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Research Paper

Describing the Educational Journey of Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English Students

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores the educational experiences of Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) students majoring in English, focusing on their motivations, expectations, challenges, and coping strategies. This study addresses the phenomenon of students dealing with challenging educational programs while desiring to develop the abilities essential for effective teaching. This section aims to understand the factors influencing their decision to pursue this program, the skills they develop, and how they overcome academic and personal obstacles. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 14 BSED English students, two English teachers, and two peers. Using thematic analysis, recurring themes and patterns were identified. Results reveal that students were driven by job opportunities, family and social influences, and personal interests. They expect to improve their speaking skills, language proficiency, and teaching strategies. Challenges include low self-esteem, teacher incompetence, and academic difficulties, while coping mechanisms involve using online resources, seeking support, and practicing self-directed learning. This study emphasizes the importance of personal and academic support systems in fostering student resilience and offers recommendations for aspiring students, such as cultivating a passion for teaching, engaging in collaborative learning, and adopting strategic reviewing.

Keywords: *BSED English Program, Challenge, Coping Strategy, Educational Journey, Motivation, Expectation*

INTRODUCTION

The growing need for skilled English teachers has motivated many students to enroll in the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) program, which focuses on English. Early observations demonstrate that students often encounter challenges when working to meet the high standards of academic performance and teaching skills expected in the field.

Moreover, one global language used in various fields is English. English acts as a bridge, promoting precise and clear communication between disciplines while supporting successful communication and comprehension within particular professional or academic contexts (Aminatun & Oktaviani, 2019). The global demand for English teachers has increased the number of students taking English-related programs and traveling overseas to teach English (Altaai & Gokgoz-kurt, 2023). English is essential for effectively communicating in various complex situations and reaching diverse audiences. Those who use communicative development strategies believe that English is valuable for global progress and long-term professional success (Protacio, 2021).

The Philippines is recognized as one of the largest English-speaking nations in the world, with English serving as one of its official languages. However, over the years, a gradual decline in English language proficiency among Filipinos has been observed, as reflected in the EF English Proficiency Index, the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC), and the average scores of

Filipino IELTS takers (Santos et al., 2022). Given that education is a lifelong and continuous process, competent and efficient graduates are needed. They should embody good values and moral responsibility and be devoted to excellent public service (Galit-Lluz, 2021).

English courses in the Philippines are affordable; however, the quality of teaching and learning is poor, and other areas of student needs are not strongly emphasized (Yeh, 2019). Language teachers face the challenge of improving English communication skills among students through training, seminars, and workshops for exploring, experimenting, and sharing ideas with the educational community (Del et al., 2019) (Reyna et al., 2023). In 21st-century education, Generation Z learners are equipped with everyday communication and life skills. Teachers play a vital role in this, requiring the knowledge and abilities to effectively address this generation's unique needs (Dejacto et al., 2023). It is essential to understand that schools alone cannot ensure educational success; many factors influence skills development, including local government support, the role of subject teachers, extracurricular activities, and the child's social and physical environment (Yohana et al., 2020).

English education in the Philippines is not fully reflective of the country's multilingual and diverse linguistic context. It overlooks language variations, different forms of English, and the common use of multiple languages in communication. From curriculum development to assessment and classroom teaching, English Language Teaching (ELT) often uses a one-size-fits-all approach, focusing on native-speaker norms (Espino et al., 2021). This approach poses challenges for students who want to become English teachers because it does not prepare them to address the diverse language needs of their future learners.

This study focused on the experiences of BSED English students, including recommendations for enhancing their learning experiences. While discussions often highlight the demands and challenges of learning English, the purpose of this study is to explore these students' motivations, expectations, challenges, and coping strategies to provide insights for targeted support. These findings improve students' language acquisition, learning skills, and overall academic and personal growth. Thus, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What motivated students to choose the BSED English program?

