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Images of Translocality of EFL Learners within an ELT Hybrid Modality

Christopher Dullas Gabriel

Languages and Literature Department, College of Liberal Arts, De La Salle University-Dasmariñas,
Dasmariñas City, Philippines

cdgabriel@dlsud.edu.ph

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Christopher Dullas Gabriel

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Languages and Literature Department, College of Liberal Arts, De La Salle University-Dasmariñas, Dasmariñas City, Philippines

Abstract: This study examines the thought processes of English as a First Language (EFL) learners as they complete their grades 11 and 12 at identified senior high schools in the province of Cavite, the Philippines. It attempts to describe the communication situations EFL learners engage in with their Filipino teachers and classmates in an Oral Communication class. The first phase of the study covers the recording of their thought processes through diary logs and open-ended questionnaires. Their reflections were then subsequently coded and interpreted using Content Analysis. Results arrived to reveal three (3) dominant themes bearing six (6) categories of each projecting subcategories that further describe the challenges EFL learners face as they operate within the context of translocality, all in the hope of completing senior high school in the Philippines. Anchored on the intent that this will strategically prepare them for completing a college degree in their parents' country of origin where education is relatively cheaper, EFL learners seem to suppose that the communication situations they engage in specifically in an Oral Communication class have remarkably displaced them despite the assumption that they have already acquired optimum ability in Spoken English.

Key words: English as a First Language, EFL Learners, translocality, oral communication

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji proses pemikiran dari pelajar Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Pertama (EFL) saat mereka menyelesaikan kelas 11 dan 12 di sekolah menengah atas yang teridentifikasi di provinsi Cavite, Filipina. Penelitian ini berusaha menggambarkan situasi komunikasi yang dihadapi oleh pelajar EFL dengan guru dan teman sekelas mereka dalam kelas Komunikasi Lisan. Fase pertama dari penelitian ini meliputi pencatatan proses pemikiran mereka melalui catatan harian dan kuesioner terbuka. Refleksi mereka kemudian dianalisis dan diinterpretasikan menggunakan Analisis Konten. Hasil yang diperoleh mengungkapkan tiga (3) tema dominan dengan enam (6) kategori masing-masing yang memproyeksikan subkategori-subkategori yang lebih lanjut untuk menggambarkan tantangan yang dihadapi oleh pelajar EFL saat mereka beroperasi dalam konteks translokalitas, dengan harapan menyelesaikan sekolah menengah atas di Filipina. Berdasarkan niat agar hal ini mempersiapkan mereka secara strategis untuk menyelesaikan gelar perguruan tinggi di negara asal orang tua mereka, di mana biaya pendidikan relatif lebih murah, pelajar EFL tampaknya berasumsi bahwa situasi komunikasi yang mereka hadapi, khususnya dalam kelas Komunikasi Lisan, telah menggantikan mereka meskipun ada anggapan bahwa mereka sudah memperoleh kemampuan optimal dalam Bahasa Inggris Lisan.

Kata kunci: English as a First Language, pelajar EFL, translokalitas, komunikasi lisan

INTRODUCTION

Current social migration literatures situate the non-native users of English in a canvas that apparently frames the skills and competencies of a native speaker-hearer as the best indicator of and the endpoint to optimal communication ability. Anything associated with learning, hence, as Rampton, et al., (2023) surmise, is treated as an attempt to target a near native or a native-like proficiency.

English as a First Language (EFL) learners' presence in Philippine classrooms lends a multitude of questions on how they engage in classroom talks. What runs through the mind of an EFL when s/he hears someone speak English in a manner that is distinctively different from the way s/he does? What adjustments s/he must do to participate successfully in a classroom talk? Why is s/he required to enroll in an Oral Communication class when, in terms of successfully interacting with his/her fellow native English speakers back in his/her country of origin, s/he has been doing fine all along? Answers to these questions may shed light into how current Philippine ELT classrooms approach the presence of EFL's in ESL classrooms.

These reflections serve as preliminary guide points for explaining the peculiar context where EFL students interact with local Filipinos in Philippine English classroom scenarios. These scenarios bear interactions where codeswitching is apparent following participants' thought processes. By way of examining EFL's nativist view of English language against Philippine English, this study could be able to establish how EFL learners make sense of this variety of English which is relatively new to them, process information either heavily or relatively expressed using codeswitching, and assimilate a seemingly combined use of English language (one is a variety and the other is the purportedly native).

LITERATURE REVIEW

An examination of these repertoires leads to adding insights into Blommaert's (2010) concept of translocalization. While EFL speakers-hearers study in the Philippines, it may seem potentially evident that their interactions with local Filipinos, following their reflections, are likely to represent, as what Spivak emphasizes, "a decentering of the center" (1990, p. 4) that Philippine English and codeswitching in the Philippines decenter their nativist view of the English language.

To participate meaningfully in one communicative situation, EFL learners are supposed to have understood certain stretches of a codeswitched language to be understood by their classmates and teachers, whereby, such learners are initially forced to insert these representative stretches in their originally learnt repertoires. However, this process of engagement does not plainly rest on weaving words strategically at the syntactic level. To make the process of assimilating these stretches of the languages meaningful, the mental weaving of thoughts and ideas must clearly recognize that such utterances are entirely contextually dependent.

When two or more cultures interact, this study believes, the language of a dominant local culture dominates. In the educative culture of the Philippines which heralds the use of English, the medium of instruction is unreservedly undertaken in English. But which English? Whose English? In a classroom interaction, the phrase "medium of instruction", demands further explanation. If Philippine English defines the Filipino classroom, then any EFL's existing

language resource could be displaced, hence, the decentering of the positive attitude towards the native English language.

If Philippine English and codeswitching define the Filipino classroom, then, the notion of an EFL being decentered could be displaced even more. An attempt to explain these speculations could allow this study to look further at the work of Wallerstein's (2004) concept of geocultural globalization. How globalization influences the makeup of a Philippine classroom where an EFL learner is present is of significant inquiry. How engagements in classrooms composed of students from different language backgrounds account for the cosmic impact of globalization on the specific makeup of Philippine English language classrooms demand further study as well.

These points could trace what Kramsch highlights on the need to locate "the foreign language learner in a bilingual, oppositional culture that, like popular culture, thrives in the interstices of dominant monolingual cultures, whether they be C1 or C2." (2011, p. 13). However, it is from this very angle where the present study proffers concluding questions as it propounds on its implications for contemporary Philippine English language teaching.

