

Parents as Para-Teachers in Pupils' Language Proficiency

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Abstract

This study investigates the transformative role of parents as para-teachers in enhancing pupils' English language proficiency in one of the public schools in Bulacan, Philippines. Employing a descriptive mixed-methods design, the research involved 96 Grade 4 pupils and their parents from a public elementary school. Data were collected through validated parental engagement surveys, standardized DepEd language tests, interviews, and focus group discussions. Results revealed that parental engagement, specifically through homework assistance, shared reading, and writing practice, had a moderate but significant association with pupils' language proficiency [$\chi^2=24.15$, $*p=.004$]. However, the duration of parental teaching showed no significant impact [$\chi^2=18.72$, $*p=.095$], suggesting the primacy of quality interaction over time investment. The thematic analysis highlighted parents' perceptions of English as vital for global communication [Theme 1], educational advancement [Theme 2], and personal development [Theme 3]. Despite socioeconomic diversity, parents with higher education levels employed more structured language-support strategies. In response, researchers developed an evidence-based program featuring five differentiated learning tracks accommodating various education levels and time constraints. Tailored to busy households, emphasizing brief, daily interventions [15–30 minutes] to reinforce language skills. Findings underscore the importance of quality over quantity in parental involvement and advocate for school-led training programs to equip parents with effective para-teaching strategies.

Keywords: Language Proficiency, Parental Involvement, Para-Teachers, Home-Based Learning, Mixed-Methods.

Introduction

In today's increasingly diverse and globalized world, language proficiency has become a critical skill for success in both academic and professional settings (1-3). However, for many students, particularly those from non-English speaking backgrounds, developing language proficiency can be a significant challenge. Thus, the role of parents as para-teachers becomes crucial. In this context, the term "para-teachers" refers to parents who assume a structured, semi-formal role in the educational process, directly supporting the child's learning based on guidance and strategies aligned with school curricula. Since parents are first and most significant teachers, they can play an important role in supporting their children's language proficiency and development (4, 5). This article investigates the concept of parents as para-teachers in enhancing pupils' language proficiency. The study highlights the importance of their role, the strategies they can employ, and the benefits of their involvement. By working together, parents, teachers, and schools can help ensure that all students have the language skills they need to succeed. The study, titled "Parents as Para-

Teachers in Pupils' Language Proficiency," embarks on an explorative venture to discern the influence of parental involvement on the linguistic development of school-aged children. At the heart of this inquiry is the recognition of parents as para-teachers, partners in pedagogy who extend the learning landscape beyond the traditional classroom setting. This investigation seeks to unveil the degree to which a parent's active engagement in their child's language education can act as a catalyst for enhanced proficiency, examining how these collaborations can reinforce language acquisition and literacy development. In a world where linguistic proficiency is not only a cornerstone of academic achievement but also a vital skill in global communication, this study positions parents as essential people in the quest to nurture a generation of proficient communicators. Grounded in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which proposes that knowledge is built through social interactions with more experienced individuals, and Epstein's framework for parental involvement, specifically the "Learning at Home" model. This study

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investigates the role of parents as para-teachers in enhancing pupils' English language proficiency in the Philippine context. It examines demographic profiles, levels of parental engagement, and the relationship between such engagement and pupils' standardized English performance, while also exploring parental perceptions and attitudes toward language learning. Finally, it proposes an evidence-based program for strengthening parental roles in English language acquisition (1, 6, 7). Recent studies continue to emphasize the critical role of parents in fostering early language skills. A meta-analysis found that home literacy activities, such as shared reading and verbal interactions, significantly predict children's vocabulary growth and reading comprehension (8). Similarly, another study demonstrated that the quantity and quality of parent-child conversations, measured through natural language recordings, strongly correlate with later language proficiency (9). With increasing multilingualism in education, research has explored how parents support bilingual or multilingual development. A study found that children exposed to consistent dual-language input at home exhibit stronger metalinguistic awareness and cognitive flexibility (10). Despite the benefits, challenges persist, including time constraints, low parental confidence, and limited access to educational materials, which hinder effective home-based language support. To address this, interventions like train-the-parent programs have proven successful in equipping caregivers with strategies to enhance children's language skills through dialogic reading and vocabulary-building exercises (11, 12).

Research Hypothesis

The researchers' premise for interpreting the study's outcomes, whether the hypothesis is rejected or accepted, is based on this null hypothesis:

Ho: There is no significant relationship between parental involvement and pupils' English language proficiency. This hypothesis guided the analysis and conclusions of the study.

