
Innovative Strategies for Teaching English in the Wake of COVID-19 Pandemic: A Phenomenological Study

Marynie Daligdig¹; Rochelle Edrozo¹; Regine Galang¹;
Jovelyn Lambayan¹; Mercy Grace Mara¹; Sophomore Talle Vacalares^{1,*}

¹College of Teacher Education, Opol Community College, Philippines

* sophomore.vacalares@gmail.com

DOI: 10.47760/cognizance.2023.v03i06.006

Abstract— *The sudden shift from traditional to blended learning as a result of the pandemic has posed numerous challenges and has had noticeable effects as the country gradually transitions back to face-to-face classes. This study aims to examine the teaching strategies employed by English language teachers to address the learning gaps caused by COVID-19. A convenience sampling method was used to select six teachers from different grade levels (G7 to G12) who participated in the study. A phenomenological approach was employed to identify and explore the teaching strategies that were utilized to address the learning difficulties stemming from the pandemic. Based on the teachers' interviews, the following strategies were identified: (1) incorporating activities that relate to students' daily experiences to enhance language skills, (2) providing ample opportunities for learning through recitation, repetition, and practice to improve knowledge and skills, and (3) implementing scaffolding techniques, such as demonstration, modeling, and inquiry methods, to foster understanding and develop critical thinking skills. The study recommends that parents should support their children's learning by creating a conducive environment, providing necessary materials, and promoting motivation and engagement.*

Keywords— *Teaching Strategies, English Teachers, Learning Skills, Phenomenological Study, COVID-19*

I. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to significant disruptions in education, affecting students across the globe. While some students were able to adapt to the new normal of virtual or blended learning, many experienced academic disruptions, resulting in significant learning gaps. These learning gaps refer to the disparity between the expected knowledge level of students at a certain grade level and what they have actually learned. To address this issue, it is essential that teachers are equipped with effective instructional methods and are prepared to provide additional support to struggling students. According to Nusantari et al. (2021), teaching cognitive and metacognitive strategies can help students learn how to study and cope with the curriculum while also increasing their motivation to learn.

English language learning has become increasingly important in today's globalized world, with more and more individuals seeking to improve their English proficiency for educational, professional, and personal reasons. However, learning English is not always an easy task, and many students struggle to maintain their motivation and interest in the subject. In this regard, teachers play a critical role in fostering students' learning and motivation, as suggested by Almoslamani's (2022) study, which highlights the link between effective teaching strategies and students' academic success. This research aims to examine the crucial role of teacher strategies in promoting English language learning, with a specific focus on how motivation can be enhanced to achieve successful outcomes. The findings of this study will contribute to the development of effective teaching practices that can improve students' English language proficiency and enhance their overall academic success.

To prevent academic failure, it is essential to address these gaps by implementing effective teaching strategies. According to Chew et al. (2020) study, teachers must consider the subject matter and available resources when choosing strategies to meet the needs of all students. This may include the use of engaging activities, visual aids, and interesting explanations. Teachers also need to seek feedback from their students to

ensure that they are meeting their needs. In the context of English language learning, which can be challenging and requires motivation, teachers need to be particularly careful when designing their strategies.

This study focuses on exploring and examining the teaching strategies employed to bridge the learning gaps in English language education caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and support the academic success of their students. The objectives of this research are to identify the specific learning gaps that have emerged as a result of the pandemic's impact on English language learning, explore effective instructional approaches that can address these identified gaps, investigate the influence of implementing these teaching strategies on students' learning outcomes, and gather firsthand accounts from students, teachers, and other stakeholders about their experiences with English language learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. By achieving these aims, this study can contribute valuable insights and recommendations for improving English language education in the context of pandemic-induced learning challenges.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. *Research Design*

This study employed a qualitative research methodology to elucidate the innovative instructional strategies employed by an English teacher within the context of high school education. The research approach of phenomenology was utilized to delve into and explore the teaching styles adopted by the teachers, employing interviews as the primary means of inquiry. Through this methodological framework, the objective was to gain a comprehensive understanding of the distinctive approaches and practices of English teachers in their pedagogical endeavors within the high school setting, aiming to address important learning issues and acquire a rich and detailed comprehension of effective teaching methodologies.