2. What are the expectations of students enrolled in the BSED English program?

3. What challenges have students encountered in the program?

4. How do students handle the challenges encountered in the program?

5. What recommendations should be provided to students planning to enroll in the BSED English program?

LITERATURE REVIEW

English as the language of instruction and evaluation has led to adverse outcomes. These outcomes include facing internal struggles, such as anxiety, frustration, tension, fear, and embarrassment, and ultimately poor academic performance (Ali, 2020). English learners lack motivation and self-confidence. They demonstrate that it is necessary to identify approaches employed by English language teachers to teach these skills and enhance them among learners (Paneerselvam & Mohamad, 2019). Future educators are also encouraged to implement activities that build and strengthen students' speaking skills to help reduce speaking anxiety (Reyes et al., 2023).

Students in the BSED English program often face initial challenges, leading to frustration and contemplation of leaving the program and shifting to another. However, some students who persistently cope with these difficulties eventually overcome them. Surprisingly, they find the

course bearable once they understand the necessary concepts and skills. Looking back, students recall the time they spent feeling frustrated, realizing that the early struggles were stepping stones toward eventual success (Dairo et al., 2023).

Students can feel a sense of achievement in studying a language when they are supported by teachers and mentors. English achievement refers to how well an individual can speak, understand, read, and write in English (Darmuki et al., 2023). Moreover, there are several motivational obstacles to overcome when studying English. These obstacles stem from internal and external factors and can significantly impact students' ability to stay engaged and committed to the learning process (Martin & Marsh, 2019). In Self-Determination Theory (SDT), external factors, such as grades, evaluations, and social opinions, often encourage students. However, intrinsic motivations, such as curiosity, personal interest, and passion, are powerful drivers of behavior. The balance between extrinsic rewards and intrinsic needs is crucial for sustaining motivation, creativity, and long-term effort, which are vital to student success (Deci & Ryan, 1985).

Moreover, in SDT, intrinsic motivation is linked to student success and well-being, while personal value (identified regulation) strongly predicts persistence. Ego-driven motives (introjected regulation) support persistence and performance goals but can negatively impact well-being. Motivation based on rewards or punishment (external regulation) does not significantly affect performance or persistence and reduces well-being. These findings highlight the importance of fostering intrinsic motivation and personal value in students (Howard et al., 2021). This aligns with the need to develop effective English teaching practices that encourage persistence and overall school adjustment, particularly for aspiring English teachers.

Although English has improved its conventional origins and become an international language, learning it remains challenging, particularly for non-native speakers. English proficiency is highly valued in the Philippines, but recent surveys show a reduction, which is concerning, especially for aspiring English teachers (Bacang et al., 2024). To understand every student's journey in education, some areas that might help improve their social and emotional skills need to be acknowledged. One of the possible ways might involve learning how to treat, effectively support, and appreciate others (Bjorke & Moen, 2020). Students also highlighted kinesics, or body language, as a vital tool in classroom communication, noting that it improves teaching effectiveness and simplifies interactions. Despite some limitations, Caybot et al. (2024) found that using nonverbal cues positively impacts students' learning (Caybot et al., 2024).

In light of the numerous studies addressing English language learning and the challenges of mastering it, this study focuses on the personal experiences of Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) Major English students, including their motivations, challenges, and how they cope with them. By gaining a deeper understanding of students' journeys, this study aims to provide insights that can help improve the program and offer better support for students, enhancing their English skills and preparing them for their future roles as educators.

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded on the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan (1985), which highlights three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy reflects students' freedom in decision-making, competence refers to their confidence in excelling based on their strengths, and relatedness emphasizes the importance of a supportive and inclusive learning environment. This framework guides the exploration of how these factors influence the motivation, decisions, and perseverance of BSED English students, providing deeper insights into their educational experiences.

RESEARCH METHODS
Research Design
This study uses a qualitative case study approach, as outlined by Merriam (1998), to examine students' educational journeys in the BSED English program at a private institution in Pagadian City, Philippines, which is known for its vital English programs. A case study is an in-depth exploration of a particular phenomenon in its real-life context. This section explores students' experiences, challenges, and insights within the institution's program. The institution is recognized for producing qualified English teachers, and its BSED English program is central to this reputation. The findings provide helpful information to improve the program's quality, address student challenges, and offer recommendations to enhance the training of future English teachers.

