

Investigation Language Teaching Styles and Strategies: A Case Study of a Professional Filipino Teacher of English Teaching in Thailand*



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Abstract

This qualitative research aims to investigate the teaching styles and strategies employed by a professional Filipino English teacher in Thailand, as well as the contextual factors influencing their application in the classroom. The study utilized a single-case study approach. Data were collected using semi-structured in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. The key informant was one Filipino English teacher with over 20 years of teaching experience in Thai educational settings.

The research instruments included an interview protocol, observation checklist, and content analysis framework. Thematic analysis was employed to examine the data, ensuring triangulation across multiple sources to enhance validity.

Findings reveal that the participant adopted a hybrid teaching style, shifting flexibly among expert, formal authority, facilitator, and delegator roles depending on instructional goals and classroom dynamics. Influential factors included curriculum requirements, student proficiency, class size, and available teaching time. Commonly used techniques included elicitation, modeling, group and pair work, error correction, and the use of authentic materials.

The study concludes that the teacher's choices were not arbitrary but were strategically aligned with learners' needs and lesson objectives. The findings underscore the importance of adaptive pedagogy and confirm that Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs), particularly from ASEAN countries, bring valuable cultural sensitivity, instructional flexibility, and learner-centered approaches to multilingual classrooms. This research contributes to the literature on effective English language instruction in intercultural contexts.

Keywords: Teaching Styles; Teaching Techniques; Professional Teacher; Filipino Teacher of English

Introduction

In the context of globalized education, English has become a vital tool for international communication and academic advancement. As English language learning continues to expand across Southeast Asia, many countries have relied on Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers

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(NNESTs), particularly from neighboring ASEAN nations such as the Philippines, to fill language teaching roles. In Thailand, Filipino English teachers represent a significant segment of the foreign teaching workforce, especially in public and private basic education institutions. Their contributions have been widely recognized in classroom teaching, yet little scholarly attention has been given to their pedagogical approaches, challenges, and strengths.

Previously, the studies in second language acquisition and English language teaching have largely centered on native speaker models, often idealizing them as the standard of effective language instruction. At the present time, the research highlights that NNESTs bring distinctive advantages, including an awareness of language learning difficulties, cultural proximity to learners, and adaptability to local educational contexts. These strengths are particularly evident among experienced Filipino teachers who demonstrate resourcefulness, resilience, and deep pedagogical engagement. Nonetheless, there remains a limited understanding of how these teachers apply teaching styles and strategies in real classroom settings, particularly in non-native environments like Thailand.

The complex dynamics of language education in multicultural settings, it is important to explore how NNESTs manage instructional choices and adapt their practices to meet diverse student needs. Teaching styles and strategies are not static; they evolve with context, classroom culture, and learner backgrounds. Understanding how experienced Filipino teachers construct their instructional decisions can provide valuable insights for educational administrators, policymakers, and teacher training programs.

This study was initiated to investigate the teaching styles and strategies employed by a professional Filipino English teacher in Thailand. By using qualitative methods and a case study approach, the research seeks to uncover how this teacher navigates pedagogical decisions, balances between various instructional roles, and responds to the specific characteristics of her students. The study aims to contribute to the broader discourse on effective language teaching in ASEAN contexts and to affirm the professional identity and agency of NNESTs within the Thai education system.

Objective of the Research

To investigate the teaching styles and strategies employed by a professional Filipino English teacher of English teaching in Thailand.

Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative case study approach to explore the teaching styles and strategies of a professional Filipino English teacher working in Thailand. The participant was selected through purposive sampling based on her extensive teaching experience, spanning more than two decades in various Thai educational settings. Data were collected

through a semi-structured in-depth interview designed to elicit detailed responses regarding instructional practices, beliefs, and context-specific decision-making.

The interview was conducted in English and audio-recorded with the participant's consent. The interview transcript was later transcribed and analyzed through qualitative content analysis. The analysis focused on identifying themes and patterns related to teaching styles, instructional strategies, and contextual influences. Triangulation was ensured by reviewing relevant literature and comparing findings with existing frameworks of teaching styles and strategies. The researcher maintained objectivity by applying a systematic coding process and member checking to validate interpretations with the participant.