Where in terms of location in the local-translocal continuum, then, pictures an EFL coming from a seemingly monolingual culture and studying English in the Philippines? What intersection/s do these students represent as they operate in a bilingual culture such as the Philippines? These questions which could have laid out the conclusions for this paper, hence, may foreground a nexus for approaching materials design and development in Philippine English language teaching classrooms where a Filipino-American, Filipino-Canadian, Filipino-British, or any other EFL student is present and hopes to complete a college degree in the Philippines.

The local literature along this study's conjectures appears to be scant or silent despite the current polarity of classrooms covering the different language backgrounds of EFL learners in ESL classrooms. A study of Radcliffe (2020) referred to the educational needs of Filipino immigrants in Hawaii. The present study is differently inflected such that, instead of looking at how ESL learners' attitude influences the process of learning English as a second language, it describes the images of translocality involving EFL learners that affect their attitude and behavior towards learning English in Philippine ESL classrooms.

METHOD

Considering that Content Analysis is applied to data analysis and interpretation for this inquiry, the research procedure consistently observes freedom from researcher's intrusions and/or biases. Content Analysis is a research technique for arriving at legitimate inferences from sets of data on a particular context. It expounds on reference to context by treating Content Analysis as an interdisciplinary methodology used for interpreting "context and meaning from textual, visual, or digital communication artifacts through quantitative and qualitative lenses" (Riffe, et al., 2023). These perspectives are central to optimizing Content Analysis where researcher's assumptions are not predetermined nor laid out prematurely so that data could flow unadulteratedly. The methodology is guided by the following key questions of this study:

1. How EFL students describe their attitude towards learning English in an Oral Communication classroom?

- 4 **Celt: A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching & Literature**, Volume 25, Number 1, June 2025, pp. 1 – 27
2. What situations interfere with his/her ability to decode messages delivered in a spoken medium?
 3. How do these situations influence his/her behavior during engagements in Oral Communication classrooms?
 4. What implications do answers to these questions have for teaching Oral Communication in an ESL setting where an EFL learner is involved, engages, and participates?

The study uses diary logs and open-ended and information questionnaires to reveal students' attitude toward learning Oral Communication within a hybrid modality. Their attitude as generated from these data gathering tools is discussed viz., certain patterns of interaction, as introspected, with their teachers and classmates. Peck's (1996) view of cultural sensitivity and Block's (1996) reference to oral diaries made use of diary logs for documenting thought process of ESL learners. The diary logs used in this study will be qualitatively interpreted in relation to the open-ended and information questionnaires which will have been accomplished by the participants.

Participants are identified in coordination with offices to whom information on these EFL learners is entrusted. The study identifies four EFL respondents from three senior high schools in the province of Cavite. All EFL respondents are assumed to have completed English courses that embed the teaching of the macro skills of the English language. Each is requested to accomplish an open-ended questionnaire where questions are sequenced in reference to typical conversations existing in an Oral Communication class as follows:

1. Initiating a conversation with a teacher
2. Initiating a conversation with a local Filipino classmate
3. Sustaining the flow of conversation with a teacher
4. Sustaining the flow of conversation with a local Filipino classmate
5. Ending a conversation with a teacher
6. Ending a conversation with a local Filipino classmate

Diary logs are carried out with the respondents as they reflect on how they engage in conversations with their teacher and local Filipino classmates in an online classroom. The diary logs are then sent to the researcher over email. The relationship of their responses to the open-ended questionnaire and their reflections entered in their diary log is qualitatively interpreted.

The information in the open-ended questionnaire and the diary log are framed following the concept of Johari Window. Luft (1969) describes the Johari Window (presented below) as representing the four windows to self and others and vice versa which influence patterns of human interaction. The reference to Johari Window also entails a much more manageable means of grouping the type of communication interaction and of subgrouping the responses that are likely to be generated from a given communicative exchange.

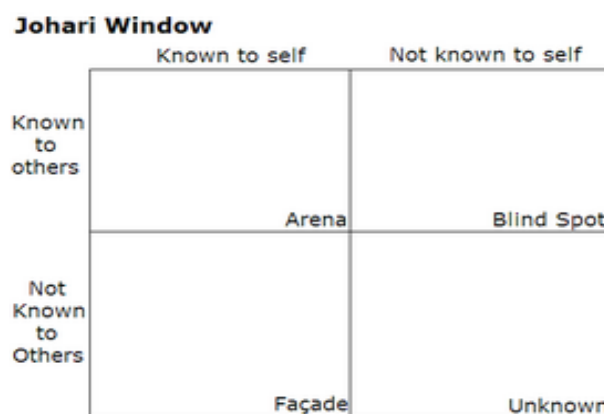


Figure 1:
Johari Window concept (in Luft, 1969)

This study employs Content Analysis. In this method of analysis, Delve (2023) describes it as analyzing texts written by selected subjects involving coding and interpretation using a qualitative lens leading to the extraction of insights or themes that illustrate the immediate context. Data interpretation is concerned with articulating underlying concepts about why particular patterns of behaviors, interactions, or attitudes emerge (Burns & Dikilitas, 2024). It is at this stage where the process of articulating the students' thought processes which could have been revealed after coding of data and interpretation is revisited and argued upon particularly on drawing insights from Blommaert's (2010) view of translocalization specifically qualified as "spatiotemporal situatedness" (3). The focus on this phenomenon is presented more fully in the discussion section of this paper.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Description of the Respondents

Considering that three of the respondents are minors and certain provisions are spelt out on observing stricter confidence in the handling of student information by respondents and their parents and/or selected schools, the names of the students and the school where these students are currently enrolled are withheld. The researcher was briefed that there should not be any mention of the name of the school and respondents' names since easy reference can be easily had. It must be emphasized that it was clear from the data generated that a school is likely to have only one EFL learner, hence, identities of the respondents can be easily revealed.

All respondents were made to accomplish the Expression of Participation document by affixing their signature as proof that they consented to be involved in the research. The respondents did not even write their names on the information and open-ended questionnaire. A reminder was also received by the researcher from the respondents over email that their identities be kept confidential. The proximity and timeliness of this research undertaking are likewise given due premium as sensitive reflections have been shared that could have potentially placed the student and/or the school in a bad light. Audio recording was not permitted by the school and respondents. Hard copies of students' writings in the open-ended questionnaire are photocopied and appended in this study for reference suggestive of the researcher's attempt to withhold information as requested by the school and/or student involved.

