

English Learning Experience of Academic Students from Non-Native Countries in a Faith-Based International School in the Philippines: A Transcendental Phenomenology Study

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Abstract—As the world grows more linked, an increasing number of people seek education opportunities abroad. The Philippines is a popular destination because English is widely spoken throughout the country. These students are typically joined by their families, participating in a transformative educational experience that inspires both excitement and concern, particularly among children. This qualitative study looks into the experiences of international students learning English in an academic setting. The study used semi-structured interviews to illustrate the complexities of language acquisition, emphasizing both challenges and successes. The findings indicate that students had a variety of linguistic issues, including being stereotyped, having difficulty with their accent and pronunciation, making grammatical errors, and not understanding what they were reading. There are also personal and cultural issues to consider, such as overcoming language obstacles, adjusting to new social and interpersonal dynamics, and adapting to new teaching methods in schools. The study looks into the development of learning experiences, emotional reactions, and social interactions. It reveals that international students experience significant progress in their language learning, practice practical learning methods, and have a positive attitude toward the learning process. Using tactics such as active listening, peer correction, maintaining a positive mentality, and participating in activities that boost English language acquisition, this study demonstrates that students applied practical learning strategies.

Keywords— Non-native country students, language barriers, linguistic difficulties, social and personal issues, educational teaching system, practical learning methods, attitude to learning.

I. INTRODUCTION

In an increasingly globalized world, academic purpose is one of the reasons people move across borders (Jata, 2015). It has even become a hallmark of some host countries in higher education, such as the Philippines. Many foreign students come to this country to pursue their studies. For instance, according to Voice of America (2015), there were 24,000 South Korean students studying in this country in that year. In fact, many students are willing to relocate to the Philippines because English is the primary language of instruction in academic and daily life in this country. On the national scale, English is constitutionally used as one of the official languages of the Philippines (Santos et. al., 2022). Coming to this country would be an opportunity to learn English better.

A lot of these students come to this country with their families, which is interesting. As a result, both parents and school-aged children have important experiences as they try to learn more, even when they are also trying to acquire English. While studies on English learning by adult students have become the focus of much research (e.g., Guzman et al., 2006; Ancheta & Perez, 2017; and Acheta, 2022), inquiries about the cross-cultural English learning experience of their children in their school context are limited.

For many individuals, particularly children, the journey begins with a mix of intense excitement and nervousness. They might be excited to go abroad, for example, to the Philippines, with their parents and experience a new life and culture; yet, most of them are scared of communicating in English. These students find themselves in an environment that often starkly contrasts with their home country. While improving their language skills, students have to get used to new teaching methods, cultural norms, and social relationships (Cambri et al., 2019). To adapt, you need to do more than just study hard. You also need to understand how English is spoken in different ethnic contexts. Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory talks about how social contact and the main cultural backdrop are significant factors in language development. This is quite similar to the need to adapt to the social environment. The Behaviorism hypothesis of B.F. Skinner is equally pertinent in this scenario. Skinner stresses that language is a social activity. However, dreaming of being skilled in English is one of their goals when traveling abroad. Therefore, this situation offers both challenges and opportunities. However, as mentioned earlier, studies in this area are rare.

This research primarily focuses on the experiences international students encounter when learning English at an academy in the Philippines, the strategies they develop to overcome obstacles, and their feelings when they can finally perform their English skills better than before. Furthermore, this research aims to explore the different experiences of international students' children from non-native countries while they are beginning their path of learning English as a second language at the AIIAS Academy, the international school for children whose parents study at the Seminary and Graduate School.

There are currently forty different countries represented among the students that are enrolled at this educational establishment (Sumendap, AIIAS HRD, personal communication, October 14, 2004). This research provides insights on ways to improve assistance for these students in educational institutions by utilizing culturally responsive English learning and teaching methodologies, in addition to social engagement activities, by analyzing the experiences of these students. Ultimately, understanding these dynamics will contribute to more effective language teaching and better outcomes for international students in English-speaking academic settings.

Therefore, this research seeks to answer the research questions below:

1. What are the English learning experiences of international students from non-native Countries?
2. What are the personal and cultural challenges encountered by international students during their English learning journey in the Philippines?
3. What are the contexts of the English learning experiences of international students from non-native countries?

II. METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative research approach, specifically a descriptive phenomenology design. Sinfield, et al. (2023) states that this design was invented by Edmund Husserl in 2013. It aims to understand the original experience of participants and distinguish and clarify the essential features of phenomena they defined directly. In this case, it is essential to acquire a more in-depth comprehension of the experiences of international students who are studying English. In the following sections, we will discuss the research design, the individuals that participated in the study, the criteria that were used to choose them, as well as the instrument and procedure that were utilized to collect data. In addition, this part discusses the need of rigor and reliability, as well as ethical concerns and data analysis.

Research Design

This study employed an interpretive phenomenology qualitative research design. Interpretive phenomenology research is a study in which researchers identify the core of the human lived experience of a phenomenon experienced by participants (Creswell, 2009). The design for this study aims to explore in depth the English language learning experiences of international students from non-native countries, emphasizing the cultural background that shapes their language acquisition process, the difficulties they face, and strategies to overcome the challenges in learning English. The design uses transcendental phenomenological approach to capture the lived experiences of these students as they navigate their educational environment.

Participants and sampling method

The participants were chosen using a purposeful sampling method. They are Academy students who are 12-16 years old and have lived in the Philippines for 6 to 2 years, representing a variety of foreign countries, cultural backgrounds, and

English proficiency levels. This diversity will ensure a comprehensive understanding of the different experiences within the international student population.

Data Collection

Data collection is employed in semi-structured interviews. These interviews were conducted individually. Each interview was recorded with a recording app. Open-ended questions facilitated the unrestricted sharing of participants' experiences of learning English. Once the answers are saturated, the interview stops.

A member check was organized to get accurate outcomes. Member checking, also called informant feedback, respondent validation, member validation, or dependability checking, is a methodological approach in which researchers present data transcripts or interpretations to participants. This process allows for participant feedback and ensures the accuracy and reliability of the findings (Varpio et al., 2017).

Additionally, a group discussion was conducted to verify and substantiate the participants' responses, facilitating dialogue among students from diverse cultural backgrounds. This enabled participants to articulate and validate their responses regarding their experiences with challenges, the strategies they developed to address these obstacles, and their emotional responses to improvements in their English skills.

Finally, after gathering information from primary data and conducting interviews with informants, data source triangulation was performed. Triangulation of data sources is the process of verifying the accuracy of specific information by using multiple types of data, such as documents, archives, interview results, observations, or by consulting with several individuals who hold different perspectives. (Syarif et al., 2021). Moreover, Data triangulation is significant for comparing the obtained data (Kojongian et al, 2022).

Instrumentation/Interview Schedule

This study proposes interview questions for international students from non-native countries in the table below. The participants will share their experiences about their backgrounds and the challenges they face in learning English.

Rigor and Trustworthiness

This study was rigorously conducted using the trustworthiness paradigm put forward by Lincoln and Guba (1985), which includes credibility and transferability criteria. Recognized research methodologies, such as triangulation and member verification, can be used to establish credibility, as Shelton (2004) explains. Lincoln and Guba (1985) noted that in order to make the study's results more applicable, the researchers described the research environment, participants, and data gathering procedures

Ethical Consideration

This study guarantees that all participants engage voluntarily, free from any form of pressure or coercion. Before the interviews were done, the University of Washington's Ethics Research Board had to approve the plan. After the researcher and the participants developed a good relationship, they worked together to set up interviews at times that worked

for everyone, making sure that communication was clear and that there was less chance of disagreement. Before signing the assent forms, the participants were told about the study's goals, methodology, and objectives. They were told that their privacy would be strictly protected and that their answers would only be used for research purposes. They would keep their names secret, and taking part was completely up to them.

TABLE 1. Interview protocol

Research Question	Prompt/Follow-up questions
What are the English Learning experiences of international students from non-native countries?	Can you describe specific qualities, events, or individuals from your English learning journey that stand out to you? What thoughts, ideas, or concepts related to English learning have made a significant impact on your experience? Have you noticed any personal changes or feelings since you began studying English in a face-to-face environment after the pandemic? Have you had any key experiences, insights, or "Aha!" moments in your English learning processes that you think are particularly important?
What are the personal and cultural challenges encountered by international students during their English learning journey in the Philippines?	How do cultural differences impact your learning experiences in the Philippines? What do you think are the long-term impacts of studying English in the Philippines?
What are the contexts of the English learning experiences of international students from non-native Countries?	How has your experience of learning English changed? What adjustments have you made in your approach to learning? What emotions or feelings do you associate with your English learning experience? In what ways do you think your English learning journey has influenced your peers or fellow students?

