

**ORAL FEEDBACKING ISSUES IN PHILIPPINE ESL CLASSROOMS:
POTENTIALS OF LINGUISTICALLY DEVELOPMENTAL ALTERNATIVES**

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ABSTRACT: *Interfacing language and literature in the English curriculum is a shared pedagogical framework in English-as-a-second-language (ESL) contexts, where frequently there exists a visible mismatch between the expected linguistic performance and the communicative competence of L2 learners. As a result, second language teachers employ strategies that lower the prescribed educational standards in order to meet the cognitive levels of the students. This coping mechanism that largely operates within ESL classrooms borders on the embarrassment and hygiene resource framework of Mackay, which this study applied to investigate the issue. This study explored instances of hygiene resources that appeared in ESL classrooms, and revealed who between the experienced teacher and the beginning teacher deployed these resources more frequently. Four English class interactions from two public rural secondary schools were recorded and transcribed. Data were coded using Mackay's taxonomy, and were analyzed using descriptive statistics, interpretations based on observations and interviews, and intensive document examination. Possible factors that lead to such pedagogical decision-making from the teacher-respondents were discussed based on social, cultural, and academic grounds. The findings in this study emphasized the formulation of productive and linguistically developmental alternatives to hygiene resources to ensure that expectations in the English curriculum are successfully met.*

Keywords: Embarrassments, Hygiene Resources, English-As-A-Second-Language Classroom, Experienced Teacher, Beginning Teacher, L2 Learners, Linguistically Developmental Alternatives

INTRODUCTION

In English-as-a-second-language (ESL) classrooms, a literary text usually serves as a jump-start in the discussion of language concepts. Learners are expected to apply a system of language repertoire and analyze patterns when they perform meaning-making in literary and informational texts. With students engaging in interpreting literature, they are, at the same time, taught how to use language effectively. In addition, literary texts serve as instructional materials for learners to acquire reading competencies, and to expose them to the creative uses of language such as its functions as dramatic and figurative devices (de la Cruz, 2011).

This integrative approach in the English language curriculum seems to smudge the line between the ability to fluently interpret and express interpretation, and the mastery of language rules. Students are required to respond to tasks taking full use of their existing grammatical knowledge while making sense of a literary work—'language is a way in – an entrance – to the text' (Vilches, 2011). Consequently, the teacher evaluates a student's oral participation by considering adherence to the rules of syntax and prosody, while assessing interpretation of the text. With this kind of paradigm implemented in an educational setup in which English is, by and large, not the first language, either mastery of language principles or skill in

communicating meaning of literary texts is compromised. With focus on appraising grammar fundamentals in students' oral performance, *affective filter* (Krashen, 1982; 2009) may increase leading to students' passive behavior, thus, discussion of content in a literature lesson may fall short. On the other hand, disregarding the syntactic accuracy of utterances in the classroom in order to pave way for an interactive teacher-student contact may result to a failure in achieving linguistic competence which 'means the acquisition of phonological rules, morphological words, syntactic rules, semantic rules and lexical items' (Philippine K to 12 English Curriculum Guide, 2013). Certainly, mismatch occurs between the level of students' communicative faculty and the educational expectations of the curriculum.

A learner struggling with complicated English subject content is a frequent problem among ESL teachers in language and literature classrooms. Students' inability to understand language topics imposed by the current curriculum may be attributed to their inadequate knowledge and skills in the English language, caused by learner's lack of self-preparation, insufficient pedagogical interventions from the teachers, and/or use of unauthenticated textbooks enforced by school administrators. This failure of students to successfully use the language in communicative situations in the ESL classroom brings about 'embarrassments' (Mackay, 1993) where the L2 learner hesitates to participate in the discussion, communicates incomprehensible oral responses to teacher's questions (Lingle, 2010), and experiences intense fear of making mistakes that could exacerbate cases of repeated silences and undue delay in responses (Garrett & Shortall, 2002). With these students' behaviors towards learning English, the teacher must devise ways to 'rescue' them from embarrassments, and to motivate them to perform in classroom interactions in the assigned and prescribed level (Kasuya, 1999).

In English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) contexts experiencing such mismatch between curriculum expectations and classroom realities, teachers tend to lower the demands of the subject content in order to level the students' existing linguistic repertoire, which eventually leads to failure in fully attaining communicative competence (Hodson, 2010; Lingle, 2010; Kasuya, 1999; Mackay, 1993). This mechanism applied by EFL teachers, which Mackay terms as 'hygiene resources', are ways of limiting occurrences of errors in students' oral responses, and are techniques that simply camouflage substandard performance. In Japan, according to Kasuya, teachers choose textbooks that assign learners to focus on simpler tasks and they also deliberately overlook cognitively demanding communicative activities in order to accomplish teaching objectives within the prescribed time frame approved by the government.

This study seeks to find out if such resources employed, to a frequent degree, by EFL teachers also operate during teacher-student or teacher-class interactions within ESL contexts. Furthermore, I have the assumption that the socio-demographic profile of an ESL teacher affects possible use of hygiene resources as a way of 'cleaning up' embarrassments committed by L2 learners. Generally, I assume that instances of the use of hygiene resources in the teaching of the English subject appear in the ESL context, but, that, an experienced teacher—one who has at least 10 years of career experience, has attained advanced degrees, and has significantly extended professional development investments (Rice, 2010; Carroll & Foster, 2010)—does not extensively practice these hygiene resources; they replace them with productive and linguistically developmental ones. By contrast, a beginning teacher employs hygiene resources to a significantly frequent degree in order to cope with students' embarrassments during discussions.