Methodology

The researchers employed a descriptive mixed-methods design to thoroughly investigate the influence of parents acting as para-teachers on pupils' language proficiency. This approach is

chosen to leverage the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the complex interactions at play. As established within mixed methods research, the integration of both forms of data can provide a complete understanding of a research subject (13).

The quantitative aspect of this design involved data collection through standardized language proficiency assessment from the Department of Education [DepEd] and survey instruments for parents involved. This enabled the researchers to quantify the relationship between parental engagement and pupil language outcomes, addressing the role of parents as para-teachers in enhancing their children's English language proficiency (14, 15).

In parallel, the qualitative component explored the perspectives and attitudes of parents on the importance of English language proficiency. These are achieved through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and observations. This qualitative exploration provided rich, contextualized insights into the 'how' and 'why' behind the quantitative findings (11, 16, 17). The combination of methods allowed triangulation of data, ensuring a comprehensive and reliable understanding of the phenomenon (18).

Participants

The respondents in this study were parents and pupils at the fourth-grade level who are enrolled in one of the public elementary schools in Bulacan.

Grade 4 pupils are a good choice for this study on parental involvement and language proficiency for several reasons. The first one is the Cognitive Development. By Grade 4, children have developed strong foundational literacy and communication skills. They can participate in standardized tests and provide reliable data on their language proficiency. Second is the Parental Involvement Patterns. Grade 4 is a good point to assess parental involvement. Parents may still be actively involved in their children's learning at this stage, but the influence might start to shift as children become more independent learners. And lastly, Curriculum Focus. The grade 4 curriculum often emphasizes building on existing language skills and developing more complex communication abilities.

Research Instrument

The researchers utilized a mixed-method approach to collect data. These included a survey

questionnaire that measured the extent of parental involvement and its relationship with pupils' language proficiency, standardized tests to measure the language proficiency level of the pupils, observations to determine the English language proficiency through class participation, and interviews with the parents through the use of guide questions. The researchers used a semi-structured interview; in this, the interviewers prepared a set of the same questions answered by all interviewees. At the same time, additional questions were asked during interviews to clarify and expand specific issues further (2, 15, 16).

Data Collection Method

To gather quantitative data, the researchers employed survey questionnaires distributed in printed form. The study utilized two main instruments: a structured questionnaire and a standardized test, which helped assess the influence of parental involvement as para-teachers on pupils' English language proficiency. (15, 16, 19, 20). Additionally, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions were conducted to explore parents' perceptions and attitudes regarding the significance of English language skills. The collected data were then analysed to evaluate the relationship between parental engagement and students' language development (11, 17). Data collection began with obtaining informed consent from the public school principal, fourth-grade teachers, and participating parents. Formal request letters were disseminated, and upon securing necessary approvals, researchers were introduced to the fourth-grade pupils by their respective teachers to establish the relationship (13). To gather initial observational data, existing

assignments were reviewed, and pupils' English language proficiency was assessed through direct observation of classroom participation.

Quantitative data were collected through the administration of a standardized language proficiency test, sourced from the Department of Education [DepEd], to the fourth-grade pupils (21). Concurrently, qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions conducted with the participating parents (11, 17). All data collection procedures adhered to strict ethical protocols and considerations. Following the acquisition of all data, quantitative data underwent statistical analysis to determine patterns and relationships. Specifically, statistical treatment was applied to interpret the scores derived from the standardized language proficiency test. The researchers used the Chi-square [χ^2] test of independence in examining relationships between categorical variables related to parental engagement and pupils' English language proficiency. On the other hand, qualitative data, resulting from interviews and focus group discussions, were evaluated using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes related to parental engagement and its apparent impact on pupils' language proficiency.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 show the demographics of the 96 parents who participated in the study. They provided valuable information that helps interpret the findings of the study. The data shows that the parents were from various age groups, educational levels, and occupations.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Parents [N=96]

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage
Age	20-30 years	18	18.75 %
	31-40 years	42	43.75 %
	41-50 years	24	25.00 %
	51+ years	12	12.50 %
Educational Attainment	Elementary	6	6.25 %
	High School	42	43.75 %
	College	36	37.50 %
	Post-Graduate	12	12.50 %
Occupation	Employed (Formal)	30	31.25 %
	Self-employed/Informal	24	25.00 %

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage
	Housewife	36	37.50 %
	Unemployed	6	6.25 %

Age Distribution

Table 1 illustrates that the majority of parents [43.75%] were between 31–40 years, indicating a population of parents who probably actively engaged in their children's education. Those between the ages 41–50 years [25%] came next. Younger parents [20–30 years] and older parents [51+ years] established smaller proportions [18.75% and 12.5%, respectively]. This implies that the main participants were middle-aged parents who are probably more established in their personal and professional lives. According to a recent study, parents in their 30s to 40s were more involved in their kids' education because their jobs and parenting responsibilities were more stable (15).