Analysis of Data

The study will employ Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-stage guide to thematic analysis to analyze the data. The six-step process involves the following: (1) Familiarization, (2) Coding, (3) Generating themes, (4) Reviewing themes, (5) Refining and naming themes, and (6) Writing up. After the member checking was done, the researcher collected and transcribed the narrative data from the respondents' interviews. After that, the researcher categorized and grouped them into themes. Furthermore, finally came to the final action of writing.

III. RESULTS

English Experiences of International Students from non-native countries

The result shows that international students have a complex learning experience. They face various challenges when they start learning English, which is influenced by their individual abilities and backgrounds. At the same time, they actively seek ways to overcome these barriers. Table 2 illustrates the feedback from the participants, highlighting that their difficulties were primarily language-related. However, they also showed resilience by utilizing self-motivation,

engaging with their school, seeking effective learning strategies, and managing their emotional responses.

TABLE 2. Result of students' response: Experience of Learning English

Categories	Themes
Feeling of stereotypes	Language Learning Barrier
Lack of understanding in Learning English	
Problem with grammar, Problem with pronunciation, and accent	Self-Motivation and persistence
Never give up learning study hard	
Do not be afraid to talk	School engagement
Teacher encouragement	
Friend support	Learning Strategies and Tools
Watching video grammar lessons	
Listening to Podcasts	
Socializing with people	
Reading books	Emotional Feelings
Feeling happy after class	
Feeling excited to learn English	
Feeling Shy to speak	
Feeling stressed	

To address the first research question, "What are the English language learning experiences of international students from non-native countries?" the participants responded with the aforementioned table. The experiences of international students from non-native countries in learning English involve language learning barriers, self-motivation and persistence, school engagement, learning strategies, and their emotional feelings.

Language Learning Barriers.

Many difficulties are encountered by those who are attempting to learn English. These difficulties include a lack of comprehension, difficulties with grammar and pronunciation, and even variations in accents. There was one participant who stated that she had a difficult time learning English since she was not familiar with the rules of the language. "I do not understand English, the rules of English, because in my country, we do not speak English." Participant 2 said that learning English is difficult. She said, "I think it is 'difficult.' In my country, many people have a stereotype that English grammar is complicated". Likewise, Participant 3 said grammar was problematic when learning English. Moreover, he also said that pronunciation and accent are difficult for him when learning English. "I encountered a few challenges. My grammar, pronunciation, and accent are not good; I am shy about talking with people,". Participants 4 and 5 also experienced this; they had difficulty learning English, particularly with pronunciation. Due to this obstacle, they are embarrassed to speak English.

Self-motivation and persistence. Learning English is a challenging task that may be extremely rewarding for individuals studying abroad. To get over challenges, you need to be self-motivated and work hard all the time. The authors Purnama et al. (2019) assert that "Motivation is one of the most important things in the learning process."

The fact that they never gave up on learning, worked very hard, and did not feel scared to speak up was the source of their drive, as can be seen in the table that is located that is

listed above. When it came time for Participant 1 to engage in conversation with other individuals, he experienced feelings of embarrassment since he did not have a strong command of the English language. He, on the other hand, underlined how important it is to keep a positive attitude and not to give up on the process of learning English. It is imperative that you never give up on your efforts to acquire the language. *"The idea is to never stop learning English."* Devoting a significant amount of work is, without a question, the most important factor in achieving success in the process of learning English. It is of the utmost importance to create a commitment that is constant, especially if that commitment involves spending time learning or practicing speaking English. According to Participant 2, *"English is very difficult and very complicated."* She said that she had to study hard. To conquer the fear of speaking, Participant 3 suggested that we need to be brave enough to speak and not let our limitations hold us back.

No less important than hard work, encouragement from the environment, teachers, and friends is very helpful in improving their ability to learn English. Participant 4 *"The thought that helped me was that my teacher encouraged me,"* while Participant 3 said, *"But my friends encouraged me"*. Participant 5 added, *"My friends help me, eeem correct my grammar"*.

