

Article

# Language Influenced by Culture: Acceptability of Philippine English Among English Language Major Students

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## Abstract

*This study investigates the acceptability of Philippine English (PhE) within the academic context among Filipino English as a Second Language (ESL) students. Employing qualitative research methods such as thematic analysis and content analysis, the research explores Filipino ESL students' perceptions of PhE and proposes a PhE-oriented Pedagogical Framework. The study reveals multifaceted understandings of PhE, encapsulated in themes like Varieties and Variations, Informality and Stereotype, Borrowing and Creation of Words, and Different Characteristics. Additionally, it identifies key factors influencing the acceptability of PhE, including Language Emphasis, Colloquial Spelling and Abbreviations, Introduction and Explanation Markers, and Grammatical Errors and Confusion. The conclusions drawn highlight the complex relationship between Filipino ESL students and their native English variety, emphasizing the necessity for nuanced pedagogical approaches.*

**Keywords:** *Acceptability, Perception, Philippine English, World Englishes*

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## Introduction

The globalization of English has led to the emergence of multiple varieties, including Philippine English, an area of interest due to its distinct characteristics. Despite the multiplicity of Englishes worldwide, the perception and acceptability of non-native Englishes, like Philippine English, remain subjects of debate (Kachru, 1985). The present research focuses on examining the acceptability of Philippine English, using perceptions of Filipino ESL teachers and students as its lens.

The framework of World Englishes (Kachru, 1985; Crystal, 2003) provides the theoretical backdrop to this study. This model posits the existence of multiple Englishes shaped by diverse socio-cultural contexts. It underscores the legitimacy of these local varieties, challenging traditional perceptions of non-native speakerism, and hence, underpins our investigation into the acceptability of Philippine English.

Bolton (2008) and Jenkins (2007) have suggested the significance of attitudes towards English varieties for language policy and pedagogical practices. Consequently, the research on Philippine English could contribute to a deeper understanding of its sociolinguistic realities, potentially informing language education and policy in the Philippines. The evolution of English as a global language has resulted in distinct varieties, known collectively as World Englishes. This phenomenon is underpinned by Kachru's three circles model, which classifies English users into inner, outer, and expanding circles based on historical and sociolinguistic contexts. The outer circle, including the Philippines, represents regions where English is institutionalized and used as a second language (Kachru, 1985).

Non-native speakerism is a pervasive bias in language learning and teaching, favoring the standards and norms of Inner Circle English-speaking countries over other English varieties. Coined by Holliday (2006), the term 'native speakerism' refers to a prejudice that positions 'native speakers' of English as linguistically superior and models for pedagogical practices. This bias has implications for English teaching, learning, and use, particularly when English is used as a second or foreign language.

However, the rise of World Englishes challenges this perspective. Kachru's model of World Englishes (Kachru, 1985) represents a paradigm shift by acknowledging the validity and legitimacy of various Englishes that have evolved around the globe, distinct from traditional Inner Circle varieties. This model emphasizes the historical and sociolinguistic realities that have led to the diversification of English and calls for recognizing and accepting these varieties (Bolton, 2008). It questions the supremacy of Inner Circle Englishes and native speaker norms, paving the way for a more pluralistic and inclusive understanding of English today.

Despite the increased recognition of World Englishes, the challenge of native speakerism remains. Studies have shown that non-native English varieties often face resistance in terms of acceptability and prestige (Lindemann, 2005; Dalton-Puffer, Kaltenbock, & Smit, 1997). These attitudes, influenced by native speakerism, could potentially impact the teaching and learning of English in diverse sociolinguistic contexts, including the Philippines. Thus, exploring perceptions towards non-native Englishes, such as Philippine English, can shed light on the complex interplay between native speakerism and World Englishes.

English has a unique status in the Philippines due to its colonial history and use in education, government, and business (Gonzalez, 2004). Research by Llamzon (1978) and Gonzalez (2004) describes Philippine English as a nativized variety with phonetic, syntactic, and lexical features distinct from other Englishes, affirming its standing in Kachru's model. Prior research on Philippine English indicates its distinctiveness (Gonzalez, 2004; Bautista, 2009), but acceptability remains less explored, especially from the perspective of its primary users. This research aims to fill this gap by examining how Filipino ESL teachers and students, as stakeholders, perceive and accept Philippine English.

