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UNLOCKING THE SOCIALIZATION STRATEGIES OF ELEMENTARY TEACHERS IN IMPROVING LANGUAGE SKILLS OF LEARNERS: A PHENOMENOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of elementary teachers including how they cope with the challenges and insights they can share about the use of socialization strategies in improving language skills of learners. This study employed a qualitative research design using phenomenological approach. To verify the validity and reliability of the acquired data, this study featured fourteen (14) participants, seven (7) for the in-depth interview and seven (7) for focus group discussion. The data gathered during the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion was organized, transcribed, translated, and analyzed. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. The results revealed elementary teachers' perspectives on using socialization strategies to enhance learners' language skills. The following themes emerged in the study on the experiences of elementary teachers: using group-based activities for language development; employing needs- based and differentiated groupings; building confidence and reducing communication barriers; and dealing with introversion and low literacy levels. Moreover, their coping mechanisms include six (6) major themes: encouraging participation and fostering safe learning space; employing differentiated activities and targeted groupings; utilizing technology and peer collaboration; promoting engagement, inclusivity, and interpersonal skills; seeking support from colleagues, parents and stakeholders; and collaborative learning and professional development. Lastly, insights of the participants were: socialization is fundamental to language learning; effective teaching requires understanding of individual background; collaborative support and professional development are key to empower educators; an inclusive and engaging learning fosters language and social skills; nurturing growth through empathy and emotional connections. The findings of the study indicate a need for professional development to better support teachers in using these methods, along with family involvement to reinforce language skills at home. Despite challenges like limited resources, socialization-based language learning proves beneficial, promoting not only linguistic growth but also learners' social and emotional development, building their confidence as communicators.

KEYWORDS: *Education, Socialization, Language Skills, Elementary Teachers, Davao Del Norte*

INTRODUCTION

Language skills involve an individual's effective use of a language for communication, expression, and comprehension. This involves listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Successful language skills include understanding information, clear expression of thoughts, and engaging in effective communication. The development of language skills relies significantly on socialization strategies, given that they offer learners a hands-on, interactive, and joyful experience. However, teachers may find it challenging to devise socialization activities that suit the diverse language skills of their learners. The time limitations within the curriculum add another layer of complexity, making it difficult to seamlessly include extended socialization activities.

In Malaysia, according to the study of Nijat et al. (2019), which involved 60 primary school pupils, teachers observed a significant lack of confidence among their learners when it came to speaking English. This hesitancy appeared to be rooted in feelings of fear, with some learners also struggling with shyness and anxiety during classroom discussions.

Meanwhile, In the Irbid Governorate of Jordan, as highlighted in Khasawneh's (2021) study, teachers have observed that fourth and fifth-grade elementary students are struggling to meet the expected educational standards in language skills. This observation aligns with reports from the Second Directorate of Education, indicating a gap in achievement. This shortfall is directly linked to teachers' limited focus on nurturing reading and writing competencies during their instructional sessions.

Moreover, in Bhutan, where English has served as the primary medium of instruction for more than five decades, teachers have observed a concerning trend among their students. A significant portion of Bhutanese students display markedly low English Communicative Abilities (ECA) particularly in listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills (Dendup & Onthanee, 2020).

In the meantime, in the Philippines, based on the study conducted by Saavedra (2020), sixth-grade elementary pupils within a division in the Zamboanga Peninsula exhibit poor writing skills in both English and Filipino. The information points out five reasons why students struggle with writing.

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These include not knowing enough words, finding it hard to put their thoughts in order, feeling like writing is tough, not being very interested or motivated, and having trouble with spelling, grammar, and making sentences.

Meanwhile, in New Corella District, Division of Davao del Norte, finds itself grappling with the enduring issue of reading difficulties. The outcome of the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) Pre- Test conducted to its elementary learners for the S.Y. 2023- 2024 has revealed the current state of difficulties faced by students. This could be a manifestation that learners have limited exposure to written texts, inadequate emphasis on reading activities and peer influence on reading habits.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this phenomenological inquiry was to explore and understand the socialization strategies of elementary teachers in improving language skills of learners in some schools of New Corella District, Division of Davao Del Norte. The research aimed to investigate how these strategies enhance the language skills of the learners.

At this stage in research, socialization strategies in language learning were defined as purposeful methods and activities designed to improve individual's language abilities through interaction and engagement with others. The study did not delve into the broader context of language in the region, including policies and resources beyond the specific socialization strategies of teachers.

Research Questions

1. What are the lived experiences of elementary school teachers in using socialization strategies to improve language skills of learners?
2. How did elementary school teachers cope with the challenges encounter in using socialization strategies to improve language skills of learners?
3. What are the insights drawn from the experiences of elementary school teachers in using socialization strategies for language skills that can be shared with others?

METHODS

This study utilized a qualitative research design employing a phenomenological approach. Qualitative research, as described by Bhandari (2020), involves collecting and analyzing non-numeric data such as text, video, or audio to comprehend ideas, thoughts, or experiences comprehensively. Furthermore, qualitative research enabled a deeper exploration of issues and the generation of new research concepts.

The study involved fourteen (14) participants who were public elementary school teachers, specifically teaching Grade 4 to Grade 6 in English or Filipino. These teachers were selected from designated schools within the New Corella District in the Division of Davao del Norte. Seven participants were selected for in-depth interviews (IDI), while the remaining seven participated in a focus group discussion (FGD). The study's participant count adhered to Creswell's (2014) recommendation for a phenomenological study, which suggests that there should be a minimum of five (5) to a maximum of twenty-five (25) participants.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Language Skills

Language skills are the tools we use to communicate ideas clearly and accurately. They encompass not only verbal expression but also active listening. In professional settings, concise writing is highly valued, while reading enables us to process large amounts of information. Developing these skills is essential for becoming a proficient communicator (Humes, 2021). For Filipino learners, developing communicative competence—encompassing grammar, context, social norms, and strategic communication—is key to improving language proficiency. This goes beyond simply knowing rules and vocabulary; practical application in real-life situations is crucial for effective communication and meaningful interactions (Bautista et al., 2023).

Additionally, communication skills are essential for learning, enabling learners to articulate their understanding and achieve strong learning outcomes (Supena et al., 2021). Furthermore, effective communication fosters positive relationships between learners and their peers and teachers, creating a comfortable and motivating learning environment (Alawamleh et al., 2022).

Socialization Strategies in Language Skills

A study of Balkaya (2023) found that implementing social strategies within foreign language classrooms significantly enhances learners' speaking skills by fostering a supportive environment that reduces anxiety and increases willingness to communicate. This was evidenced by improved speaking effort, active participation in group activities, and greater confidence in presentations, alongside a heightened awareness among students of the importance of foreign language education for cultural understanding and global opportunities.

Furthermore, collaborative learning environments offer significant benefits for learner development, impacting both academic and social-emotional growth. Providing learners with opportunities to engage and connect with peers contributes not only to their overall adjustment but also to the improvement of their language abilities (Genelza, 2022). This aligns with the findings of Frykedal and Chiriac (2018), who emphasize group work as a teaching method that fosters both learning and sociability, focusing on how learners engage and collaborate to achieve common goals.