B. *Participants and Sampling Procedure*

The participants of this research study consist of English teachers who teach grades 7-12 in a selected secondary school in Opol, Misamis Oriental. The respondents were selected using a convenient sampling method, a type of non-probability sampling that involves selecting a sample from the readily available population of English teachers. Specifically, the study focuses on six teachers from different year levels who serve as respondents. By including all English teachers in the study, the researcher gains valuable insights into the various teaching strategies employed by these educators. This approach provides a significant advantage in understanding how the curriculum progresses and how these teachers can cater to the diverse needs of their students.

C. *Data Gathering Procedure*

The study adhered to standard ethical procedures commonly followed in research studies. Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved. A formal letter was sent to the principal, seeking permission to conduct the research, and a separate letter was prepared for the participants outlining the study's terms and conditions, ensuring the confidentiality of the data collected.

Participants received an orientation session, where they were provided with detailed information about the research study. During this session, consent letters were signed by those who agreed to participate and met the outlined criteria. Only those who willingly consented and met the eligibility criteria were included in the final group of respondents for the study.

Individual interviews were conducted by a researcher using a semi-formal interview protocol developed by the research team. The interview questions focused on the teaching strategies employed by the participants, their approach to managing student behavior, and the challenges they encountered while addressing learning gaps. This approach provided a comprehensive understanding of their experiences and enabled the researchers to address the identified issues effectively.

Observations were made during the interviews, taking note of participants' facial expressions, tone of voice, and other non-verbal cues. Detailed field notes were recorded, and in some instances, audio or video recordings were used to capture the interviews.

The collected data was then evaluated and analyzed using thematic analysis. The researchers grouped the respondents' answers into relevant themes and sought to provide explanations and establish connections to existing research findings available online and printed.

By following these rigorous ethical procedures and research methods, the study ensured the validity and integrity of the data collected, enabling a comprehensive exploration of the teaching strategies and challenges faced by the participants.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The qualitative data obtained from the interviews was meticulously analyzed and organized into major thematic categories. These categories served as the framework for organizing the findings of the study. Within each theme, pertinent and noteworthy quotations from the participants were selected to provide concrete examples and support the identified themes. The inclusion of these quotations adds depth and authenticity to the findings, as they directly reflect the significant responses and perspectives shared by the participants during the interviews.

A. *Teachers' Perception of Learning Gap*

The teachers of the selected secondary schools in Opol, Misamis Oriental acknowledge the existence of a learning gap in their student's learning process. They explain that there is a mismatch between the actual level of learning of their students and the expected level of learning for their age or grade level. This concept of a "learning gap," as characterized by Rizwan & Masrur (2018), refers to the difference between what a student has actually learned and what they were supposed to learn at a specific age or grade level. The teachers further explain that the pandemic's onset and the switch from traditional to modular education are factors that contributed to their student's lack of knowledge.

The lack of confidence of students in using the English language, the weak foundation in the English language, and the implementation of the "no child left behind" policy are identified as challenges faced by teachers when teaching English at the classroom level. The COVID-19 lockdown and the transition to blended learning over the past two years have exacerbated these issues. All participants who took part in the study expressed their concern about their students' English language proficiency, highlighting the need for significant efforts to close the learning gaps that students are facing.

B. *Students' Lack of Confidence in Speaking English*

The participants of the study reported that students exhibit timidity when it comes to speaking English. Raja (2017) states that speaking a foreign language in front of peers can be a face-threatening experience, which may cause students to feel shy. Furthermore, mispronouncing a word or committing a speech error can result in ridicule, teasing, and laughter from classmates. This type of behavior hinders student participation, particularly since the learning approach has been modular and online for the last two years. Students may feel embarrassed when speaking English in front of others and, as a result, avoid using the target language. This may lead to withdrawal and lack of participation.

C. *English Aptitude reflects Students' Weak Foundation Skills*

The students' weak foundation in grammar and macro skills has a profound impact on their overall English aptitude, as it directly influences their ability to effectively communicate in written and spoken forms. When tasked with writing essays or other written assignments, students with limited grammar and macro skills often struggle to construct grammatically correct sentences, resulting in various writing errors. These errors can include incorrect verb tenses, subject-verb agreement issues, improper word usage, and punctuation mistakes.

