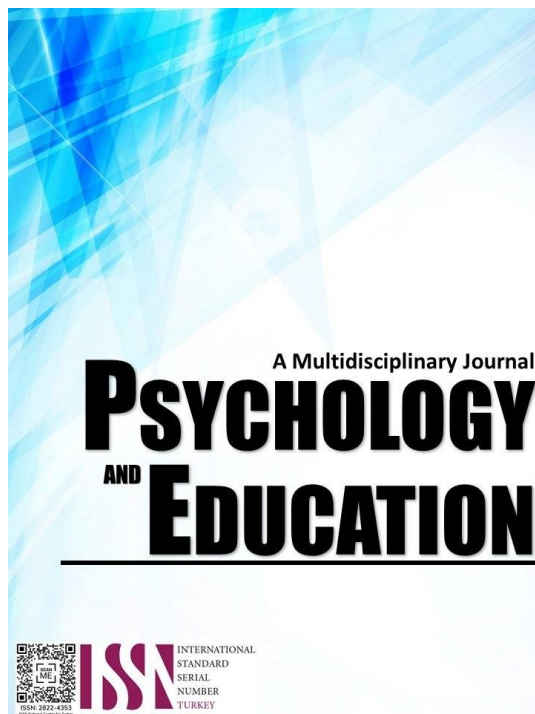


# TRAVERSING THE LIFEWORLD IN LANGUAGE IN EMI COURSES: THE LENS OF SENIOR HIGH STUDENTS



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## Traversing the Lifeworld in Language in EMI Courses: The Lens of Senior High Students

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### Abstract

Traversing the complexities of learning in a second language, senior high school students face unique challenges that shape their educational journey. This study dives into their stories, shedding light on their struggles and triumphs. This study explores the experiences of senior high school students in English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) courses, focusing on their daily lives and personal contexts. The research was conducted among senior high HUMSS students at Upper Katungal National High School in Tacurong City to understand how students navigate their academic and social environments while learning English. Using a transcendental phenomenological research design, the study collected comprehensive data through interviews, questionnaires, and thematic data analysis. The findings revealed seventeen significant emerging themes: emotional distress, language proficiency challenges, socio-economic factors, support strategies, and resilience. These themes highlight students' multifaceted challenges and determination to overcome them. The study underscores the need for targeted support and interventions to help students enhance their language skills and succeed in EMI courses. By understanding the students' experiences, educators can create more effective learning environments that address academic and emotional needs, ultimately fostering better educational outcomes.

**Keywords:** second language, unique challenges, English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), lifeworld

### Introduction

Stepping into the vibrant classrooms of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) courses in public high schools revealed a rich tapestry of experiences that students brought to their educational journey. As they navigated the intricate intersection of language and content mastery, the challenges and triumphs they encountered in EMI courses became evident.

Globally, English had evolved into a lingua franca, facilitating communication and collaboration across diverse cultures and disciplines (Crystal, 2014). EMI courses were increasingly recognized as vital tools for accessing global information and academic resources. These courses aligned with international trends towards modernization in education, preparing students to engage in a globalized world (Galloway & Rose, 2021).

In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented several initiatives to strengthen bilingual education, emphasizing the development of competence in both Filipino and English across all levels of education (DepEd, 1987). The use of both languages as media of instruction was a key policy aimed at ensuring students were equipped with the necessary language skills. Despite the structured policies and initiatives, challenges remained, particularly in terms of language proficiency and academic performance in EMI courses. Recent interviews with teachers at Upper Katungal National High School (UKNHS) revealed several challenges, including negative attitudes toward English, perceiving it as difficult, and vulnerability to language challenges, particularly in oral presentations (Taylor et al., 2021). These difficulties were compounded by glossophobia (fear of public speaking), low academic scores, and overall demotivation, which hindered student engagement and success (Brown & Lee, 2019; Yang, 2020; Jones & Brown, 2021).

The urgency of addressing these challenges was underscored by the 2024 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results, where Filipino students ranked 77th out of 79 countries in reading literacy. This ranking indicated significant issues in language education and the pressing need for intervention (OECD, 2024). In response, DepEd introduced the MATATAG Curriculum, designed to decongest basic education competencies and improve overall learner performance. The curriculum focused on producing job-ready, active, and responsible citizens while supporting teachers in delivering quality education (DepEd, 2024).

At UKNHS, these national challenges were mirrored in the local context, making the school an ideal setting for this study. The institution actively engaged in implementing DepEd's policies but continued to face significant difficulties with EMI. The school's curriculum integrated practical English applications, ensuring that students not only learned English as an academic subject but also used it as a tool for effective communication. This alignment with the study's focus made UKNHS an appropriate site for examining students' experiences and aspirations within the EMI framework.

A notable gap existed in the literature regarding the understanding of students' lifeworlds within the context of EMI courses. While previous research had explored various aspects of EMI, such as student perceptions and teacher practices, there had been limited exploration of students' lived experiences and how they perceived their future within the EMI framework (Baker & Wright, 2017; Macaro, 2018). This study sought to address this gap by conducting an empirical investigation into the experiences of Senior High School students in language-focused EMI courses.

Understanding students' lifeworlds in EMI courses is crucial for shaping the future of education in the Philippines. Through rigorous

research and analysis, this study aimed to inform transformative educational practices that prioritized student well-being, academic excellence, and global citizenship. By examining these lifeworlds, educators and policymakers could gain deeper insights into the effectiveness of current educational strategies and identify areas for improvement. This research also aimed to empower students by amplifying their voices and advocating for educational reforms that supported their holistic development.

Ultimately, this study explored various dimensions of students' experiences in EMI courses, with significant implications for language teaching practices and students' self-perception within the EMI context. By addressing challenges, and fostering a supportive learning environment, language teachers could help students become proficient English speakers, critical thinkers, and globally competent citizens. Aligning language teaching approaches with students' realities and aspirations within the EMI framework was essential for enhancing educational outcomes and preparing students for success in an increasingly interconnected world.

## Research Questions

This study described the lifeworld in EMI Courses of senior high students at Upper Katungal National High School, Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat. It answered the following questions:

1. What is the lifeworld in language in EMI courses of senior high students?
2. What are the contexts of the lifeworld of senior high students in language in EMI courses?
3. How do senior high students enrolled in EMI courses view themselves in the future?

## Methodology

### Research Design

This study utilized a Transcendental Phenomenological research design, a qualitative approach that was ideal for exploring and understanding the lived experiences of students in EMI courses at Upper Katungal National High School (UKNHS). Phenomenology, as described by Brinkmann (2018) and Moustakas (1994), aimed to describe experiences as they were freshly and purely encountered, making it well-suited for capturing the essence of students' experiences without external biases.

The descriptive method employed in this study sought to elucidate and comprehend the sensations experienced by the participants. Through criterion sampling, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and documentation, the researcher gathered rich, detailed accounts of students' experiences in EMI courses (Morley et al., 2017). This approach allowed students to narrate their stories, providing a deep understanding of how they perceived and navigated the challenges of learning in a second language.

This design effectively addressed the phenomenon of the students' lifeworld by focusing on their personal experiences. It captured the complexities of their interactions with EMI within the curriculum, revealing how they perceived their present challenges and future opportunities. The study's focus on understanding key themes through personal reports ensured that the findings were grounded in the students' authentic experiences (Zimmerman, 2013; Bandura, 2018).

Thus, Transcendental Phenomenological design was crucial for this study as it provided a comprehensive framework for exploring the students' lived experiences in EMI courses, uncovering the deeper meanings and implications of learning in a non-native language, and offering valuable insights into their educational journey (Brinkmann, 2018; Moustakas, 1994).

### Participants

The participants of this study were the Senior High School students of Upper Katungal National High School (UKNHS) in Tacurong City, Sultan Kudarat. The six teachers who were teaching courses using EMI in the Grades 11 and 12 Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) strand during the 2nd Semester of the School Year 2023-2024 played a crucial role as key informants in the study. Their participation in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) was instrumental in providing valuable insights, perspectives, and contextual understanding of the educational setting, which greatly contributed to the research's depth and validity (Creswell, 2013; Morgan, 1996). These teachers not only offered critical feedback on the study design, data collection methods, and interpretation of findings but also helped the researcher gain a deeper understanding of the students' experiences, challenges, and needs within the classroom environment (Krueger & Casey, 2015; Miles et al., 2014; Stewart et al., 2007).

The selection of student participants was guided by purposeful sampling, based on specific inclusion criteria established by the researcher. This method ensured that participants who were most likely to provide relevant and valuable information were chosen (Kelly, 2010). Purposeful sampling is particularly effective in identifying cases that maximize the use of limited research resources (Palinkas et al., 2015). The students selected for the study were required to be officially enrolled in the School Year 2023-2024, taking EMI courses, aged between 16 to 20 years old, and possessing grades between 75 and 85.