Moreover, when learners learn together in groups, they share information, knowledge, and experiences, benefiting all involved, particularly those who are struggling (Ghavifekr, 2020). This collaborative exchange also improves communication skills, fosters creativity, and provides opportunities for sharing ideas. Group work further develops leadership and interaction skills, promotes cross-cultural understanding, and ultimately creates a more positive learning environment.

To further develop English learners' communication skills, strategies like modeling, repetition, and pair/group work are

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commonly employed. However, the effectiveness of these strategies can be limited if they are not implemented frequently enough to provide ample practice opportunities. Increased frequency, coupled with the introduction of new methods to boost learner participation in speaking activities, is crucial. Additionally, providing feedback to learners allows them to recognize their errors and learn through interaction with the teacher (Toro et al., 2019).

Finally, Tuovinen et al. (2020) found that social engagement, such as working well with others and helping peers, can boost self-esteem, particularly for introverted learners, and contribute to greater school involvement. This reinforces the importance of creating supportive, collaborative environments where all learners can thrive both socially and academically.

Challenges of Learners in Learning Language Skills

Learning to speak English fluently presents a formidable challenge for both teachers and learners, requiring mastery of numerous elements such as vocabulary, accurate pronunciation, grammatical understanding, and more. Learners must simultaneously consider and integrate these aspects into their speech during communication (Haryudin & Jamilah, 2018). Specifically, factors contributing to inadequate reading skills include a lack of phonemic awareness, incomplete alphabet knowledge, limited phonics understanding, weak word recognition and vocabulary, restricted fluency, and difficulties in text comprehension (Tomas et al., 2021).

Writing, another crucial language skill, is essential for effective communication and the expression of ideas and emotions. It serves as evidence of successful second language acquisition. However, learners often face obstacles in mastering English writing due to the influence of their primary languages (Saavedra, 2020). He suggests that the challenges learners face may indicate incomplete mastery of their secondary languages (English and Filipino), particularly when their primary languages are distinct, such as Chabacano, Bahasa Sug, and Cebuano.

Speaking proficiency is another area where learners frequently struggle. Leaño et al. (2019) found that indigenous learners often struggle with speaking English due to limited vocabulary development, hindering their ability to express ideas and interact effectively. Their lack of confidence often stems from limited exposure to English, particularly in oral activities, as it is often their third language. This limited engagement negatively impacts their comprehension, pronunciation, and overall communication skills.

To address the challenge of speaking proficiency, teachers must employ creative and effective solutions. Crisianita and Mandasari (2022) suggest that small group discussions can be a valuable tool. This approach allows for individual supervision within a group setting, enabling teachers to provide personalized feedback while maintaining learner engagement and preventing boredom. Small group discussions also encourage more conversation and constructive feedback among learners themselves, benefiting both teachers and learners in the development of speaking skills.

Anxiety in Learning the Language

A research conducted by Kabigting et al. (2020) revealed that Filipino ESL learners exhibited high levels of anxiety when it came to writing essays. The primary form of anxiety identified was cognitive, followed by somatic, and lastly, avoidance behavior. When considering cognitive and somatic types of L2 writing anxiety, males experienced higher levels than females. Despite this, both male and female learners were rated satisfactorily in terms of writing ability, with no significant differences between the genders. A negative low correlation was observed between writing anxiety and the writing ability scores of Filipino ESL learners. This indicates that higher levels of anxiety regarding writing correlated with lower scores on writing tasks. The writing anxieties encountered by Filipino ESL learners significantly affect their writing process, possibly leading to a fear of making errors and impeding the advancement of essay writing abilities in the language being learned.

In connection to this, Santos et al. (2022) propose a shift in emphasis towards enhancing grammar knowledge and accuracy. While considerable attention has been given to Filipinos' comprehension and speaking skills, there remains significant room for improvement in grammar, and addressing this aspect could contribute to reducing anxiety

Teaching Strategies in Language Development

English teaching aims to equip learners with practical communication skills, and diverse teaching strategies and speaking exercises are employed, their impact needs continuous evaluation (Genelza, 2021).

Differentiated instruction has emerged as a promising approach to address the diverse needs of learners. Talain and Mercado (2023) found that teachers recognize its effectiveness and are actively engaged in its implementation, aligning it with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. However, they also emphasized the need for strengthening teachers' knowledge and skills in this area through capacity enhancement programs.

Hatmanto and Rahmawati (2023) further highlighted the importance of personalized teaching methods, differentiation strategies, strong leadership, and aligned assessments in creating a dynamic learning environment. Celik (2019) emphasizes the importance of acknowledging learner diversity and adapting teaching to individual abilities and differences.

On the other hand, Zens (2021) found minimal impact of differentiated instruction on learner engagement and motivation, they did observe that learners in the differentiated group were more consistently motivated to complete their work. Potot et al. (2023) define differentiated instruction as a range of teaching methods that address diverse learning styles, interests, prior knowledge, social needs, and comfort levels.

Several studies have explored specific strategies for improving communication skills. Toro et al. (2019) found that while activities like dramatizations are employed in English classrooms, their infrequent use limits opportunities for oral

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interaction. They recommend increasing the frequency of these activities and introducing new strategies to foster communicative competence. Meena (2020) highlighted the positive influence of cooperative language learning activities, particularly when reinforced by attention to multiple intelligences, on learners' communication skills.

Balkaya (2023) suggests that basing topics on learners' interests and needs can reduce anxiety and improve speaking skills, while Suelto (2018) emphasizes the importance of encouraging English use at school and promoting self-study, practice, and interaction with native speakers.

Additionally, creating a supportive classroom environment is crucial. Stewart (2019) recommends minimizing distractions and allowing for independent work to cater to the needs of introverted learners. Other promising strategies include gamification (Fitria, 2022), the Buddy System (Taglucop, 2022), and peer feedback using Google Docs (Saglamel & Cetinkaya, 2022). These approaches offer diverse avenues for engagement and skill development.

Moreover, William et al. (2025) suggest that technology, especially when incorporating interactive features, can improve literacy skills by making learning more engaging and providing access to diverse resources.

Finally, Tseng and Gao (2021) emphasized the importance of recognizing individual differences in second language learning and adopting a multifaceted approach. Smale-Jacobse et al. (2019) and Griffiths and Soruc (2021) highlight the role of regular assessment and adaptation of teaching through differentiated instruction and assessment for learning, emphasizing the importance of understanding each learner's unique needs.

Motivation in Language Development

A study conducted by Pangket (2019) on "Oral English Proficiency: Factors Affecting the Learners' Development" highlights motivation as a primary determinant affecting the competence of Grade 5 students at Bontoc Central School. This research recognizes motivation, alongside vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar, as essential factors affecting the effectiveness of language learning. Factors such as lack of interest, deficient vocabulary skills, and inadequate training contribute to demotivating pupils in their English language learning journey.

