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Research Article

Attitudes Towards Philippine English: The Case of ESL Teachers in Selected Provinces in Central Luzon, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

Language attitudes refer to individuals' views, judgments, and emotions regarding a language or linguistic variety. These attitudes are shaped by various factors such as cultural, social, historical, and political contexts. In the case of Philippine English, attitudes regarding this linguistic variant have shifted, reflecting evolving views and ideals within Philippine culture. Thus, the study aimed to provide insights into the social, cultural, and linguistic factors that shape attitudes towards Philippine English and contribute to a better understanding of language attitudes in multilingual societies. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed in the study, specifically the concurrent triangulation or convergent parallel design. The researchers used convenience sampling to identify 40 ESL teachers in selected provinces in Central Luzon, Philippines. The research instrument that the proponents utilized for this study is the survey questionnaire, and the data were analyzed through descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. Based on the quantitative findings, the data revealed

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that most ESL teachers strongly agree with the acceptance and utility of Philippine English in ESL instruction. Furthermore, the qualitative data presented that Philippine English promotes cultural understanding, student engagement, language empowerment, and a sense of belonging. It also enhances language skills, promotes cultural relevance and understanding, boosts communication and confidence, facilitates real-life application, and contributes to the professional growth of teachers. Finally, incorporating Philippine English in ESL instruction contributes to a more inclusive, engaging, and effective language learning experience for students. The researchers recommended offering professional development opportunities for ESL teachers, addressing the concerns of teachers who express disagreement and doubt regarding the utility of Philippine English, supporting teachers in adapting their teaching methods to effectively incorporate Philippine English, and encouraging ongoing professional growth and development among teachers in the field of Philippine English for ESL education.

Keywords: *English as a second language, ESL instruction, ESL teachers, Language attitudes, Language education, Philippine English, Region 3-Philippines*

Introduction

Every nation in the world is shaped by linguistic identities ranging from using the language for communicative purposes to using the language for the standard educational framework. Arguments on what language should be internationalized as a standard has sparked many nations to convene and tackle specific factors that can generate plausible answers. It is without doubt that the era of colonization and diaspora brought about changes in linguistic identities among alienated countries in the continents of Asia, Africa, and Europe. For centuries, the archived histories documenting diverse norms, traditions, beliefs, practices, and languages became the "palimpsest" of today's exploratory understanding of diachrony. For example, in the case of South Africa, which houses known tribes that speak Somali, Swahili, Igbo, Oromo, and much more, English dominated its geography and influenced their society to undergo conversions of religions, boiling down to a common root – power. This has caused a shift of attitude amongst individuals on how language is viewed in local and global contexts.

Language attitudes refer to individuals' views, judgments, and emotions regarding a

specific language or linguistic variety. These attitudes are shaped by various factors such as cultural, social, historical, and political contexts. In the case of Philippine English, over time, attitudes regarding this linguistic variant have shifted, reflecting evolving views and ideals within Philippine culture. Since its introduction during the American colonial period in the early twentieth century, Philippine English, a distinct variation of English spoken in the Philippines, has seen significant advances and transformations. Initially, Philippine English was seen with ambivalence, if not disdain, as a symbol of American influence and colonial tyranny. However, attitudes about Philippine English have altered over time, and it is now accepted and recognized as a valid language variant in its own right. According to Maria Lourdes S. Bautista (2000 as cited in Dayon, 2018), Philippine English is something that follows the criteria of standard American English. Rather, the opposite is true. It is not English that was poorly taught and learned as a second language either because the distinguishing qualities it possesses are not errors that are made by speakers of English who have not mastered the American standard. It is more accurately described as a nativized variation of English that contains characteristics that distinguish it from

other standards. These characteristics are the result of the influence of the Filipinos' first language or mother tongue, their unique culture in which the language is embedded, and the restrictive grammar rules. Despite this notion, there are individuals who have negative attitudes or are ambivalent about this language variation. Gonzales and Cubillo (2020) mentioned that some Filipino professionals saw the usage of Philippine English as a lack of fluency in "standard" English or as a sign of lower education. These unfavorable sentiments stemmed from the assumption that adherence to "proper" English norms, commonly associated with British or American English, is required for social acceptance and credibility.

