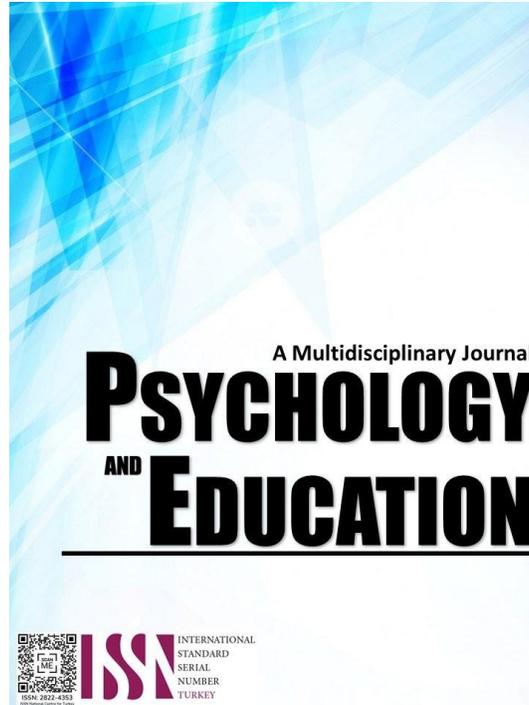


# UNVEILING LEARNERS' PERCEPTIONS OF AUDIO-LINGUAL METHOD IN LEARNING ENGLISH



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## Unveiling Learners' Perceptions of Audio-Lingual Method in Learning English

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### Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study was to unveil the learners' perceptions of Audio-lingual Method in learning English of the selected 20 participants of the sixth-grade learners in Banwalan Elementary School, Barangay San Jose, General Santos City which focused on the learners' experiences on using the Audio-lingual Method, the challenges they encounter, and the success stories they can share. Through in-depth interviews and focused group discussion, the study revealed that learners experienced progressive improvement via repetition method, enhanced listening skills, heightened reading development, gained confidence in sentence construction, engaged into interactive learning, learned through modeling approach, incorporated conversational practice and developed language fluency. However, challenges such as limited vocabulary development, struggle to apply the language skills, found it difficult to construct sentences, absence of poor knowledge, poor comprehension, lack of speaking confidence and unable to concentrate with the lesson were also noted. Despite these challenges, learners reported notable successes, including increased listening comprehension skills, enhanced English writing skills, able to speak through imitation, significantly improved reading ability, learned to understand English better, practiced conversational English confidently, and satisfied on using Audio-lingual Method to learn English. The findings highlighted the effectiveness of Audio-lingual Method in developing foundational language fluency and listening proficiency in learning English. The study contributed to the understanding of the ALM's role in learning English and provided insights for English teachers to refine their teaching strategies to better support learners' diverse need.

**Keywords:** *Audio-lingual Method, learners' perceptions, learning English, English, phenomenology, Philippines*

### Introduction

“The art of teaching is the art of assisting discovery.” — Mark Van Doren

Mark Van Doren's quote is a powerful reminder that effective education guides learners to uncover knowledge through active engagement rather than passive reception. In the context of the Philippine educational system, this philosophy underscores the importance of instructional methods that encourage learners to participate actively in their language learning journey. The Audiolingual Method, with its emphasis on repetition and oral drills, aims to assist learners in discovering language patterns through practice and reinforcement. However, given the diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds of Filipino students, their perceptions of this method greatly influence how effectively they engage with it. Recent studies in the Philippines highlight that understanding learners' attitudes and experiences with ALM is essential for adapting teaching strategies that align with their unique needs and the broader educational goals of the country. (Dela Cruz & Santos, 2023; Reyes & Bautista, 2022).

In today's world, learners struggle to develop oral English fluency and communicative competence when traditional grammar-translation and lecture-based approaches dominate language instruction. Studies have demonstrated that the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM)—with its structured repetition and drilling techniques—can significantly improve speaking ability: for example, a 2023 investigation among private EFL students reported a jump in mean pre-test to post-test speaking scores from approximately 62.2 to 80.13 after ALM instruction (Ma'rifah, 2023). Despite such evidence, ALM remains underutilized in many educational systems, even though its targeted use directly supports SDG 4 (Quality Education) by promoting adequate language proficiency and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) by enhancing learners' readiness for global participation. This study thus investigates the effectiveness and relevance of implementing ALM to address existing gaps in oral English proficiency, contributing to broader educational and sustainable development goals.

