

English Teachers' Experiences of Implementing Communicative Language Teaching in Pioneering Senior High School Alternative Learning System Contexts: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has long been promoted as a learner-centered approach that prioritizes meaningful interaction and real-life communication. However, its implementation in non-traditional educational settings, such as the Senior High School Alternative Learning System (ALS), remains underexplored. This study explores the lived experiences of English teachers implementing CLT within a pioneering ALS context, with the aim of understanding how they interpret and construct meaning from their pedagogical practices in a flexible and diverse learning environment. Guided by Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), this qualitative study involved seven DepEd English teachers teaching in the first-year implementation of the SHS-ALS program. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews and analyzed following the IPA framework of Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009), allowing for both idiographic and cross-case thematic interpretation.

Findings reveal that CLT implementation in ALS is a dynamic, context-sensitive, and transformative process shaped by pedagogical demands and structural constraints. Six superordinate themes emerged: (1) negotiating linguistic limitations through multilingual, scaffolded, and confidence-building communication; (2) contextualizing CLT into functional, real-life, and localized learning; (3) implementing CLT within structural constraints and disrupted learning conditions; (4) reframing pedagogy from grammar-centered instruction to meaningful, learner-centered communication; (5) reconstructing the teacher's role as facilitator, mentor, guide, and affective support; and (6) undergoing personal-professional transformation through reflective, adaptive, and empathetic practice. These themes highlight teachers' continuous adaptation to learners' diverse backgrounds, limited proficiency, and irregular participation, while prioritizing communication over accuracy.

The study concludes that CLT in the ALS context is not merely a methodological approach but a flexible, relational, and human-centered practice. It necessitates contextualization, empathy, and instructional innovation, while simultaneously reshaping teacher identity. These findings contribute to the growing discourse on language teaching in alternative education and underscore the importance of context-responsive pedagogies and supportive policy frameworks.

Keywords: Communicative Language Teaching, Alternative Learning System, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, contextualized instruction, learner-centered teaching

INTRODUCTION

The implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) across diverse educational contexts has been widely examined, with consistent findings pointing to a gap between its theoretical ideals and classroom realities. While CLT emphasizes meaningful interaction and the development of communicative competence, its successful application often assumes stable instructional conditions, sufficient resources, and learners with

adequate linguistic readiness— such conditions that are frequently absent in alternative and flexible learning environments such as the Alternative Learning System (ALS).

Across international contexts, studies reveal that teachers generally demonstrate conceptual understanding of CLT but encounter significant challenges in translating these principles into practice. For instance, Chang and Suparmi (2020) and Sato and Loewen (2020) both highlight how structural constraints such as limited instructional time, lack of materials, and insufficient training shape classroom implementation, often resulting in partial or modified use of CLT strategies. Similarly, Gloriez (2022) reframes CLT not as a fixed method but as a flexible pedagogical orientation, emphasizing that teachers adapt communicative practices based on contextual demands. Extending this perspective, Bartlett (2020) demonstrates that the tension between curricular expectations and classroom realities does not merely affect instructional delivery but also reshapes teachers' professional identities. Taken together, these studies suggest that CLT implementation is not a straightforward application of theory, but an interpretative process mediated by contextual limitations.

In the Philippine context, research similarly underscores the contextual complexities of CLT, particularly within resource-constrained and alternative learning environments. Banagbanag (2020) found that while Filipino teachers hold positive attitudes toward CLT, systemic factors such as large class sizes and assessment pressures limit its full implementation. Parallel findings by the IAFOR ACLL Research Team (2016) emphasize that teacher cognitions like beliefs, experiences, and interpretations play a crucial role in shaping classroom practices, signifying that CLT enactment is deeply influenced by how teachers make sense of their teaching contexts. These insights are further supported by Nguyen and Ngo (2021), who argue that CLT practices are inherently contextual and cannot be detached from sociocultural and institutional realities.

More recent studies focusing on ALS and similar alternative education settings highlight an additional layer of complexity— the interplay between pedagogical adaptation and learners' lived realities. Francisco and Buri (2024) and Barcelona and Protacio (2025) both document how teachers navigate learner diversity, irregular attendance, and limited instructional continuity, often requiring them to adopt highly flexible and context-sensitive strategies. These findings resonate with Sitoy and Sonsona (2023), who note that while communicative tasks enhance engagement, their sustainability is constrained by institutional and logistical factors. Meanwhile, the Cebu Community Academy Research Group (2024) provides a complementary learner perspective, demonstrating that communicative and interactive approaches can positively influence motivation, particularly when aligned with learners' real-life contexts.

Despite these contributions, a critical gap remains in the literature. Existing studies predominantly focus on instructional strategies, teacher attitudes, or learner outcomes, often employing survey-based or descriptive qualitative approaches. While these studies provide valuable insights into what teachers do and what challenges they encounter, they offer limited understanding of how teachers interpret and construct meaning from these experiences. Moreover, although CLT has been extensively studied in mainstream educational settings, there is a relative scarcity of research examining its implementation within pioneering Senior High School ALS context, particularly using an interpretative-phenomenological lens. This gap is significant because teaching in ALS involves not only adapting pedagogy but also rethinking the very purpose and meaning of language education under conditions of discontinuity, diversity, and constraint.

Anchored in Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), this study responds to these gaps by moving beyond descriptive accounts toward a deeper exploration of teachers' lived experiences and meaning-making processes. By focusing on how English teachers interpret, negotiate, and reconstruct CLT within a pioneering ALS context, the study contributes a more nuanced and theoretically grounded understanding of language teaching in alternative education. In doing so, it positions CLT not merely as a pedagogical method but as a dynamic, contextually mediated practice shaped by teachers' interpretations, learners' realities, and institutional conditions.

Research Questions

This study aimed to explore and interpret the lived experiences of English teachers implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) within a pioneering Senior High School Alternative Learning System (ALS) contexts. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of English teachers in implementing Communicative Language Teaching in the pioneering Senior High School Alternative Learning System settings?
2. How do these teachers interpret and construct meaning from their experiences of implementing Communicative Language Teaching within the Alternative Learning System?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

Communicative Language Teaching emerged as a response to traditional form-focused approaches such as the Grammar-Translation Method and Audio-Lingual Method, shifting the emphasis from linguistic accuracy to meaningful communication. Grounded in the concept of communicative competence, initially proposed by Hymes (1972) and later elaborated by Canale and Swain (1980), CLT conceptualizes language as a social tool used for interaction across diverse contexts. Communicative competence includes grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic components, emphasizing not only correctness but also appropriateness and effectiveness in communication.

Despite its strong theoretical foundation, the implementation of CLT has been widely debated in the literature. While CLT promotes learner-centered interaction, authentic communication, and integration of language skills, studies consistently show that its application is shaped by contextual realities. For instance, Chang and Suparmi (2020) identified structural barriers such as limited instructional time, insufficient training, and lack of resources, which prevent full implementation of CLT principles. Likewise, Sato and Loewen (2020) found that teachers often adapt or modify CLT practices, revealing a gap between theoretical ideals and classroom realities.

However, not all studies frame these adaptations as limitations. Gloriez (2022) argues that such modifications reflect the inherent flexibility of CLT, positioning it as a context-sensitive pedagogical orientation rather than a fixed method. In contrast, Bartlett (2020) highlights how tensions between institutional expectations and classroom realities reshape not only instructional practices but also teacher identity. Furthermore, Nguyen and Ngo (2021) emphasize that teachers' beliefs and sociocultural contexts significantly influence how CLT is enacted, aligning with findings from the IAFOR ACLL Research Team (2016), which underscore the role of teacher cognition in shaping communicative practices.

Taken together, these studies suggest that CLT is not uniformly implemented but is continuously negotiated in practice. Rather than viewing deviations from CLT principles as shortcomings, recent scholarship increasingly interprets them as context-driven adaptations. This perspective is particularly relevant in non-traditional educational settings, where teaching conditions differ significantly from those assumed in conventional CLT frameworks.

Alternative Learning System (ALS)

The Alternative Learning System in the Philippines is a non-formal education program designed to provide access to basic education for out-of-school youth and adults (Republic Act No. 9155, 2001; Department of Education [DepEd], 2019). ALS learners are characterized by diverse socio-economic backgrounds, varied educational histories, and irregular participation patterns, making the teaching context fundamentally different from traditional classroom environments.

Existing literature consistently highlights the complexity of teaching in ALS. Francisco and Buri (2024) describe ALS as a setting marked by limited resources, discontinuous instruction, and the need for constant pedagogical adaptation. Similarly, Barcelona and Protacio (2025) emphasize that ALS teachers must continuously negotiate between curriculum expectations and learners' lived realities, often prioritizing flexibility over rigid adherence to instructional plans.

At the learner level, the Cebu Community Academy Research Group (2024) found that ALS learners respond positively to interactive and communicative approaches, particularly when instruction is aligned with real-life

experiences. Nonetheless, structural challenges such as irregular attendance, competing responsibilities, and limited learning continuity remain significant barriers to sustained engagement.

While these studies collectively portray ALS as a context of pedagogical complexity, they also differ in emphasis. Some focus on structural constraints, while others highlight teacher resilience and adaptability. What remains consistent, however, is the recognition that ALS requires instructional approaches that are flexible, contextualized, and responsive. This positions ALS as a critical site for examining how established pedagogical approaches, such as CLT, are reinterpreted and reshaped in practice.

Implementation of Communicative Language Teaching within ALS Context

The intersection of CLT and ALS remains an emerging area of research, with limited studies directly examining how communicative approaches are implemented in alternative education settings. Existing literature indicates that CLT strategies can enhance learner engagement, particularly when aligned with real-world tasks. Sitoy and Sonsona (2023) found that communicative activities promote interaction and participation; yet their effectiveness is often constrained by institutional limitations such as time, resources, and learner readiness.

Correspondingly, Banagbanag (2020) reported that while teachers demonstrate positive attitudes toward CLT, actual implementation is influenced by contextual factors, including class size, assessment demands, and learner proficiency levels. These findings align with broader CLT literature, which emphasizes the role of environmental conditions in shaping instructional practices.

However, most existing studies remain largely descriptive, focusing on strategies, challenges, or outcomes. There is limited attention to how teachers interpret and construct meaning from their experiences in implementing CLT, particularly within ALS contexts. This gap is significant because teaching in ALS involves not only adapting instructional methods but also redefining the purpose and practice of language education in response to learners' diverse realities.

While previous research acknowledges the need for contextualization, it often treats it as an instructional adjustment rather than a central condition for effective communication. In ALS, where learners' participation is shaped by real-life demands, contextualization becomes essential rather than optional. This suggests that CLT in ALS is not merely adapted but fundamentally reconfigured.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), to explore the lived experiences of DepEd English teachers implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in the pioneering batch of Grade 11 learners under the Senior High School Alternative Learning System (ALS) program for the School Year 2025–2026. Qualitative research is appropriate when the goal is to understand how individuals interpret and construct meaning from their experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), originally developed by Jonathan A. Smith in the mid-1990s, is grounded in phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography. It seeks to explore in detail how participants make sense of their personal and social worlds, emphasizing the meanings that experiences hold for them. Central to IPA is the concept of the “double hermeneutic,” wherein participants attempt to make sense of their experiences, and the researcher, in turn, interprets how participants make sense of those experiences (Smith et al., 2009).

As Smith and Nizza (2022) further explain, IPA is particularly suitable for studies that examine professional identity, pedagogical challenges, and meaning-making processes within complex institutional contexts. Similarly, Smith and Fieldsend (2021) describe IPA as a well-established qualitative approach designed to investigate individuals' lived experiences. In this approach, the researcher focuses on participants' personal accounts and the meanings they attach to those experiences. IPA is inherently interpretative and collaborative,

as it involves active engagement between the researcher and the participant in constructing experiential meaning, rather than relying solely on predetermined theoretical frameworks.

Given that this study aimed to understand how English teachers experience and interpret the implementation of CLT within a newly institutionalized SHS-ALS context, IPA was deemed the most appropriate methodological approach. Rather than measuring instructional effectiveness, the study sought to capture the essence of teachers' lived realities specifically how they navigate pedagogical demands, respond to contextual constraints, and construct their professional identities within an inclusive education reform setting. Thus, IPA provides a robust and suitable framework for interpreting teachers' experiences in this pioneering educational context.

