DIALOGIC ENGAGEMENT AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY: AN EXPLORATION

Sweetie Joy Inocencio Eustaquio [1]

[1]*Colegio de la Purisima Concepcion, sweetiejoyeustaquio@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the dialogic engagement and English language proficiency in the selected municipalities in Capiz Division during the academic year 2023-2024. The researcher uutilized descriptive correlational research using researcher-made questionnaire that was carried out with a sample population of 332 from the total of 473 teachers that use English language as a medium of instruction. Stratified random sampling was employed to determine the number of respondents per school. Statistical tools used were frequency count, percentage, mean, T-test, ANNOVA and Spearman rank correlation analysis. The study conducted in the Province of Capiz unveiled a notably high level of dialogic engagement among teachers across various contexts, including household interactions, school dynamics, and community involvement. This emphasizes a conducive environment for collaborative networks and continuous learning, echoing the importance of dialogic interdependence as an enabler for effective leadership. Additionally, the findings regarding teachers' English language proficiency showcased a high level of proficiency, particularly evident in expressive abilities, comprehension skills, and overall confidence in language use. This aligns with the emphasis on communication skills and strategic aptitude as essential components of effective leadership. Moreover, while no significant variance was observed in the overall English language proficiency levels concerning various teacher profiles, a significant gender difference emerged. Female teachers demonstrated notably higher proficiency in English compared to their male counterparts, highlighting a potential area for targeted intervention to address competency barriers. The significant correlation identified between the extent of dialogic engagement and the level of English language proficiency underscores the importance of effective communication and collaboration skills in enhancing language proficiency, essential attributes for effective leadership development among educators in Capiz. The study provides practical insights for educators to enhance language instruction by understanding the relationship between dialogic engagement and English Language Proficiency fostering more effective teaching method. Findings contribute to the design of targeted professional development programs educators, focusing on dialogic engagement strategies, thereby elevating the language proficiency of educators in English as a medium of instructions.

Keywords: dialogic engagement, English language proficiency

1. Introduction

English proficiency is crucial for modern success (Gonzales, 2020). Proficiency in English is indispensable for nations seeking global trade, accessing advancements in science and technology, and international influence. This underscores the urgent need to foster English language skills (Runde & Nealer, 2017). The preceding paragraph highlights the necessity of mastering the English language for individuals to remain globally competitive. However, the issue of English language proficiency stands as a central concern for English language teachers worldwide (Karas, 2017). According to Al-Zoubi's (2018) research, language exposure has a pronounced positive impact on language acquisition and the development of the four language skills. The study underscores the productive contribution of continual exposure to English, whether through activities like watching English content, engaging with native speakers, or simply being involved in dialogues using the English language.

In the Philippines, after gaining independence from the United States, the influence of English persisted, and today, it remains a key language of instruction from primary to tertiary education levels (Rafael, 2015). However, despite the widespread English language proficiency in the Philippines, there is a noticeable decline in current years, as indicated by the English Proficiency Index (Inquirer.net, 2020). In another survey, the results indicated that approximately three-fourths of secondary school teachers in the Philippines did not meet the required proficiency levels in English (Department of Education, 2018).

Hence, this study is motivated by the challenges observed in English language education. To address these disparities, the research delves into the dynamic relationship between dialogic engagement and English language proficiency, emphasizing the need for tailored professional development programs to bridge the gap between educational goals and actual proficiency, this study contributes to understanding language education challenges and enables educators to foster dialogic engagement. Ultimately, this research empowers both educators to excel in English language education, making a positive contribution to society.

2. Method

In the context of this research, "Exploring the relationship between dialogic engagement and English language proficiency," it establishes a robust theoretical foundation by integrating insights from the Theory of Socio-Cultural Development, as proposed by Lev Vygotsky (1920).Vygotsky's Theory of Socio-Cultural Development emphasizes the profound impact of social interactions, collaborative learning, and cultural influences on an individual's cognitive and language development (Mcleod, 2023).The central concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) within this theory underscores that educators can achieve higher levels of language proficiency through dialogic engagement and collaboration, surpassing their current abilities with appropriate support and guidance (Daneshfar, 2018).

In this context, dialogic engagement encompasses interactive discussions, pedagogical practices, and meaningful exchanges among teachers, all of which are influenced by the socio-cultural context in which they occur. The application of the Theory of Socio-Cultural Development to language proficiency development highlights the role of structured dialogic engagement as a scaffold for language learning within the ZPD.