Globally, the application and reception of ALM in language learning have been subjects of significant research, yet concerns persist about its relevance in today's educational landscape. While ALM has been credited with improving speaking fluency and pronunciation, critics argue that its focus on repetitive drills does not foster communicative competence or real-life language use (Zhang, 2022). In many countries, including South Korea and parts of Europe, there is a growing preference for methods incorporating critical thinking, active student engagement, and real-world language use, signaling a shift away from more traditional approaches like ALM (Johnson & Silva, 2022; Kim, 2022). These global trends highlight the challenge of balancing traditional methods with modern, communicative language learning demands.

ALM has historically been integral to English language instruction in the Philippines, particularly in environments where grammar, accuracy, and pronunciation are prioritized. Many Filipino learners consider ALM effective for improving their speaking and writing accuracy through repetitive drills and pattern practice. However, there are increasing concerns regarding its limitations, particularly its inability to promote interactive, communicative language skills, which are essential in a globally connected world (Delgado & Garcia, 2022). National trends indicate a shift toward more communicative approaches focusing on fluency and practical language use,

reflecting a broader movement towards student-centered learning in the country's educational system.

At the local level, ALM continues to be prevalent in language schools and educational institutions, particularly in contexts where passing proficiency exams is crucial for academic or professional success. Learners often value ALM for its simplicity and ability to enhance pronunciation and sentence structure. However, there is growing dissatisfaction among students regarding its limited focus on real-world language use. In local classrooms, students have preferred methods that encourage interactive, communicative activities, such as discussions and role-plays, which are more likely to prepare them for authentic language encounters (Santos & Reyes, 2022). Despite these concerns, ALM's emphasis on accuracy remains respected, though its application is increasingly questioned in favor of more dynamic teaching methods.

This study responds to a research gap concerning learners' perceptions of the Audiolingual Method (ALM) in indigenous and under-resourced schools, particularly in the Philippine context. In Banwalan Elementary School, Bataan learners continue to struggle with English comprehension and oral communication due to cultural and linguistic barriers. While recent educational reforms promote flexible and student-centered learning, traditional methods like ALM remain in use, yet underexplored in such settings. This study aims to fill that gap by investigating how Bataan learners perceive the relevance and effectiveness of ALM in their classroom experience.

This study is anchored in three major theoretical perspectives that support language learning. Central to this is Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978), which underscores the importance of social interaction and cultural context in cognitive development. Vygotsky emphasized that learning is mediated by tools—particularly language—and occurs through collaboration with more knowledgeable others. In the context of language learning, this theory highlights how dialogic engagement, guided participation, and cultural tools enable learners to internalize linguistic knowledge and develop communication skills. Language, therefore, is not only a medium for interaction but also a powerful tool for thought and development.

Complementing this perspective are Behaviorism and Self-Determination Theory. The Audiolingual Method (ALM) is rooted in Behaviorist theory, particularly Skinner's (1957) work, which views learning as a result of habit formation through stimulus-response conditioning. ALM emphasizes repetition, imitation, and reinforcement to shape language behaviors. In contrast, Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) brings a motivational lens to language learning, focusing on the role of intrinsic motivation. It posits that learners thrive when their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are met. Together, these frameworks offer a comprehensive understanding of how learners acquire language through interaction, behavioral reinforcement, and internal motivation.

The study aimed to unveil the learners' perceptions of the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) in learning English through a phenomenological inquiry. It sought to explore in depth how learners perceive and experience the use of ALM in their English language learning journey. Specifically, the study aimed to answer the following research questions: How are the learners' perceptions of the Audio-Lingual Method in learning English being unveiled? In relation to this, the study further examined the learners' experiences with the method, the challenges they encountered, and the success stories they could share while learning English through the Audio-Lingual Method.

Despite the growing interest in communicative and student-centered language teaching approaches, there remains a notable gap in the literature concerning learners' actual perceptions of the Audio-Lingual Method, especially in rural and indigenous learning contexts like Banwalan Elementary School. Most existing studies emphasize theoretical and instructional aspects, with limited focus on how learners themselves experience this method in real classroom settings. This study, therefore, responds to the need for more localized and learner-centered research on ALM, offering valuable insights from the perspectives of marginalized learners such as the Bataan. By doing so, it contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 4: Quality Education, which calls for inclusive and equitable access to learning opportunities. Unveiling these learners' voices supports more responsive, culturally relevant, and effective pedagogical strategies in English language education.

