The absence of essential facilities, such as mounted televisions, limits the use of technology in lessons, reducing students' exposure to English.

The shortage of learning materials also adds to the situation, as many classrooms lack books and reading resources. Teachers rely mainly on chalkboards, with technological tools either unavailable or inaccessible.

These challenges create a learning environment with minimal access to modern educational resources, making language development and academic progress more difficult.

Strategies Employed by Teachers Teaching English in Far-Flung Schools

When the key informants were asked about their strategies they employed to overcome the challenges in teaching English in far-flung schools, four themes emerged: Innovative Teaching Strategies, Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Strategies, Fostering Supportive Learning Environment, and Maximizing Resources and Community Support.

Table 2. *Thematic Map for the Strategies Employed by Teachers Teaching English in Far-Flung Schools*

<i>First Theme: Innovative Teaching Strategies</i>	<i>Second Theme: Culturally And Linguistically Responsive Strategies</i>
<p>Interactive and Engaging Reading Strategies</p> <p>Teachers use Reader's Theater and group activities to enhance student engagement, as learners tend to be more enthusiastic when working in groups.</p> <p>Teachers reinforce reading comprehension through post-reading activities, such as role-playing or creating alternative story endings, to encourage application and creativity.</p> <p>Teachers make reading more interactive and engaging by incorporating activities like reading with emotions and creative reading.</p>	<p>Contextualization in Teaching English</p> <p>Teachers use contextualization as a strategy by providing examples related to students' experiences and surroundings, making English lessons more relatable and understandable.</p> <p>Teachers consistently contextualize lessons using real-life situations to help students relate better and understand English more effectively. Teachers use relatable and level-appropriate examples to help students better understand lessons and engage more effectively in learning.</p>
<p>Vocabulary Enhancement Strategies</p> <p>Teachers implement vocabulary enhancement strategies by conducting spelling exercises, providing word meanings, and requiring students to use words in sentences for better retention and application.</p> <p>Teachers reinforce vocabulary development by conducting daily spelling exercises with 10 to 15 words to improve students' language skills.</p> <p>Teachers enhance students' vocabulary by conducting spelling activities, providing word meanings, and giving example sentences for better understanding and application.</p> <p>Teachers use vocabulary-building games to reinforce students' vocabulary skills and enhance their language development in an engaging way.</p>	<p>Contextualization in Lesson Planning</p> <p>Teachers incorporate contextualization in their DLL by providing relatable examples that connect lessons to students' experiences and cultural background.</p> <p>Teachers apply contextualization in the Daily Lesson Log, especially in activities, to make lessons more relevant and meaningful for students.</p> <p>Teachers apply contextualization by designing activities that ensure students can relate to the lessons, making learning more meaningful and engaging.</p>
<p>Pre-Reading Activities to Enhance Comprehension</p> <p>Teachers conduct unlocking of difficulties before reading by defining unfamiliar words to help students understand the passage more easily.</p> <p>Teachers implement vocabulary unlocking activities before reading passages to ensure students understand key terms, preventing interruptions in comprehension and enhancing learning.</p> <p>Teachers use pre-reading activities, such as asking questions related to students' lives and experiences, to capture their attention and help them connect with the text.</p>	<p>Cultural Sensitivity in Teaching</p> <p>Teachers ensure that discussions about students' culture are respectful and sensitive to avoid causing offense while integrating cultural aspects into lessons.</p> <p>Teachers implement culturally sensitive pedagogy by ensuring that topics and activities are inclusive and free from bias.</p> <p>Teachers consider students' culture, experiences, way of living, and traditions in their teaching approach to make lessons more meaningful and inclusive.</p>
<p>Simplification and Scaffolding Strategies</p> <p>Teachers simplify lessons by providing the most basic explanations to ensure students understand the concepts.</p> <p>Teachers simplify or modify questions, provide clues, repeat stories, and guide students individually to enhance their understanding.</p> <p>Teachers frequently ask questions to check students' understanding and ensure they are following the lesson</p>	<p>Culturally Responsive Teaching</p> <p>Teachers employ a multicultural approach by incorporating students' cultural backgrounds into lesson plans to make learning more inclusive and relevant.</p> <p>Teachers adapt to cultural contexts by integrating lessons into students' daily lives, considering their culture when selecting topics and examples to enhance understanding.</p> <p>Teachers encourage students to share their cultural traditions and language, fostering a more inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment.</p> <p>Teachers use relatable examples and connect lessons to students' experiences to enhance understanding and engagement in learning.</p>
<p>Writing Strategies and Activities</p> <p>Teachers use fill-in-the-blanks activities to support students in writing, making it easier for them to construct sentences and express their thoughts.</p> <p>Teachers encourage writing by assigning topics related to students' personal experiences, such as memorable moments or self-reflection, to make writing more relatable and meaningful.</p> <p>The teacher starts with basic grammar concepts, such as identifying parts of speech, followed by activities and writing exercises about students' life experiences.</p> <p>Teachers use structured writing strategies, such as guiding students to write simple sentences, to develop their writing skills and confidence.</p>	<p>Use of Translation to Overcome Language Barriers</p> <p>Teachers use the grammar-translation method to help students understand difficult English words by translating them into Filipino or their dialect.</p> <p>Teachers address language barriers by translating lessons into Filipino to ensure better student understanding.</p> <p>Teachers use translation strategies by first explaining the lesson in Filipino to ensure students understand the topic before proceeding in English.</p>
<p>Interactive Activities to Enhance Communication Skills</p> <p>Teachers provide activities such as role-playing and group discussions to enhance students' communication skills by encouraging them to express their ideas in English.</p>	

Teachers incorporate games and role-playing activities to encourage active participation and help students develop their speaking skills. Teachers focus on developing students' listening skills by using storytelling to engage them.

Teachers conduct simulations, such as mock job interviews, to help students develop their communication skills and prepare for real-life situations

Third Theme: Fostering Supportive Learning Environment

Motivating and Encouraging Student Engagement

Teachers encourage student participation by praising their efforts, regardless of the accuracy of their answers, to build confidence and motivation.

Teachers use positive reinforcement by giving encouraging feedback and recognizing students' participation, even if their answers are not entirely correct, to boost confidence and engagement.

Teachers continuously motivate and encourage students by emphasizing the importance of education and the need to value their studies.

Teachers motivate students to participate by awarding points for recitations, encouraging engagement and active involvement in class

Building Positive Relationship and Communication

Teachers adopt a flexible and approachable attitude, fostering an open and comfortable environment where students feel encouraged to share, interact, and engage in learning.

Teachers listen to students' life stories and experiences, allowing them to feel heard and valued while building stronger connections in the classroom.

Teachers strive to be accommodating to students' diverse backgrounds, ensuring they feel welcome in class and comfortable sharing their ideas.

Fourth Theme: Maximizing Local Resources And Community Support

Use of Visual Materials to Enhance Learning

Teachers utilize visual strategies, such as charts and posters with pictures, to enhance student engagement and comprehension by providing clear and stimulating representations of concepts.

Teachers utilize charts, posters, flashcards, and printed materials to support students' reading development and engagement in class.

Teachers use visual strategies, such as charts, pictures, and tarpapel materials, to enhance students' comprehension of the lesson.

Use of Improvised Teaching Materials

Teachers use laminated reading passages as a strategy to enhance students' reading skills and engagement.

Teachers print stories and reading passages for students to read as a strategy to develop their reading skills.

Teachers print tarpapel with reading materials to support students in developing their reading skills.

Offline Digital Learning

Teachers download videos, learning materials, and educational games at home to ensure interactive and engaging classroom instruction.

Teachers search for lessons and materials in lower areas beforehand, ensuring they have resources ready for classroom instruction.

Teachers maximize ICT by using pre-downloaded videos and digital resources.

Community Engagement

Teachers collaborate with parents to create makeshift classrooms.

Teachers collaborate with Barangay Officials to provide whiteboards.

Teachers coordinate with PTA to facilitate the acquisition of television.

Innovative Teaching Strategies. The results of this study revealed the strategies employed by teachers teaching in far-flung schools to overcome the challenges in foundational learning gaps. These strategies include interactive and engaging reading strategies, vocabulary enhancement strategies, pre-reading activities to enhance comprehension, simplification and scaffolding strategies, writing strategies and activities, and interactive strategies to enhance communication skills.