Moreover, the main responsibility of a teacher is to provide sufficient support and motivation to their learners. Learning is not solely a cognitive process; various factors come into play. Motivational elements enhance a learner's openness to new information. Learners exhibit diverse learning styles, with some being auditory learners, others benefiting from writing, and yet others thriving through active verbal engagement. Employing the same teaching method for all students may hinder some from grasping the material. To sustain learners' interest in the learning process, it is essential for teachers to instill motivation in their students (Seven, 2020).

Insights of Teachers in Using Socialization Strategies to Improve Language Skills

Effective teaching relies heavily on well-trained and supported teachers. Teacher training and professional development, including seminars, are crucial for enhancing teacher effectiveness and boosting confidence (Darling-Hammond & Cook-Harvey, 2018; Ajani, 2019). Continuous learning and skill development are essential, even for qualified and licensed teachers, to ensure the best possible education (Khakimov, 2020).

Furthermore, Crispino and Moyani (2023) highlight the importance of tailoring professional development to the specific needs of teachers at different career stages. A collaborative effort from schools, administrators, and teachers is needed to provide resources, improve curriculum, and ensure access to professional growth opportunities.

In addition, research emphasizes the importance of a supportive classroom environment for learners' sense of belonging and engagement (Olivier et al., 2020). Effective learning is built on secure relationships and the integration of social, emotional, and academic skills (Darling Hammond, & Cook-Harvey, 2018).

Moreover, addressing learners' psychological needs is essential for increasing engagement (Martin & Bolliger, 2018). Teacher emotional support is a vital component of effective learning (Hernández-Sellés et al., 2019; Salo et al., 2022).

Beyond teacher development and classroom environment, support programs and initiatives are essential for both teachers and learners. The Philippines has programs focused on equitable and inclusive education (Llego, 2022). However, schools need more resources and better-trained teachers. For example, Sevillano (2024) describes Catch-Up Fridays as a structured opportunity for teachers to reinforce key concepts. Understanding teachers' experiences with such programs is crucial for assessing their effectiveness (Chi, 2024).

Similarly, mentoring and coaching programs have proven effective in promoting positive relationships and professional growth (Kutsyuruba & Godden, 2019; Ali et al., 2018). Schools play a crucial role in providing professional development (Nairz-Wirth & Feldmann, 2019).

Finally, parent involvement and teacher-parent collaboration are also crucial. The UK's Department for Education and Skills emphasizes the shared responsibility of parents and teachers (Cayak & Karsantik, 2020). Most parents recognize their role in supporting their children's reading development (Garcia & Ancheta, 2022). Teachers and parents should create special language programs, especially for indigenous learners (Leaño et al., 2019). Teachers also play a critical role in facilitating peer learning (Balasubramanian, 2023).

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Lived Experiences of Elementary Teachers in Using Socialization Strategies to Improve Language Skills of Learners

MAJOR THEMES	CORE IDEAS
Using Group-Based Activities for Language Development	• enhancing language skills through group discussions, role-playing and debates • fostering self-expression and socialization through interest-based group tasks • engaging learners through conversation practice and interactive activities • anchoring activities on real-life scenarios for cultural understanding and language fluency
Employing Needs-Based and Differentiated Groupings	• tailoring activities to align with learners' strengths and skills • identifying learning styles for tailored teaching • utilizing differentiated groupings to boost oral skills and build comfort in participation.
Building Confidence and Reducing Communication Barriers	• encouraging idea-sharing and mutual respect in- group work. • helping learners build confidence and reduce fear of judgment • facilitating faster learning through a supportive learning environment • appreciating learners in expressing themselves
Dealing with Introversion and Low Literacy Levels	• managing challenges related to shy, introverted learners • adapting socialization strategies to accommodate diverse dialects, attitudes, and literacy levels • overcoming reading and comprehension difficulties that hinder communication

Using Group-Based Activities for Language Development
We use group work and group activity. When we have differentiated activity per group, learners do enjoy especially if there are role playing. There are also times when we do oral recitations to help develop their oral and communication skills because that is where you can see which children really know how to express their ideas in Filipino. IDI-01

The most common strategy I use for socialization is group activities. They group themselves depending on their interests, and sometimes based on their abilities. It varies depending on the lesson. There is think-pair-share, sometimes games, role-play, and storytelling. Those are the most common ones I use. IDI-05

By engaging learners in real-life communication scenarios, they will develop their deeper understanding and fluency in that target language. I exposed my students in environment where learners can actively use the language which can build their confidence and develop a deeper understanding of the target language and culture. IDI-06

Socialization strategies could be employed in different ways, one of which is using group- based activities for language development. Participants used group- based activities to improve language skills of learners. It was proven by the participants that group works could enhance confidence, social skills and language skill of their learners.

This finding was supported by Touvenin et al. (2020) who integrated group work and activities into the learning process. Based from their study, learners were more engaged when each group is assigned a differentiated task, particularly when role-playing is involved. Oral recitations were also conducted to develop speaking and communication skills, providing an opportunity to assess learners' ability to effectively express their ideas in Filipino. This approach allowed for targeted instruction and assessment of specific language skills.

Furthermore, a study by Meena (2020) supported the idea that group activities, designed to accommodate multiple intelligences, allow learners to express their emotions and engage in socialization. Grouping learners accordingly gave them the freedom to understand how their teacher and classmates perceive them. Activities like DEAR (Drop Everything and Read) time, playtime, and even tasks like cleaning the classroom provided opportunities for social interaction and language use in various contexts.

In addition, Genelza (2022) also emphasized the benefits of immersing learners in real-life communication scenarios to enhance fluency and deepen their understanding of the target language. Creating an environment where learners actively use the language buildt confidence and strengthened their grasp of both the language and its cultural context. This active use of the language in realistic situations was key to language acquisition.

Employing Needs-Based and Differentiated Groupings
When I group them, it is based on their needs, and sometimes based on their interests. IDI-05

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Of course, we cater to each individual as unique. Each individual is unique, so we give them different activities, that is, differentiated activities. FGD-02

It is good that in the beginning of the school year, we will be conducting pre-exam so that you will know which of your students belong to kinesthetic, auditory, and visual. FGD-03

If we adapt socialization strategies to improve language skills for diverse learners, we must also have differentiated groupings. Your activities should also be diverse. – IDI-03

Teachers should give learners clear guidance, practice, and help with areas they find difficult to develop language skills. One way to do this was by using flexible group work. In these groups, learners learned from each other, which helps them build skills to learn on their own.

Additionally, Hatmanto and Rahmawati (2023) emphasized the effectiveness of differentiated instruction in addressing the diverse needs of learners. Participants in this study recognized the uniqueness of each individual and provided tailored activities, grouping learners according to their needs and, at times, their interests. This study highlighted the importance of recognizing the diverse strengths of all learners. While advanced learners might engage in writing activities like essays and sentence composition, slower learners may excel in areas like singing, rapping, or drawing. This demonstrated that even if cognitive abilities differ, learners possess diverse talents that should be recognized and nurtured.