It was found that international students use a variety of learning strategies and tools to navigate English language acquisition. This inspired them to learn on their own, which ultimately resulted in an improvement in their English. The second participant *stated that "Watching movies, listening, and talking to other people helps me learn English better."* The second participant likewise mentioned how much she enjoyed watching videos that were devoted to teaching grammar. So did Participant 5. She said, *"...practicing always by watching movies, listening to podcasts, reading books, and socializing had a very big impact when I learn my English."* Participant 2 added, *"When I was in the ESL center. I learned a lot of English. Moreover, it helped me a lot. I learned grammar, and I was able to acquire the ability to employ correct grammar"*

when I was speaking. Students who come from countries where English is not their first language generally experience a wide range of emotions when they are learning the language. These emotions include excitement, joy, fear, and stress, among others. Participant 2 shared her experience and that she felt happy after the class. Participant 5 also said, *"I feel very excited and happy,"* while Participant 3 felt the opposite, *"I am shy to talk with others,"* as well as Participant 4, *"When we learn English in class and we don't understand, our mind becomes stressed."*

Personal and cultural challenges

The second research topic explores the personal and cultural barriers that overseas students encounter when they are in the Philippines for the purpose of studying English. A number of insights can be gleaned from the responses of the participants, which are reported in Table 3. The result shows that the difficulties encountered by international students from non-native countries in the classroom include language

barriers, social and interpersonal issues, and challenges related to the educational system.

TABLE 3. Result of students' response: Personal and cultural challenges

Categories	Themes
Different language background	Linguistic Difficulties
Different forms of grammar structure	
Struggling to find a friend	Social and interpersonal challenges
Difficulty speaking in public	
Textbook-based learning to critical thinking	Educational Challenges
Different ways of teaching style	

In terms of personal and cultural barriers, the respondents identified linguistic difficulties as their primary challenges. These difficulties were a result of various language origins and varied grammatical patterns. Not only that, but the respondents also had a hard time establishing friends and giving speeches in public, particularly when they were in social and interpersonal settings. As a last point of discussion, during their experience of learning English, they encountered a variety of instructional approaches, which provided them with additional educational challenges. They needed to learn how to think critically instead of only depending on what they read in books.

Linguistic difficulties: There are two main challenges faced by international students from non-native countries in their English language journey: different language backgrounds and different grammar structures. Regarding the different language backgrounds, all participants stated that they were not from an English-speaking background. Participant 1 said, *"English is not my official language."* Participant 2 explained, *"In my country, many people have stereotypes that English grammar is difficult and complicated."* Participant 3 added, *"When I started to learn English, I encountered a few challenges."* Participant 4 also shared that when he learns English, he does not understand, his mind is stressed, and he thinks differently. Lastly, participant 5 ended with the statement, *"We are not used to speaking English at school back in my country, but here, our communication at school is in English."* Different grammatical structures can be pretty challenging for students from non-native countries, as they need to adapt to these variations. For example, participant 2 said that in her country, the words *"I love you"* are in English, and in her language, *"I you love."*

Social and interpersonal issues: It is common for international students from other countries to experience difficulties in social and interpersonal interactions while studying in a foreign country. One of the most significant challenges that people face is the experience of loneliness and isolation. This is a result of cultural differences and the adjustment process, which makes it difficult to form genuine friendships. For instance, Participant 1 mentioned that she had a great deal of difficulty making friends because she did not speak English very well. One of the participants, participant 4, found it difficult to speak in class because of her shyness and nervousness.

Educational Challenges: In the process of learning English, international students who come from countries where English is not the mother language have three primary challenges:

transitioning from an education focused on textbooks to one that emphasizes critical thinking, adjusting to a variety of teaching techniques, and obtaining research skills. Adjusting to these new habits can be a process. Participant 1 expressed her experience of adapting to a new lifestyle while studying in the Philippines, stating, *“I learned how to study and organize my schoolwork; we need to think critically.”* The second participant stated that they needed to make further adjustments *because the manner in which teachers instruct is very different from what they were accustomed to while they were living in their native country. It was a very long time before I was able to adjust to it.* Participant 3 also discussed the ways in which the learning styles and instructional approaches used at her previous school were substantially different from those used in the Philippines. She concluded by saying, *“In my country, I was used to memorization, but here I have to think critically.”*

Learning Context of English Learning Experience

The result of research question no. 3, “What are the contexts of the English learning experiences of international students from non-native Countries?” is found in Table 4. The study demonstrates that foreign students experience positive learning changes by practicing practical learning methods, such as listening to others speak, engaging in activities that involve English interaction, and correcting mistakes among themselves. The study also reveals that having a positive attitude, instead of a negative mindset, toward learning helps them to understand English well. Finally, having social support is also an essential element that contributes to their learning development.