Participants

The study involved seven (7) DepEd English teachers currently teaching in the pioneering batch of Grade 11 learners across public secondary schools in the City of Koronadal, all of which are in their first year of implementing the Senior High School–Alternative Learning System (ALS) program for the School Year 2025–2026. These participants were selected through purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling strategy appropriate for qualitative research that intentionally identifies individuals who possess direct and substantial experience of the phenomenon under investigation to ensure the richness and relevance of the data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

In Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), small and relatively homogeneous samples are not only acceptable but methodologically recommended. IPA prioritizes depth over breadth, emphasizing detailed, idiographic examination of each participant's account before identifying patterns across cases (Smith et al., 2009). As explained by Smith and Nizza (2022), IPA studies typically involve between three (3) and ten (10) participants to allow for in-depth, case-by-case analysis while still enabling meaningful cross-case interpretation. Thus, the inclusion of seven participants is both methodologically sufficient and appropriate, as it allows for comprehensive engagement with each teacher's narrative while maintaining analytical rigor.

Participants were selected based on the following inclusion criteria: (a) they must have at least one year of professional teaching experience in their current school assignment; (b) they must hold a specialization or formal teaching duty in English language instruction; and (c) they must have a teaching load in any English-related subject during the first and/or second semester of the initial implementation of the SHS-ALS program among pioneering Grade 11 students for the School Year 2025–2026. These criteria ensured that participants possessed the necessary experiential depth to meaningfully reflect on the implementation of CLT within the ALS context.

Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, it involved a small sample size of seven (7) participants, which is appropriate for Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as it prioritizes depth over generalization (Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Nizza, 2022). Second, the study was conducted in a single geographic location, focusing on public secondary schools implementing the pioneering SHS-ALS program in the City of Koronadal. As such, the findings reflect localized conditions and may not represent other ALS contexts with different resources, institutional support, or learner characteristics (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

In addition, the study was shaped by contextual constraints inherent in the ALS setting, such as irregular attendance, limited instructional time, and diverse learner backgrounds, which influenced both participants' experiences and the data collected. The use of self-reported interview data may also be affected by participants' recall and personal interpretations (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Furthermore, consistent with the interpretative nature of IPA, the findings were co-constructed through the interaction between participants' narratives and the researchers' perspectives, reflecting the "double hermeneutic" process (Smith et al., 2009). Despite these limitations, the study provides meaningful insights into CLT implementation in ALS, and future research may expand on these findings through larger samples, multiple locations, and additional data sources.

Research Instrument

The primary data collection instrument used in this study was the in-depth interview (IDI). In qualitative research, IDI is widely employed to generate rich and detailed accounts of participants' lived experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). This method enables researchers to explore participants' perceptions, emotions, and interpretations of complex phenomena through open-ended and interactive dialogue.

A semi-structured interview guide was developed by the researchers to facilitate the interview process. The guide ensured that questions were open-ended, aligned with the research objectives, and designed to elicit reflective and meaningful narratives from participants (Smith et al., 2009). As emphasized by Kvale and Brinkmann (2015), qualitative interviews aim to understand the world from the participants' perspectives and uncover the meanings embedded in their lived experiences.

The interview guide underwent expert validation to ensure content validity and relevance. Individual in-person interviews were conducted using participants' preferred language to promote authentic expression. Interviews were primarily conducted in English, Filipino, or a combination of both, depending on the participants' comfort level. All interview sessions were audio-recorded with participants' consent and were subsequently transcribed verbatim.

The transcriptions were then translated into English. As the researchers are English teachers by profession, they personally carried out the translation process, ensuring that it was done with careful attention to preserving the original meanings, nuances, and cultural expressions of the participants' responses. This process was essential in maintaining the authenticity of participants' voices and in accurately capturing the complexity of their lived experiences within the ALS teaching context.

Data Gathering Procedure

The study was conducted over a period of two months following the acquisition of the necessary institutional and ethical approvals.

The researchers first coordinated with the ALS Focal Person of the City of Koronadal Division to explain the nature, purpose, and significance of the study. They then requested a list of DepEd public secondary schools that were in their pioneering year or first batch of implementing the Senior High School–Alternative Learning System (SHS-ALS) program for Grade 11 during School Year 2025–2026.

Upon obtaining the list of identified SHS-ALS implementers, the researchers submitted formal letters requesting permission to conduct the study to the school principals of the concerned public secondary schools in the City of Koronadal. During this stage, the researchers clearly communicated the purpose, scope, and relevance of the study to ensure transparency and institutional cooperation.

After approval was granted, the researchers approached the seven identified participants. The nature, objectives, and procedures of the study were thoroughly explained, and informed consent was secured from each participant. They were assured that participation was entirely voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or consequence.

Following this, individual in-depth interviews were conducted using the validated semi-structured interview guide developed by the researchers. Among the seven participants, five participated in face-to-face interviews, while two were interviewed virtually through Google Meet due to distance-related constraints. Each interview lasted approximately 40 to 90 minutes.

For efficient communication and scheduling, participants voluntarily provided contact details such as phone numbers, Facebook, and Messenger accounts. In addition, the researchers prepared individual participant profiles to contextualize the narratives. These profiles included information such as school district affiliation, years of teaching experience, highest educational attainment, current teaching position, designations, subjects

handled in SHS-ALS, and the number of enrolled ALS learners served. These profiles were later presented in the Results and Discussion section to provide a clearer understanding of the participants' professional contexts.

In adherence to ethical research standards, all digital recordings were encrypted and securely stored. In compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173), all identifiable information was kept confidential and anonymized. Original recordings were scheduled for deletion after transcription and verification had been completed.

The data collected were analyzed using the IPA framework, which emphasizes the idiographic and thematic exploration of participants' sense-making. This analytical process enabled the identification of patterns and themes that reflected how English teachers described and interpreted their experiences in implementing CLT within the ALS context.

Data Analysis

The qualitative data in this study were analyzed using the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) framework developed by Jonathan A. Smith, Paul Flowers, and Michael Larkin (2009). IPA was selected to explore and interpret how English teachers make sense of their lived experiences in implementing CLT within the pioneering SHS-ALS context. This approach was considered appropriate because the study sought not only to describe participants' experiences but also to understand the meanings they attached to those experiences.

Consistent with IPA's idiographic and interpretative orientation, the analysis followed four key stages: (1) reading and re-reading the transcripts to achieve immersion and familiarity with the data, (2) initial noting to identify descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual insights, (3) developing emergent themes, and (4) identifying patterns across cases. These stages allowed the researchers to move systematically from detailed individual accounts toward shared meanings across participants.

In the first stage, the researchers repeatedly listened to the audio recordings and reviewed the interview transcripts to gain a holistic understanding of each participant's narrative. During this process, conscious bracketing was practiced minimizing personal assumptions and to foreground the participants' voices. The second stage, initial noting, involved open and pattern coding to capture both explicit statements and underlying meanings, including emotions, beliefs, and cultural or professional nuances embedded in the narratives. From these analytic notes, emergent themes were identified and refined into concise Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) for each participant. In the final stage, themes were examined across the seven cases to identify recurring patterns and points of convergence, leading to the development of Superordinate Themes. This cross-case analysis addressed the research questions by showing how English ALS teachers interpret their experiences and how these experiences influence their personal and professional identities.

Given that IPA is grounded in phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography, the researchers played an active role in the interpretative process. They engaged closely with the data to understand each participant's narrative within its specific context. As English teachers themselves with two researchers employed in public secondary schools and one directly involved in teaching pioneering SHS-ALS Grade 11 learners - the researchers drew upon their professional experiences to deepen their understanding of the phenomenon. While participants interpreted their own experiences, the researchers, in turn, interpreted these interpretations, reflecting the "double hermeneutic" central to IPA. Despite this interpretative involvement, the researchers remained mindful of preserving the uniqueness and authenticity of each participant's lived experience.

Ethical Considerations

The study strictly adhered to the ethical guidelines of the University of the Immaculate Conception Research Ethics Committee (UIC-REC) and the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). Prior to data collection, the researchers secured formal ethics clearance from the UIC-REC to ensure the protection of participants' rights, dignity, privacy, and overall welfare throughout the research process.

The participants were not considered a vulnerable population, as they were competent adults capable of providing informed consent and making independent decisions regarding participation. Nevertheless, appropriate ethical safeguards were strictly observed. To uphold the principle of autonomy, each participant was provided with an Informed Consent Form clearly stating the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, the procedures involved, confidentiality measures, and their right to decline participation or withdraw from the study at any time without personal or professional consequences.

Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained at all stages of the study. All identifying information, including names, school affiliations, and other personally identifiable details, was removed from the transcripts and replaced with pseudonyms or codes (Teacher A, Teacher B, Teacher C, Teacher D, Teacher E, Teacher F, and Teacher G). These codes were consistently used in all research records, analyses, and final reports to protect participants' identities.

In accordance with the principle of beneficence, the researchers ensured that interviews were conducted at times, venues, or virtual platforms most convenient for the participants to minimize disruption to their teaching responsibilities and personal schedules. Participants were also treated with respect and sensitivity throughout the interview process, particularly when discussing professional challenges or personal reflections related to their teaching experiences.

All digital data, including audio recordings, transcripts, and related documents, were securely stored in encrypted and password-protected files accessible only to the researchers. In compliance with data privacy regulations, all records will be permanently deleted after the successful completion of the study and final defense.

The researchers also practiced reflexivity throughout the inquiry by maintaining a research journal to identify and bracket personal assumptions and potential biases, consistent with phenomenological rigor (Smith et al., 2009). This process helped ensure that the findings remained grounded in the participants' actual narratives and faithfully represented their lived experiences.

Finally, continuous guidance was sought from the research adviser to ensure that the study was conducted in a professional, responsible, and ethically sound manner. Access to institutional resources, including library holdings and online academic databases, further supported the quality, rigor, and successful completion of the research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the study's results, providing a thorough analysis and interpretation of data collected from the seven participants. This study aimed to explore and interpret the lived experiences of English teachers implementing CLT within a pioneering SHS-ALS setting and how they construct meaning from these professional experiences.

Table 1. Participants' Profiles

Code	City & District	Years in Teaching	Highest Educational Attainment	Current Teaching Position	Designation	Subject/s Handled in ALS-SHS Grade 11	No. of Enrolled ALS Students
Teacher A	City of Koronadal -District X	9	Master in English	Teacher II	Grade 11 Coordinator	21 st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World	5

Teacher B	City of Koronadal -District X	11	Master in Management Major in Educational Management	Teacher II	School Paper Adviser SHS Literacy Coordinator	Oral Communication in Context	12
Teacher C	City of Koronadal -District X	6	Master of Arts in Education Major in Teaching English as a Second Language	Teacher I	Class Adviser SHS Reading Coordinator Journalism Coach	Oral Communication in Context Reading and Writing Skills	21
Teacher D	City of Koronadal -District X	3	Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in Technology and Livelihood Education	Teacher I	English as a Second Language Teacher	Oral Communication in Context Reading and Writing Skills 21 st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World	32
Teacher E	City of Koronadal -District X	11	MAED – Administration and Supervision	Teacher III	SSLG Moderator Drum and Lyre Moderator SHS Reading Coordinator Journalism Coach	English for Academic and Professional Purposes (EAPP)	21
Teacher F	City of Koronadal -District X	19	MAT- English – CAR	Teacher III	Prefect of Discipline	Personal Development Reading and Writing Skills	5
Teacher G	City of Koronadal -District X	5	BSEd- English	Teacher I	Class Adviser SHS Reading Co-in-Charge	Reading and Writing Skills	7

As shown in **Table 1**, the seven participants came from different secondary schools in the City of Koronadal under the same district, representing varied instructional contexts. Although all served as English teachers in the pioneering SHS-ALS program, they differed in teaching experience, academic qualifications, professional roles, and instructional responsibilities. This diversity enriched the study by capturing perspectives from both novice and experienced educators, as well as variations in workload and learner exposure based on the number of ALS students handled.