This study specifically sought to answer the following questions: what student embarrassments occur in the ESL classrooms; what hygiene resources do the teacher-respondents use; who between the experienced teacher and the beginning teacher employs more hygiene resources in dealing with students' embarrassments; what social, cultural, and educational variables rationalize such pedagogical decision-making; and what implications do the findings suggest to the stakeholders in the academe?

Theoretical context

The English language has taken its definitive place as the world's most important international language by most measures, and that in a report published by the British Council, it is expected that an estimate of 2 billion people will learn English at any one time during the next decade (Hammond, 2012). In many parts of the globe, the English language serves its function in social institutions such as the legal courts, trade and industry, and education. As a matter of fact, in most universities, secondary schools and even primary schools, Dearden (2014) confirms that 'there is fast-moving worldwide shift from English being taught as a foreign language (EFL) to English being the medium of instruction (EMI) for academic subjects' (p.2). In an interview made on April 30, 2014 by the British Council, Macaro emphasized that this effort to use English as a second language (ESL) for teaching and learning as well as for language policy decisions in institutions across cultures is motivated by a desire to internationalize academic profile. In this educational setup, students whose native tongue is other than the English language learn English in an ESL classroom facilitated by a teacher who is a native speaker of the target language or whose second language is English as well.

It is within this kind of setup in which a teacher experiences handling students who are reticent in communicating through English. L2 student's 'reticence' (Keaten & Kelly, 2000) in ESL classrooms is caused by fear of appearing foolish and being ridiculed when one provides an inaccurate response, lack of lexicographical knowledge in the target language, and low-level communicative proficiency (Bailey, 1996). Due to reticence, added Li and Liu (2011), students will not or cannot actively participate in class discussions, suffer from mental blocks during spontaneous speaking activities, are less able in identifying and self-correcting errors, and most likely, treat second language learning with a negative attitude. Because of these 'embarrassments' (Mackay, 1993) that students unavoidably commit in the ESL classroom, communicative competence is undermined. Therefore, the teacher is burdened to resolve the problems with urgency without necessarily compromising the smooth flow of the lesson and the time frame allotted for its implementation. One operational solution employed by teachers to clean up classroom embarrassments, as reported by Mackay, is a process he calls 'reduction'—gradually replacing complex tasks with simple ones that students can handle.

Hygiene resources are the techniques used to bring about reduction in the demands of the lesson. This feedback method permits an uninterrupted class work, however, at a level lower than the teacher and the curriculum's expectations. Mackay identified six behaviors leading to embarrassments, along with 12 hygiene resources practiced by teachers to mitigate them.

In 1993, Mackay conducted a study in the Eastern Arctic of Canada where majority of the community including students has Inuktitut (Inuit or Eskimo language) as their mother tongue. He observed classrooms within this community in which the medium of instruction in the basic levels is Inuktitut, until about Grade 4 when the MOI proceeds through a transition phase. From this point, English is used in teaching and learning for all subjects except Inuktitut Culture and

Language. For several weeks, he carried out observations and audiotape recordings of the interactions that occur in classes of Grades 7, 8, and 9 in a secondary school.

The teachers, Mackay finds out, attempt to eliminate classroom embarrassments by employing hygiene resources either singly or in combination. The following is a discussion of each hygiene resource as defined and described by Mackay in his study (1993: pp.36-38).

Reading aloud for the students. The teacher asks a question and then, after a pause, recites the reasoning process that she would like the students to engage in in order to reach the correct answer.

Vicarious dialogue. This refers to question-answer sequences where the teacher both asks and answers the questions in order to reach a desired point swiftly, or to portray a model reasoning process which he/she has failed to elicit from the students.

Academic palliatives. These are short sequences, often no more than a word or a phrase, used by the teacher to utter the academic and scientific equivalent of a correct answer supplied by a student, but expressed in non-academic language. They serve to salve the teacher's conscience for the non-scientific language being employed by the students in their answers.

Substitution. The teacher creates the occasion for the students to substitute a simple task (such as reading correct answers directly from the textbook) for a difficult task (such as composing answers, either orally or in writing, with the textbook closed).

Expansion of minimal responses. This refers to sequences where the teacher accepts a semantically appropriate but formally inappropriate word or short phrase as a response from a student and expands it formally and qualitatively into a more acceptable answer.

Question reduction. Instead of asking a question which requires the student to organize a large number of facts or integrate complex information, the teacher will ask a large number of very simple factual questions requiring a simple 'yes' or 'no' answer, or an answer which contains only one piece of recalled information.

Rapid reading. After having a series of students read aloud from the textbook, often painfully slowly and incomprehensibly, the teacher takes over herself and rapidly reads several paragraphs in order to compensate for the tiny quantity of text covered (badly) up to that point.

Fill-in-the-slot worksheets. Teachers may spend a great deal of time preparing worksheets based on the textbook. The worksheet tasks will usually require the absolute minimum response from the students, such as completing a key sentence by writing one word in the blank space provided.

Verbatim copying. Teachers, after looking at their students' notes, may decide to create notes for the students, write them on the board, and have the students copy them into their workbooks. This way they know that their students' notes are complete and accurate, can be used to answer questions in class, and are useful for review purposes.

Dictation of notes. This is a variation on the previous technique and requires students to listen attentively and to write down exactly what they heard.