One of the interactive strategies employed by teachers to enhance student engagement is the use of Reader's Theater and other group activities as learners tend to be more enthusiastic when working in groups. By using Reader's Theater, teachers provide an interactive approach to reading, allowing students to develop their language skills through expressive reading and role-playing. KII10 narrated:

Sa akin maam, naga reader's theater, more on groups talaga maam, kasi mas napapansin ko na mas ganado sila kung grupo talaga maam. (KII10, Transcript 3, Lines 64-65)

(For me, ma'am, I use Reader's Theater, it's really more on groups because I notice that they are more enthusiastic when they are in a group.)

Beyond engaging students through Reader's Theater and group activities, teachers also implement post-reading activities to further reinforce comprehension. Teachers reinforce reading comprehension through post-reading activities, such as role-playing or creating alternative story endings, to encourage application and creativity. KII7 stated:

Then after nila magbasa, naga pa activity naman ko maam about didto sa ila nga ginabasa, ng daw application na bala maam. Kis a gapa role play, kis a ng ginapahimo ko sila sang ila nga ending nga gusto sang story. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 57-59)

(Then after they finish reading, ma'am, I give them an activity related to what they read—like an application of it. Sometimes, they do role-playing, and other times, I let them create their own ending for the story.)

To further enhance student engagement and comprehension, teachers incorporate additional interactive reading strategies. Teachers

make reading more interactive and engaging by incorporating activities like reading with emotions and creative reading. KII8 articulated:

Tapos, para mas maging interactive at engaging yung pagbabasa nila maam, may mga activities ako na ginagawa kung magbasa sila, like reading with emotions or creative reading. (KII8, Transcript 3, Lines 63-65)

(Then, to make their reading more interactive and engaging, ma'am, I include activities when they read, like reading with emotions or creative reading.)

In addition to making reading more interactive and engaging, teachers also focus on developing students' vocabulary to support language acquisition. Teachers implement vocabulary enhancement strategies by conducting spelling exercises, providing word meanings, and requiring students to use words in sentences for better retention and application. KII2 stated:

I think it's vocabulary enhancement po maam, like tong gapa spelling ko maam, then ibigay ang meaning then gamitin nila sa sentence. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 102-103)

(I think it's vocabulary enhancement, ma'am, like when I have them do spelling, then give the meaning, and use it in a sentence.)

KII6 also shared that to further strengthen students' vocabulary skills, teachers incorporate consistent practice into their lessons. Teachers reinforce vocabulary development by conducting daily spelling exercises with 10 to 15 words to improve students' language skills. KII6 articulated:

Every day gid maam gapa spelling ko, 10 to 15 words and ginaspelling ko sa ila. (KII6, Transcript 2, Line 88)

(Every day, ma'am, I have them do spelling exercises with 10 to 15 words.)

Building these vocabulary reinforcement strategies, teachers further enhance students' language skills by incorporating additional activities that promote deeper understanding. Teachers also enhance students' vocabulary by conducting spelling activities, providing word meanings, and giving example sentences for better understanding and application. KII2 shared:

Gapa spelling ko sa mga bata maam..then after sang spelling ihatag ko ang meaning sang word then bigyan ko sila examples paano gamitin ang word na yan sa sentence. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 77-79)

(I have the students do spelling exercises, ma'am. Then after the spelling, I give them the meaning of the word and provide examples of how to use it in a sentence.)

In addition, to make vocabulary development more engaging, teachers also incorporate interactive strategies that go beyond traditional spelling exercises. Teachers use vocabulary-building games to reinforce students' vocabulary skills and enhance their language development in an engaging way. KII5 stated:

Then, vocabulary building po maam, mga games po na maka reinforce ng vocabulary ng mga bata. (KII5, Transcript 2, Lines 68-69)

(Then, vocabulary building, ma'am, through games that can reinforce the students' vocabulary.)

Building on these interactive vocabulary strategies, teachers conduct unlocking difficulties before reading by defining unfamiliar words to help students understand the passage more easily. KII2 mentioned:

Syempre naga unlocking of difficulties ko any. Iintroduce sa ila ang mga vocabulary na maencounter nila sa passage. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 71-72)

(Of course, I do unlocking of difficulties first. I introduce to them the vocabulary they will encounter in the passage)

Teachers further emphasized the importance of unlocking difficulties before reading which highlights teachers' commitment to supporting students' comprehension. They implement vocabulary unlocking activities before reading passages to ensure students understand key terms, preventing interruptions in comprehension and enhancing learning. KII1 shared:

Ng before sila magbasa sang passage, may ara sang vocabulary, unlocking difficulties para hindi ma interrupt ang comprehension sang bata mas better nga bal an nya ang terminologies. (KII1, Transcript 1, Lines 110-112)

(Before they read the passage, there is vocabulary unlocking of difficulties so that the child's comprehension will not be interrupted. It is better if they know the terminologies.)

Moreover, in building their commitment to enhancing student comprehension, teachers also employ various pre-reading activities beyond unlocking vocabulary. These strategies, such as asking questions related to students' lives and experiences, serve to capture their attention and establish meaningful connections with the text. KII2 articulated:

Then, may mga pre-reading activities, like mag ask sang mga questions na related sa il ana life kag situation para maka relate sila and makuha ang ila attention. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 72-74)

(Then, there are pre-reading activities, like asking questions related to their life and situation so they can relate and capture their attention.)

Furthermore, to enhance student comprehension, teachers not only utilize pre-reading activities but also simplify lessons by providing the most basic explanations to ensure students understand the concepts. They break down complex ideas into simpler terms, and use familiar examples, to reinforce learning and make lessons more accessible to all students. KII9 shared:

Kailangan ko talagang isimplify, yung pinakasimpleng explanation ng lesson para maintindihan nila. (KII9, Transcript 3, Lines 59-60)

(I really need to simplify the lesson, providing the most basic explanation so they can understand it.)

In addition to simplifying lessons, teachers employ other strategies to support student comprehension. Teachers simplify or modify questions, provide clues, repeat stories, and guide students individually to enhance their understanding. KII4 stated:

So with this ang gagawin ko naman po is to simplify the questions, or modify it or I will give them clues, or I will repeat again the story na basahin nila, or minsan gina isa isa ko ko. (KII4, Transcript 2, Lines 20-21)

(So with this, what I do is simplify the questions or modify them, or I give them clues, or I repeat the story they read, or sometimes I guide them individually.)

Similarly, when simplifying lessons and providing individual support, teachers frequently ask questions to check students' understanding and ensure they are following the lesson. This strategy helps reinforce key concepts and keeps students actively engaged in the learning process. KII7 mentioned:

Tapos from time to time naga ask gid ko sang questions maam para ma check kung naka intindi sila sa lesson or kung nasundan nila ang amon discussion. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 29-31)

(And from time to time, ma'am, I really ask questions to check if they understand the lesson or if they are following our discussion.)

Teachers recognize the importance of providing structured support to help students grasp key concepts and develop essential skills. By incorporating various strategies, they create an environment that fosters active learning and engagement. In addition to questioning techniques, teachers also use fill-in-the-blanks activities to support students in writing, making it easier for them to construct sentences and express their thoughts. KII6 narrated:

Pag magsulat sila ng sentences maam, struggling gid gihapon. Kay say for example diba, sa mga lessons gid man maam more on English, t mga essay, mahambal na sila nga pwedi Filipino maam? (KII6, Transcript 2, Lines 22-24)

(When they write sentences, ma'am, they still struggle. For example, in the lessons, which are mostly in English, especially essays, they would ask, 'Can we use Filipino, ma'am?')

KII2 also highlighted the challenges students face when expressing their thoughts in English, particularly in writing tasks. To address this, teachers adopt strategies that make writing more accessible and engaging for learners. One such approach is encouraging writing by assigning topics related to students' personal experiences, such as memorable moments or self-reflection, to make writing more relatable and meaningful. KII2 articulated:

Then kis a maam, ang ginapasulat ko lang sa ila is ng mga related lang bala sa ila na experience or life, like my memorable experience or ng mga who am I bala maam. KII2, (Transcript 1, Lines 79-81)

(Then sometimes, ma'am, I just ask them to write about things related to their own experiences or life, like 'My Memorable Experience' or 'Who Am I,' ma'am.)