Research Participants
The primary participants were 14 fourth-year BSED English students whose extensive experience in the program provided valuable insights into their motivations, challenges, and coping strategies. These students were selected based on their advanced standing in the program, ensuring sufficient exposure to the curriculum and practical classroom experiences. To enrich the study and provide a more comprehensive perspective, two English teachers and two peers from the same program were also included. The teachers were selected because of their direct involvement in the students' education, offering them insights into the challenges and instructional strategies they observed in the classroom. The peers were chosen to provide a different viewpoint on the students' experiences because they share similar academic and social contexts. All participants were selected purposefully to offer diverse and well-rounded perspectives on the BSED English program. To ensure confidentiality, the participants were assigned codes: FP1, FP2, FP3, FP4, FP5, FP6, FP7, FP8, FP9, FP10, FP11, FP12, FP13, and FP14 for students; TP1 and TP2 for teachers; and PP1 and PP2 for peers.

Data Gathering Procedure
The first step in gathering data was to ask permission from the deans of the teachers' departments to conduct the interviews. After receiving approval, the researchers communicated with the fourth-year participants regarding their availability schedule. Following the fourth-year students' completion of the internship period, interviews were conducted via Google Meet to accommodate their availability schedule. In-depth interviews were undertaken with the teachers, peers, and fourth-year participants, offering flexibility in probing for comprehensive insights while maintaining consistency across sessions. With the participants' consent, interviews were recorded to ensure accurate data capture.

Data Analysis
The researchers collected transcripts from interviews with the participants. The data were carefully examined and sorted into recurring themes, following the method of Merriam (1998). The data categorizing technique was also used to identify patterns and subcategories. Additionally, the researchers employed the triangulation method, combining interview data from students, teachers, and peers to strengthen the findings. For instance, the researchers compared students' self-reported challenges with teachers' observations of classroom difficulties and peers' perspectives on social support. This triangulation process allowed us to cross-check and validate the consistency of the data from different sources. By integrating diverse perspectives, the study provided a more comprehensive understanding of the motivations, challenges, and coping strategies of BSED English students.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study interprets and analyzes data gathered from 14 fourth-year BSED English students, two English teachers, and two peers regarding students' motivations in choosing the BSED English program. This includes the challenges they have encountered and the coping mechanisms they have employed to overcome these difficulties. Fourth-year students were officially enrolled in the BSED English program for 2023-2024. The teachers were English instructors who taught the major subjects in BSED English. Moreover, the peers were friends of fourth-year participants pursuing the same program.

The categories that emerged were Motivations for *Students to choose the BSED English Program, Expectations of Students in choosing the BSED English, Challenges Students Encountered in the Program, Students' Coping Strategies in the BSED English, and Recommendations for Students Planning to take the Program.*

Motivation for Students to Choose the BSED English Program

Students' motivations to choose the BSED English program presented the underlying reasons and factors that influenced their decision to enroll in the program. Several subcategories have emerged. These subcategories include job opportunities, social and family influences, and personal motivation and interests.

Job Opportunities

A subcategory that emerged is job opportunities. This highlights the various career pathways available to learners and indicates the potential occupations that students may seek upon completion of their studies. This is evident in the following statements:

> *"My decision to choose this program is driven by local and international career opportunities. The demand for English teachers is increasing, especially in Southeast Asian countries."* — FP3

> *"I took this program because I heard about many job opportunities outside of my country." Many nations are hiring Filipino English teachers to help them."* - FP13

Their English teacher even mentioned that students often selected the BSED English program because multiple job opportunities await those who can communicate and deliver English effectively. This is shown in the following statement:

> *"Students will enroll in BSED English because they are inspired by the opportunities they can get if they can speak English confidently, such as in call center companies in the country."* - TP2

This subcategory suggests that one key factor influencing students' choice of program is the rising demand for qualified English teachers locally and abroad. With English playing an essential role in global communication, there is a strong need for skilled educators in schools and areas such as language training and online teaching. Many students are attracted to the program, viewing it as a pathway to stable and diverse career opportunities.

English is the most dominant language in the world, and it is essential for job opportunities worldwide. Its creativity and flexibility make it the primary language for many jobs and facilitate communication with international clients (Ali et al., 2022).