Teacher A, a Teacher II with nine years of teaching experience, holds a Master in English (MIE) and currently serves as a Grade 11 Coordinator. She handles 21st Century Literature from the Philippines and the World for a small group of five ALS learners. Her relatively small class size allows for more focused and individualized instruction, which may influence her approach to implementing CLT in a more personalized manner.

Teacher B, a Teacher II, has eleven years of teaching experience and holds a Master in Management major in Educational Management. In addition to her roles as School Paper Adviser and SHS Literacy Coordinator, she teaches Oral Communication in Context to twelve ALS learners. Her involvement in literacy-related programs suggests a strong orientation toward language development, which complements her role in facilitating communicative competence among learners.

Teacher C, a Teacher I with six years of teaching experience, handles both Grade 11 and Grade 12 learners. She holds a Master of Arts in Education major in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL), which provides her with a strong theoretical and pedagogical foundation in language instruction. Serving as a class adviser, Reading Coordinator, and Journalism Coach, she handles both Oral Communication in Context and Reading and Writing Skills for twenty-one ALS students. Her TESL background and multiple roles position her as a key contributor to literacy and language development within the ALS program.

Teacher D, a Teacher I with three years of experience, represents one of the least experienced participants in the study. Despite holding a Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE), she functions as an English and ESL teacher within the ALS context. She handles a relatively large class of thirty-two ALS learners and teaches multiple subjects, including Oral Communication in Context, Reading and Writing Skills, and 21st CLPW. Her profile reflects the flexibility required in ALS, where teachers often assume roles beyond their field of specialization to meet program demands.

Teacher E, a Teacher III with eleven years of teaching experience, handles both Grade 11 and Grade 12 learners. He holds a Master of Arts in Education major in Administration and Supervision and serves in several leadership and co-curricular roles, including SSLG Moderator, Drum and Lyre Moderator, Reading Coordinator, and Journalism Coach. He teaches English for Academic and Professional Purposes (EAPP) to twenty-one ALS learners. His extensive experience and multiple responsibilities suggest a high level of instructional and organizational competence within the ALS setting.

Teacher F, a Teacher III, is the most experienced participant, with nineteen years in the teaching profession. She has completed the academic requirements (CAR) for a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) major in English. As a subject teacher and Prefect of Discipline, she handles Personal Development and Reading and Writing Skills for five ALS learners. Her long teaching experience, combined with a relatively small class size, allows her to integrate both disciplinary guidance and individualized instruction into her teaching practice.

Lastly, **Teacher G**, a Teacher I with five years of teaching experience, handles Grade 12 learners and holds a Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English. She serves as a Class Adviser and Reading Co-in-Charge, teaching Reading and Writing Skills to seven ALS learners. Her role reflects a balance between instructional and administrative responsibilities, as well as a focus on literacy development within the ALS program.

Report on Individual Participant Findings

This section presents the findings from the in-depth interviews with seven DepEd English teachers implementing CLT in the pioneering SHS-ALS context. It discusses each participant's Personal Experiential Themes (PETs), highlighting both shared and unique lived experiences and showing how participants made sense of the challenges, adaptations, and transformations in their teaching practice.

Teacher A. The participant's experience of implementing CLT in the ALS context reflects a flexible and adaptive teaching journey shaped by learners' limited English proficiency, diverse backgrounds, and structural constraints such as limited time and irregular attendance. In response, she employed context-sensitive strategies, including code-switching and communicative activities, to support comprehension, promote engagement, and encourage meaningful language use. She viewed CLT as a practical tool for communication rather than strict

grammatical accuracy, leading her to redefine her role as a facilitator and language model who prioritizes foundational and functional skills over prescribed competencies. Through these experiences, she demonstrated professional growth by becoming more reflective, responsive, and adaptable in addressing the realities of alternative learning environments.

Table 2. Teacher A’s Personal Experiential Themes

Teacher A’s Personal Experiential Themes
Recognizing learners’ limited English proficiency as a starting point
Adapting CLT through flexible and context-sensitive strategies
Negotiating language use through code-switching
Utilizing communicative activities to foster engagement
Confronting constraints of time, attendance, and diverse learner backgrounds
Viewing CLT as a tool for meaningful communication practice
Reconstructing the role of the teacher as facilitator and language model
Emphasizing foundational skills over prescribed competencies
Experiencing professional growth through reflective and adaptive practice

Recognizing learners’ limited English proficiency as a starting point

Teacher A’s experience shows that learners’ limited English proficiency served as the starting point for her instructional decisions. From the outset, she observed that ALS learners struggled with even basic communicative tasks, such as self-introduction and sentence construction. As she explained, *“even a simple introduction about themselves, they cannot straightly or grammatically construct sentences,”* highlighting the depth of their language difficulties. This realization led her to reconsider the appropriateness of teaching higher-level competencies immediately and instead focus first on essential language skills.

This awareness prompted a pedagogical shift toward assessment and foundational instruction before introducing more complex content. She stressed the importance of beginning with basic skills, noting that *“there’s really a need for these students to learn the basic before even going into the competencies.”* By grounding her instruction in learners’ actual proficiency levels, she adopted a responsive approach that prioritized immediate needs over fixed curricular expectations.

Adapting CLT through flexible and context-sensitive strategies

Teacher A adapted CLT by using flexible and context-sensitive strategies that responded to the realities of ALS learners. Rather than applying communicative approaches rigidly, she modified them to fit learners’ capacities and circumstances. For example, she used role-playing and peer interaction as accessible ways to engage learners in communication, explaining that *“through role-playing activities and peer works, students would be able to use the language in communication.”* These practices show her effort to make CLT manageable for learners with limited proficiency.

Her approach also reflected sensitivity to learners’ struggles and contextual constraints. She emphasized the need for guidance and support, stating that *“you really need to be considerate and help them in translating their thoughts using the target language.”* This adaptability suggests that CLT in ALS cannot be implemented in its conventional form but must be reshaped to suit learners’ linguistic and situational realities.

Negotiating language use through code-switching

Code-switching emerged as a central strategy in negotiating language use in the classroom. Teacher A recognized that strict English-only instruction limited learners' ability to express themselves. As she shared, learners would often ask, "*Ma'am, pwede magamit sang Filipino?*" or "*Pwede mag-Taglish?*" indicating their need for linguistic flexibility. In response, she allowed the use of both Filipino and English, seeing this as a means of supporting rather than weakening communication.

She further explained that code-switching was not simply a concession, but an intentional pedagogical tool. As she stated, "*I actually allow them to make use of Filipino and English at the same time for them to really express themselves,*" underscoring its role in meaning-making. She also noted that in instruction, "*you really need to code-switch or translate the concept,*" reinforcing the importance of language negotiation for comprehension and participation in the ALS context.

Utilizing communicative activities to foster engagement

Teacher A used communicative activities, particularly role-playing, to foster learner engagement. These activities created opportunities for learners to participate actively and use language in meaningful contexts. She described assigning tasks such as reenacting scenes from literary texts, stating, "*I asked them to prepare a 1 to 2 minute role playing of the highlight of that story.*" Such activities enabled learners to interact, collaborate, and express ideas creatively.

Despite learners' limitations, these tasks encouraged participation and interaction. At the same time, engagement was often influenced by learners' preference for familiar language forms. Teacher A observed that during such activities, learners frequently requested flexibility in language use, which she accommodated to sustain their involvement. This shows her view that meaningful participation is more important than strict linguistic accuracy in promoting active learning.

Confronting constraints of time, attendance, and diverse learner backgrounds

Teacher A's experience was significantly shaped by structural and contextual constraints within the ALS program. She identified limited instructional time as a major challenge, noting that face-to-face classes met only once a week for an hour. This restricted opportunities for sustained practice and interaction. As she explained, "*we only meet once a week and sometimes it falls that Friday is a holiday or conflict with school level activities,*" which further reduced contact time.

In addition, the diversity of learners' backgrounds added complexity to instruction. She described her students as "*mothers, working, and one is an athlete,*" pointing to their varied life roles and responsibilities. These factors influenced both participation and pacing, requiring her to adopt a more considerate and flexible approach. Together, these constraints highlight the need for adaptive teaching strategies in ALS settings.

Viewing CLT as a tool for meaningful communication practice

Teacher A interpreted CLT as a means of helping learners practice meaningful communication rather than achieve linguistic perfection. She emphasized that the primary goal was for learners to express themselves, stating that CLT allows students "*to really express themselves, to use the language.*" This reflects a functional understanding of language learning in which communication takes priority over form.

She further explained that communication remains valuable even when learners are not speaking entirely in English, as long as they are developing their ability to express ideas. As she noted, "*so long as they are practicing their communication and the ability to express themselves,*" her focus remained on communicative competence. This interpretation aligns CLT with the practical needs of ALS learners.

Reconstructing the role of the teacher as facilitator and language model

Teacher A reconstructed her role from that of a traditional instructor to a facilitator and language model. She emphasized that teaching in the ALS context involves guiding learners rather than simply delivering content, stating that *“you’re a facilitator of learning not a mere teacher who feeds them everything.”* This shift reflects a learner-centered orientation consistent with CLT principles.

She also highlighted the importance of modeling language use and building learners’ confidence. She described her role as *“model in terms of the use of language and let your students feel that. They should not be afraid in using English.”* This dual role underscores her commitment to creating a supportive environment in which learners can develop communicative competence.

Emphasizing foundational skills over prescribed competencies

Teacher A emphasized the importance of prioritizing foundational skills over strict adherence to prescribed competencies. She recognized that learners’ limited proficiency required a stronger focus on basic language skills before progressing to higher-level tasks. As she stated, *“you really have to teach them from the basic ones,”* highlighting the need for foundational development.

This view also reflects her critical stance toward the curriculum, which she perceived as not always aligned with learners’ actual capacities. She noted that *“we cannot teach all those learning competencies with very limited time,”* suggesting the need for curricular adjustment. By prioritizing foundational skills, she ensured that learning remained both meaningful and achievable for ALS learners.

Experiencing professional growth through reflective and adaptive practice

Teacher A’s experiences in ALS contributed significantly to her professional growth, particularly in terms of reflection and adaptability. She acknowledged that teaching in this context requires continuous reassessment of expectations and strategies. One key realization she shared was *“do not impose too high standards for these students,”* reflecting a shift toward more realistic and empathetic teaching.

She also developed a deeper appreciation for adaptability and innovation in teaching. Emphasizing the value of limited instructional time, she stated that *“that an hour meeting is so precious that you need to maximize that time.”* Through these experiences, she became a more reflective and responsive educator, better able to adjust her practices to the demands of ALS teaching.

Teacher B. The participant’s experience displays a dynamic and evolving teaching journey shaped by contextual challenges and meaningful transformation. She encountered the complexity of applying CLT in a non-traditional learning environment where learners’ diverse backgrounds, responsibilities, and language barriers required highly contextualized and flexible instruction. In response, she used multilingual strategies, code-switching, simulations, and task-based activities to promote comprehension, engagement, and meaningful participation, while motivational strategies such as rewards and encouragement helped sustain learner interest. Despite challenges related to irregular attendance, limited time, and environmental constraints, she came to view CLT as a learner-centered and context-driven approach that values meaningful communication over rigid standards. Through these experiences, Teacher B developed greater empathy, patience, and resourcefulness, ultimately finding fulfillment in helping ALS learners pursue education and second chances.

Table 3. Teacher B’s Personal Experiential Themes

Teacher B’s Personal Experiential Themes
Experiencing complexity of translating CLT into the ALS context
Contextualizing instruction based on learners’ backgrounds and realities

Addressing language barriers through multilingual and code-switching
Utilizing simulation and task-based activities to promote engagement
Managing challenges related to attendance, environment, and learners' diverse background
Recognizing the importance of motivation, rewards, and engagement strategies
Viewing CLT as a learner-centered and context-driven approach
Experiencing emotional transformation and increased empathy
Finding fulfillment and meaning in supporting learners' second chances

Experiencing complexity of translating CLT into the ALS context

Teacher B's experience highlights the complexity of translating CLT from a traditional classroom into the ALS setting. Although she expressed confidence in her mastery of the subject, she found its delivery more challenging in ALS because of learners' unique needs and circumstances. As she explained, *"delivering it to ALS setting, it's truly difficult that we have to translate literally and metaphorically,"* suggesting that teaching required both linguistic translation and conceptual adaptation. This reflects the need to bridge standardized curriculum expectations with learners' actual capacities.