Reading aloud. The teacher may have the students read aloud from the textbook in response to a series of questions, thus minimizing the need for students to construct their own responses. Alternatively, the teacher may do the reading aloud in order to have the lesson move at a more acceptable pace.

Oral composition with the whole class. The teacher invites the entire class to offer suggestions from which he/she selects appropriate ones to write on the board to produce a coherent text or story. This replaces the original individual writing task assigned but not carried out by the students.

According to Mackay, the mentioned hygiene resources identified from audiotape recording of classroom interactions as well as observations are actually confirmed by the teachers who used them. He added that all of these hygiene resources have been effective in decreasing instances of embarrassments from the students because these techniques reduce the difficulty level of the lesson; the academic performance and communicative competence of the students in English are, though unnoticed, significantly undermined in effect.

The original study of Mackay in a Canadian Arctic secondary school depicts an EAL—English as an Additional Language—situation in Kennedy's (1986) classification where English as a medium of instruction is used in the teaching and learning of content subjects, predominantly mathematics and science (Hodson, 2010); whereas this study is conducted in two ESL—English as a Second Language—classrooms of two Philippine public high schools where the target language is both the medium of instruction and the subject being taught. Although Mackay's study is initiated in the EAL context, his taxonomy on students' embarrassments and teacher's hygiene resources are considered applicable in the ESL context in which expectations and demands from students in successfully understanding and using the target language is usually high.

In 2010, Hodson applied Mackay's taxonomy to critically examine five teacher-student and teacher-class interactions in a Japanese EFL classroom from which he concluded that:

although it [Mackay's framework] is a useful starting-point for independent teacher reflection and self-development, the wide range of considerations (including the use of teacher talk and issues of pacing) affecting not only teacher response, but also anticipation of classroom embarrassment, along with the complexity of that phenomenon (which may result not simply from student inadequacy, but also from certain teacher decisions, and even from genuine attempts at classroom communication) mean that a wider range of tools is needed for effective analysis of pedagogical decision-making in the EFL classroom (p. 25).

As its main theoretical framework, this study follows the taxonomy of Mackay (1993) where he identifies six student behaviors leading to *embarrassments* and 12 *hygiene resources* deployed by the teacher to prevent them. Since this study is primarily focused on the oral responses of the students and how teachers provide feedback during classroom discussions, the study's data analysis used only four classifications from Mackay's terminologies related to students' embarrassments which include: 1) silence in response to teacher's question; 2) undue delay in response; 3) incomprehensible response; and 4) inarticulate response. The other two categories were not included in the data analysis because these concern students' written responses. Similarly, though Mackay suggested 12 types of hygiene resources that may operate

within teacher-student interaction, this study only incorporated four of them, namely: 1) reasoning aloud for the students; 2) vicarious dialogue; 3) expansion of minimal responses; and 4) question reduction. The other terms were not evident in the data collected, thus, to avoid the involvement of unnecessary categories, I deliberately discounted them in this study.

In 2010, Hodson reformulated Mackay's taxonomy, and he recommended an additional category under the classifications in students' embarrassments and teacher's hygiene resources. He explained that in order to fully investigate the communicative processes that happen within the EFL/ESL classrooms, one must acknowledge the complexity of such environments by considering the multilingualism of learners who aside from English have other language orientations. Therefore, he claimed that *resort to LI* by both the teacher and the students should be considered as a form of a behavior resulting to embarrassment, at the same time, teacher's mechanism to cope with the students' inability to perform at the assigned level. I believe that Hodson's additions to Mackay's framework is useful in the study, hence, his terminology is included in the categorizations and consequently, in the data analysis.

METHODOLOGY

The study used discourse analysis which employs quantitative and qualitative methods of measuring teacher and/or student behaviors from recorded, transcribed, and coded classroom discourse. The coding process applied Mackay's framework where students' embarrassments and teachers' usage of hygiene resources were identified. The data gathered from and subjected to analysis by this research procedure basically focused on the frequency of the specified behaviors that occurred within the two classroom environments. Additionally, observations, interviews and investigation of existing relevant literatures and studies supplemented the quantitative interpretations.

Context, setting, and participants

This study employed the descriptive research design in which data were collected from two teachers of English and their corresponding students in order to identify the frequency of committing embarrassments and hygiene resource usage in the Philippine ESL classes. The sample had been drawn from a predetermined population where information needed in the study was collected at different points in time within completely unchanged classroom environments. I used purposive sampling where respondents were selected based on specific purpose of the study, and my prior knowledge or information of the sample, such as (a) students' academic achievements and performances; (b) their language competence; and (c) teacher-respondents' professional profiles.

Teacher A, male, 34 years old is a Teacher II in a public high school where he handles the English subject in Grade 8. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Secondary Education English and is currently at the thesis writing phase of his master's degree. He has been in the public high school for 10 years where he was able to receive 15 division awards and 7 regional recognitions. His school provided him the opportunity to participate in 4 international seminars, 2 national seminars, and 7 regional trainings, since 2010. Taking into account teacher A's professional profile, he is considered as an *experienced teacher* in the context of this study.

Teaching for almost 6 months in a secondary public school as Instructor 1 is Teacher B, female, 24 years old. She teaches English subjects in Grades 7 and 8. She is a graduate of Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education English. Since 2014, she was able to attend 2 national seminars and a regional training. Teacher B is classified in this study as a *beginning teacher* since her profile meets the descriptions of this category.