By connecting writing tasks to students' personal experiences, teachers help them feel more comfortable expressing their thoughts. However, to further support their writing development, teachers also focus on building a strong foundation in language skills. One way they do this is by starting with basic grammar concepts, such as identifying parts of speech, followed by activities and writing exercises about students' life experiences. KII8 stated:

Naga balik po kami to basic maam, pa identify sa kanila yung mga different parts of speech, naga activity kami about sa grammar, at gina papractice sila magsulat yung mga about sa life experiences nila. Kahit one paragraph lang maam, para ma practice at masanay naman sila. (KII8, Transcript 3, Lines 69-72)

(We go back to the basics, ma'am, by having them identify the different parts of speech. We also do grammar activities and let them practice writing about their life experiences. Even just one paragraph, ma'am, so they can practice and get used to it.)

Additionally, to further support students' development, teachers implement structured writing strategies that provide clear guidance and scaffolding. One such approach is guiding students to write simple sentences, helping them develop their writing skills and confidence. KII8 shared:

Sa writing, ang mga ginapagawa ko sa mga bata is ginapasulat sila ng mga simple sentences. KII8, Transcript 4, Lines 68-69

(In writing, I ask the students to write simple sentences.)

As students become more comfortable constructing simple sentences, teachers also seek to develop their overall communication skills. Writing is just one aspect of language learning, and fostering verbal expression is equally important. To achieve this, teachers provide activities such as role-playing and group discussions to enhance students' communication skills by encouraging them to express their ideas in English. KII5 narrated:

Then, para ma enhance din po yung communications skills nila sa English, naga provide rin po ako mga activities na yung ma expose talaga sila sa pagsasalita like mga role playing, mga group activities like magshare sila ideas nila sa kanilang group. (KII5, Transcript 2, Lines 88-91)

(Then, to enhance their communication skills in English, I also provide activities that truly expose them to speaking, such as role-playing and group activities where they share their ideas with their group.)

By creating opportunities for students to express themselves in English, teachers help them build confidence in their communication abilities. Interactive activities play a crucial role in this process, as they make learning more engaging and dynamic. To further encourage active participation, teachers incorporate games and role-playing activities to help students develop their speaking skills. KII8 stated:

Then naga pa games din ako maam, para mas ma encourage ang mga bata to actively participate in class, then mga role playing para ma practice din yung speaking skills nila. (KII8, Transcript 3, Lines 88-90)

(Then, I also incorporate games, ma'am, to encourage the students to actively participate in class, and role-playing activities to help them practice their speaking skills.)

In addition to fostering active participation through games and role-playing, teachers also recognize the importance of strengthening students' receptive skills, particularly in listening. Effective communication is not only about speaking but also about understanding spoken language. To enhance this skill, teachers focus on developing students' listening skills by using storytelling to engage them. KII6 stated:

Sa ila na level maam, more on dira ko sa listening skills maam. Naga storytelling ko sa ila. (KII6, Transcript 2, Line 7)

(At their level, ma'am, I focus more on listening skills. I do storytelling with them.)

By incorporating storytelling, teachers help students improve their listening skills while making learning more engaging and interactive. However, developing strong communication skills requires not only listening but also the ability to express oneself effectively in real-life situations. To further enhance students' confidence and readiness for practical scenarios, teachers conduct simulations, such as mock job interviews, to help students develop their communication skills and prepare for real-life situations. KII10 articulated:

Then yung mga simulations po like mock job interview kasi meron yan sa EAPP maam ei. (KII10, Transcript 3, Line 93)

(Then, simulations like mock job interviews, ma'am, because that's part of EAPP.)

Addressing the foundational learning gap requires innovative and student-centered teaching strategies that enhance language acquisition and communication skills. By simplifying lessons, providing structured support, and incorporating interactive activities, teachers create an engaging learning environment that fosters student confidence and skill development. Through writing exercises, speaking activities, storytelling, and real-life simulations, students gradually build the necessary language proficiency for both academic success and real-world communication. These strategies not only bridge learning gaps but also empower students to express themselves effectively and face future challenges with confidence.

Culturally And Linguistically Responsive Strategies. This study found the strategies employed by teachers teaching English in far-flung schools to overcome the challenges in cultural diversity and language barriers. These strategies include contextualization in teaching English, contextualization in lesson planning, culturally sensitive instruction, culturally responsive teaching, and use of translation to overcome language barriers.

To effectively address cultural diversity, teachers employ various strategies that ensure inclusivity in English instruction. One key approach is contextualization, which allows teachers to tailor their lessons to the lived experiences of their students. By doing so, they make learning more meaningful and accessible. Specifically, teachers use contextualization as a strategy by providing examples related to students' experiences and surroundings, making English lessons more relatable and understandable. KII1 shared:

Contextualization maam. Halimbawa maam maghatag ko sang example para mas makarelata sila, kung ano tong mga experience nila, kung ano tong ara lang sa palibot. (KII1, Transcript 1, Lines 46-47)

(Contextualization, ma'am. For example, I give them examples so they can relate better, based on their experiences and what is around them.)

Building on this approach, teachers consistently integrate real-life situations into their lessons to further enhance students'

understanding. By grounding English instruction in familiar contexts, they bridge the gap between abstract concepts and practical application. This method not only makes lessons more engaging but also helps students grasp the language more effectively. Teachers consistently contextualize lessons using real-life situations to help students relate better and understand English more effectively. KII3 mentioned:

I always contextualized my lesson into real life para mas maka relate sila. (KII3, Transcript 1, Line 10)

(I always contextualize my lesson into real life so they can relate better.)

To further support student learning, teachers ensure that the examples they use are both relatable and appropriate to the students' proficiency levels. By aligning lesson content with their experiences and abilities, teachers create a more inclusive and engaging learning environment. Teachers use relatable and level-appropriate examples to help students better understand lessons and engage more effectively in learning. KII8 stated:

Ang mga strategies naman na ginagamit ko maam, mas nagabigay ako nang maraming examples sa mga bata maam, mga examples na kung saan mas maka relate sila at yung Madali lang sa level nila. (KII8, Transcript 3, Lines 55-57)

(The strategies I use, ma'am, involve providing more examples for the students, examples that they can easily relate to and that match their level.)

Moreover, to make lessons even more meaningful, teachers integrate contextualization into their Daily Lesson Log (DLL). By incorporating relatable examples that connect lessons to students' experiences and cultural backgrounds, they create a learning environment that fosters better comprehension and engagement. Teachers incorporate contextualization in their Daily Lesson Log by providing relatable examples that connect lessons to students' experiences and cultural background. KII1 mentioned:

Sa dll, nagahimo man ko maam, like nagahatag ko sang mga examples, ng ma relate relate maam, gina contextualize gyapon. (KII1, Transcript 1, Lines 63-64)

(In the DLL, I also do that, ma'am, like giving examples that are relatable. I still contextualize.)

Similarly, teachers apply contextualization in their Daily Lesson Log, particularly in the activities they design. By doing so, they ensure that learning experiences remain relevant and meaningful, allowing students to better connect with the lesson content. Teachers apply contextualization in the Daily Lesson Log, especially in activities, to make lessons more relevant and meaningful for students. KII5 shared:

DLL po yung gamit ko maam, at gina contextualized ko po yung lesson ko lalo na sa mga activities. (KII5, Transcript 2, Lines 72-73)

(I use the DLL, ma'am, and I contextualize my lessons, especially in the activities.)

To further strengthen this approach, teachers intentionally design activities that align with students' backgrounds and experiences. By ensuring that learning tasks are relatable, they create a more engaging and meaningful educational experience. Teachers apply contextualization by designing activities that ensure students can relate to the lessons, making learning more meaningful and engaging. KII2 noted:

Then sa akon ang ginagawa ko po is contextualization, like ang mga activities ko gina make sure ko na makarelate ang mga bata. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 87-89)

(Then, what I do is contextualization, like I make sure that my activities are relatable for the students.)

In addition to making lessons relatable, teachers also recognize the importance of integrating cultural aspects into their instruction. They approach discussions about students' culture with sensitivity and respect, ensuring that cultural integration enhances learning without causing misunderstandings or offense. Teachers ensure that discussions about students' culture are respectful and sensitive to avoid causing offense while integrating cultural aspects into lessons. KII4 stated:

Then ginamake sure ko din po na hindi maoffend yung mga bata kung pag usapan ang culture nila. (KII4, Transcript 2, Lines 124-125)

(Then I also make sure that the students are not offended when we talk about their culture.)