The complexity was further intensified by the need to redesign activities that were appropriate and meaningful for ALS learners. She noted that *"you have to produce activities that are manageable in ALS,"* indicating the continuous process of modifying instruction. Her experience suggests that CLT is not directly transferable to ALS but must be thoughtfully reconstructed to suit learners' levels and realities.

Contextualizing instruction based on learners' backgrounds and realities

Teacher B emphasized the importance of grounding instruction in learners' lived experiences, backgrounds, and daily realities. She recognized that ALS learners differ from those in regular classrooms, explaining that *"they're here because they could not be in a regular setting, but they want to graduate... and they're working."* This understanding shaped her effort to make lessons relevant and meaningful.

She also stressed that effective teaching requires knowing learners more deeply, including their language preferences, work conditions, and family responsibilities. As she shared, *"I have to know their background, which language do they prefer, and tailor it to them."* This demonstrates her deliberate effort to align instruction with learners' realities so that learning becomes accessible, relatable, and purposeful.

Addressing language barriers through multilingual and code-switching

Language barriers emerged as a significant challenge, leading Teacher B to adopt multilingual and code-switching strategies. Because learners came from different linguistic backgrounds, she often shifted between languages to ensure understanding. She described this vividly, stating, *"English-Tagalog-Hiligaynon—gabalubalubad ako ng instructions para maintindihan,"* reflecting the complexity of navigating multiple languages in instruction.

This challenge became more evident when learners struggled to understand straight English. She recalled a learner saying, *"Dili man ko kasabot sa imo, ma'am oy,"* highlighting the necessity of adapting language use. Through code-switching, she promoted comprehension and participation, showing that language flexibility is essential in ALS classrooms.

Utilizing simulation and task-based activities to promote engagement

Teacher B used simulation and task-based activities to promote learner engagement and meaningful communication. Activities such as simulations, video creation, and role-based exercises allowed learners to participate actively and apply communication skills in practical contexts.

She also incorporated tasks related to learners' professions and daily experiences, such as workplace and family situations. As she explained, *"if they have this profession, how should they play out words in daily activities?"* This highlights her effort to make learning relevant and experiential. Her strategies suggest that engagement increases when activities are interactive, realistic, and connected to learners' lives.

Managing challenges related to attendance, environment, and learners' diverse backgrounds

Teacher B faced multiple challenges related to attendance, classroom environment, and learners' diverse backgrounds, all of which affected instructional delivery. She described irregular attendance and competing responsibilities, stating, *"There was a time, I only had three students, but we still had our class,"* reflecting the unpredictability of ALS participation.

Environmental factors also created challenges, including noise, classroom disruptions, and learners bringing children to class. She shared, *"may dinadalang anak, sometimes naga-tantrums so I have to carry them,"* illustrating the unique realities of ALS classrooms. These experiences highlight the need for patience, flexibility, and adaptability in managing diverse and unpredictable teaching conditions.

Recognizing the importance of motivation, rewards, and engagement strategies

Teacher B recognized that sustaining learner engagement requires intentional motivational strategies, including rewards and enjoyable activities. She observed that learners may disengage when lessons are not stimulating, stating, *"Sometimes, they don't really listen if it's not fun."* This led her to design activities that were enjoyable and motivating.

She also used simple incentives to encourage participation, sharing, *"Sometimes, I give candies just for enthusiasm."* These strategies reflect her understanding that motivation is especially important for ALS learners who often balance multiple responsibilities and may have limited academic focus.

Viewing CLT as a learner-centered and context-driven approach

Teacher B interpreted CLT as a learner-centered and context-driven approach that emphasizes learners' needs and experiences. She explained that *"if you create a learner-centered kind of classroom, it would really be effective,"* showing her belief in the value of active participation.

She further stressed that teaching must be meaningful and responsive, stating that *"your knowledge as a teacher could not be translated if you could not create meaningful activities."* This suggests that CLT is not simply a method but an approach that depends on relevance, responsiveness, and learner engagement.

Experiencing emotional transformation and increased empathy

Teacher B experienced significant emotional transformation, developing greater empathy, patience, and adaptability. She described the experience as *"kind of humbling and self-fulfilling,"* reflecting her growing awareness of learners' struggles and perseverance.

This experience also reshaped her teaching identity, making her more flexible and compassionate. She shared, *"My experience in ALS have softened me. I need to adjust for them,"* highlighting a shift toward a more empathetic and responsive approach. Her experience suggests that ALS teaching fosters not only pedagogical growth but also personal development.

Finding fulfillment and meaning in supporting learners’ second chances

Teacher B found deep fulfillment in supporting ALS learners as they pursued second chances in education. She expressed a strong sense of purpose, stating, *“It’s fulfilling kasi bumalik sila sa school and you are one of the people na nakapag-help.”* This reflects her recognition that her role extends beyond academic instruction.

She also emphasized the value of being part of learners’ journeys toward improvement and success. By citing examples of ALS graduates who achieved professional success, she reinforced the transformative power of education. This sense of fulfillment highlights the meaningfulness of teaching in ALS, where education becomes a pathway for personal and social change.

Teacher C. The participant’s experience mirrors a flexible and evolving pedagogical journey shaped by learner diversity, significant language gaps, and structural constraints within the ALS context. Recognizing these realities, she employed contextualization, code-switching, and communicative activities to make learning accessible, meaningful, and functional, while using immediate feedback to balance communication with linguistic accuracy. Because of limited instructional time, irregular attendance, and challenging learning environments, she prioritized foundational skills and often returned to basic language competencies. Through these experiences, she came to view CLT as a practical and context-sensitive tool for functional language learning rather than a rigid method. More importantly, Teacher C developed greater empathy and a stronger learner-centered perspective, leading to a transformative professional journey marked by reflection, adaptability, and growth.

Table 4. Teacher C’s Personal Experiential Themes

Teacher C’s Personal Experiential Themes
Recognizing learner diversity and significant learning gaps
Adapting CLT through contextualization and code-switching
Integrating communicative activities for functional language use
Balancing communication and accuracy through immediate feedback
Confronting structural constraints of time, attendance, and learning environment
Prioritizing foundational skills and returning to basics
Viewing CLT as a tool for functional and contextual language learning
Developing empathy and learner-centered teaching perspectives
Experiencing professional growth as a transformative and eye-opening journey

Recognizing learner diversity and significant learning gaps

Teacher C’s experience highlights the profound diversity among ALS learners, particularly in terms of age, background, and language proficiency. She described her learners as ranging from teenagers to senior citizens, emphasizing that *“the learning gap is really huge. There is a teenager, and then there’s a senior citizen.”* This diversity created major differences in learning readiness, making it difficult to apply uniform teaching strategies. She also observed that many learners struggled with basic language skills, noting that *“they don’t know the basic subject-verb agreement nor how to construct a sentence,”* which underscores the depth of learning gaps in the ALS classroom.

These observations led her to recognize that teaching in ALS requires a fundamentally different approach from traditional classrooms. The presence of learners who had forgotten foundational skills required instructional adjustments that began at a more basic level. As she explained, *“you really need to go back from the basic competencies,”* highlighting the need to assess learners’ needs before proceeding with instruction. This recognition became the basis of her adaptive teaching practice, where diversity and learning gaps were treated not as obstacles but as starting points for meaningful learning.

Adapting CLT through contextualization and code-switching

Teacher C adapted CLT by contextualizing lessons and using code-switching as a practical strategy for facilitating understanding. She emphasized that strict English-only instruction was not realistic in the ALS setting, explaining that *“in reality, it is really not quite practical.”* As a result, she allowed learners to express their ideas first in their native language before guiding them toward English translation. This approach reflects her belief that comprehension and participation should come before linguistic accuracy.

She also deliberately contextualized her teaching by linking lessons to learners’ experiences and realities. She noted that teachers must *“craft activities that could let them engage and adjust to their abilities as ALS students.”* Through this approach, CLT became more accessible and meaningful because learners were able to connect language use to their daily lives and actual experiences.

Integrating communicative activities for functional language use

Teacher C consistently used communicative activities to promote functional language use. She described strategies such as interviews, role plays, and situational prompts, explaining that *“We try to get opinions or ideas from our learners like an interview question.”* These activities encouraged learners to express their thoughts and experiences, in line with the core principles of CLT.

She also incorporated simulation-based tasks that mirrored real-life situations, such as workplace communication. For example, she described activities in which learners reenacted scenarios, stating that *“You’re going to reenact what usually the lines that waiters use.”* These tasks enabled learners to practice language in context, making learning more practical and relevant. Through these strategies, she created a classroom environment where language was used as a tool for communication rather than simply an academic subject.

Balancing communication and accuracy through immediate feedback

Teacher C demonstrated a balanced approach by valuing both communication and accuracy through immediate feedback. Although she prioritized learners’ ability to express themselves, she also ensured that errors were addressed promptly. As she explained, *“If they got grammatical errors, I correct them immediately,”* highlighting her commitment to improving learners’ language accuracy.

At the same time, she clarified that immediate correction did not hinder communication but instead supported learning. She stated that *“It’s not really a hindrance with the communication; it’s normal,”* emphasizing that feedback is part of the learning process. This approach reflects her understanding that effective language learning involves both meaningful communication and ongoing refinement of linguistic skills.

Confronting structural constraints of time, attendance, and learning environment

Teacher C’s experience was significantly influenced by structural constraints, particularly limited instructional time and irregular attendance. She noted that classes were held only once a week and were often disrupted, stating that *“there’s an instance that in one month, I could only see them twice.”* This limited contact time reduced opportunities for sustained instruction and practice, posing a major challenge to CLT implementation.

Attendance issues further complicated the teaching process. She observed that only a small number of students attended regularly, sharing that *“I can only see around 5, 6...”* out of a larger group. Environmental factors, including non-conducive classrooms, also affected learning conditions. These challenges underscored the need for flexible and adaptive teaching strategies to maximize the limited opportunities for instruction.

Prioritizing foundational skills and returning to basics

Teacher C emphasized the need to prioritize foundational skills in response to learners' limited proficiency. She recognized that many ALS learners struggled with basic literacy and language abilities, which made it necessary to revisit fundamental concepts. As she stated, "*you really need to go back to basics,*" underscoring the need to rebuild learners' foundational knowledge.

This emphasis on basics also shaped her instructional decisions, particularly in selecting suitable activities and materials. She noted that "*some learners can't read well especially advanced words,*" which limited their ability to engage with more complex content. By focusing on basic skills, she ensured that learning remained accessible, relevant, and developmentally appropriate.

Viewing CLT as a tool for functional and contextual language learning

Teacher C interpreted CLT as a tool that enables learners to use language in functional and social contexts. She emphasized that the main goal of CLT is not grammatical perfection but practical communication, stating that "*they could be able to use the language in function or social context.*" This reflects a shift away from traditional language teaching toward a more communicative and purpose-driven approach.

She further noted that CLT is especially effective in ALS because it aligns with learners' goals, such as employment and everyday communication. By focusing on functional language use, she ensured that learning was relevant and immediately applicable. This interpretation reinforces CLT as a flexible and context-sensitive approach to language teaching.

Developing empathy and learner-centered teaching perspectives

Teacher C's ALS experience deepened her empathy and strengthened her commitment to learner-centered teaching. Reflecting on her learners' struggles, she remarked that "*Behind all those things, they are still learners and they just want to learn.*" This realization points to her growing understanding of learners' motivations and aspirations beyond their external circumstances.

As a result, she adopted a more compassionate and responsive teaching approach. She emphasized that teachers must "*have a deeper empathetic side,*" showing a shift in her teaching philosophy toward one that places learners' needs and experiences at the center of instruction.