Umayam, Icamen, Merano, & Adnan (2022) conducted a study on the attitudes and perceptions of college students towards Philippine English. The participants were taking Bachelor of Arts in Filipinology and Bachelor of Arts in English Language Studies. The findings of the researchers indicate that the variation in the focus of language between those fields does not impact the general preference, attitude, or perception that the community of students has regarding their native language and the Philippine English. The concept of diversification is slightly being demolished as a result of the stigma associated with the continual usage of the English language. Furthermore, the utilization of Philippine English demonstrates not only that this type of English may decolonize the impact of the colonizers but also that it can polish and grow the native language. In an earlier endeavor, in a separate research conducted by Dimaculangan & Gustilo (2018), the proponents focused on the attitudes of Filipino English teachers toward 21st-century Philippine English Writing. Two-hundred English teachers from 15 public and private institutions from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao in the Philippines were shown a subsample of 99 lexical items taken from a newly developed 400,000-word corpus of early 21st-century Philippine English written texts. The corpus was composed of written texts in Philippine English that were authored in English. The acceptability test demonstrated that respondents have an unfavorable opinion of the Philippine English vocabulary. Only five of the 99 lexical elements

that underwent the acceptability test were deemed appropriate for formal writing, and only two of the items were deemed appropriate for informal writing. Only 33 of the lexical components were approved for use in casual oral situations, while none of the others were even considered acceptable for use in formal oral contexts. Twenty were deemed inappropriate for inclusion in the Philippine English vocabulary for use in any of the four categories that were presented. The findings revealed that a lot of ESL teachers in the Philippines are still unaware or are not yet embracing the Philippine English variety and the concept of World Englishes, which may have influenced their negative attitude and indifference towards the sociolinguistic reality of Philippine English.

Understanding these views is critical for encouraging linguistic inclusion and a balanced awareness of Philippine English as a vibrant and substantial language diversity in the Philippines. Thus, the researchers delved into the attitudes towards Philippine English among ESL teachers in selected provinces in Central Luzon by analyzing their perceptions, beliefs, and preferences towards the language variety. The study aimed to provide insights into the social, cultural, and linguistic factors that shape attitudes towards Philippine English and contribute to a better understanding of language attitudes in multilingual societies.

Objectives of the Study

Throughout the conduct of this research, the proponents sought answers which led to the attainment of the following objectives:

1. to identify and describe the attitudes of ESL teachers towards Philippine English in selected provinces in Central Luzon in terms of acceptance and utility; and
2. to explore and understand the ESL teachers' personal insights in accepting and utilizing Philippine English in social interactions and classroom teaching.

Methods

Research Design

Both quantitative and qualitative methods were employed in the study since a research question is not always answered using the

qualitative and quantitative approaches themselves. Mixed methods aim to present a new approach in which a researcher expects to utilize the advantages of both methodologies (Almeida, 2018). Expanding and strengthening a study's results and thus adding to the body of published literature is the overall objective of mixed methods research, combining qualitative and quantitative research. (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017). When examining complex research problems, mixed methods could offer pragmatic advantages. Data from qualitative methods can provide an in-depth understanding of survey responses, while data from statistical analysis can provide a comprehensive review of response patterns (McCusker & Gunaydin, 2014).

The researchers specifically used the concurrent triangulation or convergent parallel design, a one-phase model that involves the use of equal-weighted quantitative and qualitative methods at the same time (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2006). The design fits the paper's objectives because the researchers intend to merge, integrate, and corroborate the two data types to end up with well-grounded and justifiable conclusions about the attitudes of ESL teachers toward Philippine English.

Population and Sample of the Study

The researchers made use of convenience sampling to select respondents. This method is appropriate for researchers with time restrictions and minimal resources as the samples would usually consist of willing individuals whom the researchers may contact immediately; the researchers used this strategy to find potential participants who fulfilled practical requirements such as geographical proximity, accessibility, availability, and interest to volunteer (Dörnyei, 2007, as cited by Etikan et al., 2015). The participants were 40 English as a second language teachers from secondary and tertiary schools located throughout the selected provinces in Central Luzon, Philippines, all of whom are contactable by the researchers.

