



Vernacular-Mediated Instruction in English Classrooms: Teachers' Approaches to Contextualized Teaching and Learning

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Received 04/04/2026

Revised 24/05/2026

Accepted 24/07/2026

Abstract

Background and Aim: In multilingual educational settings, English language teachers often encounter challenges in ensuring students' comprehension when instruction is delivered solely in English. Limited exposure to English outside the classroom may hinder learners' understanding, participation, and confidence in language use. Consequently, teachers frequently utilize the vernacular as a pedagogical resource to facilitate learning and bridge communication gaps. Grounded in Translanguaging Theory, this study explored teachers' experiences in using the vernacular as a contextualization strategy in English language instruction. Specifically, it examined teachers' perceptions of vernacular use, the challenges they encountered, the coping strategies they employed, and the lessons they learned from integrating the vernacular into English classrooms.

Materials and Methods: This study employed a qualitative case study design conducted in a private secondary school in Pagadian City, Philippines. Seven English teachers were purposively selected based on their experience in using the vernacular during instruction. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and field notes. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, categories, and themes related to teachers' experiences and instructional practices.

Results: The findings revealed that teachers perceived the vernacular as a valuable instructional support that enhances students' comprehension, promotes classroom participation, increases learner comfort, and facilitates the explanation of complex concepts. However, teachers also encountered challenges, including difficulties in translating technical terms, students' dependence on teachers for language equivalents, and persistent comprehension difficulties among some learners. To address these concerns, teachers employed various coping strategies such as utilizing external resources, translating explanations, adjusting language use according to instructional needs, providing contextualized examples, and using alternative explanations to clarify concepts. Furthermore, teachers learned that the strategic and balanced integration of the vernacular improves communication and learner engagement while maintaining opportunities for English language development.

Conclusion: The study concludes that the vernacular serves as an effective contextualization tool in English language teaching when used purposefully and in moderation. A balanced application of both the vernacular and English promotes meaningful learning, supports comprehension, and contributes to the gradual development of students' English proficiency in multilingual classroom settings.

Keywords: Case Study; English Language Teaching; Teachers' Experiences; Translanguaging; Vernacular

Introduction

English is widely used as the medium of instruction in language subjects. However, many students struggle to understand lessons when these are delivered entirely in English. In multilingual classrooms, learners often have limited opportunities to use or hear English outside of school, making it difficult for them to follow explanations, understand instructions, and express their own ideas during class discussions. Research has shown that when students are unable to fully understand the language used in instruction, they tend to participate less in classroom activities and may develop feelings of anxiety or insecurity during English lessons (Dewaele, 2016; MacIntyre, 2017). As a result, this challenge affects not only their academic comprehension but also their confidence in using English.

This situation places teachers in a difficult position. While they are expected to teach English using English as much as possible, they must also ensure that meaningful learning takes place among their students. Studies in second language education emphasize that comprehension plays a crucial role in language learning (Gilakjani, 2016). When students fail to understand lesson content, they may rely on memorization instead of developing genuine understanding, which can negatively affect their long-





term language development. Because of this, teachers are encouraged to adopt strategies that make lessons more accessible while still supporting the development of English proficiency.

Recent research highlights the strategic use of learners' first language or vernacular as a helpful support in English instruction. According to Davydova and Hazen (2021), the first language can be used to clarify complex ideas, explain grammar, and provide clearer instructions when necessary. In the same context, Macaro (2018) notes that the limited and purposeful use of the first language can improve students' understanding of lessons without reducing their exposure to English. These findings suggest that the vernacular can function as a tool to support learning rather than act as a barrier to language development.

Although previous studies recognize the benefits of using the first language in English teaching, there is still limited research that examines how teachers actually integrate the vernacular in real classroom settings and how students respond to this practice, particularly within private secondary school contexts where English-only policies are more strictly enforced.

Many existing studies focus on language outcomes, with less attention given to classroom interaction, teacher decision-making, and students' perceptions of vernacular use. In the local context, particularly in English classrooms where English-only instruction is still commonly encouraged, there is a need for more qualitative studies that explore how the vernacular can serve as a bridge to understanding within multilingual classrooms composed of learners with varying levels of exposure to English outside school.

In the local context, particularly in English classrooms where English-only instruction is still commonly encouraged, there is a need for more qualitative studies that explore how the vernacular can serve as a bridge to understanding. The use of learners' first language has been shown to support comprehension, facilitate meaning-making, and enhance participation in the classroom (Ingerpuu-Rümmel, 2018). Moreover, integrating the vernacular in instruction aligns with sociocultural perspectives of learning, which emphasize that language plays a crucial role in mediating cognitive development and knowledge construction (Gumartifa, 2025). In multilingual settings such as the Philippines, the strategic use of the mother tongue can help learners connect prior knowledge to new concepts, thereby improving overall learning outcomes (Perfecto, 2022).