Teachers also implement a culturally sensitive pedagogy by carefully selecting topics and designing activities that are inclusive and free from bias. This approach ensures that all students feel valued and respected while engaging with lesson content. By fostering an inclusive learning environment, teachers implement culturally sensitive pedagogy by ensuring that topics and activities are inclusive and free from bias. KII10 mentioned:

In terms of pedagogy maam, wala talagang bias, kumbaga culturally sensitive po yung topic at activities namin. (KII10, Transcript 3, Lines 71-72)

(In terms of pedagogy, ma'am, there is no bias. Our topics and activities are culturally sensitive.)

To further promote inclusivity in the classroom, teachers consider students' cultural backgrounds, lived experiences, and traditions when designing their instructional approaches. By doing so, they ensure that lessons are not only relevant but also respectful of diverse perspectives. Teachers consider students' culture, experiences, way of living, and traditions in their teaching approach to make lessons more meaningful and inclusive. KII7 narrated:

Ng gina consider ko man ang culture sang mga bata maam, lalo na ang ila na mag experiences, ng way of living nila, ng il ana mga traditions ba na. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 111-112)

(I also consider the students' culture, ma'am, especially their experiences, way of living, and their traditions.)

Furthermore, to continue this commitment to inclusivity, teachers adopt a multicultural approach that actively integrates students' cultural backgrounds into lesson plans. By acknowledging and incorporating diverse traditions and experiences, they create a learning environment that is both relevant and respectful of different cultural identities. Teachers employ a multicultural approach by incorporating students' cultural backgrounds into lesson plans to make learning more inclusive and relevant. KII4 articulated:

I used multicultural approach, wherein ginatry ko include sa lesson plan ko yung about sa culture nila. (KII4, Transcript 2, Lines 122-123)

(I used a multicultural approach, wherein I try to include their culture in my lesson plan.)

Teachers further adapt their instructional methods to align with the cultural contexts of their students. By integrating lessons into students' daily lives and considering their cultural backgrounds when selecting topics and examples, they make learning more meaningful and accessible. Teachers adapt to cultural contexts by integrating lessons into students' daily lives, considering their culture when selecting topics and examples to enhance understanding. KII8 shared:

To adapt sa cultural contexts maam, gina incorporate ko ang mga lessons sa daily lives ng mga bata, yung topics at mga examples gina consider ko yung culture talaga ng mga bata. (KII8, Transcript 3, Lines 74-75)

(To adapt to cultural contexts, ma'am, I incorporate the lessons into the students' daily lives. I truly consider their culture when selecting topics and examples.)

Likewise, teachers actively encourage students to share their cultural traditions and language in the classroom. Teachers encourage students to share their cultural traditions and language, fostering a more inclusive and culturally responsive learning environment. KII7 noted:

Tapos kis a gina ask ko man sila about sa il ana culture na sila naman ang magshare kung ano ang mga traditions nila maam, kis a ng about man sa ila nga language. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 49-51)

(Then sometimes, I also ask them about their culture so they can be the ones to share their traditions, ma'am, and sometimes also about their language.)

Teachers also ensure that lessons remain meaningful by making them relevant to students' lives. By using relatable examples and linking lesson content to students' personal experiences, they enhance both comprehension and engagement. Teachers use relatable examples and connect lessons to students' experiences to enhance understanding and engagement in learning. KII4 narrated:

Kung mag explain ko sa mga bata maam, ang ginagawa ko po is naga bigay po ako ng mga examples para mas lalo nila magets ang lesson then as much as possible ginatry ko talaga irelate sa kanilang experiences para mas makarelata sila sa lesson naming. (KII4, Transcript 2, Lines 99-101)

(When I explain to the students, ma'am, what I do is give examples so they can better understand the lesson. Then, as much as possible, I try to relate it to their experiences so they can connect more with our lesson.)

Moreover, teachers also employ strategies that support students' comprehension of complex English vocabulary. By incorporating translation techniques, they ensure that students can grasp difficult words more effectively, bridging the gap between English and their native language. Teachers use the grammar-translation method to help students understand difficult English words by translating them into Filipino or their dialect. KII10 stated:

Siguro yung ano maam, yung grammar translation, kasi yung mga words maam sa English is hindi talaga nila naiintindihan, mahirap sya, so naga translate ako maam. (KII10, Transcript 3, Lines 57-58)

(Maybe the grammar-translation method, ma'am, because the English words are really difficult for them to understand. It's hard, so I translate them, ma'am.)

By translating lessons into Filipino, teachers enhance student comprehension and make learning more accessible. Teachers address language barriers by translating lessons into Filipino to ensure better student understanding. KII5 mentioned:

Yung strategies ko po maam, una is yung sa language barrier, is yung ginatranslate ko into Filipino yung lesson para mas lalo

maintindihan ng mga bata. (KII5, Transcript 2, Lines 60-61)

(My strategies, ma'am, first, for the language barrier, I translate the lesson into Filipino so that the students can understand it better.)

Likewise, teachers use translation strategies by first explaining the lesson in Filipino to ensure students understand the topic before proceeding in English. This step-by-step approach ensures that students fully grasp the topic in Filipino before engaging with it in English. KII7 narrated:

Mga strategies maam, nuh, ng like kung magklase ko maam tong siling ko kaina na gina translate ko anay sya sa Filipino maam para makuha sang, sang mga bata kag maintindihan nila ang topic. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 44-46)

(The strategies, ma'am, like when I teach, as I mentioned earlier, I first translate it into Filipino so that the students can grasp and understand the topic.)

Teaching English in far-flung schools comes with challenges, particularly in overcoming cultural diversity and language barriers. To address these, teachers use contextualization by relating lessons to students' real-life experiences and cultural backgrounds, making learning more meaningful and accessible. They also implement culturally responsive teaching by integrating students' traditions, way of life, and identities into lessons, fostering an inclusive and engaging learning environment. Additionally, teachers employ translation techniques, such as the grammar-translation method, to help students grasp complex English vocabulary by initially explaining lessons in Filipino or their dialect before transitioning to English. This approach builds students' confidence and reinforces comprehension. Through a combination of contextualization, cultural sensitivity, and translation strategies, teachers create an inclusive and effective learning experience that enhances students' English proficiency despite the challenges of teaching in remote areas.

Fostering Supportive Learning Environment. The result of this study revealed the strategies employed by teachers teaching English in far-flung schools to overcome the challenges in socio-economic barriers. These strategies include motivating and encouraging student engagement and building positive relationships and communication.

To create a supportive learning environment, teachers implement strategies that help students overcome socio-economic barriers. One key approach is fostering student motivation and active participation by acknowledging their efforts and creating a positive classroom atmosphere. Teachers encourage student participation by praising their efforts, regardless of the accuracy of their answers, to build confidence and motivation. KII4 shared:

Para mas ma encourage ko pa talaga sila na magparticipate or mag recite, gina praise ko po talaga sila, kahit hindi ganon ka galing or kaganda ng sagot, minsan gani kahit mali pa ang sagot, gina praise ko parin sila. (KII4, Transcript 2, Lines 136-139)

(To further encourage them to participate or recite, I really praise them, even if their answer is not that good or well-constructed. Sometimes, even if their answer is wrong, I still praise them.)

Teachers also use positive reinforcement by giving encouraging feedback and recognizing students' participation, even if their answers are not entirely correct, to boost confidence and engagement. By providing encouraging feedback and acknowledging students' participation, they create an atmosphere where students feel safe to express their thoughts and ideas. KII3 shared:

The strategies kay positive reinforcement. I always give them positive feedback. Recognizing sa ila na participation like during nagrecite sila bisan layo ang ila nahambal. (KII3, Transcript 1, Lines 72-74)

(The strategy is positive reinforcement. I always give them positive feedback. Recognizing their participation, like when they recite, even if their answer is far from correct.)

In addition to using positive reinforcement, teachers also strive to instill a strong sense of purpose in their students. They remind learners of the significance of education and continuously encourage them to take their studies seriously. Teachers continuously motivate and encourage students by emphasizing the importance of education and the need to value their studies. KII7 mentioned:

Ang gina ubra ko lang gid is gina motivate kag encourage lang gid sila maam kung ano ka importante ang pagskwela, nga ng hindi man bala dapat nila pagpabay an ila nga pagskwela. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 105-107)

(What I really do, ma'am, is just motivate and encourage them about how important education is, that they should not neglect their studies.)