Educational Attainment

While a smaller percentage of parents had post-graduate [12.5%] or only elementary-level [6.25%] education, a sizable portion had either a high school diploma [43.75%] or a college degree [37.5%]. This distribution is consistent with research showing a relationship between language support strategies and parental education level

(4). While parents with less formal education may rely on casual interactions, parents with higher levels of education may use more structured language-learning techniques (20). Studies have indicated that the educational expectations of parents are impacted by their own educational attainment, which can then affect the degree of parental involvement (22).

Occupation

Table 1 shows that the majority of the parents identified as full-time parents [37.5%] or formally employed [31.25%], and some of them are self-employed/informal work [25%]. Fewer parents reported being unemployed [6.25%]. Socioeconomic diversity may have an impact on the time and resources available for language support, as this illustrates. Full-time parents may spend more time helping their children with homework, but these parents have limited exposure to advanced English. On the other hand, working parents may have less time or less involvement to their children's homework but they have more access to educational resources (23).

Table 2: Parental Engagement in Teaching English Language Skills [N = 96]

Engagement Dimension	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Key Findings
Duration of Teaching Per Day	<30 minutes	43	44.79	Most common duration
	30 minutes - 1 hour	41	42.71	Balanced with shorter duration
	1-2 hours	7	7.29	Limited extended engagement
	>2 hours	5	5.21	Minimal intensive engagement
Tutoring Support Provided (Multiple Response)	Homework Assistance	78	81.25	Most prevalent support
	Reading Together	60	62.50	Common literacy activity
	Writing Practice	42	43.75	Moderate engagement
	Grammar Exercises	30	31.25	Least common support

Table 2 presents the 96 participating parents' levels of parental involvement in teaching English language proficiency. Table 2 provides important

information on the kind and extent of parental involvement, particularly in the duration of

teaching and the types of tutoring support provided.

Duration of Teaching per Day

The data in the table 2 reveals that, most parents only teach English language proficiency for a short period of time. Specifically, 42.71% of parents spend between 30 and 1 hour a day and 44.79% spend less than 30 minutes. This suggests that although parents are actively involved, their engagement is often short-term and integrated into daily routines. Only a small percentage of parents reported spending 1-2 hours [7.29%] or more than 2 hours [5.21%] per day on teaching English language skills. This finding implies that intensive, prolonged teaching sessions are less common.

Recent research suggests that even brief, consistent periods of parental engagement can have a significant impact on student learning. A study found that short but consistent daily interactions [15–30 minutes] significantly improve vocabulary retention in young learners, supporting the effectiveness of brief, frequent engagements (24). Hence, studies also emphasize the importance of quality over quantity, highlighting that focused; brief interactions can be more effective than lengthy, unstructured sessions. This aligns with the finding that most parents in

this study engage in shorter durations of teaching (5).

Tutoring Support Provided (Multiple Response)

When examining the types of tutoring support provided, homework assistance emerged as the most prevalent activity, with 81.25% of parents reporting this form of engagement. This highlights the practical and immediate nature of parental engagement, often focusing on supporting daily academic tasks. Reading together was also a common activity, with 62.50% of parents engaging in this practice, indicating a focus on literacy development. Writing practice was reported by 43.75% of parents, showing moderate engagement in this area. Grammar exercises were the least common form of support, with only 31.25% of parents reporting this activity.

Homework assistance dominance matches findings by other researchers who observed that parents prioritize tasks directly linked to school requirements. Reading together was similarly highlighted in a study showing that shared reading improves comprehension and fluency. Lower engagement in grammar found that parents often avoid grammar instruction due to uncertainty about rules (25, 26).