This study is important because it offers insights into how the vernacular can support learning in English classrooms. The findings may help English teachers make more informed decisions about when and how to use the first language without limiting students' exposure to English. School administrators and curriculum planners may also benefit from the results by considering more flexible language policies in multilingual learning environments. Furthermore, this study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on multilingual and inclusive teaching practices.

Viewed through the lens of translanguaging, the use of the vernacular can be understood as a dynamic process in which teachers and students draw from their full linguistic repertoire to support communication and learning. Rather than treating languages as separate systems, translanguaging allows learners to move flexibly between languages, using the vernacular as a scaffold to construct meaning and deepen understanding. In this sense, the integration of the first language in English instruction is not merely a compensatory strategy but a purposeful approach that enhances both comprehension and language development.

The main purpose of this study is to explore the role of the vernacular in teaching English as a second language. Specifically, it investigates the pedagogical strategies teachers employ the vernacular during instruction and how students perceive its role in helping them understand lessons. Through this, the study seeks to gain a deeper understanding of both teachers' and students' experiences in order to highlight how the vernacular can be used as a supportive tool in English language teaching.

Objectives

To guide the direction of this study and provide a clear framework for understanding vernacular use in English language teaching, the following objectives were established. This study examines teachers' experiences in integrating the vernacular as part of their instructional practices, including their views on its effectiveness, the challenges they encounter in the process, and the strategies they apply to





address these difficulties. Additionally, the study seeks to identify the insights and lessons teachers have gained from integrating the vernacular in their teaching. In line with these objectives, this study specifically sought to answer the following questions:

1. How do teachers perceive the use of the vernacular in the English classroom?
2. What challenges do teachers encounter when integrating the vernacular into instruction, and what specific coping mechanisms do they employ to address these challenges?
3. What lessons or insights have teachers gained from using the vernacular as a contextualization strategy in teaching?

Literature review

Use of the Vernacular in English Language Teaching

The use of the vernacular in English language teaching has increasingly gained attention in multilingual education settings. In many bilingual and multilingual classrooms, learners naturally draw upon their entire linguistic repertoire to make sense of new information. Wei and Garcia (2022) describe this process as translanguaging, a practice in which both teachers and students shift between languages to support understanding and communication during instruction.

Similar observations were made by Sun (2022), who emphasized that drawing from learners' first language can facilitate cognitive development and support second language acquisition. In the same way, Mercer et al. (2019) argued that the first language should not be excluded in language classrooms as it can serve as a valuable instructional resource rather than a limitation.

Rather than viewing the vernacular as an obstacle to learning English, translanguaging recognizes it as a resource that can assist learners in constructing meaning. In English as a Second Language (ESL) classrooms, the strategic use of the first language allows teachers to clarify difficult concepts and facilitate communication without replacing English as the primary language of instruction. When used appropriately, the vernacular helps make abstract ideas more accessible and supports meaningful learning among students.

Teachers' Perceptions of Vernacular Use in ESL Classrooms

Teachers' beliefs and perceptions significantly influence how the vernacular is used in the classroom. Macaro (2018) found that many English teachers consider the students' first language to be beneficial when it is used in a controlled and purposeful manner. According to the study, teachers often rely on the vernacular to explain complex ideas, maintain classroom management, and check students' understanding of lesson content.

Likewise, Shuchi and Islam (2016) reported that both teachers and learners viewed the use of the first language as helpful in clarifying lesson content and reducing confusion during discussions. Garcia and Kleyn (2016) also noted that teachers tend to view limited vernacular use as a practical support, particularly in contexts where students have limited English proficiency.

While concerns about its overuse were also expressed, the majority of teachers acknowledged its effectiveness as a form of instructional support rather than a substitute for English. These findings suggest that the vernacular is frequently seen as a practical strategy that helps address comprehension difficulties among learners.

Effects of Vernacular Use on Students' Comprehension

Previous studies have also examined how the use of the vernacular affects students' comprehension. Research conducted by Creese and Blackledge (2015) indicated that students tended to understand lessons more easily when teachers allowed the use of their first language during instruction. The study revealed that learners became more confident and willing to participate in classroom discussions when difficult ideas were explained using familiar language.

In addition, Vanden et al. (2020) highlighted that the use of learners' first language can support vocabulary development and comprehension, particularly at the early stages of language learning. Brevik and Rindal (2020) also found that allowing the use of the first language during classroom interaction can help learners organize thoughts and better understand lesson content.





