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THEORY OF MEASURES CAUSED BY NON-VIABILITY IN QUALITY ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

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Abstract

This Straussian grounded theory study generated an explanatory theory of why English language educators in basic education experience difficulty translating professional knowledge into consistently effective classroom practice. In this study, non-viability refers to the condition in which ideal English language instruction cannot be fully enacted because available resources, teacher preparation, learner readiness, language exposure, socioeconomic support, and institutional conditions are insufficient or uneven. Data were gathered from sixteen purposively selected informants composed of English language teachers, school administrators, stakeholders, and community members in public elementary school settings in Dalaguete, Cebu, Philippines. Semi-structured interviews served as the primary data source, while field notes and selected school-related documents were used to support contextual understanding and triangulation. Data were analyzed through open, axial, and selective coding. Findings showed that participants valued English instruction for literacy development, academic participation, communication competence, and future readiness, but implementation was constrained by resource limitations, uneven teacher preparation, learner diversity, limited English exposure outside school, socioeconomic conditions, multilingual classroom realities, and resistance to instructional change. Seven categories were generated: building a strong English foundation, tailoring language lessons, overcoming language teaching issues, navigating language dynamics, promoting community participation, addressing education and income-related factors, and using innovative tools. The core category, the Theory of Measures Caused by Non-Viability, explains that schools and communities adopt corrective, adaptive, and preventive measures when ideal English instruction becomes difficult to sustain. The theory contributes to English language education by explaining not only what constraints exist but how local actors respond to them in order to maintain learning continuity.

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Introduction

Quality English language basic education requires competent language educators, sufficient resources, responsive school leadership, and inclusive learning environments. In the manuscript converted for this journal copy, the central concern is that teachers and stakeholders recognize the importance of quality English instruction, yet actual classroom conditions often prevent ideal instruction from being fully implemented. This concern is consistent with teacher cognition literature, which emphasizes that what teachers know, believe, and do must be understood in relation to classroom realities and institutional conditions (Borg, 2003).

The central objective of the study was therefore theory generation. Rather than merely listing instructional problems, the inquiry sought to explain the process through which constrained instructional conditions lead schools, teachers, and community actors to adopt corrective, adaptive, and preventive measures in English language instruction.

In the Philippine context, English curriculum implementation is also shaped by curriculum coherence and reform demands. Barrot (2019) found that the Philippine English curriculum needs stronger specificity, internal coherence, and alignment with language teaching principles. This supports the present study because the gap between curriculum expectations and school-level capacity can make quality instruction difficult to sustain, especially when teachers must respond to learner diversity, resource limitations, and reading difficulties.

Inclusive education literature further supports the study because language instruction is affected by learners' socioeconomic background, location, home support, and language exposure. UNESCO (2020) emphasized that inclusion requires attention to learners excluded by poverty, location, language, and other conditions. Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron, and Osher (2020) also underscored that educational practice must respond to learner variability, development, adversity, and supportive relationships. These perspectives justify examining why educators adopt practical measures when ideal English instruction is not viable in existing conditions.

National literacy evidence strengthens the urgency of this inquiry. The SEA-PLM 2019 National Report of the Philippines and PISA 2022 results show continuing concerns in reading and general learning performance. Although such assessments do not directly measure the informants' schools, they provide a national

background for strengthening foundational literacy and English language instruction (UNICEF & SEAMEO, 2021; Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2023).

English instruction in multilingual communities also requires sensitivity to the linguistic realities of learners. Cummins (2000) argued that language, power, and pedagogy intersect in the schooling of bilingual learners, while García and Wei (2014) explained translanguaging as a way of understanding bilingual meaning-making in education. These sources support the study's finding that English language teaching must navigate learners' multilingual backgrounds rather than assume equal English exposure among all learners.

This study focused on public elementary school contexts in Dalaguete, Cebu, where English language educators, administrators, stakeholders, and community members described the constraints and measures surrounding quality English language instruction. The research questions were organized to support the development of the core category: (1) What do English language educators understand about delivering quality language instruction in basic education? (2) What constraining conditions hinder the viability of such instruction? (3) What corrective, adaptive, or preventive measures are adopted by schools and communities in response to these constraints? (4) What reasons explain the adoption of these measures? and (5) What grounded theory explains the relationship among instructional constraints, responses, and the resulting measures?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Quality English Language Instruction and Curriculum Coherence

Quality English language instruction is not only a matter of teacher competence; it is also shaped by curriculum coherence, teaching resources, learner readiness, classroom participation, and institutional support. Barrot (2019) emphasized curriculum specificity and internal coherence in the Philippine English curriculum, while Barrot (2023) showed that technology-assisted feedback can support L2 writing accuracy but may also involve challenges such as overcorrection, cognitive load, and limited metalinguistic explanation. These studies support the manuscript's claim that effective English instruction requires clear curriculum direction and pedagogically guided support.