TABLE 4. Result of students’ response: The contexts of English learning experiences

Categories	Themes
Listening to people talk helps to improve pronunciation.	Practical Learning Methods
Get more activities to learn English	
Correcting each other's mistakes is a significant form of support for learning.	
Complaining makes it harder to learn	Negative mindset
Don't understand the lesson makes stress	
Practicing speaking English with many friends	Social Support
Dare to talk with a native speaker	
Socialize with many English-speaking people	Positive attitude in learning
Learning English should be fun	
Feeling positive about Learning English	
Conversations help each other	
Sharing knowledge opportunity	

Findings reveal several significant factors that contribute to the success of international students. These elements are essential in shaping their overall learning context.

Practical Learning Methods. When they moved to the Philippines and attended an international school, the participants had a difficult time adjusting to the process of learning English. On the other hand, the researcher observed that their own experiences highlighted the effectiveness of the practical learning method that was utilized. One of the most effective ways to acquire the ability to correctly pronounce English words was to listen to native speakers. The alternative for improving one's English skills was to engage in more

enjoyable activities. According to the first participant, using flashcards and learning through music and songs is a more effective method of learning than simply recalling information from a book. They also said that watching movies was a great way for them to learn English. Another important strategy discussed was the practice of pointing out each other's mistakes. The participants in the research thought this was a good thing. Participant 3 made this point clear by saying, *“This is the most important support because we can help each other fix mistakes.”*

Students' moods for learning will be affected by negative mindsets, which is something that should be avoided. One of the attendees suggested that we should never let negative thoughts hinder our studies. Having a complaint just makes it harder to learn. Additionally, it's essential not to worry about things that are likely to cause you stress. Participant 4 noted, *“When we don't grasp the lesson, it causes me stress.”* It means that we need to avoid having a negative mindset, such as complaining and feeling stressed while learning English, and instead cultivate a sense of fun, vigor, and happiness.

Social support in learning English, especially in conversation, is extremely important for the establishment of a supportive atmosphere and fostering social interaction. Practicing speaking English with friends, daring to talk with native speakers, and socializing with English speakers is important to support students' improvement in English. Participant 1 said, *“Practicing speaking English with many friends helped me.”* Besides friends, native speakers are also no less important because support from native speakers can provide significant benefits for students in learning English. Participant 4 said that friends are needed as partners when speaking. Participant 3 mentioned that friends can be of assistance by pointing out our mistakes or offering other points of view.

The potential of pupils from countries where English is not their first language to learn the language is considerably improved when they have a positive attitude. One of the participants stressed the need to have a joyful mindset by saying, *“I felt happy, and we should maintain positive thoughts whenever we study.”* Another participant, who is participant 4, expressed a similar perspective, stating that *“Learning English should be enjoyable.”* In addition, Participant 3 emphasized that learning English ought to be a pleasurable experience and urged others not to be concerned or anxious about their limitations. Fear is not something that should be present in the process of learning English, according to participant 2.

Conversations with others help students enhance their verbal communication skills. Participant 1 states that conversing with family and friends in English can help improve grammar and pronunciation. Participant 3 stated that the most effective approach to improve one's English is to speak it every day. He also underlined that talking to other people in English is really helpful. allowing friends to help each other by correcting mistakes.

Another positive action in learning English is sharing knowledge opportunities. Participant 2 said that sharing what you've learned can help you improve your English skills.

Participant 5 stated that when he initially started at the international school, a friend pointed out his grammar and pronunciation mistakes to him. Now he can help his classmates in the same way. He said, "I'm proud to teach my friends what I've learned over the years."

IV. DISCUSSION

Theme 1: English Experiences of International Students from non-native countries

During the process of learning English, students who come from countries where English is not the native language regularly face challenging linguistic situations. Having preconceived notions about people who are not native speakers can be stressful and make communication more challenging. It is possible that they will have difficulties comprehending native speakers due to variances in accents, unfamiliar vocabulary, and phrases that are often used in everyday conversation. In addition, the grammatical differences between their native language and English could potentially result in misunderstandings and mistakes. Differences in sound systems can hinder a person's ability to accurately make English sounds and establish an accent that is nearly identical to that of a native speaker. This can also lead to problems with pronunciation and accent. There is a possibility that these obstacles will have a substantial impact on their overall self-confidence as well as their academic achievement.