By connecting new English concepts to their existing linguistic knowledge, students are better able to process and internalize lesson content. This supports the view that the vernacular can play an important role in improving students' comprehension in ESL classrooms.

Challenges in Integrating Vernacular in English Instruction

Despite its potential advantages, integrating the vernacular into English instruction is not without challenges. Capacio et al (2024) pointed out that teachers often struggle to find an appropriate balance between maximizing exposure to English and providing sufficient support through the use of the first language.

In addition, Gleeson and Davison (2016) observed that excessive use of the first language may limit opportunities for authentic English practice if not carefully managed. Capacio (2021) further emphasized that institutional demands for English-only instruction can make teachers hesitant to use the vernacular even when it may benefit students' understanding.

Institutional policies that promote English-only instruction, concerns about limiting students' opportunities to practice English, and uncertainty regarding when and how much vernacular use is appropriate are among the common difficulties faced by teachers. These challenges require educators to make careful instructional decisions to ensure that the vernacular supports rather than hinders language development.

Coping Strategies and Translanguaging Practices

In response to these challenges, teachers have developed various strategies to effectively integrate the vernacular into classroom instruction. Canagarajah (2016) highlighted several translanguaging practices, such as code-switching, explaining key concepts in the first language, and reinforcing information using familiar terms.

These approaches enable teachers to manage classroom interaction more effectively while reducing students' confusion and supporting lesson comprehension. Through flexible language practices, teachers are able to respond to learners' needs without compromising English as the main language of instruction. Such strategies demonstrate how educators adapt their teaching practices in multilingual learning environments.

Research Framework

This study is grounded in Translanguaging Theory as proposed by Wei and Garcia (2022), which explains how teachers and learners use multiple languages as resources for constructing meaning and facilitating learning. Translanguaging enables teachers to shift. Through translanguaging, teachers can shift between English and the vernacular to explain difficult concepts, give clearer instructions, and support students' understanding during classroom interaction.

In the context of English language teaching, this perspective acknowledges that the use of students' first language does not necessarily hinder English language development. Instead, it can serve as a supportive tool that encourages comprehension and promotes more active class participation. Guided by this theoretical perspective, the present study considers the vernacular as a pedagogical resource that teachers can utilize to address learning gaps and classroom challenges.

Translanguaging Theory provides a useful lens for examining teachers' experiences, including their perceptions, the challenges they encounter, the strategies they employ, and the insights they gain from integrating the vernacular into English instruction.