Since both teachers A and B handle Grade 8 classes, students under this grade level served as the participants in the study. The two classes belong to the highest section with 30 students each, however the difference of the two sections lies in the number of males and females. In the case of Teacher A's Grade 10 section, there are 12 boys and 18 girls, while 14 boys and 16 girls comprise the class of Teacher B.

To obtain the necessary information for this study, questionnaire (socio-demographic profile), audio-video (AV) recording, informal interview guide were employed. These instruments were useful in providing answers to the problems specified in this study. The socio-demographic profile elicited information from the teacher-respondents which include position in the school, highest educational attainment, length of teaching experience, number of publications (print or online), trainings or seminars attended, and awards or recognitions received. On the other hand, the AV recording documented the teacher-student and teacher-class interactions in the two ESL classrooms for two consecutive sessions each, which were eventually translated into a total of four interactional transcriptions.

Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to data collection, I obtained permission to conduct the study from the principals of the selected secondary public schools. Upon the approval, each teacher-respondent together with his/her immediate supervisor was briefed on the objectives of the study as well as how data collection will be carried out. During this meeting, each teacher-respondent was given the socio-demographic profile to fill out; they were asked to submit the accomplished form on the last day of class observation. I was then introduced to the Grade 8 class handled by each teacher respondent. I assured the sample that their identity, including the actual AV recording of the class discussions in which they participated shall remain strictly confidential. I observed the class for four consecutive one-hour meetings but only performed AV recording of the teacher-student and teacher-class interactions in the last two sessions through the Apple Ipad Air® video recorder application. Since I intended to capture the natural, spontaneous communication that occurred in the ESL classrooms, this scheme was employed which allowed the students to get used to the presence of an outsider within the perimeters of their classroom, in effect, lessening tendencies of hesitancy to participate in discussions or being unusually participative during activities that require students' response. This was an attempt to undermine the "Hawthorne Effect" coined and defined by Landsberger in 1958 (as cited in Levitt & List, 2009).

Data Analysis

The AV recordings gathered from the two classroom sessions of each teacher-respondent were transcribed in Microsoft Word® following the conventions on communication transcription provided by Kuckartz, et al. in 2008. This system was adopted because it includes a deliberately simple and quickly attainable transcription system that considerably smoothens speech and sets the focus on content. The transcription was then labeled based on the taxonomy provided by

Mackay (1993). Tables that show students' embarrassments and teachers' hygiene resources with corresponding extracts from the transcriptions were constructed for reference of the categorization made. Descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages were used to determine occurrences of embarrassments and hygiene resources from the transcribed interactions. After examining the transcriptions, I scheduled a one-hour interview session with each teacher-respondent. The meetings were set on the basis of respondents' availability. They were asked about the underlying reasons behind the manner by which they orally responded to the students' behavior during class discussions, and linked these reasons to their theoretical and pedagogical underpinnings. Furthermore, relevant literatures and researches were examined to provide auxiliary substantiation to the interpretations of the results. These tools and procedures facilitated the analysis of the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Student behaviors that lead to embarrassments

Table 1 shows the embarrassments experienced by the Grade 8 students of Teacher A and Teacher B during the first day of observation. In both groups, more than 50% of the oral responses were behaviors that lead to embarrassment.

Table 1: Students' Embarrassments in the First Session

Embarrassment-producing Behaviors	CA (TSR=86)		CB (TSR=71)	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Silence in response to teacher's question	7	8%	14	20%
Undue delay in response	15	17%	5	7%
Incomprehensible response	2	2%	3	4%
Inarticulate response	6	7%	6	8%
Resort to L1	15	17%	13	18%
Total	45	52%	41	58%

Note. CA=Teacher A's Class; CB=Teacher B's Class; TSR=Total Number of Students' Oral Responses.

For Teacher A's class, the students usually took long pauses before giving their answers to questions, and also resorted to their first language—*Iloco*—when unable to communicate in the L2 which may be attributed to the teacher's filling in of stopgaps by the recurrent use of *Iloco* expressions such as '*Aya?*' ('Right?'), '*Di ngamin?*' ('Isn't it?'), and '*Ana?*' ('What?' or 'Pardon?'), that he extensively used to clarify or confirm responses as well during the discussion. Sample 1 shows instances in the teacher's utterances in which these expressions were used.

- (1) Teacher A's First Recorded Session. Context: During-reading activity where students are assigned to read and explain the paragraph that appears from the slide presentation before proceeding to the next part of the short story.

1 T: Okay, so what is the first paragraph all about? Let's have S20. What can you
 2 understand from this, paragraph-- first paragraph?
 3 S20: (...) You can s-- see other people. Delay
 ISSN 205: 4 T: You can see other people? *Ha?* Really?
 5 S20: (...) You can even notice them. Delay
 6 T: You're just reading S20 *aya*. What's your idea about this one? What can you
 7 understand? *Aya?* From this paragraph? 2.Reduction

Students may have thought that since the teacher incorporated *Iloco* expressions in his utterances, they too, can speak in L1 when assigned to perform a task. However, when the response was expressed in *Iloco*, the teacher infrequently required the student to translate the answer in English. Therefore, in Teacher A's English class, resort to L1 by the students was permissible, but with limitations that were subject to the teacher's decision. The following sample illustrates how Teacher A enforced the use of English to his students in the discussion, specifically in lines 3 to 6 where Teacher A encouraged S14 to state the answer in the L2.