Experiencing professional growth as a transformative and eye-opening journey

Teacher C described her experience in ALS as both transformative and eye-opening, contributing significantly to her professional growth. She reflected on how the experience broadened her perspective as a teacher, sharing that "*It empowered me. It is really a wonderful experience.*" This illustrates the positive impact of ALS teaching on her professional development.

She also recognized that teaching in ALS requires constant reflection and adaptation. She noted that she now double-checks whether activities are appropriate for her learners, indicating a more careful and deliberate approach to lesson planning. This growth reflects her increasing ability to respond to challenges and refine her practice, ultimately becoming a more effective and reflective educator.

Teacher D. The participant's experience exhibits a flexible and adaptive teaching process shaped by learner challenges and continuous professional growth. She encountered difficulty encouraging learners to communicate in English because of limited proficiency and low confidence, leading her to use code-switching, translation, and communicative activities to promote understanding, participation, and engagement. While managing irregular attendance, competing responsibilities, and significant language gaps, she emphasized reading and writing as foundational skills and remained sensitive to learners' emotional needs. Through these experiences, she came to view CLT as a learner-centered and communication-focused approach that values meaningful expression over rigid accuracy. Her journey also strengthened her instructional flexibility, reflection, and responsiveness to the diverse realities of ALS learners.

Table 5. Teacher D’s Personal Experiential Themes

Teacher D’s Personal Experiential Themes
Recognizing learner diversity and significant learning gaps
Adapting CLT through contextualization and code-switching
Integrating communicative activities for functional language use
Balancing communication and accuracy through immediate feedback
Confronting structural constraints of time, attendance, and learning environment
Prioritizing foundational skills and returning to basics
Viewing CLT as a tool for functional and contextual language learning
Developing empathy and learner-centered teaching perspectives
Experiencing professional growth as a transformative and eye-opening journey

Difficulty in incorporating English communication among learners

Teacher D’s experience highlights the difficulty of encouraging ALS learners to communicate in English, particularly because of their limited proficiency and low confidence. She observed that learners often resisted using English during classroom interaction, expressing reactions such as *“Ay English na naman, pwede Ma’am Tagalog? Pwede po Hiligaynon?”* This reflects both discomfort and a preference for familiar languages. Their hesitation suggests not only linguistic limitations but also anxiety in using English as a medium of communication.

She further acknowledged that learners could not be forced to speak English, emphasizing that *“hindi naman natin mapipilit talaga sila.”* This realization shaped her teaching approach, where encouragement rather than imposition became the preferred strategy. The challenge of incorporating English communication was therefore both pedagogical and affective, requiring patience and gradual scaffolding to build learner confidence.

Adapting instruction through code-switching and translation

To address comprehension difficulties, Teacher D adapted instruction through code-switching and translation. She explained that when learners struggled to understand English instructions, she provided explanations in their vernacular language, stating that *“if I am giving them instruction in English, I will also translate it to their vernacular language para mas maintindihan nila.”* This approach ensured that learners could follow tasks and participate meaningfully.

At the same time, she maintained the goal of developing English proficiency by encouraging learners to respond in English after understanding the instructions. She noted that *“I then encourage and scaffold them to give their answers in English.”* This dual approach reflects a balance between accessibility and language development, where code-switching functions as a bridge rather than a replacement for English learning.

Utilizing communicative activities to promote engagement

Teacher D utilized communicative activities such as role plays, dramatization, and group discussions to foster learner engagement. She described assigning dramatization tasks in which learners created and performed their

own stories, stating that *“I gave them a task where they had to create their own story and perform a dramatization.”* These activities provided opportunities for active, creative, and collaborative language use.

Despite initial reluctance, learners gradually engaged in these tasks, particularly when given preparation time. Teacher D observed that learners were able to perform successfully, saying *“na-deliver nila nang maayos yung kanilang dramatization.”* This suggests that communicative activities, when properly scaffolded, can increase participation and demonstrate the value of CLT in promoting meaningful language use.

Managing challenges in learners’ attendance and responsibilities

Teacher D’s teaching experience was significantly influenced by challenges related to attendance and personal responsibilities. She explained that many learners, particularly parents and out-of-school youth, were unable to attend regularly because of financial and family constraints. Learners would often explain, *“wala kami pamasaha kaya absent muna kami ngayon”* or *“walang magbabantay ng anak ko Ma’am,”* highlighting realities that hindered consistent participation.

These attendance issues disrupted the continuity of instruction and made it difficult for learners to keep pace with lessons. Teacher D emphasized that once a learner had been absent, *“mahihirapan na si student na mag-cope.”* As a result, she frequently adjusted her teaching strategies and revisited previous lessons to accommodate returning learners.

Addressing language proficiency gaps through reading and writing tasks

To address learners’ limited language proficiency, Teacher D emphasized reading and writing as foundational skills. She designed activities that required learners to engage with texts and produce written outputs, noting that *“I’m giving them like activities where they have to write or read stories.”* These tasks aimed to strengthen comprehension and expression, both of which are essential for effective communication.

She also preferred that writing tasks be completed during class to encourage authenticity and independent work. As she explained, *“mas okay po pag during class talaga gawin ang writing activity,”* which reduced reliance on external tools such as AI. This reflects her commitment to developing genuine language skills while addressing learners’ literacy gaps.

Practicing emotional awareness in classroom interaction

Teacher D demonstrated strong emotional awareness in her interactions with learners, recognizing their sensitivity and varied personal circumstances. She noted that ALS learners may become easily discouraged, stating that *“once mapagalitan mo, iba yung feeling nila. They easily feel ashamed.”* This awareness shaped her approach, leading her to adopt a more supportive and non-threatening teaching style.

She also ensured that learners were given additional opportunities to respond without fear of embarrassment. As she shared, *“I’m giving them the chance again para hindi sila ma-hurt.”* This emotional sensitivity helped create a safe learning environment where learners felt more comfortable participating.

Viewing CLT as a learner-centered and communication-focused approach

Teacher D viewed CLT as a learner-centered approach that emphasizes meaningful communication rather than strict grammatical accuracy. She explained that teaching should not focus only on structures, stating that *“not just structures that matter most, you have to give them the chance to give their answers.”* This highlights her belief that learners should be allowed to express themselves freely.

She further interpreted CLT as an approach that encourages active participation and authentic interaction. Through this perspective, CLT became a tool for empowering learners to use language in meaningful and practical ways.

Developing flexibility in instruction across different learning contexts

Teacher D demonstrated flexibility in adapting teaching strategies across different learning contexts, particularly when handling regular Grade 11 ALS learners and Persons Deprived of Liberty (PDLs). She acknowledged that one approach cannot be applied universally, stating that *“hindi mo pwedeng gawin yung strategy mo sa regular students to PDLs.”* This underscores the need to tailor instruction according to learners’ contexts and needs.

Her experience also emphasized the importance of continuous adjustment in teaching practices. She explained that *“kailangan mo din po mag-adjust when you are teaching English to them,”* reflecting her responsiveness to diverse classroom situations. This flexibility enabled her to navigate the complexities of the ALS environment more effectively.

Experiencing professional growth through exposure to diverse learner needs

Teacher D’s experience contributed significantly to her professional growth, particularly in terms of adaptability and instructional awareness. She described how teaching diverse learners challenged her to expand her strategies, stating that *“you don’t have to use one strategy only. Kailangan meron ka talagang iba’t ibang strategies.”* This reflects her evolving understanding of effective teaching.

She also noted that the experience broadened her perspective on language teaching by emphasizing contextualized and learner-centered approaches. As she shared, *“it improves my professional growth, mas naiintindihan ko na ngayon,”* indicating increased self-awareness and competence. This growth highlights the transformative impact of ALS teaching, where exposure to diverse learner needs fosters continuous professional development.

Teacher E. The participant’s experience signals a challenging, yet transformative teaching journey shaped by learners who are largely working individuals with diverse and context-specific needs. Recognizing learners’ reluctance and limited language proficiency, he employed adaptive strategies such as job-related and real-world tasks, along with vernacular-to-English translation, to make learning practical, accessible, and confidence-building. His practice was also influenced by limited time, irregular attendance, and scheduling conflicts, which required flexibility and careful planning. Through these experiences, he came to view CLT as a tool for functional and meaningful language use rather than rigid adherence to formal structures. This process also redefined his role as a mentor, facilitator, and guide who supports learners holistically. Ultimately, Teacher E demonstrated substantial professional growth through reflection, innovation, and a deeper understanding of responsive teaching in alternative learning environments.

Table 6. Teacher E’s Personal Experiential Themes

Teacher E’s Personal Experiential Themes
Experiencing CLT as challenging yet transformative
Recognizing learners as working individuals with contextual needs
Addressing learners’ reluctance and limited language proficiency
Contextualizing CLT through job-related and real-world tasks
Utilizing vernacular-to-English translation as instructional scaffold
Confronting constraints of time, attendance, and scheduling
Viewing CLT as a tool for practical and functional language use
Reconstructing the teacher’s role as mentor, facilitator, and guide
Experiencing professional growth through reflection and innovation

Experiencing CLT as challenging yet transformative

Teacher E described his experience of implementing CLT in the ALS context as both demanding and transformative. Although he had prior theoretical knowledge of CLT, actual implementation in a real ALS setting presented unexpected complexities. As he expressed, *“challenging, but then it opened new doors for the school and me. Iba talaga yung mag-iimplement ka na,”* highlighting the gap between theory and practice. This illustrates the dynamic nature of ALS teaching, where educators must continually adapt their understanding of pedagogy.

At the same time, the challenge became an opportunity for growth and innovation. Teacher E recognized that teaching ALS learners required him to rethink and expand his strategies, stating that it *“opened new doors to strategize and widen my horizon.”* This suggests that teaching non-traditional learners can reshape teachers’ perspectives and lead to more responsive, context-driven practices.

Recognizing learners as working individuals with contextual needs

Teacher E emphasized that ALS learners are primarily working individuals whose needs differ significantly from those of regular students. He noted that many learners are already employed and balancing multiple responsibilities, explaining, *“They are already immersed in their jobs. They have to juggle on work.”* This reality shaped how learners participated in classroom activities and influenced their availability for instruction.

Recognizing this context led him to design lessons that aligned with learners’ experiences and professional needs. He understood that instruction needed to be practical and relevant, particularly when linked to employment and career advancement. This perspective highlights the importance of contextualizing instruction so that learning becomes meaningful and applicable.

Addressing learners’ reluctance and limited language proficiency

Teacher E identified learners’ reluctance to communicate in English as a major challenge, often rooted in limited proficiency and low confidence. He observed that learners hesitated to participate because they feared making mistakes, explaining that *“Most of them wouldn’t want to talk especially in English. They are shy. They don’t want to be ridiculed.”* This reluctance reflects both linguistic limitations and affective barriers to communication.

He also noted that many learners struggled with basic language concepts because of interrupted educational experiences. As he explained, *“They don’t even remember what noun is, what is verb...”* This highlights the need to revisit foundational knowledge and provide supportive scaffolding so learners can gradually develop confidence and competence in English.

Contextualizing CLT through job-related and real-world tasks

To make CLT effective, Teacher E contextualized instruction through job-related and real-world tasks. He incorporated activities such as application letter writing, resume preparation, and mock job interviews. These practical tasks reflected learners’ immediate needs and connected language learning to their daily experiences.

He also emphasized that contextualized tasks improved engagement and comprehension. As he explained, *“when lessons become contextualized, they can relate to the situation,”* which encouraged participation and meaningful communication. This demonstrates how CLT can be effectively adapted when instruction is grounded in learners’ real-world contexts.

Utilizing Vernacular-to-English translation as instructional scaffold

Teacher E used vernacular-to-English translation as a key instructional scaffold to support understanding and expression. He allowed learners to form ideas in their native language before translating them into English, stating, *“I allow them to use vernacular and then later on translate it sa English para hindi sila mahirapan.”* This approach reduced cognitive load and encouraged participation.

This scaffold also helped learners move gradually from comprehension to production. By guiding them through the translation process step by step, he enabled them to build confidence while strengthening their language skills in a supportive environment.