Furthermore, this aligned with Talain and Mercado's (2023) study that differentiated instruction necessitated tailoring socialization strategies to accommodate diverse learners. Participants in this study created inclusive environments where quieter learners felt comfortable participating. This involved structuring activities to encourage involvement and modifying communication styles to suit varying levels of understanding. Using language appropriate to learners' abilities, backgrounds, and preferences ensured that all learners could effectively comprehend and engage in the learning process.
Moreover, this was similar to Zen (2021) study which explored the crucial link between adapting socialization strategies and implementing differentiated groupings. This approach ensured that learners were placed in environments that align with their strengths and learning preferences. Participants emphasized the importance of offering varied and inclusive activities that cater to different interests and abilities. Providing a range of options, such as activities incorporating the arts, mathematics, or drama, allowed each child to find a space where they feel most comfortable and engaged. This integrated approach addressed multiple learning needs simultaneously, fostering a more inclusive and effective learning environment.

Building Confidence and Reducing Communication Barriers

When you call on them, they are no longer afraid because they are comfortable with the environment. You need to boost their self-esteem so they will be able to express themselves and share their thoughts openly with you. IDI-02

Students can contribute ideas that help their group leader. You ask them with their ideas because in group work, you tell them to respect the ideas of others. Even if the answer is wrong, you should never bully or laugh at their answer. IDI-01

The activity would not be successful if they will not be talking with each other. Thus, their communicative competence would really be increased. FGD-06

Socialization strategies could build confidence and reduce communication barriers as it gives learners a chance to express themselves, so teachers encourage idea- sharing and mutual respect in- group work, help learners build confidence and reduce fear of judgement through creating a supportive learning environment for language development of the learners.

The study was supported by the study of Suelto (2018) that the success of language learning activities hinged on learners engaging in meaningful interactions. Communication was key; without it, the learning experience became less effective. Active participation in discussions and collaborative tasks enhanced learners' ability to express their thoughts, listen to different perspectives, and exchange ideas. This, in turn, significantly improved their communicative competence, leading to stronger language skills, increased confidence in speaking, and the ability to articulate thoughts effectively in various social and academic settings.

In addition, the study of Balkaya (2023) emphasized the need to create engaging and supportive communication environments. The study suggested that topics should be based on learners' interests and needs. Role-playing, in particular, provided children with opportunities to actively express themselves and practice speaking in a supportive setting. This interactive approach gradually built confidence. Furthermore, the collaborative nature of role-playing, working with a partner or group, fostered motivation. Learners felt reassured that speaking was a natural part of learning and that mistakes were accepted. This encouraged them to articulate their thoughts without fear of judgment, enhancing speaking skills and promoting a positive learning experience.

On the other hand, Leaño et al. (2019) acknowledged that some learners may be initially reserved or hesitant to engage with others. However, with time and encouragement, they gradually became more comfortable and express themselves more freely. This transformation was crucial for developing self-confidence and fostering a sense of belonging. Through participation in group activities and communication with classmates, learners learned essential social skills, such as collaboration, active listening, and effective expression. This process helped them build stronger connections with peers and enhances their ability to engage in meaningful conversations.

Dealing with Introversion and Low Literacy Levels

Usually, shy and introvert learners do not participate because they feel like it is only for a group of learners. They seem not encouraged to be involved. We have to keep telling them that it is okay to join in. IDI-01

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The main challenge I encountered when implementing socialization strategies, especially in group work, is that some group members are hesitant to participate because they are too shy to share their answers. IDI-07

While enhancing the learners' communicative competence, the communication barrier is also a big challenge. Just like us, if we are not used to speaking English in our daily conversations, our learners will also experience communication barriers. Most kids love to speak and express themselves in the vernacular, but when they try to speak in English, they struggle to express themselves. FGD-07

Teachers played an important role in helping learners develop language skills by using strategies that supported introverted learners who tend to be passive and those with low literacy levels. They created a welcoming environment and used careful methods to encourage shy and quiet learners to participate and communicate.

This finding was backed by Stewart (2019) who emphasized the need for a supportive classroom environment to help introverted students feel comfortable and valued. Shy and introverted learners often hesitated to participate in group activities, feeling excluded or lacking confidence. Consistent reassurance and a welcoming atmosphere were crucial. Gently encouraging their involvement and emphasizing the value of their contributions could ease anxiety and gradually built their confidence to engage and express themselves more comfortably.

Additionally, this was supported by the study of Haryudin and Jamilah (2018) that learning English as a second language presented inherent challenges. Mastering vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and integrating these elements in communication was a complex process. Communication barriers persisted, and just as adults struggled with infrequent use, learners faced similar difficulties. Many children were comfortable in their native language but struggle with English, leading to hesitation and a fear of mistakes. A supportive environment that encourages practice was essential for building fluency and self-assurance.

This was also the same with the idea of Tomas et al. (2021) that there were several factors contributing to inadequate reading skills, including a lack of phonemic awareness, incomplete alphabet knowledge, limited phonics understanding, weak word recognition and vocabulary, restricted fluency, and comprehension challenges. Some learners struggled with basic reading and writing, while others may be illiterate. The presence of unfamiliar dialects further complicated the teaching process. Adapting strategies to support every learner and bridge these gaps was crucial.

Further, this was similar to Saavedra (2020) who mentioned that challenges in mastering the target language often stem from the learners' primary languages. The variety of dialects spoken presented a significant hurdle in developing effective socialization strategies. This suggested that many learners may not have fully mastered their second or even first languages, hindering clear expression and understanding. Targeted support was needed to strengthen proficiency in these languages, enabling confident and effective participation in social and academic interactions.

Table 2
Major Themes and Core Ideas on Coping with the Challenges Encountered in Using Socialization Strategies to Improve Language Skills of Learners

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Encouraging Participation and Fostering Safe Learning Space	• encouraging participation of shy learners • using games and rewards to encourage socialization • celebrating successes and give praises • creating a supportive learning environment • providing collective support • utilizing pair reading during DEAR time • allowing learners to freely express themselves
Employing Differentiated Activities and Targeted Groupings	• tailoring strategies with learners' capacity and skills • pairing learners with same level • fostering learner collaboration through shared tasks • grouping learners according to learning styles and skills • customizing teaching based on learner background • employing age-appropriate activities
Utilizing Technology and Peer Collaboration	• integrating technology and peer feedback • leveraging interactive applications and virtual tools • using peer-assisted educational games
Promoting Engagement, Inclusivity and Interpersonal Skills	• encouraging group support and inclusivity among students of varying abilities • fostering student engagement by valuing diverse activities and the use of native language

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	• enhancing interpersonal skills and creating a sense of belonging through inclusive practice
Seeking Support from Colleagues, Parents, and Stakeholders	• seeking mentoring from master teachers for guidance • asking support from parents and the community • pursuing advice from colleagues who offer new ideas • soliciting advice from superiors or experienced colleagues
Collaborative Learning and Professional Development	• engaging in focused group discussions, peer mentoring, and LAC sessions • facilitating sharing of ideas during LAC sessions • gaining insights from professional development opportunities

Encouraging Participation and Fostering Safe Learning Space

I encouraged shy pupils to join the group because their performance is group-based. So, the leader encouraged the shy members to join the activity since the performance is based on the group. IDI-01

Through games, games with rewards, if there are games and there are rewards, they will like it because of the reward. I encourage others to socialize and make friends with their classmates. IDI-02

Celebrate successes no matter how small, how big it is, you have to praise the students to motivate them. What I've seen is that you create memories for the students. Even when they move on to the next grade level, they will remember what they did. FGD-06
We have to create a safe space. It is so important for students to feel comfortable taking risk and trying new things. FGD-03

A safe and encouraging classroom was key for elementary learners to learn and grow. When children felt supported, they were more likely to participate, ask questions, and try new things. Encouraging participation and fostering a safe learning space helped learners build confidence, expressed themselves freely, and overcome language barriers. When learners felt comfortable and supported, they were more likely to engage in discussions, practice new vocabulary, and improve their communication skills.