Additionally, these students needed to demonstrate challenges in the English language and enrolled in the subjects Reading and Writing Skills, Statistics and Probability, Introduction to the Philosophy of the Human Person, Physical Education and Health 2, Earth and Life Science, Practical Research 1, Creative Nonfiction: The Literary Essay, Disciplines, and Ideas in the Applied Social Sciences, Physical Education and Health 4, Empowerment Technologies (ETech): ICT for Professional Tracks Research Project, Entrepreneurship, Inquiries, Investigation and Immersion, Trends, Networks and Critical Thinking in the 21st Century Culture, Community Engagement,

Solidarity and Citizenship, Work Immersion, an EMI courses offered in the SHS 2nd semester, school year 2023-2024. They also needed to be willing to share their experiences in EMI courses and be capable of speaking English, Filipino, and their mother tongue. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and students were required to provide their consent.

Furthermore, the inclusion criteria for teachers as key informants were based on their active involvement in teaching EMI courses within the HUMSS strand during the relevant school year. These teachers were selected for their ability to provide critical insights into the classroom dynamics, student performance, and the effectiveness of EMI as a teaching strategy. Their expertise and direct interaction with students made them invaluable contributors to the research.

This approach allowed the researcher to closely monitor and analyze the participants' experiences in EMI courses. It was observed that during the first quarter, over 88% of the students had initial marks below 80, highlighting the significant challenges they faced and underscoring the importance of this study in understanding and addressing these issues.

## Instrument

According to Patton (2015), qualitative surveys provide a valuable method for collecting rich, nuanced data from participants, allowing researchers to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences and perspectives. Patton (2015) highlights that questionnaires can effectively gather detailed narrative data to explore participants' experiences, perceptions, and beliefs in depth. In this study, the researcher employed semi-structured interviews as the primary data collection method. Semi-structured interviews offer a balance between flexibility and systematic inquiry, enabling the exploration of diverse perspectives while ensuring that key topics related to the research objectives are consistently addressed (Fontana & Frey, 2005).

The interview questions were carefully developed by the researcher and underwent a content validity process to ensure their relevance and accuracy. The initial draft of the questions was reviewed by the researcher's adviser, after which the questions were validated by a panel of experts, including an Instructor I, a Master Teacher II, and a Teacher III. These validators were selected based on their expertise in education and their familiarity with the subject matter, ensuring that the questions were appropriate for the study's context and objectives.

During the data collection process, audio recordings of the one-on-one interviews were made with the participants' consent. The researcher assured the participants that these recordings would remain confidential and would only be used for transcription and verification purposes. Additionally, the researcher utilized several supporting instruments, including a questionnaire validation tool, interview protocols, an informed consent form, and a transcription writing guide, to ensure the reliability and integrity of the data collection process. The criteria for validators emphasized their educational qualifications and experience in teaching, which provided a solid foundation for assessing the content validity of the interview questions.

## Procedure

Before conducting the interviews, the researcher ensured that informed consent was obtained from all participants, who signed confidentiality agreements to protect the information gathered (Polit & Beck, 2017). Permission to conduct the study was also secured from the School Principal. After receiving approval, the researcher scheduled interviews while adhering to health protocols. The interview responses were transcribed, coded, and analyzed in a structured manner (Silverman, 2019).

To ensure the validity of the study, the researcher followed a systematic approach to align the data collected with the analysis and interpretations made, as emphasized by Miles and Huberman (1994). According to Creswell (2009), validity is a cornerstone of qualitative research, and the researcher aimed to confirm the accuracy of findings from the perspectives of the researcher, participants, and future readers of the study.

Data trustworthiness and rigor were achieved through continuous analysis of participants' responses, ensuring consistency and credibility in identifying the main themes. Confirmability, as discussed by Shenton (2004), was maintained by ensuring that the research findings were shaped by the participants' perspectives rather than the researcher's biases. This was further supported by maintaining reflexivity, keeping an audit trail, and engaging in peer debriefing sessions. Korstjens and Moser (2018) also highlighted the importance of maintaining neutrality in data interpretation to ensure that the researcher's preferences did not influence the findings.

The researcher employed an audit trail during the field process, documenting data collection to compare it with observations made during the study (Johnson & Smith, 2018). Field notes were used to verify observed details and ensure accurate data capture. Color coding and code names were utilized to distinguish different data sets, with various colors representing the initial and subsequent interviews (Brown & Clarke, 2016). The inclusion of alternative perspectives was also prioritized to enhance the validity of the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The researcher collaborated with the adviser to elicit alternative viewpoints, ensuring a comprehensive and accurate validation of the data.

To ensure data saturation, the researcher gathered extensive information from the participants, probing until no new ideas emerged (Guest et al., 2016). Saturation was confirmed when commonalities were observed across all participants, and no further disconfirming evidence was found (Fusch & Ness, 2015). In addition, the researcher sought participants with diverse life experiences and philosophies to enrich the data. Peer debriefing discussions with the research adviser, and qualitative paper analysis with the analysts were made to

develop and refine the themes (Nowell et al., 2017). Similar interpretations were clustered, while differing interpretations were thoroughly examined through individual analysis.

Member checking was employed during the interview sessions, where the researcher established rapport with the participants by utilizing the information gathered. In subsequent interview phases, the researcher returned to the student-participants to validate the results, providing a comprehensive explanation of the study's findings. This approach fostered confidence among participants and ensured the validity and accuracy of the data obtained during the initial interviews, as recommended by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Thematic analysis is then used.

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis for this study was conducted using thematic analysis, a widely recognized method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2016). The process began with the researcher familiarizing themselves with the data, achieved by thoroughly reading and re-reading the collected information. This step was crucial in identifying initial patterns and gaining a comprehensive understanding of the content. Following this, the researcher generated initial codes by labeling specific pieces of data that represented key ideas or recurring themes. This coding process involved organizing the data into meaningful categories, making it easier to handle and analyze effectively (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

Once the initial codes were established, the researcher moved on to searching for themes by grouping these codes into broader, overarching themes that accurately reflected the essence of the data. This step required careful consideration to ensure that the themes were comprehensive and captured the full scope of the data, even if some elements did not fit neatly into a single category. The themes were then reviewed to ensure they accurately represented the data and aligned with the study's theoretical framework (Nowell et al., 2017). This review process was critical for maintaining the validity and coherence of the analysis.

After reviewing, the researcher defined and named each theme, clearly articulating what each theme represented and its significance within the context of the study. This step was essential for ensuring that the themes were both meaningful and relevant to the research objectives. Finally, the researcher produced the report, focusing on the most relevant themes that provided significant insights into the data. This final step involved selecting the themes that made the most meaningful contributions to understanding the study's findings, ensuring a clear and organized presentation of the results (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

### **Ethical Considerations**

This study undertook the following procedures: The researcher asked permission from the School Principal. After permission was granted, the researcher personally interviewed the participants.

Informed and voluntary consent ensures that people understand what it means to participate in a particular research study to consciously and deliberately decide whether to participate. Thus, the participants were assured anonymity and confidentiality and reminded that their participation was voluntary.

The participants were also informed that they could withdraw at any stage and choose not to answer any questions they felt uncomfortable with. The study was designed and conducted according to the ethical principles that Sultan Kudarat State University established.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **The Emerging Themes on the Lifeworld in Language in EMI Courses of Senior High School Students at Upper Katungal National High School**

Seventeen (17) emerging themes were articulated through arduous procedural data analysis and interpretation. They were all synthesized from 198 formulated meanings, 92 initial themes, and 55 clustered themes.

The seventeen (17) emerging themes are the following: Emotional Distress in Academic and Social Settings, Language Proficiency and Academic Challenges, Socio-economic and Environmental factors, Support/Learning Strategies, Resilience and Growth, Persistence and Dedication to Learning, Supportive Learning Environment, Language Proficiency Challenges, Personal growth and confidence building, Commitment to Continued Learning, Role Modeling, Career Readiness, Family/Community and Long-Term Goals, Language Proficiency, Personal Drive and Growth development, Drive to Overcome Challenges and Achieve Success, Empowerment Through English Proficiency. These characterized Senior High School Students' Lifeworld in Language in EMI Courses.

### **The Emerging Themes on the Lifeworld in Language in EMI Courses of Senior High School Students at Upper Katungal National High School**

Five (5) emerging themes were articulated through arduous procedural data analysis and interpretation. They were all synthesized from 58 formulated meanings, 26 initial themes, and 18 clustered themes.

The five (5) emerging themes are the following: Emotional Distress in Academic and Social Settings, Language Proficiency and



Academic Challenges, Socio-economic and Environmental factors, Support/Learning Strategies, Resilience and Growth. These characterized Senior High School Students' Lifeworld in Language in EMI Courses.