A total of four respondents whose first language is English are involved in this study. They completed their kindergarten, primary, elementary, and junior high school in Canada and the United States. The particulars below sequence the profile of the respondents which they accomplished online on the second week of November 2019, the final term of the first semester during which Oral Communication course is taught.

Table 1:
Profiles of Respondents

Student A	Student B	Student C	Student D
18, Male	17, Male	16, Female	17, Male
Place of Birth: Victoria, Canada	Place of Birth: Missouri, United States	Place of Birth: Ohio, United States	Place of Birth: Philippines
Citizenship: Canadian	Citizenship: American/Filipino	Citizenship: American	Citizenship: American
First Language Spoken: English	First Language Spoken: English	First Language Spoken: English	First Language Spoken: English
Issuing Authority of Passport: Canada	Issuing Authority of Passport: United States	Issuing Authority of Passport: United States	Issuing Authority of Passport: United States

Two respondents were born and raised in the US. One respondent was born and raised in Canada. One was born in the Philippines but eventually migrated to the US when she reached the age of three. All respondents have lived in the US and Canada for nearly two decades and have assimilated the American or Canadian culture in their social and family engagements. This can be inferred from the information that all of them have not travelled to the Philippines so far prior to their study. On the segment that speaks of their education, all the respondents completed their K-10 at their respective state-run schools. They all consider their ability to speak English excellent.

B. Respondents' Diary Logs

The diary logs were submitted over email. Only the participants' reflections for their 26 November and 28 November online classes were accomplished since reference to the immediate classroom context could not be had due to COVID-19. The latest submitted reflection was received on 10 December 2019. The earliest was submitted on 03 December 2019.

For easy reference, each participant is assigned a letter from A to D. Each diary log is subjected to open coding and worked on the topic, "How did my Oral Communication class go today?" Each diary log represents a thought group and is coded respectively. Respondent D failed to send her diary logs. The respondents' reflections are reported in Table 2.

Table 2:
Coding of Respondents' Reflections in Their Diary Logs

Student A, 26 November	
Feeling embarrassed	(1) It's kinda boring.
Experiencing isolation	(2) Everybody's preparing for the long weekend

Experiencing isolation	(3) and I'm still confused about how I can be more dynamic with my group.
Reminiscing	(4) It is in times like this that I miss my friends back home.
Asserting identity	(5) It is easier to get things done.
Asserting identity	(6) If everyone shares the same points and speaks the same language.
Checking on immediate reality	(7) Mom and Dad are gonna be surprised
Experiencing isolation	(8) that I am not adjusting well to my classmates here.
Assuming self as difficult to talk with	(9) My teacher is serious about making things happen for me in the Oral Comm class.
Expressing disbelief on teacher's ability	(10) but the way she speaks English and most of my classmates
Assuming self as difficult to talk with	(11) makes it even more difficult to say what I have in mind.
Checking on immediate reality	(12) I do not wonder any longer
Checking on immediate reality	(13) that my folks back in the hood
Asserting identity	(14) will soon be picking me about how my English has changed
Checking on immediate reality	(15) when I see them for Christmas.
28 November	
Checking on immediate reality	(16) A classmate did show some of his dancing skills.
Checking on immediate reality	(17) It was about giving instructions.
Thinking others being poor at English	(18) I almost cringed when he said something like "Kuros"
Thinking others being poor at English	(19) and I was thinking about Michael Korrs.
Thinking others being poor at English	(20) Damn, it was Chorus.
Asserting identity	(21) Like I was thinking
Asserting identity	(22) what's Korrs has to do with this dance.
Experiencing isolation	(23) That's exactly what I have been experiencing since day one.
Thinking others being poor at English.	(24) My teacher and my classmates understand this kind of English
Experiencing isolation	(25) that I am completely unaware.
Asserting identity	(26) And when I say things right,
Asserting identity	(27) just when I am so into what I am about to say
Assuming self as difficult to talk with	(28) I just can't say it
Assuming self as difficult to talk with	(29) because I really have to slow down
Assuming self as difficult to talk with	(30) just so they can understand what I am trying to say.
Asserting identity	(31) This is far from what I had been trained before in Cali.
Student B, 26 November	
Checking on immediate reality	(32) Today we are planning about our output for the PT for the finals.
Experiencing disbelief on teacher's ability	(33) I can't figure out what my teacher was telling us to do.
Experiencing disbelief on teacher's ability	(34) Maybe teaching Oral Communication is new to her.

Checking on immediate reality	(35) But I am the group representative
Checking on immediate reality	(36) and every after class I get to consult her
Checking on immediate reality	(37) or I get to present the group output.
Experiencing disbelief on teacher's ability	(38) I don't know but I sense an unnatural interaction
Experiencing disbelief on teacher's ability	(39) every time I talk to her.
Checking on immediate reality	(40) When I clarify something,
Experiencing disbelief on teacher's ability	(41) she begins to sound like a book talking.
Experiencing isolation	(42) So formal and it keeps me distant to her.
Assuming self as difficult to talk with	(43) Every time I say something
Assuming self as difficult to talk with	(44) I feel like there is a need to say it again.
Assuming self as difficult to talk with	(45) I'm unsure if she got me right or not.
Identifying poor Tagalog as cause of getting isolated	(46) I want to learn to speak Tagalog.
Thinking others being poor at English	(47) My classmates wouldn't find a way to speak to me in English.
Thinking others being poor at English	(48) They try to say things in English.
Feeling mistreated	(49) only when I begin to complain.
Affirming that everyone speaks Tagalog	(50) Like my classmates, my teacher would have long ideas delivered in Filipino in class.
Expressing disbelief in teacher's ability	(51) and I am sure she is more comfortable using Tagalog in class.
Student B, 28 November	
Checking on immediate reality	(52) Two more weeks and the class is over.
Checking on immediate reality	(53) I am excited to begin my writing class
Checking on immediate reality	(54) which is apparently happening next semester.
Checking on immediate reality	(55) Our PT on report aging is planned out pretty fine
Asserting identity	(56) but I think I own around 90% of the effort from planning out and finalizing everything.
Asserting identity	(57) My teacher is going to give me an A grade
Concluding that class does not improve skills	(58) but in terms of developing my speaking skills, I don't think I really improved a lot.
Concluding that class does not improve skills	(59) I can see that from my classmates also.
Checking on immediate reality	(60) We had a group presentation of the first two parts of our PT
Asserting identity	(61) and, well, what can I say.
Thinking others being poor at English	(62) Most of my groupmates can't even say things that clear.
Asserting identity	(63) And I was like duh.
Reminiscing	(64) I can't help but think about my friends in the secondary.
Asserting identity	(65) Talking with them was definitely a complete contrast of what I am in now.