To further enhance student engagement, teachers incorporate strategies that make learning more interactive and rewarding. Teachers motivate students to participate by awarding points for recitations, encouraging engagement and active involvement in class. KII2 stated:

Gahatag ko points sa ila..everytime mag recite sila, ginatagaan ko dayong sang points..kay kung makita nil ana may points na sila, malipay sila kag mag participate nah. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 44-45)

(I give them points... Every time they recite, I immediately give them points... because when they see that they have points, they feel happy and participate more.)

Moreover, teachers also create a classroom atmosphere that fosters openness and comfort. Teachers adopt a flexible and approachable attitude, fostering an open and comfortable environment where students feel encouraged to share, interact, and engage in learning. KIII narrated:

Hindi ko strikto gid kaayo basta patihon lang nila ko, kay mas open sila ba kung amo ng, kung sa akon lang ba..mas open sila sa teacher mag open up, magshare kag mag interact kung hindi kayo higit ang maestra ba. KIII1, Transcript 1, Lines 146-148

(I'm not too strict as long as they respect me because they tend to be more open that way. If it's just with me, they feel more comfortable opening up, sharing, and interacting when the teacher is not too strict.)

In the same way, to cultivate a supportive learning environment, teachers take the time to listen to their students' life stories and experiences. By showing genuine interest in their backgrounds, it allows students to feel heard and valued while building stronger connections in the classroom. KII7 shared:

Ng mamati kaman bala sa ila na mga stories sa life maam, sa ila na mag experiences, ng about sa family nila, kag dira mo ab mas makilala sila maam.,ng dira nga way makuha mo man ila nga heart bala maam, kay ng ma feel man nila nga may gapamati man sa ila. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 114-117)

(When you listen to their life stories, ma'am, their experiences, and about their families, that's when you get to know them better. In that way, you also win their hearts because they feel that someone is listening to them.)

By fostering meaningful connections with their students, teachers create a sense of trust and belonging in the classroom. When students feel heard and valued, they become more comfortable expressing themselves and engaging in discussions. Teachers strive to be accommodating to students' diverse backgrounds, ensuring they feel welcome in class and comfortable sharing their ideas. KII2 articulated:

Ginatory ko lang gid maging accommodating sa ila ng despite of their diversity lalo na sa culture, still ma feel nila na welcome man sila sa klase kag magshare sang ila nga ideas. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 47-49)

(I really try to be accommodating to them so that despite their diversity, especially in culture, they still feel welcome in class and comfortable sharing their ideas.)

Teachers in far-flung schools play an important role in creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment despite socio-economic barriers. Through positive reinforcement, motivation, and a flexible teaching approach, they empower students to actively participate and engage in their education. By listening to students' experiences and accommodating diverse backgrounds, teachers foster a sense of belonging and trust, ensuring that every learner feels valued and encouraged. Their commitment to building strong teacher-student relationships and promoting inclusivity not only enhances classroom engagement but also contributes to students' overall academic growth and success.

Maximizing Local Resources and Community Support. This study revealed the strategies employed by teachers teaching English in far-flung schools to overcome the challenges in resource and infrastructure limitations. These strategies include the use of visual materials to enhance learning, use of improvised teaching materials, offline digital learning, and community engagement.

Among these strategies, the use of visual materials plays a crucial role in enhancing learning. Teachers utilize visual strategies, such as charts and posters with pictures, to enhance student engagement and comprehension by providing clear and stimulating representations of concepts. KII5 mentioned:

Para sa akin yung pinaka effective na material is yung mga chart and posters. Yung mga materials na may pictures. (KII5, Transcript 2, Lines 75-80)

(For me, the most effective materials are charts and posters, those materials that have pictures.)

The effectiveness of visual materials in enhancing student learning is evident in teachers' strategies. Teachers utilize charts, posters, flashcards, and printed materials to support students' reading development and engagement in class. KII8 shared:

In my class, I used mga charts, posters, and flash cards especially for reading. At may mga printed materials din kami maam. (KII8, Transcript 3, Lines 80-81)

(In my class, I use charts, posters, and flashcards, especially for reading. We also have printed materials, ma'am.)

In addition to supporting reading development, visual materials also aid in improving students' comprehension of lessons. Teachers use visual strategies, such as charts, pictures, and tarpapel materials, to enhance students' comprehension of the lesson. KII9 stated:

For them to comprehend the lesson, ang pina ka effective sa kanila is with pictures, chart, ganon. So gumagawa ako ng tarpapel, may mga pictures. (KII9, Transcript 3, Lines 90-91)

(For them to comprehend the lesson, the most effective materials are pictures, charts, and similar visuals. So, I create tarpapel with

pictures.)

Apart from utilizing charts and pictures, teachers also employ other creative approaches to facilitate learning. One such strategy is the use of improvised teaching materials. Teachers use laminated reading passages as a strategy to enhance students' reading skills and engagement. KII1 said:

May ara man kami sinang mga laminated reading passage. (KII1, Transcript 1 Line 67)

(We also have those laminated reading passages.)

Teachers continuously find ways to provide students with more reading materials to enhance their literacy skills. One common approach is ensuring that students have access to printed texts. Teachers print stories and passages for students to read as a strategy to develop their reading skills. KII2 articulated:

Ang gina ubra nalang namon is, kami nagaprint po maam sang mga stories or mga reading passage kag ipabasa sa ila. (KII2, Transcript 2, Lines 29-31)

(What we do is, we print stories or passages and have the students read them, ma'am.)

Moreover, aside from providing printed stories and passages, teachers explore different ways to make reading materials more accessible and engaging for students. They recognize the importance of varied resources in improving literacy skills. Teachers print tarpapel with reading materials to support students in developing their reading skills. KII3 mentioned:

Naga print din kami tarpapel para maka pagread din sila. (KII3, Transcript 1, Line 52)

(We also print tarpapel so they can read as well.)

In addition to using printed materials like tarpapel to support students' reading development, teachers also integrate digital resources to enhance learning. One effective strategy they employ is offline digital learning. Teachers download videos, learning materials, and educational games at home to ensure interactive and engaging classroom instruction. KII9 narrated:

And then I also download videos or pictures since we don't have strong internet access at school, sa bahay palang ay nagadownload na ako ng mga videos, mga learning materials and mga games para may magamit kami sa klase at maging interactive din ang klase namin. (KII9, Transcript 3, Lines 103-106)

(And then I also download videos or pictures since we don't have strong internet access at school. At home, I already download videos, learning materials, and games so that we have resources to use in class and make our lessons more interactive.)

Given the limited internet access in schools, teachers take proactive steps to secure digital resources in advance. Teachers search for lessons and materials in lower areas beforehand, ensuring they have resources ready for classroom instruction. KII10 shared:

Nung wala pa kaming internet talaga dito, pag nasa baba kami naga search kami ng lesson at mga materials prior sa klase naming para pagdating naming sa school, meron na kaming ipresent. (KII10, Transcript 3, Lines 59-61)

(When we still didn't have internet here, we would search for lessons and materials while we were in lower areas before our class so that when we arrived at school, we already had something to present.)

Additionally, teachers ensure that students still have access to interactive and engaging learning materials even without a stable internet connection. Teachers maximize ICT by using pre-downloaded videos and digital resources. KII3 stated:

Ang ICT, maka apply man maam sa klase, kay, kahit wala man kami talaga..internet na connectivity na nami gid, maka apply man din kami maam through downloaded videos. (KII3, Transcript 1, Lines 38-39)

(ICT can still be applied in class, ma'am, because even though we don't have a stable internet connection, we can still use it through downloaded videos.)

Beyond utilizing technology to support learning, teachers also recognize the importance of community involvement in addressing educational challenges. One way they do this is by working closely with parents to improve learning environments. Teachers collaborate with parents to create makeshift classrooms. KII10 articulated:

So yung mga parents ng senior high maam, bumuo kami ng makeshift na classroom. (KII10, Transcript 3, Lines 47-48)

(So, the parents of the senior high students, ma'am, and I built a makeshift classroom.)

In addition to partnering with parents to create makeshift classrooms, teachers also seek support from local authorities to enhance the learning environment. Teachers collaborate with Barangay Officials to provide whiteboards. KII7 said:

Naka provide po kami ng white board through the help of our Barangay Officials. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 49-50)

(We were able to provide a whiteboard through the help of our Barangay Officials.)



