

The Importance of Curriculum Development in English Language Education Management: A Case Study

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Abstract: This study explored the significance of curriculum development in the effective management of English language education in selected public elementary schools in Talomo District, Davao City. Employing a qualitative phenomenological approach, the study sought to understand the lived experiences of elementary school teachers regarding curriculum development in English language education. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews with eight purposively selected Department of Education elementary teachers. The findings revealed that teachers encountered several challenges in curriculum development, including issues related to educators' language proficiency, alignment with educational standards and curriculum reforms, and the linguistic diversity of learners. To address these challenges, participants employed various strategies such as engaging in teacher certification and professional development programs, utilizing culturally relevant instructional materials and content, and participating in peer observation and collaborative learning. Furthermore, the study generated an important educational management insight emphasizing the value of adopting a regional perspective in curriculum development to ensure that English language instruction remains responsive to the diverse linguistic and cultural contexts of learners. Overall, the findings underscore the vital role of curriculum development in strengthening the management of English language education by promoting curriculum relevance, instructional quality, and alignment with national educational standards. The study provides valuable implications for school leaders, curriculum developers, and policymakers in enhancing curriculum development practices that support effective English language education in public elementary schools.

Keywords: Curriculum Development, English Language, Education Management.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In a world where English has emerged as a common language for communication, trade, and international relations, and being proficient in speaking the language can open doors and allow individuals to pursue their dreams, teachers bear the responsibility of laying the foundation for acquiring this skill and ensuring that every learner receives the most effective teaching instruction to acquire it. Teachers understand that their profession is rooted in distinct principles, beliefs, values, and philosophies, while also acknowledging that the effectiveness of language teaching depends on the design and the effective implementation of a great school curriculum. For teachers, language teaching follow certain rules and ways of doing things, similar to how other businesses and organizations operate. Just as businesses have standard operating procedures

and organizational guidelines, language teaching programs adhere to specific methodologies and approaches. These guidelines ensure consistency and effectiveness in language instruction, helping teachers deliver quality education to their students.

Over time, language teaching has gone through numerous changes in its underlying theories, the methodologies it prescribes, and the procedures it favors. This ongoing evolution in the field of language teaching is a reflection of the dynamic nature of education and the influence of various factors, including advances in pedagogical research, changes in educational philosophies, and shifts in societal needs and technology. It is essential to recognize that language teaching isn't a static discipline but rather a dynamic one that adapts to

the ever-changing needs of learners and the evolving landscape of education.

On a global scale, various frameworks and models are used around the world to guide the teaching and learning of English. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) are two of the most widely accepted English language proficiency tests in many countries around the globe, including Non-English-speaking regions within Asia. Many English language programs and curricula are designed to prepare students for these exams. Another notable example is TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) which is a global association for English language teaching professionals. They have developed standards for language teacher education programs, which impact curriculum development in teacher training institutions worldwide. In Europe, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) as developed by the European council, is a widely recognized framework that provides a common reference point for language proficiency. It is used in Europe and many other parts of the world to design English language teaching programs and assess language proficiency.

In the United States, Alrashedi (2020) posits that English as a Second Language (ESL) programs at American universities are designed to develop non-native speakers' proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking. Utilizing a multi-level curriculum, these programs prepare students for real-world communication, giving them far-reaching significance. To achieve language mastery, ESL programs strategically implement a curriculum focused on improving reading, speaking, vocabulary, and comprehension of both written and spoken English.

In the Philippines, government has established specific educational goals to be implemented by its primary authorities, the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education, with the aim of cultivating high-quality individuals. Ferrer and Sagon (2022) assert that curriculum serves as the principal mechanism for achieving these objectives. To be effective, it must be meticulously organized and structured into defined programs, with curriculum development guiding the selection of educational content. This process aims to create a comprehensive course blueprint, which involves outlining the course, constructing its components, and aligning all content with intended learning objectives. Ultimately, maintaining a well-prepared and current curriculum is fundamental to the enhancement of educational quality.