The findings of this study revealed three major themes: learners' engagement through repetition and drills, the struggle with comprehension and pronunciation, and the sense of accomplishment through improved speaking skills. Learners expressed that the repetitive nature of the Audio-Lingual Method helped them memorize vocabulary and sentence patterns more easily, building their confidence in speaking. However, they also encountered challenges, particularly in understanding unfamiliar words and producing correct pronunciation without visual or contextual cues. Despite these difficulties, many participants shared success stories of gradually overcoming their fear of speaking English and experiencing noticeable progress in their oral communication skills. These insights highlight the nuanced impact of ALM on learners, showing both its benefits and limitations when applied in culturally diverse and linguistically under-supported settings.

## Methodology

In this qualitative study conducted at Banwalan Elementary School, General Santos City, during the 2023-2024 school year, the researcher strategically employed purposive sampling to select twenty Grade 6 learners. A total of ten learners participated in in-depth interviews (IDI) to gain individual perspectives, while another ten learners were selected for a focus group discussion (FGD) to encourage collective reflection and shared experiences. The researcher purposively selected participants who had completed at least one full academic year of English instruction using the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM). To ensure meaningful participation, only those

learners who demonstrated basic communication skills in English, Filipino, or Blaán were included, as this allowed them to effectively articulate their learning experiences during interviews and discussions.

The inclusion criteria required Blaán Grade 6 learners at Banwalan Elementary School who had completed at least one full academic year of ALM-based English instruction and could communicate in English, Filipino, or Blaán. The exclusion criteria applied to learners who were newly transferred, had less than six months of ALM exposure, had documented learning or speech-language impairments, or were not of Blaán heritage, to ensure consistent and culturally focused data. Participation was voluntary, and learners, along with their guardians, were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without consequence. Withdrawal was honored immediately if a participant showed discomfort or if consent was retracted by a parent or guardian, in line with ethical research standards (Creswell & Poth, 2022).

The materials for this qualitative phenomenological study primarily consisted of a semi-structured interview guide, a focus group discussion (FGD) protocol, informed consent forms, and audio recording equipment. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews (IDIs) and an FGD with ten purposively selected Blaán Grade 6 learners who had at least one full academic year of exposure to the Audiolingual Method (ALM). Interviews were conducted in a quiet, comfortable setting, allowing participants to speak in Blaán, Filipino, or English according to their preference. All sessions were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and validated through member checking. Data were analyzed using Colaizzi's (1978) seven-step method: (1) reading all descriptions, (2) extracting significant statements, (3) formulating meanings, (4) organizing meanings into themes, (5) developing an exhaustive description, (6) identifying the fundamental structure, and (7) returning findings to participants for validation. This systematic approach ensured that the analysis remained faithful to the learners' lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2022; Seidman, 2019; Morgan, 2019).

The procedure for data collection began with ethical clearance that was obtained from the Schools Division Superintendent of General Santos City, followed by written approval from the principal of Banwalan Primary School. Once institutional permission was granted, the researcher finalized the interview guides and ethical documentation. Each participant received an informed Consent Form and a Participant Agreement Form detailing the study's objectives, the voluntary nature of participation, the assurance of confidentiality, and the use of pseudonyms. These forms were explained in both Filipino and the learners' native language, and parental consent was secured for all participants. All procedures adhered to ethical research standards to protect the learners' rights, safety, and privacy.

Prior to the interviews and discussions, the researcher conducted a preliminary meeting to orient the participants on the study's purpose, the topics to be discussed, and the types of questions they would encounter. The researcher emphasized the confidentiality and truthfulness of their responses, striving to create a comfortable and trusting environment conducive to open and honest communication. Recognizing the importance of cultural sensitivity, the researcher remained mindful of the participants' social context and cultural background to ensure respectful interaction. Participants were informed that the sessions would be audio-recorded, and they would have access to the recordings.