Table 3: English Language Proficiency of Grade 4 Pupils [N=96] Using DepEd Standards

Proficiency Level	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage	DepEd Equivalent	Interpretation
Advanced	14-15	9	9.38%	Exceeded Expectations	Mastered all competencies
Proficient	12-13	30	31.25%	Met Expectations	Demonstrated key competencies
Approaching Proficiency	10-11	27	28.13%	Approaching Expectations	Developing fundamental skills
Developing	7-9	21	21.88%	Needs Improvement	Significant gaps in understanding
Beginning	0-6	9	9.38%	Below Expectations	Minimal language comprehension

Table 3 reveals the distribution of Grade 4 pupils across different English language proficiency levels based on DepEd standards. A significant portion of the pupils [31.25%] fall under the "Proficient" level, indicating they have met the expectations and demonstrated key competencies in English. However, a considerable number of pupils are also in the "Approaching Proficiency"

level [28.13%], suggesting they are still developing fundamental English language skills and require further support. Only a slight percentage [9.38%] achieved the "Advanced" level, signifying mastery of all competencies. Remarkably, the table does not show any pupils falling into the "Developing" or "Beginning" proficiency levels based on DepEd

standards, which might suggest a baseline level of English proficiency among the students.

The results revealed that children whose parents actively engaged in language-based activities such as reading together and vocabulary reinforcement showed higher proficiency levels. This supports the idea that parents acting as para-teachers can help bridge learning gaps, particularly for pupils in the "Developing" and "Beginning" categories (27). Meanwhile, research highlights that many elementary pupils struggle with foundational English skills, including reading comprehension and grammar, aligning with the 28.13% in

"Approaching Proficiency" and 21.88% in "Developing." They emphasize the need for structured parental support to reinforce classroom learning (28).

The findings indicate that although some pupils meet or exceed expectations, a substantial number require additional support. Research highlights the role of parents as para-teachers in enhancing language proficiency, particularly among low-performing pupils. Interventions such as guided reading, vocabulary exercises, and consistent parent-teacher collaboration may significantly enhance student outcomes.

Table 4: Chi-Square Analysis on the Relationship between Parental Involvement Factors and Pupils' English Proficiency [N=96]

Parental Factor	Involvement	Proficiency Level	χ^2	df	P-value	ϕ	Interpretation
Duration of Teaching			18.72	12	.095	.37	Moderate non-significant association
<30 minutes		Advanced					34.8% of Advanced students
30 mins-1 hour		Proficient					42.1% of Proficient students
1-2 hours		Developing					55.6% of Developing students
Tutoring Support			24.15	9	.004*	.42	Significant moderate association
Homework assistance		Advanced					82.6% vs 69.2% in Developing
Reading together		Proficient					68.4% vs 33.3% in Beginning
Writing practice		Advanced					39.1% vs 11.1% in Developing
Grammar exercises		Proficient					31.6% vs 0% in Beginning

Note. *p<.05, ϕ =effect size [0.1=small, 0.3=moderate, 0.5=large]

Table 4 examines the statistical association between two key parental engagement factors, Duration of Teaching and Tutoring Support, and the English language proficiency levels of the Grade 4 pupils.

Duration of Teaching

The Chi-Square analysis for the duration of parental teaching showed a χ^2 value of 18.72 with 12 degrees of freedom and a p-value of .095. This p-value is greater than the conventional significance level of 0.05, indicating that there is no statistically significant association between the duration of parental teaching and the pupils' English proficiency levels. However, the Phi [ϕ] value of .37 suggests a moderate effect size, implying a potential trend that might become significant with a larger sample size. The table further breaks down the distribution, suggesting that a higher percentage of "Advanced" students received less than 30 minutes of parental teaching, while a higher percentage of "Developing" students received 1-2 hours. This seemingly

counterintuitive trend warrants further investigation.

This aligns with recent research that found that brief but high-quality parent-child discussions [asking open-ended questions about a story] had a stronger impact on language development than extended, passive tutoring. The current study's moderate effect size [ϕ =.37] hints at this trend, even if the association wasn't statistically significant. It raises a critical question: Are parents of struggling learners spending more time reactively addressing gaps rather than proactively building skills (21).

Tutoring Support

The Chi-Square analysis for tutoring support revealed a χ^2 value of 24.15 with 9 degrees of freedom and a statistically significant p-value of .004 [p < .05]. This indicates a significant association between the type of tutoring support provided by parents and the pupils' English proficiency levels. The Phi [ϕ] value of 0.42 indicates a moderate effect size, suggesting a

meaningful relationship. The breakdown shows that a higher percentage of "Advanced" students received homework assistance and writing practice from their parents, while a higher percentage of "Proficient" students engaged in reading together and grammar exercises with their parents. Notably, no students in the "Beginning" proficiency level received support with grammar exercises.