However, despite these varieties' distinctiveness, their global acceptability is contentious. Regarding language standards, the idealized native-speaker norm has dominated much of the discourse (Jenkins, 2007). It is known as 'native speakerism,' a bias favoring native-speaker varieties of English, creating an issue for non-native Englishes' acceptance and legitimacy (Holliday, 2006).

Studies investigating perceptions of World Englishes often point to a bias favoring Inner Circle Englishes. For instance, a study by Lindemann (2005) suggests that listeners are likelier to perceive a speaker negatively if they use non-standard accents. Similarly, Dalton-Puffer, Kaltenboeck, and Smit (1997) found that Austrian students preferred American and British accents and considered them more prestigious. These attitudes reflect the challenges in accepting non-native Englishes.

Turning to the Philippine context, studies on the acceptability of Philippine English are relatively scarce. Bautista (2009) notes the existence of local standards for Philippine English, but it remains unclear how these standards are perceived and accepted by language users. Moreover, while some work has been done on the perceptions of Philippine English in the wider world (Bolton, 2008), little is known about the attitudes of Filipino ESL teachers and students toward their local English variety.

Research on language attitudes is crucial as it can influence pedagogical practices. In her work, Jenkins (2007) argues that the attitude towards a variety of

English may impact how it is taught and learned. Similarly, studies by Galloway and Rose (2015) and Sung (2016) highlight the need for EFL curricula to reflect the global diversity of English, suggesting that attitudes toward English varieties can affect language education policy.

In the realm of teacher and student perceptions, a few studies, such as those conducted by Timmis (2002) and Bayyurt and Sifakis (2015), have shed light on the importance of teachers' roles in promoting a broader understanding and acceptance of English varieties. It aligns with English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), which emphasizes communicative effectiveness over native-speaker norms (Seidlhofer, 2011).

Meanwhile, learners' perspectives are equally important, as evidenced by studies like Matsuda (2003) and Sifakis and Sougari (2005), who argue that students' acceptance and perceptions of English varieties can influence their learning strategies and outcomes. Nevertheless, the perspectives of Filipino ESL teachers and students towards Philippine English remain largely unexplored.

While there has been substantial research on the existence and features of Philippine English (Gonzalez, 2004; Bautista, 2009), there appears to be a notable paucity in the literature regarding the perception and acceptability of this English variety, particularly from the perspective of its primary users, Filipino ESL teachers and students. Most studies have focused on linguistic aspects, leaving the sociolinguistic and pedagogical implications less explored. Therefore, the gap in existing research lies in the need for a more comprehensive understanding of how local educators and learners perceive, accept, and use Philippine English within its socio-cultural context. It is especially pertinent given the increasing recognition of the plurality of Englishes globally.

The study of Philippine English's acceptability thus significantly contributes to the literature, potentially revealing insights into how World Englishes are perceived within their contexts. This focus will add depth to our understanding of the interplay between globalization and language, highlighting the experiences of the community most intimately involved with using Philippine English - its teachers and students. The research stands as a conduit to demystify the position of Philippine English in the sphere of World Englishes. It presents a shift from the domination of standard English, emphasizing the importance of localized English forms and their acceptability. The study offers the possibility of understanding and subsequently challenging the prevailing beliefs on non-native speakerism through the lived experiences of Filipino ESL teachers and students.

In the context of Philippine English, acceptability is a complex issue. Bautista (2000) and Gonzalez (2004) have comprehensively described Philippine English,

noting its unique linguistic features adapted to the local context. However, as Llamzon (1997) argues, the acceptability of Philippine English often depends on the audience's attitudes and perceptions, which various sociolinguistic factors can influence.

In the context of English language teaching, the role of teachers' beliefs and perceptions cannot be overlooked. Borg (2006) emphasizes that teachers' beliefs significantly influence their teaching practices. Hence, Filipino ESL teachers' attitudes towards Philippine English and their beliefs about 'native' and 'non-native' English can profoundly impact their teaching practices, as Medgyes (1994) underscored.