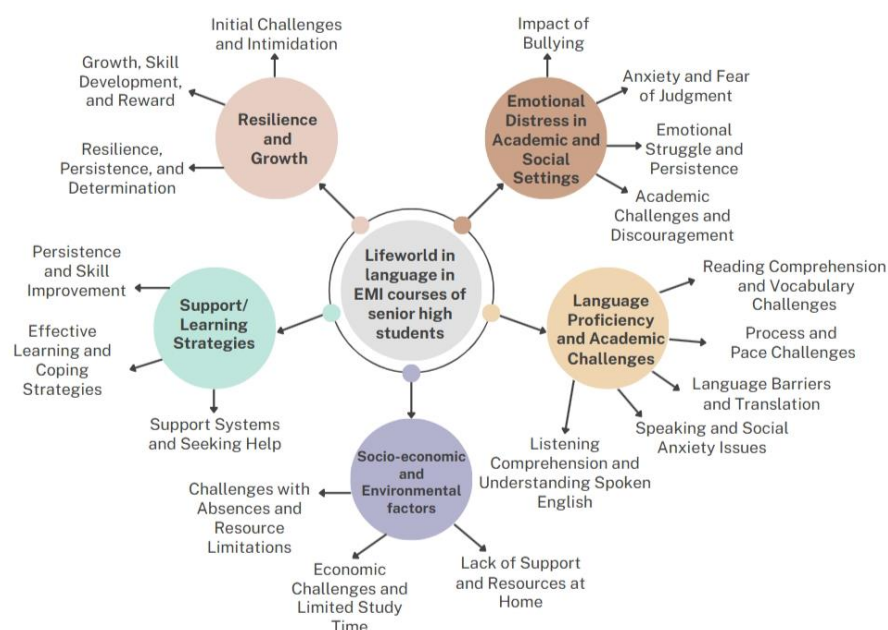


Figure 1. Schematic diagram on the lifeworld in language of senior high students in EMI courses

### Emerging Theme 1: Emotional distress in academic and social settings

This theme focuses on the lifeworld in the language of senior high students in EMI courses. Emerging theme 1 is characterized by four (4) clustered themes: The impact of bullying, Anxiety, fear of judgment, Emotional struggle and persistence, and Academic challenges and discouragement.

These were formulated by fourteen (9) initial themes: Impact of childhood bullying on language learning, Anxiety in speaking English, Emotional struggle and persistence, Impact of bullying on confidence, Struggles with writing skills, Fear of academic judgment, Challenges with speaking, Fear of judgment and peer pressure, Coping strategies and overwhelming feelings, Social anxiety, and Academic discouragement.

The participants shared their thoughts and feelings on their emotional distress in academic and social settings in language in EMI Courses as follows:

"When I was younger, I was bullied a lot in school because of my accent in pronouncing words, and I didn't know how to pronounce words properly; whenever I tried to speak, some of my classmates laughed at me. It made me feel scared and ashamed to make mistakes. Speaking English in class makes me scared. I remember how kids laughed at me before, so I worry about making mistakes. Even though I practice a lot before presenting, I still get nervous." S3 L24-38

"Sometimes, I feel frustrated because my classmates seem to understand the texts quickly, but I need more time and effort. However, I try to push through because reading is important for my education and future. Speaking English in classroom discussions or presentations is one of my most challenging parts. I feel very nervous and scared because I worry about making mistakes and being judged by my classmates. Sometimes, I get bullied or laughed at because of my poor English, which makes me feel embarrassed and less confident. Writing assignments or essays in English is another tough challenge. I struggle with grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structure. I also fear that my teachers will not understand my writing or will give me a low grade because of my poor English." S4 L28-53

"Speaking English in the classroom is very difficult for me. I get very nervous, and my hands start to sweat. I worry that I will make mistakes, or my classmates will laugh at me. This fear makes it hard for me to speak up, even when I know the answer. In presentations, I practice a lot beforehand, but I still feel scared when it's my turn to speak. My voice trembles, and I forget the words I want to say. This experience makes me feel very anxious and discouraged. Despite my efforts, I often feel overwhelmed and discouraged. However, I am determined to improve and hope that, with practice and support, I can overcome these challenges and succeed in my studies." S5 L31-54

"I was often bullied in elementary school because I couldn't speak English well. My classmates would laugh at my mistakes, making me feel stupid. Speaking English in class is very stressful. I fear making mistakes and being laughed at, just like when I was younger. During presentations, my hands shake, and I forget my words. I often avoid participating in discussions because I don't want to be

embarrassed." S6 L24-38

"I often feel frustrated because I can't keep up with my classmates, and I'm worried they might laugh at me if they see I'm struggling. I'm always afraid I'll say something wrong, and my classmates will laugh at me. Sometimes, I try to practice what I will say before class, but when it's my turn to speak, I get so nervous that I forget everything." S8 L26-32

"I try to use a dictionary or ask friends for help, but it's not always enough. I feel overwhelmed and unmotivated to keep up with the reading assignments... Speaking English in class is nerve-wracking. I'm always afraid that I'll make mistakes and be laughed at by my classmates... I know I need to improve, but I find it hard to stay motivated to practice and revise my work." S9 L26-51

"This frustrates me, and sometimes I just want to give up because I feel like I can never keep up with my classmates... I'm afraid of making mistakes and being laughed at because of my accent or wrong grammar." S10 L27-32

"Even when I practice what I want to say, I get very nervous during presentations or discussions and often forget what I plan to say. I try to avoid speaking in front of the class because it makes me feel very anxious and disconnected from the class. Even though I try hard and work on my assignments, I often feel that my writing is not good enough, which makes me feel discouraged." S10 L 32-48

## Emerging Theme 2: Language proficiency and academic challenges

Emerging theme 2 is depicted by five (5) clustered themes: Reading comprehension and vocabulary challenges, Process and pace challenges, Language barriers and translation, Speaking and social anxiety issues, Listening Comprehension, and Understanding Spoken English. These focus on ten (10) initial themes: Challenges in reading comprehension, Difficulty with vocabulary and comprehension, Time-consuming processes, Language barriers, Public speaking and confidence issues, Feelings of confusion, Challenges with fast speech, Listening comprehension difficulties, Writing difficulties and expressive challenges, and Language translation.

The Senior high school students showed how they feel about their language proficiency and academic challenges in language in EMI Courses, as evident in the following statements:

### Reading:

"Reading English is hard because I get nervous remembering when I was bullied. I had few English books at home, so the words are still difficult." S3 L30-32

"Reading English texts is very hard for me. The words are difficult, and I must use a dictionary a lot. It takes me a long time to read and understand the lessons. Reading English texts is very hard for me. I often struggle with understanding the words and the meaning of the sentences. It takes a lot of time to read even one page because I need to look up many words in the dictionary." S4 L24-28

"Initially, I struggled with understanding the texts' vocabulary and complex sentence structures. The unfamiliar words and idioms often made it difficult for me to grasp the full meaning of the passages." S7 L27-29

"The words are often difficult to understand, and it takes me a long time to read even a small passage. I use a dictionary to look up words I don't know, but sometimes I still don't get the meaning." S8 L24-26

"I often find the words difficult and confusing, and I don't always understand what I'm reading. Because I sometimes skip classes, I fall behind and have to catch up on reading, which makes it even harder." S9 L24-26

"I often don't understand many words, and it takes me a long time to finish even a small part." S10 L24-25

### Speaking:

"Speaking English has been another area where I've had to overcome significant challenges. My lack of confidence in my English abilities often prevented me from actively participating in class." S7 L38-40

"When it's my turn to speak, I often forget what I want to say because I'm so anxious. I usually try to avoid speaking in front of the class as much as possible...." S9 L33-35

"Even when I practice what I want to say, I get very nervous during presentations or discussions and often forget what I plan to say. I try to avoid speaking in front of the class because it makes me feel very anxious and disconnected from the class." S10 L32-35

### Listening:

"Understanding spoken English in class is difficult. The teachers talk fast, and I sometimes cannot catch all the words. I miss some important information." S2 L24-35

"It's hard for me to understand English when teachers talk fast. I missed some things they said before because I worried about getting bullied." S3 L42-43

"Understanding spoken English in lectures or audio-visual materials is also very difficult. The teachers and audio-visual materials

speak too fast, and I can't keep up with the pace. I miss a lot of important information because I don't understand the words or the context. I often feel lost and confused during lectures." S4 L44-45

"When the teacher speaks too fast, I can't follow along. I miss important points and feel lost during the lesson. Sometimes, I try to take notes but can't keep up with the speed. This makes it hard for me to learn and understand the discussed topics. I often rely on my classmates' notes or ask the teacher to repeat the information..." S5 L39-43

"Understanding spoken English has been a constant struggle for me. The fast pace of speech, unfamiliar accents, and the use of technical vocabulary often make it challenging for me to follow along." S7 L50-51