Technology integration must therefore be treated as instructional support rather than a universal solution. Furenes, Kucirkova, and Bus (2021) found that children's reading outcomes differ depending on

whether reading is done on paper or screen, and that adult support and design features matter. Barrot (2022) reviewed social media as a language learning environment and mapped research on the pedagogical affordances of social media platforms. Together, these works support careful and contextual use of digital tools in English language instruction.

Feedback and formative assessment also support quality instruction. Hattie and Timperley (2007) conceptualized feedback as information about performance or understanding and explained that its effect depends on the type and delivery of feedback. Black and Wiliam (2009) further developed formative assessment theory by connecting assessment practices with learning processes. These sources support the study's recommendation that English language learning should include feedback-driven instruction, monitoring, and responsive classroom adjustment.

Teacher Cognition, Professional Development, and Instructional Change

Teacher cognition is central to the study because the problem concerns why teachers may know what quality English instruction requires but still struggle to implement it. Borg (2003) reviewed research on what language teachers think, know, believe, and do, while Borg (2015) positioned teacher cognition as a major theme in language teacher education. These works support the study's focus on the gap between professional knowledge and classroom enactment.

Professional development literature explains why teacher training must be sustained and connected to classroom realities. Guskey (2002) described teacher change in relation to professional development, classroom practice, and evidence of student learning. Desimone (2009) argued that professional development should be conceptualized through core features such as content focus, active learning, coherence, duration, and collective participation. These sources justify the study's recommendation for sustained English language teacher development rather than one-time training activities.

Linguistically responsive teaching is also necessary in multilingual classrooms. Lucas and Villegas (2013) explained that preparing teachers for culturally and linguistically diverse learners requires orientations, knowledge, and skills that develop across the professional continuum. Canagarajah (2005) emphasized that local knowledge should inform language policy and practice. These studies support the present theory because teachers and communities adopted local measures when imported or idealized instructional models were not fully workable.

Learner Engagement, Motivation, and Classroom Interaction

Learner engagement is a strong support for this study because informants discussed reading programs, tailored lessons, oral practice, and participation as ways to improve English learning. Philp and Duchesne (2016) described engagement in language classrooms as a multidimensional construct involving cognitive, behavioral, social, and emotional dimensions. Hiver, Al-Hoorie, Vitta, and Wu (2024) systematically reviewed 20 years of language engagement research and found the need for clearer definitions and operationalizations of engagement. These sources support the study's emphasis on active participation and purposeful classroom tasks.

Motivation also matters in English language instruction because learner effort affects participation and persistence. Al-Hoorie (2018) conducted a meta-analysis of the L2 motivational self system and reported relationships between motivational components and intended effort. Mercer and Dörnyei (2020) emphasized classroom conditions that promote engagement among language learners. These references support the discussion that English language instruction must include meaningful tasks, learner agency, and classroom experiences that sustain participation.

Interaction is another dimension of language learning. Loewen and Sato (2018) reviewed interaction and instructed second language acquisition, noting the importance of input, output, negotiation for meaning, peer interaction, task characteristics, and computer-mediated interaction. This supports the finding that tailored lessons, speaking practice, reading support, and collaborative activities can help learners use English in meaningful contexts rather than only memorize language forms.

Grounded Theory and Qualitative Trustworthiness

The Straussian grounded theory design was appropriate because the study sought to generate a theory from participants' accounts rather than test a predetermined model. Corbin and Strauss (2015) described grounded theory as a systematic process of coding, categorization, comparison, and theoretical integration. This supports the study's use of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

Qualitative trustworthiness was strengthened through methodological rigor. Lincoln and Guba (1985) established credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability as criteria for naturalistic inquiry. Nassaji (2020) added that good qualitative research should be systematic, robust, well-informed, and

thoroughly documented. These sources support the study's use of careful transcription, repeated review, triangulation, audit trail, and data-grounded theory generation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used the Straussian grounded theory design. This design was appropriate because the purpose was to generate a theory from the experiences and explanations of participants about quality English language instruction. Following Corbin and Strauss (2015), the data were analyzed through open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.