Research Instrumentation

The research instrument that the proponents utilized for this study is the survey questionnaire. Questionnaires are considered the

primary way to collect quantitative data in a standardized format to maintain consistency and coherency for data analysis (Roopa & Rani, 2012). For qualitative data, questionnaires acknowledge anonymity and freedom to elaborate or limit participants' answers which allow participants to consider and evaluate their answers since they will not be able to change their responses after submission (Hanna & Gough, 2019).

The questionnaire used in this paper started with the survey's introduction, which presented general information about the study, such as the title, proponents, objectives, and target population. The introduction also acted as informed consent for the participants as it mentioned that the confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents are kept. Next, it is then divided into two (2) sections: Section 1 and Section 2. Section 1 inquired about the respondents' attitudes towards Philippine English through Likert-scale items. The scale had 1 as its lowest (Strongly Disagree) and 4 as its highest (Strongly Agree). The items were then categorized into two (2): ten (10) questions about the acceptance and (10) questions about the utility of Philippine English in daily communication and ESL teaching. Section 2 asked the respondents for their personal insights on accepting and utilizing Philippine English in social interactions and classroom teaching through open-ended questions. The Likert-scale items and three (3) open-ended questions were tailored by the researchers and validated by three experts in the field of language education to gather responses that fit the study's objectives.

Data Gathering Procedure

In gathering the data, the researchers sent a letter of permission to conduct research to the school division superintendents, principals and heads of different secondary and tertiary schools in selected provinces in Central Luzon, Philippines. Afterward, the respondents were given informed consent to participate in the research study. Each respondent was provided with a well-structured, well-instructed, and validated set of questions. The questionnaires were distributed through Google Forms. The researchers then collected the answers and

checked if all the items were answered religiously for the conduct of the study.

Statistical Treatment and Qualitative Data Analysis

The questions from Section 1 that collected quantitative data were based on the four-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Descriptive statistics, specifically means and standard deviations of the overall summation of values assigned to each question (1 for strongly disagree and 4 for strongly agree), was used to analyze quantitative data for the paper. The means of the ratings were categorized using the following ranges: 3.50 – 4.00 for Strongly Agree, 2.50 – 3.49 for Agree, 1.50 – 2.49 Disagree, and 0 – 1.49 for Strongly Disagree.

On the other hand, the researchers used thematic analysis (TA) to examine the open-ended questions from the questionnaire’s Sec-

tion 2. This method of qualitative analysis differs not only in terms of theoretical adaptability and practical applicability but also in research objectives, sample size and composition, data-gathering methods, and concept-making procedures (Clarke & Braun, 2017). According to Terry et al. (2017), there are six stages in the thematic analysis of qualitative data: data familiarization, code formation, theme construction, examination of probable themes, the definition of identified themes, and report creation.

Results and Discussion

Part I. Acceptance Towards Philippine English

It consists of two (2) tables that present the attitudes of ESL teachers toward Philippine English in selected provinces of Central Luzon. Table 1 shows the overall attitudes of ESL teachers toward Philippine English.

Table 1. Attitudes of ESL Teachers Towards Philippine English

Attitudes	Mean	Level of Acceptance
1. I believe that Philippine English is a legitimate and valid form of English, supported by empirical evidence.	3.77	Strongly Agree
2. I accept and acknowledge the use of Philippine English in ESL classrooms.	3.75	Strongly Agree
3. I am open to exploring and incorporating local cultural elements associated with Philippine English in my lessons.	3.88	Strongly Agree
4. I recognize empirical research which shows that embracing Philippine English benefits ESL learners in Central Luzon.	3.80	Strongly Agree
5. I encourage my students to use Philippine English expressions in appropriate contexts.	3.70	Strongly Agree
6. I am uncomfortable with individual variations in pronunciation and vocabulary influenced by Philippine English.	2.50	Agree
7. I do not appreciate the cultural richness that Philippine English brings to ESL instruction.	1.63	Disagree
8. I do not believe in empirical findings that show incorporating Philippine English into ESL lessons enhances students' language skills and cultural understanding.	1.60	Disagree
9. I do not support research and further development in the field of Philippine English for ESL education.	1.48	Strongly Disagree
10. I do not actively seek opportunities to learn more about teaching Philippine English in Central Luzon.	1.55	Disagree
Overall Attitude	2.77	Agree