Motivating oneself and remaining persistent are two of the most important factors in successful English language acquisition. (Ugla, 2021). According to Ugla. The expression "never give up learning" highlights the significance of making consistent efforts and adopting a growth mindset in order to achieve any level of success. In order to accomplish this, it is necessary to view difficulties as chances for learning and to persistently pursue ways that will increase one's talents. In the context of academic endeavors, "study hard" refers to devoting time to those interests and participating in consistent practice. Participating in activities, completing assignments, and looking into chances for autonomous learning are all required steps in this process. The phrase "Do not be afraid to talk" emphasizes the importance of overcoming the fear of making mistakes and participating in conversations, as it highlights the necessity of doing so. Having the awareness that making mistakes is a normal and essential component of the learning process is of the utmost importance. Even so, it is of the utmost importance to make the most of the opportunities for communication, even if certain circumstances may appear to be rather daunting. As a conclusion, the phrase "face all the challenges" demonstrates how essential it is to develop resilience and become more adept at finding solutions to issues.

A further aspect that contributes to increased student engagement in school is the degree to which students perceive that they are receiving support and value. The support that students receive from their professors is an essential component in the development of a constructive learning environment that encourages students to take on challenges, increases their drive, and helps them develop confidence in

their own capabilities. This, in conjunction with the unwavering support from friends, contributes to the development of a sense of belonging. During the course of their education, children are more likely to participate in learning, develop a passion for information, and realize their full potential if they have a connection with their professors and peers.

It is necessary to employ several different tactics to acquire a language successfully. Listening to podcasts provides students with the opportunity to observe typical speech patterns. On the other hand, teaching grammar through video lectures provides students with both visual and auditory reinforcement. Participating in conversations with native speakers improves one's ability to converse and deepens one's understanding of other cultures. By participating in an English as a Second Language (ESL) program, one receives structured teaching and individualized feedback from trained teachers. In conclusion, reading literature written in the target language helps expand one's vocabulary, improve understanding, and deepen knowledge of cultural differences.

Lastly, it is possible that learning a new language will cause them to experience a wide range of emotions. Students typically experience feelings of excitement and eagerness when they first begin learning English. However, they could have feelings of shyness when interacting with other children, and the desire to perform better might occasionally cause them to feel anxious. On the other hand, if you are able to truly comprehend a challenging concept or engage in a meaningful discussion, you may experience a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment, which can make the overall learning process more enjoyable.

Theme 2: Personal and cultural challenges encountered by international students

The varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds of overseas students present a significant obstacle for them to overcome when it comes to language learning. According to research, a number of different factors have a significant part in determining the level of engagement that students have with English. It has been demonstrated by Cutad et al. (2024) that one's cultural background has an effect on their level of self-assurance, motivation, and overall academic success. According to Jata (2015), the incorporation of the cultural context of the target language into language learning has the potential to considerably improve understanding, which in turn assists students in the development of their English skills. Regarding this particular feature, the vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and social conventions that are inherent to the target language are taken into consideration. The educational environment benefits from the unique language experiences and knowledge that students from a variety of backgrounds bring to the educational setting. Each language has its own set of rules that make up grammar, and these rules are unique to certain languages. In addition to changes in syntactic arrangement, verbal conjugations, and nominal inflections, these restrictions also include modifications. It is possible that learners will encounter difficulties in their efforts to master the complexities of English grammar as a result of these disparities. Individuals whose original languages do not

contain articles may have a particularly difficult time comprehending the function and use of articles in the English language.

Challenges posed by social and interpersonal interactions can significantly impact the process of language acquisition. There is a possibility that certain learners may experience feelings of isolation and a decrease in motivation if they find it difficult to interact with others who share similar language learning goals. Additionally, the stress associated with speaking in front of others, such as giving a presentation or participating in a group discussion, may hinder the development of fluency and exacerbate the challenges of social communication.

The transition from traditional textbook-based education to instructional methods that place an emphasis on critical thinking is usually required in order to address educational concerns pertaining to the acquisition of the English language. As a result of the change, teachers will need to modify their instructional methods in order to ensure that pupils acquire knowledge that goes beyond merely learning facts and practicing grammar. Teachers have the ability to implement a wide range of instructional strategies, including collaborative learning, project-based learning, and the use of technology, in order to make the classroom environment more engaging and meaningful. These strategies have the potential to assist students in developing their analytical thinking, problem-solving, and communication abilities.