Teachers also collaborate with other community stakeholders to enhance the learning environment and provide better educational tools for students. Recognizing the importance of multimedia resources in engaging learners, teachers coordinate with the PTA to facilitate the acquisition of a television. KII6 stated:

Kung mag project po ng tv, idaan sa PTA maam. (KII6, Transcript 2, Lines 85-86)

(If we are going to acquire a TV, it should go through the PTA, ma'am.)

Teachers in far-flung schools demonstrate resilience and resourcefulness in addressing challenges related to limited resources and inadequate infrastructure. By maximizing available local materials, creating improvised teaching aids, and utilizing offline digital learning strategies, they ensure that students receive quality education despite these constraints. Moreover, their strong collaboration with parents, local officials, and the community highlights the importance of collective effort in improving the learning environment. These strategies not only enhance student engagement and comprehension but also reinforce the vital role of community support in sustaining quality education in remote areas.

Support Needed from the Department of Education of the Teachers Teaching English in Far-Flung Schools

When key informants were asked about the support they need in teaching English in far-flung schools, three themes emerged: Support for Educational Resources and Infrastructure, Financial Support and Budget Allocation, and Teacher Development Through Training and On-Site Support.

Table 3. *Thematic Map for the Support Needed from the Department of Education of the Teachers Teaching English in Far-Flung Schools*

<i>First Theme: Support For Educational Resources And Infrastructure</i>	<i>Second Theme: Financial Support And Budget Allocation</i>
<p style="text-align: center;">Provision of ICT Equipment</p> <p>Teachers need support from the Department of Education in prioritizing the provision of ICT equipment because it is essential for 21st-century learning. Teachers need support from the Department of Education in integrating technology and introducing language applications to enhance English instruction. Teachers need support from the Department of Education in providing each classroom with a TV to support ICT integration. Teachers need support from the Department of Education through more learning resources, such as TVs, computers, and laptops, to help both teachers and students explore and enhance learning through technology.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Financial Support</p> <p>Teachers need support from the Department of Education through incentives as recognition for their dedication and to motivate them in delivering quality education despite challenges. Teachers need financial support, such as hazard pay, to compensate for transportation costs and the challenges of teaching in far-flung areas. Teachers need support from the Department of Education through allowances to help ease the financial burden of teaching in challenging environments.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Provision of Learning Resources and Materials</p> <p>Teachers need support from the Department of Education through contextualized learning materials, especially English textbooks and workbooks. Teachers need support from the Department of Education in prioritizing literacy development by providing more learning resources and materials to address students' challenges in comprehension and sentence formulation. Teachers need support from the Department of Education by providing more English books and reading materials. Teachers need support from the Department of Education through more resources and learning materials specifically designed to address their unique challenges.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Budget Allocation for Far-Flung Schools</p> <p>Teachers need support from the Department of Education through additional funds allocated to support those teaching in far-flung schools. Teachers need support from the Department of Education through an increased budget for far-flung schools to better address their needs and challenges. Teachers need support from the Department of Education through an additional budget to address the needs in far-flung schools, particularly for learning materials and equipment.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Classroom Environment and Infrastructure</p> <p>Teachers need support from the Department of Education in providing a speech laboratory to help students practice their communication skills and build their confidence in speaking. Teachers emphasize the need for more conducive classrooms to create a better learning environment for students. Teachers need support from the Department of Education in constructing more conducive classrooms to provide a better learning environment for students.</p>	
<i>Third Theme: Teacher Development Through Training And On-Site Support</i>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Teachers' Training and Seminars on Contextualized Teaching</p> <p>Teachers need support from the Department of Education through training and seminars on how to contextualize lessons to align with students' cultures and effectively teach English in far-flung areas where learners are non-native speakers. Teachers need support from the Department of Education through seminars tailored for educators in remote areas, focusing on contextualizing lessons for Indigenous Peoples (IPs), effective classroom management, and strategies to motivate students to value education. Teachers need support from the Department of Education by being included in</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Teachers' Training and Seminars on Enhancing Teaching Strategies and Instructional Approaches</p> <p>Teachers need support from the Department of Education through specifically designed training for English teachers in far-flung areas, focusing on improving reading comprehension for IP students and strategies. Teachers need support from the Department of Education through seminars focused on enhancing teaching strategies, particularly simple yet effective methods tailored to students' learning levels and cultural</p>

the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED) program. Teachers need support from the Department of Education through seminars on addressing learning gaps, considering the scarcity of resources and language barriers.

backgrounds to support their development. Teachers need support from the Department of Education through seminars focusing on gamification and interactive learning games, as these strategies can engage students more effectively and make learning more enjoyable.

Conducting On-Site Evaluation

Teachers need support from the Department of Education through visits and monitoring of the situations in far-flung schools to better understand and address their challenges. Teachers need support from the Department of Education through regular visits to far-flung schools to better understand and address their challenges. Teachers need support from the Department of Education through site visits and monitoring in far-flung schools to better understand and address their challenges.

Support for Educational Resources and Infrastructure. Support for educational resources and infrastructure is another important theme that emerged in this study. Teachers emphasized the importance of having access to sufficient teaching materials, such as textbooks, technology, and classroom tools, to effectively support student learning. Additionally, the availability of proper infrastructure, including well-maintained classrooms, reliable internet connectivity, and functional equipment, plays a vital role in ensuring that both teachers and students can fully engage in the learning process. Adequate support in these areas enables schools to provide a more conducive learning environment, ultimately improving educational outcomes.

One significant aspect of educational resources that teachers highlighted is the provision of ICT equipment. As 21st-century learning increasingly relies on technology, educators stress the need for the Department of Education to prioritize the provision of ICT equipment because it is essential for 21st-century learning. Ensuring access to ICT resources empowers both teachers and students to engage in modern, technology-driven education. KII2 shared:

I think the DepEd should really aim po at providing ICT equipments, like ahm what I said po maam..it is very useful and important po lalo na that we are already in the 21st century. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 137-138)

(I think the DepEd should really focus on providing ICT equipment. Like I said, ma'am, it is very useful and important, especially since we are already in the 21st century.)

KII7 also mentioned that simply having access to technology is not enough; it must be effectively integrated into classroom instruction. Consequently, teachers need support from the Department of Education in integrating technology and introducing language applications to enhance English instruction. By doing so, students can engage in more interactive and immersive learning experiences that improve their language skills. KII7 stated:

Ano maam, siguro kay nasa 21st century na tayo, may technology integration nah talaga, yung ano po maam, yung using AI in language, then iintroduce din sana nila, or iimplement din yung mga language app. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 127-129)

(Ma'am, since we are already in the 21st century, technology integration is really a must. Like, using AI in language learning, and hopefully, they will also introduce or implement language applications.)

KII2 also emphasized the importance of having the necessary equipment to fully implement ICT in the classroom. One specific request is for the Department of Education to provide each classroom with a TV to support ICT integration, which can serve as a valuable tool for delivering digital lessons, multimedia content, and interactive learning activities. With this support, teachers can better utilize technology to enhance instruction and engage students more effectively. KII2 articulated:

Kung pwedi lang daad..makapurchase sang TV..or matagaan sang TV ang every classroom.. para ma apply man namon ang ICT integration sa klase. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 116-117)

(If possible, we could purchase a TV or have a TV provided for each classroom so that we can also apply ICT integration in our classes.)

Moreover, teachers also stressed the need for a broader range of learning resources to fully integrate ICT into education. To achieve this, teachers need support from the Department of Education in providing these essential tools, ensuring that digital learning opportunities are accessible to all. KII7 narrated:

Mag hatag pa unta sila sang mga learning resources maam, like mga TV, computers, kag laptops maam ng para may magamit man ang mga teachers lalo na ang mga bata maam, ng maka explore man sila gamit sang computer maam. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 135-137)

(They should provide more learning resources, ma'am, like TVs, computers, and laptops so that the teachers and especially the students will have something to use. This will allow them to explore using computers, ma'am.)

To further enhance the quality of education in far-flung areas, it is not only technological resources that are needed but also appropriate

learning materials. Teachers emphasized the importance of receiving support from the Department of Education in the form of contextualized learning materials, especially English textbooks and workbooks. KII8 mentioned:

Mag provide din po sana sila ng mga contextualized learning materials po, lalo na yung mga English textbooks, mga workbooks. (KII8, Transcript 3, Lines 108-109)

(They should also provide contextualized learning materials, especially English textbooks and workbooks.)

