

Relationships of English Teachers' Proficiency and Approaches to Students' Phonological English Language Learning

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Abstract- The study determined the relationship of English teachers' proficiency and approaches and students' acquisition of phonological English language learning. This generally ferreted out the significance of teachers' practices in teaching English language and their approaches in using the language that impact the students' phonological English language learning. This anyhow observed teachers' language fluency through their grammatical accuracy and sound production that were quite crucial in students' language learning aside from the fact that educators' approaches manifest and become a huge influence in students' learning. This used the descriptive correlational method of research that utilized frequency, percentage distribution and mean score, which were used in the presentation of level of importance in phonological accuracy practice, level of frequency in phonological accuracy practice, teachers' communicative fluency practice, teachers' use of pedagogical strategies as well as English teachers' approach. Pearson r - Correlations Analysis was used to determine the relationship between English teachers' proficiency and approaches to students' learning of phonological English language.

With regard to English teachers' proficiency and students' phonological English language learning, it showed that there was no significant relationship that existed between teachers' proficiency in terms of level of importance in phonological accuracy practice, level of frequency in phonological accuracy practice, and teachers' use of pedagogical strategies, and students' learning phonological English language.

As regards the English teachers' approaches and the students' phonological English language learning, it showed that there was a significant relationship between teachers' efficacy practice, teachers' teaching approach, students' language learning, and students' learning phonological English language.

Index Terms- grammatical and phonological accuracy; teaching approach; teacher's efficacy; language learning

I. INTRODUCTION

Language teaching is one of the challenging tasks that Educators do teach aside from numerical encounters and scientific endeavors they are into. In the Philippines, language teaching has been evidently part of its educational system as it is

imposed all along on the academic curriculum designed from kindergarten to collegiate level. English, specifically, is ideally learned by the Filipino students from their formative years until preparation for their imminent career. Besides, aside from Filipino subjects, there is no any other subject course being taken in Filipino language but English, instead. Despite the fact that English language has been strongly taught in all schools in the nation, a question of what and how the learners have learned in English after taking up numbers of its subject courses still arises and is deemed to be focused on.

A lot of factors possibly emerge merely to solidify ideas of where the students' language learning depends and lies on. Should it be emanating from their teachers, who facilitate English classes and unavoidably show proficiency through their speaking and writing skills trickled down to the students? Does the end point rely on the students' responsibilities for their own learning the fact that their teachers have already taught them theories and lessons from the books and experiential occurrences in and out of the classrooms?

Martinez Agudo (2017) viewed the significance and role of English as the most influential language of international arena of communication are now highly evident in the current globalized world. Hence, there would be a huge need for training qualified and competent language teachers, who view the importance of undergoing English as foreign language teacher education programs. Teacher's language proficiency is a crucial matter as far as learner's language learning is concerned. Richards (2017) raised an issue of what particular proficiency in English a teacher should have to be an effective English teacher. He emphasized that teacher's proficiency in language encompasses his knowledge on subject matter as well as his ability to teach in English. It is strongly believed that teacher's proficiency in English language is a huge help in the students' acquisition of learning (Park and Lee, 2006).

Another thing to take into account in language teaching is the teacher's grammatical accuracy, which is of big help as well in shaping students' appreciation of language learning. According to Nel and Muller (2010), teachers who have had low English proficiency made basic grammatical errors, incorrect use of tenses, spelling and pronunciation as well that would be inevitably

acquired by their students, too. It is disheartening to know that teachers' ungrammatical expressions tend to be correct in the students' beliefs as they also apply it in their real communicative situations. Moreover, in language teaching, teacher's pronunciation cannot be discounted in students' acquisition of language learning as they learn out of listening and mimicking. The students tend to acquire a mesolectal English since it is the way their teachers produce sounds and unavoidably model it to them. Teachers inevitably transfer phonological errors to the students in a sense that a miss pronunciation, incorrect sound, stress and intonation pattern would be taught to the learners (Nel and Muller, 2010).

English Language in a Global Context

English has been treated differently by various people depending on their perception of this language. Some say that English is the language of privileged for many of the affluent people have taken advantage of using it in and out of their houses, circles of friends and all transactions that they are into. Some have claimed that it is the language of professionals for it has brought individuals to different worlds of different people with different perspectives regardless of their status in life. Whether or not these claims are true, it is agreed that the significance and role of English as the most influential language of international arena of communication are now highly evident in the current globalized world (Martinez Agudo, 2017). It is globally acknowledged as it is known to be an international language. However, a question of how well-versed a user of language would be is always at stake. A lot of ways in acquiring language learning are present and could be availed of as to ensure good English expressions. Karakas (2017) stated that individuals have generally acted on the assumption that good English is attained by speaking and writing grammatical English.