The analysis of the collected data followed Colaizzi's (1978) seven-step method, which is widely recognized for its rigor and depth in phenomenological research. This method was chosen for its structured approach to interpreting lived experiences, ensuring that the essence of participants' narratives is captured accurately and meaningfully. The study aimed to understand how Grade 6 Blaán learners experience the Audiolingual Method (ALM) in their English language learning. Colaizzi's method allowed for a comprehensive analysis of individual and shared perceptions.

The subsequent step involved coding and analyzing the data using Colaizzi's (1978) seven-step method. The process began with familiarization through repeated reading of transcripts to understand the learners' experiences with the Audiolingual Method. Significant statements were then extracted verbatim to ensure authenticity, followed by the formulation of meanings that captured their perceptions and emotional responses. These meanings were clustered into themes reflecting patterns in repetition, cultural alignment, and motivation. An exhaustive description was created and distilled into a fundamental structure summarizing the essence of the phenomenon. Finally, member checking validated the findings, ensuring the themes accurately represented the learners' real-life insights. Colaizzi's method offered a systematic yet flexible framework for transforming rich qualitative data into insightful and grounded findings. The approach not only honored the participants' voices but ensured that the analysis was conducted with methodological integrity, in line with best practices in qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2022; Colaizzi, 1978).

To ensure the rigor and trustworthiness of this qualitative phenomenology study, the researcher prioritized establishing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the data. Credibility was achieved through prolonged engagement with participants and member checking to validate that the findings accurately reflected their lived experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability was supported by providing thick descriptions of the participants' contexts, allowing readers to determine the applicability of the results to other settings. Dependability was ensured by maintaining a detailed audit trail documenting the research process, enhancing consistency and transparency (Shenton, 2004). Confirmability was addressed through reflexive journaling and clear documentation of analytic decisions to minimize researcher bias and ensure the findings emerged authentically from participants' voices (Morrow, 2005). Collectively, these strategies strengthened the integrity and reliability of the research outcomes.

To ensure ethical integrity in this study, the researcher adhered strictly to guidelines concerning voluntary participation, confidentiality, informed consent, and risk minimization, following the standards of the RMMC Ethics and Review Committee. Participants,

specifically Grade 6 Blaan learners, were fully informed about the study's purpose and procedures, with both learners and guardians providing consent; they were assured of their right to withdraw without penalty. The research protected privacy in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 and ensured a culturally sensitive, safe environment throughout data collection. Recruitment was conducted transparently without coercion or incentives, and measures were taken to avoid physical, emotional, or social harm. The researcher maintained academic honesty by avoiding plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, and deceit, rigorously documenting and reporting data to reflect authentic participant experiences. No conflicts of interest existed, and all organizational permissions were secured before the study commenced. This ethical rigor aligns with best practices in qualitative research, prioritizing participants' welfare, respecting their autonomy, and upholding scholarly integrity throughout the research process.

## Results and Discussion

This part presents the experiences of the learners using the Audio-Lingual Method in learning English, specifically describing their perceptions, feelings, and reactions as they engaged with the method.

*Table 1. The Learner's Experiences on Using Audio-lingual Method in Learning English*

<i>Clustered Themes</i>	<i>Emergent Themes</i>
Love to listen and engage with the teacher	Enhanced Listening Skills
Find it enjoyable to listen the lessons in the television	
Can listen to the lesson easily through the help of television	
The use of television in reading English increase learning	Heightened Reading Development
Felt to be better in reading through the help of television	
Able to read a lot of words because of the pictures being shown	
Learn to formulate English sentence through the help of teacher	Gained Confidence in Sentence Construction
Able to write and spell English better	
Become more confident in writing sentence through the lessons in the television	
Images shown in television help the learners remember the lesson	Engaged into Interactive Learning
Learning becomes more fun and engaging	
Learners become more participative and interactive	
Teachers do it first then the learners follow	Learned Through Modeling Approach
Learners appreciate more when the teacher uses object as an example	
Learn better when the teacher inside the television read English words first	
Learners follow the lead of teacher	
Audio-lingual method helps learners to practice speaking	Incorporated Conversational Practice
Able to converse with classmates using the English language	
Can answer and talk to the teacher	
Listening help learners to speak correctly	
Repetition helps learners to master the English words	Progressive Improvement Via Repetition Method
Repetition makes the learners answer the question better	
Repeating the sentences progress learning	
Teachers teach learners to develop speaking skills	Developed Language Fluency
Constant speaking practice develop fluency	
Learners are able to pronounce well with the help of audio-lingual method	

Table 1 presents the experiences of the learners using the audio-lingual method in learning English. It revealed eight emergent themes. The following themes are: enhance listening skills, heighten reading development, increase confidence in sentence Construction, engage in Interactive learning, learn through a modeling approach, incorporate conversational practice, and develop language fluency.