The Straussian tradition was selected because it provides a systematic yet flexible procedure for connecting conditions, actions or interactions, and consequences through open, axial, and selective coding. This orientation was more appropriate than a purely Glaserian approach because the study required explicit category development and relational analysis, and it was more appropriate than a constructivist design because the manuscript aimed to present an explanatory process model grounded in the participants' accounts and contextual data.

Research Environment

The study was conducted in public elementary school settings in Dalaguete, Cebu Province, Philippines. The long locale description from the thesis copy was condensed in this journal version to emphasize the educational context, learner diversity, resource conditions, and school-community participation relevant to English language instruction.

The participating schools were situated in a multilingual community where learners commonly encountered English through formal classroom instruction while continuing to use local languages in home and community settings. The setting was characterized by varied learner readiness, differences in home support, uneven access to learning materials, and active school-community participation. These contextual conditions were important because the generated theory explains why English instruction becomes difficult to sustain when classroom expectations exceed available instructional, social, and material support.

Informants

The informants were sixteen participants composed of English language educators, school administrators, stakeholders, and community members. They were selected through purposive sampling because of their

direct or indirect involvement in English language instruction and school-community support.

Data saturation was determined when recurring responses appeared across participant groups and no substantially new category emerged from additional interviews. Saturation was assessed through repeated comparison of interview accounts, field notes, and the developing coding matrix.

Inclusion criteria required participants to have direct or indirect involvement in English language instruction, learner support, school leadership, or community-based educational assistance. Teachers were included because they implemented English instruction; administrators because they supervised and supported instructional programs; stakeholders because they participated in school improvement and support activities; and community members because they provided perspectives on learner support beyond school. Participants were identified through purposive selection based on relevance to the phenomenon, availability, willingness to participate, and ability to provide information-rich accounts.

Table 1
Profile of Informants

Group	Number	Role	Relevance to the Study
Teachers	4	English language educators	Provided classroom experiences and teaching challenges
Administrators	4	School leaders	Explained instructional support and school-level responses
Stakeholders	4	School-community participants	Explained support systems and practical measures
Community members	4	Community representatives	Shared perspectives on learner support beyond school
Total	16	All informant groups	Data saturation was reached through recurring responses

Research Instrument and Data Gathering

The primary instrument was a semi-structured interview guide focused on participants' understanding of quality English instruction, constraining factors, school and community responses, and reasons for adopting such measures. Interviews were audio-recorded with consent and continued until recurring responses indicated data saturation.

Interviews were conducted in settings that allowed participants to speak freely while maintaining privacy and confidentiality. Audio recordings were transcribed for analysis, and the researcher reviewed the transcripts repeatedly to check completeness, clarify meaning, and prepare the data for coding. Field notes documented contextual observations, recurring ideas, and analytic reflections. Document-based information referred to relevant school-related materials that helped the researcher understand instructional programs, learner

support practices, and school-community initiatives connected with English language instruction.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Open coding identified initial concepts from meaningful participant statements. Axial coding grouped related codes into broader categories. Selective coding integrated the categories into a core explanatory category, which became the Theory of Measures Caused by Non-Viability.

For example, participant accounts describing learners who struggled with vocabulary, reading comprehension, and confidence in English were first coded as reading difficulty, limited vocabulary, and low oral participation. During axial coding, these related codes were grouped under the category Build a Strong English Foundation. During selective coding, the category was connected to the core theory because strengthening foundational skills became a corrective measure adopted when ideal English instruction was not viable under existing learner-readiness conditions.

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

Trustworthiness was supported through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. The study used careful transcription, repeated review, triangulation, contextual description, and documentation of coding decisions. Ethical considerations included informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and the right to withdraw from the study.

Triangulation was conducted by comparing interview accounts with field notes and document-based information to determine whether emerging categories were supported across sources. An audit trail was maintained through coding records, category notes, and reflections on analytic decisions. Ethical safeguards included securing permission from appropriate authorities, obtaining informed consent from participants, protecting participant identities through anonymized labels, and ensuring that participation remained voluntary throughout the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Open Coding Results

Open coding generated fourteen initial codes from participant responses. For journal presentation, raw interview screenshots and thesis appendices were removed and replaced with a concise coding matrix. The open codes show that informants associated quality English instruction with literacy, communication, learner success, teacher competence, reading support,

resource availability, community participation, and adaptive instructional measures.