These findings suggest that the type of parental engagement, specifically tutoring support, has a

more significant relationship with pupils' English proficiency than the duration of teaching. While the duration showed a moderate but non-significant association, the specific activities under tutoring support demonstrate a clear link to different proficiency levels. This highlights the importance of focusing on the quality and nature of parental involvement rather than just the quantity of time spent.

Table 5: Parental Perceptions and Attitudes on the Importance of English Language Proficiency

Theme	Codes	Theme Description
1. English as a Gateway to Global Communication and Mobility	• "Wherever we go, we can understand the English language." • "If they go to other places or countries." • "Universal language. It can be used in any country." • "Communicate with people from different cultures." • "International language and it is used to communicate with other countries." • "Anywhere they go and in any part of the world." • "If one goes to another country." • "Open for opportunities around the world." • "Communicate with others." • "Primary language of international communication." • "Communicate to others." • "Communicate with them." • "Applying for jobs." • "Future job."	Parents view English as a vital tool for global interaction, travel, and accessing opportunities worldwide. They emphasize its role as a universal language that enables communication across cultures and countries, highlighting its practical, outward-facing benefits.
2. English for Educational and Career Advancement	• "Studies and future job." • "Finding a job and studying." • "Higher level or in their writings and reading." • "Studying, work, and communication." • "Good teaching and to broaden the learning of our	Parents associate English proficiency with academic success and career opportunities. They believe it is essential for higher education, securing employment, and thriving in professional environments. This theme reflects their focus on the future economic and educational well-being of their children.

Theme	Codes	Theme Description
3. English as a Tool for Personal Development and Confidence	children." • "Useful for their future, such as when applying for a job." • "Higher education." • "Land a good job in the future." • "Essential for my child's studies." • "Primary language of instruction in many educational institutions worldwide." • "Learning English makes it easier to find a job or get hired in a company." • "Help him on his future job." • "Development of their character." • "Broaden one's understanding." • "Develop in the English language." • "Learn to speak in front of many people." • "Confidence to communicate with other people." • "Socializing and expressing themselves in the world." • "Good English-speaking skills ensure that he can express and share." • "Keep up with changes, as English is widely used for communication everywhere."	Beyond practical uses, parents see English as a means to foster personal growth, confidence, and self-expression. They believe mastering English helps their children communicate effectively, build social skills, and expand their intellectual horizons, emphasizing its intrinsic value.
	• "Because it is one of the most widely spoken languages in the world." • "It is commonly used by people, including foreigners." • "Language is our major means of communication." • "English is the easy way to communicate with other people." • "National language."	Parents recognize English as a dominant language in modern life, essential for navigating a globalized society. They see it as a necessity for communication in business, technology, and other domains, reflecting a pragmatic understanding of its role in contemporary society.
4. English as a Necessary Skill in a Globalized Society		

Theme	Codes	Theme Description
5. Parental Belief and Positive Reinforcement	• "It's necessary to be fluent in English." • "I'm surely believing 100% that English language proficiency is for my child's future." • "I strongly believe that mastering the English language is important for his future."	Parents strongly believe in the importance of English for their children's future. They actively support their children's learning, demonstrating their commitment to their education. This theme highlights the active role parents play in reinforcing the value of English proficiency.
	• "Very important."	
	• "It is very important for me that my child learns the English language."	
	• "I do believe that it is important for him."	
	• "He/She is practicing reading on his/her own, and sometimes I also teach him/her how to read."	

Table 5 presents the thematic analysis of five key themes that illustrate the perspectives of parents regarding their role in enhancing their children's English language proficiency. Each theme is supported by various codes that reflect parents' beliefs and attitudes, providing a comprehensive understanding of their motivations and the perceived importance of English in their children's lives.

Theme No.1: English as a Gateway to Global Communication and Mobility

Theme no. 1 indicates that parents see English as a valuable tool for global communication, pointing out the significance of English as a lingua franca or communication tool between different cultures. They view English as a language they need to have for interacting at the world level, traveling, and accessing opportunities all over the globe. They emphasize its role as a universal language that allows communication across cultures and countries, highlighting its practical benefits. According to one of the parents, "English is important because it is an international language and it is used to communicate with other countries." This aligns with findings from a recent study, which indicates that mastery and proficiency in the English language bring international opportunities and improve intercultural communication. The parents'

recognition that studying English facilitates communication with other people globally represents mundane values of this foreign language in a highly interconnected society (1).