This theory sheds light on how dialogic engagement, embedded in socio-cultural contexts, can significantly catalyze the language proficiency growth of English teachers. By integrating the Theory of Socio-Cultural Development into this study, we gain a structured lens through which to analyze and understand the intricate dynamics of language development within an educational context (Hul, 2023).

3. Results and Discussion

The importance of social interaction and collaboration is central to Bandura's theory. In this study, it will explore how dialogic engagement fosters social learning among English teachers. How do collaborative discussions, peer feedback, and shared experiences during dialogic interactions contribute to language proficiency development.

By weaving Social Learning Theory into this research, that researcher can gain insights into how dialogic engagement among English teachers serves as a platform for language proficiency development. Bandura's framework provides a lens through which we can examine the dynamics of social learning, role modeling, self-efficacy, and collaborative interactions in the context of English language proficiency enhancement among educators.

The findings of this study shed light on the dialogic engagement and English language proficiency levels among teachers in the Province of Capiz. The selected profile used in this study to describe the teachers includes age, sex, and educational attainment.

Firstly, almost half of the respondents were in the age range of 31-40 years old (137 or 41.3%), and 359 (47.61%) were females. Followed by the age range from 21-30 years old with ninety-seven respondents' correspondents to 29.2 percent. Next in number is the age range from 41-50 years old (63 or 19%). Lastly, the lowest number of respondents was from the age range 51 years old and above with 35 respondents corresponding to 10.5 %.   It infers that the majority that served as respondents of this study were 31-40 years old.

Secondly, the demographic composition of the study's respondents reveals a notable gender distribution, with the data indicating that a significant majority, comprising over three-fourths of the total respondents, were female (266 individuals, constituting approximately 80% of the sample). Conversely, the remaining portion of the sample consisted of 66 male respondents, accounting for approximately 19.9% of the total population surveyed. This substantial gender disproportionality infers that the study predominantly attracted female participants, suggesting a noteworthy representation bias towards women in the respondent pool.

Lastly, out of 332 respondents, 117 (35.2%) are with doctorate units; 82 (24.7 %) are with bachelor's degree; 72 (21.7%) are master's degree holder; 37 (11.1 %) are doctorate degree holder; and 24 (7.2) respondents only with master's degree units. This implies that the majority of the respondents were with doctorate degree units.

Overall, the findings of this study underscore the critical role of dialogic engagement and English language proficiency in educational settings. By promoting active communication and collaboration among educators and investing in language education and professional development programs, educational leaders can foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment that enhances both teacher effectiveness and student success.

Conclusion and Implications

This study has provided valuable insights into the levels of dialogic engagement and English language proficiency among teachers in the Province of Capiz. The findings reveal a culture of active communication and collaboration among educators, coupled with a high level of English language proficiency, which are crucial components of effective teaching and educational leadership. Despite gender differences in language proficiency, dialogic engagement remains consistently high across demographic groups, highlighting the importance of fostering a culture of dialogue and collaboration in educational settings. Additionally, the significant correlation between dialogic engagement and English language proficiency underscores the interconnectedness of communication skills and language development, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to support teacher growth and development.

The findings of this study have several implications for educational practice and policy. Firstly, educational leaders and policymakers should prioritize initiatives aimed at promoting dialogic engagement and fostering a culture of collaboration among educators. This can be achieved through professional development programs, collaborative learning opportunities, and supportive organizational structures that encourage open communication and dialogue.

Secondly, there is a need to invest in language education and professional development programs to support teachers in enhancing their English language proficiency. This includes providing access to language training

courses, resources, and support networks to address language proficiency gaps and ensure equitable opportunities for all educators.

Furthermore, the gender disparity in English language proficiency highlights the importance of implementing targeted interventions to support the language development of male teachers. This may involve tailored language training programs, mentorship opportunities, and support networks to address language proficiency gaps and promote gender equity in educational settings.

Overall, the findings of this study underscore the importance of fostering a culture of dialogue, collaboration, and language development in educational settings. By addressing these key areas, educational leaders can create a supportive and inclusive learning environment that enhances teacher effectiveness and ultimately improves student outcomes.

This study acknowledged that cultural perceptions and attitudes toward English language usage can influence dialogic engagement and language proficiency. However, this research didn't delve into these cultural factors, which are beyond its scope. It also recognized that regional variations in dialects, languages, and local contexts may impact these aspects differently in other regions, but the study's findings are specific to the province of Capiz. Additionally, the study focused on English language proficiency among teachers that use English as a medium of instruction and did not explore broader sociolinguistic factors, individual teacher characteristics.