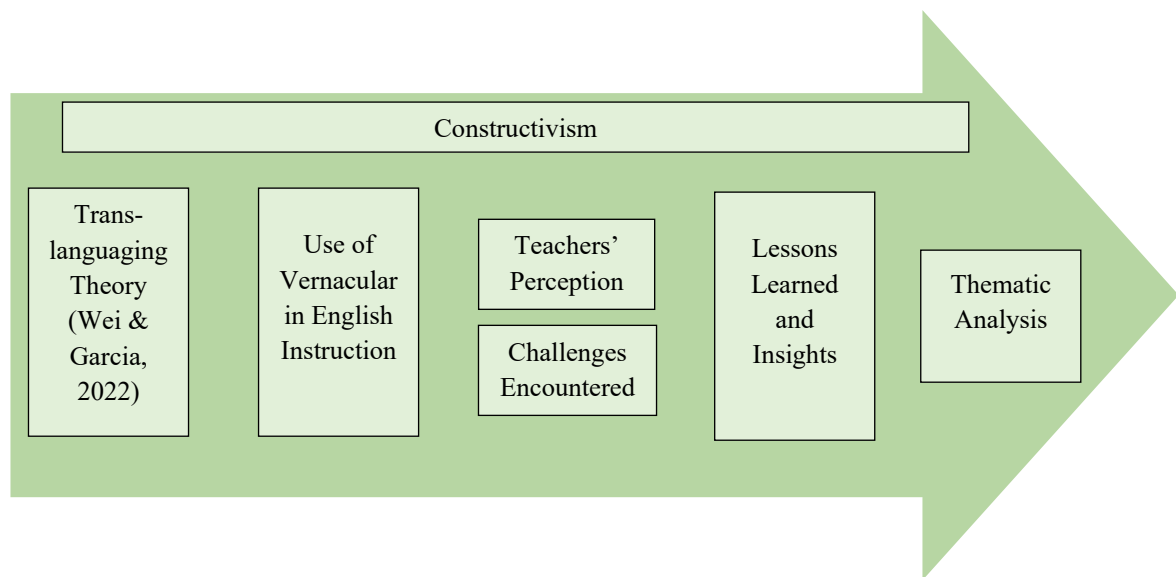


Figure 1: Research Framework

Methodology

Research Design

This study utilized a qualitative case study design based on the approach outlined by Merriam (1998). This design was appropriate for examining teachers' experiences and instructional practices within their actual classroom setting. It enabled the researchers to gather in-depth information through interviews and observations while considering diverse perspectives on the use of the vernacular. By employing a case study approach, the research captured the complexities of teachers' decision-making when integrating the vernacular and gained a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in a private secondary school in Pagadian City. The selected institution provides a multilingual learning environment where English is primarily used as the medium of instruction in classroom teaching. The presence of students from varied linguistic backgrounds made the setting appropriate for examining how teachers incorporate the vernacular in their English language instruction.

Consistent with the qualitative case study design, the school served as the bounded context of the study, allowing for an in-depth examination of teachers' instructional practices and their interactions with students within the natural classroom environment (Merriam, 1998).

Research Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants of this study were English Teachers (ETs) who regularly handled language subjects in the selected school. In keeping with the qualitative case study design, purposive sampling was employed to identify teachers who had prior experience using the vernacular in their instructional practices.

This sampling approach ensured that the selected participants were directly involved in the context under investigation and were capable of providing relevant and detailed insights into the use of the vernacular as a teaching strategy. Seven English Teachers (ETs) were chosen to allow for a more in-depth examination of their experiences, classroom practices, and personal reflections. This method is consistent with the recommendation of Merriam (1998) to select bounded and information-rich participants in qualitative research.



Research Instruments

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The use of semi-structured interviews provided teachers with the opportunity to share their perceptions, the challenges they encountered, the coping strategies they employed, and the lessons they learned based on their teaching experiences. Classroom observations, on the other hand, offered direct insight into how the vernacular was incorporated into actual instructional practices.

Field notes were also utilized to record classroom interactions, teaching decisions, and other significant events observed throughout the study. Taken together, these data collection tools enabled the researchers to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the case, which is recommended in qualitative case study research (Merriam, 1998).

Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering process followed a structured approach to ensure that relevant and detailed information was obtained while upholding ethical standards throughout the study. Initially, permission was sought from the school principal to conduct the research in the selected classrooms. Upon receiving approval, the researchers explained the purpose of the study, including the expectations from the participants, after which informed consent was secured from the participating teachers.

Following this, classroom observations were carried out during English lessons, allowing the researchers to take detailed notes on how teachers incorporated the vernacular to support student learning. After the observation phase, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the selected participants.

During the interviews, teachers were asked to share their perceptions, the challenges they encountered, the coping strategies they employed, and the lessons they learned from using the vernacular in their instructional practices. Throughout the entire process, careful attention was given to ensure that the data collected were accurate, complete, and sufficiently detailed to provide a meaningful understanding of the teachers' experiences.

Throughout the entire process, careful attention was given to ensure that the data collected were accurate, complete, and sufficiently detailed to provide a meaningful understanding of the teachers' experiences. The use of multiple data sources, including interview responses, classroom observations, and field notes, ensured data triangulation, which strengthened the credibility and rigor of the findings. This approach is consistent with qualitative case study research, where different forms of evidence are utilized to develop a more comprehensive and well-supported understanding of the case (Merriam, 1998).

Data Analysis

All the collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which is widely applied in qualitative case study research. The researchers carefully examined the interview transcripts and observation notes to identify recurring patterns, categories, and emerging themes related to teachers' perceptions, the challenges they encountered, the coping strategies they adopted, and the lessons they gained from their teaching experiences.

Following the framework introduced by Clarke and Braun (2017), the analysis involved several stages, including familiarization with the data, initial coding, identification of potential themes, review and refinement of these themes, and the final presentation of the findings. The identified codes were organized into broader thematic categories in order to present a clearer understanding of how the vernacular was used in English language instruction.

The analysis placed particular emphasis on teachers' experiences in the classroom, providing meaningful insights into the ways in which the vernacular supported both teaching practices and student learning in multilingual classroom contexts.

The coding process was carried out manually using systematic organization techniques, such as grouping codes into categories and themes through repeated review and comparison of the data.



Results and Discussion

The Perceptions of English Teachers on the Use of Vernacular in English Classes

As the researchers sought the truth behind the perceptions of the seven English Teachers (ETs) on the use of Vernacular in English Classes, they determined the categories: (1) Improved Student Comprehension; (2) Increased Participation and Engagement; (3) Comfortability; (4) Ease of Teaching; (5) Clarified Concepts; and (6) Usage Needs Limitation.