Confronting constraints of time, attendance, and scheduling

Teacher E's experience was significantly shaped by constraints such as limited instructional time, irregular attendance, and scheduling conflicts. He shared that classes were held only once a week, stating, *"every Friday only with one hour for each subject,"* which restricted opportunities for sustained learning and interaction.

Attendance issues further complicated instruction, as learners often missed classes due to work commitments. He explained, *"They wouldn't go because they still have to juggle on work,"* highlighting the realities faced by ALS learners. These constraints required flexibility and creative strategies to maintain continuity in learning despite limited contact time.

Viewing CLT as a tool for practical and functional language use

Teacher E interpreted CLT as a practical tool for developing functional language skills that learners could use in real-life situations. He described CLT as a guide for acquiring essential skills in writing, speaking, and reading, emphasizing preparation for real-world communication rather than abstract knowledge.

He also highlighted the value of CLT in helping learners pursue personal and professional goals. By linking language learning to employment opportunities, he reinforced its practical importance. As he stated, *"I tell my students they will never know that they still have to get the basics of speaking and writing when it comes to looking for a job,"* underscoring the relevance of functional language skills.

Reconstructing the teacher's role as mentor, facilitator, and guide

Teacher E redefined his role as more than that of an instructor, seeing himself also as a mentor, guide, and facilitator of learning. This expanded role reflects the holistic nature of teaching in ALS, where academic support is closely connected to learners' broader life circumstances.

He also emphasized the need to understand learners personally, noting that teachers must act as *"a parent and a guidance counselor as well."* This view highlights the importance of empathy and support in fostering learner success. By taking on multiple roles, he created a nurturing environment that supported both academic and personal development.

Experiencing professional growth through reflection and innovation

Teacher E's experience contributed significantly to his professional growth, particularly through reflection and innovation. He recognized that teaching diverse learners required continuous learning and adaptation, stating, *"I learned so much from them. I will use that experiences to craft my lesson."* This reflects an ongoing process of reflective practice.

He also emphasized the importance of innovation in improving teaching strategies and materials. His development of tracking systems and contextualized resources demonstrated a proactive response to learners' needs. As he stated, *"for the next batch of ALS learners, we will become better,"* indicating a commitment to continuous improvement and professional growth.

Teacher F. The participant's experience reflects a transformative and learner-centered teaching journey marked by flexibility, innovation, and holistic support. She shifted from grammar-focused instruction to a meaning-oriented approach that prioritized authentic communication and learner expression, while viewing teaching as mentorship that includes academic, emotional, and social guidance. To reduce language anxiety, she created safe and supportive learning spaces and used real-world, contextualized, simulation-based, and collaborative activities to make learning relevant and engaging. Structural constraints such as irregular attendance and limited instructional time were addressed through flexible modalities and adaptive planning. Within this context, she

interpreted CLT as valuing expression over perfection, allowing learners to communicate confidently without fear of error. Ultimately, these experiences reshaped her professional identity toward greater empathy, flexibility, and innovation, reflecting a stronger commitment to responsive and inclusive language teaching.

Table 7. Teacher F’s Personal Experiential Themes

Teacher F’s Personal Experiential Themes
Embracing instructional flexibility and student-centered innovation
Viewing teaching as mentorship and holistic support
Shifting from grammar-focused to meaning-oriented instruction
Reducing language anxiety through safe and supportive spaces
Contextualizing learning through real-world and contextualized tasks
Promoting engagement through simulation and collaborative strategies
Addressing constraints of attendance and time through flexible modalities
Interpreting CLT as expression over perfection
Transforming teacher identity toward empathy, flexibility, and innovation

Embracing instructional flexibility and student-centered innovation

Teacher F’s experience highlights the importance of instructional flexibility and student-centered innovation in implementing CLT within the ALS context. She described her approach as grounded in “*adaptability and then student-centered innovation*,” reflecting her recognition that ALS learners require varied strategies responsive to their diverse needs, schedules, and learning paces.

To address these demands, she adopted blended learning approaches that included face-to-face, modular, and online strategies. As she explained, “*I have this modular distance learning and blended learning. Pwede din siya sa online*,” demonstrating her effort to sustain learning despite irregular attendance. This flexibility underscores her commitment to making instruction accessible and responsive to learners’ realities.

Viewing teaching as mentorship and holistic support

Teacher F viewed teaching as extending beyond academic instruction to include mentorship and holistic support. She described her role not only as a teacher but also as a guide who helps learners navigate personal and academic challenges, stating, “*It requires mentorship. I act as a facilitator and a counselor*.” This reflects her understanding of the complex needs of ALS learners.

She also emphasized the importance of helping learners balance work and education. This perspective positions teaching as a holistic practice that addresses both cognitive and socio-emotional dimensions of learning, reinforcing the value of empathy and support in ALS education.

Shifting from grammar-focused to meaning-oriented instruction

Teacher F underwent a significant pedagogical shift from grammar-focused instruction to a meaning-oriented approach aligned with CLT principles. She acknowledged her former emphasis on grammar drills and accuracy but later moved toward communicative and task-based learning.

This shift is evident in her use of real-world simulations, where communication takes precedence over grammatical perfection. As she stated, *“I shifted my focus from grammar drills to task-based learning,”* highlighting her move toward meaningful interaction. This change reflects a deeper understanding of CLT as a communicative and functional approach to language teaching.

Reducing language anxiety through safe and supportive spaces

Teacher F deliberately reduced learners’ language anxiety by creating a safe and supportive classroom environment. She recognized that many learners feared making mistakes, noting that *“many ALS learners are often hesitant to speak for fear of making mistakes.”* This awareness shaped her effort to establish psychological safety in the classroom.

To support learners, she intentionally avoided correcting errors during communication. She explained, *“I don’t immediately correct their grammatical errors whenever they speak because I don’t want to put them into shame.”* By prioritizing understanding over correction, she encouraged participation without fear, helping learners build confidence and engage more actively.

Contextualizing learning through real-world and contextualized tasks

Teacher F emphasized the importance of contextualizing learning through real-world tasks that reflected learners’ experiences. She designed activities directly connected to learners’ lives, such as workplace communication and community issues, demonstrating her commitment to meaningful instruction.

One notable example was her use of real-life scenarios such as community meetings and workplace negotiations. She observed that learners became more engaged when tasks were relatable, explaining that *“they respond positively when they see immediate application to their lives.”* This shows how contextualization can strengthen both engagement and learning outcomes.

Promoting engagement through simulation and collaborative strategies

Teacher F used simulation and collaborative strategies to promote active engagement. She implemented role plays and simulations, such as job interviews and community hearings, which allowed learners to practice language in authentic contexts and build fluency.

She also incorporated collaborative strategies like reciprocal or shared roles in group discussions. As she explained, *“students work in small groups, one acts as a summarizer, one a questioner, another member as clarifier, etc.”* These strategies transformed the classroom into a more dynamic and participatory environment, fostering interaction and shared learning.

Addressing constraints of attendance and time through flexible modalities

Teacher F acknowledged that irregular attendance and limited instructional time were major challenges in the ALS context. She noted that learners often missed classes because of external responsibilities, making continuity in learning difficult.

To address these constraints, she adopted flexible modalities such as modular and blended learning. She explained, *“When they’re absent, I provide a module for distant learning,”* ensuring that learners could continue their studies despite absences. This approach reflects her commitment to maintaining accessibility and continuity in instruction.

Interpreting CLT as expression over perfection

Teacher F interpreted CLT as prioritizing expression over perfection, emphasizing that being understood matters more than grammatical accuracy. She articulated this clearly by stating that *“learners should speak not to impress, but to express.”* This reflects her belief that communication is the primary goal of language learning.

She further reinforced this idea by encouraging learners to use language without fear of error, as long as they could make themselves understood. This interpretation aligns with CLT principles, where fluency and communicative competence are valued over correctness, and it helps learners build confidence in using language meaningfully.

Transforming teacher identity toward empathy, flexibility, and innovation

Teacher F’s experience transformed her professional identity, particularly in terms of empathy, flexibility, and innovation. Reflecting on this change, she stated, *“I have become nicer and more understanding,”* indicating a shift toward a more compassionate teaching approach.

She also emphasized that the experience made her *“a more flexible and innovative teacher.”* This transformation reflects her ability to adapt to the distinct demands of ALS teaching and respond more effectively to learners’ needs. Her journey shows how teaching in ALS can foster both personal and professional growth.

Teacher G. The participant’s experience echoes a complex yet adaptive teaching journey shaped by structural constraints and learner diversity. Limited instructional time, irregular attendance, and less conducive learning environments affected instructional continuity, while differences in learners’ age, background, and responsibilities required responsive and differentiated strategies. To address learners’ hesitancy and low confidence in using English, she used the vernacular as a bridge toward comprehension and gradual English communication, supported by scaffolding and collaborative learning activities. She also contextualized lessons to make learning more relevant and engaging through real-life experiences. Through these practices, she recognized the importance of flexibility and learner-centered teaching, leading to a shift from accuracy-oriented to fluency-oriented instruction. Ultimately, these experiences developed her patience, adaptability, and reflective practice, marking her growth as a responsive and empathetic educator in the ALS setting.

Table 8. Teacher G’s Personal Experiential Themes

Teacher G’s Personal Experiential Themes
Experiencing CLT as challenging due to structural constraints
Addressing learner diversity in age, background, and responsibilities
Managing learners’ hesitancy and low confidence in using English
Utilizing vernacular as a bridge toward English communication
Employing scaffolding and collaborative learning strategies
Contextualizing instruction to enhance relevance and engagement
Recognizing the importance of flexibility and learner-centered teaching
Shifting from accuracy-oriented to fluency-oriented instruction
Developing patience, adaptability, and reflective teaching practice

Experiencing CLT as challenging due to structural constraints such as limited time, irregular attendance, and disruptive learning conditions

Teacher G described the experience as highly challenging because of structural constraints such as limited contact time and irregular attendance. She explained that classes were held only once a week for two hours, stating, *“We’re just meeting once a week for two hours and not all the students really go to school.”* This limited interaction reduced opportunities for sustained communicative practice, which is central to CLT.

The learning environment also presented disruptions that affected classroom management and instructional flow. She shared that some learners brought their children to class, saying, *“dala-dala nila yung mga anak nila. Minsan nagtatakbuhan kaya nai-interrupt yung klase.”* These realities created a non-traditional and often unpredictable setting that required constant adjustment in teaching strategies.

Addressing learner diversity in age, background, and responsibilities

Teacher G highlighted the diversity of ALS learners in terms of age, background, and personal responsibilities, which significantly shaped her teaching approach. She noted that some learners were older than her and already had families, stating, *“Ang iba sa kanila mas matanda pa sa akin, merong 30 plus, at yung iba may mga anak na.”* This diversity required differentiated instruction and sensitivity to varied learner needs.

She also recognized that learners' work and family obligations influenced participation and comprehension. These realities reinforced the need for flexible and contextualized teaching strategies that accommodated different life circumstances.

Managing learners' hesitancy and low confidence in using English

Teacher G observed that many ALS learners hesitated to use English and often preferred to communicate in their native language. She recalled learners saying, *“Ma'am, pwede Tagalog or vernacular?”* and *“Ma'am, hindi kami confident na gamitin yung English.”* These responses reflected fear of making mistakes and low self-confidence.

She further recognized that learners worried about being judged or ridiculed when speaking English. These affective barriers highlighted the need for supportive teaching strategies that build confidence, reduce anxiety, and encourage participation.

Utilizing vernacular as a bridge toward English communication

To address learners' hesitation, Teacher G used the vernacular as a bridge toward English communication. She allowed learners to express ideas first in their preferred language before guiding them to translate into English, stating, *“I actually let them use first the vernacular and then I would challenge them, ‘Can you translate it in English?’”* This approach supported comprehension while gradually developing English skills.

She also framed translation as a collaborative process. As she encouraged learners, *“We will help each other. I will help you translate that idea into the English language.”* Through this scaffolded approach, she created a supportive environment that promoted confidence and participation.

Employing scaffolding and collaborative learning strategies

Teacher G employed scaffolding and collaborative strategies to support learner engagement and understanding. She used step-by-step guidance and structured assistance to help learners complete language tasks more confidently.