Table 2

Condensed Qualitative Evidence Supporting the Codes

Category	Condensed participant meaning-unit evidence	Interpretive code	Link to generated theory
Build a Strong English Foundation	Informants consistently described reading, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension as basic conditions for learner participation in English tasks.	Foundational English skills	Corrective measure for learner-readiness gaps
Tailor Language Lessons	Teachers and school actors reported that lessons needed adjustment when learners differed in pace, confidence, exposure, and comprehension.	Differentiated language support	Adaptive measures for learner diversity
Overcome Language Teaching Issues	Participants noted instructional difficulty to limited materials, student needs, large or varied classes, and scarce support systems.	Instructional barriers	Corrective measure for resource and preparation gaps
Navigate Language Dynamics	Accounts reflected that learners moved between local languages and English, requiring teachers to support meaning-making without ignoring multilingual realities.	Multilingual classroom response	Adaptive measures for language exposure gaps
Promote Community Participation	School and community participants emphasized that English instruction was reinforced when families and local stakeholders supported reading and learner motivation.	School-community support	Preventive measure for learning discontinuity
Use Innovative Tools	Participants viewed reading programs, feedback, and technology as useful only when guided by teachers and aligned with learner needs.	Guided instructional innovation	Supportive measure for sustaining learning

Table 2 presents the link between participant accounts and the generated categories more transparent, the study presents condensed meaning-unit evidence from the coded responses. These entries are not presented as verbatim quotations; rather, they summarize participant meanings while protecting anonymity and reducing the risk of identifying informants.

Table 3

Open Coding Matrix

Aspect	Selected Open Codes	Meaning
Knowledge	Quality English instruction; English foundation; literacy is necessary	Participants viewed English as essential for academic and communicative success
Contributing Factors	Resource limitations; teacher preparation gaps; learner diversity; socioeconomic conditions	Instruction became difficult when classroom needs exceeded available support
Measures	Tailored lessons; reading programs; feedback; technology use; community collaboration	Schools adopted adaptive responses to sustain learning
Reasons	Learner comprehension; participation; continued English use; foundational learning	Measures were adopted because conventional instruction alone was insufficient

Axial Coding Results

Axial coding grouped the initial codes into seven categories. These categories explain how schools and communities respond when quality English instruction becomes difficult to sustain under existing conditions.

Table 4
Axial Coding Categories

Category	Related Codes	Interpretive Meaning
Build a Strong English Foundation	Reading, grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, communication	Foundational skills were treated as prerequisites for higher-level language learning
Tailor Language Lessons	Differentiated lessons, micro-skill support, vocabulary development	Instruction was adjusted to learner needs and classroom realities
Overcome Language Teaching Issues	Materials, training, class size, learner diversity	Schools addressed barriers that made ideal instruction difficult
Navigate Language Dynamics	Multiple language, English exposure, multilingual learners	Teachers responded to the multilingual context of learners
Promote Community Participation	Parents, stakeholders, local support	Community involvement extended learning support beyond classrooms
Address Education and Income Factors	Home support, resource access, disruptions	Socioeconomic conditions affected learning continuity
Use Innovative Tools	Reading programs, technology, feedback tools	Innovation was used as a supportive measure, not as a stand-alone solution

Selective Coding and Generated Theory

Selective coding identified the core category: Measures Caused by Non-Viability. This theory explains that when ideal English language instruction becomes difficult because resources, teacher preparation, learner readiness, language exposure, or community support are insufficient, schools and communities adopt corrective and adaptive measures to sustain learning.

Table 5
Generated Theory Model

Core Theme	Measures	Theoretical Explanation
Theory of Measures Caused by Non-Viability	Build strong English foundation	Strengthens literacy and basic language competencies
Theory of Measures Caused by Non-Viability	Tailor language lessons	Adapts instruction to learner diversity and classroom conditions
Theory of Measures Caused by Non-Viability	Overcome language teaching issues	Addresses training, resource, and support limitations
Theory of Measures Caused by Non-Viability	Navigate language dynamics	Responds to multilingual and sociocultural realities
Theory of Measures Caused by Non-Viability	Promote community participation	Extends support through parents and stakeholders
Theory of Measures Caused by Non-Viability	Use innovative tools	Supports learning through guided technology and reading programs

Discussion of Findings

The findings confirm that knowing what quality English instruction requires is different from being able to deliver it under constrained conditions. This supports teacher cognition literature because teachers' knowledge, beliefs, and classroom actions are shaped by institutional and contextual realities (Borg, 2003, 2015). In the present study, teachers valued English instruction but encountered barriers related to materials, learner readiness, professional development, and English exposure.