Furthermore, their limited grammar and macro skills also affect their speaking abilities. Students may experience difficulties in expressing themselves fluently and accurately, as they may struggle with sentence structure, vocabulary choice, and pronunciation. This can lead to hesitations, grammatical errors, and overall, less confident oral communication. The findings of Kirmizi & Karci (2017) support these observations, emphasizing that errors in pronunciation, morphology, syntax, and spelling are significant contributors to the students' weak English aptitude. These errors further highlight the need for focused attention on grammar and macro skills development in language instruction.

To address this issue, educators and language instructors prioritize the teaching and reinforcement of grammar rules, sentence structures, and vocabulary. Providing ample opportunities for practice, such as engaging in writing exercises and conversational activities, can help students improve their language proficiency and overcome their weaknesses. Additionally, teachers provide constructive feedback and guidance that can assist students in identifying and correcting their specific errors. Ultimately, by addressing the weak foundation in grammar and macro skills, educators can empower students to enhance their English aptitude and effectively communicate in both written and spoken contexts.

D. *"No Child Left Behind" Policy*

One of the identified system-level challenges is the incorrect interpretation of primary and secondary-level policies. Several participants mentioned the incorrectly interpreted "no child left behind" policy.

Teacher 1: *We cannot give a failing grade to the learners, so even if they did not learn from the previous level, we have no choice.*

Teacher 2: *This policy of not leaving any child behind must be followed.*

Teacher 5: *We teachers cannot retain our learners and must make them pass, which makes mastery and developing learning capability impossible. So every one of them should graduate to a higher level... or simply go to a higher level. Even if... they do not have mastery, if they do not emphasize mastery or make sure they already have the skills they need to move on to the next level, they will be ready. Also, ... as far as I am concerned, that is the main driver of the issue.*

In this discourse among educators, a contentious topic revolves around the practice of promoting students to the subsequent academic level irrespective of their actual learning progress or attainment of essential competencies. Teacher 1 raises apprehension regarding the inability to assign failing grades, which potentially leads to students advancing without acquiring a sufficient grasp of the material covered in the preceding level. Conversely, Teacher 2 advocates for the policy of inclusive education, aiming to provide equal opportunities for all students. However, Teacher 5 contends that this approach impedes the cultivation of mastery and learning aptitude since students are advanced even in the absence of requisite skills. They emphasize the critical significance of ensuring students possess the necessary skills before progressing to the next level, as this serves as the fundamental underlying concern in the ongoing discussion.

In general, the conversation among teachers brings attention to the ongoing debate regarding the practice of promoting students without considering their actual learning progress or mastery of required skills. The varying perspectives expressed by the teachers reflect the complexities and considerations involved in this educational decision. It underscores the importance of finding a balance between inclusivity and ensuring students have a solid foundation in the necessary knowledge and skills. This broader issue highlights the need for educational systems to continually evaluate and refine their promotion policies to effectively support students' overall development and academic success.

E. *Coping Mechanisms in Teaching English*

These coping mechanisms include being resourceful and adaptable when creating instructional materials, providing alternative activities to enliven and engage passive learners, and balancing the use of both technology and library books to alleviate the difficulties teachers face when teaching English to students.

To prevent additional issues with teaching the subject, it is important to address students' lack of confidence and interest in learning and using the English language. The teaching-learning process can flow smoothly when teachers have sufficient knowledge about the subject. This enables them to impart appropriate concepts, theories, and information to their students and match the learning activities to the lesson. It is crucial to recognize the relationship between subject matter and learning activities.

In conclusion, coping mechanisms play a significant role in effectively teaching English to students. By being resourceful and adaptable, teachers create engaging instructional materials and provide alternative activities to address the needs of passive learners. Balancing the use of technology and traditional resources like library books can also enhance the teaching experience. Addressing students' lack of confidence and interest in the subject is crucial for a successful learning environment. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject matter are essential in delivering appropriate concepts and information to students and aligning learning activities with the lesson objectives. Recognizing the relationship between the subject matter and the learning activities further enhances the teaching-learning process.

F. *Students' Shaky English Foundation Skills*

Teachers must set attainable goals for students in order to connect with them. Due to the students' weak foundation in English, their performance is affected, and therefore, the teachers need to adjust the teaching method and make it suitable for the student's level. Some participants even started teaching the basics to assist the students.