Theme No. 2: English for Educational and Career Advancement

The second theme reveals that parents associate English proficiency with academic success and future career opportunities. A strong emphasis is placed on the instrumental value of English for academic and professional success. Parents believe that proficiency in English is essential for accessing higher education, securing desirable employment, and thriving in future careers. One of the parents stated, "Learning English makes it easier to find a job or get hired in a company." This perspective is supported by research conducted, which indicates that English language skills are vital for accessing higher education and improving employability. Parents' emphasis on English as a primary language of instruction in educational institutions reflects their understanding of its significance in securing a prosperous future for their children (2).

Theme No. 3: English as a Tool for Personal Development and Confidence

Beyond its practical applications, parents recognize the role of English in fostering personal growth. They see it as a means to enhance communication skills, build confidence in

expressing oneself, develop social skills, and broaden intellectual understanding. Parents also perceive English as a means of fostering personal growth and self-confidence. "The English language is important for my children in socializing and expressing themselves in the world," stated a parent. Another parent affirmed that "Good English-speaking skills ensure that my child can express and share himself with others". This theme resonates with the findings of a study, which suggests that language proficiency contributes to self-esteem and social skills development. By encouraging their children to master English, parents believe they are equipping them with the tools necessary for effective communication and self-expression, which are vital for personal development (20).

Theme No. 4: English as a Necessary Skill in a Globalized Society

Theme no. 4 explains that parents recognize that English is a dominant language in many aspects of modern life. They see it as a necessity for navigating a globalized society, where English is frequently used in business, technology, and various other domains. This theme reflects a pragmatic understanding of the role of English in contemporary society. Based on the interview, one of the parents said, "English is the easiest way to communicate with other people, English is a national language." The recognition of English as a dominant language in a globalized society is another significant theme. This perspective is echoed in the work argues that fluency in English is essential for navigating various domains,

including business and technology. Parents' acknowledgment of English as a necessary skill reflects a pragmatic understanding of its role in contemporary life, reinforcing the idea that language proficiency is crucial for success in a globalized world (3).

Theme No. 5: Parental Belief and Positive Reinforcement

Finally, the theme of parental belief and positive reinforcement highlights the active role parents play in their children's language learning. As affirmed by the parent, "I strongly believe that mastering the English language is important for his future." Another parent said, "It is very important for me that my child learns the English language." This theme shows the strong belief that the parents have in the importance of their child learning English. They are actively helping their children and see the value in it. This theme is supported by research, which emphasizes the impact of parental involvement on children's academic outcomes (26). Parents' strong belief in the importance of English proficiency and their commitment to supporting their children's learning demonstrate the critical influence of parental engagement in educational success. The thematic analysis of parental perspectives in the study aligns with and is supported by recent research emphasizing the significant role of parental beliefs and attitudes in children's language learning. Findings provide valuable context-specific insights that can inform the development and implementation of strategies involving parents as para-teachers to improve pupils' English language proficiency.

Table 6: Thematic Analysis on Parental Perceptions of Support in Children's English Language Proficiency

Theme	Codes	Theme Description
1. Parental Guidance and Active Involvement	- "We are ready to support you in learning the English language." - "Teach and share knowledge for a broader understanding." - "Speak slowly and be patient." - "Practice speaking English in conversations."	Parents emphasize their active role in supporting their children's English learning. This includes providing guidance, encouragement, and hands-on assistance with studies. They recognize the importance of their presence and involvement in the learning process.
	- "Using a dictionary and books will help." - "Reading books can improve English skills." - "A dictionary is very helpful for word meanings."	Parents recognize the value of traditional educational resources like dictionaries and books, as well as modern resources like e-books. They see these materials as essential tools for expanding vocabulary, improving
2. Educational Resources and Materials		

Theme	Codes	Theme Description
3. Digital Resources and Technology	- "Educational books written in English."	reading skills, and reinforcing grammar.
	- "Watching YouTube teacher vloggers."	The internet, YouTube, educational videos, and other digital resources are seen as valuable tools for learning English. Parents recognize the accessibility and engaging nature of these resources.
	- "The internet is extremely helpful for English proficiency."	
	- "Let them watch movies/videos in English."	
4. Consistent Exposure and Practice	- "Google and YouTube as main resources."	Parents understand that consistent exposure and practice are essential for language acquisition. They believe that frequent use of English in daily conversations and activities will help their children become more proficient.
	- "Frequent use of English in daily conversations."	
	- "Day-to-day English conversations with her."	
5. Structured Learning Programs	- "Kumon program helps improve English."	Structured learning programs are seen as a tool to help children improve their English skills.