(2) Teacher A's First Recorded Session. Context: Vocabulary building where Teacher A asks the students to give the meaning of a difficult term used in a sentence.

- 1 T: So, S13, if you are bored in my class, you are preoccupied? Ah?
 2 Do you agree? (.) Anyone?
 3 S14: Mabalin Ilocano sir? Resort to L1 *Can I speak in Ilocano sir?*
 4 T: Ah?
 5 S14: *Ilocano/*
 6 T: *Ilocano? Ala*, please speak in English. S15?
 7 S15: Busy.
 8 T: Busy *kanu*. Okay, let's find out if S15 is correct. Will you read the meaning S16.
 9 S16: "Dominate or engross the mind of someone to the exclusion of other thoughts."
 10 T: So basically you're busy when you're preoccupied right? (.) You are thinking of
 11 something *aya*? (.) You're thinking of something in which you become
 12 unmindful of the other things that is happening around you. Reasoning

Due to lack of vocabulary in the L2, Teacher A's students usually conveyed their answers in *Iloco*; though at certain points in the discussion, the teacher required them to speak in English, there were more instances when the students were allowed to code-switch. This kind of communication in Teacher A's class also appeared in Teacher B's, however, as exhibited in line 4 to 13 of Sample 3, she was more tolerant in accepting responses expressed in the L1, because she did not demand for translation of the answers nor ask students, who code-switch, to speak in English.

(3) Teacher B's First Recorded Session. Context: The teacher, in the post-reading discussion, asks the students what the meaning of the third stanza in the poem is.

- 1 T: Yes, S3? What are you trying to tell us?
 2 S3: (silence) Silence
 3 T: Oh, I'll get back to you. S13.
 4 S13: Tay "a traveler between life and death" ma'am ket, kaslang tay,
 5 he will be there for her in life and death, tapos, kaslang, diay "the reason

Teacher B emphasized:

If I do not allow my students to orally express their answers in our native language, I'm afraid that no communication might happen inside the class during discussions. Besides, our school does not impose an English Only Policy, so, we're allowed to speak in the mother tongue. Even, we, English teachers sometimes speak in Iloco when delivering our lessons, especially when it's already difficult for our students to understand the concept. I guess, it's a part of helping our students learn.

In a survey on code-switching participated in by 15 bilingual students, Bista (2010) found out that the students looked for equivalence between terms in the L1 and L2, in that, they had high tendencies of performing word-for-word translation. She added that when her respondents failed in establishing equivalence, they opted to use the L1—a language phenomenon that also probably happened in Teacher A's class.

On the other hand, most students under Teacher B, who were assigned to answer a question, remained silent and reticent to respond to the task. The researcher observed that Teacher B provided very insufficient wait time between asking a question and assigning a student to answer, which may have discouraged a student to respond accordingly.

(4) Teacher B's First Recorded Session. Context: The teacher, in the post-reading discussion, asks the students what the meaning of the second stanza in the poem is.

- 1 T: S13 said, the first stanza is about the first meeting, what about the second stanza?
 2 (...) Yes, S3.
 3 S3: (silence) → Silence
 4 T: (...) When you talk, that's when YOU interact or communicate with someone
 5 else and (that's how?) YOU (.) get to know. Yes, getting to know (...) Getting to
 6 know each other. → Reasoning And (.) what did he find out?
 7 S13: Diay (record?) na ma'am ket haan nga/=
 8 T: Please stand up, S13, stand=
 9 S13: Tav sweet records ken sweet promises ket tav kaslang (.)awan pay bad nga
 10 naaramid na ma'am= → Resort to L1
 11 T: Okay, RECORDS. These are the (.) things about the person, right? What else?
 12 S21. I know there's something playing inside your mind.
 13 S21: (silence) → Silence
 14 T: Oh, common, stand up.
 15 S21: (silence) → Silence
 16 S3: communicate and interact=
 17 T: Oh, S3, you were saying communicate, interact (.) What else? (.) So, what do

In the interview, Teacher B stated:

Our lesson plan is time-bound. Meaning, we have to complete the objectives on time, if not, we have to make adjustments in the succeeding lessons, and that's not an easy process. If the student can't provide the answer, then, we simply have to give it. I have no choice. I have to finish my lesson.

In 2013, Ferlazzo affirmed that the quality and quantity of student responses increase when wait time is expanded to between three and seven seconds. In addition, he stated that adequate wait time should also be taken into account after a response had been conveyed by a student; this allows other students to assess the previous answer and possibly build up on it.

The frequency of embarrassment-producing behaviors that appeared in both classes during the second session was presented in Table 2. Similar to the results in the first session, approximately 50% of the students' responses were associated with behaviors causing embarrassments. Likewise, in both classes, students extensively provided inarticulate responses to questions asked by the teachers, gaining 12 frequency counts (12%) out of 47 (48%) embarrassment-producing behaviors in Class A, while out of 41 (54%) classifications under embarrassments, 15 (20%) cases of the fourth category occurred in Class B. These answers of the students were expressed in L2 but were interrupted by some grammatical errors and largely by the recurrent use of gap fillers or filler sounds and unnecessary discourse markers.

These hesitation devices, according to Rieger (2003), occur when L2 students are placed in a position in which there is a lack of L2 words to use or when they plan their next utterance. He added that even native speakers of English deploy fillers when they speak.