Theme 3: The contexts of the English learning experiences of international students from non-native Countries

Methods that focus on practical learning prioritize the use of real-life situations and active participation. It is possible to gain significant insights regarding pronunciation and intonation by listening to conversations that are taking place among native speakers. Utilizing flashcards, listening to music, and watching films are all examples of additional activities that need active engagement with the English language. Participating in these activities is essential. In order to stimulate collaboration and enhance peer-to-peer learning, a supportive learning environment that facilitates reciprocal correction among learners is essential. This setting also provides crucial feedback, which contributes to the acceleration of language acquisition. According to Thi Vo and Pham Le (2022), pupils' psychological adaptation and language proficiency are mediated by their interactions with their peers. It is clear from this that it is essential to create a classroom setting that is welcoming to all students, encourages the development of cross-cultural connections, and facilitates the acquisition of languages in an international setting.

According to Andi et al. (2022), negative attitudes should be avoided since they have the potential to have a significant impact on the development of English language learning. There is a possibility of creating a self-defeating loop by frequently expressing complaints and obstacles, which can make it difficult to maintain motivation and involvement. In addition, difficulties in comprehending educational material can lead to feelings of tension and anxiety, which in turn can result in feelings of inadequacy, hindering the ability to effectively absorb new information. It is imperative that you

establish a growth-oriented mindset in order to be successful in learning English and overcoming the challenges that you face.

Support from one's peers is absolutely necessary for the successful acquisition of the English language. According to the findings of this study, having conversations in English with one's contemporaries creates an encouraging atmosphere that is beneficial to the development of one's self-assurance and fluency. Participating in conversations with native speakers provided invaluable opportunities to experience language learning in its natural setting. By doing this, the student gained an understanding of the cultural complexity related to it. Engaging with native English speakers makes immersive practice easier to achieve and boosts learners' sense of belonging, which in turn boosts learners' motivation and enriches their entire experience of learning a language (Intang et al., 2023).

In order for students who come from non-native backgrounds to effectively acquire the English language, it is essential for them to maintain a positive attitude. The adoption of the idea that learning English should be fun contributes to the development of an experience that is more dynamic and engaging. Students are motivated to overcome obstacles and celebrate their achievements when they are exposed to a positive tone while they are engaged in the learning process. People are more likely to feel comfortable sharing knowledge when they are in an environment where they are also doing activities with their friends and teachers. One of the benefits of working together in this manner is that it not only helps people learn more effectively, but it also provides them with numerous opportunities to develop both as individuals and as a society while they are learning.

V. CONCLUSION

Learning English for international students from non-native backgrounds is complex and fraught with obstacles and successes. Significant challenges include language barriers and cultural differences, such as a lack of understanding in learning English as their new language, grammar difficulties, accent, pronunciation, and feeling stereotyped. In terms of personal and cultural background, they encounter linguistic barriers, including differences in language type and structure. Social and interpersonal issues include struggles to make new friends due to limited English proficiency and a fear of public speaking. The different educational teaching systems they encounter in the new school environment, from textbooks and memorization to critical thinking, add to the challenge.

However, various elements contributed positively to their learning language experience, including self-motivation traits such as never giving up, studying hard, and communicating bravely with others. Additionally, peer support, like encouragement from classmates and teachers, played a significant role. Moreover, effective learning strategies and resources, such as podcasts, grammar videos, social media, reading materials, and ESL program participation, were also vital to their success. Furthermore, fostering a sense of enjoyment and enthusiasm greatly influenced their ability to learn English.

English learning for international students from non-native countries uses practical learning methods, such as listening to people talk, doing more activities in learning, and correcting each other's mistakes. In addition, they also avoid negative mindsets and create a positive attitude in learning, such as talking to people with pleasure and sharing knowledge opportunities. This learning context will positively impact their development of English learning and their friends.

It is recommended that educational institutions offer training to teachers in cultural responsiveness so the educators can identify students' various cultural backgrounds and adjust their teaching approaches as needed.

Furthermore, the researcher suggested that a future study should be carried out to explore the experiences of mature students, focusing on their challenges and teachers' strategies to overcome these issues. Future research could also be conducted in schools for teachers and staff to determine their experiences, perspectives, and insights in dealing with students from other countries, focusing on the culturally sensitive learning environment and methods. Lastly, exploring how social interactions promote language confidence among non-native students with inverted and extroverted personalities is also a potential issue for further research.

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