The geographic boundaries of this study was limited only to the national high schools in the selected municipalities in Capiz such as, Jamindan, Mambusao, and Tapaz. Consequently, the findings are not directly applicable to other municipalities, provinces or regions within the country. The sample size was confined to three neighboring schools, and while efforts were made to enhance representativeness, the findings are not fully represent the diversity within the province of Capiz. The study acknowledged the potential for response bias due to the sensitive nature of the topic and reliance on self-reported data. The questionnaire used may not capture the full complexity of dialogic engagement and English language proficiency, leading to potential distortions in the findings. External factors, such as changes in policies, economic conditions, or unexpected events, could influence the context in which teachers engage in dialogic interactions and their language proficiency.

Finally, while providing valuable insights into a specific region and context, the study's findings are not directly transferable to other settings with different linguistic, cultural, or educational backgrounds. The population was limited to three neighboring schools, which does not fully represent the broader population of teachers in Capiz.

Tables

Table 1. The distribution of respondents per school is as follow:

School Name	Population	Sample Size	Percentage%
Jamindan NHS	108	76	22.89
Jagnaya NHS	47	33	9.94
Lucero NHS	40	28	8.43
Camp Peralta NHS	40	28	8.43
Tapaz NHS	93	65	19.58
Mambusao NHS	77	54	16.27
San Nicolas NHS	40	28	8.43
Camburanan NHS	28	20	6.02
TOTAL	**473**	**332**	**100%**

Table 2. Extent of dialogic engagement among teachers as a whole.

Indicators	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
School Locale	3.61	High
Community Setting	3.50	High
Household Atmosphere	3.30	Moderate

| Grand Mean | 3.47 | High |

Table 3. Extent of dialogic engagement among teachers in terms of school locale.

Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
As a teacher, I …		
1. use English language when teaching students in the classroom	3.80	High
2. share teaching strategies with colleagues using English	3.74	High
6. communicate with school staff in English when seeking necessary support for my instructional materials	3.73	High
3. communicate with school administrators in English when discussing school concerns	3.70	High
13. discuss in English with colleagues about innovative strategies addressing instructional challenges	3.68	High
15. promote a positive classroom atmosphere through English language interactions with students on non-academic concerns	3.67	High
10. create an English-rich learning environment for students	3.66	High
9. engage in English language discussions with administrators about school improvement strategies	3.64	High
5. encourage students to ask questions in English during class discussions	3.62	High
11. adapt English language communication to address the individual learning needs of students	3.58	High
12. communicate with school counselors in English to provide comprehensive support for students' social well-being	3.54	High
7. discuss with peers in English about students' achievements	3.50	High
4. collaborate with parents during parent-teacher conferences discussing student's progress in English	3.49	High
8. provide feedback to students in English regarding their academic progress	3.43	High
14. coordinate with school librarians in English when asking assistance for instructional resources	3.39	Moderate
Grand Mean	**3.61**	**High**

Table 4. Extent of dialogic engagement among teachers in terms of community setting.

Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
As a teacher, I …		
1. engage in English conversations with community members in public places	3.64	High
4. use English to greet people in public places	3.62	High
3. employ English language dialogues when attending community events	3.61	High
13. use English to share information about community resources with residents	3.57	High
12. use English to engage in meaningful conversations about concerns within the community	3.56	High

11. maintain English language communication when volunteering for outreach programs	3.55	High
15. use English language when I inquire something at information desk	3.53	High
7. use English language during my conversations when dining at local restaurants	3.51	High
10. actively engage in English conversations during transactions with local service providers	3.49	High
6. use English language during interactions within our neighborhood	3.48	High
5. explain community initiatives in English during public meetings	3.45	High
8. communicate in English with the vendors during visits to local markets	3.42	High
14. use English to bridge regional dialect problems among new residents in the community	3.39	Moderate
2. use English when interacting with personnel in local government units (LGU)	3.37	Moderate
9. interact using English language in local recreational facilities like parks	3.31	Moderate
Grand Mean	**3.50**	**High**

Legend: 4.21-5.00 = Very High; 3.41-4.20 = High; 2.61-3.40 = Moderate; 1.81-2.60= Low; 1.00-1.80= Very Low.