Table 2: Students' Embarrassments in the Second Session

Embarrassment-producing Behaviors	CA (TSR=98)		CB (TSR=76)	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Silence in response to teacher's question	7	7%	12	16%
Undue delay in response	8	8%	8	11%

Incomprehensible response	4	4%	3	4%
Inarticulate response	12	12%	15	20%
Resort to L1	16	16%	3	4%
Total	47	48%	41	54%

Note. CA=Teacher A's Class; CB=Teacher B's Class; TSR=Total Number of Students' Oral Responses.

Samples 5 and 6 cite occasions in the discussion phase where students excessively employ hesitation devices that, in effect, make their responses incoherent, thus, incomprehensible.

- (5) Teacher A's Second Recorded Session. Context: Students need to describe the characters in the short story based on the details presented by the narrator.

1 T: Okay she's sad according to S13. Are you sure? Initially, she was expressionless
 2 right? She doesn't have any facial expression, blank face, it said there, and then,
 3 afterwards, okay (.) she was seen (.) crying. Expansion Then the last one?
 4 The pabebe girl. Le@t's have (.) S3.
 5 S3: (...) She is, ah, a pabebe girl. Delay uhm, she's wear short (.) SHORTS,
 6 and have, aha chit-chat with her iphone, and, uhm, she's very noisy. Inarticulate
 7 T: Okay, she's wearing clothes that are not too decent, aya, and the way that she
 8 talks over the phone is very inconsiderate because she talks too loud. Expansion
 9 Now, based on the descriptions S3, aya, do you think that, ah, the particular
 10 passenger is a fine woman? Ha? ? Reduction
 11 S3: No.
 12 T: Why?
 13 S3: (...) she is, ah, she's ah, uhm, a simple woman=. Delay; Inarticulate
 14 T: She's a simple woman, what do you mean?
 15 S3: Naarte sir=. Resort to L1
 16 T: Naarte kanu. What else? What did she do inside the train? Will you comment
 17 on her manner of talking inside the train? ? Reduction

- (6) Teacher B's Second Recorded Session. Context: After reading the text, the teacher posts several comprehension questions, which the students need to respond to.

1 T: Let's talk about our story for today, the title is (...) A Story of a Saint. Okay (...)
 2 What problem was (Pochemphelli?) facing in 1951? What problem?=Yes S8.
 3 S8: (...) Some people, ah, of Pochem--Pochemphelli, uhm, have lands, but the
 4 peasants do not have. Inarticulate
 5 T: Okay, do not have land, okay. What else? What problem (.) in 1951=YES?
 6 S9: Uhm, people are getting sick.=
 7 T: People are getting sick, because of?=
 8 Sts: HUNGER (.) hunger//
 9 T: //Hunger// Okay, what else? (...) Aside from, they're getting sick=the people,
 10 have no land, yes, ah=
 11 S10: They're hungry and landless=
 12 T: OKAY, the people are hungry, at the same time, they are (.) LANDLESS. Okay)
 13 (...) LANDLESS. They have nothing to eat, AND, they have (.) no land to//
 14 Sts: //till//=
 15 farming//
 16 //plant//

Khojastehrad (2012) maintained that these hesitation devices do not simply ‘signal the speaker’s under-construction-utterance’ but aid in building efficient communication. However, in the case of the ESL classes handled by the teacher-respondents, these devices not only resulted to failure in fluently communicating ideas but also to the obstruction of meaning.

Erten (2014) proposed that since hesitation occurs to the L2 students more frequently than the native speakers of English, they should be given more time to plan their speech; this, the two teacher-respondents in this study fall short of.

Hygiene resources that operate in the ESL Classroom

In this study, Teacher A is recognized as an *experienced teacher* while Teacher B is classified as a *beginning teacher*—this categorization was completely based on their socio-demographic profile. The researcher presupposed that Teacher B will utilize Mackay’s framework more frequently than Teacher A, however, Table 3 disapproves this earlier assumption.

Table 3 reveals that, during the first session, Teacher A employed hygiene resources more extensively, yielding 50 frequency counts (54%), than Teacher B who only obtained 15 (23%). This significant difference between the frequency distribution of the teacher-respondents’ hygiene resource usage may be attributed to the idealism often associated to beginning teachers.

Mudzingwa and Magudu (2013) claim that teachers who enter the profession have high pre-formed expectations about the education system, whereas those teachers who have been in the service for a considerable length of years, as stated by Callaghan (2002), have lowered their standards to cope with the realities and challenges within the system.

This irony, one way or another, explains Teacher B’s low frequency of hygiene resource usage. Most likely, she maintained her high expectations towards her students in the discussion, and was not confident enough to reduce the complexity level of the lesson to better address students’ embarrassments.

Table 3: Teacher’s Use of Hygiene Resources in the First Session

Hygiene Resources	TA (TTR=92)	TB (TTR=65)
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	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Reasoning aloud for the students	13	14%	4	6%
Vicarious dialogue	14	15%	0	0%
Expansion of minimal responses	9	10%	2	3%
Question reduction	10	11%	5	8%
Resort to L1 or L2	4	4%	4	6%
Total	50	54%	15	23%

Note. TA=Teacher A; TB=Teacher B; TTR=Total Number of Teacher's Oral Responses.

Even so, Teacher B did not attempt to deploy alternative techniques that would help students understand the language tasks, although, most of them produced embarrassment-producing behaviors. Her inadequate pedagogical decision-making may be due to her inexperience in the teaching profession.