Additionally, ensuring access to contextualized learning materials is just one aspect of improving English instruction in far-flung schools. Teachers also highlighted the need for broader support in literacy development. They emphasized that the Department of Education should prioritize providing additional learning resources and materials to help students overcome difficulties in comprehension and sentence formulation. Strengthening these foundational skills is crucial for enhancing overall language proficiency and academic performance. KII7 narrated:

Siguro sa literacy gid maam. Kay sa nasiling ko na maam, medyo mahina gid ang mga bata sa comprehension, hindi maka formulate sang sentences nga tama. So daad ang Deped mag provide pa sang mga learning resources kag materials maam para ma address ang problema sa literacy maam. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 147-150)

(Probably in literacy, ma'am. As I mentioned, the students are quite weak in comprehension and cannot formulate correct sentences. So, the Department of Education should provide more learning resources and materials, ma'am, to address the problem of literacy.)

Similarly, teachers mentioned that having sufficient English books and reading materials in the classroom is important. They emphasized the need for the Department of Education to provide more English books and reading materials to support both teaching and learning. KII5 said:

Then books din po lalo na sa English at mga reading materials. (KII5, Transcript 2, Lines 113-114)

(Then books as well, especially in English, and reading materials.)

Furthermore, teachers also highlighted the importance of having learning resources tailored to their specific challenges. They emphasized that materials may not always align with the needs of students in far-flung areas, making it crucial for the Department of Education to provide resources designed to address these unique difficulties. Ensuring that teachers have access to appropriate and relevant materials will greatly enhance the effectiveness of English instruction. KII2 stated:

Hoping na ang Deped maka provide pa sang mga resources kag learning materials na intended man diri sa bukid. (KII2, Transcript 1, Lines 122-123)

(Hoping that the Department of Education can provide more resources and learning materials specifically intended for rural areas.)

Beyond books and materials, teachers emphasized the necessity of facilities that can enhance students' communication skills. To further strengthen English instruction, they expressed the need for a speech laboratory where students can practice speaking and build their confidence in using the language. Providing such infrastructure would greatly contribute to improving students' oral proficiency and overall language competence. KII10 shared:

Then sa speaking naman maam, sana ano, mag provide sana ang Deped ng Speech lab, yung speech laboratory, para ano naman, ma practice yung communication skills nila at ma build yung confidence nila. (KII10, Transcript 3, Lines 106-108)

(Then, in terms of speaking, ma'am, hopefully, the Department of Education can provide a speech lab, a speech laboratory, so that students can practice their communication skills and build their confidence.)

In addition to specialized facilities like a speech laboratory, teachers also highlighted the importance of having more conducive classrooms to support effective learning. They emphasize the need for more conducive classrooms to create a better learning environment for students. KII9 articulated:

And then ofcourse, classroom din, dapat conducive rin ang mga classroom. (KII9, Transcript 3, Lines 140-141)

(And then, of course, classrooms as well, they should also be conducive to learning.)

Teachers further pointed out the need for concrete action in improving classroom conditions. They asserted that the Department of Education should take steps to construct more conducive classrooms to ensure a better learning environment for students. KII5 mentioned:

And then ma kapa construct din ng conducive classroom. (KII5, Transcript 3, Line 96)

(And then, they should also be able to construct conducive classrooms.)

Addressing the challenges faced by teachers in far-flung areas requires a multifaceted approach that includes providing essential learning resources, improving literacy support, and enhancing classroom infrastructure. The integration of technology, access to

contextualized learning materials, and the establishment of facilities such as speech laboratories are significant in fostering student engagement and language proficiency. Furthermore, creating conducive classroom environments is vital for effective teaching and learning. To achieve these goals, sustained support from the Department of Education is necessary to bridge the resource gap and ensure that both teachers and students have the tools they need for quality education.

Financial Support and Budget Allocation. This study revealed that financial support and proper budget allocation are important in ensuring the success of educational initiatives, especially in far-flung schools. Adequate funding is necessary not only for providing adequate resources like books, teaching materials, and infrastructure but also for supporting professional development programs for teachers.

Teachers need support from the Department of Education through incentives as recognition for their dedication and to motivate them in delivering quality education despite challenges. These provisions are essential to help compensate for the travel expenses they incur in reaching remote schools, ensuring that their efforts are properly acknowledged and supported. KII8 shared:

Sana magbigay din po sila mga incentives sa mga teachers po na dito nagtuturo sa far-flung schools, para kahit yung pamasaha naman naming ay ma compensate rin. (KII8, Transcript 3, Lines 107-108)

(I hope they also provide incentives for the teachers who are teaching in far-flung schools so that at least our transportation expenses can be compensated.)

Similarly, teachers need financial support, such as hazard pay, to compensate for transportation costs and the challenges of teaching in far-flung areas. KIII1 stated:

Kung may hazard pay gid maam man daw, daw okay.. macompensate ang pamasaha. (KIII1, Transcript 1, Lines 126-127)

(If there is hazard pay, ma'am, that would be great... it could compensate for the travel expenses.)

To further alleviate these financial struggles, teachers need support from the Department of Education through allowances to help ease the financial burden of teaching in challenging environments. KII5 mentioned:

Kung mabigyan po sana kami ng allowance, much better po sana. (KII5, Transcript 2, Lines 129)

(If we could be given an allowance, that would be much better.)

Additionally, to ensure sustained support for teachers, it is essential that the Department of Education allocates additional funds to support those teaching in far-flung schools particularly in providing the needs of the students and to have a television in the classroom. KII5 stated:

Mas okay gid po sana if mag provide po talaga sila additional budget in support sa teachers sa far-flung schools like para, ahm ma provide ang mga needs din ng mga bata, sa classroom magkaroon ng tv. (KII5, Transcript 2, Lines 124-126)

(It would be much better if they could provide an additional budget to support teachers in far-flung schools, such as to provide for the needs of the students and to have a TV in the classroom.)

Moreover, teachers need support from the Department of Education through an increased budget for far-flung schools to better address their needs and challenges. This additional funding can be used to address needs particularly in teaching English. KII4 narrated:

Isa sana sa mga initiatives na gawin ng deped is to increase the budget po or magkaroon ng additional na budget para dito sa mga far-flung schools at ma provide rin yung mga needs dito, sa teaching lalo na sa English. (KII4, Transcript 2, Lines 180-182)

(One of the initiatives that DepEd should implement is to increase the budget or provide additional funding for far-flung schools to address their needs, especially in teaching, particularly in English.)

Furthermore, teachers need support from the Department of Education through an additional budget to address the needs in far-flung schools, particularly for learning materials and equipment. KII8 shared:

Pinaka importante is magkaroon ng additional budget po para sa pangangailangan ng mga teachers dito sa bundok lalo na sa mga learning materials at equipment. (KII8, Transcript 3, Lines 119-121)

(The most important thing is to have an additional budget for the needs of teachers here in the mountains, especially for learning materials and equipment.)

Ensuring quality education in far-flung schools in Sultan Kudarat requires strong financial support and proper budget allocation from the Department of Education. Without adequate funding, teachers face continuous challenges that affect their ability to effectively teach English and other subjects. By providing increased financial assistance, including transportation allowances, hazard pay, and necessary teaching materials, the government can help ease the burden on teachers and improve the overall learning environment. Investing in these resources not only enhances teachers' motivation and efficiency but also ensures that students in remote areas receive the quality education they deserve. Prioritizing financial support for teachers in far-flung schools is an important step toward bridging

educational gaps and fostering equitable learning opportunities for all.

Teacher Development Through Training and On-Site Support. The results of this study revealed that teachers need support from the Department of Education, especially in organizing training and seminars on contextualized teaching and improving teaching strategies and instructional approaches. Additionally, DepEd should also conduct on-site evaluations to assess and enhance the implementation of these initiatives.

Teachers require further support from the Department of Education through specialized training and seminars that focus on contextualizing lessons to align with students' cultures. This is particularly crucial in far-flung areas, where learners are non-native English speakers and may struggle with language acquisition. Providing professional development opportunities tailored to these challenges can help educators implement more effective teaching strategies that cater to their students' unique linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In this regard, teachers need support from the Department of Education through training and seminars on how to contextualize lessons to align with students' cultures and effectively teach English in far-flung areas where learners are non-native speakers. KII8 articulated:

Sa mga training and seminars maam, much better siguro po if mag conduct din ng seminar about paano icontextualized ang lessons na ma align sa culture ng mga bata maam, then siguro kung paano talaga ituro ang English maam sa mga far-flung areas considering po na non-native speakers sila ng English. (KII8, Transcript 3, Lines 111-114)

(In the training and seminars, ma'am, it would be much better if they also conducted a seminar on how to contextualize lessons to align with the culture of the students, and perhaps on how to effectively teach English in far-flung areas, considering that they are non-native English speakers.)