NOTE: Statements are arranged/presented from highest to lowest-maintaining their actual number as indicated in the research instrument.

Table 5. Extent of dialogic engagement among teachers in terms of household atmosphere.

Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
As a teacher, I …		
14. practice English language prayers aligned with our religious beliefs	3.62	High
10. express appreciation to family members in English	3.53	High
15. employ English language dialogues to inspire family members	3.47	High
5. communicate English while watching TV programs	3.42	High
13. use English to share stories with family members	3.35	Moderate
8. mentor family members on educational concerns in English	3.34	Moderate
2. engage in usual conversations with family members in English	3.28	Moderate
12. engage in meaningful conversations about educational goals within the family	3.26	Moderate
1. utilize English language to show basic family values	3.24	Moderate
6. Interact to family members during family gatherings in English	3.23	Moderate
9. use English conversation when addressing basic health concerns	3.19	Moderate
3. answer questions of family members in English	3.18	Moderate
11. maintain English language communication when discussing important family matters	3.15	Moderate
4. encourage family discussions in English language	3.10	Moderate
7. discuss current events with family members in English	3.10	Moderate
Grand Mean	**3.30**	**Moderate**

Legend: 4.21-5.00 = Very High; 3.41-4.20 = High; 2.61-3.40 = Moderate; 1.81-2.60= Low; 1.00-1.80= Very Low.

NOTE: Statements are arranged/presented from highest to lowest-maintaining their actual number as indicated in the research instrument.

Table 6. Degree of English language proficiency of teachers as a whole.

Indicators	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Expression	4.03	High
Comprehension	4.01	High
Confidence	3.94	High
Grand Mean	**3.99**	**High**

Legend: 4.21-5.00 = *Very High*; 3.41-4.20 = *High*; 2.61-3.40 = *Moderate*; 1.81-2.60= *Low;* 1.00-1.80= *Very Low*

NOTE: Components are presented from highest to lowest.

Table 7. Degree of English language proficiency of teachers in terms of expression.

Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
As a teacher, I …		
2. write proficient English language materials	4.17	High
13. use English to engage with colleagues in professional discussions	4.15	High
12. write English language research papers in my field	4.13	High
1. express myself clearly in spoken English during classroom interactions	4.12	High
14. communicate in English about students' progress	4.11	High
4. use English to create engaging conversation with students during off-hours	4.03	High
7. craft English language assessments	4.03	High
3. express my ideas in English language dialogues	4.01	High
9. adapt my English language communication to cater to students with diverse language backgrounds	4.01	High
11. use English to guide students through assignments	4.01	High
10. provide constructive feedback to students	3.99	High
8. use English to facilitate student discussions.	3.97	High
15. express my ideas in English during staff meetings	3.94	High
5. communicate complex concepts in English	3.91	High
6. use English to explain abstract concepts to my students	3.85	High
Grand Mean	**4.03**	**High**

Legend: 4.21-5.00 = *Very High*; 3.41-4.20 = *High*; 2.61-3.40 = *Moderate*; 1.81-2.60= *Low;* 1.00-1.80=*Very Low*.

NOTE: Statements are arranged/presented from highest to lowest-maintaining their actual number as indicated in the research instrument.

Table 8. Degree of English language proficiency of teachers in terms of comprehension.

Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
As a teacher, I …		
5. comprehend of complex written English language materials	4.13	High
14. understand official reports in English language	4.11	High
9. comprehend English language materials about professional development	4.08	High
13. comprehend English language content in e-learning platforms	4.08	High
11. comprehend when watching English language educational videos	4.05	High
1. understand the main ideas when listening to academic lectures in English	3.90	High
4. grasp the main point of instructional written materials	4.01	High
6. understand English language presentations	4.00	High
2. absorb spoken explanations in English without difficulty	4.00	High
15. comprehend English language television programs	3.98	High
3. understand English language movies without the need for subtitles	3.97	High
8. understand spoken English conversation with my colleagues	3.97	High
12. interpret concept maps presented in English language	3.97	High
10. analyze academic research papers in English language	3.94	High
7. engage in English conversations with native speakers in English	3.88	High
Grand Mean	**4.01**	**High**

Legend: 4.21-5.00 = *Very High*; 3.41-4.20 = *High*; 2.61-3.40 = *Moderate*; 1.81-2.60= *Low*; 1.00-1.80 =*Very Low.*

NOTE: Statements are arranged/presented from highest to lowest-maintaining their actual number as indicated in the research instrument.