In the local scenario, elementary teachers highlight that English is a global language and an important tool for international communication. While learning English has become more common and easier for young learners nowadays compared to the past, thanks to the use of the internet, teachers still believe it's important to provide a stronger foundation for

learning the language by incorporating it into the school curriculum. A strong curriculum prepares students to engage in global academic, economic, and cultural exchanges, enhancing their opportunities in the global community. It is in this premise that the researcher was drawn to the underlying principles of curriculum development for English language teaching in the Philippines and its importance for individual student success, economic growth, and national development.

II. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically a phenomenological approach, to explore the lived experiences of elementary school teachers regarding curriculum development in the effective management of English language education. Through this approach, the study sought to gain a deeper understanding of how teachers experience, perceive, and make sense of curriculum development in their instructional practice. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with teachers who had direct experience in implementing the English curriculum in public elementary schools. The interview transcripts were carefully examined to identify recurring words, phrases, and significant statements, which were then organized into clusters of meaning to generate themes that captured the essence of the participants' experiences.

The participants of this study consisted of eight (8) elementary school teachers from the Talomo District, Davao City, who were employed by the Department of Education and had direct responsibilities in teaching English at the elementary level. Participants were purposively selected based on the nature of their work, their experience in implementing the English curriculum, and their involvement in curriculum-related practices within their respective schools. Selection was made regardless of age, sex, or marital status, as the primary criterion was their capacity to provide rich and relevant insights into the phenomenon under investigation. Because the study involved teachers sharing their professional experiences related to curriculum development, ethical safeguards were strictly observed. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained prior to data collection, and participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without consequence.

To ensure confidentiality and protect participants' identities, all personal identifiers were removed from the transcripts, and pseudonyms or participant codes were used throughout the reporting of the findings. The researcher also clearly explained the objectives, procedures, potential benefits, and minimal risks associated with the study to establish trust and encourage honest, reflective responses. Consistent with qualitative research principles, a relatively small sample size was considered appropriate because the purpose of the study was to obtain rich, in-depth descriptions rather than to achieve statistical generalization. Data collection continued until data

saturation was achieved, as evidenced by the repetition of ideas and the absence of new themes emerging from subsequent interviews.

The primary instrument for data collection was the in-depth interview, which enabled participants to describe their experiences, perceptions, challenges, and strategies related to curriculum development in English language education. The semi-structured interview format provided sufficient flexibility to probe participants' responses while ensuring that all topics relevant to the research objectives were addressed. This method was particularly appropriate for the phenomenological design because it facilitated the exploration of participants' lived experiences and the meanings, they attributed to curriculum development within the context of English language education.

The collected data were analyzed using the thematic analysis framework developed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Following their six-phase process, the researcher became familiar with the data, generated initial codes, searched for patterns, reviewed and refined emerging themes, defined and named the themes, and produced a coherent interpretation of the findings. This analytical framework was well suited to the study because it provided a systematic yet flexible approach for identifying meaningful patterns across participants' narratives, allowing the essential features of teachers' experiences with curriculum development in English language education to emerge while ensuring analytical rigor and credibility.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the findings of the study based on the responses of the participants to the research questions. The findings highlight the lived experiences of elementary school teachers regarding curriculum development in the effective management of English language education. Specifically, this section discusses the participants' experiences, the challenges they encountered in developing and implementing the English curriculum, the strategies they employed to address these challenges, and the educational management insights that emerged from their experiences. Based on the results of the thematic analysis of the responses from the participants of the study, the following findings and their corresponding themes were revealed. The challenges of the teachers on Curriculum Development of English Education were mainly: Language Proficiency of Educators, Alignment with Educational Standards and Reforms and Linguistic Diversity in the country.

➤ *Language Proficiency of Educators.*

The findings revealed that language proficiency among educators remains a significant challenge in curriculum development for the effective management of English language education. Participants emphasized that limited proficiency in English affects their confidence and ability to deliver curriculum content effectively, which may hinder learners' language development and the successful implementation of

curriculum objectives. They also recognized that language fluency alone does not guarantee effective teaching, as pedagogical competence and a deep understanding of language acquisition are equally essential in translating curriculum goals into meaningful classroom instruction.

