

Lived Experiences of Filipino Assistant Language Teachers under the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme

Josephine Cebeda Fameronag

Adventist University of the Philippines

Email address: 2045254@aup.edu.ph

Abstract—Filipino professionals participating more frequently in the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) programme has raised questions as to how these Filipino assistant language teachers (ALTs) experience living and working in Japanese schools and communities, apart from the official ideals of cultural exchange as described by the programme's mandate. This study investigates the lived experiences of Filipino ALTs by looking at their experience of living and working in Japan, the ways in which they understand their decision to participate in the JET Programme both personally and professionally, and how the meanings that they attribute to their experiences change over time. The study employs a qualitative research design based on van Manen's hermeneutic phenomenology, using in-depth semi-structured interviews with six Filipino ALTs assigned to six different prefectures in Japan. Data were analyzed through reflective and interpretive phenomenological writing to identify the essential themes of the lived experiences. The findings reveal that participants experience life and work in Japan as a continuous process of adjustment, marked by cultural transition, linguistic vulnerability, and role ambiguity in schools. The JET Programme is viewed as a decision reflecting different moral and emotional components: professional goals, discontent, and family obligations. The meaning of the JET experience was revealed over time through perseverance, affirmation from others, and self-reflection, rather than being instantaneous. Overall, the findings suggest that the JET Programme represents a significant stage in life during which an individual's identity is redefined and developed. Future studies may include longitudinal studies of ALTs, cross-cultural comparisons, and re-integration to the Philippines after JET.

Keywords— Assistant Language Teacher (ALT), JET Programme, lived experiences, Phenomenology, van Manen.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Japan Exchange Teaching (JET) Programme, instituted in 1987, has become one of the largest international cultural exchange initiatives, bringing foreign educators to Japan to promote mutual understanding through language education and cultural exchange (Binns, 2022). Since its establishment, the number of participants has grown from four to 54 countries (CLAIR, 2025). The Philippines joined the program in 2014 with only two participants. The Philippines ranks among the countries with the highest number of participants, next to the United States. In 2024, Japan welcomed 123 Filipino participants, which exceeded all previous years (Embassy of Japan in the Philippines 2025). This dramatic growth reflects broader patterns of educational migration among Filipino professionals seeking international

career opportunities (Balana & Paglinawan, 2025), with Philippines-based educators increasingly viewing overseas teaching as a pathway to professional advancement and personal development.

Filipinos frequently consider themselves to be on par with or even superior to native English-speaking instructors, seeing themselves as authorities in English language teaching (Masa & Estrellas, 2025). This confidence stems from their strong language proficiency, pedagogical expertise, and emphasis on content-based instruction. Beyond language teaching, they also take on the role of educational caretakers, prioritizing students' overall well-being by fostering motivation to learn English and offering emotional support when needed (Jung & Choe, 2024). Unlike native-speaker teachers who may focus primarily on linguistic authenticity, Filipino teachers bring a distinctive pedagogical perspective grounded in their own experience as English learners, enabling them to relate to student challenges and employ effective strategies for non-native contexts (Timon & Libago, 2026). In Japan, there has been increased research on Filipino instructors since 2021, which has yielded more in-depth insights into their life experiences, professional difficulties, and adjustment to novel cultural and institutional settings (Masa & Estrellas, 2025). This growing scholarly attention reflects both the increasing prominence of Filipino educators in Japan's educational landscape and the recognition that their experiences offer valuable insights into international teacher migration, identity formation, and cross-cultural pedagogy (Bisenio, 2024).

Every year, from October to December, the Japanese Embassy in the Philippines accepts applications from all over the Philippines. Many Filipinos send applications in the hope of being chosen as one of the ambassadors of the Philippines. The participants of this program are termed Assistant Language Teachers (ALT). Their responsibilities include assisting Japanese Teachers of English (JTEs) in planning and delivering lessons, providing authentic pronunciation and cultural input, leading communicative activities, and encouraging students' confidence in using English. Beyond classroom teaching, ALTs may also help design teaching materials, participate in extracurricular clubs, and engage in cultural exchange activities within schools and local communities. (JET Programme, General Information Handbook 2023).