The thematic analysis in Table 6 presents five key themes that emerged from the data collected on parents' roles as para-teachers in enhancing pupils' language proficiency. These themes highlight the strategies and resources parents use to support their children's English learning.

Theme No. 1: Parental Guidance and Active Involvement

Theme no. 1 reveals that parents emphasize their active role in guiding and supporting their children's English learning. This aligns with recent studies that highlight the importance of parental involvement in children's educational outcomes. For instance, a study in Nepal found that educated parents provided structured learning environments and motivated their children, leading to better English proficiency (29). This theme supports the notion that parental involvement is crucial for academic success. The theme of parental guidance and active involvement emphasizes the significant impact that parents have on their children's English language learning. Parents expressed a strong commitment to supporting their children through challenges and providing hands-on assistance with their studies. This finding aligns with recent research, which highlights that parental involvement is crucial for language development and academic success (14).

The active engagement of parents not only fosters a supportive learning environment but also reinforces the importance of language learning in daily life, as parents recognize their role in shaping their children's educational experiences.

Theme No. 2: Educational Resources and Materials

Parents value traditional instructional resources like dictionaries and books, as well as modern tools such as e-books, for improving reading skills and vocabulary. This theme supports language acquisition theories that highlight the importance of reading in language development (28). Access to these resources helps parents teach their children more effectively and reinforces grammar and vocabulary skills. Parents acknowledged the value of both traditional and modern educational resources in supporting their children's language acquisition. The emphasis on using dictionaries, storybooks, and e-books reflects a comprehensive approach to language learning. Research supports this theme, indicating that access to diverse reading materials significantly enhances vocabulary and reading skills. By utilizing various resources, parents can create a rich linguistic environment that promotes language proficiency, demonstrating their understanding of the tools necessary for effective language learning (29).

Theme No. 3: Digital Resources and Technology

The internet and digital platforms such as YouTube are recognized as valuable tools for English learning due to their accessibility and engaging nature. A study highlighted the use of online-based learning platforms as an effective method for teaching English at home. This aligns with broader trends in education that emphasize the benefits of multimedia in enhancing learning experiences. The increasing reliance on digital resources and technology is a notable trend in language learning. Parents recognized the benefits of using the internet, educational videos, and platforms like YouTube to facilitate their children's English learning. This theme resonates with the findings, which highlight the effectiveness of technology in language education. The accessibility and engaging nature of digital resources provide parents with innovative tools to support their children's learning, making language acquisition more interactive and enjoyable. This reflects a shift in educational practices, where technology plays a central role in enhancing language proficiency (30).

Theme No. 4: Consistent Exposure and Practice

Frequent use of English in daily conversations is viewed as essential for language proficiency. This aligns with language acquisition theories that emphasize the role of consistent exposure in enhancing fluency and comprehension. Recent studies continue to highlight the importance of consistent practice in language learning. Consistent exposure and practice emerged as a vital theme in the analysis, with parents acknowledging that frequent use of the English language is essential for language acquisition. The findings assert that regular language use significantly contributes to proficiency. By engaging in daily conversations and activities that involve English, parents can help their children internalize language structures and vocabulary, ultimately leading to improved language skills (29). This consistent practice reinforces the idea that language learning is an on-going process that benefits from regular engagement.

Theme No. 5: Structured Learning Programs

The multifaceted role parents play in supporting their children's language learning. Parents not only provide emotional support but also actively engage in teaching and guiding their children. The use of educational resources, digital tools, and

formal instruction underscores the importance of a comprehensive approach to language education (31, 32). The theme of structured learning programs highlights parents' recognition of the benefits of formalized educational interventions, such as tutoring and programs like Kumon. This reflects a growing interest in structured approaches to language learning, as supported by a study (33). Parents see these programs as effective tools for enhancing their children's English skills, indicating a proactive stance towards language education (33). The structured nature of these programs provides a framework for learning that can complement the informal support parents offer at home. The results of this thematic analysis reveal that parents play a multifaceted role as para-teachers in their children's language proficiency development. Their active involvement, utilization of educational resources, and recognition of the importance of teacher support contribute significantly to enhancing English language skills. By fostering a supportive and resource-rich environment, parents can effectively complement formal education, ultimately leading to improved language outcomes for their children.