Teacher B disclosed in the interview that the learning competencies in the English curriculum should be adhered to accordingly since these were informed by linguistic perspectives. She added that when teachers deviate from these prescribed objectives and competencies as a means of acknowledging the level of the students, meaningful learning will not take place.

By contrast, Teacher A's oral feedback (*see Table 3*) was nearly entirely hygiene resources; he needed to reduce the questions into a yes-no or short objective questions and provided explanations to the questions he raised whenever his students missed out on the expected answers, so that the class could complete the lesson within the prescribed time frame.

This dissimilarity in instructional practice manifested by the teacher-respondents is illustrated by samples 7 and 8 in which Teacher A almost invariably employs hygiene resources whereas Teacher B attempts to strictly abide by her curriculum-based lesson plan, letting students find their own ways through the tasks.

- (7) Teacher A's First Recorded Session. Context: Pre-reading activity where the teacher motivates the students to participate in the discussion by sharing their personal experiences.

- 1 T: So, when you are inside the bus S2, do you usually(.) talk to the other
2 passengers?
3 S2: Sometimes(.) sometimes.
4 T: Okay, so definitely you don't have the nerve, right, the courage rather in having
5 conversation to the other passengers there. Inarticulate Ah, how about S3, do
6 you love taking the bus or riding on a bus?
7 S3: No sir.
8 T: No? Why?
9 S3: Maka, makapaulaw (laughs). Resort to L1
10 T: *Makapa@ulaw?* Are you sure?
11 S3: Yes sir.
12 T: I think it's makapaulaw. It makes you dizzy most especially if the bus is
13 airconditioned, di ba? But if it is an ordinary bus, then definitely, I think
14 everything will just be okay. Right? Reasoning Okay, NOW, so, this
15 afternoon, you are going to read an article *aya* that has something to do with the
16 public transport, *aya*? BUT, it's not about a bus (...) Though we don't have this
17 thing in Ilocos, well, it is only in (...) Manila, *di ba*? Okay, so, the title of the
18 article that we are going to read is?

- 24 T: What is MRT? What does MRT stand for? (.) → ? Reduction Yes, may we
25 have S7?
26 S7: Metrorail Transit sir.
27 T: Okay, Metrorail Transit, so what is that S5? Anything in mind?
28 S5: Pagluganan! → Resort to L1
29 T: Ah?
30 S5: Train.
31 T: Ah? (...) Oh, there's a picture there. Who use it? What is it for? → ? Reduction
32 DESCRIBE.=
33 S5: Ket pagluganan, train met talaga. → Resort to L1
34 T: Okay, but explain further. Anyone? What is MRT?
35 (...) Or why do we have MRT? → ? Reduction

(8) Teacher B's First Recorded Session. Context: Pre-reading activity where the teacher motivates the students to participate in the discussion by sharing their personal experiences.

- 1 T: This is a question for the gentlemen, okay (...) this question is addressed to all
2 the gentlemen, uhm, I'm curious, how do you describe your ideal woman? If you
3 have a (picture?) of your ideal woman right now? (.) Okay, S1.
4 S1: (silence) → Silence
5 T: Yes, S1?
6 S1: (silence) → Silence
7 T: How do you describe your ideal woman? Or (.) the characteristics or (.) the
8 qualities of the woman you wanted to be WITH for the rest of your life?

9 S1: Kind=
10 T: Come again?
11 S1: Kind ma'am=
12 T: Okay, you want to be with a KIND woman. Probably, someone who is helpful to
13 others, right? Or someone who loves kids, maybe? → Expansion Yes, S1?
14 S1: Yes ma'am.
15 T: Okay, how about you (.) Mr. S2?
16 S2: (silence) → Silence
17 T: YES S2?
18 S2: I would like to have, uhm, someone who is, ah, brain-- intelligent. → Inarticulate
19 T: OH, so you want a woman who is intelligent?=Someone like you? Okay, how
20 about S3?
21 S3: Apay ma'am? (.) Kasla kenka. → Resort to L1
22 T: What are the qualities of your ideal woman? What should your ideal woman
23 possess? When we say, POSSESS, it may be a physical appearance, or (.) OR
24 something about her attitude, her interests, even her weaknesses, you may
25 include.
26 S3: (.) Uhm, I want to be with a woman who is intelligent.

Table 4: Teacher's Use of Hygiene Resources in the Second Session

Hygiene Resources	TA (TTR=74)		TB (TTR=90)	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Reasoning aloud for the students	8	11%	9	10%
Vicarious dialogue	3	4%	0	0%
Expansion of minimal responses	5	7%	3	3%
Question reduction	6	8%	3	3%
Resort to L1 or L2	8	11%	3	3%
Total	30	41%	18	20%

Note. TA=Teacher A; TB=Teacher B; TTR=Total Number of Teacher's Oral Responses.

As exhibited in Table 4, the employment of hygiene resources by Teacher A and Teacher B decreased in the second session—from 54% to 41% for Teacher A, and from 23% to 20% for Teacher B. Though there was an attempt by Teacher A to lessen the reduction of tasks, his use of hygiene resources is still considerably high, which could be contributory to students' failure in achieving communicative competence.

Teacher A, being an experienced teacher, is loaded with numerous teaching assignments such as being an adviser in academic and interest clubs, consultant in the school's official publication, and coach of campus journalists. His instructional planning and implementation is usually compromised by these functions, therefore, Teacher A needed to accomplish as many lessons as he could within limited time frame. Certainly, the L2 students' inability to perform at the level demanded by the lesson hinders this objective of the teacher, thus, the use of hygiene resources, primarily as a mechanism to cope with the time pressure, and to make it appear that the expectations of the curriculum are met since all the topics in the subject were fully (though unsatisfactorily) covered.