Student C, 26 November	
Asserting identity	(66) I just wanna be frank about this.
Reminiscing	(67) When I was in the US
Highlighting the need to speak English	(68) I was into knowing more about how to speak
Highlighting the need to speak English	(69) and I write better like I was at the top of class.
Reminiscing	(70) I remember my English teachers
Asserting identity	(71) telling me that I can be like J.K. Rowling
Asserting identity	(72) That made me passionate about studying English.
Checking on immediate reality	(73) But when I came to the Philippines
Checking on immediate reality	(74) to prepare for college and get in senior high,
Giving up	(75) that completely changed.
Checking on immediate reality	(76) I know my parents would not agree with it
Concluding that class did not improve skills	(77) but I find my English class not helping me out to be better.
Concluding that class did not improve skills	(78) Its been flat
Concluding that class did not improve skills	(79) like there isn't any progress
Noting others using Taglish/Tagalog in class	(80) My teacher and classmates seem to speak a mixed up English.
Feeling mistreated	(81) And I end up confused.
Asserting identity	(82) But surprisingly like when I speak up everyone listens.
Thinking others being poor at English	(83) No interaction or whatever you wanna call it.
Thinking others being poor at English	(84) No comment.
Thinking others being poor at English	(85) Nothing at all.
Asserting identity	(86) It is just me talking and that's it.
Student C, 28 November	
Being mocked at	(87) It's been months since they keep on referring to me as an alien.
Checking on immediate reality	(88) every time we meet as a group.
Experiencing isolation	(89) I thought they were just into X-Men series
Experiencing isolation	(90) but I was able to confirm
Being mocked at	(91) that they consider me an alien
Thinking others being poor at English	(92) because they don't understand what Im saying
Asserting identity	(93) When I talk, I talk too fast
Asserting identity	(94) and I said I cant slow down
Asserting identity	(95) or else I'm gonna bite my tongue.
Being mocked at	(96) Obviously their gonna highlight that with nosebleed and stuff
Checking on immediate reality	(97) I asked my auntie about nosebleed
Checking on immediate reality	(98) and she told me it means that I speak English
Thinking others being poor at English	(99) and they don't get what I'm saying.

Feeling embarrassed	(100) I'm bothered
Feeling embarrassed	(101) because their gonna be my classmates next semester
Thinking others being poor at English	(102) and what will our English class be like?
Giving up	(103) This seems unbearable
Checking on immediate reality	(104) but I have no other choice.
Checking on immediate reality	(105) Mom sent me here
Checking on immediate reality	(106) because college is cheaper here than in the US.

C. Diary Logs

The grouping that follows interconnects the diary log and the questionnaire. The main intent for employing this procedure is to enable common patterns to emerge from the interconnections. Out of the sixteen codes, six major categories emerge and are considered material to this research undertaking. These categories total 163 codes from the questionnaires and diary logs.

1. Situation Characterizing Alienation (Experiencing isolation, Assuming self as difficult to talk with)

In this category, the experiences of the respondents point to the occasions that make them feel alienated. Alienation is a mental perception where the person feels that his presence is perceived to be non-existent by the other person or group. Such alienation is characterized by the feeling that they are being isolated by notable circumstances where they seem distanced. These experiences led them to characterize themselves as not being easy to engage in communication.

2. Negative View on Interlocutor (Thinking others being poor at English, Noting others using Taglish/Tagalog in class, Affirming that everyone speak Filipino in class, Expressing disbelief on teacher's ability)

This category focuses on the respondents' perspective of the persons they are communicating with. Subcategories reflect that the respondents find their interlocutors as lacking in necessary skills to communicate with them in English. Taglish (a mixture of Tagalog and English) and Tagalog have become the strings of language their interlocutors use in class in explicating point. It is also remarkably highlighted in this category that despite having a foreign student in a class, the local Filipino classmates speak Filipino in the classroom. It is also in this category that respondents speak of their disbelief in their teachers' ability to speak consistently in English in an Oral Communication class.

3. Expression of a Negatively Felt Emotion (Being mocked at, Feeling mistreated, Feeling embarrassed)

While category 1 resembles this third category, it must be emphasized that negative emotions are the primary focus being explored in this category. The emotions emanate from the feelings of the respondents as their assumptions cover being mocked at, being treated perhaps as an outsider in the class, and the feeling of being embarrassed as these emotional thoughts have affected their ability to engage with local Filipino students.

4. Reference to Past Experience (Reminiscing)

This category attempts to capture any opportunity where the respondent goes back to remembering the situations he had been engaged in which are totally in stark contrast with what is currently being experienced.

5. Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity (Asserting identity, Highlighting the need to speak in English)

Two subcategories emerge from this category where the respondents had to either knowingly or unknowingly give emphasis on their cultural identity. In the process of emphasizing such an identity, stressing the need to speaking English in the classroom had to be done as well.

6. Unchallengeable Immediate Reality (Checking on immediate reality, Concluding that class does not improve skills, Giving up, Identifying good English as cause of getting isolated, Identifying poor Tagalog as cause of getting isolated)

In this category, the respondents had to express a certain degree of relying purely on fate and that any other outside force to change the dynamics of using the local language despite presence of EFL learners. A total of five categories emerged from this category which center on the view that the class fails to address communication needs in English. Quite proportionate to this view is the claim that the ones who speak better English are silently labeled and are forced to operate in isolated environments. Such a system of isolation is caused by the local Filipinos who keep on using the local language even if there is a foreign language user around.

D. Questionnaire Results

The information and open-ended questionnaire have four segments. The first three segments seek information on their personal circumstances (QI), education and purpose/s for traveling to the Philippines (QII), and ability to speak the English language (QIII) respectively. The fourth segment (QIV) focuses on the use of English in the classroom. The sets of information on this segment are outlined below. The phrase initiate, sustain, and end is used to present how the participants' responses in the questionnaire under Segment IV, Number Five are logically guided such that "What can you say about yourself speaking to... teacher and local Filipino classmate".