Improved Student Comprehension:

Students really comprehend the lesson when vernacular is used. (ET01)

They understand immediately. (ET02)

You can see that they grasp the point right away. (ET03)

It helps both the teacher and the students understand the explanation better. (ET04)

Explaining the concept in vernacular helps them understand the lesson more clearly. (ET05)

They nod and agree. (ET06)

There is understanding within conversations. (ET07)

Increased Participation and Engagement:

They participate more when they are allowed to use the vernacular. (ET01)

Students can express themselves better, understand, and enjoy the lesson more. (ET05)

Comfortability:

Most students are more comfortable using Cebuano. (ET01)

Many students prefer to answer in Bisaya. (ET04)

When I speak Bisaya, students tend to answer in Bisaya. (ET07)

Ease of Teaching:

It makes teaching easier. (ET02)

Using Cebuano is easier. (ET03)

It definitely helps in teaching. (ET06)

Clarified Concepts:

If students ask for clarification, that is usually when I decide to use the vernacular. (ET04)

Clarification is sometimes given in Bisaya. (ET06)

Usage Needs Limitation:

Sometimes I think it is good, but sometimes I think it should not be used too much. (ET01)

I think it is acceptable for teachers to use some vernacular in class. (ET05)

When teaching, it is helpful to use a small amount of vernacular so that students can understand the lesson better. (ET07)

Staying in proximity to the categories, the researchers noticed the diverse yet related and relevant perceptions of the English Teachers as regards the use of Vernacular in English Language Teaching. Be that as it may, the researchers deduced the categorical expression: English teachers' perceptions of the use of the vernacular in English classes highlight its role in improving student comprehension, increasing participation and engagement, promoting learner comfort, facilitating ease of teaching, clarifying complex concepts, and the need for its limited and strategic use during instruction.

The responses of the English teachers indicate that the use of the vernacular plays a supportive role in English language instruction, particularly in helping students comprehend lesson content and participate actively in classroom discussions. Teachers observed that learners tend to be more responsive and confident when familiar language is used to explain complex ideas, especially when struggling with specific English terms or instructions.

Furthermore, the vernacular creates a more comfortable classroom atmosphere that encourages students to express their thoughts more freely. Some participants noted that explaining difficult concepts in the vernacular makes the teaching process more manageable, although they emphasized using it in moderation to avoid limiting English exposure.

These observations are supported by Macaro (2018), who noted that the purposeful use of learners' first language can enhance comprehension and classroom interaction in second language learning. In alignment with this, Wei and Garcia (2022) explained that learners rely on their entire linguistic repertoire to construct meaning, suggesting that the vernacular functions as a strategic



instructional support. Ultimately, the vernacular serves as a bridge that facilitates understanding while allowing students to gradually develop English proficiency.

The Challenges Teachers Face when Using Vernacular in English Classes:

As the researchers sought the truth behind the challenges the seven English Teachers (ETs) face in their use of the Vernacular in their English Classes, they determined the categories: (1) Difficulty Translating Terms; (2) Students' Dependence on Teachers for Translation; and (3) Persistent Comprehension Difficulties among Students.

Difficulty Translating Terms:

I forget the Cebuano translation of certain English words. (ET02)

It becomes difficult to translate some terms into Cebuano. (ET05)

Students' Dependence on Teachers for Translation:

One difficulty is when students treat you like a dictionary. (ET01)

They ask me for the English equivalent of certain Bisaya words. (ET03)

They would ask, "What is the English word ma'am?" (ET07)

Persistent Comprehension Difficulties among Students:

There are still students who do not understand. (ET04)

Many students are still below their grade level in terms of their comprehension. (ET06)

Keeping in mind the details, the researchers noticed the varied challenges English Teachers face in English Language Teaching that lead them to the use of Vernacular. The researchers reached the categorical expression: The challenges encountered by English teachers in using the vernacular during instruction are characterized by difficulties in translating technical terms, students' increasing reliance on teachers for language equivalents, and persistent comprehension gaps among learners despite the use of familiar language.

The responses provided by the participating teachers reveal that although the vernacular can be used to support students' understanding, its integration in English instruction is accompanied by certain difficulties. One of the most common challenges identified was the difficulty in translating specific English terms accurately into the local language, especially when dealing with technical or abstract concepts.

In addition, teachers noted that some students tend to become overly dependent on them for translation, often relying on the teacher for word equivalents rather than attempting to comprehend the lesson independently. Despite the use of the vernacular to clarify ideas, there were also instances in which learners continued to struggle with comprehension, indicating that language support alone may not fully address the diverse learning needs present in the classroom.