"The teachers often speak too fast for me to follow, and I miss much of what they say. I try to focus on keywords and use context clues, but it's still hard." S8 L37-38

"The teachers talk fast, and I often miss what they say. I try to catch some keywords or phrases but still struggle to follow along." S9 L39-40

"The teachers talk very fast, and I can't catch all the words." S10 L38

#### Writing:

"Writing essays in English is very challenging for me. I struggle with grammar and vocabulary. I spend many hours writing and correcting my work." S2 40-41

"Writing essays in English is hard for me. I struggle with grammar and finding the right words to use. I spend a long time writing and fixing my work. I ask my classmates for notes or read the textbook again to understand better." S3 L43-48

"My teachers give me feedback, which helps, but I still find it challenging. I read simpler English books and practice writing sentences to try and get better." S3 L49-51

"When I was young, I felt frustrated because I couldn't understand most words. Even now, I struggle to keep up in my EMI courses... I find it hard to express my thoughts clearly. My vocabulary is limited, so I often use simple words and sentences... I also struggle with grammar and punctuation, which results in low grades." S5 L24-49

"Writing in English has been one of the most daunting tasks. Organizing and expressing my thoughts clearly and adhering to proper grammar and structure has been a constant challenge." S7 L62-64

"I have a lot of ideas in my head, but I don't know how to express them in English. My grammar and vocabulary are not very good, so my writing is often full of mistakes." S8 L44-46

"I often have difficulty organizing my thoughts and putting them into correct English sentences. My grammar and vocabulary are weak, so my writing has many mistakes." S9 L46-48

"I start by thinking of ideas in Filipino because it's easier, and then I try translating them into English. My grammar and vocabulary are not strong, so my writing has many mistakes." S10 44-46

#### Emerging theme 3: Socio-economic and environmental factors

The emerging theme comprehensively centers on the participants' socio-economic and environmental factors in language in EMI Courses. This theme relates to three (3) clustered themes: Lack of Support and Resources at home, economic challenges and Limited study time, and Challenges with absences and resource limitations. These clusters are depicted on two (2) initial themes: Economic challenges and limited study time and Challenges with absences and resource limitations, as indicated in the following lines.

"At home, my parents were too busy working to help me with my studies, and we didn't have books or the internet. Because of poverty, I had to work during my free time to help my family, leaving me little time to study." S6 25-28

"Since I miss a lot of classes, I feel lost when I return and try to catch up with the audio materials. I don't always have access to recordings or additional resources, which makes it even harder to understand and stay engaged." S9 L40-43

"When I miss classes for work or other reasons, I fall behind, and catching up becomes even harder." S10 26-27

#### Emerging Theme 4: Support/Learning Strategies

The emerging theme is associated with three (3) clustered themes: Support systems and seeking help, Effective learning and coping strategies, and Persistence and skill improvement. Six (6) initial theme depicts this clustered theme: Reliance on peers and supplementary materials, Supportive environment, Drive to improve speaking skills, Coping strategies and seeking help, Utilizing resources, and Persistence and seeking feedback.

As stated in the following responses by the participants, it is very important to have support/learning strategies.



"I find that breaking down the texts into smaller chunks and using context clues helps me comprehend the content better. Additionally, referring to dictionaries and asking for clarification from my teachers or classmates has improved my reading skills." S7 L32-35

"Sometimes, I ask my classmates for help or try to read the text that goes with the lecture if it's available. But overall, I often feel lost and confused during these lessons." S8 L39-41

"I use a dictionary and ask for help from friends, but it doesn't always work." S9 L54-56

### Speaking

"Teachers encouraged a supportive environment, which helped build my confidence in speaking English." S1 L35-36

"Speaking English during classroom discussions or presentations was intimidating at first due to fear of making mistakes and being judged by peers... Despite this, I try my best to participate to improve my speaking skills." S4 L32-39

"Gradually, I've become more comfortable speaking English in class. Preparing well for discussions and presentations and practicing my lines helps me feel more confident. I also try to focus on communicating my ideas rather than worrying about perfect grammar." S7 L44-47

### Listening

"Sometimes, I watch English videos with subtitles to practice listening." S2 L36-37

"To cope, I listen carefully and take notes, even if I don't understand everything. I also ask my classmates for help or look for translations online." S4 L46-47

"To overcome this challenge, I've learned to actively listen and ask for clarification when needed. I also try to preview the lecture materials beforehand to familiarize myself with the key concepts and vocabulary. Taking notes during lectures and reviewing them later has also helped reinforce my understanding. Additionally, I've found that practicing listening to English audio materials, such as podcasts or news broadcasts, has improved my ability to comprehend spoken English." S7 L53-59

### Writing

"I take detailed notes, ask questions when I don't understand something, and review the lecture materials afterward to cope with these challenges. With practice and constructive feedback from my teachers, I've become more proficient in structuring my essays, developing arguments, and using appropriate vocabulary. I use online grammar checkers and writing resources to refine my work." S1 L45-53

"My teachers are kind and help me, but I still feel shy and unsure when speaking English. I ask my classmates for notes or read the textbook to understand better." S2 L41-43

"Despite these challenges, I keep practicing and ask for feedback to improve my writing skills." S4 L54-55

"However, I've learned that practice and dedication are key to improving my writing skills. Creating an outline before writing and revising and editing my work multiple times helps me produce better-quality essays. I also use online resources like grammar guides and writing tips to improve my writing skills. Seeking feedback from my teachers and classmates has also been valuable in identifying areas for improvement." S7 L65-70

## Emerging theme 5: Resilience and growth

This theme centers on the challenges encountered by the participants in writing in English. Emerging theme 5 is characterized by three (3) clustered themes: Initial challenges and intimidation, Growth, skill development, and reward, and Resilience, persistence, and determination. These were formulated by ten (10) initial themes, such as Overcoming initial challenges.

Growth and reward, Skill development, Initial intimidation, Improvement through participation, Learning through mistakes, Resilience and improvement, Emotional struggle and persistence, Overcoming language and socio-economic barriers, and Perseverance and support.

The student participants shared their growth and resilience encountered in the language in EMI Courses. As can be noted from the participants' narratives:

"Sometimes, I ask my classmates for help or try to read the text that goes with the lecture if it's available. But overall, I often feel lost and confused during these lessons." S8 L39-41

"I find that breaking down the texts into smaller chunks and using context clues helps me comprehend the content better. Additionally, referring to dictionaries and asking for clarification from my teachers or classmates has improved my reading skills." S7 L32-35

### Speaking

"Speaking English during classroom discussions or presentations was initially intimidating due to fear of making mistakes and being judged by peers. Teachers encouraged a supportive environment, which helped build my confidence in speaking English." S1 L32-36

"Despite this, I try my best to participate to improve my speaking skills." S4 L38-39

"Gradually, I've become more comfortable speaking English in class. Preparing well for discussions and presentations and practicing my lines helps me feel more confident. I also try to focus on communicating my ideas rather than worrying about perfect grammar." S7 L44-47

### Listening

"Sometimes, I watch English videos with subtitles to practice listening." S2 L36-37

"To cope, I listen carefully and take notes, even if I don't understand everything. I also ask my classmates for help or look for translations online." S4 L46-47

"To overcome this challenge, I've learned to actively listen and ask for clarification when needed. I also try to preview the lecture materials beforehand to familiarize myself with the key concepts and vocabulary. Taking notes during lectures and reviewing them later has also helped reinforce my understanding. Additionally, I've found that practicing listening to English audio materials, such as podcasts or news broadcasts, has improved my ability to comprehend spoken English." S7 L53-59

### Writing

"I take detailed notes, ask questions when I don't understand something, and review the lecture materials afterward to cope with these challenges... With practice and constructive feedback from my teachers, I've become more proficient in structuring my essays, developing arguments, and using appropriate vocabulary. I use online grammar checkers and writing resources to refine my work." S1 L45-53

"My teachers are kind and help me, but I still feel shy and unsure when speaking English. I ask my classmates for notes or read the textbook to understand better." S2 L41-43

"Despite these challenges, I keep practicing and ask for feedback to improve my writing skills." S4 L54-55

"However, I've learned that practice and dedication are key to improving my writing skills. Creating an outline before writing and revising and editing my work multiple times helps me produce better-quality essays. I also use online resources like grammar guides and writing tips to improve my writing skills. Seeking feedback from my teachers and classmates has also been valuable in identifying areas for improvement." S7 L65-70

"Initially, I found it difficult to understand complex vocabulary and academic jargon in English texts, but with consistent practice and the help of dictionaries and online resources, my comprehension has significantly improved. Consistent practice and using resources like dictionaries have improved my comprehension of English texts. Reading English texts in my EMI courses has been quite challenging yet rewarding, as it has broadened my understanding of various subjects and helped me appreciate diverse writing styles and perspectives. Speaking English during classroom discussions or presentations was initially intimidating due to fear of making mistakes and being judged by peers. Participating in group activities and presenting in front of the class has improved my fluency and pronunciation. I still make errors, but I've learned that these mistakes are part of the learning process and that practice makes perfect." S1 L25-39

"My teachers give feedback, and I try to learn from it. Writing is hard, but I keep trying to improve." S2 L41-42

"...I am determined to improve and hope that, with practice and support, I can overcome these challenges and succeed in my studies." S5 L52-54

"Reading English texts has been a challenging yet rewarding experience. Growing up with language barriers and poverty, I've had to work hard to improve my English proficiency... Despite the challenges I've faced, I'm proud of my progress in my English proficiency. My hard work and dedication will pay off in the long run as I pursue my educational and career goals. I'm grateful for the support of my teachers, classmates, and family, who have encouraged me to keep pushing forward." S7 L24-74

"It's very discouraging, but I know I must keep practicing to get better." S8 L48-49

## **The Emerging Themes on the Context of the Lifeworld in Language in EMI Courses of Senior High School Students at Upper Katungal National High School**

Four (4) emerging themes were articulated through arduous procedural data analysis and interpretation. They were all synthesized from 72 formulated meanings, 32 initial themes, and 21 clustered themes.

