

Bridging the Learning Gaps: Analysis of Strategies and Interventions of English Teachers in Sampaloc Elementary School

Sylvia D. Fajardo¹, Joseph D. Encinares²

¹Sampaloc Elementary School, Dasmarinas, Cavite-4114

²Sampaloc Elementary School, Dasmarinas, Cavite, Philippines-4114

Email address: sylvia.fajardo001@deped.gov.ph; josephencinares6@gmail.com

Abstract— *The Covid-19 pandemic has become the prime cause of the challenges being faced today in the field of teaching and learning. Concerns have been raised regarding the impact on students' learning from the suspension of in-person classes during this outbreak. One of the identified challenges is the learning gap in education. A learning gap is a mismatch between what a student has learnt and what they are expected to learn at a certain time in their schooling. It has become more evident and prevalent as the schools reopen and brought both the teachers and the learners in difficult situation. In this case, teachers as the primary facilitators of learning ought to address this concern. This study aimed to analyze the different strategies and interventions of 11 English teachers in Sampaloc Elementary School to bridge the learning gaps in English. Data were collected using survey-questionnaires. Findings revealed that the most effective strategies in bridging the learning gaps in teaching English are Visual Literacy, Hands-On Learning, Experiential Learning/Portfolio, Vocabulary Building and Explicit Teaching. This study, therefore, suggests that teachers must employ learner-centered practices concerning to bridging the learning gaps in teaching English.*

Keywords— *Learning gap; explicit teaching; hands-on learning; visual literacy; vocabulary buildin.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Disruptions to education systems during the Covid-19 pandemic have had a devastating impact on vulnerable students, exacerbating unprecedented inequalities with far-reaching and long-term consequences. Urgent action is needed to close the learning gaps and ensure smooth and continuous educational pathways for all students. In the long term, systems must promote student opportunities and nurturing environments where each individual has the skills to reach their full potential (OECD, 2020).

It is also noteworthy to cite that prior to the pandemic, concerns about the quality of basic education were brought up due to the Philippines' poor performance in recent regional and global learning tests (Ignacio, L., et. al, 2022). School closures due to the COVID-19 crisis in 2020 have resulted in significant disruptions to education provision, due to fears of a drop in learning and an increase in educational inequality (Maldonado & Witte, 2020).

With the challenges brought to education by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Department of Education is seeking innovative strategies to uplift the quality of education and has

implemented various distance learning modalities to combat the presents' health situation and to cope up with the societal needs. The school's closures for two consecutive years have brought a huge setback in the Philippine education.

With the issuance of DepEd Order No. 34, s. 2022, all public schools and learning institutions has returned to five-day in-person classes starting November 2022 hoping to address the raising concerns on the quality of education in the country due to the pandemic (The Manila Times, 2022). The City Schools Division of Dasmarinas has implemented the full five-day face-to-face classes since then. It has found out that most of the schools in the country were facing the same problems and issues on the learning gaps being evidently shown on the students' performance in schools due to the two years closures of the schools, hence, an unprecedented disruption in both teaching and learning (Sharma, 2022).

Learning gaps are often referred to as student achievement, which refers to the difference between what a student has learned and what they should be learning at a given grade level, or level (Education Reform, 2013). Growth and development include not only the physical changes, but it also includes the emotional, personality, behavioral, thinking, and language changes as the child go through the different developmental stages (Choi, 2021). Hence, there is well-defined learning expectations at each grade level in primary education, and this commonly refers to the educational standards or curriculum standards. It best describes what students should know and be able to do at a certain level or age. It comes in two categories: content standards and performance standards (deped.gov.ph).

Learning gaps happened when a certain level of expectations has not been met or achieved. A learning gap occurs when there is a mismatch between what a student has learnt and what they are expected to learn at a certain time in their schooling.

Learning gaps in education have become more evident and prevalent as the schools reopen and brought both the teachers and the learners in difficult situation. In this case, teachers as the primary facilitators of learning ought to address this concern. With this, it is high time that we look into a deeper perspective to provide immediate solutions in order to stop the dilemma, thereby bridging the learning gaps and mitigating the challenges brought about by the pandemic.

II. METHODOLOGY

The target participants of this study were selected using non-probability, purposive sampling. All the respondents were English Teachers. Data were collected using survey-questionnaires.

The researchers used a descriptive analysis using the Weighted Mean to determine the level of effectiveness of the various teaching strategies and interventions used by the respondents. These strategies and interventions were analyzed to come with a more holistic result. The research instrument used the Likert Rating Scale that uses a 5-point scale, as shown below.