From the perspective of Translanguaging Theory, these challenges reflect the complex nature of language use in multilingual learning environments. Wei and Garcia (2022) emphasized that while learners draw on their full linguistic repertoire to construct meaning, the process of shifting between languages requires careful instructional decisions on the part of the teacher.

In this context, teachers are expected to manage the use of both English and the vernacular in ways that support understanding without fostering overreliance on translation. This suggests that translanguaging is not simply about the presence of multiple languages in instruction but involves the strategic use of linguistic resources to facilitate learning, while still promoting students' gradual development of proficiency in the target language.

The Coping Strategies Teachers Employ to Address Challenges in English Instruction:

As the researchers sought the truth behind the coping mechanisms of the seven English Teachers (ETs) as regards the varied challenges faced, they determined the categories: (1) Using Online or External Resources; (2) Translating Explanations Within Languages; (3) Adjusting Language Use with Reference to the Activity; (4) Using Examples and Instructional Materials; and (5) Finding Alternative Explanations.

Using Online or External Resources:

I search for the meaning of the word on the internet and then explain it to the students. (ET02)

Use resources and be resourceful. (ET06)



Translating Explanations Within Languages:

I first explain it in English and then translate it into Cebuano. (ET01)

I translate it into the vernacular so they can understand it better. (ET04)

I sometimes explain it directly in Bisaya so that it becomes clearer. (ET05)

Adjusting Language Use with Reference to the Activity:

I tend to use vernacular more during reporting and oral recitation. (ET03)

I tend to use more vernacular when teaching research because it is very technical. (ET07)

Using Examples and Instructional Materials:

I give them examples and show them actual research books or published studies. (ET01)

Showing them real examples helps them understand the lesson better. (ET06)

Finding Alternative Explanations:

Teachers should always find ways to help students understand the lesson. (ET02)

As long as a teacher is resourceful, the strategy usually works. (ET03)

I try to find other ways to explain the lesson. (ET04)

Staying in proximity to the categories, the researchers noticed the diverse yet related and relevant coping mechanisms of the English Teachers to counter the challenges they faced. With those, the researchers deduced the categorical expression: The coping strategies employed by English teachers in addressing instructional challenges involve the use of external resources, translation of explanations between languages, adjustment of language use based on lesson requirements, utilization of examples and instructional materials, and the adoption of alternative approaches to facilitate students' understanding.

The findings indicate that teachers apply a range of strategies to manage the challenges encountered when integrating the vernacular into English instruction. Some participants reported utilizing online or external resources to clarify unfamiliar terms and provide accurate explanations for students. Others described translating explanations between English and the vernacular to make lesson content more accessible. Teachers also noted that the extent to which the vernacular is used often depends on the nature of the classroom activity, such as during reporting or when explaining technical concepts in research subjects.

Additionally, the use of concrete examples and instructional materials was found to support learners' understanding, particularly when students encountered difficulty in processing abstract ideas. In situations where comprehension gaps persisted, teachers reported finding alternative ways to explain the lesson in order to ensure that learning takes place.

From the perspective of Translanguaging Theory, these coping mechanisms may be seen as forms of pedagogical decision-making that allow teachers to draw upon multiple linguistic resources to support student learning. Wei and Garcia (2022) emphasized that learners construct meaning by using their entire linguistic repertoire, suggesting that the flexible use of both languages can enhance classroom interaction and comprehension.

With that being said, Canagarajah (2016) noted that strategies such as code-switching and contextualized explanations can assist learners in negotiating meaning and making sense of complex ideas in multilingual learning environments. These practices reflect how teachers adapt their instructional approaches to address learners' needs while maintaining English as the primary language of instruction.

Lessons Learned by Teachers from Using Vernacular as a Contextualization Strategy:

As the researchers sought the truth behind the perceptions of the seven English Teachers (ETs) on the use of Vernacular in English Classes, they determined categories: (1) Contextualization Leads to Better Communication; and (2) Utilization of Local and Universal Languages Depends on the Demand.

Contextualization Leads to Better Communication:

It made learning easier for the students. (ET01)

In research, students understand better when I explain concepts in Cebuano. (ET02)

Explaining the concept in the vernacular helps them understand the lesson clearly. (ET03)



They understand the lesson more easily, and they participate more actively. (ET04)

Students can relate more when the teacher uses the vernacular, which encourages them to participate more actively in class. (ET05)

Students understand better when dialogue is explained in Bisaya and when their names are used as examples. (ET06)

The use of the vernacular really helps in teaching. (ET07)

Utilization of Local and Universal Languages Depends on the Demand.:

Teachers should not rely entirely on the vernacular. (ET01)

Teachers can mix both languages, but the vernacular shall be used sparingly. (ET03)

It should only be used when giving examples, when students ask for clarification, or when

They are having difficulty understanding the lesson. (ET05)

Keeping in the vicinity of details, the researchers captured the lessons these English Teachers realized with regard to their journey. With that, researchers reached the categorical expression: The lessons learned by teachers from using the vernacular as a contextualization strategy highlight its role in improving communication and learner engagement, while emphasizing the importance of adjusting the use of local and universal languages based on instructional demands.