This was in line with Genelza (2022) who emphasized the crucial role of teacher support, reminding learners that they do not have to face challenges alone. Teacher's guidance, support, and encouragement were essential, fostering a classroom where learners feel comfortable asking for help and sharing their struggles. This warm and supportive atmosphere, built on simple acts of listening, encouragement, and collaboration, was the foundation for learner confidence and motivation.

In addition, the result was also in connection with the study of Tuovinen et al. (2020) which revealed the importance of social engagement. Their study found that positive social interactions, like working well with others and helping peers, could significantly boost self-esteem, especially for introverted learners. Encouraging shy learners to participate in group-based activities, emphasizing teamwork, and empowering group leaders to motivate quieter members were key strategies. Creating a sense of shared responsibility helped these learners gradually become more comfortable contributing, boosting both their confidence and their communication skills.

On the other hand, the study of Fitria (2022) introduced the concept of gamification. Incorporating game-like elements, especially those with rewards, made lessons more engaging and encourages active participation. The element of reward added motivation, making activities more exciting and enjoyable. Beyond the fun factor, these games also served as a valuable tool for socialization, providing opportunities for learners to build friendships, improve communication skills, and develop teamwork through interaction with their classmates.

Employing Differentiated Activities and Targeted Groupings

I used differentiated instruction. They will be grouped according to their skills, and the tasks assigned to them will also fit their skills. IDI-07

You should create differentiated instruction according to the child's level of understanding. The slower learners should be grouped with slow learners and smarter learners should be grouped with brighter students. IDI-04
We can also employ activities that are age-appropriate so that they can relate on the activities you are employing. IDI-07

Employing Differentiated Activities and Targeted Groupings was an effective instructional strategy to meet the diverse needs of learners within a classroom. By combining differentiated activities with targeted groupings, teachers could create a learning environment that was inclusive, engaging, and tailored to the individual needs of each learner for language development.

This was supported by the study of Potot et al. (2023) that highlighted the importance of grouping learners according to their skill levels as a key component of differentiated instruction. This allowed teachers to assign tasks aligned with each group's abilities, ensuring activities were both appropriate and engaging. Learning at their own pace within a supportive environment fostered confidence and skill development. This tailored approach enabled targeted support and enrichment opportunities, promoting effective learning for all.
Additionally, this was also the same with the idea of Talain and Mercado (2023) that emphasized the need to tailor instruction to the strengths and needs of diverse learners for a truly inclusive and effective learning experience. Teachers adapted their strategies based on each learner's mental capacity, skills,

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and talents. This personalized approach allowed for appropriate challenges for advanced learners while providing additional support for those who need it. Recognizing and addressing individual differences fostered confidence, enhances skill development, and encourages deeper understanding. Creating a learning environment that valued and nurtured each learner's unique abilities inspired growth, motivation, and academic success.

Moreover, this was supported by the study Celik (2019) who pointed out that differentiated instruction should be designed based on each learner's level of understanding. Tailoring instruction to individual needs allowed learners to engage with material at a pace that suits their abilities, fostering confidence and academic growth. This approach allowed educators to provide appropriate challenges for advanced learners while offering additional support for those who need it. Through carefully planned activities and instructional strategies, each learner could develop their skills in a way that maximizes their potential. Recognizing and addressing diverse learning needs created a more inclusive and supportive environment where every learner has the opportunity to succeed.

Utilizing Technology and Peer Collaboration

We always have to incorporate technology in the classroom and provide interactive activities. IDI-03
Utilize resources and technology through interactive apps since children nowadays love online games. We can also use virtual field trips. IDI-06
I also integrate games to develop their writing, reading and speaking skills through the help of their peers. IDI-07

Utilizing technology and peer collaboration in the classroom enhanced learners learning, engagement, and the development of critical 21st-century skills such as communication, teamwork, and digital literacy. By combining technology and peer collaboration, teachers could create dynamic, engaging learning experiences that encourage creativity, critical thinking, and communication.

This was supported by Frykedal and Chiriac (2018) who emphasized the importance of utilizing available resources and technology, particularly interactive applications, recognizing children's high engagement with online games. Educational apps could transform learning into a fun and immersive experience, motivating learners while developing essential skills. Integrating technology-driven activities, such as educational games and virtual explorations, created a more engaging and dynamic learning environment that caters to learners' interests while enriching their knowledge and curiosity for language development.

Willian et al. (2025) also had the same idea and mentioned that incorporating games into learning was an effective strategy for enhancing literacy skills. Games actively engaged students in reading, writing, and speaking in a fun and interactive way. Through educational games, learners processed information, construct sentences, and articulate their thoughts more effectively. This approach was even more powerful when combined with peer collaboration. Learners working together in game-based activities exchanged ideas, provided constructive feedback, and refined their communication skills in a supportive environment. Interactive games also promoted critical thinking and problem-solving, which further strengthen comprehension and expression. Integrating games with peer-assisted learning created an engaging and dynamic environment that fostered literacy development while making learning enjoyable and meaningful.

In addition, the result was also in connection with the study of Saglamel and Cetinkaya (2022), which revealed that technology played a vital role in creating an interactive and engaging classroom environment in other ways. Teachers could enhance learning by incorporating activities that encouraged learner participation and collaboration. One effective method was allowing learners to participate in the feedback process, where they assess and evaluate their peers' work.

Promoting Engagement, Inclusivity and Interpersonal Skills

These strategies really address the needs of the students. It makes them enjoy learning because of the varied activities you provide. It is quick, exciting, and keeps their interest alive. IDI-03

Just let them talk and talk, and then after they have expressed themselves, translate what they said into English so they understand how they should speak about the things they wanted to say. FGD-07

Socialization strategies address the needs of the students by helping them develop their interpersonal skills, and building a sense of belonging. IDI-07

Through socialization strategies, teachers could encourage group support and inclusivity among learners of varying abilities and foster learner engagement by valuing diverse activities and the use of native language for language skills development. It could also enhance interpersonal skills and creating a sense of belonging through inclusive practice.

Similarly, Crisianita and Mandasari (2022) emphasized the importance of engaging and stimulating learning activities. These methods, incorporating a variety of approaches, ensured learners remain actively involved in the learning process. The dynamic nature of these activities made learning enjoyable, providing opportunities for exploration, creativity, and interaction. Whether through interactive games, collaborative projects, or technology-driven tasks, learners experienced excitement and motivation that sustains their interest. Furthermore, these approaches promoted faster comprehension and retention of information by encouraging hands-on participation rather than passive learning. By keeping lessons engaging, interactive, and enjoyable, teachers could foster a love for learning and ensure learners remain enthusiastic and eager to explore new concepts.