Social and Family Influences

Another subcategory emerged: social and family influences. This describes the decision to pursue a program through numerous factors, including influence from family, teachers, peers, and societal perceptions of career opportunities and personal interests. This is evident in the following statements:

"I was motivated to choose BSED English because I was inspired by my English teachers back in elementary and high school." - FP1

"We are a family of educators, and one of the factors that motivated me to choose this program was my mother, who also majored in English." - FP2

"The person who pushed me to participate in this program was my friend's aunt. She shared many things about the program, encouraging me to choose this path." - FP4

This indicates that social and family factors significantly influenced students' decisions to pursue BSED English. Many participants stated that encouragement from family, teacher guidance, and peer support played crucial roles in their enrollment decisions. At the same time, positive reinforcement from educators bolstered students' confidence, and societal perceptions of teaching as a valuable profession were further aligned with students' values and aspirations.

While some students followed their desired path, others took different routes because of the influence of their surroundings. This demonstrates how people and their surroundings significantly influence students' future career decisions (Carrico et al., 2019) (Majarocon et al., 2024).

Personal Motivation and Interests

This subcategory defines students' internal drive to pursue or achieve their goals. This involves their willingness to exert effort and thrive despite challenges. The following statements correspond to this subcategory:

"When I was young, I always envisioned myself as a teacher. My interest and passion motivated me to choose the BSED English program." - FP5

"I took the program as a personal motivation. Despite not being very good in English, I pursued this to enhance my skills and knowledge." - FP7

"In my family, some did not have a chance to attend school. This realization prompted me to prioritize enhancing my English skills." - FP9

A peer also shared some observations to support the participants' responses. Most of the participants' interests and motivations aligned with BSED English, which was a factor in choosing this program. This is shown in the following statement:

"My friends enjoy engaging with others, especially initiating conversations. Since teaching entails daily student interaction, their outgoing personality seems appropriate for this field." - PP2

This subcategory suggests that many students were drawn to this program because of their passion for the English language and a desire to inspire future generations. However, some individuals choose this path as a challenge, motivated by a determination to improve their language skills despite feeling less confident in their English proficiency. This personal connection to the subject matter, whether through passion or the desire to overcome obstacles, enhances students' learning experience and equips them with the resilience they need to navigate the program's challenges.

Students' motivation and interest in learning are essential in their choice of college programs and success in achieving educational goals. Without personal interest and motivation, learning challenges become more difficult. Acknowledging the influence of other factors, such as parental influence and the drive to improve one's weaknesses, is also essential to fostering lifelong passion and interest in learning (Filgona et al., 2020).

Students' Expectations When Choosing BSED English

Students' expectations when choosing the BSED English program explain what they anticipate to gain. This may include a comprehensive understanding of the English language, literature, and teaching methodologies. Furthermore, students may also expect opportunities for practical teaching and learning experiences to help them develop their competence in using the language.

The subcategories that emerged were the development of speaking skills, enhancement of language proficiency, and mastery of teaching strategies.

Development of Speaking Skills

This describes how enhancing students' ability to communicate effectively. This includes improving articulation, fluency, clarity, pronunciation, and overall confidence in public speaking. This is evident in the following statements:

"As a future teacher, I expect to be trained well in this program, especially in public speaking and interacting with people." - FP1

"I expected that I would be able to enhance my speaking and communication skills and build my confidence to apply them in my future work as a teacher." - FP6

Students selecting the Bachelor of Secondary Education (BSED) in English often expect to enhance their speaking skills as a vital part of their education. They anticipate improvements in articulation, fluency, clarity, and pronunciation to build confidence in public speaking. Many participants express the importance of engaging in discussions, delivering presentations, and participating in activities that foster these skills.

Practical communication skills and language competence are essential for success in various fields. Among the four macro-skills, speaking is the most significant for global communication. Given the widespread use of English worldwide, students must acquire competent communication skills to succeed in their chosen endeavors (Rao, 2019).