This methodology was chosen to allow for in-depth understanding of how an experienced non-native English-speaking teacher manages instructional decision-making in a multicultural classroom setting. The single-case design offers insight into pedagogical adaptability and personal teaching philosophy in real-world practice.

The participant in this study was a female Filipino English teacher with over 22 years of teaching experience, including more than 15 years in Thai public and private schools. She holds a bachelor's degree in English education and a master's degree in Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL). Her professional background spans primary and secondary education, with most of her teaching conducted in English Program (EP) settings. The participant had completed several teacher training workshops in Thailand and had also served as a mentor for novice foreign teachers. Her classes typically consisted of 25–35 Thai students with mixed levels of English proficiency. She described herself as “flexible and intuitive,” emphasizing the importance of adapting instruction to the learning style and emotional state of each class. Her extensive experience and reflective teaching style made her an ideal subject for this case study.

Research Results

The findings of this study revealed that the Filipino English teacher adopted a hybrid teaching style that integrated multiple roles, including expert, formal authority, facilitator, and delegator. Rather than relying on a single dominant style, the teacher demonstrated flexibility in selecting teaching approaches that matched the classroom context, student needs, and instructional goals. This dynamic use of teaching styles allowed the teacher to in terms of teaching strategies, the participant employed a wide array of techniques such as eliciting prior knowledge, modeling language use, giving clear verbal and written instructions, organizing pair and group work, monitoring classroom interactions, and providing both corrective and encouraging feedback. The use of authentic materials and contextualized language practice further reflected a strategy focused on communicative competence and learner engagement.

The teacher's instructional decisions were influenced by several contextual factors. These included student proficiency levels, class size, available instructional time, curriculum

demands, and the cultural expectations of Thai learners. The participant demonstrated an awareness of how these factors shaped her lesson planning and moment-to-moment teaching practices. Her approach emphasized responsiveness, adaptability, and the ability to shift pedagogical tactics depending on real-time classroom dynamics.

Overall, the research highlights the practical application of multiple teaching styles and strategies by an experienced NNEST. It also affirms the role of context-sensitive decision-making as a key component in effective English language instruction in Thai classrooms.

In discussing her lesson planning, the participant emphasized the importance of aligning instruction with students' interests. She stated,

"I always consider their interests first. Thai students like music, so I use English songs in group tasks. They enjoy it, and they remember more vocabulary that way."

This reflects a learner-centered strategy that encourages participation and memory retention through contextualized, affective engagement. It also demonstrates an awareness of cultural preferences in Thai classrooms, a recurring theme in the teacher's approach to planning interactive activities.

Furthermore, the participant mentioned that her role in the classroom shifts based on student readiness:

"At the beginning of the semester, I act more like an authority because they need structure. But once they get used to me, I become more like a facilitator."

This illustrates her hybrid teaching style, combining formal authority with facilitator roles depending on learners' familiarity and comfort levels—an adaptive pattern observed consistently across her teaching process.

The participant's reflections also support theoretical models of teaching flexibility and contextual adaptation. For example, she noted:

"When the students are shy, I start with pair work. It's less scary than speaking in front of the whole class. After that, they're more willing to speak."

This supports Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (1978), where scaffolding is used to gradually increase learner confidence and independence. Her sensitivity to emotional and social aspects of learning is also indicative of high intercultural competence (Byram, 1997), as she tailors strategies to suit Thai students' cultural communication norms.

Additionally, her approach to code-switching illustrates awareness of cognitive load. She shared:

"If they don't understand something, I sometimes say it in Thai. Just one sentence. Then I repeat in English again. It helps them relax."

This pedagogical choice demonstrates her pragmatic flexibility and aligns with CLT principles that emphasize comprehension and communication over rigid target-language-only instruction.

The teacher's emphasis on affective factors and motivation mirrors Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which suggests that learners acquire language more effectively when they are relaxed and engaged. Her classroom decisions consistently supported this view. As she remarked:

"If they laugh and enjoy the lesson, they learn more. That's why I never make them feel wrong. I correct gently, or I repeat the correct sentence and smile."