Students' attitudes and perceptions also play a crucial role in accepting Philippine English. Several studies, such as those conducted by Sifakis and Sougari (2005) and Galloway and Rose (2015), have shown that students often have positive attitudes towards 'non-native' Englishes when these varieties are presented as valid and effective means of communication in specific contexts. However, these attitudes can be influenced by various factors, including exposure to different varieties of English and the ideologies prevalent in the educational context.

The interplay of attitudes, perceptions, and practices in World Englishes is also a significant area of interest. Canagarajah (2006) emphasizes that World Englishes should be seen as products and processes of dynamic user interaction and negotiation. This perspective highlights the importance of exploring how Filipino ESL teachers and students negotiate the acceptability of Philippine English in their teaching and learning contexts.

The above-mentioned studies reveal the complexities involved in delving into the acceptability of Philippine English through the lens of Filipino ESL students. It underscores the need for further research to better understand the interplay of attitudes, perceptions, and practices in the context of World Englishes, moving away from non-native speakerism and towards a more inclusive and equitable view of English language teaching and learning. This research study delved into the acceptability of Philippine English among Filipino ESL students in the academic setting. This study sought to answer the following questions: (1) What are the students' perceptions of Philippine English as a legitimate variety within the global landscape of Englishes? and (2) How do the students use Philippine English in journal writing?

## **Methodology**

This study used the qualitative method, which involves understanding and interpreting individuals' experiences, perspectives, and meanings within their natural settings. It emphasizes exploring complex, context-bound phenomena to understand better social and human interactions (Creswell, 2018). Specifically, thematic analysis

and content analysis were utilized. As Clark and Braun (2012) described, thematic analysis is a widely used qualitative research method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It involves systematically organizing and interpreting textual or visual data to gain insights into the research question or topic of interest. The process includes familiarizing oneself with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing and defining themes, and writing the thematic analysis.

Moreover, Neuendorf (2017) said content analysis is “*a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from data to their context.*” It is a research methodology used to systematically analyze and interpret the content of various forms of communication, such as texts, audio, video, or visual material. It involves identifying, categorizing, and interpreting patterns or themes within the collected content to draw meaningful insights or conclusions. In this study, the participants made a reflective journal and were analyzed through content analysis.

The study was conducted at the Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University in the Province of La Union. The province of La Union has one State University where the researcher lives and works. The participants were selected utilizing purposive sampling. It is a ‘critical case sampling’ strategy: identifying those “who are likely able to provide the most information on a given phenomenon” (Rose, McKinley & Briggs Baffoe-Djan, 2020, p. 161). In this study, the researcher selected 15 participants. The participants of this study were 15 undergraduate students who are officially enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts in English Language department of the Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University for the First Semester of the Academic Year 2023-2024. The participants were selected based on the following criteria: (1) students enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts in English Language department who are taking up or have taken up the “*Philippine English*” course, (2) the participants have knowledge about World Englishes and Philippine Englishes, and (3) the participants are willing to participate in the study. By implementing these criteria, the participants were found suitable for achieving the overall objective of this study.

A semi-structured interview guide was used as the tool for gathering data. Three experts in the field evaluated the content validity of the guide. The experts then interpreted the semi-structured interview guide as entirely accepted using the validation sheet for qualitative research interview guide questions by Cuizon (2014). The study conducted an interview based on the participants’ availability. Also, the participants answered questions in a reflective journal to be submitted to the researcher, following prompts about the learning they acquired through the course, along with course-related satisfactory and dissatisfactory matters. Such data collection

is highly effective for qualitative research, as journals are “a powerful research method to gain insight into learner practices and thoughts” and “can provide a valuable and systematic vehicle for reflection and learner introspection in autonomous learning” (Rose, McKinley & Briggs Baffoe-Djan, 2020, p. 134).

The researcher sent a letter of request to the participants to conduct the study through interviews and a reflective journal. This request was accompanied by informed consent and other relevant information about the study. The interviews were audio recorded, then closely transcribed, and finally translated into English.