Moreover, in countries where English language education is part of the curriculum, it is expected that competent English is obtained in all academic institutions. Nevertheless, a claim from Ishaque (2018) in a study has stated that one's proficiency in English is not gauged by how the language is taught and spoken within the four corners of the classrooms but by the creativity and productivity of varied teachers and students as well. English basically needs a huge reformation as far as language teaching and learning to address to the sociolinguistic aspects of diversified teachers and students.

Teacher's Grammatical and Phonological Accuracy

Ho (2018) states that phonological accuracy is the use of accurate forms in which utterances do not contain errors that impair a language's phonological, syntactic, semantic, or discourse aspects. To put it another way, people came to believe that beginners studying English should utilize English as a correct form of grammar and structure.

Likitrattanaporn (2013) investigated the teaching English phonological and communicative fluency at Thai secondary

schools which revealed that teachers have very highly positive attitudes on teaching phonology and communication manifesting in their activities assigned to their classes. However, teachers' attitudes did not coincide with the pedagogy taken in their classrooms as ought to be expected. It was also ferreted out that the teachers thought of themselves to have been sufficiently knowledgeable theoretically with regard to pronunciation and communicative activities but most of them would also desire to improve their teaching in these aspects. This shows a need for improvement for all English language teachers especially the non-native speakers.

To improve the linguistic and literary creativity in English classroom, language teaching needs to have a new approach of the world Englishes, which pays homage to differences in tones, accents and suprasegmentals of students and teachers as well. Likitrattanapon (2014) found out on his study that whenever learners pronounce English words or sentences properly, they would transmit meanings efficiently. Some of them remark that a correct accent improves mutual understanding. Pronouncing English sounds correctly results to efficient communications. Another study showed findings of their study that English as Foreign Language educators must be cognizant of their understanding and knowledge about speaking which emanate from their past education and language teaching explorations and experiences as well. Through this, teachers would be of huge support to students' acquisition of language learning, too (Tajeddin, et. al., 2018).

Teacher's Pedagogical Practice

Different teachers have different schools of thoughts when it comes to pedagogical strategies to apply in the class to ensure learning of the students. In teaching English language, wherein communication skills are deemed to be developed, a lot of strategies have been implemented to make the class as student-centered as possible. When identifying the notion of innovative pedagogical practices, it is critical to grasp what it means; it refers to attempts to initiate reform within the classroom as well as the inclusion of technical resources that have sparked the development of the information society (Kapur, n.d.).

One of which that seems apt to use when teaching phonological English language is the use of technologies. While it is necessary for a teacher to speak English with his students as frequently as possible, it is equally important for them to hear a diversity of voices and accents. Different models of spoken English can be obtained from audio recordings. This can assist students in pronouncing words correctly. Audio recordings bring variation to courses, and some students will like being in a technology-rich environment (OLC, n.d.) Another pedagogical strategy an English teacher may use to develop listening and viewing skill of his students is film-viewing. Films provide real linguistic input as well as a dynamic conversation framework in the classroom. They also provide a genuine glimpse of the language and culture, giving insight into local English speakers' daily lives (Kabooha, 2016). Some teachers have taken advantage of bringing students to communicative-functional situations to apply the lessons. As Theall (n.d.) says that there are numerous benefits to introducing real-life scenarios into classroom

instruction. The relevance of content is illustrated by real-life instances, and theoretical material is applied in real-life circumstances to make content easier to understand. This helps students develop their communications in their daily engagement in and out of the classrooms.

Teacher's Efficacy

Moran, et. al., (Babaei and Abednia, 2016) mentioned that teacher self-efficacy deals with their beliefs on their capabilities to effectively perform a certain task to achieve a desirable learning outcomes in a specific situation. Richards (2017) accentuated that the ability to perform effectively their roles as language educators and this is known to be teacher efficacy. Sabokrouh (2014) claimed that the researchers in education have profiled that the teachers' sense of efficacy has tremendous impacts on various aspects of teaching and learning. This is a thing that students have usually remembered about their teachers. Richard's (2017) finding in his study stated that language proficiency and teaching ability have been different entities. Basically, the ability to teach English through English is understood as possible as language proficiency problem. If teachers have improved the level of their teaching skills in English, they surely be able to teach English effectively.

In a study conducted by Sabokrouh (2014), it was found out that there was a significant relationship between the attitude and the teachers' English efficacy beliefs that was congruent with the profiled studies with regard to links between English students/teachers' attitude toward English as well as their confidence in themselves as English speakers. Moreover, Bandura (Babaei and Abednia, 2016) stated that these efficacy beliefs refer to main sources such as mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, and social persuasion as well as emotional and physiological states.