Filipino ALTs, once accepted into the JET Programme, are assigned to various locations across Japan, and their experiences often differ depending on their placement, school environment, and working relationships with their colleagues (Escarda, 2024). Despite these diverse experiences, Filipinos have established a strong presence in English language teaching, supported by networks such as the FETJ and other Filipino organizations that provide guidance and social networks (Stewart, 2020). In addition, many Filipino vloggers have shared their personal journeys and insights through platforms such as YouTube and social media, offering practical information, tips, and candid and sometimes dramatized accounts of daily life as ALTs. These online narratives not only help demystify the application process and set expectations, but also inspire and encourage more Filipinos to pursue the JET Programme as a viable and rewarding opportunity.

In Japan, several studies have documented the experiences of Filipino Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) working in the country. For example, a qualitative study conducted by Arrogante and Gaza (2025) used descriptive phenomenology to understand how ALTs perceive their roles, contributions, and contextual challenges within the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme in Japan. The results of this study revealed that while ALTs contribute significantly to English language education and cultural exchange, their job satisfaction and effectiveness are greatly impacted by whether they have a supportive work environment and relationships with their peers and communities. Escarta (2024) also analyzed the collaborative relationship between ALTs and Japanese teachers and found that these relationships shape ALTs' classroom practices and how well they integrate into the greater school community. Understanding why ALTs choose to participate in ALT programs provides insight into their experiences as ALTs. Hasegawa and Sakamoto (2023) investigated the expectations among ALTs before arriving in Japan, reflecting their motivations and lived experiences in the program. While this research is not exclusively focused on Filipino ALTs, its findings are useful for understanding the motivations Filipino teachers have in seeking ALT positions in Japan and how these motivations shape Filipino teachers' experiences as ALTs.

Studies on Filipino ALTs have emphasized cultural adaptation as a key theme in their professional experiences. Casingal and Caerlang (2025) used mixed methods to delve into how Filipino ALTs handle complex cultural and pedagogical contexts in Japan. They found that Filipino ALTs often use blended professional identities that merge Philippine and Japanese educational strategies, demonstrating flexibility and adaptability in facing cross-cultural challenges such as language barriers and different classroom norms. Language difficulty is also commonly identified as a crucial challenge for ALTs. Aswe et al. (2023) conducted a hermeneutic phenomenological study on ALTs in Japan, showing that struggles in communicating with students and Japanese co-teachers can restrict ALTs' instructional capability and professional competence. Their findings highlight the need for

more vigorous linguistic support and intercultural training in ALT programmes.

Online narratives about Filipino Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) in Japan have made information about the JET Programme more accessible to a wider audience, offering glimpses into the opportunities and challenges of living and working abroad for Filipino teachers. Although recent studies have presented relevant information, several gaps remain. Most research still emphasizes descriptive or mixed approaches rather than strictly transcendental phenomenological designs focused on Filipino ALTs' lived experiences of teaching English. Additionally, few studies have consistently investigated how ALT experiences affect long-term career paths or intercultural identity development. However, much of this content tends to highlight selected aspects of the experience, which may not always capture the full reality of an ALT's day-to-day life. Simultaneously, existing academic literature has primarily focused on the demographic profile, motivations, and aspirations of Filipino ALTs, emphasizing why they choose to apply, the linguistic and cultural assets they bring, and their potential contributions to Japan's English education system (Fermin, 2020). However, less attention has been devoted to their lived experiences after arrival, such as how they navigate culture shock, language barriers, professional expectations, and their adjustment to local communities and schools. Therefore, this study seeks to build on scholarly accounts by exploring the real, everyday experiences of Filipino ALTs during their transition and residency in Japan. By examining their experiences, this research aims to provide a more holistic understanding of what it means to live and work as a Filipino ALT under the JET Programme.

This study, *Experiences of Filipino Assistant Language Teachers under the Japan Exchange Teaching Programme: A Hermeneutical Phenomenological Study*, aims to investigate the following three primary questions:

1. What is it like for Filipino Assistant Language Teachers to live and work in Japanese schools and communities under the JET Programme?
2. How do Filipino Assistant Language Teachers understand their decision to enter the JET Programme within their personal and professional life contexts?
3. What meanings do Filipino Assistant Language Teachers ascribe to their experiences in the JET Programme as these experiences unfold over time?

II. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employed a qualitative research design informed by van Manen's (1990) hermeneutic phenomenological approach. This approach emphasizes the interpretive understanding of lived experiences, recognizing meaning as emerging through reflection and writing rather than through the bracketing of researcher assumptions. It was well suited to exploring how Filipino Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) under the JET Programme experience their everyday life and work in Japan, with the aim of capturing the essential thematic meanings of these experiences.

Population and Sampling Techniques

The study was conducted in Japan and involved Filipino Assistant Language Teachers from different prefectures. The population consisted of Filipino ALTs currently employed in the JET Programme. A total of six (6) participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure that each participant could provide rich, in-depth, and reflective insights into the phenomenon. The inclusion criteria required participants to: (1) be currently working as an Assistant Language Teacher in Japan, (2) have at least two years of teaching experience as an ALT, and (3) be employed under the JET Programme. Placements vary widely, with some ALTs working in urban centers and others assigned to rural towns and remote areas. Participants may also be deployed to different school levels, including elementary, junior high, and senior high schools, contributing to the diversity of professional contexts. Recruitment will be voluntary, based on informed consent, and confidentiality will be assured through the use of pseudonyms.

Instrumentation

Data were gathered using a semi-structured interview guide, which allowed flexibility while maintaining consistency across interviews. The guide covered several key areas: participants' entry into the program (RQ2), their initial experiences and adjustment (RQ1), and their teaching experiences (RQ1). It also explored cultural and social experiences, serving as a bridge between RQ1 and RQ3, as well as aspects of support and community (RQ1), and challenges and coping strategies (RQ1). In addition, the interviews examined the professional and personal meanings the participants derived from the program (RQ3) and concluded with reflective questions (RQ3). The questions were designed to elicit rich and detailed narratives of the participants' lived experiences.

Data Gathering Procedures

Participants received email invitations outlining the study's objectives, ethical assurances, and interview procedures. Informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. Interviews were conducted via Zoom and lasted approximately 35–45 minutes. The interviews were conversational in nature but were guided by the interview questions. All sessions were audio-recorded with participants' consent, transcribed verbatim, and anonymized using pseudonyms. The transcripts were reviewed and verified for completeness and accuracy prior to analysis.

Data Analysis

Guided by van Manen's hermeneutic phenomenology, the interview questions elicited reflective descriptions of lived experiences, focusing on how Filipino ALTs interpreted and gave meaning to their participation in the JET Programme across time and context. The analysis began by identifying a phenomenon of interest and formulating a phenomenological question about it. In-depth interviews were conducted to capture the participants' lived experiences of the phenomenon under consideration. Emergent essential themes were

identified through holistic, selective, and detailed readings, and meaning was derived from iterative phenomenological writing and rewriting. Throughout the process, the researcher remained focused on the phenomenon, moving back and forth between parts and the whole, drawing from the lifeworld existentials (lived space, lived body, lived time, and lived human relations) as interpretive guides. The researcher also employed reflexivity, rich descriptions, and member checking to enhance the trustworthiness of the results. From this process, major themes emerged, including motivated entry, cultural adjustment, negotiated professional identity, support systems, coping and resilience, and personal and professional transformations.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical standards were strictly followed throughout the study. Participants were informed of their rights, the voluntary nature of participation, and their ability to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality was ensured through pseudonyms and secure data storage. The study received ethical clearance from the institution's research ethics committee prior to data collection.

III. RESULTS

This chapter presents and interprets the lived experiences of six Filipino Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) under the JET Programme in Japan. Using van Manen's hermeneutic phenomenological approach, the analysis focuses on how participants experience, understand, and give meaning to their lives as teachers, migrants, and cultural learners over time. The findings are organized according to the three research questions addressed in this study. While presented separately, the experiences described are deeply interwoven, reflecting the fluid and unfolding nature of the lived experience.

Lived Experiences for Filipino Assistant Language Teachers Living and Working in Japanese schools and communities under the JET Programme
Living and Working as Continuous Adjustment.

For the participants, living and working in Japan were not separate spheres but a single, continuous experience of adjustment. The first weeks were commonly described as overwhelming, combining professional uncertainty with everyday survival issues.