From the clustered experiences shared by the Blaan learners—such as their fondness for listening to and engaging with the teacher, their enjoyment of television-based lessons, and their ease of understanding lessons through multimedia instruction—the emergent theme Enhanced Listening Skills clearly surfaced as one of the most meaningful outcomes of employing the Audio-lingual Method (ALM). Learners consistently expressed that the teacher's spoken delivery, combined with visual and auditory cues from televised instruction, made English lessons more comprehensible and enjoyable. Their consistent positive feedback highlights the power of auditory repetition and media-based learning in improving their ability to listen, understand, and respond in English.

Moreover, the integration of multimedia resources—such as educational television, video clips, and teacher-recorded audio—served not only to grab learners' attention but also to reinforce auditory processing through repetition and meaningful contextualization. Learners mentioned that they were more likely to recall and mimic phrases and sentences when these were paired with images, gestures, or familiar scenes. For example, one learner shared that "I like watching the video and hearing the teacher say the sentence again and again. I can follow and repeat what I hear." This reflection illustrates how multimedia enhances not only passive listening but also active engagement and recall.

In educational theory, these findings are strongly supported by Dual Coding Theory (Paivio, 1991), which asserts that people process verbal and non-verbal information in separate but interconnected channels. When learners are exposed to both words and images

simultaneously, they are more likely to understand and remember the content. Similarly, Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (Mayer, 2009) emphasizes that well-designed multimedia instruction enhances learning by reducing cognitive overload and promoting deeper processing. For early readers or English language learners, this kind of integrated instruction is especially effective, as it allows for multiple points of entry into the meaning-making process.

The theme of Gained Confidence in Sentence Construction also highlights the important role of learner agency. As students become more confident in their writing, they are more likely to take risks with language, explore new sentence forms, and revise their work—behaviors that are essential for continued growth. This aligns with constructivist learning theories, which suggest that learners build knowledge most effectively when they are actively involved and supported within a safe and nurturing learning environment.

Another findings strongly support previous literature emphasizing the cognitive and motivational advantages of multimedia learning and interactive pedagogies. According to Mayer (2009), learners retain more information when presented with verbal and visual input simultaneously, as it reduces cognitive overload and promotes meaningful learning. Similarly, Gee (2003) points out that digital and media-based environments create “situated learning,” where learners gain skills within real or simulated contexts, making knowledge acquisition more authentic. Mercer (2000) and Vygotsky (1978) both affirm that language learning is enhanced when learners interact socially within a meaningful and supportive environment—conditions that were clearly present in the multimedia-supported classroom setup described by the learners.

In addition, the study’s findings strongly resonate with Albert Bandura’s Social Learning Theory, which emphasizes learning through observation and imitation. Bandura (1986) posits that individuals learn new behaviors by watching others and then replicating those behaviors, particularly when the model is perceived as competent or authoritative. Similarly, Rosenthal and Zimmerman (1978) highlight that observational learning is most effective when it includes attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation—components clearly evident in how Blaen learners responded to modeled instruction. Furthermore, Schunk (2012) supports that modeling, particularly in educational contexts, plays a vital role in developing both cognitive skills and self-efficacy among learners. This result supports earlier findings that conversational practice, particularly when rooted in behaviorist principles of repetition and reinforcement, builds fluency, pronunciation, and communicative confidence in second language learners (Richards & Rodgers, 2014; Nation & Newton, 2009; Brown, 2007; Thornbury, 2005). Progressive Improvement via Repetition Method also highlights the psychological impact of repetition on learner performance. Learners began to view English not as a daunting foreign language, but as a set of manageable patterns that could be mastered with practice. The familiarity bred by constant repetition lowered their anxiety and fostered a sense of achievement each time they succeeded in recalling or correctly using a repeated phrase. They also noted that their ability to construct responses became quicker and more automatic over time, reflecting how repetition supported fluency development.

