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Enhancing Filipino Language Pedagogy through AI Integration: Bridging Tradition and Technology in Education

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Abstract

This study explored the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Filipino language pedagogy, focusing on teachers' and students' perceptions, its impact on comprehension and engagement, and the balance between AI-driven tools and traditional teaching approaches. Using a qualitative descriptive design, data were analyzed to identify recurring themes related to learning enhancement, cultural adaptation, and instructional practices. Results revealed that AI-supported instruction increased student motivation and participation through interactive activities such as quizzes, chatbots, and personalized exercises. It also facilitated comprehension of complex literary texts by simplifying archaic vocabulary and providing contextual explanations, thereby expanding opportunities for differentiated learning. However, participants consistently emphasized that while AI aids comprehension, it cannot replicate the interpretive depth and cultural insights conveyed through teacher-led instruction. Teachers and students highlighted concerns regarding mistranslations of idioms, oversimplification of literary works, and the risk of diminishing cultural authenticity when AI is used uncritically. Challenges such as limited Filipino-specific AI resources, unequal access to technology, and the need for teacher training were also underscored. At the same time, opportunities were identified in the form of adaptive learning, resource accessibility, and pedagogical innovation when AI is strategically integrated into classroom practice. The study concludes that the effectiveness of AI in Filipino language education depends on educators' ability to harmonize digital tools with culturally responsive pedagogy, ensuring that technological innovation enhances rather than erodes linguistic heritage and cultural identity.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Filipino language pedagogy, inclusive education, cultural preservation, student engagement, personalized learning

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Introduction

The rapid development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has transformed multiple sectors, including education, where it is increasingly recognized as a powerful tool for innovation in teaching and learning. In the global landscape, AI applications such as intelligent tutoring systems, adaptive learning platforms, speech recognition technologies, and automated assessment tools are being utilized to enhance learner engagement, provide instant feedback, and personalize educational experiences (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019; Chen et al., 2020). These tools have effectively improved comprehension, increased motivation, and supported differentiated instruction, particularly in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) subjects (Li et al., 2021). However, their integration into the humanities and language education, especially in local and culturally specific contexts such as Filipino language instruction, remains limited and underexplored.

Language education has been one of the earliest beneficiaries of AI technology, with global platforms such as Duolingo, Grammarly, and Babbel providing learners with opportunities to practice linguistic skills through gamified exercises, real-time corrections, and adaptive tasks. Research shows that AI enhances second language acquisition by creating interactive environments where learners can receive corrective feedback tailored to their needs (Heil et al., 2016; Ouyang & Jiao, 2021). Furthermore, AI tools have been found to promote learner autonomy, allowing students to proceed at their own pace while accessing individualized learning materials (Fryer & Carpenter, 2006). Despite these advancements, most AI-driven platforms are designed for widely spoken languages such as English, Mandarin, and Spanish, creating an imbalance in digital resources that disadvantages speakers and learners of less globally dominant languages, including Filipino (Villanueva & Llego, 2021).

Filipino, as the national language of the Philippines, is not only a medium of instruction but also a vessel for cultural heritage and national identity. Filipino language instruction nurtures proficiency while fostering appreciation of literary traditions, historical narratives, and values embedded in the national consciousness (Gonzalez, 1998; Tupas, 2015). Teaching canonical works such as *Florante at Laura*, *Noli Me Tangere*, and *Mga Ibong Mandaragit* poses unique challenges because of their linguistic complexity, classical vocabulary, and rich cultural references (Sibayan & Gonzalez, 1996; Datar, 2019). These challenges often translate into comprehension gaps and disengagement among students, particularly in contemporary classrooms where digital literacy and shorter attention spans are significant concerns. AI tools present potential solutions by offering real-time translations, contextual explanations, and interactive scaffolding. However, critics note that AI systems struggle to capture

cultural nuances, metaphorical language, and the sociohistorical contexts central to Filipino literature (McCarthy, 2022). This tension raises an important question: How can AI be integrated meaningfully into Filipino language pedagogy without eroding its cultural depth?

The promise of AI in enhancing learning outcomes must be understood alongside systemic barriers to its effective adoption. One major limitation is the lack of Filipino-trained AI models capable of accurately processing the language's grammar, semantics, and cultural references (Reyes, 2020). Most existing systems rely on English-centric models that generate literal but often inaccurate or culturally inappropriate translations. Teachers also express concerns over the digital divide, where rural schools, economically disadvantaged students, and under-resourced institutions lack access to devices, internet connectivity, and AI-based platforms (Cabigon, 2021). Furthermore, the effective use of AI requires adequate teacher preparation. Studies show that teachers may resist or misuse AI tools without professional development and clear pedagogical frameworks, resulting in limited effectiveness and even increased classroom inequality (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019; Luckin, 2018).