One participant recalled the early weeks as overwhelming at the most basic level:

"Everything felt new – from understanding school operations and my responsibilities to adjusting to daily life in Japan. Even small things like commuting to school, buying groceries, and figuring out daily routines took extra effort." (P4)

Another participant emphasized the emotional weight of this adjustment:

"It was one of the most difficult times of my life... I was anxious almost every day, but slowly, I got used to the life." (P1)

The physical and emotional demands of adjustment were inseparable from professional responsibilities.

“You're getting used to living while simultaneously getting used to working. There's no break from it.” (P2)

Phenomenologically, this reflects the lived body – marked by stress, vigilance, and heightened self-awareness—and the lived space, in which Japan is first encountered not as a place of ease or belonging but as an environment that demands careful navigation.

Teaching in Japan: Presence Without Full Authority

Teaching was experienced as meaningful, but structurally ambiguous. While officially labeled as “assistant,” many participants found themselves functioning as lead teachers, often without clear expectations.

One participant shared their shock regarding this mismatch:

“I thought my role would be assisting and observing. But when I arrived, I was the teacher one, leading most classes and planning almost everything.” (P4)

Another participant echoed this uncertainty:

“Sometimes I do not know if I am doing enough or too much. You're there, but you don't really have full control.” (P3)

In spite of this ambiguity, students found fulfillment in affirmation and engagement.

“I felt fulfilled every time my students or JTE would say, ‘Your lesson was really fun.’” (P5)

Through being seen and recognized by others, these moments of awareness established the participants' professional identities by reinforcing their sense of self. Rather than emerging from formal authority or individual autonomy, meaning arose relationally through interactions that validated competence, belonging, and contribution.

Community, Belonging, and Everyday Support

Living in Japanese communities is strongly shaped by relationships. Support from fellow ALTs, Japanese colleagues, and Filipino communities enabled participants to cope with isolation and sustain their emotional well-being.

One participant described receiving unexpected care during their first few days:

“She bought my futon, cooking pot, and other necessities by driving all the way to my house. She was my first ever community here.” (P4)

Fellow ALTs also provided emotional and practical support.

“Other ALTs shared tips about teaching and adjusting to life. It made things less overwhelming.” (P2)

For many, Filipino communities and religious spaces offer continuity of identity:

“That great feeling of belonging and support came from being a member of the Filipino community.” (P6)

Belonging was not permanent or guaranteed, but when it emerged, it fundamentally altered participants' experience of Japan. In these moments, Japan shifted from a space of vigilance or negotiation to one that felt inhabitable and sustaining.

Filipino Assistant Language Teachers' Understanding of their Decision to Enter the JET Programme within their personal and professional life contexts

Teaching as Vocation Interrupted and Reclaimed

Participants understood their decision to enter the JET programme as being deeply connected to their personal histories, particularly their relationship with teaching and family responsibilities.

One participant reflected on returning to teaching after leaving for financial reasons:

“Although I have always been enthusiastic about teaching, my family has depended on me for financial assistance. That's why I worked in the BPO.” (P6)

JET allowed participants to reconcile passion and practicality:

“I would be able to teach in the Philippines if it were simply about passion. However, I also had to support my family.” (P5)

Another participant framed JET as an opportunity to grow without abandoning their responsibility:

“It felt like a way to grow professionally while still being responsible.” (P2)x

This highlights how decisions were morally negotiated rather than purely strategic and shaped by participants' values, responsibilities, and relationships. Choices were weighed not only in terms of efficiency or advantage but also through ethical considerations about care, obligation, and the impact on others, revealing decision-making as a situated and relational process rather than a detached calculation.

Choosing JET as Escape and Opportunity

The participants did not describe their decisions as purely strategic. Instead, it emerged during moments of dissatisfaction, exhaustion, or emotional readiness.

One participant explained this as follows:

“I was really frustrated with my work before. When I saw JET, it felt like the right time.” (P1)

Another participant described feeling stuck before applying:

“Life started to feel repetitive and unfulfilling.” (P6)

JET was imagined as a threshold rather than a certainty.