Teacher self-efficacy gets defined by Richards (2017) as pedagogical ability as teacher's knowledge of teaching that encompasses knowledge on the subject-matter, repertoire of methods and activities that a teacher uses. Indeed, there is really a need for an effective English teaching methodology (Ler, 2012). Hoy and Spero (Kaysigiz, et. al., 2018) stated that teacher self-efficacy plays a vital role on one's behavior as it has an effect on the culling out activities and efforts to put in performing a certain activity. Mashhady (Sabet, et. al., 2018) stated that successful teachers are able to choose apt teaching techniques in order to make a difference in students' learning outcomes. English teachers' self-efficacy may affect their educational and instructional applications and can foresee apt teaching methodologies to employ in the classrooms (Kaygisiz, et. al., 2018).

II. METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study utilized the descriptive correlational design to attain its objectives. This used descriptive survey and correlation type of quantitative research because it has dealt with the present situation, current practices, characteristics of groups of individuals and their behavioral patterns, attitudes as well as their opinions. The study was anent the English teachers' practices that have affected the students' phonological English language

learning as considered important variables of this research. Moreover, the survey-questionnaire as adopted by the researcher was validated by other expert researcher.

To obtain the sample respondents of this study, the researcher employed a Two-stage Random Sampling technique. Two-stage Random Sampling is a process of selecting samples or groups randomly and then chooses individuals randomly from these groups (Fraenkel, et.al., 2013). Since there were limited movements and activities at present during the CoViD-19 pandemic and due to the restrictions given by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases in the Philippines (IATF), the two-stage random sampling technique was far more appropriate in the conduct of this study.

The researcher deemed the faculty and students of the selected local colleges and universities (LCUs) in Metro Manila as the respondents of the study. These came from the Eastern Manila District (2nd District) such as Marikina City and Quezon City while some emanate from Northern Manila District [Camanava] (3rd District) such as Caloocan City, Malabon City, and Navotas City as well as Valenzuela City.

The researcher got the population of faculty and students, who had taught and taken up English subject during 1st semester, AY 2019-2020 in the local colleges and universities (LCUs) of the aforementioned cities to be the respondents of the study.

The questionnaires have been adopted to delve the teachers' practices in teaching English that would affect the students' learning of phonological English language. The researcher prepared two sets of survey questionnaires for the teacher and student-respondents respectively. The survey questionnaire for student-respondents has been divided into three (4) parts. The first part of the instrument refers to students' perceptions on their English teachers' efficacy practice, which affects classroom management as well as teaching environment and it would decide whether or not students get encouraged and challenged to learn the language. The second part of the instrument deals with their perceptions on their English teachers' teaching approach that is anent the pedagogical strategies being used in the class. The third part ferrets out data on students' level of understanding on language learning through personal applications in their daily engagements. Finally, the last part delves on students' phonological English language learning.

The second set of survey-questionnaire was furnished to the teacher-respondents and it has been divided into four (4) parts. The first part delves on teachers' perceptions on the importance of their phonological accuracy practice that has played a vital role in their students' language learning. The second part deals with the frequency evaluation on teacher's phonological accuracy that has reinforced to students' learning phonological English language. The third part refers to teacher's communicative fluency practice and the last part is anent the teachers' use of pedagogical strategies that have enabled the students to acquire learning of grammatical and phonological English language.

The researcher sought the permission of the selected local colleges and universities (LCUs) president or executive director or officer-in-charge to let him conduct the study in their respective academic institutions as the locales of this study through paying a personal visit to hand letters of permission as well as copies of the research instruments, which later on were translated into Google Forms since no faculty and students have personally gone to school for reporting. Some academic institutions were long wait in prescribing decisions to whether or not allow the researcher to conduct the study since some of them have been used as quarantine facilities as pandemic has been on. As soon as the approval got released, the researcher dealt with different personnel to be generated with the links to furnish to teacher and student-respondents respectively through their Google mail accounts, which had just been known to the respective personnel alone. After such, the gathered data were computed, tallied, and interpreted using the apt statistical tools and treatment.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This table shows the computed Pearson r correlation coefficient value between English teacher's proficiency and students' acquisition of learning phonological English language. As data gleaned from this table, there is no significant relationship that exists between teacher's proficiency in terms of level of importance in phonological accuracy practice, $r=0.349, p>0.05$, level of frequency in phonological accuracy practice, $r=0.444, p>0.05$, and teachers' use of pedagogical strategies, $r=0.142, p>0.05$, and students' acquisition of learning phonological English language. Thus, it is accepting the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between teacher's efficacy practice and students' acquisition of phonological English language learning.