Furthermore, the shortage of qualified English teachers with both strong language proficiency and appropriate instructional skills presents an additional barrier to maintaining high-quality English language education. These findings support Kazakov (2021), who argued that many educators lack a scientifically grounded understanding of language acquisition due to gaps in teacher preparation, and Aisyah (2023), who emphasized that teachers' language proficiency is a critical determinant of instructional effectiveness and educational quality. Viewed within the context of curriculum development, the findings underscore the importance of strengthening teacher preparation, continuous professional development, and language proficiency enhancement programs to ensure that educators are equipped to implement the English curriculum effectively and achieve its intended learning outcomes.

➤ *Alignment with Educational Standards and Reforms.*

The findings indicate that aligning curriculum development with evolving educational standards and reforms is a persistent challenge in the effective management of English language education. Participants shared that frequent curriculum revisions and policy changes require continuous adjustments to instructional practices, often disrupting the continuity of English language instruction and creating uncertainty in curriculum implementation. Although teachers acknowledged that curriculum development is essential for ensuring that English language education remains relevant, responsive, and aligned with learners' needs, they also emphasized that repeated reforms without adequate preparation, clear communication, and sustained support can undermine instructional consistency, reduce teacher confidence, and impede professional growth.

These experiences affirm the importance of establishing stable curriculum frameworks and providing teachers with sufficient guidance to successfully implement curriculum changes. The findings are consistent with Johnson et al. (2020), who emphasized that curriculum alignment among learning objectives, instructional strategies, and assessment practices is critical for effective teaching and meaningful student learning, while misalignment compromises instructional quality and assessment validity.

➤ *Linguistic Diversity in the Country.*

The findings revealed that the Philippines' rich linguistic diversity presents a significant challenge in curriculum development for the effective management of English language education. Participants emphasized that the existence of more than 180 languages creates multilingual classroom environments where learners possess varying levels of

proficiency in both their mother tongue and English, making it difficult to design and implement a standardized English curriculum that addresses the diverse linguistic needs of all students. These experiences highlight the necessity of developing flexible, culturally and linguistically responsive curricula that recognize learners' varied language backgrounds while ensuring equitable access to quality English language instruction.

Moreover, the findings suggest that effective curriculum development should incorporate instructional approaches and learning resources that support multilingual learners without compromising curriculum standards. This perspective is supported by Cabanová (2019), who argued that educational institutions face the challenge of balancing majority-language instruction with the linguistic and cultural identities of diverse learners, emphasizing that children's communication and learning are strongly influenced by their cultural-linguistic backgrounds. Likewise, Freeman (2020) emphasized that learners' motivation, engagement, and academic performance are shaped by both personal and social factors, including their educational environment and the support they receive. Within the context of English language education, these findings underscore that curriculum development should be responsive to linguistic diversity by promoting inclusive, culturally relevant, and learner-centered practices that enable teachers to effectively address the needs of multilingual classrooms while enhancing the overall quality of English language education.

Meanwhile, the coping mechanisms of teachers to the challenges of the Curriculum Development of English education were Teacher Certification Programs for Professional Development, Culturally Relevant Material and Content and Peer observation and collaboration. The main insight of the participants was Regional Perspective on Curriculum Development.

➤ *Teacher Certification Programs for Professional Development.*

The theme indicates that teacher certification programs and continuous professional development are essential strategies for strengthening curriculum development in the effective management of English language education. Participants emphasized that engaging in specialized certification programs enhances not only their English language proficiency but also their pedagogical competence, enabling them to implement the English curriculum more effectively and adopt innovative, learner-centered instructional strategies. They further recognized that these professional learning opportunities foster reflective teaching practices, improve curriculum planning and implementation, and increase their confidence in responding to evolving curriculum standards and learners' needs. These experiences suggest that sustained professional development equips teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure that curriculum objectives are translated into meaningful classroom practices, ultimately improving student learning outcomes.