In sum, the emergent theme Developed Language Fluency emphasizes how the structured, repetition-based, and teacher-facilitated nature of ALM contributed significantly to the learners’ oral language development. Through sustained exposure, guided practice, and active engagement, students experienced noticeable gains in their ability to speak fluently and accurately in English. These findings provide compelling evidence for the continued use of the Audio-Lingual Method in contexts where spoken English proficiency is a key instructional goal.

*Table 2. The Learners’ Challenges on Using Audio-lingual Method in Learning English*

<i>Clustered Themes</i>	<i>Emergent Themes</i>
Find it difficult to construct sentences	Found Difficulty to Construct Sentences
Battle with the different styles in writing	
Hard to write English sentences	
Lack of time during writing activity	Limited Vocabulary Development
Tend to write words without even knowing what it meant	
Some lessons hinder from expanding vocabulary	
Limited exposure on English words and phrases	Struggle to Apply the Language Skills
Language skills in audio-lingual method is hard to apply in real-life scenario	
Find it hard to follow what the teacher speaks	
Some lessons lack focus on practical communicative application	Absence of Prior Knowledge
No prior knowledge with the English lesson	
Encounter many unfamiliar words	
Unable to catch-up new English lesson	Poor Comprehension
Cannot understand other English words	
Struggle to comprehend in English	
Felt embarrassed and nervous when the lesson is difficult	Lack of Speaking Confidence
Tend to get shy in speaking English	
Unable to find the words to speak English	
Felt nervous when called to answer in English	Unable to Concentrate with the Lesson
Cannot speak English well	
Unable to concentrate due to noisy classmates	
Poor listening skills leads to poor concentration in learning	
Very challenging for those learners who struggle to learn English	

Table 2 outlines the challenges learners face when using the audio-lingual method in English learning. Seven key themes emerged from the findings: difficulty in constructing sentences, limited vocabulary development, absence of prior knowledge, poor comprehension, lack of speaking confidence, and inability to concentrate during the lesson.

This emergent theme sheds light on the deeper cognitive demands involved in writing in a second language. Constructing written sentences requires learners not only to recall correct structures and vocabulary but also to organize their thoughts logically and present them clearly. Many learners found this process mentally taxing, especially without enough exposure to formal writing instruction. Some recounted being overwhelmed by the pressure of composing quickly during time-limited classroom tasks, which led to incomplete or fragmented responses. Unlike speaking, which can be rehearsed through repetition and modeling, writing demands a higher degree of planning, analysis, and synthesis—skills that require focused and sustained support.

Scholars have long argued that vocabulary learning is most effective when learners are exposed to words multiple times across various contexts and when those exposures are paired with active engagement strategies (Schmitt, 2008; Laufer, 2005; Nation, 2013; Webb & Nation, 2017). The findings from this study strongly support that claim. To promote long-term retention and meaningful usage, educators must move beyond mere repetition and incorporate rich, contextualized vocabulary instruction that nurtures both receptive and productive language skills. Encouraging learners to read extensively, discuss ideas, and reflect on word meanings through authentic tasks may help them transition from passive vocabulary users to confident communicators with a deeper command of the English language.

The emergent theme *Struggle to Apply the Language Skills* emphasizes that while the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) is helpful in internalizing grammatical structures, it often does not equip learners with the skills necessary to engage in natural, interactive communication. Learners heavily depended on rote memorization of dialogues and sentence patterns, which became problematic when they needed to construct responses independently or adapt language to fit new contexts. This reliance on repetition, without opportunities for personalized or situational language practice, hindered their ability to develop communicative competence. The absence of activities that required negotiation of meaning, use of authentic language input, or real-time interaction contributed to the limited transferability of their classroom learning to the real world.

From the clustered themes—no prior knowledge with the English lesson, encountering many unfamiliar words, and being unable to catch up with new English lessons—the emergent theme *Absence of Prior Knowledge* emerged. Learners described their experiences as overwhelming, particularly when lessons introduced vocabulary and concepts that were completely foreign to them. Without a basic understanding or exposure to English prior to classroom instruction, they often found themselves lost and disengaged. As one participant noted, the words “sounded new every time,” making it hard to remember or associate them with anything familiar. The fast pace of instruction, coupled with the lack of pre-existing linguistic anchors, contributed to their difficulty in comprehension and active participation.