The findings underscore the need for educational stakeholders to recognize and support the role of parents in language learning, providing them with the necessary resources and training to maximize their impact as para-teachers. As the landscape of education continues to evolve, the collaboration between parents, teachers, and digital resources will be essential in promoting language proficiency among students. From the results of the study, the researchers developed an evidence-based program for parents as para-teachers in supporting their children's English language proficiency. The program is designed for busy parents.

English Proficiency Program for Busy Parents**Key Features of the Program**

Flexibility: The program offers five different tracks based on available time and education level, allowing parents to choose the most suitable option for their family.

Daily Activities: Each track includes daily activities from Monday to Friday, ensuring consistent practice and exposure to the English language.

Progress Tracking: A star chart is used to track/keep progress, which gives both parents and kids a visual reason to keep going.

Celebration of Achievements: Weekly prizes/rewards encourage and motivate continued participation.

Tracks Overview

Track 1: Busy Parents (15 mins/day) - Employs everyday objects for quick language exercises.

Track 2: Basic Education (20mins/day) - Concentrations on translation, vocabulary building, and storytelling.

Track 3: Stay-at-Home (25mins/day) - Incorporates household chores into language learning.

Track 4: College-Educated (30 mins/day) - Engages with more advanced language skills such as grammar correction and debate.

Track 5: Smartphone-Only (15mins/day) - Leverages digital tools like Duolingo Kids for learning.

Alignment with Research Findings

This program is in accordance with recent studies emphasizing the importance of parental involvement in enhancing children's English proficiency. A study has shown that active parental involvement, as helping them with homework and giving them learning support, and school activities, significantly improves their English language proficiency. Additionally, providing supportive facilities and engaging in literacy activities at home are also vital for fostering a conducive learning environment. The program's emphasis on reliable experience and practice, as well as its use of digital resources, supports language proficiency theories that highlight the importance of regular engagement and interaction with the language. Moreover, the structured nature of the program aligns with research emphasizing the value of systematic learning experiences for skill development.

Limitations and Future Directions

While the program is designed to be a full language development program, parents' skill level in their target second language and academic background may become challenges further research might consider how to tailor the program to better assist parents with different levels of education and language skills. To reduce social desirability bias, future researchers may conduct future studies that employ methodological triangulation, integrating

objective measures such as organized daily diaries, audio recordings of parent-child interactions, or teacher reports to complement parental surveys. To enhance generalizability, extensive studies across various educational settings are recommended to document changes in the effects of parental para-teaching on language proficiency from early to later grades. Furthermore, an important future direction is the development and implementation of an intervention study to empirically test the efficacy of the evidence-based program proposed in this research. Such a study may not only validate the program's effectiveness but also provide stronger evidence for causal relationships between structured parental support and pupils' language proficiency.

Conclusion

The study reveals a diverse group of parents in terms of age, education, and jobs, which affects how they help their pupils learn English. The analysis further indicates that parental support, such as assisting with homework or shared reading activities, significantly correlates with student proficiency levels. On the other hand, the duration of parental engagement demonstrated a less substantial impact, aligning with research emphasizing focused and high-quality interactions over lengthy sessions. Similarly, the study confirms that parents play a significant role in enhancing their children's English language proficiency. Their active involvement through guidance, resource provision, and consistent practice meaningfully impacts pupils' learning outcomes. The study also reveals that parents value English for its utility in multiple domains: facilitating worldwide communication, unlocking educational and economic opportunities, building self-confidence, and functioning in contemporary life (1, 2). And lastly, the English Language Proficiency Program provides a valuable framework for parents to support their children's English learning. By leveraging parental involvement and structured activities, it has the potential to significantly enhance language proficiency among Grade 4 students.

Abbreviations

DepEd: Department of Education.

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Author Contributions

Christina D Vicencio: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing - Original Draft, Editing, Christopher S Vicencio: Formal Analysis, Review, Editing, Mary Joy V Yambao: Data Collection, Data Analysis.

Conflict of Interest

The authors have disclosed no financial or nonfinancial interests. None of the co-authors expressed a Conflict of Interest.

Declaration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Assistance

Generative AI tools were used to assist in language editing, organization, and formatting under the authors' full supervision.

Ethics Approval

This study was conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines and principles of Bulacan State University- Research Management Office, and complied with the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

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