In addition, teachers need support from the Department of Education through seminars tailored for educators in remote areas, focusing on contextualizing lessons for Indigenous Peoples (IPs), effective classroom management, and strategies to motivate students to value education. These training programs would help teachers develop culturally responsive teaching methods and create a more engaging and inclusive learning environment for their students. KII7 narrated:

Mga seminars maam nga intended gid tani para sa mga teachers diri sa bukid, paano mag contextualize sang lessons. Paano makipag deal sa mga bata na mostly kay mga Ips, paano ang classroom management, paano sila ma encourage pa, mga techniques bala maam paano sila ma motivate pa na tagaan importansya ang pag skwela. Mga amo sina maam. Ng kumbaga ang focus sang seminar is about gid sa teaching sa far-flung schools. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 157-161)

(Seminars, ma'am, that are specifically intended for teachers here in the mountains, on how to contextualize lessons. How to deal with students who are mostly Indigenous Peoples, how to manage the classroom, how to further encourage them, techniques on how to motivate them to value education. Those are the kinds of things, ma'am. The focus of the seminar should really be about teaching in far-flung schools.)

To further strengthen this support, secondary teachers need also to be included in the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED) program not only the elementary teachers, which provides specialized training and resources for teachers working with Indigenous learners. KII9 stated:

I hope na yung parang, isali rin kami sa IPeD. (KII9, Transcript 3, Line 111)

(I hope that we are also included in the IPeD.)

KII5 also mentioned that teachers need support from the Department of Education through seminars on addressing learning gaps, considering the scarcity of resources and language barriers. Providing targeted training will equip educators with effective strategies to overcome these challenges and ensure that students receive quality education despite these limitations. KII5 said:

Meron din sana seminar na related dito sa far-flung schools. Like paano iaddress ang learning gaps sang mga bata po maam considering the scarcity of resources and yung language barrier. (KII5, Transcript 2, Lines 99-101)

(There should also be a seminar related to far-flung schools, like how to address the learning gaps of students, ma'am, considering the scarcity of resources and the language barrier.)

Another informant mentioned that teachers need support from the Department of Education through specifically designed training for English teachers in far-flung areas, focusing on improving reading comprehension for IP students and strategies. These specialized seminars will help educators develop more effective teaching approaches tailored to the unique needs of their students. KII7 narrated:

Pero ng seminars lang maam nga para lang gid sa English teachers maam, paryas satong sa Creative Speech, ng daw hindi gid bala sya seminar nga ang mga topic maam is ng daw intended man bala para diri sa far-flung maam. Ng like, paano ma improve ang reading comprehension sang mga bata diri na mga Ips, ng mga strategies bala maam ng para ma cater bala ang needs man sang mga bata diri. (KII7, Transcript 3, Lines 140-144)

(But the seminars, ma'am, were only for English teachers, like the one on Creative Speech, which didn't really focus on topics intended

for far-flung areas. Like, how to improve the reading comprehension of IP students and the strategies to cater to the needs of the children here.)

Furthermore, teachers need support from the Department of Education through seminars focused on enhancing teaching strategies, particularly simple yet effective methods tailored to students' learning levels and cultural backgrounds to support their development. KII6 shared:

Sa mga seminar maam, ng about sya tani sa mga Enhancing Teaching Strategies, ng mga strategies nga simple lang pero at least ng makuha gid bala sang bata ang learning development, ng mga strategies nga naka base man sa level sang mga bata kag sa ila nga culture. (KII6, Transcript 2, Lines 133-136)

(In the seminars, ma'am, it should be about Enhancing Teaching Strategies, strategies that are simple but can truly help students in their learning development, as well as strategies that are based on the students' level and their culture.)

In addition to this, teachers can further benefit from seminars that explore innovative teaching methods to enhance student engagement. Consequently, teachers need support from the Department of Education through seminars focusing on gamification and interactive learning games, as these strategies can engage students more effectively and make learning more enjoyable. KII1 shared:

So mas better gid tani kung ang mga seminar is tong mga gamification, making games bala haw kay mas interactive sya. (KII1, Transcript 1, Lines 141-143)

(So it would be much better if the seminars were about gamification, like making games, because it is more interactive.)

Aside from training and seminars, it is also very important to provide direct support by assessing the actual conditions in far-flung schools. With this, teachers need support from the Department of Education through visits and monitoring of the situations in far-flung schools to better understand and address their challenges. Conducting on-site evaluations will allow education officials to identify specific needs, provide timely interventions, and ensure that necessary resources and assistance reach these remote areas. KII4 articulated:

So hoping po, that Deped will still improve its support by like visiting and monitoring din po dito para makita nila mismo po yung situation at mga pangangailan ng teachers and students. (KII4, Transcript 2, Lines 164-165)

(So we are hoping that DepEd will still improve its support by visiting and monitoring here as well so they can see firsthand the situation and the needs of both teachers and students.)

KII8 also added that frequent visits will enable education officials to provide continuous support, assess ongoing concerns, and implement sustainable solutions tailored to the needs of both teachers and students in far-flung schools. KII8 said:

Hoping magkaroon sang regular visit ang mga Deped Officials po maam para makita po nila mismo ano po yung mga need talaga ng mga teachers at sa classroom po. (KII8, Transcript 3, Lines 116-117)

(Hoping that DepEd officials will have regular visits, ma'am, so they can see for themselves what the teachers and classrooms truly need.)

Similarly, KII5 shared that teachers need support from the Department of Education through site visits and monitoring in far-flung schools to better understand and address their challenges. These efforts will help education officials gain deeper insights into the realities faced by educators and students, allowing them to implement more effective and responsive interventions. KII5 stated:

Then mag site visit din po sana sila para mas mamonitor nila yung situation sa far-flung at ma address talaga nila mismo kung ano yung mga needs dito sa school, needs po ng mga estudyante at lalo na sa mga teachers po. (KII5, Transcript 2, Lines 129-132)

(Then they should also conduct site visits so they can better monitor the situation in far-flung areas and directly address the needs of the school, the students, and especially the teachers.)

Ensuring quality English instruction in far-flung schools in Sultan Kudarat requires comprehensive support from the Department of Education. Teachers in these remote areas face numerous challenges, including financial constraints, a lack of instructional materials, and difficulties in teaching English to non-native speakers. Addressing these concerns demands increased budget allocation, specialized training, inclusion in the Indigenous Peoples Education (IPED) program, and regular on-site evaluations. By providing these essential forms of support, DepEd can empower teachers to effectively cater to the diverse needs of their students, create a more conducive learning environment, and improve overall education quality in far-flung communities. Strengthening these initiatives will not only enhance teachers' capabilities but also ensure that every student, regardless of location, receives meaningful and high-quality English education.

Conclusions

This study revealed the significant challenges faced by English teachers in far-flung schools in Sultan Kudarat, including learning gaps, cultural and linguistic barriers, socio-economic difficulties, and limited resources. Despite these obstacles, teachers demonstrated

resilience by employing various strategies such as innovative teaching methods, culturally responsive approaches, and maximizing local resources and community support. Their efforts illustrated the importance of adaptability and creativity in ensuring effective English instruction in remote areas.

The results also revealed the need for targeted support from the Department of Education to address the unique circumstances of teachers in these schools. Providing adequate resources, improving infrastructure, and offering specialized professional development programs can significantly enhance the quality of English instruction. Increased budget allocations and policy adjustments tailored to the realities of far-flung schools can further ensure a more equitable education system.

Beyond its research contributions, this study reflects the dedication and perseverance of teachers working in challenging environments. Their commitment to education goes beyond the profession. It is a vocation driven by passion and resilience. Despite the hardships, these teachers remain steadfast in their mission, playing a significant role in shaping the future of their students and inspiring others with their unwavering dedication to education.

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Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Glory Lou A. Mancenero

Esperanza National High School
Department of Education – Philippines

Anna Liza C. Cerbo

Anna Liza C. Cerbo – Philippines