Research in second language acquisition confirms the critical role of comprehensible input in facilitating language learning (Krashen, 1985). Krashen argues that learners acquire language best when they are exposed to messages that are slightly above their current level ( $i+1$ ) but still understandable with support. In line with this, the study found that learners who lacked sufficient scaffolding often withdrew from classroom interactions and expressed anxiety, especially when faced with unfamiliar vocabulary or grammar structures. Emotional responses such as nervousness, shame, and fear of failure were common and often discouraged learners from even attempting familiar tasks if the overall lesson seemed too advanced.

This emotional unease was deeply rooted in their fear of being ridiculed, making grammatical errors, or mispronouncing words in front of others. Such fears significantly impacted their willingness to participate, especially in oral recitations, dialogues, or role-play activities that are integral to the Audio-lingual Method (ALM). Despite recognizing that speaking is a necessary part of learning English, many learners felt that the risk of embarrassment outweighed the potential benefits of practice.

The findings are consistent with earlier studies suggesting that comprehensible input, a concept emphasized by Krashen (1982), is crucial for second language learning. Without clear and accessible input, especially in a low-noise, structured environment, learners are unlikely to stay engaged or make meaningful progress. Additionally, Mercer (2011) points out that psychological readiness and emotional security play vital roles in language engagement—learners who feel safe, respected, and supported are more likely to persist even when lessons are difficult.

Table 3 presents the learners' success stories on using the Audio-Lingual Method in learning English. It revealed seven emergent themes: significantly improve reading ability, be able to speak English through imitation, enhance English writing skills, learn to understand English better, increase listening comprehension skills, and be satisfied with using the Audio-Lingual Method to learn English.

From the clustered themes—learners can better read now, learn to answer after proper reading, felt that the Audio-Lingual Method became an avenue to effectively read, and repetition strategy was an effective way of reading enhancement—the emergent theme *Significantly Improve Reading Ability* clearly surfaced. Learners described how the structured and repetitive nature of the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) helped them gain not only confidence and fluency but also greater comprehension when reading English texts. Several participants expressed that before being exposed to ALM-based instruction, they often struggled with word recognition,

pronunciation, and meaning-making. However, after repeated practice with model readings, oral drills, and pattern-based instruction, they were gradually able to decode words more easily, read with greater clarity, and respond accurately to comprehension questions. The method provided a scaffolded learning experience, making the process of reading in English less intimidating and more accessible.

Table 3. *The Learners' Success Stories on Using the Audio-lingual Method in Learning English*

<i>Clustered Themes</i>	<i>Emergent Themes</i>
Learners can better read now	Significantly Improve Reading Ability
Learn to answer after proper reading	
Felt that audio-lingual method became an avenue to effectively read	
Repetition strategy was an effective way of reading enhancement	
Able to be an independent reader	Able to Speak English Through Imitation
Learners easily learn through imitation	
Can speak English now through imitation approach	
Improve English speaking skills via imitating	
Imitating the video lessons in the television develop speaking ability	
Able to write English sentences now	Enhance English Writing Skills
English writing became easier though audio-lingual method	
Improve writing skills in English	
Learn to practice sentence construction more	
Audio-lingual method became an avenue to learn English more	
Able to understand English words now	Learn to Understand English Better
Learn how to answer in English when asked	
Learn a lot of learning and the ability to read, listen and speak English	
Value the importance of listening in understanding English lessons	Increase Listening Comprehension Skills
Able to listen attentively in order to learn and comprehend	
Listen to the teacher in order to answer the questions	
Learn to listen and pay attention to the discussion in English	Satisfied on Using Audio-Lingual Method to Learn English
Went home with a happy heart because of new learning in English	
Love to learn with the help of the video lessons	
Audio-lingual method help develop four macro skills	
The use of lapel and television are very helpful in learning	
Able to converse with the teacher	Practice Conversational English Confidently
Love to talk at home using the English language	
Can now speak English when talking to friends	
Able to teach siblings and friends on how to speak English	
Overcome shyness when talking using the English language	

Learners' testimonies suggested that imitation did not merely serve as a passive learning activity but became an interactive and empowering experience that enabled them to internalize language patterns. The more they engaged in mimicking familiar lines from television, songs, or classroom audio-visual presentations, the more they noticed improvements in their articulation, vocabulary usage, and sentence construction. Imitation acted as a scaffold, allowing learners to gradually move from dependent language use to spontaneous and independent expression. Notably, many learners described how they initially struggled with pronunciation or fluency but found encouragement in copying simple and repetitive phrases, eventually stringing words together into meaningful speech.