Table 1 presents the attitudes of ESL teachers towards Philippine English, with responses

measured on a Likert scale. The mean scores indicate the level of acceptance for each attitude. The data reveals a generally positive attitude

towards Philippine English among ESL teachers. Most teachers strongly agree that Philippine English is a legitimate and valid form of English, supported by empirical evidence, and they accept and acknowledge its use in ESL classrooms. They are open to incorporating local cultural elements associated with Philippine English in their lessons, recognizing the benefits it brings to ESL learners in Central Luzon. However, there is a slightly lower level of agreement when it comes to individual variations in pronunciation and vocabulary influ-

enced by Philippine English. Additionally, a minority of teachers disagree with the cultural richness that Philippine English brings and the empirical findings supporting its incorporation in ESL lessons. Furthermore, a small number of teachers express strong disagreement with supporting research and further development in the field of Philippine English for ESL education. Overall, the teachers' attitude towards Philippine English can be characterized as agreeable, with room for improvement in certain areas.

Table 2. Utility of ESL Teachers Towards Philippine English

Utility	Mean	Level of Acceptance
1. I recognize empirical research that demonstrates the utility of Philippine English in ESL instruction in enhancing students' language proficiency and cultural understanding.	3.77	Strongly Agree
2. I believe in empirical data that indicates incorporating Philippine English in ESL instruction helps learners to communicate effectively within their local communities.	3.83	Strongly Agree
3. I believe that teaching Philippine English enhances students' ability to understand and appreciate the cultural context of Central Luzon.	3.93	Strongly Agree
4. I actively integrate Philippine English expressions in ESL lessons to increase student engagement and motivation.	3.68	Strongly Agree
5. I believe that utilizing Philippine English reflects the linguistic reality and diversity of Central Luzon.	3.83	Strongly Agree
6. I do not value the utility of Philippine English in ESL instruction, as it does not provide the practical language skills necessary for everyday communication in Central Luzon.	1.70	Agree
7. I do not believe that incorporating Philippine English in ESL instruction facilitates a better understanding of local customs and traditions.	1.50	Disagree
8. I do not believe in empirical studies that show that incorporating Philippine English in ESL lessons helps learners navigate real-life situations more effectively in Central Luzon, even when based on empirical studies.	1.50	Disagree
9. I am not open to adapting my teaching methods to incorporate the utility of Philippine English in social interactions and everyday communication.	1.53	Disagree
10. I do not believe that teaching Philippine English is a practical and relevant approach in ESL classrooms, even when backed by empirical evidence.	1.45	Strongly Disagree
Overall Utility	2.67	Agree

Table 2 presents the utility of ESL teachers towards Philippine English, with mean scores

indicating the level of acceptance for each utility. The data highlights a generally positive attitude towards the utility of Philippine English

among ESL teachers. The majority strongly agree that incorporating Philippine English in ESL instruction enhances students' language proficiency and cultural understanding, as supported by empirical research. They also believe that teaching Philippine English helps learners effectively communicate within their local communities and understand the cultural context of Central Luzon. These teachers actively integrate Philippine English expressions in ESL lessons to increase student engagement and motivation, recognizing its reflection of linguistic reality and diversity in the region. However, a minority expresses disagreement with the utility of Philippine English, stating that it does not provide practical language skills for everyday communication or facilitate a better understanding of local customs and traditions. Some also doubt the empirical studies supporting its incorporation in ESL lessons and are less open to adapting their teaching methods accordingly. Overall, the teacher's attitude towards the utility of Philippine English can be described as agreeable, with some areas of disagreement that warrant further exploration and discussion.

Part II. Personal Insights on Accepting and Utilizing Philippine English in Social Interactions and Classroom Teaching

Language instruction and teaching methodologies are constantly evolving to meet the needs of diverse learners in a globalized world. In the field of English as a Second Language (ESL) education, the incorporation of local varieties of English has garnered significant attention. One such variety is Philippine English, which has been recognized for its positive impact on language skills, relationships, and overall teaching practices. This research aims to explore the themes that emerge from the positive impact of Philippine English in ESL instruction. These themes include the enhancement of language skills and relationships, catering to diverse learners, cultural relevance and understanding, language empowerment and motivation, authenticity and relatability, enriched teaching practices, strong connections, enhanced language skills, impactful teaching approaches, enhanced proficiency, cultural ap-

preciation, and the role of the teacher in professional growth. By examining these themes, this research aims to shed light on the significance of incorporating Philippine English in ESL instruction and its implications for language proficiency, cultural appreciation, and effective teaching practices.