Note that the responses are intentionally left unedited. Actual photocopies of entries to the questionnaire are appended. Likewise, the complete participants' responses to the open-ended questionnaire including its other segments can be found elsewhere in this study. Coding covers the participants' reflections in their diary logs treated in manageable thought groups which guide the establishment of categories. Each thought group is labeled which allows for a more specific categorizing of data. Meaning is then arrived at a thorough examination of each thought group which leads to a more systematic and organized analysis. The following is the result of the questionnaire that shares information about use of English in the classroom (Segment IV, Number Five):

What can you say about yourself speaking English to start a conversation with your teacher in your country of origin and your teacher here in the Philippines?

Student A

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Reminiscing

(1) It is easier to start a talk with my teacher in Canada.

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Challenging teacher's ability

(2) Here, if I start the conversation, it stops right away.

Negative view of the Interlocutor

Challenging teacher's ability

(3) No engagement at all.

Student B

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(4) I think talking with teachers in US is much smoother.

Expression of a Negatively Felt Emotion

Feeling embarrassed

(5) I feel forced to speak slow

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Challenging teacher's ability

(6) so my teachers can understand me

Experiencing Isolation

Assuming self as difficult to talk with

(7) or like I would say my point twice.

Student C

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(8) Its easier and more natural back home.

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(9) Speaking fast is natural.

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Challenging teacher's ability

(10) Here I need to slow down so my teacher can get my point.

Student D

Reference to Past Experience

Reminiscing

(11) Back in the US, I was comfortable speaking to my teachers in English

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(12) and didn't have to worry

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(13) about them not being able to understand me or the reference I use.

Experiencing Isolation

Assuming self as difficult to talk with

(14) Here in the Philippines, I've had to worry about the language barrier.

What can you say about yourself speaking English to sustain the flow of conversation with your teacher in your country of origin and your teacher in the Philippines?

Student A

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(15) It is pleasant and engaging to talk with my Canadian teachers.

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Challenging teacher's ability

(16) Filipino teachers sound too distant and too formal.

Student B

Situations Characterizing Alienation

Assuming self as difficult to talk with

(17) I feel uneasy about keeping the conversation going

Unchallengeable Reality

Checking on immediate reality

(18) when I talk with my teachers here

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(19) unlike in the US.

Student C

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(20) Interaction is smooth when talking with American teachers.

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Challenging teacher's ability

(21) Here it's like waiting for teachers to use right words.

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Challenging teacher's ability

(22) Its distracting.

Student D

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(23) In the US, our conversation wouldn't stop or get interrupted

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(24) because neither one of us had to think about

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting Identity

(25) whether or not the other person understood what the other person said.

Unchallengeable Reality

Checking on Immediate Reality

(26) Here, it's difficult because I've had to speak to them both in English and Filipino.

What can you say about yourself speaking English to end the conversation with your teacher in your country of origin and your teacher in the Philippines?

Student A

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(27) Normal endings are obvious with a Canadian teacher.

Unchallengeable Reality

Checking on immediate reality

(28) Here it sounds a little awkward.

Student B

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(29) It ends naturally.

Unchallengeable Reality

Checking on immediate reality

(30) Here it appears rather weird.

Student C

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identify

Asserting identity

(31) The tone and mood is more relaxed back home.

Unchallengeable Reality

Checking on immediate reality

(32) Here. its quite formal and unnatural.

Student D

Unchallengeable Reality

Checking on immediate reality

(33) Here I've had to think and see if they understood me

Unchallengeable Reality

Checking on immediate reality

(34) and that there were no miscommunication,

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity \

(35) but back in the US I could just simply walk away

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(36) without thinking if they understood me or not.

What can you say about yourself speaking English to start a conversation with a local Filipino classmate?

Student A

Unchallengeable Reality

Checking on immediate reality

(37) When I start a conversation they reply in Tagalog

Situations Characterizing Alienation

Experiencing isolation

(38) and I am left with "what's that?"

Student B

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Thinking others being poor at English

(39) Usually its discouraging to start it with a Filipino classmate

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Thinking others being poor at English

(40) because it just stops and ends there right away.

Student C

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Thinking others being poor at English

(41) When I start the talk, it takes a little while to get a response.

Student D

Truncated Interaction

Attempting to reach out

(42) When I speak to them in English, I know right away that I have to translate

Truncated Interaction

Attempting to reach out

(43) or ask another classmate to translate what I've said in Filipino.

What can you say about yourself speaking English to sustain the flow of conversation with a local Filipino classmate?

Student A

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Noting others using Taglish/Tagalog in class

(44) It simply ends because I'm caught up with the Tagalog responses

Situation Characterizing Alienation

Experiencing isolation

(45) which I don't understand.

Student B

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Highlighting the need to speak in English

(46) If we can understand each other definitely the talk goes on.

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Highlighting the need to speak in English

(47) But this rarely happens

Student C

Unchallengeable Reality

Giving up

(48) If they can't keep up then I give up the conversation

Unchallengeable Reality

Giving up

(49) I mean end it.

Student D

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Thinking others being poor at English

(50) I can tell that they have a hard time,

Truncated Interaction

Attempting to reach out

(51) so, I have to adjust and speak to them in Filipino.

What can you say about yourself speaking English to end the conversation with a local Filipino classmate?

Student A

Unchallengeable Reality

Giving up

(52) It stops right away.

Student B

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Thinking others being poor at English

(53) Usually its easier to end the talk

Faithfulness to Native Speaker Identity

Asserting identity

(54) because I tend to be more dominant when talking with them in English.

Student C

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Thinking others being poor at English

(55) It's easier to end conversation

Negative View of the Interlocutor

Thinking others being poor at English

(56) because most of the time they dont understand me.

Student D

Truncated Interaction

Attempting to reach out

(57) I've had to ask them if they understood everything I've said.