“I didn't know exactly what to expect, but I knew I needed a change.” (P3)

Here, lived time becomes evident: participants moved toward JET not because the future appeared stable or clearly defined but because the present felt constraining and untenable. Their orientation toward the program was shaped less by long-term certainty than by an urgent need for temporal movement – an opening away from an unsustainable present and toward the possibility, however ambiguous, of something different.

Meanings Ascribed by Filipino Assistant Language Teachers to their Experiences in the JET Programme over time
Growth as Quiet and Cumulative

The participants consistently emphasized that meaning was not immediate. Early experiences focused on endurance rather than reflection.

One participant shared:

“At first, I was just trying to survive day by day.” (P2)

Over time, the participants began to recognize personal growth.

“I became more disciplined—waking up early, preparing lessons, even how I take care of myself.” (P1)

Another participant noted emotional maturity:

“I learned how to handle challenges calmly and appreciate small wins.” (P6)

Therefore, meaning was retrospective, taking shape through reflection rather than through immediate or decisive insight. Participants often understood the significance of their experiences only after time had passed, as distance allowed events to be reinterpreted and woven into a coherent narrative, revealing meaning as something constructed after the fact rather than grasped in the moment.

Shifting Identity: Becoming Quieter, More Reflective

Living in Japan reshaped the participants’ sense of self, often in subtle ways.

One participant reflected on becoming more reserved:

“I became quieter. At first I thought this isn’t me, but eventually you adapt.” (P1)

Another participant described becoming more patient:

“As a teacher, I became more patient and open-minded.” (P6)

Rather than erasing Filipino identity, the experience deepened it.

“Living in Japan made me value my Filipino identity even more.” (P3)

Identity transformation was experienced as integration rather than loss, as new roles, perspectives, and ways of being were folded into the existing sense of self. Rather than replacing or erasing prior identities, change involved a process of layering and reconciliation, allowing participants to recognize continuity alongside growth and experience transformation as an expansion of who they were.

No Regret, Only Integration

When asked what they would change, most participants answered nothing. Despite these challenges, participants framed their experiences as necessary and formative.

One participant stated:

“Everything that I had to go through were necessary experiences.” (P5)

Another shared:

“I do not regret the challenges. They helped me grow as a teacher and as a person.” (P6)

Even unmet expectations were positively reinterpreted:

“If I knew everything before, maybe I wouldn’t grow as much.” (P3)

JET was ultimately understood as a meaningful passage rather than a mistake, reframed over time as a formative transition within participants’ life trajectories. Even when marked by difficulty or ambivalence, the experience came to be seen as purposeful, contributing to personal and professional development and situating JET as a necessary crossing rather than a misstep in the career path.

IV. DISCUSSION

This study aimed to understand the lived experiences of Filipino Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) in Japan under the JET Programme. Rather than evaluating effectiveness or satisfaction, the discussion interprets how participants live through teaching, migration, cultural difference, and meaning-making over time. Three overarching interpretive threads

emerged across all six participants: adjustment as embodied experience, decision-making as morally situated, and meaning as something that unfolds retrospectively rather than immediately.

Living and Working as Embodied Adjustment

The findings show that living and working in Japan is experienced as a single embodied process of adjustment. The early months were marked by anxiety, vigilance, and heightened self-awareness, reflecting phenomenological ideas of lived bodies and space in unfamiliar environments (Jose & Cabunilas, 2025). Language posed a major challenge; limited fluency temporarily suspended participants’ sense of competence and authority, reducing even experienced teachers to beginners, socially, professionally, and linguistically (Aswe et al., 2023). Teaching was paradoxical: while responsible for leading classes, participants’ “assistant” roles limited their autonomy, generating anxiety about usefulness and professional worth (Nall & Hiratsuka, 2023). Fulfillment arose relationally rather than from control over the patient. Affirmation from students and Japanese teachers, such as “your lesson was fun,” provided grounding and emotional significance (Arrogante & Gaza, 2025). Community support from fellow ALTs, Filipino networks, and religious groups transformed Japan into a temporarily inhabitable space. Although episodic, such support was deeply meaningful. Overall, being a Filipino ALT centers less on pedagogy or cultural exchange and more on learning to endure, stay, and inhabit a foreign world, reflecting broader migrant experiences of navigating language, identity, and belonging (Lleses, 2024).