Moreover, Genelza (2021) supported this by highlighting the connection between confidence, strong social skills, and positive self-image, building on the foundation of engaging activities. When learners developed these qualities, they began

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to feel empowered, believing in their abilities. This self-assurance allowed them to participate more actively in discussions, collaborate effectively with peers, and express their thoughts without fear. As they gained experience interacting with diverse individuals and situations, their confidence in public speaking and group activities grows. Feeling secure in their abilities enabled them to approach challenges with a positive mindset, fostering resilience and a willingness to learn. Nurturing both confidence and socialization skills helped learners develop academically and personally.

Finally, the study emphasized the importance of inclusivity and respect for diversity. This approach, as suggested by Ghavifekr (2020), accommodated the diverse ways in which learners communicate and interact. Recognizing that each learner had unique communication styles and social preferences allowed learners to create a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. In a classroom that values diversity, learners of all backgrounds—regardless of religion, race, or cultural differences—felt welcomed and respected. Encouraging open dialogue and collaboration fostered a sense of belonging, ensuring every learner had the opportunity to express themselves and engage meaningfully with others. Promoting inclusivity and understanding empowered learners to develop strong interpersonal skills, empathy, and mutual respect.

Seeking Support from Colleagues, Parents, and Stakeholders

Seek support from Master Teachers because they are more knowledgeable of how to cater the different skills and abilities or capacities of the learners. IDI-01

As a teacher, we really need to ask for support from our stakeholders, especially from parents, our co-teachers, the PTA, and our school heads to make the implementation easier and to provide for our needs. IDI-05

The best thing to do is to ask for assistance from those who have higher ranks or those who have been in service for a long time, or those who are good in that field. FGD-01

Seeking support from colleagues, parents, and stakeholders was crucial for creating a collaborative and effective learning environment that benefited learners. Engaging these groups fostered a sense of community and shared responsibility, which could significantly enhance learner achievement, well-being, and school culture. By actively seeking support from colleagues, parents, and stakeholders**,** teachers created a well-rounded support network that enhances the educational experience.

In line with this, Cayak and Karsantik (2020) emphasized the vital role of parental support in a child's development, particularly for shy or hesitant learners. Open communication between parents and teachers provided valuable insights into each child's personality, strengths, and challenges. This collaboration enabled the creation of strategies that encourage active participation and confident self-expression. Parental involvement also extended learning beyond the classroom, reinforcing skills and values taught at school.

Additionally, this was supported by the study of Leaño et al. (2019) that the joint efforts between teachers and parents was very important in developing specialized language programs. These programs should provide children with the necessary tools to build their English vocabulary, including well-structured learning materials and effective teaching methods. Working together, teachers and parents could create an environment that encourages vocabulary practice and expansion both at school and at home.

Furthermore, Kutsyuruba and Godden (2019) emphasized the importance of seeking guidance from experienced professionals in higher positions, long-serving teachers, or subject matter experts. Their knowledge and expertise provided valuable insights for addressing teaching challenges and enhancing instructional practices. Mentoring and coaching, including structured guidance, constructive feedback, and practical strategies, were crucial for supporting teachers' holistic well-being and professional development. This continuous improvement ultimately benefited learner learning.

Collaborative Learning and Professional Development

As usual, the most common thing we do is have LAC sessions, peer mentoring, and focused group discussions. IDI-05
Based on our experience from previous school years, we really hold LAC sessions, where the expertise of others is shared, and we are learning from it. FGD-07

Seek professional development, attend workshops, conferences, where we can gain insights, new ideas, and learn. IDI-06
Collaborative learning and professional development were essential for both learner success and teacher growth. When teachers engaged in on-going professional learning, especially in a collaborative setting, they continuously refined their skills, stayed current with educational trends, and improved instructional practices. Similarly, collaborative learning among learners fostered deeper understanding, communication, and problem-solving skills. Both collaborative learning for learners and collaborative professional development for teachers played a vital role in improving educational outcomes. In the classroom, collaborative learning fostered deeper understanding, critical thinking, and social skills. For teachers, collaborative professional development led to continuous growth, improved instructional practices, and shared expertise. Like the result, it was supported by the idea of Darling-Hammond and Cook-Harvey (2018) that highlighted the multifaceted benefits of teacher training programs, such as seminars and professional development courses. These programs equipped teachers with new instructional techniques and boost their confidence in delivering lessons effectively. They also fostered collaboration among teachers, enabling the exchange of ideas and the development of innovative teaching approaches. Furthermore, ongoing professional growth allowed teachers to adapt to the evolving needs of learners, making learning more engaging and impactful. Investing in continuous learning enabled teachers to refine their skills, improved learner outcomes, and created a more dynamic and enriching educational environment. Ajani (2019) supported this, noting that these activities were designed to improve teaching methods and classroom attitudes, ultimately leading to better instruction.

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Further, it was also supported by the study of Khakimov (2020) that emphasized the role of professional development in facilitating teacher growth. It enabled teachers to exchange ideas, share experiences, and receive valuable recommendations for improving their teaching practices. Through collaboration and constructive feedback, teachers could refine their methods, enhance classroom management, and better engage learners. Even qualified and licensed teachers benefited from continuous learning to stay current with evolving educational trends. Attending workshops, training sessions, and peer discussions helped them develop new skills and adopt modern teaching strategies. This commitment to ongoing growth allowed teachers to provide learners with high-quality education, ensuring a more effective and engaging learning experience.

Moreover, Crispino and Moyani (2023) added that regular teacher meetings, focused on learner challenges, teaching strategies, and enhancing participation, were a valuable form of professional development. These discussions contributed to refining instructional methods and improving classroom engagement. Finally, the study concluded by emphasizing the importance of tailoring professional development programs to meet the specific needs of teachers. Targeted training in innovative teaching strategies, classroom management, and learner engagement equipped teachers with the right tools and knowledge to create more effective and inclusive learning environments where learners could thrive.

Table 3
Major Themes and Core Ideas on the Insights of Elementary Teachers in Using Socialization Strategies to Improve Language Skills of Learners

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Socialization is Fundamental to Language Learning	• socialization encourages participation and engagement in learning • language learning is social and requires active participation • socialization strategies strengthen relationships • socialization opportunities enhance communication competence • peer mentoring and buddy systems help struggling students • interaction and socialization help improve language skills
Effective Teaching Requires Understanding of Individual Background	• diagnosing student background is crucial to implement effective teaching strategies • connecting learners' home experiences to lessons makes learning more meaningful • embracing and understanding the individual differences of students without judgement
Collaborative Support and Professional Development are Key to Empower Educators	• building strong networks • ongoing professional development • DepEd should allocate more time and resources for language skills development • structuring of activities for Catch-Up Friday from DepEd, with room for modification • Teachers need a well-planned curriculum from DepEd • Curriculum integration should focus on communicative competence
An Inclusive and Engaging Learning Fosters Language and Social Skills	• teachers foster peer learning in a supportive environment • creating an inclusive environment boost language learning • incorporating games and interactive activities • using technology and varying activities • motivating students through rewards • fostering language development through active participation
Nurturing Growth Through Empathy and Emotional Connections	• understanding learners' abilities • having an enduring patience • building strong relationships • teaching requires not only knowledge but emotional connection with students • learners should feel secure in making mistakes to support language development and socialization