This strategy is not only pedagogically effective but also culturally appropriate, reinforcing classroom harmony and student confidence in line with Thai cultural expectations.

One particularly insightful comment emphasized her adaptive pacing:

"Sometimes I prepare a long lesson, but if I see they are tired or confused, I slow down or change the activity. I follow their mood."

This reflects a high level of teacher reflectivity and situational awareness, consistent with Schön's (1983) concept of the reflective practitioner, and is characteristic of experienced educators who can adjust their instruction in real time.

The New Body of Knowledge

The findings of this study led to the development of a conceptual framework illustrating the integration of teaching styles and strategies employed by a non-native English-speaking teacher (NNEST) in a Thai classroom. The framework consists of three core components: (1) Hybrid Teaching Roles, (2) Contextual Strategy Selection, and (3) Adaptive Decision-Making Process.

1. Hybrid Teaching Roles: The teacher alternates between expert, formal authority, facilitator, and delegator depending on instructional objectives and learner needs. This flexibility enhances classroom responsiveness and supports a variety of learning activities.

2. Contextual Strategy Selection: Teaching strategies are not applied in isolation but are selected based on factors such as students' English proficiency, class size, time constraints, and curriculum requirements. Strategies include eliciting, modeling, error correction, pair/group work, and the use of authentic materials.

3. Adaptive Decision-Making Process: Instructional choices are continuously adjusted during lesson implementation. The teacher evaluates student responses and engagement levels to fine-tune approaches in real time.

This model contributes to the body of knowledge in English language education by emphasizing the importance of teaching flexibility, learner-centered adaptation, and strategic integration of pedagogical methods. It also affirms the professional agency of NNESTs in navigating culturally diverse classrooms through reflective and responsive practices.

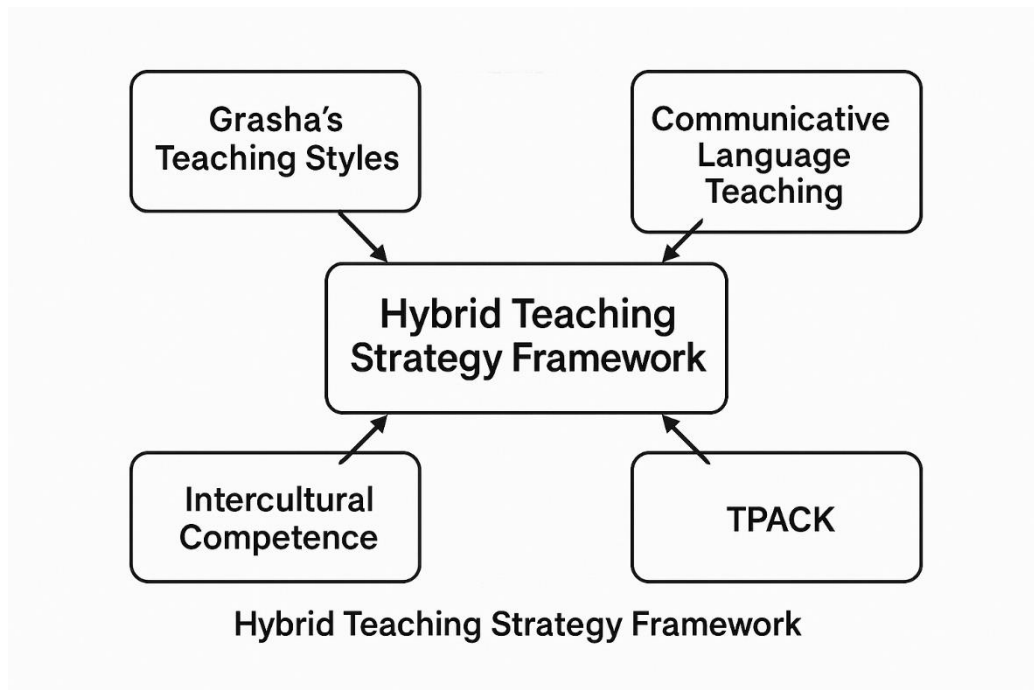


Figure 1: Hybrid Teaching Strategy Framework

This framework illustrates the dynamic integration of four key elements: hybrid teaching roles, contextual factors, instructional strategies, and adaptive decision-making. At the core, the teacher acts flexibly across multiple roles—expert, formal authority, facilitator, and delegator—while adapting strategy selection to variables such as student proficiency, class size, curriculum needs, and cultural norms. Through continuous reflective practice, the teacher makes real-time instructional adjustments that respond to learners’ needs, creating a cycle of responsive, context-sensitive pedagogy. This model underscores the interplay between teaching identity, strategy application, and situational awareness in non-native English-speaking teaching contexts.