Entering JET as a Morally Situated Decision

Participants did not see joining the JET Programme as strictly rational or based solely on career considerations. Instead, many of their decisions are influenced by their personal backgrounds, family responsibilities, and emotional preparedness (Chan et al., 2024). A significant number found that teaching had been an interrupted vocation resulting from the need to work for a living. Some teachers who had left teaching due to needing more money found the opportunity to combine their passion and practicalities in returning to a field of their studious pursuits and being able to financially support their families through the JET Programme (Nasir, 2025). This also complicates the dominant narratives of being a migrant to work outside one’s home country based on the economic model of migration or seeking personal fulfillment in work. Rather, migration is considered a moral negotiation between one’s obligations to the individual and those obligations made to the community (Oegalska-ukasik, 2025).

Many individuals entered JET as a result of having experienced burnout, dissatisfaction, disagreement, or conflict within their workplaces rather than making a choice to join JET long-term; this reflects how participants experience “lived time” as providing the opportunity to envision the future as an escape from a negative present (Oliveros et al., 2026). Experiencing heavy workloads, inadequate support, and lack of emotional support contributed to their reconsideration of their careers and choice to migrate to reclaim their sense of agency (Kerr et al., 2025; Quiroga, 2025). Family obligations

and personal desires converged to drive the decision-making process for the participants. While obtaining monetary support for the family was extremely important, it could not be separated from emotional readiness or personal dreams; the combination of these three things illustrates the moral aspect of the migration experience and how it cannot be solely looked at through an economic lens (Camacho et al., 2017; Camacho et al., 2024).

Meaning-Making Over Time: From Endurance to Integration

The finding show that living and working in Japan was a process of adjustment, with early months marked by anxiety, vigilance, and heightened self-awareness (Jose & Cabunilas, 2025). Language barriers challenged competence and authority, reducing even experienced teachers to beginners socially and professionally (Aswe et al., 2023). Teaching was paradoxical: participants led classes yet had limited autonomy, causing anxiety about usefulness and professional worth (Nall & Hiratsuka, 2023). Fulfillment came relationally rather than from control. Affirmation from students and teachers provided grounding, while episodic support from fellow ALTs, Filipino networks, and religious groups made Japan temporarily inhabitable (Arrogante & Gaza, 2025). Overall, being a Filipino ALT was less about pedagogy or cultural exchange and more about enduring, adapting, and inhabiting a foreign world, reflecting broader migrant experiences of language, identity, and belonging (Lleses, 2024).

Being an ALT in the Philippines requires constant adjustment to teaching, living, and belonging as interconnected experiences. Participants face a combination of linguistic vulnerability, cultural reservation, and ambiguity in their roles; therefore, the process of becoming a member of the JET Programme is best described by moral and emotional motives (i.e., personal dissatisfaction, professional goals, family obligations) rather than simply for strategic career purposes. The reasons behind this are complex because meaning will emerge over time through reflecting and enduring. Participants also learn to view their individual experiences not as separate instances of success or failure, but rather as interconnected stages of development in regards to both their personal and career growth. The JET Programme can also be experienced as a transformative process, as opposed to an idealized cultural exchange; as such it is an evolving process involving adversity, growth, and discreet acts of determination to succeed.

The research findings indicate that ALT well-being and retention may be increased by consistent mentorship and culturally sensitive help. Helping teachers to prepare for the emotional aspects of teaching abroad rather than just the practical aspects may also assist with the "expectations gap." The study had only six participants, limiting its generalizability; however, phenomenological research is focused more on depth than breadth. Additionally, participants' experiences will differ based on geographic region, level of school, and length of these contracts. This study supports the idea that teaching abroad is much more than a professional assignment; it truly is a human experience for Filipino ALTs. The JET Program also serves as a place for

ALTs to turn endurance into growth, difference into understanding, and uncertainty into meaning.