On the Positive Impacts and Contributions of Philippine English to a More Inclusive and Engaging Learning Environment

After analyzing the 40 responses sharing specific instances where incorporating Philippine English vocabulary and expressions, recognizing diverse pronunciation patterns, and incorporating cultural context and examples in social interactions and classroom teaching had a positive impact and explaining how did this experience contribute to a more inclusive and engaging learning environment the following themes were derived:

1. Incorporating Philippine English enhances language skills and relationships
2. Catering to diverse learners
3. Cultural relevance and understanding
4. Language empowerment and motivation
5. Authenticity and relatability

Overall, the thematic analysis showcases the benefits of incorporating Philippine English in ESL instruction. It promotes cultural understanding, student engagement, language empowerment, and a sense of belonging. By recognizing and valuing students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds, educators create a more inclusive and effective learning environment.

On the Incorporation of Philippine English Vocabulary, Expressions, and Pronunciation

After analyzing the 40 responses sharing incorporating Philippine English vocabulary, expressions, and pronunciation enriched teaching practices and fostered stronger connections with ESL learners and providing an example of how these language elements have enhanced students' language skills and their ability to handle real-life situations the following themes were derived:

1. Enhancing language skills
2. Cultural relevance and connection
3. Communication and confidence

4. Real-life application
5. Teacher's professional growth

Overall, the thematic analysis highlights the benefits of incorporating Philippine English in language instruction. It enhances language skills, promotes cultural relevance and understanding, boosts communication and confidence, facilitates real-life application, and contributes to the professional growth of teachers. By recognizing and incorporating students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds, educators create a more engaging, inclusive, and effective learning environment.

On the Reflection of Experiences with Utilizing Philippine English in ESL Instruction

After analyzing the 40 responses sharing reflections on their experience of utilizing Philippine English in ESL instruction, specifically their personal insights or lessons have influenced their teaching approach and that positively impacted students' language proficiency

and cultural appreciation, the following themes were derived:

1. Enhancing language proficiency
2. Cultural appreciation and connection
3. Language variations and global acceptance
4. Student-centered learning and emotional support
5. Practical communication skills
6. Teacher's role and professional growth

Overall, the thematic analysis highlights the importance of enhancing language proficiency, fostering cultural appreciation and connection, recognizing language variations, creating student-centered and emotionally supportive learning environments, developing practical communication skills, and promoting teachers' professional growth. Incorporating Philippine English in ESL instruction contributes to a more inclusive, engaging, and effective language learning experience for students.