While studies on AI in education are rapidly expanding, particularly in STEM and English language instruction, limited scholarship exists on its integration into Filipino language teaching. This gap is significant given the subject's dual role in developing linguistic skills and nurturing national cultural identity. AI has the potential to support comprehension and engagement but may also risk undermining the cultural-linguistic richness that Filipino language education is meant to uphold. Current literature suggests the need for approaches that blend AI's efficiency with culturally responsive pedagogy (Villanueva & Llego, 2021; Reyes, 2020). However, empirical studies that explore teachers' and students' lived experiences, perceptions, and strategies in balancing technology and tradition are scarce.

This study seeks to address this gap by qualitatively examining the integration of AI in Filipino language instruction through the perspectives of teachers and students. Specifically, it investigates how AI-driven tools influence comprehension, motivation, and engagement; how they complement traditional teaching methods rooted in cultural and linguistic traditions; and what challenges and opportunities arise in their adoption. This research expands the literature on AI in education by situating AI integration within the cultural and educational context of the Philippines. It contributes practical insights into culturally responsive technology use. Ultimately, the study underscores that technology should not merely modernize pedagogy but also preserve and enrich the cultural essence of Filipino language education.

Research Objectives

1. To explore teachers' and students' perceptions and experiences regarding integrating AI in Filipino language instruction, focusing on its impact on comprehension, engagement, and learning outcomes.
2. To examine how AI-driven tools complement traditional teaching methods in Filipino language pedagogy, highlighting the interplay between technology and cultural-linguistic traditions.
3. To identify the challenges and opportunities in adopting AI for Filipino language education, emphasizing educators' strategies, concerns, and best practices for effective implementation.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the integration of AI in Filipino language pedagogy. Specifically, a phenomenological approach was used to understand teachers' and students' lived experiences and perceptions regarding AI-assisted instruction. The study was conducted in selected secondary schools partnered with and within the service areas of Nueva Vizcaya State University, Cagayan State University, Central Bicol State University, Sulu State College, Aklan State University, and Mindanao State University-Tawi-Tawi College of Technology and Oceanography and Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University. These institutions represent the Philippines' geographically and culturally diverse regions, ensuring that the findings reflect varied contexts of Filipino language instruction and AI integration.

The study participants included Filipino language teachers and Grade 8 to 10 students, who were selected through purposive sampling based on their exposure to AI-driven educational tools. Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted to gather in-depth insights into their experiences, challenges, and perspectives on AI integration in language instruction. In addition, classroom observations were carried out to examine how AI applications were used alongside conventional teaching strategies across different regional settings.

Interview guides and observation checklists were developed for data collection to ensure consistency in gathering relevant information. All interviews and FGDs were recorded, transcribed, and coded for thematic analysis. Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns, emerging themes, and key insights related to

AI's impact on student engagement, comprehension, and preserving Filipino linguistic and cultural traditions.

To ensure trustworthiness, member-checking was conducted, allowing participants to review and validate the findings. Ethical considerations were strictly observed, including obtaining informed consent from participants and maintaining confidentiality. The study results provided valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities of AI in Filipino language education across different regions, contributing to the ongoing discourse on culturally grounded and technology-enhanced pedagogy.

Results and Discussions

Teachers' and Students' Perceptions and Experiences on AI Integration in Filipino Language Instruction

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 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.*

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 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

This study explored the integration of AI in Filipino language instruction, focusing on its impact on comprehension, engagement, and learning outcomes. The findings revealed that AI enhances student participation and understanding of complex texts, making learning more interactive and accessible. However, concerns regarding over-reliance on AI, the need for teacher training, and preserving cultural and linguistic authenticity remain significant challenges. Additionally, the study highlighted how AI is a valuable supplement to traditional teaching methods rather than a replacement. While AI-driven tools improve personalized learning and accessibility, they lack the depth required to convey the richness of Filipino literature and cultural nuances fully. Educators must therefore strike a balance between AI integration and conventional pedagogy to ensure meaningful learning experiences.

Moreover, the study identified gaps in AI resources for Filipino language education, emphasizing the necessity for more localized AI applications. The lack of professional development programs for teachers hinders effective implementation. Addressing these challenges through training initiatives and the development of AI tools tailored to the Filipino language will maximize AI's potential in education.

In conclusion, AI presents both opportunities and challenges in Filipino language instruction. Its successful integration requires a strategic approach

combining technological innovation with traditional teaching methods to enhance comprehension, preserve cultural identity, and improve learning outcomes.

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