Socialization is Fundamental to Language Learning
Socialization can improve the language skills of students because it encourages them to participate instead of just staying quiet. It really helps shy children because they feel encouraged to join the group. So, they work hard to memorize when someone tells them to, and they really try to memorize since they are working as a group. IDI-01

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My realization is that language is social by nature. You can socialize through language. Active participation is the key, and collaboration boosts confidence. IDI-04

I can say that the communication competence of our learners will really be enhanced through socialization strategies for language skills. They just need to be given the opportunity to talk and share their experiences. FGD-07

Another successful strategy is peer mentoring and the buddy system, where you pair students who are struggling with learning. FGD-04

Socialization played a crucial role in language learning because language was inherently a social tool**,** it could help build confidence for instance, regular interaction builds confidence, especially when learners were in a supportive environment. Through socialization, they experienced incremental progress, which reduced language anxiety and increased their willingness to communicate. It could also foster cultural understanding because language and culture were intertwined. Socialization exposed learners to cultural nuances, enhancing their understanding of how language reflects and shapes social behavior.

This was in line with Supena et al. (2021) who pointed out and emphasized the importance of giving learners ample time to communicate with one another. This enhanced collaboration, critical thinking, and confidence in expressing ideas. Teachers mentioned how meaningful discussions helped learners articulate their thoughts, refine reasoning skills, and gain deeper understanding. Strong communication skills were vital for academic success, enabling learners to explain their work, justify answers, and engage in discussions. Structured conversations, group activities, and peer feedback not only improved learning outcomes but also prepared learners for real-world interactions. Alawamleh et al. (2022) further highlighted that providing time for conversation fostered strong communication skills and built positive relationships with peers and teachers, creating a supportive classroom environment where learners felt comfortable and motivated.

Moreover, this was the same with the study of Toro et al. (2019) which suggested another effective strategy to improve communication skills: peer mentoring and buddy systems. Pairing struggling learners with excelling students incorporates techniques like skill modeling, repeated practice, and collaborative pair or group work. Working together enhanced understanding and cultivates a supportive, team-oriented classroom environment.

Effective Teaching Requires Understanding of Individual Background

You need to really understand the needs of these students. You have to diagnose them so that you will know what to do. The most basic thing is benchmarking, where you diagnose them. IDI-05

I believe that each learner is not a blank slate. They come to school with meaningful experiences from home. We just need to connect their experiences to the lesson so that it becomes meaningful and relevant for them. FGD-05

As a teacher, you should not react immediately. You need to understand the situation and know the background of your students so that you can address their needs. IDI-02

Teachers' insights revealed that understanding learners' individual backgrounds was a key factor in effective teaching, particularly when using socialization strategies to enhance language skills. They observed that learners bring diverse cultural, social, and personal experiences to the classroom, which shape their learning styles and communication needs. By recognizing and respecting these differences, teachers could adapt their strategies to foster engagement and confidence. They also shared that creating activities rooted in learners' backgrounds helped build trust, encourages participation, and promoted language development in a meaningful and supportive way.

The study of Tseng and Gao (2021) supported the result that learners were not blank slates; they brought meaningful experiences from home to school. Teachers could enhance learning by connecting these personal experiences to the curriculum, making lessons relevant and engaging. Recognizing the uniqueness of each learner—with distinct traits, accomplishments, and potential—teachers were encouraged to tailor instruction to individual needs. In second language learning, this required a multifaceted approach that addresses cognitive, affective, social, and strategic factors, fostering an inclusive environment where every learner could thrive.

Additionally, this was supported by the study of Smale-Jacobse et al. (2019) which stressed the importance of teachers gaining a deep understanding of their learners' individual needs through careful assessment and diagnosis of strengths and areas for growth. This process enabled teachers to identify effective strategies and targeted interventions. Effective teaching also hinged on continuously monitoring learner progress and adapting instructional methods accordingly. Regular evaluation of learner performance allowed teachers to tailor their approach to address diverse learning styles and evolving needs, creating a more responsive and successful educational environment.

It was also strengthened by the study of Griffiths and Soruc (2021) which emphasized the importance of understanding each child's background and circumstances, recognizing the influences that shape their behavior. This understanding enabled teachers to create personalized materials, adapted their teaching styles, and provided constructive feedback tailored to each learner's growth. Understanding each child's background and embracing their uniqueness allowed teachers to tailor materials, adjust teaching methods, and offer specific feedback that promoted individual growth, ultimately fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment where every learner had the opportunity to succeed.

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Collaborative Support and Professional Development are Key to Empower Educators

Embrace collaboration—share experiences, resources, and strategies with colleagues. Do not hesitate to ask for help and ideas from your colleagues. IDI-06

My suggestion to DepEd and DepEd officials is to conduct training or seminars on how to elevate socialization strategies, more specifically on holding seminars about socialization strategies so that teachers in the field can apply them. IDI-01

My suggestion is for curriculum integration. Let us put more emphasis on communicative competence and use authentic materials and collaborative projects. IDI-04

Teachers recognized that collaborative support and professional development play a crucial role in empowering educators to effectively use socialization strategies for improving learners' language skills. By working together, sharing experiences, and learning from one another, teachers gained valuable insights into what works best for their learners. Professional development opportunities, such as workshops and training, further equipped educators with new techniques and tools to foster communication and social interaction. These collective efforts helped create a supportive environment where teachers felt confident in their abilities to guide learners toward stronger language and social skills.

Furthermore, Chi (2024) emphasized the program's value in developing learners' language skills. Through targeted review, peer discussions, and individualized feedback, learners could strengthen their comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. Crucially, teacher feedback played a vital role in assessing and refining the program's effectiveness, ensuring its continued impact on learner language development and overall academic success.

To maximize the impact of such programs, a well-structured curriculum, coupled with comprehensive materials and resources, was fundamental. Llego (2022) emphasized the importance of providing teachers with clear lesson plans, instructional strategies, and adaptable resources to ensure consistency and effectiveness in the classroom. Moreover, schools must be equipped to address the diverse learning needs of all learners, including those with disabilities. This necessitated not only adequate materials and well-trained teachers but also targeted professional development programs that equipped teachers to recognize and address these diverse challenges.

An Inclusive and Engaging Learning Fosters Language and Social Skills

Teachers can facilitate group activities and peer learning opportunities where students can practice their speaking, listening, reading, and writing in a supportive environment. FGD-02

As I mentioned, creating an inclusive environment for my learners through positive reinforcement, constructive feedback, and respect for diversity. IDI-05

So, you have to motivate the students, and at the same time, they must be engaged in activities. Do not just let them sit; give them a chance to speak. FGD-04

An inclusive and engaging learning environment is critical for enhancing both language acquisition and socialization, as it created a supportive space where all learners felt valued, encouraged, and motivated to participate. An inclusive and engaging learning environment not only enhanced language acquisition by providing meaningful practice opportunities but also supports socialization by teaching learners how to communicate effectively and empathetically in diverse settings. This combination was essential for building confident, capable language users who were equipped for real-world.