For Statement of the Problem Number 1, in analyzing the data, the thematic analysis was employed, which involves identifying and analyzing patterns of themes within the data to gain insights into the research question or topic of interest following these steps (Clark and Braun, 2021): (a) familiarization with the data, (b) generating initial codes, (c) searching for themes, (d) reviewing themes, (e) defining and naming themes, and (f) writing the thematic analysis. The final/emerging themes were validated/triangulated by presenting and explaining them to the participants.

The data were analyzed through content analysis for Statement of the Problem Number 2. The journal transcripts were analyzed using Philippine English for grammatical structures. In this way, the researcher can confirm whether the participants use Philippine English.

## **Results and Discussions**

### ***Perception of Filipino ESL Students on Philippine English***

In this part, the researcher conducted a thematic analysis to determine Filipino ESL students’ perception of Philippine English as a legitimate variety within the global landscape of Englishes, utilizing a semi-structured interview guide. The following themes were derived: Varieties and Variations, Informality and Stereotype, Borrowing and Creation of Words, and Informality and Code-Switching.

#### *Varieties and Variations*

This study defines Varieties and Variations as recognizing diverse regional and social varieties of Philippine English, characterized by differences in accent, vocabulary usage, and grammar structures.

Participants mention variations such as Taglish, Carabao English, and Yaya English, highlighting differences in accent, vocabulary, and grammar usage across different English varieties in the Philippines. Below are sample responses:

Participant 2: *Sir, at first, the Carabao English, or others say it is wrong grammar or choice. It is all English for Filipinos. We used to.*

Participant 4: *Something that comes to my mind when I hear Philippine English is its different varieties. Not just about one topic or language. Not just one variety of English. It is not just about American English. Yes, there are a lot more. Moreover, one variety is...One variety I have learned is the famous car about English, or Yaya English.*

Acknowledging the existence of various English varieties within the Philippines highlights the need for linguistic flexibility and sensitivity in communication. Emphasizing the legitimacy of regional and social dialects promotes linguistic equity and respect for diverse language practices. The diversity of Philippine English varieties reflects the rich tapestry of linguistic traditions and cultural expressions across different regions and communities. Exploring these variations deepens our understanding of language as a dynamic and contextually embedded phenomenon. Moreover, the recognition of various varieties of Philippine English reflects the linguistic diversity within the country, influenced by factors such as region, socio-economic status, and education.

Sociolinguistic studies in the Philippines have documented the existence of distinct English varieties, such as Taglish (a mix of Tagalog and English) and regional English varieties (Gonzales, 2008). Also, the theory of linguistic accommodation (Giles & Coupland, 1991) suggests that speakers adjust their language use based on social contexts and interlocutors, contributing to the emergence of different English varieties in the Philippines.

### *Informality and Stereotype*

This theme describes the informal nature of Philippine English usage, characterized by code-switching between English and Filipino and the reduplication of words for emphasis, reflecting the bilingual and bicultural identity of Filipinos and stereotypes associated with Philippine English, such as notions of broken or non-standard English, reflecting language attitudes and ideologies prevalent in society.

Participants highlight the informal use of Philippine English in everyday conversations and the practice of code-switching between English and Filipino, as well as reduplicating words for emphasis, and acknowledge perceptions of Philippine English as broken or non-standard, recognizing the negative associations but also emphasizing the richness and complexity of Philippine English beyond stereotypes. Below are sample responses:

Participant 3: *When I encountered the word Philippine English, at first, I thought it was about Tagalog and English mixing up together, but then I was wrong because I was*

*studying the English language. I, Philippine English, encountered many variations not about mixing Tagalog and English. However, it concerns how English is pronounced, and other Filipinos use it.*

Participant 14: *What is the first thing about Philippine English that pops your mind? When I first heard about Philippine English, I had this preconception or a notion that it is the non-standard or grammatically incorrect English that most Filipinos use, or the broken English.*

Recognizing the prevalence of informal language use and code-switching in Philippine English highlights the importance of context and pragmatics in communication. Embracing linguistic diversity and flexibility promotes effective intercultural communication and mutual understanding. It implies that informality and code-switching in Philippine English reflect the complex negotiation of identity and belonging in multilingual societies. Understanding these language practices deepens our appreciation of language as a dynamic tool for social interaction and identity construction.