Discussion of Research Results

The study aimed to explore the teaching styles and strategies of a professional Filipino teacher of English in Thailand. The findings revealed that the participant employed a combination of expert, facilitator, formal authority, and delegator roles, aligning with Grasha’s (1996) classification. The use of multiple roles reflects a flexible and context-sensitive approach to teaching.

The findings are consistent with prior studies. For instance, Javier and Pascual (2019) and Park and Kim (2020) found that Filipino ESL teachers in East Asia adapted well to local cultures and were valued for their interpersonal warmth and ability to simplify complex content. Similarly, Medgyes (1992) and Moussu and Llorca (2008) emphasized the unique advantages of non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs), such as metalinguistic awareness

and empathy for learners. The participant in this study demonstrated these strengths through scaffolded instruction and culturally responsive strategies.

In terms of teaching methodology, the participant integrated principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), including group work and real-life communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Additionally, the use of simplified English and code-switching reflects awareness of Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development, adjusting instruction based on learner readiness.

Although limited digital tools were used, the teacher's real-time integration of content and pedagogy aligns with the concept of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Furthermore, intercultural competence (Byram, 1997) was evident in the participant's sensitivity to Thai students' behaviors and classroom norms.

The findings also reflect Schön's (1983) model of the Reflective Practitioner. The teacher made in-action adjustments during lessons, demonstrating reflective awareness and experience-based judgment.

In summary, this case study supports the view that NNESTs—especially from ASEAN contexts—possess pedagogical strengths that are vital in multicultural classrooms. Their effectiveness stems not from native-like fluency, but from cultural sensitivity, adaptability, and reflective practice.

Conclusion

This study explored the teaching styles and strategies employed by a professional Filipino English teacher working in Thailand. Through a qualitative case study approach, it was found that the teacher adopted a flexible and context-sensitive pedagogical approach, drawing from a range of teaching styles—namely expert, formal authority, facilitator, and delegator—and employing varied instructional strategies to meet the specific needs of her learners. The selection of teaching methods was not arbitrary but informed by classroom realities such as student proficiency levels, class size, curricular demands, and time constraints.

This pedagogical flexibility reflects a deep understanding of both content and learner, allowing for responsive, effective teaching in a multicultural and multilingual environment. Moreover, the study highlights the professional agency and competence of non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs), particularly those from ASEAN countries, in delivering high-quality English language education.

By presenting a real-world example of a highly experienced NNEST, this research contributes to the ongoing conversation about inclusive and context-aware language education. It calls attention to the value of teaching practices rooted in reflection, adaptability, and cultural relevance—practices that transcend native-speaker norms and resonate with the actual conditions of language classrooms in Thailand and similar educational contexts.

Suggestions

1. The suggestions from the research

1.1 Educational institutions in Thailand should recognize and support the role of non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs), particularly those from ASEAN countries, by providing professional development opportunities that emphasize pedagogical flexibility and intercultural competence.

1.2 Teacher training programs should incorporate case-based learning from experienced NNESTs to promote reflective practice and adaptive instructional skills among pre-service and in-service teachers.

1.3 School administrators should foster inclusive environments where NNESTs are encouraged to contribute to curriculum development and share effective teaching strategies with local educators.

2. The suggestions for future research

2.1 Future studies should expand the participant pool to include multiple NNESTs across various Thai educational settings to allow for comparative analysis and broader generalization.

2.2 Longitudinal research could be conducted to examine the professional development trajectories of NNESTs and how their teaching styles evolve over time.

2.3 Comparative studies between native and non-native English-speaking teachers could offer deeper insights into instructional choices, cultural influences, and classroom outcomes.

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