Building a strong English foundation emerged as a critical category. This category is supported by literacy and assessment-oriented literature because reading comprehension, vocabulary, feedback, and formative assessment contribute to learning continuity (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Black & Wiliam, 2009; Furenes et al., 2021). It also aligns with the national concern for reading and foundational learning reflected in SEA-PLM and PISA results (UNICEF & SEAMEO, 2021; OECD, 2023).

Tailoring language lessons emerged as a necessary instructional response. Differentiated instruction supports the idea that teachers must adjust content, process, and support according to learner readiness and classroom conditions (Tomlinson, 2014). In language education, postmethod pedagogy and local knowledge perspectives also emphasize the need for context-sensitive teaching (Kumaravadivelu, 2001; Canagarajah, 2005).

Overcoming language teaching issues revealed the non-viability of ideal instruction when teacher support, resource access, and learner readiness are insufficient. Professional development literature supports this interpretation because teacher change requires sustained, coherent, and classroom-connected learning opportunities (Guskey, 2002; Desimone, 2009; Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

Navigating language dynamics explains why English instruction in Dalaguete must consider multilingual realities. Cummins (2000) and García and Wei (2014) support this interpretation because bilingual and multilingual learners use language resources shaped by home, community, and school contexts. Lucas and Villegas (2013) further support the need for linguistically responsive teacher preparation.

Community participation strengthened the theory because schools cannot address all English learning constraints independently. Keltz and Wakabayashi (2020) identified communication, inclusive opportunities, parent education, and family activities as key themes in school engagement. In this study, community support became a practical measure for reinforcing reading, motivation, and language use outside the classroom.

Learner engagement and interaction also support the generated theory. Philp and Duchesne (2016), Mercer and Dörnyei (2020), and Hiver et al. (2024) support the view that engagement involves active participation in learning tasks. Loewen and Sato (2018) support the importance of interaction in instructed second language acquisition. These studies justify the use of tailored lessons, oral interaction, collaborative tasks, and reading programs as measures for language development.

Technology and digital tools were interpreted as supportive, not automatic, solutions. Barrot (2022, 2023) and Furenes et al. (2021) support the view that digital tools can assist language learning when they are pedagogically guided and accompanied by teacher mediation. This supports the study's conclusion that innovation must be integrated carefully into English instruction rather than treated as a substitute for teacher

expertise.

Overall, the Theory of Measures Caused by Non-Viability explains that schools and communities adopt measures when ideal instruction cannot operate fully. These measures are corrective because they respond to existing gaps, adaptive because they fit local conditions, and preventive because they reduce the possibility that learners will fall further behind in English language development.

The original contribution of the generated theory lies in its explanation of the movement from constraint to measure. Existing literature explains teacher cognition, differentiated instruction, professional development, multilingual pedagogy, engagement, and technology-supported learning as important domains of practice. The present theory extends these perspectives by showing how these domains become locally organized as corrective, adaptive, and preventive responses when ideal English instruction is not viable in a specific basic education context. Thus, the theory does not simply restate known instructional principles; it explains the conditions under which schools and communities activate those principles as practical measures for sustaining English language learning.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that English language educators and school-community participants understand the importance of quality English instruction for literacy, communication, academic participation, and future readiness. However, this understanding does not automatically lead to effective implementation because instruction is constrained by resources, teacher preparation, learner diversity, limited English exposure, socioeconomic conditions, multilingual realities, and resistance to change.

The Theory of Measures Caused by Non-Viability was generated from the data. The theory explains that when ideal English instruction becomes difficult to implement, schools and communities adopt practical measures to sustain learning. These measures include strengthening foundational English skills, tailoring lessons, addressing teaching barriers, navigating language dynamics, involving communities, and using guided innovations.

The study further concludes that quality English language instruction cannot be sustained by teacher effort alone. It requires coherent curriculum support, sustained professional development, differentiated pedagogy, formative feedback, linguistically responsive teaching, careful technology integration, community participation, and school leadership that recognizes local learner realities.

For practice, schools may strengthen reading programs, provide sustained English teacher development, improve resource allocation, use formative feedback, support differentiated instruction, and involve families and community partners in English language learning. For future research, the generated theory may be refined in other districts, grade levels, multilingual settings, and mixed-method research designs.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited by its qualitative grounded theory design, purposive selection of sixteen informants, and focus on public elementary school settings in Dalaguete, Cebu. These features provided contextual depth but also limited statistical generalization. The findings should therefore be interpreted as analytically transferable rather than universally representative of all Philippine schools. The generated theory also depends on participants' accounts, field notes, and available document-based information; consequently, future studies may refine, extend, or test the theory in other districts, grade levels, school types, multilingual communities, and mixed-method research designs.

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