Matching the learning situation to the proficiency level of students is important. Lesson planning can be used to align students' levels and learning environments (Diggele *et al.*, 2020). All participants admitted to making some adjustments to their lesson plans:

Teacher 3: *focused on simplifying learning objectives so that students could better understand them;*

Teacher 1: *typically considered the availability of real-world examples that could be used in English instruction; meanwhile,*

Teachers 4 and 5: *used simple words and diction to explain the material in English.*

Teachers 3 and 2: *agreed to take into account students' social and financial circumstances and not assign homework that would cost money.*

In this discussion among teachers, Teacher 3 emphasizes the importance of making learning objectives easier for students to comprehend by simplifying them. Teacher 1, on the other hand, takes into consideration the use of real-world examples that can be incorporated into English instruction to enhance students' understanding. Teachers 4 and 5 adopt a teaching approach that involves using simple words and language to

explain the subject matter in English. Lastly, Teachers 3 and 2 agree to be mindful of students' social and financial situations by avoiding homework assignments that would require additional expenses.

In conclusion, the teachers in this discussion highlight various strategies to support students' learning of the English language. Simplifying learning objectives, incorporating real-world examples, using simple language, and considering students' social and financial circumstances are all valuable approaches. These practices aim to enhance students' comprehension, engagement, and accessibility to the subject matter, ultimately fostering a conducive learning environment. By embracing these strategies, teachers can effectively cater to the diverse needs of their students and promote inclusive and effective English instruction.

G. *Providing Positive Feedback*

Providing motivational feedback to students is an effective way to enhance their enthusiasm for learning English. This approach was frequently employed by three participants, as evidenced by the following statements:

Teacher 3: *I often provide motivational feedback to passive students*

Teacher 4: *I constantly advise students to continue studying to foster their interest in English*

Teacher 5: *My initial step in motivating students with low enthusiasm is to offer them verbal encouragement.*

In this context, Teacher 3 mentions that they frequently offer positive and motivational feedback to students who are less active or engaged in their learning. Teacher 4 states that they consistently encourage students to continue their studies in order to cultivate their interest in the English language. Teacher 5 shares that their first approach to motivating students who have low enthusiasm is to provide them with verbal support and encouragement. These teachers recognize the importance of motivation and strive to inspire and uplift students in different ways to enhance their learning experience and outcomes.

Generally, these statements indicate the importance of fostering a positive learning environment and providing students with the necessary support and guidance to help them overcome motivational barriers. By offering motivational feedback and advice, teachers can help students build their confidence and develop a sense of purpose, which can in turn enhance their engagement and overall performance in the subject.

H. *Innovative Strategies Used by the Teachers*

1. *Targeting Macro-Skills (Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening)*

Teacher 1: *emphasizes the importance of the macro skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing, in language development. In order to address any gaps in the student's language proficiency, equal attention is given to the improvement of all these skills.*

Teacher 2: *Receptive skills are not taught first, then writing and speaking." This means that we don't just show pantomime and gestures without reading or writing, which is the Natural Method.*

Teacher 3: *In a homeroom set-up, students are presented with differing showing procedures focusing on the large scale abilities, making every one of the directions fit to the necessities of each and every student.*

Teacher 4: *In showing the English language, the objective here is to advance tuning in, talking, perusing, and composing, and all are similarly significant." I believe in taking a holistic approach, which can be quite challenging for teachers to implement due to the fact that there are learning gaps and numerous ways must be used to educate students about the significance of the English language. As time goes on, you'll notice that in addition to exercises in grammar and structure, we also have time for conversation that will be useful in their lives and come naturally.*

Teacher 5: *Students are involved in listening, speaking, reading, and writing; we simply progress from the straightforward to the complex.*

Teacher 6: *When I asked my students what they had learned in English 7, I was heartbroken to hear that none of them had responded. But that didn't stop me from considering and coming up with concepts that could help meet the requirements of my students. Before I teach, I make sure to review the fundamentals and frequently incorporate them so they can learn what I want to teach. I incorporate many inquiries that will bring conversation. This is getting the understudies to imitate their own considerations in English and talk during the illustrations.*