The responses of the participating teachers suggest that the use of the vernacular as a form of contextualization contributes to more effective classroom communication and better learner engagement. Teachers observed that students tend to understand lessons more easily when concepts are explained using familiar language, particularly in subjects that involve technical or abstract content. The vernacular also helps learners relate lesson content to their own experiences, allowing them to participate more actively during discussions. However, participants also acknowledged that while the use of the vernacular may support comprehension, it should not entirely replace English in classroom instruction. Instead, both local and universal languages need to be used in accordance with the demands of the lesson, particularly when clarification or examples are necessary.

Viewed through the lens of Translanguaging Theory, these insights reflect the importance of flexible language practices in facilitating meaningful learning in multilingual classrooms. Wei and Garcia (2022) emphasized that learners construct meaning by drawing on their full linguistic repertoire, enabling them to connect new knowledge with their existing understanding.

In the same way, Brevik and Rindal (2020) noted that the strategic use of learners' first language can function as a scaffold that supports comprehension while still promoting the development of second language proficiency. This suggests that when used appropriately, the vernacular can serve as a contextual tool that bridges understanding without limiting students' exposure to English.

With the facts that were presented, the researchers had finally grasped the total experiences of the English Teachers (ETs). The researchers culminate with this expression: Teachers' experiences with the use of the vernacular in English instruction reflect its perceived effectiveness in enhancing student comprehension, engagement, and instructional clarity, while revealing challenges related to translation and learner dependence that are addressed through adaptive coping strategies, leading to instructional insights on the contextualized and balanced use of local and target languages based on classroom demands.

Discussion

The outcomes of the study showed that English teachers considered the use of the vernacular as a useful instructional aid that helps students' comprehension, involvement, engagement, and comfort in learning English. This conclusion is in line with the idea of translanguaging that considers learners' linguistic resources as useful resources for meaning-making and knowledge development. Teachers found that pupils understood lessons better when challenging subjects were explained in the native language. This aligns with García and Wei (2022), who claimed that learners benefit from drawing on their full language repertoire to support understanding and communication in multilingual classrooms. Similarly, Macaro (2018) observed that strategically using the learners' native language can promote comprehension without limiting prospects for second language acquisition.



The usage of the vernacular was also proven to promote student participation and classroom engagement. Teachers noted that pupils were more eager to answer questions and share thoughts when education involved familiar terminology. The finding supports earlier research which suggests that translanguaging approaches foster more inclusive and participatory learning settings. Creese and Blackledge (2015) argue that the flexible use of different languages allows learners to negotiate meaning with greater confidence and to participate more actively in classroom conversation. Similarly, Brevik and Rindal (2020) discovered that when learners are allowed to utilize their original language in classroom interaction, they are more engaged and have a greater knowledge of the content of the lessons.

Teachers, however, also experienced difficulties when utilizing the vernacular. A common problem was the translation of technical or abstract terminology of English into the local tongue. Another problem was the increased reliance of pupils on teachers for direct translations. These observations are in line with those of Gleeson and Davison (2016), who found that over-reliance on learners' first language can restrict possibilities for real practice in the target language. The present study thus underscores the need to balance instructional support and meaningful exposure to English. In response to the problems, teachers adopted a variety of coping methods, including the translation of explanations, drawing on external resources, offering contextualized examples, and changing language use in relation to class expectations. Such techniques resonate with the translanguaging pedagogies discussed by Canagarajah (2016), who suggested that flexible movement across languages can aid comprehension while retaining academic rigor. The use of contextualized examples and instructional scaffolding further supports the sociocultural perspectives of learning, which stress the function of language as a mediating instrument for cognitive development.

Another important conclusion was that teachers learned the vernacular in a selective fashion and not thoroughly. Participants agreed that the vernacular provides a helpful bridge to comprehension, but that English should remain the instructional language to support continuous language development. This is in agreement with Wei and García (2022), who pointed out that translanguaging is not designed to replace the target language, but to help learners to access content and build multilingual competence. Similarly, Van den Bosch et al. (2020) discovered that strategic support of the first language can assist comprehension and positively impact the development of second language literacy. In sum, the data imply that vernacular-mediated education is an important contextualization method in multilingual English classrooms. The vernacular, when utilized intentionally and in moderation, facilitates understanding, engagement, and clarity of instruction, while promoting incremental improvement of English language ability. These findings add to the expanding body of literature supporting the use of flexible and context-sensitive language strategies in multilingual educational contexts.