She also encouraged pair and group work to promote peer interaction and shared learning. As she explained, *“I let them work in pairs or in group.”* These strategies increased participation, built learner confidence, and aligned with the interactive principles of CLT.

Contextualizing instruction to enhance relevance and engagement

Teacher G emphasized the importance of contextualizing instruction to make learning meaningful and engaging. She adapted examples and activities based on learners' real-life roles and experiences, such as being a parent or a pastor. She shared prompts such as, *“Sa context mo pastor, can you give me an example?”* and *“How about bilang nanay...”* to make lessons relatable.

She also observed that learners responded more positively when tasks reflected their daily lives. This suggests that contextualized instruction increases both engagement and comprehension in the ALS setting.

Recognizing the importance of flexibility and learner-centered teaching

Teacher G recognized that flexibility and learner-centered teaching are essential in the ALS context. She emphasized that teachers must adjust to learners’ needs, stating, *“It requires us to be flexible and we should be supportive.”* This reflects her awareness that rigid teaching approaches are ineffective for diverse and non-traditional learners.

She also stressed the importance of contextualizing and localizing activities because ALS learners have varied experiences and needs. This learner-centered orientation helped keep instruction relevant, responsive, and aligned with CLT principles.

Shifting from accuracy-oriented to fluency-oriented instruction

Teacher G described a shift in her teaching perspective from focusing on accuracy to prioritizing fluency and meaningful communication. Reflecting on her earlier practice, she stated, *“Dati, focus talaga ako on accuracy,”* but later realized the importance of communication over strict form.

She now emphasizes practical language use in real-life contexts and believes that effective English teaching is not about perfection. This shift reflects stronger alignment with CLT, where fluency, confidence, and meaningful expression are prioritized.

Developing patience, adaptability, and reflective teaching practice

Teacher G’s experience contributed to the development of patience, adaptability, and reflective practice. She acknowledged that teaching diverse learners required greater patience, stating, *“It shaped me to be more patient especially sa kanilang context.”* This reflects growing empathy and understanding of learners’ situations.

She also highlighted the importance of adaptability and reflection in improving her teaching. As she explained, *“Implementing CLT in ALS strengthened my adaptability, making me more responsive and reflective English teacher.”* These experiences demonstrate how challenges became opportunities for professional growth.

Report on All Participant Findings: A Cross-Case Analysis

Following the thematic presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the participants’ Personal Experiential Themes, six (6) superordinate themes emerged across the seven cases. These themes directly address the study’s research questions and illuminate how teachers interpret and construct meaning from their experiences of implementing CLT within the SHS-ALS context. Grounded in the participants’ narratives and interpreted through an IPA lens, these superordinate themes are also situated within relevant theoretical literature and supported by previous research.

Table 9. The Seven Participants’ Superordinate Themes

The Seven Participants’ Superordinate Themes
Negotiating linguistic limitations through multilingual, scaffolded, and confidence-building communication
Contextualizing CLT into functional, real-life, and localized learning
Implementing CLT within structural constraints and disrupted learning conditions
Reframing pedagogy from grammar-centered instruction to meaningful, learner-centered communication
Reconstructing the teacher’s role as facilitator, mentor, guide, and affective support
Undergoing personal-professional transformation through reflective, adaptive, and empathetic practice

In presenting these superordinate themes, the analysis draws on rich evidence and illustrative excerpts from the participants' in-depth interviews to provide an interpretative account of both their shared and distinct experiences.

Superordinate Theme 1: Negotiating linguistic limitations through multilingual, scaffolded, and confidence-building communication

Across the seven participants, one of the most prominent shared experiences was the need to address learners' limited English proficiency, low confidence, and language anxiety through multilingual support and scaffolded communication. Common subthemes within this cluster include recognizing learners' weak English foundation, managing their reluctance to speak, using the vernacular as a bridge, applying code-switching and translation, and scaffolding oral participation.

Teacher A recognized from the outset that learners struggled even with basic self-introduction and sentence construction, leading her to conclude that instruction had to begin with foundational language needs. Teacher B similarly encountered learners who hesitated to speak because they associated English with correctness and feared failure. Teachers C and G also described learners as highly diverse in proficiency, with some unable to construct even basic sentences, prompting them to adjust classroom language and instructional support. Teacher D observed that learners would immediately ask, "*Pwede Ma'am Tagalog? Pwede po Hiligaynon?*" while Teacher E noted that many learners were "*shy*" and did not want to be "*ridiculed*" by classmates. Teacher F framed this struggle in affective terms, identifying language anxiety and a "perfection mindset" as major barriers to participation.

What unites these accounts is that the teachers did not interpret learners' use of Filipino, Hiligaynon, Bisaya, or mixed codes as a weakness. Rather, they treated these linguistic resources as starting points for learning. Teacher A allowed learners to use both Filipino and English so they could first express their ideas before refining their language. Teacher C permitted learners to respond in their local language before guiding them to translate into English. Teacher G shared, "*I actually let them use first yung vernacular... and then let's try,*" showing that translation functioned as support rather than correction. Teacher E used vernacular-to-English translation and vocabulary banks to make expression more manageable. Teachers B and F likewise emphasized that what matters most is that learners are understood and not silenced by fear. Across the cases, teachers employed various forms of scaffolding, including translation, sentence guides, vocabulary lists, peer mentoring, differentiated grouping, and guided instruction.

From an IPA perspective, this theme suggests that teachers were not simply responding to language difficulties but rethinking what it means to use English in the ALS context. They moved away from the expectation that English must be used perfectly and instead viewed it as a tool for communication that learners can develop gradually. English was no longer treated as something learners had to master immediately, but as something they could build through the linguistic resources they already possessed. In this sense, communication began not with correctness but with psychological safety, comprehensibility, and participation.

This finding aligns with literature emphasizing multilingual scaffolding as a necessary adaptation in communicative language teaching. Teachers commonly use code-switching and learners' first languages to support comprehension and participation, particularly in low-proficiency contexts (Chang & Suparmi, 2020; Nguyen & Ngo, 2021). However, the present study extends prior research by showing that multilingual strategies are not merely compensatory but deliberate pedagogical choices that reshape how communication is understood in ALS. Theoretically, this reflects a movement away from a monolingual view of communicative competence toward a more inclusive and developmental understanding of language use (Hymes, 1972). In the ALS context, communication is evaluated less through linguistic accuracy than through meaningful participation, positioning multilingual scaffolding not as a deviation from CLT but as one of its most contextually appropriate expressions.

Superordinate Theme 2: Contextualizing CLT into functional, real-life, and localized learning

Another strong cross-case pattern was the participants' shared recognition that CLT becomes effective in the ALS context only when it is connected to learners' real lives, occupations, responsibilities, and aspirations.

Common subthemes within this cluster include aligning lessons with work and family realities, using authentic real-world tasks, designing job-related activities, localizing content, and ensuring relevance before expecting active communication.

Teacher E most clearly articulated this orientation by grounding English for Academic and Professional Purposes (EAPP) lessons in practical tasks such as resume writing, application letters, job interviews, and employment-related paperwork. Teacher C similarly shared that teaching job application letters created opportunities for learners to discuss their real motivations for returning to school, such as seeking better employment or opportunities abroad. Teacher B tailored simulations, communication scenarios, and classroom tasks to learners' professional and domestic contexts, while Teacher F described her approach as "*localized contextualization*," replacing distant textbook prompts with socially relevant tasks such as service contracts, work schedules, barangay resolutions, and community concerns. Teacher G likewise contextualized examples to learners' identities as mothers or a pastor so that abstract concepts became personally meaningful.

This theme is also evident in the communicative activities consistently used by the participants. Across all seven teachers, classroom tasks became more effective when they reflected situations learners might actually encounter. These included role plays, mock interviews, dramatizations, application letters, group discussions, situational tasks, and collaborative activities. For instance, Teacher F used mock job interviews and community hearings; Teacher B used simulations and work-related tasks; Teacher C used reenactments; Teacher E focused on interviews and application writing; and Teacher D used dramatizations. Across cases, one clear principle emerged: learners participated more actively when tasks resembled real situations they might face in everyday life. Teachers likewise observed stronger engagement when activities were useful, familiar, and connected to work, family responsibilities, or community participation.

Interpreted through IPA, this theme reveals how participants reconstructed the meaning of English teaching in the ALS setting. They were not merely adjusting classroom examples but reinterpreting language as a practical social resource rather than abstract school knowledge. English was no longer taught as content detached from daily life, but as a tool for employment, family responsibilities, civic participation, and future mobility. By shifting from textbook abstraction to lived relevance, teachers came to understand that CLT becomes genuinely communicative only when rooted in learners' actual experiences. In this sense, contextualization was not an optional strategy but a necessary condition for meaningful communication.

This finding supports studies asserting that CLT is most effective when grounded in learners' lived experiences and immediate communicative needs. Prior research notes that communicative tasks increase engagement when aligned with real-world situations (Sitoy & Sonsona, 2023), and that teachers often adapt CLT according to contextual demands (Gloriez, 2022). However, the present study extends this literature by showing that, in ALS, contextualization is more than a strategy for motivation, it is the basis of participation itself. Theoretically, this reflects the principle of sociolinguistic appropriateness within communicative competence, wherein language use must be suitable to context, purpose, and audience (Canale & Swain, 1980). Unlike conventional classrooms where communication may remain simulated, ALS requires communication grounded in immediate realities. Thus, CLT in the ALS context is not simply contextualized; it is fundamentally context-dependent.

Superordinate Theme 3: Implementing CLT within structural constraints and disrupted learning conditions

A major cross-case reality among the seven participants was that CLT was implemented within structurally challenging and frequently disrupted conditions. Common subthemes within this cluster include limited contact hours, irregular attendance, unstable schedules, inadequate facilities, non-conducive learning spaces, environmental interruptions, and learners' competing work and family responsibilities.

Teacher A emphasized that classes met only once a week, and even this schedule was often affected by holidays and school activities. Teacher C noted that in some months she saw learners only twice because Friday schedules were frequently disrupted. Teacher E described one-hour weekly meetings and alternating schedules that weakened instructional continuity. Teacher G encountered multiple challenges, including once-a-week classes, lateness, gradual learner dropout, and classroom disruptions caused by children brought to class. Teacher D

reported that attendance was heavily influenced by transportation difficulties and childcare responsibilities. Teacher B similarly faced irregular attendance, environmental noise, interruptions, and the realities of learners bringing children to school.

These conditions directly influenced how CLT was enacted in practice. Because CLT relies on interaction, continuity, and active learner participation, such realities often constrained effective lesson delivery. When learners were absent, they missed key stages of communicative tasks and classroom interaction. Short class periods limited opportunities for guided practice and feedback, while noisy or uncomfortable environments reduced concentration and participation. Learners who arrived tired from work or domestic responsibilities also struggled to engage consistently. In response, participants adopted adaptive strategies such as modular learning, blended modalities, follow-up through group chats, flexible lesson pacing, and selective prioritization of essential competencies. However, the narratives suggest that these strategies were often reactive responses to difficult conditions rather than ideal pedagogical choices.

From an IPA lens, this theme reveals that participants experienced CLT not as a fixed or straightforward method, but as an ongoing negotiation within scarcity, instability, and interruption. They were not simply applying CLT; they were continually reconstructing it to fit the realities of the ALS context. Teachers also recognized that ALS instruction cannot be evaluated using the same standards as regular classrooms because learning conditions are often inconsistent and unpredictable. Their accounts reflect resilience, but they also reveal a deeper reality: teaching in ALS frequently involves sustaining learning despite recurring disruptions.

This finding is consistent with research identifying barriers to CLT implementation, including limited time, insufficient resources, and institutional constraints (Chang & Suparmi, 2020; Francisco & Buri, 2024). However, the present study extends this literature by showing that teachers do not merely encounter these barriers—they actively negotiate and reinterpret them through everyday practice. Theoretically, this aligns with IPA's emphasis on meaning-making within complex lived conditions, where individuals continuously adapt to uncertainty. It also challenges assumptions that CLT requires stable and well-resourced environments to succeed. In the ALS context, communication is sustained despite interruption, suggesting that CLT can be reconfigured through context-sensitive, flexible, and resilient practice.

