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ENGLISH PROFICIENCY AND TEACHING EFFICACY IN SECOND LANGUAGE AMONG ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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2. ABSTRACT

This quantitative study determined the level of English proficiency and teaching efficacy of elementary school teachers, and tested the significant relationship and influence between these variables in selected elementary schools across the municipalities of Carmen, Matalam, and Kabacan in the Third District of North Cotabato, Philippines for School Year 2025–2026. Using a descriptive-correlational design, 361 Grade 4 to Grade 6 teachers were surveyed through simple random sampling from a total population of 1,416. English proficiency was assessed through reading comprehension (M = 4.29, Moderately Proficient), vocabulary (M = 4.29, Moderately Proficient), and grammar (M = 3.91, Less Proficient). Teaching efficacy was measured through student engagement (WM = 4.15, Efficient), classroom management (WM = 4.12, Efficient), and instructional strategies (WM = 4.36, Highly Efficient). Spearman's rho correlation analysis revealed negligible to weak associations that were not statistically significant across all English proficiency-teaching efficacy combinations (all $p > .05$), indicating that observed relationships were statistically indistinguishable from random variation. Multiple linear regression analyses confirmed that English proficiency explained only 0.2% of variance in student engagement efficacy ($R^2 = 0.002$, $F = 0.227$, $p = .877$), 2.1% in classroom management efficacy ($R^2 = 0.021$, $F = 2.532$, $p = .057$), and 0.6% in instructional strategies efficacy ($R^2 = 0.006$, $F = 0.669$, $p = .571$). None of the overall models attained conventional statistical significance. These findings establish that English proficiency does not serve as a significant predictor of teachers' perceived teaching efficacy, and that interventions should prioritize pedagogical knowledge, instructional skills, and classroom management capability.

3. KEYWORDS: *English proficiency; teaching efficacy; student engagement; classroom management; instructional strategies; Spearman's rho; multiple regression; North Cotabato.*

4. INTRODUCTION

In the Philippines, where English serves as the primary medium of instruction in most subjects, teachers' English proficiency is widely assumed to be a significant determinant of their instructional effectiveness. This assumption underlies policies such as the government's 2003 mandate to use English as a second language in elementary schools and its ongoing emphasis on English remedial programs for teachers (McLean, 2020). Yet, the empirical evidence base for this assumption—particularly at the elementary level and across the specific domains of student engagement, classroom management, and instructional strategies—remains remarkably thin.

Prior studies have concentrated largely on secondary and tertiary education contexts, using generalized self-efficacy scales that may not adequately capture the task-specific and language-mediated demands of elementary English instruction. This methodological limitation, combined with the absence of research examining how contextual and professional factors interact with proficiency and efficacy at the elementary level, creates a critical knowledge gap (Bandura, 1997; Eslami & Fatahi, 2008; Butler, 2015). The present study addresses this gap by quantitatively testing the relationship and predictive influence of English proficiency on teaching efficacy dimensions among elementary teachers in the Third District of North Cotabato.

5. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design. A descriptive-correlational design was employed to describe the levels of English proficiency and teaching efficacy, and to test their significant relationships and predictive influence (Pearson, 2016).

Locale and Respondents. The study was conducted in nine selected elementary schools across the municipalities of Carmen (Carmen Central ES, General Luna ES, Ugalingan ES), Kabacan (Kabacan Pilot CES, USM Annex CES, Katidtuan CES), and Matalam (Matalam CES, Malamote ES, Dalapitan ES), Third District, North Cotabato. Using simple random sampling, 361 Grade 4 to Grade 6 teachers from a total population of 1,416 served as respondents: Carmen (n = 115), Kabacan (n = 129), and Matalam (n = 117).

Instruments. An English Proficiency Test measured reading comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar on a ten-point scale (Very Proficient: 8.00–9.99; Proficient: 6.00–7.99;

Moderately Proficient: 4.00–5.99; Less Proficient: 2.00–3.99; Least Proficient: 0.50–1.99). The Teacher Self-Efficacy Questionnaire adapted from Bandura (2017) measured teaching efficacy along student engagement, classroom management, and instructional strategies on a five-point Likert scale (Highly Efficient: 4.21–5.00; Efficient: 3.41–4.20; Moderately Efficient: 2.61–3.40; Less Efficient: 1.81–2.60; Least Efficient: 1.00–1.80).

Statistical Analysis. Means described proficiency and efficacy levels. Spearman's rho correlation determined significant relationships. Multiple linear regression identified the predictive influence of each English proficiency component on each teaching efficacy domain. Null hypotheses were tested at $\alpha = 0.05$.

6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Level of Teachers' English Proficiency

Reading Comprehension and Vocabulary both received mean ratings of 4.29, both categorized as Moderately Proficient. This indicates that teachers demonstrate a solid understanding of written English texts and possess functional vocabulary suitable for academic and professional communication. Grammar registered a lower mean of 3.91 (Less Proficient), indicating potential challenges in accurately applying grammatical rules in written and spoken English. The disparity between reading/vocabulary and grammar proficiency suggests that while teachers can comprehend and communicate meaning effectively, structural accuracy remains an area requiring targeted development. This finding is consistent with McLean (2020), who documented persistent English skill concerns among Filipino educators, and Richards et al. (2020), who identified grammar competence as a critical component of language teacher subject-matter knowledge.

Table 1. Level of Teachers' English Proficiency.