One effective strategy for building this inclusive environment was peer learning. As supported also by the study of Balasubramanian (2023), which stated that organizing group activities where learners practice speaking, listening, reading, and writing in a supportive setting could be highly beneficial. With clear guidance and feedback, teachers could ensure meaningful engagement, boosting confidence and promoting teamwork and critical thinking. Well-structured peer learning not only contributed to academic growth but also built essential communication and social skills.

Additionally, the study of Olivier et al. (2020) revealed that when learners feel valued and accepted, they developed a sense of belonging and became more engaged in learning and school activities. This positive atmosphere, fostered through inclusive lessons, open discussions, and mutual respect, not only boosts academic success but also encouraged confidence, collaboration, personal growth and language development.

Nurturing Growth Through Empathy and Emotional Connections

The first is that, you are understanding with your students, why are they like this. We should really embrace why they act like that. It is not easy to teach, you experienced a lot and you need to adjust. Then, you should not give up, even though you are going through a lot. It is very fulfilling that you transform a learner from full refresher into a reader. IDI-02

One of my realizations in using socialization strategies to improve learners' language skills is that it is not just about having a brain full of knowledge; it is important to have the heart to teach. It is not just about the mind but also about touching their lives. FGD-01

The strategy that I think is successful is making your learners feel secure. They should feel like, even if I fail, even if I make mistakes, it is okay because it is part of the learning process. FGD-02

Creating a supportive and nurturing learning environment was crucial for learner success, and attending to learners' psychological needs was a fundamental aspect of this. As Martin and Bolliger (2018) suggested, when teachers acknowledged and supported these needs, such as belonging,

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self-esteem, and emotional well-being, learners felt more comfortable, valued, and motivated. This created a safe space where learners could focus, take risks, and actively participate, leading to increased engagement and enthusiasm for learning. A classroom that prioritized emotional well-being not only enhances academic performance but also fostered resilience, confidence, and a positive attitude toward education.

IMPLICATION FOR TEACHING PRACTICE

The lived experiences of elementary teachers in using socialization strategies to improve language skills offered a deep, qualitative understanding of how teachers approached, implemented, and adapted these strategies in real classroom settings. Exploring their experiences revealed the challenges, strategies, and insights that shape teaching practices.

Specifically, results showed that teachers recognized the crucial role that socialization played in language acquisition. Their experiences suggest that language skills are often best developed in an interactive, communicative setting rather than through isolated exercises. This highligheds the need for language-rich, interactive activities where learners could practice speaking, listening, and responding to one another.

To achieve this interactive environment, teachers often employed creative and diverse strategies to engage learners, especially those who may felt shy or hesitant to speak. For example, role-playing, games, and group activities were common strategies that make language practice more engaging and less intimidating.

However, they also encountered various challenges when implementing socialization strategies, such as dealing with introvert learners, low literacy levels, and different cultural backgrounds. Consequently, teachers' experiences revealed the importance of adapting socialization strategies to the needs of learners with different language backgrounds, social skills, and learning styles. This differentiation ensured that all learners benefit from socialization activities.

Moreover, teachers noted that socialization strategies were most effective in a classroom environment where learners felt safe and valued. A positive classroom culture fostered learner confidence in participating in social activities, making language learning a more enjoyable experience. To continually improve, teachers often engaged in reflective practices to evaluate and refine their socialization strategies, learning from both successes and challenges.

Additionally, family involvement could reinforce language skills and encouraged children to use language outside the classroom. Parents could support their children's language development, especially reading skills, by engaging with them about what they had read, using school-provided reading sheets, and creating a language-rich home environment.
Furthermore, teachers saw socialization as not just a tool for language improvement but also as a means of empowering learners by giving them a voice, improving self-expression, and building self-confidence. Teachers often benefited from peer support networks where they could share challenges, successes, and strategies with colleagues, which helped them refine their approaches and stay motivated.

Furthermore, teacher-provided emotional support was key to fostering positive teacher-learner relationships, which were essential for learners' overall development. Salo et al. (2022) emphasized how a caring and supportive atmosphere allowed learners to feel comfortable expressing themselves, asking for help, and engaging in class activities.

In conclusion, this study underscored that successful language learning in elementary classrooms hinged on creating a dynamic, supportive, and inclusive environment where socialization was prioritized. Teachers, through their lived experiences, demonstrated that by adapting strategies to meet diverse learner needs, fostering a positive classroom culture, and actively engaging families, they not only improved language skills but also empowered learners to become confident and effective communicators.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This study was only limited to the fourteen (14) elementary teachers of New Corella, District, Davao del Norte who utilized socialization strategies to improve language skills of learners. However, the result of this study was essential as a basis for further research. Additionally, considering the limitations identified and the findings of the study, the following are recommended for future research:

First, this research study may be done by conducting a re-interview of the selected teachers in three schools in New Corella to obtain correspondence with the collected and evaluated information. This can help in verifying the validity and reliability of their responses as the results of the study.

Additionally, it is also recommended to conduct another perspective on the phenomenon, particularly about the effectiveness of socialization strategies to improve language skills of learners. This would be beneficial to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied from the point of view of learners.

Furthermore, to deepen the investigation of this research issue, it is advised that the study be carried out in a larger area and to conduct the same study with a wider range of locations to gather intensive and substantial data about the phenomenon. Specifically, it is recommended to conduct the study outside New Corella District to gather significant relations on the lived experiences of elementary teachers who utilized socialization strategies to improve language skills of learners from different places outside the selected locale of the study.

Moreover, future research should use a quantitative approach to broaden the understanding of socialization strategies in language learning. This would involve studying a larger group of teachers to determine how often different strategies are used and how effective they are. Specifically, researchers could look

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at the relationship between the types of socialization activities teachers use and how much learners' language skills improve. Quantitative data will also help identify the most effective strategies for different learners and learning environments, providing more generalizable results and statistical evidence.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Unlocking the socialization strategies of elementary teachers in improving language skills of learners highlighted the powerful role of social interaction in language development and underscores the innovative, adaptable approaches that teachers used to support learners' communication skills. Through structured peer interactions, creative role-playing activities, and the creation of inclusive classroom environments, teachers cultivated a supportive space where language skills flourish. This research shed light on the importance of fostering a classroom culture that encouraged learners to express themselves, take risks, and learn through interaction.

The study not only provided valuable insights into effective teaching practices but also called attention to the need for professional development, family involvement, and resources to overcome challenges teachers faced in implementing these strategies. Socialization-based approaches in language learning ultimately contributed to learners' linguistic, social, and emotional growth, helping them became confident communicators equipped for both academic and real-world settings.

Future research could further refine these insights, exploring the long-term impact of socialization on language development, examining its effectiveness in diverse cultural contexts, and considering the integration of technology. This study is a vital step toward understanding how socialization strategies can be optimized to create inclusive, dynamic learning environments that empower young learners in their journey toward language proficiency.

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