In this discourse, a group of teachers shares their perspectives on language development and teaching methodologies. Teacher 1 highlights the paramount significance of the macro skills - listening, speaking, reading, and writing - in fostering language proficiency. They stress the need to address any gaps in students' language abilities by according to equal attention to the enhancement of all these skills. Teacher 2 rejects the notion of teaching receptive skills in isolation from writing and speaking, advocating for a comprehensive approach that integrates various language dimensions. Teacher 3 adopts a homeroom setup, employing diverse instructional strategies tailored to the specific requirements of individual students, with a focus on developing macro-level abilities. Teacher 4 emphasizes a holistic approach to English language instruction, encompassing listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and acknowledges the challenge of bridging learning gaps while

employing multifaceted teaching methodologies. Moreover, Teacher 5 adopts a progressive methodology, engaging children in a gradual progression from simple to complex language tasks. Lastly, Teacher 6 recounts their commitment to addressing students' needs by reinforcing foundational knowledge, fostering meaningful conversations, and encouraging students to articulate their thoughts in English. Collectively, these educators strive to create a comprehensive and engaging learning environment that nurtures language development and caters to the diverse needs of their students.

2. *Teaching Formal and Informal Strategies*

Teacher 1: *Yes, this is educational instruction. The students arrive at school expecting to learn in their classes. Indeed, they will investigate usage, grammar, and spelling. However, you notice that the illustrations are tied in with being a capable individual, such as focusing on the climate. The study of the environment starts early.*

Teacher 2: *We want to speak in a way that is lively, common, and has a flavor that is typical of everyday speech. When we create lessons, we try to incorporate our local culture.*

Teacher 3: *The old arrangement of just punctuation and sentence structure isn't the way now. Goodness, I can't say we never consider the tests, but we attempt to be casual with games and social exercises.*

Teacher 4: *Nowadays, students are short on time. I use technology like videos, audio clips, and even animations to make learning fun because students tend to get bored during lengthy discussions.*

Teacher 5: *The students of this generation prefer to see what the teacher is trying to convey. As a teacher, I modify it so that those voids are gradually filled in.*

Teacher 6: *These days, learning needs to be flexible and differentiated. For students' education to be successful, teachers must employ numerous strategies. The best thing I can do is make learning exciting for my students because I am aware of the disparity in their learning.*

In this discussion, a group of teachers shares their perspectives on educational instruction and approaches to engage students effectively. Teacher 1 acknowledges the importance of language elements like usage, grammar, and spelling, but also highlights the integration of real-life illustrations, such as focusing on environmental topics, to foster well-rounded development. Teacher 2 emphasizes the use of lively and natural language, incorporating local culture into lessons. Teacher 3 challenges the traditional approach of solely focusing on punctuation and grammar, instead opting for a more relaxed approach with games and social activities, while still considering assessments. Teacher 4 recognizes the time constraints of modern students and employs technology like videos, audio clips, and animations to make learning engaging and prevent student boredom during lengthy discussions. Teacher 5 recognizes the visual preferences of today's students and adapts teaching methods to gradually fill in knowledge gaps. Lastly, Teacher 6 stresses the need for flexible and differentiated learning, employing various strategies to accommodate different learning styles and creating an exciting learning environment to address the varying levels of student learning. Overall, these educators acknowledge the evolving nature of education and the importance of adapting instructional methods to captivate and effectively educate students.

In general, modern educational instruction involves a shift towards engaging and interactive teaching methods that go beyond traditional grammar and structure. Educators recognize the importance of incorporating real-life illustrations, local culture, and technology to make learning more relevant and exciting for students. There is a focus on accommodating different learning preferences and filling knowledge gaps through visual aids, differentiated instruction, and flexible approaches. The goal is to create a stimulating learning environment that fosters comprehensive development and keeps students actively involved in their education.

3. *Formative Learning*

Teacher 1: *In order for the process to become a skill, we need to give it enough time to prepare the ground.*

Teacher 2: *When deciding whether to continue or repeat the lesson, I take into account the fact that children are thinking in their native tongue.*

Teacher 3: *I always make sure that students are free to answer questions or share whatever is on their minds. I generally make sense of the fact that nobody has the option to taunt or criticize somebody as a result of an off-base response. Everybody is as yet changing, and I know beyond all doubt that my understudies also are changing, particularly after a measured realization that the majority of them have a learning hole.*

Teacher 4: *When it comes to a child's overall development... we employ a holistic approach.*