Knowledge Contribution

The findings of the study indicate that teachers view the vernacular as a useful instructional support in English classes, particularly in enhancing students' understanding, encouraging active participation, and promoting clearer communication during lessons. While the use of the vernacular contributes to improved learning, teachers also encounter certain challenges, such as difficulties in translating specific terms and students' tendency to rely on the teacher for clarification.

To manage these concerns, teachers adopt various strategies, including shifting between languages, using relevant examples and available resources, and adjusting their language use depending on the nature of the lesson. Through these experiences, teachers have come to recognize that the vernacular is most effective when applied in a purposeful and balanced manner. Rather than replacing English, it serves as a complementary tool that supports comprehension while allowing students to gradually develop their proficiency in the target language.

In practice, this balance is achieved by using the vernacular selectively, such as during the clarification of complex concepts, giving instructions, or addressing student confusion, while maintaining English as the primary medium during lesson delivery and practice activities. This



approach enables teachers to provide necessary support without limiting students' exposure to English.

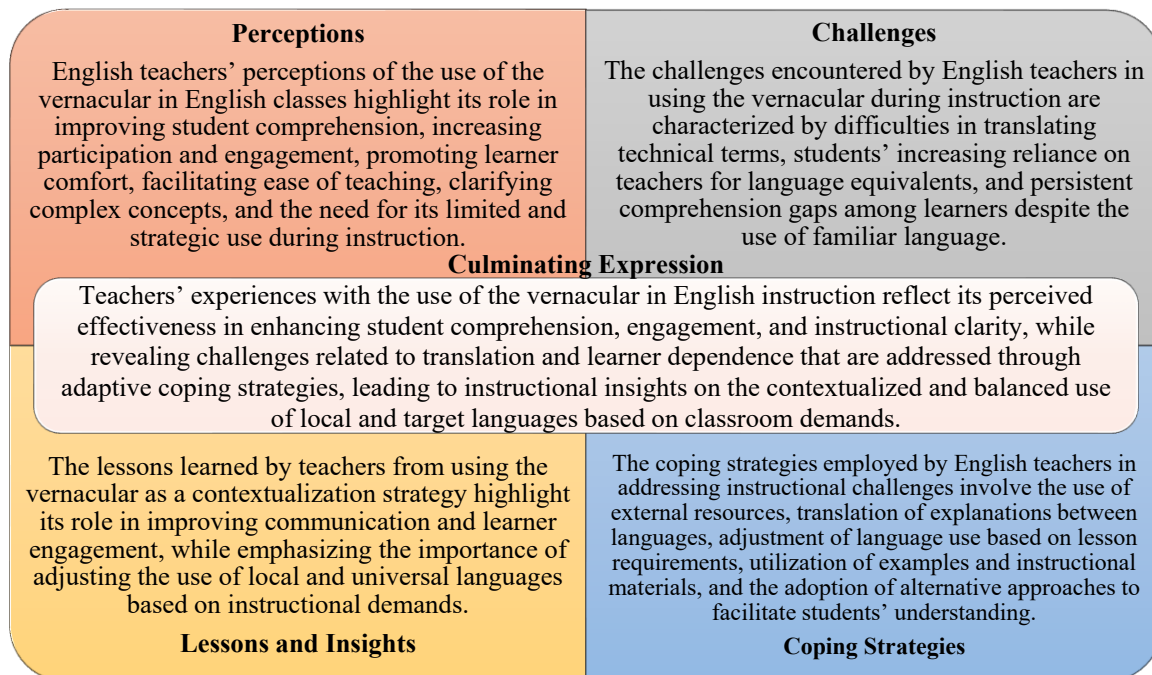


Figure 2 Knowledge Contribution

Recommendations

1. **Teachers** may consider using the vernacular strategically to support students' understanding, particularly when explaining complex concepts, providing examples, or offering clarification during instruction.
2. **Teachers** could adopt coping strategies such as utilizing online or external resources, translating explanations, adjusting language use based on the activity, and providing concrete examples to address challenges.
3. **Students** should be encouraged to participate actively in classroom discussions by utilizing both English and the vernacular to build confidence and improve comprehension.
4. **School Administrators** could provide professional development and training opportunities that help teachers integrate the vernacular into English instruction while maintaining language proficiency goals.
5. **Future Researchers** may explore additional instructional approaches that utilize the vernacular and examine their influence on English proficiency across different grade levels and subject areas.

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