The four (4) emerging themes are the following: Persistence and Dedication to Learning, Supportive Learning Environment, Language Proficiency Challenges, and Personal growth and confidence building. These characterized Senior High School Students' Lifeworld in

Language in EMI Courses.

### Emerging themes on the contexts of the lifeworld of senior high students in language in EMI courses

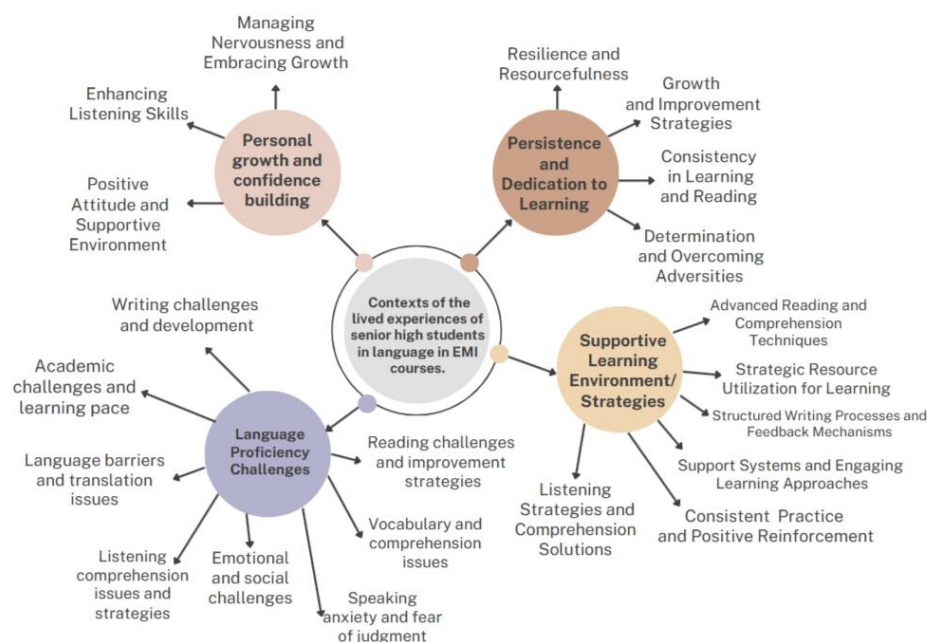


Figure 2. Schematic diagram on the context of the lifeworld in the language of senior high students in EMI courses

#### Emerging theme 1: Persistence and dedication to learning

Emerging theme 1 is associated with four (4) clustered themes: Resilience and resourcefulness, Growth and improvement strategies, Consistency in learning and reading, and Determination and overcoming adversities. These by eight (8) initial themes: Persistence and resourcefulness, Patience and focus in learning, Determination and hard work, Emotional struggle and persistence, Persistent efforts despite challenges, Effort to improve speaking skills, Employing various strategies to overcome language challenges, Determination to continuously enhance English skills.

The lines cited show the persistence and dedication to learning language in EMI courses of the participants,

"Yes, Ma'am, I have encountered several challenges in English. In reading, unfamiliar vocabulary and complex texts were initial barriers, but I addressed them by using dictionaries and online resources to expand my vocabulary. In speaking, fear of making mistakes was a significant challenge, which I overcame by practicing regularly and participating actively in class discussions. Listening comprehension was difficult due to fast-paced lectures and different accents, but I improved by taking detailed notes and practicing with English audio materials. Writing was challenging due to organizing and expressing my thoughts clearly, but I addressed this by creating outlines, seeking feedback, and revising drafts thoroughly." S1 L94-103

"... I face many challenges in learning English. To address these challenges, I try to stay positive and keep practicing. I use a dictionary, ask for help from teachers and classmates, and practice speaking and writing whenever possible. It's not easy, but I try to improve." S3 L81-86

"I often have to read the same paragraph multiple times to understand it. Engaging with English texts is a slow process, but I try to stay patient and focused because I know it will help me improve. I try to participate as much as possible because I know practice is essential for improvement. I remind myself that making mistakes is part of learning... Despite these challenges, I stay determined and keep working hard to improve my English skills." S4 L58-99

"I still struggle and often feel discouraged. However, I am determined to improve and hope that with continuous effort and support, I can overcome these barriers and succeed in my studies." S5 L96-99

"Yes Ma'am. I have faced many challenges in learning English. To address them, I use a dictionary and take notes for reading, practice speaking with patient friends, watch English videos with subtitles to improve listening, and get help from friends or teachers for writing. Despite these efforts, progress is slow, and I often feel frustrated and hopeless, but I keep trying because I want to improve and succeed." S6 L83-87

"I've had to push myself to practice speaking English more frequently, even if it means stumbling over my words occasionally." S7 L87-89

"To address these challenges, I use a dictionary for reading and writing, practice speaking with friends or in front of a mirror, take notes and ask for help to improve my listening and seek feedback from my teachers to improve my writing. I know I have to work harder than others, but I believe that I can improve my English skills with practice and determination over time." S8 L87-91

"To address these challenges, I try to use whatever resources I have, like dictionaries and help from friends. I practice speaking and writing as much as possible, even if difficult. I also ask for help from teachers and classmates to understand lectures better. But I know I must keep improving my English skills." S9 L85-89

### Emerging Theme 2: Supportive Learning Environment/Strategies

Emerging theme 2 presents another form of challenge in writing in English. This theme is linked to six (6) clustered themes: Advanced Reading and Comprehension Techniques, Strategic Resource Utilization for Learning, Structured Writing Processes and Feedback Mechanisms, Support Systems and Engaging Learning Approaches, Consistent Practice and Positive Reinforcement, and Listening Strategies and Comprehension Solutions. These clustered themes evolved among thirteen (13) initial themes. They include Effective reading strategies, Seeking support and strategies for improvement, Utilizing resources for understanding, Bilingual approach to writing, Persistent efforts and strategies for reading comprehension, Developing coping strategies for better understanding, Positive attitude and support system, Engagement through discussion, Practice, and positive reinforcement, Practice beyond the classroom, Active listening strategies, Structured approach to writing, and Seeking feedback for improvement. Student participants have shared their Supportive learning environment/strategies as to how they cope with their challenges, as cited in the lines,

"I start by skimming the text to get a general idea of the content. Then, I read it more thoroughly, highlighting important points and unfamiliar words. I often use a dictionary or online resources to understand new vocabulary and take notes to summarize key concepts." S1 L56-59

"To address these challenges, I ask for help from teachers and classmates. I practice a lot and use dictionaries and online tools." S2 L79-80

"I use a dictionary to look up words I don't know and sometimes translate sentences into Filipino to grasp their meaning. I also take notes and highlight important parts to help me remember and understand the content better... I start by brainstorming ideas in Filipino and then try translating them into English...I struggle with vocabulary and comprehension for reading, so I use a dictionary and take notes to help me understand." S4 L62-93

"When I was young, I struggled a lot with English, and that hasn't changed much. I read very slowly to engage with written materials and try to understand each word. I use a dictionary for words I don't know and sometimes ask classmates or teachers for help. I highlight important parts and make notes in the margins to help me remember and understand better. Even though it takes a long time, these steps help me interpret the material more clearly." S5 57-62

"To address this, I've had to develop strategies like breaking down the text into smaller chunks, using context clues, and regularly consulting dictionaries... However, I've learned that with a positive mindset, a willingness to learn, and the support of my teachers and community, I can overcome these obstacles." S7 L79-115

#### Speaking

"Engaging in discussions with classmates about reading materials enriches my understanding by providing diverse perspectives and reinforcing key concepts." S1 L59-61