Enhancement of Language Proficiency

Another subcategory emerged: enhanced language proficiency. This includes improving their vocabulary, grammar, and usage of English. This is evident in the following statements:

"I expect to improve my writing skills and become good at them. In addition, I hope to enhance

my vocabulary and learn more literary pieces in English." - FP3

"My expectations are more focused on learning. I expect to learn the rules, structures, and components of the English subject, and I will deepen my understanding of them." - FP5

One English teacher also mentioned that students may have certain expectations regarding what they wish to gain from teachers in helping them develop their English proficiency. The following statement illustrates this.

"I believe that a student's primary expectation is to learn from their teachers. They expect to have an excellent teacher who is highly knowledgeable, especially in the subject matter." - TP1

These statements indicate that students expect to improve their vocabulary, grammar, and overall use of the English language. Many participants focused on developing their writing skills and enhancing their understanding of literary works in English. There is a strong emphasis on learning the rules, structures, and components of the English language because students recognize the need to strengthen their language competence. This commitment to improving language skills is essential for students' future roles as educators, highlighting their understanding of the importance of proficiency in English for effective teaching.

English proficiency is a crucial skill for today's interconnected world. The widespread use of English highlights the importance of enhancing English proficiency to effectively engage in global communication and succeed in various aspects of life and work (Putra et al., 2020).

Mastery of Teaching Strategies

The last subcategory that emerged is mastery of teaching strategies. This refers to competence in using different teaching approaches to enhance students' academic growth. These differences necessitate adaptable teaching methods that can accommodate the diverse needs of students (Killen & O'Toole, 2023). This subcategory is evident in the following statements:

"Since I am taking Education, I expect to learn methods of handling students, and how to deliver my lessons, craft effective lesson plans, and deliver classroom demonstrations." - FP12

"My expectations were raised, especially during our LET review, because the dean hired passers to train us. Knowing that our instructors are highly knowledgeable in the subject, I anticipate significant learning, especially in various teaching approaches." - FP13

Moreover, a peer also mentioned that participants usually struggle with crafting lesson plans and demonstrations that employ effective teaching strategies, which causes stress and overwhelming emotions. This is shown in the following statement:

"I expected it to be easy, but as I observed, they face challenges like sleepless nights, creating lesson plans, and preparing demos, highlighting the need to master teaching strategies for effectiveness." -PP1

Participants anticipate gaining essential skills in handling students, delivering lessons, crafting lesson plans, and conducting classroom demonstrations. These expectations are

heightened by the involvement of experienced instructors in the review sessions for the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET). However, many students face challenges when developing lesson plans and implementing effective teaching strategies, which can lead to stress and overwhelming emotions as graduation approaches. Consequently, there is a strong emphasis on mastering various teaching strategies because students recognize that these skills are crucial for their success as educators.

Challenges Students Faced in the Program

The challenges students encountered in the BSED English program are the difficulties they experienced throughout their educational journey. This includes common challenges such as language barriers and other problems in the learning process. The subcategories that emerged were *low self-esteem, teacher incompetence, and academic obstacles.*

Low Self-Esteem

One subcategory emerged as low self-esteem. This refers to having a lack of confidence and a negative perception of one's abilities and worth. Individuals with low self-esteem often experience feelings of self-doubt, inadequacy, and self-criticism, which can impact various aspects of their lives, including academic pursuits and mental well-being. This subcategory is present in the following statements:

> *"The most challenging aspect for me is public speaking, especially when delivering a speech. I feel nervous and struggle to articulate my thoughts and ideas properly."* - FP1

> *"My main challenge is my lack of confidence. Due to the pandemic, I have not been exposed to so many people in my first two years in college, so I have become quite introverted."* - FP6

One English teacher also stated that students hesitate when using the language, which may hinder them from fully expressing their thoughts and ideas clearly. This is shown in the following statement:

> *"Some challenges my students face is their lack of confidence in using the language. Some students feel embarrassed and struggle to express themselves properly in English."* - TP2

A key challenge identified among BSED English students is their lack of confidence in public speaking and oral communication. Many participants reported feeling shy and nervous when delivering speeches, which affected their ability to articulate their thoughts clearly. Limited exposure to public speaking opportunities during the pandemic has increased my anxiety and introversion. An English teacher observed that students often hesitated to use the language, further hindering their expression. This lack of confidence and embarrassment creates significant barriers to effective communication.