The findings support Ahmed et al. (2021) who emphasized that continuous professional development and in-service training enhance teachers' motivation, professional competence, instructional effectiveness, and self-efficacy. Taken together, these findings underscore that investing in teacher certification and ongoing professional learning is a critical component of effective curriculum development and educational management, as it empowers teachers to deliver high-quality English language instruction that is responsive to curriculum goals and educational reforms.

➤ *Culturally Relevant Material and Content.*

As mentioned, the Philippines is a linguistically diverse country thus, classrooms around the nation are most likely to be linguistically diverse as well. To combat this, participants agree that integrating literature, media, and materials from various cultures and linguistic communities helps students see themselves represented in the curriculum, fostering a sense of belonging and motivation to learn English. Incorporating culturally relevant material makes the curriculum more relatable and meaningful to students, capturing their interest and motivating them to actively participate in learning. When students see themselves reflected in the curriculum through texts, examples, and activities that resonate with their cultural backgrounds and experiences, they are more likely to feel connected to the content and invested in their learning.

Additionally, relevant materials enhance students' language proficiency by providing authentic language input and opportunities for meaningful communication. When students engage with texts and multimedia resources that reflect real-world language use in diverse cultural contexts, they develop their language skills in a more authentic and naturalistic way. Besonia et al. (2023) highlight the growing significance of culturally relevant supplemental e-learning materials in today's increasingly diverse educational environments. As both physical and virtual classrooms become more culturally heterogeneous, there is a pressing need for teachers to develop digital resources that reflect and support the varied cultural backgrounds of their students.

➤ *Peer Observation and Collaboration.*

The findings revealed that peer observation and collaboration serve as valuable strategies for strengthening curriculum development in the effective management of English language education. Participants emphasized that working collaboratively with fellow English teachers enables them to exchange ideas, share effective instructional practices, provide constructive feedback, and collectively address challenges related to curriculum implementation. They viewed professional learning communities, mentoring, and peer observation as essential avenues for continuous learning, allowing teachers to refine instructional strategies, interpret curriculum requirements more effectively, and enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. These collaborative practices also foster a supportive professional culture where

educators learn from one another and develop shared solutions to improve curriculum delivery. The findings are consistent with Burns (2019), who emphasized that collaborative professional development promotes meaningful teacher learning through continuous dialogue, mutual reflection, and shared professional experiences.

Likewise, Rosselló and de la Iglesia (2021) found that structured peer observation and collaborative school cultures strengthen collegiality, enhance professional growth, and empower teachers to improve their instructional practices collectively. Within the context of curriculum development, these findings underscore that sustained collaboration among educators is fundamental to effective educational management, as it promotes consistent curriculum implementation, continuous instructional improvement, and the delivery of high-quality English language education.

Furthermore, this study generated an important educational management insight emphasizing the need to adopt a regional perspective in curriculum development to strengthen the effective management of English language education. Participants highlighted that while the English curriculum should remain aligned with national and international language standards and proficiency benchmarks, its implementation must also be responsive to the linguistic, cultural, and contextual realities of different regions. They emphasized that recognizing variations in learners' language backgrounds and English proficiency levels, particularly across urban and rural communities, enables the development of more relevant instructional approaches and equitable learning opportunities. These findings support Tazhitova et al. (2021), who emphasized that incorporating regional perspectives into education enhances curriculum relevance by acknowledging the cultural and contextual characteristics of local communities.

Likewise, Nieveen et al. (2022) argued that curriculum implementation is significantly influenced by educational policies and governance structures, underscoring the importance of providing appropriate institutional support while balancing curriculum standardization with contextual flexibility. Collectively, the findings suggest that effective curriculum development requires a responsive and context-driven approach that integrates national standards with regional needs, thereby improving curriculum implementation, promoting inclusive English language education, and enhancing educational quality across diverse learning environments.

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