English Proficiency Dimension	Mean Rating	Interpretation
Reading Comprehension	4.29	Moderately Proficient
Vocabulary	4.29	Moderately Proficient
Grammar	3.91	Less Proficient

Level of Teachers' Teaching Efficacy

Student Engagement efficacy was rated Efficient overall (WM = 4.15). Among individual items, 'follow routines and procedures to maximize instructional time' was highest (M = 4.45, Highly Efficient), while 'engage and value learning from classmates' was lowest (M = 3.61,

Efficient), suggesting room for strengthening peer-mediated learning approaches. Classroom Management efficacy was also rated Efficient (WM = 4.12). 'Letting pupils understand their responsibility in maintaining discipline' scored highest (M = 4.46, Highly Efficient), while 'promoting value integration and understanding individual differences' was lowest (M = 3.53, Efficient). Instructional Strategies were rated Highly Efficient overall (WM = 4.36), with 'utilizing varied techniques and strategies for different kinds of learners' the highest item (M = 4.95), while 'setting lessons appropriate to the needs and difficulties of learners' was lowest (M = 3.84, Efficient). These findings align with Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy framework and Tschannen-Moran and Hoy's (2018) three-domain teacher self-efficacy model.

Table 2. Summary of Teachers' Teaching Efficacy Levels.

Teaching Efficacy Dimension	Weighted Mean	Description
Student Engagement	4.15	Efficient
Classroom Management	4.12	Efficient
Instructional Strategies	4.36	Highly Efficient

Relationship Between English Proficiency and Teaching Efficacy

Spearman's rho correlation analysis revealed a pervasive pattern of negligible to weak associations between all English proficiency dimensions and all teaching efficacy domains, with none attaining statistical significance at the $p < .05$ level. For Student Engagement: Reading Comprehension ($r = -.035$, $p = .509$), Vocabulary ($r = -.027$, $p = .612$), Grammar ($r = -.013$, $p = .805$)—all non-significant. For Classroom Management: Reading Comprehension ($r = .098$, $p = .064$), Vocabulary ($r = .097$, $p = .065$), Grammar ($r = .075$, $p = .155$)—the classroom management correlations approached but did not attain marginal significance. For Instructional Strategies: Reading Comprehension ($r = -.050$, $p = .341$), Vocabulary ($r = -.075$, $p = .155$), Grammar ($r = -.093$, $p = .078$)—all non-significant. The null hypothesis of no significant relationship was therefore accepted. These findings suggest that English proficiency does not function as a significant linear predictor of teaching efficacy, and that other pedagogical, experiential, and contextual factors likely exert more pronounced influence.

Table 3. Spearman's Rho Correlation: English Proficiency and Teaching Efficacy.

English Proficiency	Student Engagement (r/p)	Classroom Management (r/p)	Instructional Strategies (r/p)
Reading Comprehension	r = −.035, p = .509	r = .098, p = .064	r = −.050, p = .341
Vocabulary	r = −.027, p = .612	r = .097, p = .065	r = −.075, p = .155
Grammar	r = −.013, p = .805	r = .075, p = .155	r = −.093, p = .078

All $p > .05$ (Not Significant)

Influence of English Proficiency on Teaching Efficacy

Multiple regression analyses confirmed the absence of statistically significant predictive relationships. For Student Engagement ($R^2 = 0.002$, $F = 0.227$, $p = .877$): Reading Comprehension ($\beta = -.040$, $p = .450$), Vocabulary ($\beta = -.011$, $p = .837$), Grammar ($\beta = -.012$, $p = .822$)—English proficiency explained only 0.2% of the variance, with the overall model non-significant. For Classroom Management ($R^2 = 0.021$, $F = 2.532$, $p = .057$): Reading Comprehension ($\beta = .103$, $p = .053$), Vocabulary ($\beta = .093$, $p = .095$), Grammar ($\beta = .043$, $p = .436$)—while a marginal trend was observed, the overall model did not meet the $p < .05$ threshold. For Instructional Strategies ($R^2 = 0.006$, $F = 0.669$, $p = .571$): Reading Comprehension ($\beta = -.026$, $p = .620$), Vocabulary ($\beta = -.042$, $p = .448$), Grammar ($\beta = -.047$, $p = .397$)—English proficiency explained only 0.6% of the variance. Collectively, these findings establish that English proficiency, as measured by reading comprehension, vocabulary, and grammar, does not significantly predict teachers' self-reported teaching efficacy. Other factors—including pedagogical content knowledge, training quality, accumulated experience, and classroom support systems—are likely more powerful determinants of teaching efficacy.

Table 4. Summary of Multiple Regression Results.

Teaching Efficacy Dimension	R^2	F-Value	Probability	Decision
Student Engagement	0.002	0.227	0.877 (NS)	Not Significant
Classroom Management	0.021	2.532	0.057 (NS)	Not Significant
Instructional Strategies	0.006	0.669	0.571 (NS)	Not Significant

NS = Not Significant at $p < .05$

7. CONCLUSION

Teachers in the selected elementary schools of the Third District of North Cotabato demonstrate Moderate English Proficiency in reading comprehension and vocabulary, and Less Proficiency in grammar. Teaching efficacy is generally Efficient to Highly Efficient across all three dimensions, with instructional strategies rated highest and student engagement and classroom management rated efficient. Spearman's rho analysis confirmed no statistically significant relationships between any English proficiency dimension and any teaching efficacy indicator. Multiple regression analyses confirmed that English proficiency explains minimal to negligible variance in teaching efficacy (0.2–2.1%), with none of the models attaining statistical significance. These findings establish that English proficiency does not serve as a significant predictor of teachers' perceived teaching effectiveness. Educational interventions aimed at enhancing teaching efficacy should therefore prioritize pedagogical knowledge, differentiated instruction training, classroom management strategies, and relevant professional development—rather than focusing exclusively or primarily on language skill enhancement. Grammar-targeted professional development may however benefit teachers for broader academic and professional purposes beyond direct efficacy prediction.

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