Thus, the COVID-19 pandemic caused major educational disruptions, leading schools worldwide to adopt distance learning. This has affected students' learning experiences, behavior in learning, and adaptability during this shift (Miranda & Tolentino, 2023). Self-esteem, moreover, plays a significant role in academic performance, greatly influencing students' classroom achievements (Christy & Mythili, 2020).

Teacher Incompetence

Another subcategory emerged: teacher incompetence. Competent teachers demonstrate

expertise in teaching a subject. However, this subcategory becomes a challenge when the teacher does not demonstrate competence or expertise in the subject matter, teaching strategies, classroom management, and assessment practices, which is evident in the following statements:

> *"Sometimes, the main challenge lies with the teacher. One of our teachers' teaching strategies was ineffective, and her approach to student interaction was lacking. The lessons are less interesting."* - FP5

> *"We had a teacher in our major subject before who was not very good at teaching, which was challenging because I did not understand her topics, but they were important because they were major subjects."* - FP13

A significant challenge identified by BSED English students is related to the effectiveness of their teachers. Some participants expressed that difficulties arise when teaching strategies are ineffective or teachers do not properly engage with students. When lessons are uninteresting, students struggle to stay motivated and learn.

The education system must equip students with essential skills, highlighting the urgent need for competitive teaching staff. Teachers' competitiveness improves through updated subject knowledge, new teaching methods, digital skills, and the fostering a positive classroom environment (Gorodnycha et al., 2023). When teachers communicate effectively and are perceived as credible, students are more motivated and achieve higher academic success. Conversely, when teachers lack effective communication and credibility, students experience decreased motivation and lower academic performance (Fernandes, 2019).

Academic Obstacles

This relates to the struggles students encounter during their educational journey. These challenges are supported by the following statements:

> *"Studying English, especially literature, is very challenging; it often involves numerous characters and complex narratives, some of which are not even based in the Philippines, making it particularly difficult for me."* - FP2

> *"In my fourth year, I struggled with lesson planning and classroom management. I find it difficult to manage a class, create lesson plans, or make instructional materials."* - FP3

Various challenges often mark students' academic journeys, and these challenges are complex and abundant. These challenges can manifest in different forms, especially in the context of academic factors. Their teacher mentions this in the following statement:

> *"It is quite common that many of my students struggle with grammar, which can be problematic considering they have chosen to major in English. Some of their grammar skills need improvement."* - TP1

BSED English students face several academic challenges, especially concerning significant subjects like literature. Many students find it difficult to understand complex characters and narratives. The deep terminology used by these subjects adds to their difficulties. Students also struggle with lesson planning and classroom management in their fourth year, mainly because they are not adequately taught these skills during the pandemic. In addition, teachers have noticed that

many students have difficulties with grammar. These challenges show that students' academic journeys are often filled with obstacles that affect their learning and confidence.

Studying English presents many challenges. The selection of appropriate language-teaching materials and approaches is crucial for effective language teaching and learning. Teachers must carefully evaluate English materials and strategies before using them in classrooms (Agusta, 2023).

Students Coping Strategies in BSED English

This category focuses on how students in this program address challenges related to their studies, curriculum, teaching practices, and professional development. This encompasses managing workload, understanding complex literature, honing language skills, and adapting teaching methods. This section explores strategies, resources, and experiences that help BSED English students overcome obstacles and thrive academically.

The subcategories that emerged from this category were using online resources, seeking support and collaboration, and embracing self-directed learning.

Using Online Resources

Students in the BSED English program use online resources to cope with challenges. These resources, such as digital libraries and educational websites, help students understand complex topics and access extra materials. This is evident in the following statements:

> *"As a visual learner, I regularly watch instructional videos online to learn effective strategies for overcoming challenges."* - FP3

> *"I use several strategies to overcome challenges. Firstly, I listen to speakers, particularly on platforms such as YouTube and Facebook, as they often offer helpful advice."* - FP5

Based on their responses, BSED English students employ various strategies to overcome academic challenges, with many relying on online resources. Some students who identify as visual learners regularly watch instructional videos to learn practical techniques for tackling difficulties. They explore different websites to find potential methods to help them address their challenges. Others use social media platforms to listen to speakers who share valuable advice and tips on managing academic obstacles.