"For speaking, I feel anxious and fear being judged, so I practice as much as possible and remind myself that making mistakes is part of learning." S4 L93-95

#### Listening

"Engaging in English conversations outside the classroom has familiarized me with diverse speech patterns, enhancing overall comprehension." S1 L77-80

"I also watch English videos with subtitles to practice listening. I ask my teachers or classmates to give feedback to help me get better." S2 L65-66

"I try to improve by listening carefully, taking notes, and asking my classmates for help. I also practice listening to English audio materials at home to improve... For listening, I find it hard to keep up with fast speech, so I take notes and ask for help when needed." S4 L74-96

"My listening skills are not very strong, and I find it hard to keep up, especially when the teacher talks fast. I often miss key points and feel lost. To help myself, I take detailed notes, ask the teacher to repeat things, and sometimes record the lectures so I can listen again at home. Even with these efforts, I still struggle to fully understand everything, which makes me feel frustrated." S5 L75-79

"To overcome this, I've learned to actively listen, take detailed notes, and ask for clarification when needed. Previewing the lecture materials beforehand and reviewing them afterward has also been crucial in reinforcing my understanding." S7 L97-100

"I try to focus on keywords and take notes, but I often miss important details." S9 L72-73

### Writing

"My approach to writing in English involves several steps. First, I brainstorm ideas by jotting down key points and organizing them logically. I create an outline to guide my writing and ensure my ideas flow coherently. As I write the first draft, I focus on getting my thoughts down on paper without worrying too much about grammar or style. After completing the draft, I revise it by checking for clarity, coherence, and relevance." S1 83-88

"I outline to organize my thoughts and ensure my essay has a clear structure. When writing the first draft, I focus on getting my ideas down without worrying too much about grammar or vocabulary. Afterward, I revise my draft multiple times, checking for grammar mistakes, improving my word choice, and ensuring my sentences are clear. I often ask my teachers or classmates for feedback to help me improve. For writing, I have trouble with grammar and vocabulary, so I revise my drafts multiple times and seek feedback from others." S4 L96-98

"I've had to rely heavily on online resources, such as grammar guides and writing tips, as well as seeking feedback from my teachers and classmates to improve my writing skills over time." S7 L106-108

### Emerging Theme 3: Language Proficiency Challenges

Emerging theme 3 covers challenges in writing English by the Grade 12 students. This theme is linked to nine (9) clustered themes: Reading challenges and improvement strategies, Vocabulary and comprehension issues, Speaking anxiety and fear of judgment, Emotional and social challenges, Listening comprehension issues and strategy, Language barriers and translation issues, Academic challenges and learning pace, Writing challenges and development, and Academic and emotional impact. These clustered themes evolved among nine (9) initial themes. They include Reading challenges and improvement strategies, Difficulty with vocabulary and comprehension, Speaking anxiety and fear of judgment, Emotional and social challenges, Listening comprehension issues and strategy, Language barriers and translation issues, Academic challenges and learning pace, Writing challenges and development, and Academic and emotional impact.

"Reading English texts is very hard for me. As a child, we did not have many books at home. I use a dictionary a lot to understand difficult words. Sometimes, I ask my classmates or teachers to help explain the words. I read slowly and tried to understand the meaning. I highlight important parts and take notes to remember better." S2 L46-50

"Reading English texts is hard for me because of my past experiences being bullied. It makes me nervous and unsure, but I try to understand. I read slowly and often use a dictionary to help me with difficult words. Sometimes, I ask my classmates or teachers for help to ensure I understand everything." S3 L54-57

"When I was young, I struggled a lot with English, and that hasn't changed much. To engage with written materials, I read slowly and try to understand each word. Expressing myself verbally in English in the classroom is very scary. It makes me nervous about speaking. My fear started when I was young because I was often teased for my poor English. In class, I worry about making mistakes and being judged. This fear makes it hard for me to participate in discussions or give presentations. When I have to speak, I practice a lot beforehand, but I still feel anxious and sometimes freeze up, forgetting what I want to say... To address these challenges, I use dictionaries, ask for help, highlight key points, and make notes when reading." S5 L57-93

"Reading English texts is very hard for me. The words are difficult, and I often don't understand the sentences. I have to read very slowly and use a dictionary a lot. Even then, I sometimes can't understand what the text means. This makes me feel frustrated and tired. I try highlighting important parts and writing notes to help me remember, but it is still very challenging." S6 L53-57

"The unfamiliar vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and cultural references often overwhelm and frustrate me. I re-read passages multiple times, trying to piece together the meaning." S7 L77-79

"I often need to read sentences multiple times to understand their meaning. I use a dictionary to look up unfamiliar words, but it greatly slows me down. Sometimes, I try to guess the meaning from the context or ask my classmates or teachers for help. Despite these efforts, I often feel frustrated and worried that I do not understand the material well." S8 L52-56

"I often find the words and sentences difficult to understand. I try to engage with the text by looking up unfamiliar words in a dictionary, but it takes a lot of time, and sometimes the definitions don't help much." S9 L54-56

"I often find the words difficult to understand. I try to use a dictionary to look up unfamiliar words, but sometimes the meanings don't help much." S10 51-52

### Speaking

"I feel very nervous about speaking English in class. When I was younger, we did not speak English much at home. I am afraid to make mistakes and be laughed at. I practice what I want to say before speaking. My teachers are kind and help me, but I still feel shy and scared. I try to join in class discussions to get better at speaking." S2 L53-56



"I feel scared when I have to speak English in class. I worry about making mistakes and what others might think of me. Even though my teachers are kind and supportive, I still feel shy and unsure. I practice a lot before speaking, but I still get nervous." S3 L60-63

"Expressing myself verbally in English in the classroom makes me very nervous. I worry about making mistakes and being judged by my classmates. I feel anxious and sometimes embarrassed, especially when I get bullied for my poor English." S4 L68-69

"Expressing myself verbally in English is very scary. I am afraid of making mistakes and being laughed at. When I have to speak in class, my heart beats fast, and I get very nervous. Sometimes, I forget what I want to say or use the wrong words. This makes me feel embarrassed and more scared to speak next time." S6 L60-63

"Expressing myself verbally in English in the classroom has been another significant hurdle. The fear of making mistakes or being misunderstood has often held me back from actively participating in discussions and presentations." S7 L85-87

"I worry about making mistakes and being laughed at by my classmates. Because of this, I tend to speak very little in class and often stay quiet during discussions. When I do speak, I try to keep my sentences short and simple to avoid mistakes. I practice a lot at home, but I still feel very nervous when the moment comes in class." S8 L59-62

"Expressing myself in English in the classroom is very stressful. I'm always worried that I'll make mistakes and that my classmates will laugh at me. I practice what I want to say before class, but when it's my turn to speak, I get so nervous that I forget what I want to say. I usually stay quiet during discussions and avoid speaking in front of the class as much as I can. It makes me feel isolated and less involved in class activities." S9 65-67

"I feel frustrated and unmotivated when I can't keep up with my classmates. Speaking English in class makes me very nervous. I'm always afraid that I will make mistakes and that my classmates will laugh at me. I practice what I want to say before class, but when it's my turn, I get so anxious that I forget everything. I try to stay quiet during discussions and avoid speaking in front of the class. This makes me feel isolated and disconnected from the class activities." S10 L58-62

## Listening

"Understanding spoken English is difficult for me. As a child, I did not hear much English around me. Teachers speak fast; sometimes, I cannot catch all the words. I focus on key points and write down notes." S2 L60-62

"Understanding spoken English in lectures is difficult because sometimes the teachers talk fast, and I miss important information. It's challenging to catch everything they say. Sometimes, I watch English videos with subtitles to help improve my listening skills." S3 L67-71

"The speakers often talk too fast, and I can't catch all the words. I miss a lot of information because I struggle with vocabulary and pronunciation." S4 L75-76

"Understanding spoken English in lectures is very difficult for me. The teachers speak quickly, and I can't catch all the words. I often feel lost and miss important information. Listening to audio materials is even harder because I can't see the teacher's mouth moving, which helps me understand better. My listening comprehension skills are very weak, making me feel worried about my studies." S6 L67-72

"Comprehending spoken English in lectures or audio materials during EMI courses has been particularly daunting. The rapid pace of speech, unfamiliar accents, and technical vocabulary often leave me feeling lost and confused." S7 L95-97

"The teachers often speak too quickly, and I can't keep up. I miss important details and struggle to understand the overall message. To cope, I try to focus on keywords and write notes as best as possible. I also ask my classmates to explain things to me afterward. Despite these strategies, I still struggle to follow along." S8 L66-70

"Understanding spoken English during lectures is quite difficult for me. The teachers often speak quickly, and I struggle to keep up with their words. Because I sometimes miss classes, catching up on lectures is even harder. My listening comprehension is not very good, and I often have to ask classmates for help or read the textbook to fill in the gaps." S9 L71-76