Superordinate Theme 4: Reframing pedagogy from grammar-centered instruction to meaningful, learner-centered communication

A central interpretative shift across the seven participants was the reframing of English teaching itself. Common subthemes within this cluster include moving from grammar drills to communication, prioritizing meaning over form, valuing fluency and confidence, rethinking error correction, and understanding CLT as learner-centered rather than teacher-dominated.

Teacher F expressed this shift most directly when she stated that she moved “*from grammar drills to task-based learning.*” Teacher G admitted that she previously focused heavily on accuracy, but CLT led her to view English as practical, meaningful, contextualized, and learner-centered. Teacher C explained that although grammar remains important, teaching in ALS helped her realize that language learning is “*more than the structure.*” Teacher A emphasized that speaking straight English is not the true measure of learning if learners cannot communicate meaningfully. Teacher D similarly moved beyond teaching structures alone and instead gave learners space to respond independently. Teacher B argued that communication should be judged by whether it is understood rather than whether it is perfect. Teacher E described CLT as preparing learners in practical speaking, writing, and reading skills needed in everyday life.

However, this shift did not mean that grammar lost its value. Rather, its role was redefined. Teacher C continued to emphasize immediate corrective feedback. Teacher E highlighted the need to revisit grammar so learners could meet workplace demands. Teachers A and G also stressed the importance of returning to basic grammar foundations. Teacher F acknowledged the value of grammar but ensured that it did not silence learners or prevent participation. Across participants' narratives, the issue was not grammar versus communication, but communication first with grammar as support. Learners were encouraged to speak, write, and express ideas freely before refining accuracy in ways that avoided shame or discouragement.

From an IPA view, this theme reflects a significant shift in how participants understood effective English teaching. Their meaning-making moved from a performance model centered on correctness toward a participation model centered on purposeful language use. English was no longer something learners had to prove through grammatical accuracy, but something they could use in social, academic, and occupational contexts. Teaching therefore became less about transmitting formal rules and more about enabling learners to communicate meaningfully. This shift is interpretatively significant because it transformed not only classroom practice, but also teachers' understanding of the purpose of language education.

This finding aligns with literature describing the movement from form-focused to meaning-focused instruction within CLT. Previous studies note that teachers often struggle to balance fluency and accuracy (Sato & Loewen, 2020), while assessment systems may continue to privilege correctness over communication (Banagbanag, 2020). However, the present study extends this discussion by showing that grammar is not rejected but strategically repositioned. Theoretically, this reflects the distinction between grammatical competence and communicative competence, where linguistic accuracy is integrated into meaningful language use (Canale & Swain, 1980). It also supports core CLT principles that view learners as active participants in communication rather than passive recipients of rules. In the ALS context, effective pedagogy therefore prioritizes communication, confidence, and participation while using form as a supportive resource.

Superordinate Theme 5: Reconstructing the teacher's role as facilitator, mentor, guide, and affective support

Across the seven participants, the role of the English teacher was consistently reconstructed beyond formal instruction to include facilitation, mentorship, emotional support, and guidance. Common subthemes within this cluster include seeing oneself as a facilitator rather than a lecturer, modeling language use, acting as mentor or counselor, creating psychological safety, and supporting learners as whole individuals.

Teacher A described herself as a "*facilitator of learning*" and a "*model*" who must help learners feel unafraid to use English. Teacher E explicitly identified himself as "*a mentor*," "*a guide*," and even "*a parent*" and "*a guidance counselor*." Teacher F framed teaching as mentorship and counseling, particularly in helping learners balance work and studies. Teacher G viewed her role as building confidence and empowering learners to use English in real-life contexts. Teacher D demonstrated strong emotional care, especially in avoiding hurt and public embarrassment. Teacher C emphasized learner-centeredness and the need for deeper empathy. Teacher B described becoming more open-minded, resourceful, and patient as she responded to learners' varied circumstances.

This expanded role is especially visible in how participants addressed learners' fear, hesitation, and discomfort. Rather than treating these emotional barriers as secondary concerns, teachers understood them as central to learning itself. Teacher F intentionally created a safe space where being understood mattered more than grammatical accuracy. Teacher D was careful not to embarrass sensitive learners. Teacher G provided time, translation, and repeated opportunities so learners would not withdraw into silence. Teachers C and E emphasized the need to understand who learners are beneath their intimidating or adult exterior. Teachers B and F also described ALS as a second chance, suggesting that the teacher's role includes restoring dignity and confidence, not merely delivering content.

From an IPA perspective, this theme reveals that participants' professional identities were shaped through their interpretations of learners' needs and vulnerabilities. Teachers made sense of their roles, that is, through their ongoing interactions with learners. Teaching became more than subject delivery; effectiveness depended on empathy, patience, emotional attune, and responsiveness. This interpretative shift suggests that the ALS context encouraged teachers to develop a broader and more human-centered professional identity in which language teaching is inseparable from care, encouragement, and sustained support.

This finding aligns with literature emphasizing the relational and affective dimensions of teaching in alternative and non-traditional learning contexts (Bartlett, 2020; Francisco & Buri, 2024). However, the present study extends this perspective by showing that the teacher's role in ALS goes beyond facilitation to include mentorship, emotional care, and identity restoration. While CLT traditionally positions teachers as facilitators

of communication, this role becomes more complex in ALS, where communication is closely tied to learners' confidence, prior educational disruption, and life realities. Theoretically, this reflects learner-centered principles within CLT, where the teacher supports participation through interaction and encouragement rather than authority alone. From an IPA lens, teacher identity is continually reshaped through these encounters, highlighting that effective CLT depends not only on instructional strategies but also on psychologically safe and supportive learning environments.

Superordinate Theme 6: Undergoing personal-professional transformation through reflective, adaptive, and empathetic practice

The final superordinate theme that emerged across all seven participants is transformation. Common subthemes within this cluster include becoming more reflective, empathetic, flexible, patient, innovative, and more aware of learners' lived realities.

Teacher A became more reflective and realistic, learning not to impose high expectations before foundational skills were established. Teacher B described becoming more open-minded, flexible, resourceful, and emotionally aware. Teacher C characterized the experience as "*memorable*," "*empowering*," and "*eye-opening*," particularly because it helped her see beyond appearances and recognize learners' aspirations. Teacher D reported substantial professional growth through exposure to diverse learner needs. Teacher E repeatedly emphasized learning from the learners themselves and using those lessons to improve his teaching. Teacher F shared that the experience made her "*nicer*," "*more understanding*," "*more flexible*," and "*more innovative*." Teacher G concluded that ALS strengthened her adaptability, patience, creativity, and reflectiveness.

This transformation was not merely theoretical but grounded in sustained encounters with diverse and complex learners. Participants came to recognize that ALS learners are not defined by deficits alone, but are individuals with varied identities and responsibilities, including parents, workers, Balik Aral or returnees, adult community members, and those in special or conditional circumstances. Several participants described ALS teaching as a "*humbling experience*" that reshaped both their perspectives and practices. They learned to review instructional materials more carefully, redesign strategies, contextualize lessons more deliberately, and become more responsive to learners' emotional and social realities. A strong sense of fulfillment also emerged. Teacher B found meaning in supporting second chances; Teacher E described it as "*very fulfilling*" to become part of learners' journeys; Teacher F valued providing renewed opportunities for adults and out-of-school youth; and Teacher G viewed the work as both challenging and rewarding.

Grounded in IPA, this theme represents the deepest level of meaning-making in the study. Participants were not only interpreting how they implemented CLT but also reflecting on how the experience transformed them as teachers and as persons. Their accounts suggest that teaching in ALS reshaped professional identity in significant ways. Through challenge, they became more adaptable; through learners' vulnerability, they became more empathetic; and through uncertainty, they became more reflective and innovative. The implementation of CLT in ALS therefore emerged not merely as a methodological task, but as a transformative professional encounter that redefined teacher identity at its core.

This finding supports literature describing teacher development as a reflective, adaptive, and context-responsive process (Francisco & Buri, 2024; Gloriez, 2022; Nguyen & Ngo, 2021). However, the present study extends prior research by showing that transformation in the ALS context is not only professional but also deeply personal. Theoretically, this reflects IPA's emphasis on identity formation through lived experience and interpretative sense-making. Participants did not simply acquire new strategies; they re-evaluated beliefs, reshaped practices, and reconstructed their understanding of what it means to teach. In this sense, implementing CLT in ALS became a process of professional reconstitution that fostered empathy, flexibility, and sustained responsiveness. Thus, CLT functioned not only as a pedagogical approach, but also as a catalyst for teacher transformation.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the lived experiences and meaning-making processes of English teachers implementing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) within a pioneering Senior High School Alternative Learning System (ALS) context. Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), the findings revealed a dynamic relationship among contextual realities, pedagogical adaptation, and evolving teacher identity.

First, the implementation of CLT in the SHS-ALS context is strongly shaped by structural and contextual realities such as irregular attendance, limited instructional time, disrupted schedules, and learners' socio-economic responsibilities. These conditions significantly influence both teaching practices and learning opportunities.

Second, effective CLT implementation requires a shift from traditional accuracy-oriented instruction toward a communicative and meaning-focused approach in which learners are encouraged to express ideas, participate actively, and use language for authentic purposes rather than merely achieve grammatical perfection.

Third, contextualization emerged as a key condition for successful CLT implementation. Learning activities anchored in learners' real-life experiences, particularly in employment, family, and community contexts, increased relevance, motivation, and engagement.

Fourth, addressing affective factors such as fear, hesitation, and language anxiety proved equally important. Creating safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environments enables learners to participate more confidently in communicative tasks.

Fifth, the ALS setting demands flexible, adaptive, and learner-centered pedagogies, requiring teachers to continuously modify strategies according to learners' diverse backgrounds, needs, and circumstances.

Sixth, implementing CLT in ALS was found to be transformative for teachers themselves. The experience fostered greater empathy, reflectiveness, patience, and innovation, demonstrating that teaching in alternative learning environments reshapes professional identity as much as instructional practice.

Overall, the implementation of CLT in the SHS-ALS context is both challenging and transformative. It requires teachers to navigate contextual constraints, rethink conventional pedagogies, and embrace responsive, learner-centered approaches. More importantly, it redefines teaching as an evolving and meaningful practice aimed at empowering learners to communicate effectively and participate more fully in real-world contexts.

Implications, Recommendations, and Future Directions

English teachers implementing CLT in ALS contexts are encouraged to adopt flexible, responsive, and learner-centered approaches that prioritize meaningful communication over rigid accuracy. Instructional activities should be contextualized to learners' real-life experiences, responsibilities, and goals in order to increase relevance and engagement. Teachers are likewise encouraged to use appropriate scaffolding strategies, including multilingual and vernacular support, to facilitate comprehension and gradual language development. Equally important is the creation of safe, inclusive, and supportive classroom environments that reduce language anxiety, strengthen confidence, and encourage active participation.

Schools and educational leaders should provide stronger institutional support for ALS programs through conducive learning spaces, adequate instructional resources, and sufficient contact time for meaningful learning. Administrators are encouraged to recognize the distinct realities of ALS learners and teachers by promoting flexible scheduling, accessible delivery modalities, and equitable resource allocation. Such support may help address persistent barriers related to attendance, continuity, and instructional constraints.

Curriculum developers are encouraged to design contextualized and localized learning materials specifically suited to ALS learners' needs and life situations. There is also a need to streamline or decongest curricular expectations so that competencies remain realistic within limited instructional time. Communicative and

functional language approaches should be integrated across relevant subject areas to strengthen authentic language use. At the policy level, stronger support systems for ALS implementation are needed, particularly in the areas of teacher training, continuing professional development, and sustained program monitoring.

Future research may explore learners' perspectives on CLT within ALS contexts to complement the present teacher-focused findings. Longitudinal studies may also examine language development outcomes over time, while intervention-based research may investigate the effectiveness of specific CLT strategies in alternative learning environments. Comparative studies between ALS and traditional classroom settings may further deepen understanding of how context shapes language teaching, learning, and communicative practice.

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