The widespread use of electronic devices among today's learners suggests a natural inclination toward e-learning resources, which are interactive educational tools accessible on various devices (Bringman-Rodenbarger & Hortsch, 2020). The rise of online English language learning has also created valuable opportunities, offering students and educators a roadmap for adapting to a hybrid learning model (Susanto et al., 2022).

Seeking Support and Collaboration

This involves asking others for their assistance when facing uncertainties or challenges. Collaboration implies working together with others to achieve common goals through shared efforts and contributions. This is demonstrated in the following statements:

> *"Do not hesitate to ask questions from your peers. Seek help from them and share ideas because it is better to collaborate to overcome a challenge together."* - FP13

> *"Learning how to communicate with others is essential. If you are unfamiliar with lesson planning and have not researched it yet, connect with people who know how to do it. Ask for*

advice on what to do.” - FP14

A peer also stated that collaborating with colleagues, classmates, or others who know something about the topic can significantly help students face complex challenges in school. This is presented in the following statement:

“Students handle difficulties by asking questions and assisting each other. They collaborate and inquire with teachers when faced with confusion.” - PP1

The participants recognized the importance of collaboration in overcoming academic challenges. They encourage each other not to hesitate when asking questions, as peers can provide valuable support. Students emphasize the need for effective communication, suggesting that simple conversations can lead to greater understanding. Observations show that students often work together, asking questions and assisting one another, highlighting collaboration's positive impact on navigating complex school challenges.

Academic engagement, collaboration, and psychological resources such as efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience affect academic performance (Martinez et al., 2019). The quality of collaborative learning depends on the verbal interactions that occur during the process. In studying English, the effectiveness of collaboration is influenced by the type and quality of communication between students of different proficiency levels (Bolivar et al., 2024; Susanti et al., 2022).

Embracing Self-directed Learning

This refers to inner drive and personalized strategies to achieve goals and overcome obstacles. This includes personalized learning styles, approaches, and study techniques that students employ to motivate themselves to understand a topic and overcome difficulties related to their studies. This is shown in the following statements:

“To overcome challenges, you must find the most suitable material. Every student has a different learning style, and you must put in your best effort to find the material that fits your learning style.” - FP2

“I maintain a structured schedule. On Saturday evenings, I work on my lesson plans or answer my activities; on Sundays, I study the lessons to be discussed. This way, I have a daily schedule, ensuring I do not get overwhelmed by my tasks.”
- FP8

BSED English students emphasized the importance of finding appropriate materials and developing effective study habits to overcome academic challenges. They recognize that each student has a unique learning style, making it crucial to identify resources that align with their needs.

Previous studies have highlighted the significant role learning styles play in enhancing student learning outcomes and academic success. Understanding how students prefer to learn can significantly impact their educational journey and overall achievement (Ariastuti & Wahyudin, 2022).

Recommendations for Students Planning to Take the Program

This category provides guidance and suggestions for students considering a BSED English program. It offers valuable recommendations to help prospective students undergo the planning

process and make informed decisions about pursuing the program, including tips on thriving.

The subcategories that emerged from this category are a passion for teaching and learning, collaborative studying, and strategic reviewing.

Passion for Teaching and Learning

A subcategory that emerged is the passion for teaching and learning. This describes the relentless drive to acquire knowledge, skills, and understanding. This refers to the willingness to pursue a particular teaching career path and the dedication to acquire new knowledge and understanding. This is evident in the following statements:

"If they plan to enroll in BSED English, they must have a genuine passion and willingness to study English. Even if they are not very good, they will survive as long as they are determined."
- FP3

"One persists in the program despite facing numerous obstacles because of passion. Embracing challenges and failures opens doors to opportunities for growth and learning." - FP8

Their English teacher also provided tips for students contemplating enrolling in the BSED English program. The response is shown in the following statement:

"Put your heart into choosing your program. If you see BSED English as your last resort simply because you think it is easy, then it is more than that. Do not treat it as your only option available." - TP1

Students and teachers emphasize the importance of genuine passion and commitment for those considering the BSED English program. Participants noted that although determination can help students succeed even if they have limited skills, genuine interest in English is essential for success. Persistence through challenges and passion fosters growth and learning. Teachers advise that BSED English should not be chosen as a fallback option; instead, students should be fully invested in the program, understanding that it involves much more than reading and writing.