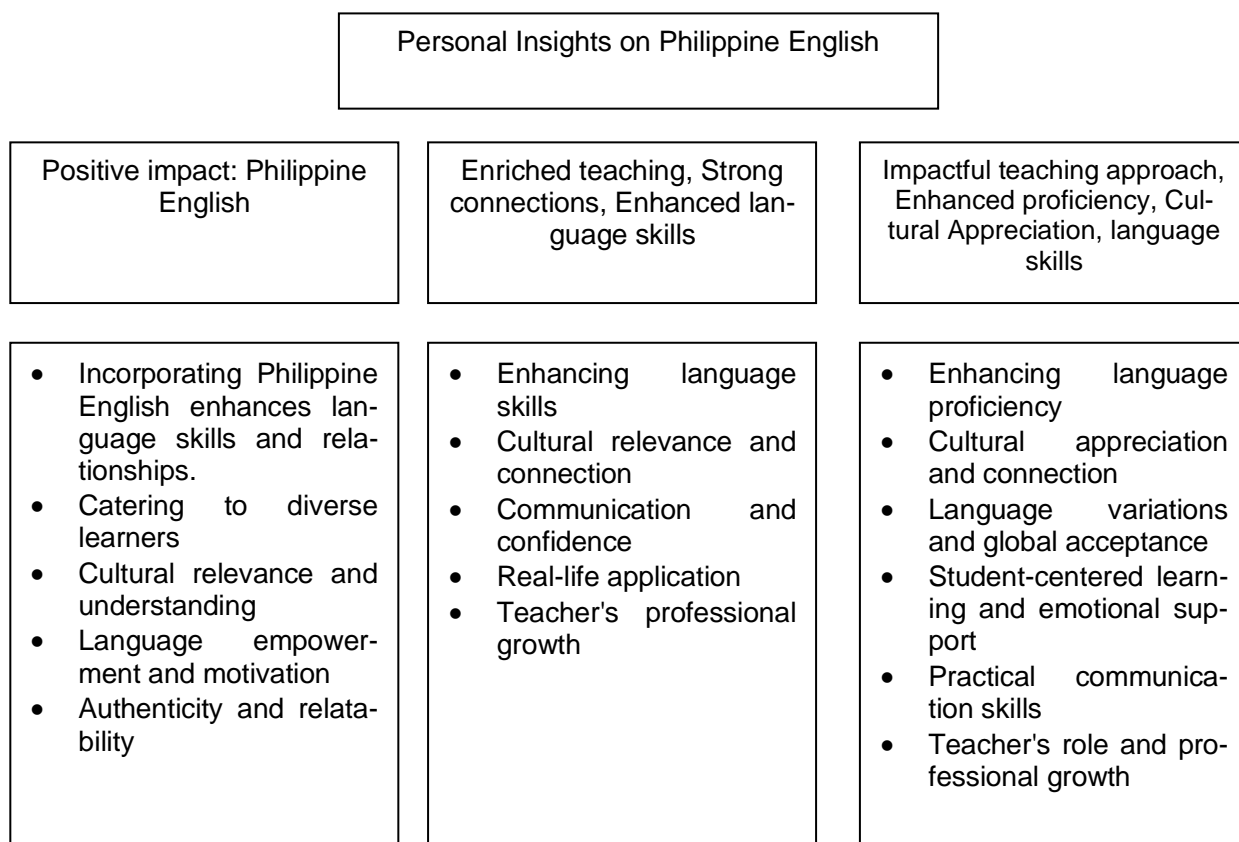


Figure 1. Personal Insights on Philippine English

Conclusion

Based on the data gathered, presented, and interpreted, the following conclusions were drawn.

1. The attitude of ESL teachers towards Philippine English is generally positive, with most teachers strongly agreeing that it is a legitimate and valid form of English supported by empirical evidence.
2. Similarly, ESL teachers show a positive attitude towards the utility of Philippine English among ESL teachers with some areas of disagreement that warrant further exploration and discussion.
3. The use of Philippine English in ESL instruction provides an effective and meaningful pathway to language learning and cultural understanding. It equips students with the necessary skills to communicate effectively while also fostering a sense of appreciation for their own culture and the cultures of others.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are presented:

1. Offer professional development opportunities for ESL teachers to further enhance their understanding and knowledge of Philippine English. This can include workshops, seminars, and training sessions that provide teachers with research-based evidence, resources, and strategies to effectively incorporate Philippine English in their instruction.
2. Address the concerns of teachers who express disagreement and doubt regarding the utility of Philippine English as well as the empirical studies supporting its incorporation in ESL lessons. Additional research and evidence to showcase the value and impact of incorporating Philippine English in ESL lessons should be provided.
3. Support teachers in adapting their teaching methods to effectively incorporate Philippine English expressions and reflect the linguistic reality and diversity of the region. Provide training and resources that help teachers integrate these elements to

increase student engagement and motivation.

4. Encourage ongoing professional growth and development among teachers in the field of Philippine English for ESL education. Support research initiatives and collaboration to further explore and expand knowledge in this area.

The incorporation of Philippine English in ESL instruction has demonstrated a positive impact on language skills and relationships, catering to diverse learners with cultural relevance and understanding. It empowers students, fostering motivation and authenticity while enhancing their proficiency in real-life communication. This enriches the teaching approach, strengthening connections between teachers and students and promoting the teachers' professional growth. It not only enhances language skills but also cultivates cultural appreciation, enabling students to navigate language variations and develop practical communication skills. Through student-centered learning and emotional support, this approach facilitates an impactful teaching environment that nurtures enhanced proficiency and cultural appreciation. Overall, the use of Philippine English in ESL instruction provides an effective and meaningful pathway to language learning and cultural understanding.

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