Furthermore, Challenging stereotypes of Philippine English as inferior or broken promotes linguistic justice and equality. Recognizing the value of linguistic diversity fosters inclusive language policies and practices that empower speakers of non-standard varieties. It means that stereotypes of Philippine English reflect broader issues of language hierarchy and power dynamics. Deconstructing these stereotypes promotes linguistic equity and social justice, fostering a more inclusive and respectful linguistic environment.

Code-switching research (Grosjean, 1982) suggests that speakers strategically alternate between languages for pragmatic purposes, such as expressing solidarity or marking identity. In consonance, the language ideology theory (Silverstein, 1979) posits that language use is shaped by social beliefs and attitudes, influencing speakers' code-switching and language mixing choices.

Further studies on language stigma (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005) highlight how linguistic features associated with marginalized groups can be stigmatized and discriminated against. Counteracting language stigma requires promoting linguistic diversity and challenging monolithic standards of "correct" English (Rosa & Flores, 2017).

#### *Borrowing and Creation of Words*

This theme is defined as Filipinos borrowing words from English and other languages and creating new words, reflecting linguistic creativity and adaptation to local contexts.

Participants discuss borrowing words from English and other languages and creating new words to express cultural concepts or experiences, demonstrating the dynamic nature of Philippine English vocabulary. Below are sample responses:

Participant 10: *It is very, um, it has really used, or should I say it has constantly used, because, uh, of course, as Filipinos, we are very creative, and we like, we like to create words on our own, basing from the original English words, and we like to add our own meanings, and, um, of course, use it in a sentence, in the sentence differently, for example, words like salvage, such as, and, uh, So, I am pretty sure, so English is constantly used in the Philippines. So, number four, the next question is this one.*

Participant 1: *Well, if I am going to define it in a literal meaning,*

*Sir, I think that Philippine English is a combination. A combination of standard English and Filipino terms, grammar, or anything that is English, but in a Filipino way.*

Celebrating lexical borrowing and innovation in Philippine English underscores the creative adaptability of language to meet communicative needs. Encouraging linguistic creativity fosters a sense of ownership and pride in language use, promoting cultural empowerment and linguistic resilience. It shows that the borrowing and creating words in Philippine English reflect a fluid and dynamic nature. Embracing these linguistic innovations enriches English's expressive potential and reflects Filipino communities' cultural vitality.

The findings corroborate the studies on lexical borrowing and neologism formation and highlight the role of culture and social identity in shaping language use (Poplack, 1980; Algeo, 2009). It is the same with the "lexical innovation" phenomenon common in multilingual societies like the Philippines, where speakers creatively adapt and coin new words to express cultural concepts or experiences (Mufwene, 2008).

### *Different Characteristics of Philippine English*

This theme describes the understanding of Philippine English as a hybrid of standard English and Filipino elements, encompassing vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation influenced by local linguistic and cultural contexts.

Participants describe Philippine English as a combination of standard English and Filipino terms, grammar, and pronunciation, reflecting the linguistic fusion unique to the Philippines. Below are sample responses:

Participant 8: *Sir, Philippine English, hmm. It has a different accent and emphasis on the use. There are a lot of different words, sir, from English that may confuse other native English speakers, sir. And... And... So, it is more like on... Will it be more like it is... You are adapting words from English.*

Participant 10: *It is very, um, it has really used, or should I say it's constantly used, because, uh, of course, as Filipinos, we are very creative, and we like, we like to create words on our own, basing from the original English words, and we like to add our own meanings, and, um, of course, use it in a sentence, in the sentence differently, for example, words like salvage, such as, and, uh, So, I'm pretty sure, so English is constantly used in the Philippines. So, number four, the next question is this one.*

It implies that recognizing Philippine English as a distinct linguistic variety acknowledges the cultural and historical influences that shape language use in the Philippines. Embracing this diversity can foster linguistic inclusivity and promote a deeper understanding of Filipino identity. It shows that Philippine English represents a dynamic and evolving form of communication that reflects the complex interplay between global English standards and local linguistic practices. Understanding its characteristics enriches our appreciation of language as a reflection of cultural heritage and social dynamics.