Future studies may build on these findings by examining the longitudinal experiences of ALTs across multiple contract renewals, comparing the experiences of Filipino ALTs with those from other cultural backgrounds, and exploring reintegration after returning to the Philippines. Further research could also investigate how language acquisition over time reshapes professional identity and sense of competence.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Arrogante, R., & Gaza, J. S. B. (2025). The lived experiences of successful Filipino assistant language teachers in Japan. *Dibon Journal of Languages*, 1(3), 231–252. <https://doi.org/10.64169/djl.130>
- [2]. Aswe, I., Smith, J., Tanaka, Y., & Lee, A. (2023). *The language barrier: Exploring the lived experiences of assistant language teachers in Japan: A hermeneutic phenomenological study. International Journal of Language and Literary Studies*, 5(3), 92–99. <https://doi.org/10.36892/ijlls.v5i3.1339>
- [3]. Balana, S. M. B., & Paglinawan, J. L. P. J. L. (2025). Across Borders: Opportunities and Challenges of Filipino College Graduates in Foreign Workplaces. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Cultural Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.54536/ijsscs.v1i1.4961>
- [4]. Bantugan, B. (2025). Qualitative Mindset behind Phenomenology: Implications to Qualitative Research Training. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. <https://doi.org/10.47772/ijriss.2025.90400331>
- [5]. Binns, A. (2022). Impact of Assistant Language Teachers on English Education in Shizuoka. *JALT Postconference Publication - Issue 2021.1; August 2022*. <https://doi.org/10.37546/jaltpcp2021-11>
- [6]. Bisenio, J. (2024). Filipino English teachers in Japan: Exploring subject positioning in teaching experiences. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*. <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2024.22.3.1907>
- [7]. Camacho, R., dela Cruz, M., Santos, J., & Reyes, L. (2024). *Singly keeping up: Common implications of inflation to overseas Filipino workers (OFW) single mothers. International Research and Innovation Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.62293/IRIJ-382sb>
- [8]. Casingal, C. P., & Caerlang, L. R. (2025). *Transforming English language education: The role of Filipino assistant language teachers in Japan's internationalization efforts. MSI Journal of Arts, Law and Justice*, 2(7), 1–35. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15834236>
- [9]. Chan, R. K., Chun, D. W., Leung, K. Y., & Chu, K. L. (2024). Individual Concerns and Family Decisions: Examining Migration Decision-Making in the Latest Hong Kong Migration Wave. *International Journal of Religion*. <https://doi.org/10.61707/yexnhn84>
- [10]. Chen, G. K.-W., Tansley, C., & Chou, R. C.-C. (2021). Towards liminality competence: a migrant's talent identity narratives for re-imagining global talent management. Emerald Publishing Limited. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1108/joep-02-2021-0037>
- [12]. Council of Local Authorities for the International Relations (2025), "JET Programme Participant Numbers." *The Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme*. <https://jetprogramme.org/en/history/> (Accessed 2 September 2025).
- [13]. Deshmukh, A., & Sharma, N. (2025). Career Transitions in Midlife: Exploring Meaning-Making and Role Adjustment. *KMAN Counseling and Psychology Nexus*. <https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.ooc.psyxenus.3.6>
- [14]. Embassy of Japan in the Philippines. (2025). "Japan and Exchange Teaching (JET) Programme." *Embassy of Japan in the Philippine Website*. https://www.ph.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtp_en/index.html (Accessed 2 September 2025).
- [16]. Escarda, George. (2024) "Exploring the Experiences of Filipino Assistant Language Teachers working with Japanese Elementary School Teachers", Volume 13 Issue 1, January 2024, *International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)*, Pages: 858-864, <https://www.ijsr.net/getabstract.php?paperid=SR24110093813>,
- [17]. Fang, C., & Saraob, G. (2026). Interaction Mechanism between Teachers Emotional Intelligence Experiences and Conflict Management Styles from the Perspective of Educational Phenomenology: An