After coding the participants' reflections in their diary logs and grouping them into manageable thought groups is the interpretation of data such that pertinent conclusions are specifically drawn out from what the data proffers. Likewise, doing this provides a much clearer mapping out of repetitive yet complementing codes found in the diary log and the questionnaire. What follows, hence, presents primary and secondary categories together with their frequency of recurrence in the analyzed data like shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3:
Negative View of the Interlocuter

Category: Negative View of the Interlocutor	Frequency in the Diary Log
Thinking Others Being Poor at English	11
Expressing Disbelief on Teachers' Ability	7

Under the category, "Negative View of the Interlocutor", *Thinking Others Being Poor at English* and *Expressing Disbelief on Teachers' Ability* occurred in 11 and 7 instances respectively in the Diary Log and in the Questionnaire. This perspective of the respondents captures three dominant areas – Thinking Others Being Poor at English and Expressing Disbelief on Teachers' Ability – precisely point to how the respondents perceive the language abilities of their local Filipino classmates and their teachers. Apparently, this perspective manifests as well in the questionnaire accomplished by the respondents.

Going further on the notion that the English language abilities of their interlocutors are put in question, it can be gleaned from the respondents' thought processes that they are using their current language ability particularly their seemingly unique speaking ability as basis for saying that they speak better English and that they are better at using English (see Table 4).

Table 4:
Expression of a Negatively Felt Emotion

Category: Expression of a Negatively Felt Emotion	Frequency in the Diary Log
Being Mocked at	2
Reminiscing	4

For the category, "Expression of a Negatively Felt Emotion", *Being Mocked at* registered 2 while "Reminiscing" bears the frequency of 4 in the Diary Log. Despite an apparent assertion of their English language ability as something that holds supreme and seemingly appears to be the gold standard of who speaks better English, in this category, the respondents feel rather negatively to the kind of communicative engagements and successes they have had with their interlocutors. Being mocked at precisely gets in the way of their ability to express themselves and, in some instances, could be a remarkable indicator that they are likely to get on with certain avoidance strategies during the interaction as they feel rather treated negatively in the process.

It is quite likely a potential, hence, that circumstances which the respondents consider negative compel them to resort to reminiscing the kind of successful communicative engagements they have had back in their country of origin which are a stark contrast to what they are experiencing (see Table 5).

Table 5:
Unchallengeable Immediate Reality

Category: Unchallengeable Immediate Reality	Frequency in the Diary Log
Checking on Immediate Reality	23

The "Unchallengeable Immediate Reality" category has the code *Checking on Immediate Reality* registering the frequency of 23 in the Diary Log. As the respondents are left with no other choice but to engage in communicative circumstances proffered by their current communication contexts at school, it is quite evident that they have positioned themselves at an angle where there is no other opportunity but to take in what the immediate environment dictates them to. Thus, it would be quite likely as well that their communicative interactions with their local Filipino classmates and Filipino teachers are limited by such realities.

E. Three Dominant Themes

The recurring categories as reflected present three dominant themes are the focal points of this research. Each is given emphasis vis-a-vis the translocality phenomenon where these English as a First Language users seemingly operate.

1. Native English “Speakerism”

This theme describes all the participants as referring to their current English-speaking ability as the blueprint of what the course Oral Communication expects from everyone enrolled in it. While in the diary log, a subtle reference to their language and cultural origins was made, their responses in the questionnaire, on the other hand, could overtly establish that their identity holds a rightful place in the local Oral Communication classroom.

The participants highlight that teachers back in their country of origin are easy to speak to where the flow of the talk is natural. In their current educational contexts, the degree of formality and word choice of their Filipino teachers impede the processing of information which makes the interaction sound unnatural and distant.

In starting a conversation with a local Filipino classmate, the participants find the difficulty of initiating the talk because of the passive behavior of their interlocutors. Local Filipino students tend to be brief about their responses which could be due to the difficulty in processing what their EFL classmates say. In sustaining the flow of conversation with a local Filipino classmate, while all the respondents maintain the use of English, most of the conversations are shortened because their local Filipino interlocutors could not keep up with the flow of the interaction. In ending the conversation with a local Filipino classmate, except D who finds a way to ensure that her message is sent across, the rest of the respondents take the initiative of ending the talk.

These reflections are a stark contrast to the way they reminisce about their interaction with their peers back in their country of origin. It is evident from the transcripts in their diary logs that they consistently image their nativist orientation.

2. Negative Emotional Experiences

While asserting identity could be seemingly a premium for the participants to position rightfully the significance of their native speaker ability in an Oral Communication classroom, contrariwise, a multitude of negative experiences appear to railroad their nativist orientation. Among the codes under the category, “Expression of a Negatively Felt Emotion”, *Being Mocked at* most frequently recurs in the diary log.

(87) It’s been months since they keep on referring to me as an alien.

(91) that they consider me an alien.

(96) Obviously their gonna highlight that with nosebleed and stuff.

The same negative emotional impact could be derived from secondary categories characterizing mistreatment and embarrassment as seen from these entries.

(48) They try to say things in English

(49) only when I begin to complain.

(100) Im bothered

(101) because their gonna be my classmates next semester

Starting, Sustaining, and Ending a conversation with a local classmate likewise characterizes opportunities of getting mocked at. **Nosebleed**, in its context of use, characterizes a joking aside

commonly heard as a reaction on someone who consistently speaks English. It has been quite apparent in the repertoires of local Filipino students, however, when said to the participants, their uptake seems to be leaning on the negative. While their local classmates might consider this expression to be a light comment on someone who speaks English, the participants see it as embarrassing and uncompromising. They think that it forced them to learn and speak Filipino, Tagalog, and/or Taglish as suggested in the code, Attempting to Reach Out, registering a frequency of 5 under the category, “Unchallengeable Immediate Reality” (see Table 6).

Table 6:
Unchallengeable Immediate Reality

Category: Unchallengeable Immediate Reality	Frequency in the Diary Log
Attempting to Reach Out	7

Forasmuch as these negative emotional experiences spring from these expressions and moves elicited by their interlocutors, the participants could be predisposed to attempt at learning certain basic expressions of Taglish, Tagalog, and/or Filipino in order to somewhat keep engaged in classroom group tasks. Despite having to go through certain engagements with their local classmates as demanded by the classroom task, the same expressions lead the participants to entertain notions of being isolated.

3. Generalizations on Current Circumstances

Under the category, “Unchallengeable Immediate Reality”, the code, “Checking on Immediate Reality” registered a frequency of 23 in the Diary Log and 8 in the Questionnaire. These generalizations speak of how influential the spoken language of the local classmates is in terms of getting involved in accomplishing classroom tasks. The participants have seemingly come to terms with the idea that, for them to be included in the discourse as dictated by group activities, they are implicitly required to learn how to speak and comprehend Tagalog, Filipino, or and/or Taglish.