The result agrees with the studies on World Englishes, such as Kachru's model (Kachru, 1985), which recognizes Philippine English as one of the outer circle varieties shaped by local linguistic norms and cultural practices.

Moreover, the result coincides with the concept of "English as a Lingua Franca" (ELF), which also applies here, suggesting that English serves as a means of communication among multilingual speakers with diverse linguistic backgrounds (Seidlhofer, 2011). In the Philippine context, this includes incorporating Filipino vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation into English discourse.

### ***Acceptability of Philippine English***

In this part, the researcher conducted a content analysis to determine Filipino ESL students' acceptability of Philippine English as a legitimate variety within the global landscape of Englishes through the reflective journals answered by the participants.

#### *Language Emphasis*

In this theme, prioritization and importance are placed on English language proficiency, particularly within academic and professional contexts. Participants were motivated to improve their English language skills for academic programs and career opportunities using phrases like "English Language", "major in English".

The emphasis on English language proficiency reflects the recognition of English as a crucial skill for academic and professional success. Participants

demonstrate a clear awareness of the importance of English in accessing opportunities, building confidence, and effectively communicating with others. This emphasis suggests a strategic approach to language learning, driven by the desire to meet the linguistic demands of their chosen fields and achieve their educational and career goals. Participants' motivation to improve their English skills also highlights their proactive attitude towards language acquisition and willingness to invest time and effort in enhancing their language abilities.

The strong emphasis on English proficiency underscores English's role as a global lingua franca and its significance in the Philippine context. It reflects the participants' recognition of English as a tool for social mobility, professional advancement, and cross-cultural communication. This emphasis also highlights the need for effective language education programs that prioritize the development of English language skills and provide learners with opportunities to practice and engage in meaningful language use.

Studies on language attitudes and motivations among Filipino students and professionals consistently identify English proficiency as a key determinant of academic and career success (Bernardo, 2010; Gonzalez, 2008). These findings corroborate the significance of English language emphasis observed in the responses and underscore the importance of English proficiency in the Philippine socio-economic landscape.

#### *Colloquial Spelling and Abbreviations*

This theme uses informal spelling variations, contractions, and abbreviations commonly found in spoken language or informal written communication. Participants used colloquial spellings like "saddenly" and contractions such as "I am ","saddenly", "im", "curriculum", "did'nt", "was'nt".

Using colloquial spellings and abbreviations reflects the influence of spoken language norms and informal communication styles on written expression. Participants employ variations in spelling and abbreviations to mimic spoken English's phonetic sounds or streamline written communication. These colloquialisms contribute to a casual and conversational tone in the responses, facilitating informal communication and fostering a sense of familiarity among participants. Additionally, using abbreviations may expedite communication and convey a sense of insider knowledge or belonging within specific communities or contexts.

It implies that the prevalence of colloquial spellings and abbreviations highlights language use as a dynamic and adaptive nature in informal contexts. While such variations may be acceptable in casual or personal communication, they may not

adhere to formal language standards and may be perceived as unprofessional in academic or professional settings. Therefore, individuals should be mindful of their audience and context when employing colloquialisms in written communication to ensure clarity and appropriateness.

Studies on language variation and code-switching in Philippine English have documented colloquial spellings and abbreviations in informal communication contexts, such as social media platforms and online forums (Danico, 2014; Sibayan, 2018). These findings corroborate the presence of colloquial language features observed in the responses and highlight the dynamic interplay between spoken and written language norms in Philippine English discourse.

#### *Introduction and Explanation Markers*

In this theme, introduction and explanation markers are words or phrases used to introduce statements, provide context, or clarify information in communication.

The use of introduction and explanation markers provides context, clarifies information, and guides the reader through the narrative structure of the responses. Participants employ markers such as *“Supposedly”*, *“Actually”*, and *“Since I was a kid”* to frame their statements, introduce new ideas, and establish a logical flow of information. These markers help to orient the reader, signal transitions between ideas, and enhance the coherence and readability of the responses. Additionally, using these markers reflects the participants’ awareness of the importance of providing context and background information to facilitate understanding and engagement.