Table 9. Degree of English language proficiency of teachers in terms of confidence.

Statements	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
As a teacher, I …		
10. create stimulating English language learning environment	4.23	Very High
12. establish strong interpersonal relationships with students	4.00	High
15. use English with confidence to bridge communication between parents	3.99	High
7. demonstrate passion for the subject when using English to explain complex concepts	3.98	High
11. encourage students to ask questions with thirst for knowledge in English	3.97	High
8. enthusiastically share personal experiences in English igniting students' interest	3.96	High
2. facilitate dynamic classroom discussions in English	3.95	High
14. build rapport with diverse individuals through effective English communication	3.95	High
1. use English as the primary language for classroom instruction, ensuring students understand the lesson effectively	3.94	High
4. confidently address classroom challenges in English	3.93	High
13. engage in one-on-one English language discussions with confidence	3.93	High
9. use my English language proficiency to present subject-related materials with enthusiasm	3.91	High
3. handle spontaneous discussions in English with ease	3.80	High

5. create a supportive atmosphere using English fostering student language development	3.80	High
6. deliver demonstrations performances in English language proficiently	3.78	High
Grand Mean	**3.94**	**High**

Legend: 4.21-5.00 = *Very High*; 3.41-4.20 = *High*; 2.61-3.40 = *Moderate*; 1.81-2.60= *Low;* 1.00-1.80 = *Very Low.*

NOTE: Statements are arranged/presented from highest to lowest-maintaining their actual number as indicated in the research instrument.

Table 10. Socio-demographic profile of the respondents.

Profile	Frequency	Percent(%)
Age		
21-30 years old	97	29.2
31-40 years old	137	41.3
41-50 years old	63	19.0
51 years old and above	35	10.5
Total	**332**	**100.0**
Sex		
Male	66	19.9
Female	266	80.1
Total	**332**	**100.0**
Educational Attainment		
Bachelor's Degree	82	24.7
With Master's Units	24	7.2
Master's Degree Holder	72	21.7
With Doctorate Units	117	35.2
Doctorate Degree Holder	37	11.1
Total	**332**	**100.0**

Table 11. Differences in the extent of dialogic engagement among teachers and some variables.

Profile	f/t-Value	Significant Value	Probability
Age	0.459	0.71	n.s.
Sex	1.477	0.141	n.s.
Educational Attainment	1.268	0.282	n.s.

p-value>0.05=not significant

Table 12. Differences in the degree of English language proficiency of teachers and some variables.

Profile	f/t-Value	Significant Value	Probability
Age	0.944	0.419	n.s.
Sex	2.454	0.015	s.
Educational Attainment	1.894	0.111	n.s.

p-value>0.05=not significant

Table 12. Relationship between the level of dialogic engagement and the degree of English language proficiency of teachers.

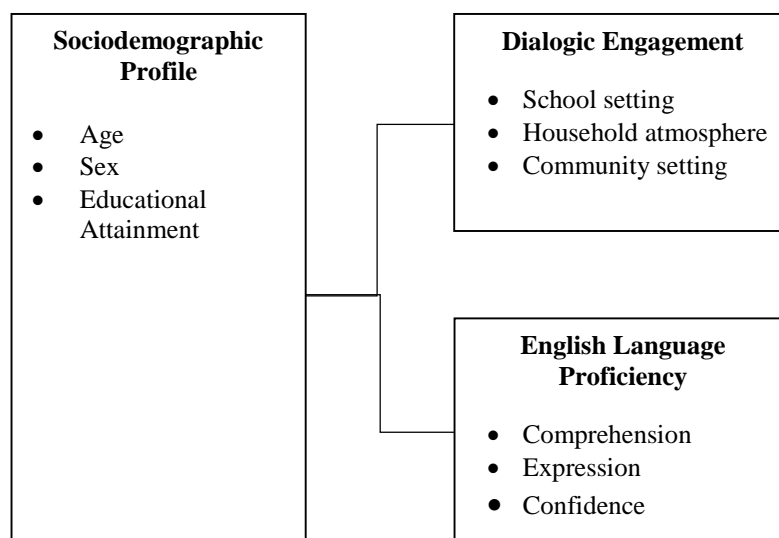| Variable	N	Pearson's r	Significance Value	Probability
Dialogic Engagement	332	0.703	0.000	s.
English Language Proficiency				

Figure

Figure 1. The schematic diagram of the study showing the relationship of independent and dependent variables

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