From these reflections, one explicit point that can be drawn out is that the participants’ current English language ability in fact distances them from getting engaged with their local classmates in classroom tasks within the context of a Public Speaking class. A stark contrast could be had between curricular expectations that embodies development of speaking skills in English and the dynamics of group interaction seemingly dictated by an internally agreed requirement to use the local language to carry out a Public Speaking group task.

The dominant themes in this generalization mirror Identities are constructed about the people they deal with. They co-identify with foreign students whose accent and manner of speaking resemble theirs. Their native speakerism orientation marks a negative regard to their Filipino English language teachers. In exploring further these mental descriptions made by EFL learners on their local classmates and teachers. The respondents’ learning preferences are seen to be negatively directed towards the local teachers and put in question their credibility as legitimate teachers of English.

In one assertion made by Richards (2015) about native speakers of English teachers, certain expert syndrome labels have been unfairly enjoyed as compared to those nonnative speakers of English. Along the same vein, Wang-McGrath (2013) posits that,

... expatriate native English-speaking teachers (NEST) have linguistic and sociocultural power over local nonnative English teachers (NNEST) which is why the position of NNESTs has been frequently examined within the framework of hegemonic relations between NESTs and NNESTs. These hegemonic relations reflect NNESTs' fear of losing their value as English teachers and entail a power struggle to maintain their legitimate status as English teachers (31).

In relation to the reflective summary submitted by student C, the statements shared largely affirm the assertions previously made. The way sentiments and emotions are expressed is an exact mirroring of the six major categories set in the treatment of data.

A more detailed examination of the more specific details of the reflective summary paints a negative take on the communication conditions where the respondent has been consistently exposed to. These statements also manifest an attempt to view the lacks in teaching English in the school context where the respondent was in.

CONCLUSION

The dominant themes namely, (1) Native English Speakerism, (2) Negative Emotional Experiences, and (3) Generalizations on Current Circumstances capture the "movement" within the confines of translocality characterizing the presence of English as a First language learner learning Oral Communication in Philippine classroom.

Such dominant themes which are given emphasis in this study are not mutually exclusive. The major categories and their subcategories can overlap or interplay much as they complement each other. As a matter of fact, the respondents' intentions, adjustments, and sentiments in their engagements with their teachers and classmates are a smorgasbord of their attitudes toward learning Oral Communication.

Blommaert (2010) gives attention to the knit wit interrelationship of locality and mobility saying, "whenever we observe patterns of mobility, we have to examine the local environment in which they occur". This study hopes to work on the said complementarity. However, the dominant themes of this study seemingly extend multiple imaging of EFL's attitudes toward learning Oral Communication in an ESL classroom which could demand a more complex qualitative approach such as Grounded Theory and its attendant analysis.

The six categories forwarded in this study representing the dominant themes are an attempt to picture to a certain extent the EFL ~ one who engages in an ongoing process of reflecting on his nativist orientation on English language use, after longer exposure to local context, perhaps, a redirection of his current social positions to something that is more tolerant to the frame of local Filipino classroom contexts, in his/her journey towards finishing senior high school in the Philippines. In reflection to this, Kramsch (2011) assertion which goes, "to locate the foreign language learner in a bilingual oppositional culture thrives in the interstices of dominant monolingual cultures", could be further studied as representing the other side of the coin when the parameters of the current study are examined.

The participants in this study are likely to bring with them notions of alienation, assertion of their identity as a native speaker, and their unpleasant views of their interlocutors. While operating in a classroom largely described by local classmates, comparisons between and among

their current and past experiences co-occur with their attempts to get involved in speaking opportunities which somehow are eventually truncated. They continue to do so for they acknowledge that they are confined to an unchallengeable and immediate reality where the language of/and the local culture dominate.

Is the learner de-centered as we seek to address the query raised elsewhere in paper, “[W]here, in terms of location in the local-translocal continuum, then, pictures an EFL coming from a seemingly monolingual culture and studying English in the Philippines?” there could be an increasing likelihood that the participants have been dislocated. In the study, the category “expression of a negatively felt emotion” represents nineteen coded entries from both the questionnaire and diary log thereby casting a multitude of negative feelings ranging from mockery, to mistreatment, to embarrassment. The notion of alienation appears twenty-one times as the participants describe their engagements with their classmates and teachers alike. They have felt isolated and may continue to feel one as the school year progresses. These findings could be affirmed in the assertions made by one of the respondents in the reflective summary.

Insofar as their nativist orientation on the kind of English they speak which their classmates and teachers perceive to be a “nosebleed”, a continuum could be established with two notions at opposite ends. On the one hand is the participants’ implicitly strong assertion of their identity. On the other hand, is the dominant classroom culture dictated by the use of Tagalog and/or Taglish in an Oral Communication class. The makeup of spoken interactions could be clearly seen as decentering the native speaker’s language which the participants seemingly think as the language of the center. This could be inferred from their continued reference to the kind of instruction they received at their American or British styled primary and secondary curricula.

Their apparently unbreakable faithfulness to native speaker identity as they assert it and unreservedly highlight that their stay in the Philippines is simply predetermined by the temporal goal of obtaining a lesser expensive education (this is mentioned by all the participants in the information questionnaire) is one compelling area that influences them to think of some of their interlocutors – be they classmates or teachers – as, to some extent, inexperienced users of English. Thus far, the study presents a handful of coded entries labeling their interlocutors as poor users of English. Conversely, as the participants have perceived them to be so, the participants, themselves, have silently suffered the brunt of alienation brought about by an unchallengeable immediate reality where they are in at the moment.

What then are the implications of this study for English language teaching? The factors identified in this study could warrant a more faithful accounting of the requirements reflected in the syllabus for teaching Oral Communication. They demand a more insightful generation of the treatment of group interaction by considering more fully the dynamics of spoken engagements between and among students who are first language, second language, and third language users of English.