It implies that the strategic use of introduction and explanation markers underscores the participants’ communicative competence and ability to effectively structure and organize their thoughts in written communication. By employing these markers, participants demonstrate a conscious effort to engage the reader, establish rapport, and convey their message with clarity and coherence. This communicative strategy enhances the overall impact and persuasiveness of the responses, making them more compelling and engaging for the reader.

Studies on discourse markers and pragmatic features in Philippine English have identified the use of markers such as *“Actually”*, *“But”*, and *“So”* to signal contrast, clarification, and emphasis in spoken and written discourse (Tan, 2017; Tirona, 2019). These findings corroborate the strategic use of introduction and explanation markers observed in the responses and highlight their role in facilitating effective communication and discourse coherence in Philippine English contexts.

### *Grammatical Errors and Confusion*

In this theme, grammatical errors and confusion are mistakes or inconsistencies in grammar, syntax, and usage within written or spoken communication. Participants demonstrated errors such as subject-verb agreement issues (“*one of my teachers*”) and misspellings (“*did’nt*”, “*was’nt*”).

Grammatical errors and confusion, such as subject-verb agreement issues, tense inconsistencies, and misspellings, indicate challenges in mastering English grammar and syntax among the participants. These errors may arise from various factors, including limited exposure to formal English instruction, interference from the participants’ native language structures, and the influence of colloquial speech patterns. While grammatical errors are common in language acquisition processes, they may impede clarity and comprehension in written communication and detract from the overall effectiveness of the message.

It implies that the presence of grammatical errors underscores the need for targeted language instruction and support to address linguistic difficulties and enhance English proficiency levels among learners. Language educators should prioritize explicit instruction in grammar and syntax, provide ample opportunities for practice and feedback, and offer scaffolding and support to help learners overcome common grammatical challenges. Additionally, learners should be encouraged to develop metalinguistic awareness and reflective practices to identify and correct errors independently.

Studies on English language proficiency among Filipino students have identified grammatical errors as common challenges in written and spoken English communication (Ancheta, 2015; Galang, 2016). These findings corroborate the presence of grammatical errors observed in the responses and underscore the importance of targeted language instruction and support to address linguistic difficulties and enhance English proficiency levels among learners.

## **Conclusion**

The thematic analysis of Filipino ESL students’ perceptions of Philippine English reveals a nuanced understanding of this variety within the global landscape of Englishes. The themes identified, Varieties and Variations, Informality and Stereotype, Borrowing and Creation of Words, and Different Characteristics of Philippine English, highlight Philippine English’s rich linguistic diversity and cultural complexity. Participants recognize multiple regional and social varieties, including Taglish, Carabao English, and Yaya English, emphasizing the legitimacy of these dialects and the need for linguistic flexibility and sensitivity. The informality and code-

switching prevalent in Philippine English reflect Filipinos' bilingual and bicultural identity, challenging stereotypes and promoting linguistic justice and inclusivity. Lexical borrowing and innovation underscore Philippine English's dynamic and creative nature, showcasing its adaptability and cultural relevance. Furthermore, the distinct characteristics of Philippine English as a hybrid of standard English and Filipino elements highlight its unique linguistic fusion and cultural heritage.

The content analysis on the acceptability of Philippine English among Filipino ESL students underscores a strong emphasis on English language proficiency for academic and professional success. This priority reflects the strategic approach of students to language learning, driven by the desire to meet the demands of their fields and achieve career goals. Additionally, the informal use of colloquial spellings, abbreviations, and discourse markers in written communication illustrates the influence of spoken language norms and informal communication styles. While such variations may facilitate casual communication, they also highlight the need for awareness of audience and context. Lastly, the presence of grammatical errors and confusion points out the necessity for targeted language instruction and support to address linguistic difficulties and enhance English proficiency levels among learners. Overall, these findings emphasize Philippine English's dynamic and evolving nature, its cultural significance, and the importance of promoting linguistic inclusivity and effective language education.

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