Teacher A commented:

I believe that teachers should be a part in the textbook planning and construction, because we know what the students need. We are the ones who work with them, so, we naturally know what practices are best suitable for them to learn in the most meaningful way. The textbooks that we have require too many and too demanding tasks that they seem to lack focus in terms of content. That's why we devise our own solutions to our

existing problems. Yes, there are so many issues to address in the real setting, and these calls for collaborative effort.

Implications for the Stakeholders in the teaching-learning process

The results of this study contribute to various stakeholders concerned with addressing the problems which instigated the conduct of this research undertaking. This study provides data that show occurrences of the use of hygiene resources by teachers of English in two ESL classrooms in order to clean up L2 students' inability to successfully communicate in the target language, and to perform in a level prescribed by the English language curriculum. It incites prospective and needed interventions from the education sector to ameliorate students' academic performance in the English subject by developing task-appropriate language skills where hygiene resources are replaced by comprehensive alternatives that allow students to achieve communicative competence in English. The continued extensive use of hygiene resources, according to Mackay, restricts opportunities for productive learning of the 'inner language' (Willis, 1987)—English—and fossilizes student inadequacy in applying its pragmatic functions. Lingle (2010) concludes that the practice of deploying hygiene resources causes potential negative consequences in the long-term, thus, should be considered as a serious issue in the language curriculum of any country.

The authority of administrators and curriculum developers over language policy and planning is recognized by this study. They will be guided on what specific features in the language curriculum need revisiting and amendments to prevent Mackay's 'reductions' in ESL classrooms, and to support teachers of the English subject to improve the communicative performance of L2 students. The government, as suggested by Kasuya (1999), should thoroughly reexamine concerned areas in the educational system such as level of competencies in the English curriculum, authorized instructional materials (textbooks), teacher training efforts, and teaching approaches to interfacing language and literature in a lesson, that serve as causal variables in the recurrent use of hygiene resources.

This study opens up a process of self-reflection for teachers. Lazaraton and Ishihara (2005) suggest that close examination of classroom discourse recorded precisely as it happens enables teachers to understand interaction in their own classrooms, and to maximize learning opportunities. McGarry (2004) stated that the method employed by the teacher as a way of responding to the students is essential in facilitating a smooth flow in the learning process; however, teachers should also realize that instead of using hygiene resources to avoid committing of error and embarrassments in the classroom discussion, students should have the opportunity to self-correct. Studies conducted by Mackey (2006), Chandler (2003), and Ferris and Roberts (2001) recommend classroom procedures that primarily aim at improving the ability among students to identify the nature of their errors by themselves or pointed out to them indirectly, thus, students' achievement of communicative competence will not be compromised, rather reinforced.

ESL teachers, including those who do not handle English subjects, should realize that the classroom environment—from which they build up educational expectations—presented in the policy is not always representative of the classroom environment that they encounter in real-life practice (Lingle, 2010). This awareness directs teachers towards valuable solutions that can address students' embarrassments without reducing the standard of the subject matter.

Students are the main beneficiaries of the contributions of this study in the field, since possible amendments in the curriculum which comprise textbook revisions and teacher's engagement in task-based approaches to delivering English lessons, directly affect their learning and academic success. In addition, parents should be exposed to classroom realities of which they may not have clear, authentic representation. This study stimulates their interest in the enhancement of the curriculum, in effect, encouraging their support to the various academic programs implemented by the government.

CONCLUSION

Findings of the study reveal that hygiene resources are employed by the teacher-respondents in order to avoid cases of embarrassments among their L2 students. These resources reduce the level of difficulty of the task at hand in order to suit the learners' level of competence in the use of the second language. Although this method ensures the completion of lessons within the curriculum-prescribed time frame, previous studies disapprove the extensive and frequent use of such reduction, especially if the primary goal of the language curriculum is to attain communicative competence in the L2—English. Moreover, students whose teachers rely heavily on the employment of hygiene resources have greater tendency of losing motivation to learn the target language and makes them dependent on the teacher's inputs during discussions rather than engaging themselves in communicative activities.

Furthermore, the experienced teacher (Teacher A) resorts, with a significant degree of frequency, to hygiene resources during the discussion phase of the lesson. The researcher presumed that the experienced teacher, having sufficient knowledge on how to effectively carry out the objectives of the curriculum, would replace hygiene resources with more comprehensive alternatives that encourage L2 students to use the target language so that the expectations could be met and the competencies of the English curriculum would be acquired by the students. The study presents other reasons and factors—insufficient wait time, pressure to meet the time frame, preoccupation with teaching assignments other than instruction, lack of training in classroom management—to rationalize the use of hygiene resources by the two teacher-respondents.

The researcher finds it alarming that the teacher-respondents who come from two of the most competitive public high schools in the northern region of the Philippines employ techniques that could possibly imperil the quality of education. If instances of embarrassments and the deployment of hygiene resources occur in these ESL classrooms, then, there is a probability that this phenomenon happens in other countries with similar English language curricular skeleton and educational outline. Therefore, awareness of Mackay's framework is an essential starting point for a process of reflection in English language policy and planning, as well as in teacher's role of bridging the curriculum objectives to the L2 students in the most effective, relevant and engaging way.

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