The discourse makeup of an Oral Communication class must be reflective of the attitudes of the students with the images of translocality being stationed at a more focused platform beyond the linguistically driven requirements of accent, pronunciation, paralinguistics and other Western-based cosmetics of language learning and pedagogy. It could be evident as well that the findings arrived at in this paper are largely negative most specifically because these are actual written up statements taken from diary logs, questionnaire responses, and reflective summary. However, the tendency to suppose other potentially positive interpretations that could spring from these

experiences would have been possibly taken notice if only recorded interviews have been undertaken with the original sample types of respondents and data gathering procedures. The Senior High School, being under the Department of Education, is strictly operating under clauses that directly protect the identity of the respondents who are minors. Several angles would have been given more emphasis specifically if a much wider corpora is generated. Hence it is material that:

1. a much wider sampling source be undertaken to include senior high schools from different towns in Cavite;
2. future study along this research sees the Purposive Communication being explored as the issue of respondents being minors can be avoided;
3. a more strategically scheduled time frame for interviewing the respondents be carried out so that their trail of thoughts can be examined more precisely;
4. a translocal study of this sort be able to highlight the diversity and effects of migration particularly on the intents and purposes of the respondents for seeking a college degree in the Philippines where English is taught by teachers who speak English as a second or even as a Foreign language;
5. the potential to deliver optimal English language instruction of a particular school be covered in future study along this direction as there could possibly be a significant difference between schools which are considered established and those which are relatively young; and
6. the need to explore the rich area of comparing and contrasting thought processes of English as a First Language students and English as a Second or Third Language students who are studying in the Philippines towards obtaining a Senior High School degree.

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APPENDICES

Respondents' Diary Logs (November 26 and November 28 Oral Communication Classes)

Student A

26 November

It's kinda boring. Everybody's preparing for the long weekend and I'm still confused about how I can be more dynamic with my group. It is in times like this that I miss my friends back home. It is easier to get things done if everyone shares the same points and speaks the same language. Mom and Dad are gonna be surprised that I am not adjusting well to my classmates here in the Philippines. My teacher is serious about making things happen for me in the Oral Comm class but the way she speaks English and most of my classmates makes it even more difficult to say what I have in mind. I do not wonder any longer that my folks back in the hood will soon be picking me about how my English has changed when I see them for Christmas.

28 November

A classmate did show some of his dancing skills. It was about giving instructions. I almost cringed when he said something like Kuros and I was thinking about Michael Korrs. Damn, it was Chorus. Like I was thinking what's Korrs has to do with this dance. That's exactly what I have been experiencing since day one. My teacher and my classmates understand this kind of English that I am completely unaware. And when I say things right, just when I am so into what I am about to say, I just can't say it because I really have to slow down just so they can understand what I am trying to say. This is far from what I had been trained before in Cali.

Student B

26 November

Today we are planning about our output for the PT for the finals. I can't figure out what my teacher was telling us to do. May teaching Oral Communication is new to her. But I am the group representative and every after class I get to consult her or I get to present the group output. I don't know but I sense an unnatural interaction every time I talk to her. When I clarify something, she begins to sound like a book talking. So formal and it keeps me distant to her. Every time I say something I feel like there is a need to say it again. Im unsure if she got me right or not. I want to learn to speak Tagalog. My classmates wouldn't find a way to speak to me in English. They try to say things in English only when I begin to complain. Like my classmates, my teacher would have long ideas delivered in Tagalog and I am sure she is more comfortable using Tagalog in class.

28 November

Two more weeks and the class is over. I am excited to begin my writing class which is apparently happening next semester. Our PT on reportaging is planned out pretty fine but I think I own around 90% of the effort from planning out and finalizing everything. My teacher is going to give me an A grade but in terms of developing my speaking skills, I don't think I really improved a lot. I can see that from my classmates also. We had a group presentation of the first two parts

of our PT and, well, what can I say. Most of my groupmates can't even say things that clear. And I was like duh. I can't help but think about my friends in the secondary. Talking with them was definitely a complete contrast of what I am in now.

Student C

I just wanna be frank about this. When I was in the US I was into knowing more about how to speak and write better like I was at the top of class. I remember my English teachers telling me that I can be like J.K. Rowling. That made me passionate about studying English. But when I came to the Philippines to prepare for college and get in senior high, that completely changed. I know my parents would not agree with it but I find my English class not helping me out to be better. Its been flat like there isnt any progress. My teacher and my classmates seem to speak a mixed up English. And I end up confused. But surprisingly like when I speak up everyone listens. No interaction or whatever you wanna call it. No comment. Nothing at all. It is just me talking and that's it.

It's been months since they keep on referring to me as an alien every time we meet as a group. I thought they were just into X-Men series but I was able to confirm that they consider me an alien because they dont understand what Im saying. When I talk, I talk too fast and I said I cant slow down or else Im gonna bite my tongue. Obviously their gonna highlight that with nosebleed and stuff. I asked my auntie about nosebleed and she told me it means that I speak English and they dont get what Im saying. Im bothered because their gonna be my classmates next semester and what will our English class be like? This seems unbearable but I have no other choice. Mom sent me here because college is cheaper here than in the US.

Reflective Letter of Student B Dated 10 August 2020

Dear Mr Gabriel

My apologies for replying this late. Had to catch up with my requirements to graduate formally. My adviser told me that my final tasks for my STEM strand needed revision.

Whenever I talk to my Filipino classmates in English, there is always hesitation from me. I worry about words that Im gonna use if they can get what Im trying to say. But that was before until I tried to learn a few words but honestly I cant speak Tagalog that much unlike my mom. Talking to my Filipino classmates was just challenging until now. Its always in a situation like when I join the conversation, I just don't want to be the one starting the topic. But when I say something all attention is on me. I know itwasn't all about my English. Its not about the topic also. Maybe they get to think first right before they speak to me in English. I notice that. Its weird though because here in school we have a couple of foreign students too who are native speakers of English. But it seems like my Filipino classmates or most of them don't bother.

My teachers on the other hand are really understanding no doubt about that. But what I notice is that they are not that open about accepting opinions. Or maybe it isn't about opinions. Most of my teachers are like when I start explaining though Im sure it wasn't my best, they'll complement me. And Im like what did I say that was just simple. Maybe they just want to make our exchange much longer. This happens in most of my classes except in my English class. My

English teacher is nice but her pronunciation and choice of words sometimes make try to think of the words she was trying to say and only at that time that I get to understand her. But from all the teachers that I had she is the only one I am able to carry a conversation in a more natural exchange. There isn't much opportunity in school where I can speak English unlike in some schools nearby there are spots in campus where students must speak English. We don't have that here.

I don't have any chance to talk to a foreign student in school. But in the village, I have a couple of friends who study at IBA and with them Im able to just speak English as normally as I could. In school, I'm the only foreign student in my grade level I think.