- Empirical Qualitative Study. *Journal of Qualitative Research in Education*. <https://doi.org/10.54963/jqre.i45.2001>
- [18]. Fermin, Tricia S. (2020) "Profile and Motivations of Filipino ALTs in the JET Programme: An Exploratory Study." *The Bulletin of the Graduate School of Josai International University* Vol. 23, March 2020 313-328
- [19]. Garabiles, M. R., Ofreneo, M. A. P., & Hall, B. J. (2017). Towards a model of resilience for transnational families of Filipina domestic workers. *Public Library of Science*. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0183703>
- [20]. Hasegawa, H., & Sakamoto, N. (2023). *Narrative research on the internal cognition of Assistant Language Teachers at the preparation stage of the JET Programme*. *JAILA Journal*, 9, 32–43.
- [21]. Japan Association for Language Teaching. (2023). Supporting assistant language teachers in Japan: Challenges and best practices. *The Language Teacher*, 49(2), 15–22. <https://jalt-publications.org>
- [22]. Jose, D. & Cabunilas, D. (2025). Narrative Inquiry of a Filipino ALT (Assistant Language Teacher) in Japan. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation*. <https://doi.org/10.54660/ijmrge.2025.6.3.1249-1257>
- [23]. Jung, C., & Choe, H. (2024). *Professional identity of Filipino English teachers teaching international students in a Global City in the Philippines*. *English Teaching*, 79(2), 3–31. <https://doi.org/10.15858/engtea.79.2.202406.3>
- [25]. Kelly, M., & McLeod, E. (2025). Acknowledging existential moments and meaning-making in palliative care: A hermeneutic study of physicians experience. *Palliative & Supportive Care*. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1478951525100230>
- [26]. Kerr, S., Schmeichel, M., & Wurzburg, B. (2025). From Burnout to Breakout: The Social Media-Supported Exodus from Teaching. *Teachers College Record*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01614681251335088>
- [27]. Kosi, A. (2025). *Individual Factors in Acculturation: An Overview of Key Dimensions*. *Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute*. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3390/bs15060827>
- [28]. Lleses, C. (2024). Teacher emotions, identity, and speakerhood status in narratives of Filipino JET Assistant Language Teachers (ALT). *Diversitas Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.48017/dj.v9ispecial1.2829>
- [29]. Masa, S. R. L., & Estrellas, J. (2025). Lived Experience of Filipino Non-Education Graduates Teaching English Language in Southeast Asia. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Perspectives*. <https://doi.org/10.69569/jip.2025.128>
- [30]. Masten, A. S., Lucke, C. M., Nelson, K. M., & Stallworthy, I. (2021). Resilience in Development and Psychopathology: Multisystem Perspectives. *Annual Reviews*. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-clinpsy-081219-120307>
- [31]. MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology). (2023). *JET Programme recruitment guide and programme overview*. Tokyo: Government of Japan.
- [32]. Nall, M., & Hiratsuka, T. (2023). Indulge in a Little Chaos: Assistant Language Teachers
- [33]. Cognition and Pedagogical Knowledge Development Through the Lens of Complex Dynamic System Theory. *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language--TESL-EJ*. <https://doi.org/10.55593/ej.27106s3>
- [34]. Nasir, S. A. (2025). Human Capital Transformation In Global Migration: Insight From The Lived Experience Of Indonesian Workers In Taiwan. *Journal of Studies in Academic, Humanities, Research, and Innovation*. <https://doi.org/10.71305/sahri.v2i2.922>
- [35]. Oliveros, C. J., Cordero, J., Veloso, K., & Sareogon, C. M. (2026). Why Teachers Leave: A Phenomenological Inquiry into School Climate and Educator Attrition in Misamis Occidental. *Journal of Education and Learning Reviews*. <https://doi.org/10.60027/jelr.2026.e2561>
- [36]. Oegalska-ukasik, N. (2025). Filial Piety Across Borders: Decision-Making and Migration Experiences of Young Chinese in Poland. *Przegląd Polonijny*. <https://doi.org/10.4467/25444972smpp.25.005.21388>
- [37]. Quiroga, R. (2025). Separation anxiety, adjustment and loss experiences among Overseas Filipino Workers. *International Review of Social Sciences Research*. <https://doi.org/10.53378/irssr.353149>
- [38]. Stewart, A. *Language Teacher Recognition: Narratives of Filipino English Teachers in Japan*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2020. <https://research.ebsco.com/linkprocessor/plink?id=e07a3ccd-de43-3ccc-81f0-5fc2c6fe92f5>. Ac.
- [39]. Timon, S. M. S., & Libago, M. A. R. (2026). Navigating New Territories: A Multiple Case Study on Non- English Teachers turned to Foreign English Teachers. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research and Innovation*. <https://doi.org/10.64637/661058>