Teacher 5: *Filling in these learning gaps is the primary objective of addressing them. Our strategy is interactive as well as holistic. After reading pages... that are both interesting and instructive, children engage in discussion. Naturally, there are language abilities.*

Teacher 6: *I watch to realize what they need. It's clear why we keep revising and repeating... Because I simply tailor my lessons to the requirements of my students, there are times when I am unable to complete my lesson plan.*

In addressing the statements made by the teachers, it is evident that they emphasize the importance of giving sufficient time for learning processes to become skills and for students to develop at their own pace. They consider the influence of students' native language and aim to create a supportive and non-judgmental environment where students feel free to express themselves. The teachers recognize the existence of learning gaps and adopt a holistic approach to address them, focusing on filling these gaps through interactive strategies and engaging discussions. They acknowledge the individual needs of their students and adapt their lessons accordingly, even if it means deviating from the original lesson plan. The overarching goal is to facilitate comprehensive development and foster a positive and inclusive learning experience.

The teachers' statements reflect a common trend in education, where educators recognize the importance of allowing sufficient time for learning processes to develop into skills. They acknowledge the impact of students' native language and strive to create a supportive and inclusive learning environment. There is an emphasis on addressing learning gaps and adopting holistic approaches that cater to individual needs. Interactive strategies and engaging discussions are utilized to enhance learning experiences. Flexibility in lesson plans is valued to accommodate students' requirements. These teachers' perspectives demonstrate a broader commitment to personalized and comprehensive education, aiming to facilitate students' growth and development.

4. Repetition

The Audio-Lingual Approach heavily relies on aural and oral activities, such as dialogues, repetition drills, and pattern drills. Authentic language materials are often used, and the teacher serves as a model for correct pronunciation and intonation. Grammar rules are usually taught implicitly through exposure to examples and extensive practice.

Teacher 1: *I make it a habit to memorize a short English story each day in order to keep my students' attention. I tell them interesting stories and let them practice reading, but I also watch them every day. I made sure that my students were allowed to browse the internet and watch movies about literature. I also asked them to write reflection papers or a summary of what they learned from the movies. Redundancy is significant in light of the fact that the more you rehash things to your understudies, the more they hold the data.*

Teacher 3: *Arranged and rehashed jargon is developed to empower them to talk in sentences. Speaking and using words to form sentences and sentence patterns become more natural as a result of this.*

Teacher 4: *Picture reading and sight reading are often practiced. repeating a few commonly used words that are necessary for stories.*

Teacher 5: *Routines are used in our alphabet instruction. Songs and nursery rhymes are repeated. Kids become specialists at this errand.*

Teacher 6: *Because English is a complex language, it must be made concrete and experiential; redundancy of the sounds and the images is required.*

In language instruction, teachers employ various strategies to enhance student learning. One approach involves incorporating repetition and redundancy to reinforce comprehension and retention. For example, Teacher 1 emphasizes the practice of memorizing short English stories, allowing students to engage in reading and reflection. Teacher 3 focuses on repeated vocabulary exercises to develop sentence construction skills. Teacher 4 utilizes picture and sight-reading activities, emphasizing commonly used words. Teacher 5 incorporates routines, such as songs and nursery rhymes, to reinforce alphabet learning. Finally, Teacher 6 highlights the importance of concrete and experiential learning, utilizing repetition of sounds and visuals to aid in understanding the complexities of the English language. Overall, these approaches aim to solidify language skills and foster greater fluency and comprehension in students.

Consequently, using repetition and redundancy, a common practice employed by teachers to enhance learning outcomes, is part of the audio-lingual approach. By repeating information, such as vocabulary words, sentence patterns, or stories, students are given multiple opportunities to reinforce their understanding and retention of the material. This approach is utilized across various language teaching methods and can be seen as an effective way to solidify language skills and promote fluency. Whether it involves memorizing stories, practicing vocabulary exercises, or engaging in repetitive activities, the overarching goal is to provide students with ample exposure and practice to improve their language proficiency.