"Teachers speak too fast, and I often miss what they say. I try to focus on keywords and take notes, but I still find it hard to follow along. Since I miss classes sometimes, I feel lost when I return and try to catch up. I often ask classmates for help or read the textbook to understand better." S10 L66-69

## Writing

"Writing in English is a slow process for me. First, I think of ideas and write them in simple words. Then, I outline to organize my thoughts. I write a draft and try to use correct grammar and words. After that, I check for mistakes and improve my draft. I ask my teachers or classmates to give feedback to help me get better." S2 L69-72

"Writing in English is a big challenge. I struggle with finding the right words and using correct grammar. I spend a lot of time thinking and planning when I write essays. I write down my ideas first, then revise and correct my drafts often. My teachers give me feedback,

which I use to try and improve my writing skills." S3 L74-77

"Writing in English is a slow and difficult process. I start by brainstorming ideas, but organizing them is hard. My vocabulary is limited, so I use simple words and sentences. Drafting takes a long time because I worry about grammar mistakes. I revise my work multiple times and seek feedback from my teachers and classmates. I often feel my writing is not as good as it should be. This process is stressful and makes me doubt my abilities." S5 L82-87

"...My vocabulary is limited, and I struggle with grammar. I feel like I can't express my thoughts clearly. I spend much time on assignments, but my grades are still low. This makes me feel discouraged and sometimes makes me want to give up. When I start, I try to brainstorm ideas in Hiligaynon, my native language first, and then translate them to English. This takes a lot of time and effort. My grammar and spelling are not good, so I make many mistakes. Revising drafts is hard because I don't always see where my mistakes are. I ask for help from friends or teachers, but it still feels very hard." S6 L68-79

"The writing process in English, from brainstorming ideas to revising drafts, has been one of the most challenging aspects of my EMI courses. Organizing and expressing my thoughts clearly and adhering to proper grammar and structure has been a constant struggle." S7 103-106

"I start by brainstorming ideas in Filipino because it's easier for me to think in my native language. Then, I try to translate those ideas into simple English sentences. My first drafts usually have many mistakes, so I revise them multiple times, checking grammar and vocabulary with the help of a dictionary or online tools when I can access them. I also ask my teachers for feedback to improve my writing." S8 L73-77

"Writing in English is a long and difficult process. I start by brainstorming ideas in Filipino because it's easier for me. Then I try translating these ideas into English, but my grammar and vocabulary problems make this process slow and frustrating. My drafts often have many errors, so revising takes time. I try to keep my sentences simple and clear, but I still worry that my writing won't meet my teachers' expectations. I often feel discouraged, but I must keep practicing to improve." S9 L79-85

"I start by brainstorming ideas in Filipino because it's easier. Then, I translate these ideas into English, but my grammar and vocabulary problems make this slow and frustrating. I often make many mistakes in my drafts, so revising takes time. I try to keep my sentences simple and clear, but I still worry that my writing won't meet my teachers' expectations. I feel discouraged, but I know I must keep practicing to improve." S10 L72-77

#### Emerging theme 4: Personal growth and confidence building

Emerging theme 4 evolves on the growth and confidence building from the challenges encountered in language in EMI courses. Three (3) clustered themes are managing nervousness and embracing growth, Enhancing listening skills, Positive attitude, and a supportive environment. The six (6) initial themes are, Overcoming initial nervousness, Embracing mistakes as learning, Improving listening, Holistic environment, Comprehensive challenge acknowledgment, and Positive attitude and support system. Participants developed personal growth and confidence, as they indicated in the following translated utterances:

"Initially nervous about speaking in English, I have gained confidence through teacher encouragement and active participation in class discussions and presentations. I've learned that making mistakes is integral to learning and actively participating has improved my ability to express thoughts and opinions confidently in English... My ability to understand spoken English has improved over time. At first, I found keeping up with the pace and different accents challenging. However, I have improved my listening comprehension skills by actively listening, taking notes, and reviewing the material afterward." S1 L64-77

#### Writing

"With perseverance, practice, and using available resources have helped me overcome these challenges and improve my English skills." S2 103-104

"Yes, Ma'am, throughout my EMI course experiences, I've encountered numerous challenges and barriers related to reading, speaking, listening, and writing in English. However, I've learned that I can overcome these obstacles with a positive mindset, a willingness to learn, and the support of my teachers and community." S7 L112-115

#### The Emerging Themes on the Lifeworld in Language in EMI Courses of Senior High School Students at Upper Katungal National High School

Eight (8) emerging themes were articulated through arduous procedural data analysis and interpretation. They were all synthesized from 68 formulated meanings, 32 initial themes, and 16 clustered themes.

The eight (8) emerging themes are the following: Commitment to Continued Learning, Role Model, Career Readiness, Family/Community and Long-Term Goals, Language Proficient, Personal Drive and Growth development, Drive to Overcome Challenges and Achieve Success, and Empowerment Through English Proficiency. These characterized Senior High School Students' Lifeworld in Language in EMI Courses.

## Emerging themes described the views of the senior high school in EMI Courses in the future

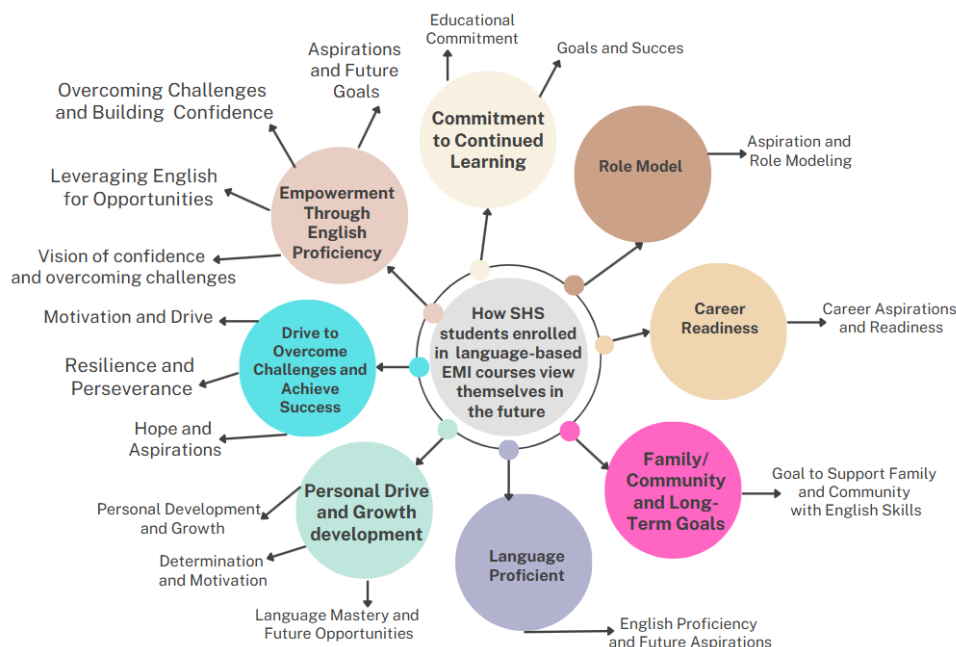


Figure 3. Schematic diagram on how senior high students enrolled in language-based EMI courses view themselves in the future

### Emerging theme 1: Commitment to continued learning

Emerging theme 1 is depicted by two (2) clustered themes, Educational commitment, Goals, and success, focusing on one (1) initial goal to support family and community with English skills. It is evident in the narrative of the participants:

"I aim to use my English skills to help my family and community." S2 L86-87

"I hope to use my improved English skills to help my family and community, maybe even get a job where English is important." S3 L94-95

"In my future, I see myself being proficient in English, able to communicate confidently and effectively. I envision using my improved English skills to help my family and community." S4 L104-108

"In the future, I hope to be someone who can communicate effectively in English, both in speaking and writing. I want to use these skills to help my family and community." S5 L105-107

"I hope to have a good job that allows me to support my family." S6 L94-95

"I want to support others with the same challenges I've faced. I know it will take much hard work and persistence, but I can achieve this." S10 L97-99

### Emerging theme 2: Role modeling

Emerging theme 2 is linked to one (1) clustered theme, Aspiration, and role modeling. These clustered themes evolved in one (1) initial theme: Inspiration and role modeling. Student participants have shared their narratives as cited in the following lines:

"I want to be a role model for others who face similar challenges, showing them that it is possible to overcome obstacles and succeed." S4 L108-109

"I want to be a role model for others facing similar challenges, helping them succeed in their studies." S9 L119-120

"I also hope to inspire others who face similar struggles. I want to prove that even if you come from a tough background and find English difficult, you can still progress and reach your dreams if you keep trying." S9 L112-114

### Emerging theme 3: Career readiness

Emerging theme 3 is characterized by one (1) clustered theme: Career readiness.