Collaborative Studying

Another subcategory emerged: collaborative study, which pertains to the collective effort to learn through the help of others. With a combination of engagement, students can solve problems, complete tasks, and achieve common goals.
This is evident in the following statements:

"The best way to succeed in college is to find friends who will help you grow and support your educational journey. Choose good friends who can positively influence you so that when you study, collaboration will naturally happen." (p. - FP9)

"Do not rely solely on yourself, but engage with your classmates because having friends is beneficial." They can help you lessen the stress of academic responsibilities." - FP14

This subcategory summarizes the concept of asking for help and working together with others to achieve specific goals. Thus, it also highlights the advantages of having friends who constantly support and update you regarding your academic responsibilities and help you cope with problems and stress at school.

Interacting and being socially present can significantly enhance active collaborative learning and student engagement, positively influencing their academic performance. These elements foster an environment where students feel connected, supported, and motivated, ultimately contributing to their learning outcomes (Qureshi et al., 2021).

Strategic Reviewing

The last subcategory is a strategic review, which involves preparing for a task or study session by using strategies, gathering materials, reading from various sources, and setting goals. This entails revisiting previously learned materials to reinforce understanding and retention or studying ahead of time to cope with possible academic challenges. The following statements respond to this concept:

> *"When choosing the BSED English program, one must study the basic structures and grammar. It is good to possess a foundation in learning so that it will not be very hard for them."* - FP2

> *"Those planning to be BSED English students must read regularly. Furthermore, not just read; they should read, analyze, and understand. This way, in the future, it will be easier for them when they encounter complex words or concepts."* - FP12

The participants also shared that preparing for college by studying in advance and regularly reviewing materials is crucial for success. This ensures that students are adequately equipped with the knowledge and skills required to excel in their academic pursuits. It helps students feel more confident and capable of handling the rigorous college-level coursework. Students' participation in college and career preparation activities can significantly impact their education and work attainment after graduation (Xing et al., 2019). Furthermore, findings from a previous study indicate that English majors encounter various challenges in learning English, including difficulties in understanding the meanings of new words, pronouncing them accurately, using them correctly in context, and memorizing and spelling new vocabulary. These challenges highlight the complexity of vocabulary acquisition and its critical role in English language learning (Afzal, 2019). Thus, this study explores the strategies employed by English students to overcome these challenges. By identifying and analyzing these strategies, this study offers practical insights that address the typical difficulties associated with learning English vocabulary and enhance overall language proficiency. Hence, according to Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by Deci and Ryan (1985), the need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness drives students to overcome obstacles, develop effective strategies, and grow into confident and capable individuals. This study underscores how fostering these motivations can enhance learning outcomes and teaching preparedness.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, the participants described their educational journey in the BSED English program as shaped by their motivations, expectations, challenges, and coping strategies. Despite the obstacles, students maintained high expectations for improving their language skills and acquiring effective teaching methods, driven by the global demand for educators. Recommendations for future students include developing a passion for the language, using strategic study techniques, collaborating with peers, and engaging in self-directed learning. For the program, recommendations include updating the curriculum to include more practical teaching experiences, improving teacher training for effective instruction, and incorporating modern teaching resources like digital tools. It is also recommended that a supportive learning environment with peer collaboration, faculty communication, and mentorship opportunities be fostered. These

recommendations enhance both the student experience and the program's ability to effectively prepare future educators.

LIMITATION AND FURTHER RESEARCH

After a comprehensive analysis of the findings, one limitation of this study is its focus on a specific group of BSED English students, which may not fully represent the experiences of students from other disciplines or programs. Despite meeting national educational standards and providing quality service, the institution still has areas for improvement to enhance student satisfaction. (De & Briones, 2024). Future research could explore similar educational experiences in different educational programs or universities to provide a broader perspective. Additionally, further studies could examine the long-term impact of the identified challenges and strategies on the professional development of graduates and explore the role of institutional support in shaping these experiences.

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