Table 1. Composite Table of the Significant Relationship Between English Teachers' Proficiency and Students' Acquisition of Learning Phonological English Language Using Pearson r Correlation Coefficient

	Computed r	VI	Sig	Decision	VI
Level of importance in phonological accuracy practice	-0.235	LC	0.349	FR	NS
Level of frequency in phonological accuracy practice	-0.192	LC	0.444	FR	NS
Teachers' communicative fluency practice	-0.493	MC	0.038	R	S
Teachers' use of pedagogical strategies	-0.361	LC	0.142	FR	NS

The data shown above are construed by Open Learn Create (n.d.) by stating that it is necessary for a teacher to speak English with his students as frequently as possible, it is equally important for them to hear a diversity of voices and accents. Different models of spoken English can be obtained from audio recordings. This can assist students in pronouncing words correctly. Audio recordings bring variation to courses, and some students will like being in a technology-rich environment.

On the other hand, in terms of teachers' communicative fluency practice, there is a significant relationship being found, $r=0.038, p<0.05$. Thus, it is rejecting the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant relationship between teacher's efficacy practice and students' acquisition of phonological English language.

Table 2. Composite Table of the Significant Relationship Between English Teachers' Approach and Students' Acquisition of Learning Phonological English Language Using Pearson r Correlation Coefficient

	Computed r	VI	Sig	Decision	VI
Teacher's efficacy practice	0.560	MC	0.000	R	S
Teacher's teaching approach	0.735	HC	0.000	R	S
Students' language learning	0.671	MC	0.000	R	S

Legend: *FR- Failed to reject HC- High Correlation LC- Low Correlation MC- Moderate Correlation R- Reject NS- Not significant S- Significant*

Table 2 displays the computed Pearson r correlation coefficient value between the English teacher's approach and the students' acquisition of learning phonological English language. As data gleaned from this table, a significant relationship exists between teacher's efficacy practice, $r=0.560$, $p<0.05$, teacher's teaching approach $r=0.735$, $p<0.05$, students' language learning $r=0.671$, $p<0.05$ and students' acquisition of learning phonological English language. Thus, it is rejecting the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between teacher's teaching approach and students' acquisition of learning phonological English language. The results have been supported by the study conducted by Sabokrouh (2014), which found out that there was a significant relationship between the attitude and the teachers' English efficacy beliefs that was congruent with the profiled studies with regard to links between English students/teachers' attitude toward English as well as their confidence in themselves as English speakers.

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Significant relationship between English teachers' proficiency and students' acquisition of learning phonological English language

The study shows that there is no significant relationship between teacher's proficiency (level of importance in phonological accuracy practice, level of frequency in phonological accuracy practice, and teachers' use of pedagogical strategies) and students' acquisition of learning phonological English language. Thus, it is accepting the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between teacher's efficacy practice and students' acquisition of phonological English language. However, in terms of teachers' communicative fluency practice, there is a significant relationship being found. Thus, it is rejecting the null hypothesis that states that there is no significant relationship between teacher's efficacy practice and students' acquisition of phonological English language learning.

Significant relationship between English teachers' approach and students' acquisition of learning phonological English language

The study shows that there is a significant relationship between teacher's approach (teacher's efficacy practice, teacher's teaching approach, students' language learning) and students' acquisition of learning phonological English language. Thus, it is rejecting the null hypothesis stating that there is no significant relationship between teacher's teaching approach and students' acquisition of learning phonological English language.

Recommendations

Since the study shows that teacher's communicative fluency practice has significant relationship to students' acquisition of learning phonological English language, it is recommended for English teachers to be more aware of all the activities they give their students in dealing with the lessons being taken. Teachers need to be provided ample training on how they conduct these activities efficiently. By doing so, they become more aware of the apt activities they could give students and they may avoid having a teacher-centered way of teaching over and

above the different approaches to enhance students' phonological English language learning. There should be more communicative-functional activities to be involving students to enhance communication skills in English language.

As the study shows a significant relationship between teacher's approach and students' acquisition of learning phonological English language, teachers must reflect on how important their approaches are whenever they take lessons with the students. It is not only that they portray the roles they have as teachers, but their classroom management, treatments, and attitudes toward the students need also to be taken into account. The affective domain among students, aside from the cognitive to develop, also needs to be considered by the English teachers. The subject may not be that easy, but if teachers become more motivating for students to engage in the activities or making them feel that they can improve and do well in the subject, it is believed that students become little by little interested to participate and learn afterwards.

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