Scale	Range	Verbal Interpretation
5	4.50 - 5.00	Highly Effective
4	3.50 - 4.49	Most Effective
3	2.50 - 3.39	Effective
2	1.50 - 2.49	Less Effective
1	1.00 - 1.49	Least Effective

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After the proponents' thorough evaluation of the data gathered using the survey-questionnaires, it has revealed that 5 respondents or 46% were Grade II teachers, 4 respondents or 36% were Grade III teachers, 1 respondent or 9% were Grade IV and Grade V teachers.

Among the respondents, 1 or 9% has gained 25 years in teaching the English subject. It has also found out that 9 respondents or 46% has 10 years of teaching English. The remaining 5 respondents have gained 1 month, 2 months, 2 years, 5 years, and 6 years in teaching English, respectively. It is notable that there were several strategies and interventions used to bridge the learning gaps in teaching the English subject, such as Review of pre-requisite skills, Diagnostic Assessment, Lecture Method, Deductive Method, Inductive Method, Open-Ended Questions, ICT Integration, Visual Literacy, Hands-On Learning, and Experiential Learning/Portfolio.

TABLE 1. The most effective strategies and interventions used by the teachers

No.	Strategies	Respondents										Total	Weighted Mean	Interpretation	Rank	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10					11
1	Review of pre-requisite skills	5	5	4	3	4	5	3	4	5	0	3	41	3.73	Most Effective	3
2	Diagnostic Assessment	3	4	3	3	4	5	5	5	4	0	3	39	3.55	Most Effective	4
3	Lecture Method	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	5	4	44	4.00	Most Effective	2
4	Deductive Method	3	0	4	3	4	4	3	3	5	0	3	32	2.91	Effective	6
5	Inductive Method	5	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	0	3	38	3.45	Effective	5
6	Open-Ended Questions	3	0	4	3	4	5	4	4	3	5	3	38	3.45	Effective	5
7	ICT Integration	5	0	5	4	4	5	3	5	4	0	4	39	3.55	Most Effective	4
8	Visual Literacy	4	5	5	4	5	5	3	5	5	0	4	45	4.09	Most Effective	1
9	Hands-On Learning	4	0	4	4	5	5	5	4	5	4	4	45	4.09	Most Effective	
10	Experiential Learning/Portfolio	4	4	4	3	5	4	5	4	5	0	3	41	3.73	Most Effective	3

The data presented in Table 1 shows that seven (7) enlisted strategies were most effective and the remaining three (3) strategies were effective. Ranked as number one are Visual Literacy and Hands-On Learning with the weighted mean of 4.09 followed by the Lecture Method with 4.00 and Review of pre-requisite skills and Experiential Learning/Portfolio with

3.73 weighted mean. Diagnostic Assessment and ICT Integration were ranked fourth with 3.55 weighted mean followed by Inductive Method and Open-Ended Questions with 3.45 weighted mean, and Deductive Method with 2.91 weighted mean.

It has revealed that the most effective strategies in bridging the learning gaps in teaching English were Review of pre-requisite skills, Diagnostic Assessment, Lecture Method, ICT Integration, Visual Literacy, Hands-On Learning, and Experiential Learning/Portfolio. Further, the remaining strategies listed were determined as effective strategies.

TABLE 2. Other Strategies Utilized by the Teachers

No.	Other Strategies	Frequency
1	Drill	1
2	Vocabulary Building	2
3	Unlocking Familiar Words	1
4	Remediation	1
5	Game-based Learning	1
6	Cooperative Learning	1
7	Explicit Teaching	2
8	Integration of Other Subjects	1
9	Other approaches in Communicative Language Technique such as Dyad, Parade of Characters, Role Playing, Picture Strip Story, Games, Poster and the like.	1
10	Modification of Modules	1
11	Interactive Instruction	1

IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings generated from the data gathered, it can be concluded that the strategies and interventions of English teachers in Sampaloc Elementary School were effective in order to bridge the learning gaps in education both in KS1 and KS2. Researchers recommend these strategies and interventions used by English teachers to be used by other teachers handling different learning areas. It would also be helpful for future researchers to conduct analysis of the different learning gaps in English among learners in KS1 and KS2. Researchers opt to conduct action research on Review of pre-requisite skills, Diagnostic Assessment, Lecture Method, ICT Integration, Visual Literacy, Hands-On Learning, and Experiential Learning/Portfolio as the most effective strategies in bridging the learning gaps in teaching English.

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