This was formulated by one (1) initial theme: Career aspirations and readiness. The participants shared their thoughts as follows:

"Envisioning my future, my experiences in language-based EMI courses have prepared me to excel in diverse career paths that require strong English proficiency, such as journalism, law, or international relations." S1 107-110

"I hope to pursue a career where I can use my language skills to make a positive impact, maybe in teaching or community work, where I can support others in their learning journeys." S4 L109-112

"Maybe I can work in a field where English is important, like teaching or social work, so I can support others who struggle with similar barriers." S5 L107-108

"I see myself finishing college and getting a good job where I can use my English skills. Maybe I can even help others struggling with English, just like I am now. I want to show that even if you come from a poor background and have many challenges, you can still achieve your goals with hard work and perseverance." S8 L103-106

"I hope to finish my education and find a job where my improved English skills will help me succeed." S9 L109-110

"Using my language skills, I hope to excel in my career and give back to my community through mentorship and education. Education has transformed my life, and I'm eager to face future challenges with resilience and determination " S9 L120-123.

"I see myself using my improved English skills to help my family and community. I dream of working where English is important, like teaching or social work." S10 L96-97

#### **Emerging theme 4: Family/Community and long-term goals**

Emerging theme 4 is described by one (1) clustered theme and focuses on one (1) initial theme, Family/Community and Long-Term Goals. It is evident in the narrative of the participants:

"I aim to use my English skills to help my family and community."S2 L86-87

"I hope to use my improved English skills to help my family and community, maybe even get a job where English is important."S3 L94-95

"In my future, I see myself being proficient in English, able to communicate confidently and effectively. I envision using my improved English skills to help my family and community." S4 L106-108

"In the future, I hope to be someone who can communicate effectively in English, both in speaking and writing. I want to use these skills to help my family and community." S5 L105-107

"I hope to have a good job that allows me to support my family."S6 L94-95

"I want to support others with the same challenges I've faced. I know it will take much hard work and persistence, but I can achieve this." S10 L97-99

#### **Emerging theme 5: Language proficient**

Emerging theme 5 is described by one (1) clustered theme, the English proficiency and future aspirations, and focuses on one (1) initial theme, an English proficiency and future aspiration. As evident in the narrative of the participants:

"In the future, I see myself being proficient in English, able to communicate confidently and effectively." S4 L106-107

"In the future, I hope to be someone who can communicate effectively in English, both in speaking and writing." S5 L105-107

"In the future, I hope to become more confident in my English skills. I want to read and understand texts more easily, speak without fear of being laughed at, follow lectures without getting lost, and write essays that clearly express my thoughts." S8 L97-100

#### **Emerging theme 6: Personal drive and growth development**

Emerging theme 6 is centered on one (3) clustered themes, Personal development and growth, Determination and motivation, and Language mastery and future opportunities. It focuses on five (5) initial themes: Strength from struggles, Persistence and utilization of strategies, Determination, supportive attitude, Aspiration for language mastery and future opportunities, and Resilience and Growth Through Experience. It is evident in the narrative of the participants:

"Beyond academics, my growth in language-based EMI courses has fostered personal resilience and adaptability, preparing me to face challenges and embrace opportunities in a globalized world." S1 115-118

"I believe that my struggle with English now will make me stronger and more determined in the future." S4 L104-105

"I imagine myself becoming more confident in my English skills, thanks to the hard work and strategies I've developed, like using dictionaries, practicing speaking, taking detailed notes, and revising my writing... My journey has been challenging, but it has also made me more determined to achieve my goals and support others in overcoming their challenges." S5 102-114

"These struggles have made me determined to improve. I see myself in the future as someone who has overcome these language barriers and become more confident in using English." S6 L92-94

"In the future, I see myself confidently mastering English, both in speech and writing, which will open doors to many opportunities." S7 L118-119

"I see these experiences as steppingstones to my future. I know that learning English is important for my dreams and for helping my family. Even though it's hard now, I can improve with determination and continuous practice... I envision a future where my experiences in language-based EMI courses have made me stronger and more resilient. They will push me to keep improving and to never give up on my dreams." S8 L98-109

"I want to understand it without feeling lost and to express my ideas clearly when speaking or writing." S9 L106-108

### **Emerging theme 7: Drive to overcome challenges and achieve success**

Emerging theme 7 is one of the challenges the student-participants encounter and is depicted by three (3) clustered themes: Motivation and drive, Resilience and perseverance, and Hope and aspirations. These were formulated with five (5) initial themes: Drive to overcome challenges and achieve success, Motivation from past experiences, Emotional resilience and persistence, Socioeconomic and emotional difficulties, and Hope and positive outlook. It is evident from the narratives of the participants showing their attitude toward overcoming challenges in language in EMI courses:

"Lastly, I want to prove to myself and others that I can succeed despite my challenges." S3 L95-96

"I see myself as someone who has overcome significant challenges and succeeded despite difficulties. These experiences have taught me resilience and the importance of hard work... My past experiences have motivated me to keep pushing forward, and I am determined to build a better future for myself and those around me." S4 L102-117

"My experiences have shown me the importance of patience and persistence, and I believe these qualities will help me succeed in my career and personal life." S5 L108-110

"Growing up in poverty and being bullied for my poor English skills made me feel anxious, but it also pushed me to work hard during my free time to pursue my education. I believe that my efforts and perseverance will lead to a better future for myself and those around me." S6 L90-96

"Even though I've struggled with English and often feel unmotivated and overwhelmed, I still try to imagine a better future for myself... Despite the difficulties and the times I've been laughed at, I want to show that I can achieve my goals with hard work and perseverance." S9 L101-111

"Despite the difficulties and the times I've felt discouraged, I want to prove that I can overcome these challenges. My experiences have taught me the value of perseverance, and I hope to inspire others who also struggle with English." S10 L100-102

### **Emerging theme 8: Empowerment through English proficiency**

Emerging theme 8 presents the adaptive strategies utilized by the student-participants. It is depicted by 3 (3) clustered themes, which are Leveraging English for opportunities, Overcoming challenges, and building confidence, Aspirations, and future goals, and focused on four (4) initial themes: Using English for connection and opportunity, Perspective on current challenges, Aspiration for improvement, and Vision of confidence and overcoming challenges. The following are the narratives of the participants:

"I envision myself as someone who can use English to connect with more people, access more information, and create better opportunities for myself and my community." S8 L100-102

"I know my current difficulties don't define my life. I hope that, with time and effort, I can improve my English skills. In the future, I see myself as someone who has learned to overcome these challenges. I dream of becoming more confident in English." S9 L102-106

"In the future, I hope to be more confident in English. Even though I struggle now, I believe that with time and effort, I can improve my English skills." S10 L91-92

## **Conclusions**

The following conclusions are based on the synthesized emerging themes and the participants' experiences.

Language learning challenges, like any other kind of educational obstacle, have the potential to significantly disrupt a student's academic journey. Mastering English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI) requires sophistication and is not always easy to achieve. The ability to think critically and make solid decisions is just as crucial as having strong language skills. Students who do not invest the time and energy to polish their language basics will have difficulty meeting more stringent academic requirements. A student who struggles with language proficiency faces a significant hurdle in their educational pursuits. Maintaining motivation can be challenging under these conditions.

The current research investigated and detailed the lifeworld in language in EMI courses, the context of their lived experiences, and how they view themselves in the future. Despite their difficulties, the results showed that the participants exhibited a favorable attitude



toward learning in EMI courses and were willing to improve their English skills in an academic context. Structured learning activities helped students organize their thoughts and ideas more effectively.

Moreover, teachers should be equipped with varied instructional strategies, including scaffolding, visual aids, and integrated language development techniques, to make EMI more accessible to students with different proficiency levels. Additionally, there should be a stronger emphasis on building students' foundational language skills through targeted support programs, such as supplementary language classes and peer tutoring.

Furthermore, incorporating technology into EMI education can significantly enhance teaching and learning. Digital tools and platforms should be utilized to provide interactive and engaging methods for students to improve their language skills, making the learning process more dynamic and effective.

The following are recommended based on the findings and conclusions:

The research's potential impact could lead to the development of a comprehensive emotional support program that includes strong anti-bullying policies, mental health resources such as counseling and stress management workshops, and teacher training to recognize and address student distress. Additionally, it could focus on building students' confidence in using English through practice sessions and positive reinforcement.

It is recommended that learners could enhance their practical English skills for career readiness by incorporating career-relevant language activities into lessons, partnering with local professionals for workshops, encouraging peer mentorship, and utilizing free online language learning tools.

Teachers are encouraged to strengthen English proficiency of students by integrating real-world language activities, fostering a supportive learning environment, providing access to resources such as clubs and tutoring, and connecting students with mentors who have successfully used English in their careers.

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