5. Other Innovative Strategies

Learning vocabulary through association was a teaching method used to provide English language learners with straightforward definitions, synonyms, and antonyms. This method also encouraged learners to group events or ideas in memory, a helpful strategy for language acquisition. Additionally, the method aimed to enhance learners' understanding of concepts by using examples and non-examples. The teacher would name the idea, provide synonyms, and sometimes offer a definition to ensure learners had a clear understanding. To

reinforce learning, the demonstration strategy included a rehearsal step called recitation, also known as "chiming in." During this step, the teacher would listen to the students and provide feedback while noting potential adjustments that could be made. This approach helped prevent learners from experimenting and failing when encountering new ideas.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The rapid transition from traditional pedagogy to blended learning in response to the COVID-19 pandemic has posed substantial challenges within the academic sphere. As the country gradually shifts towards the resumption of face-to-face instruction, the implications of this paradigm shift are becoming more pronounced. Similarly, the study conducted by Santos (2020) aimed to explore the teaching strategies employed by English teachers in addressing the learning gaps caused by the sudden shift from traditional to blended learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Interviews were conducted with English teachers from selected secondary schools in Opol, Misamis Oriental to gather insights into their strategies for addressing the learning gaps. The teachers acknowledged the presence of learning gaps resulting from the previous modular learning modality and expressed the need to address these gaps through various efforts. The study utilized a descriptive thematic analysis approach, analyzing qualitative data from interviews with six teachers from different year levels. The findings revealed that teachers employed strategies such as repetition, targeting macro-skills, using formal and informal methods, and promoting learning development. Challenges faced by teachers included students' lack of confidence and weak foundational skills in English, as well as the impact of the "no child left behind" policy. The study also highlighted coping mechanisms, including adapting teaching approaches to match students' proficiency levels and providing motivational feedback.

This study recommends that effective collaboration between public and private educational institutions, alongside government support, is crucial for implementing improved education guidelines and assistance. The education sector should develop a flexible and reliable curriculum guide that addresses students' needs and fills the learning gaps caused by the pandemic. Teachers can contribute by fostering strong relationships with students, implementing effective teaching strategies, and engaging in continuous professional development. Parents, on the other hand, should provide support by creating conducive learning environments, supplying necessary resources, and encouraging their children's motivation and engagement in studies. Together, these efforts can bridge the learning gap, enhance academic performance, and ensure a more effective and feasible learning process for students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors would like to express their profound gratitude to the participants for their invaluable contribution to the successful completion of this study. Their willingness to share their insights and experiences has greatly enriched the findings and understanding of the research topic. The authors extend their appreciation for the participants' active involvement, cooperation, and the time and effort dedicated to providing valuable data and information. Their significant contributions have played a pivotal role in advancing knowledge in this field. The authors are sincerely grateful for their participation, which has been instrumental in the successful execution of this research endeavor.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Almoslamani, Y. (2022). The impact of learning strategies on the academic achievement of university students in Saudi Arabia. *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: Gulf Perspectives*, 18(1), 4-18. DOI 10.1108/LTHE-08-2020-0025
- [2]. Chew, Q. H., Wei, K. C., Vasoo, S., Chua, H. C., & Sim, K. (2020). A narrative synthesis of psychological and coping responses towards emerging infectious disease outbreaks in the general population: practical considerations for the COVID-19 pandemic. *Singapore Medical Journal*, 61(1), 350-356. doi: <https://doi.org/10.11622/smedj.2020046>
- [3]. Diggele, C. V., Burgess, A., & Mellis, C. (2020). Planning, preparing, and structuring a small group teaching session. *National Library of Medicine*, 20(2), 462-468. doi: 10.1186/s12909-020-02281-4
- [4]. Kirmizi, O., & Karci, B. (2017). An Investigation of Turkish Higher Education EFL Learners' Linguistic and Lexical Errors. *Educational Process: International Journal*, 6(4), 35-54. DOI: 10.22521/edupij.2017.64.3
- [5]. Rizwan, S., & Masrur, R. (2018). Open Distance Learning: Bridging the Gap between Instructional Planning and Prescribed Standard. *Pakistan Journal of Distance & Online Learning*, 4(1), 135-152.



-
- [6]. Nusantari, E., Abdul, A., Damopolii, I, Alghafri, A. R., & Bakkar, B. S. (2021). Combination of Discovery Learning and Metacognitive Knowledge Strategy to Enhance Students' Critical Thinking Skills. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 10(4), 1781-1791. <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.10.4.1781>
- [7]. Raja, F. (2017). Anxiety Level in Students of Public Speaking: Causes and Remedies. *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, 4(1), 94-110.