This finding aligns with second language acquisition theories that highlight the interdependence of language skills and the benefits of controlled input and output. Scholars like Byrnes and Manchón (2014) and Hyland (2003) assert that writing development in a second language requires both practice and exposure to correct language models. The ALM's focus on accuracy before fluency, though sometimes critiqued in communicative approaches, proved beneficial in this context, particularly in developing the learners' sentence-level writing competence.

In addition, Thornbury (2005) posits that comprehension is not merely about decoding words but understanding how language is used in real-life communicative contexts. ALM's dialogue-based practice reinforces this by presenting learners with practical, everyday language that mirrors real conversation. This functional use of English makes learning more relevant and effective, particularly for learners with limited prior exposure.

These results are consistent with a body of research that highlights the importance of listening in second language acquisition. Goh and Taib (2006) argue that developing metacognitive listening strategies is essential in helping learners monitor and enhance their comprehension processes. Vandergrift (2007) also supports the view that structured listening activities enable learners to develop better decoding and interpretation skills. In line with Richards and Rodgers (2014), the use of listening-based drills in ALM proves beneficial in fostering learners' ability to process and understand oral language input.

Participants described that the presence of video lessons and audio recordings provided them with visual and auditory stimuli, keeping them focused and making each session dynamic. The use of lapel microphones and televisions during instruction ensured that the spoken language was audible and clear, thereby reducing distractions and enhancing comprehension. These tools, when paired with



the method's characteristic emphasis on repetition, pattern drills, and immediate feedback, created an environment where learners could repeatedly hear and imitate correct language forms, reinforcing correct usage and pronunciation.

In summary, the learners' testimonials show that ALM provided more than language instruction—it fostered confidence, autonomy, and empowerment. Learners were not only able to speak English more fluently, but also felt proud and motivated to use their skills to connect with others, teach peers, and express themselves in ways they hadn't before. This confidence marks a critical milestone in their language journey and reflects the transformative potential of well-implemented communicative language teaching strategies.

## Conclusions

The findings from this study reveal meaningful insights into how the Audio-Lingual Method (ALM) shapes the English language learning journey of Grade 6 Blaán learners. Drawing from Tables 1 to 3—representing their experiences, challenges, and success stories—several implications for teaching practice emerge.

First, learners benefitted greatly from visual and auditory support, particularly through the use of television and modeled instruction. These tools enhanced their listening, reading, and writing skills, making language input more comprehensible and engaging. This suggests that multimedia integration and teacher modeling should be sustained and expanded, especially in multilingual and Indigenous contexts where learners may have limited prior exposure to English.

Second, the challenges learners faced—such as limited prior knowledge, poor vocabulary, difficulty concentrating, and struggles with comprehension and sentence construction—indicate the need for more scaffolded instruction. Teachers should pre-teach vocabulary, link new content to learners' background knowledge, and provide clear, culturally sensitive explanations to support deeper understanding. Incorporating interactive and student-centered activities may also address concentration issues and boost learner motivation.

Lastly, the success stories from the learners highlight the effectiveness of ALM in promoting repetition-based learning, improved fluency, confidence in speaking, and greater comprehension. These positive outcomes emphasize the value of structured practice, imitation, and feedback in language acquisition. However, to maximize effectiveness, ALM should be blended with communicative and contextualized tasks that allow learners to apply their language skills meaningfully beyond drills.

Thus, this study affirms that while the Audio-Lingual Method has limitations, it remains a powerful tool when adapted with multimedia, culturally responsive strategies, and learner-centered enhancements. These adjustments are essential for supporting Indigenous learners like the Blaán and ensuring inclusive, effective English language education.

This study offers meaningful insights into how learners experience the audio-lingual method in acquiring English, but it also points to areas that require further investigation. One key direction for future research is to examine the long-term effects of the method, particularly on learners' ability to retain language skills and apply them in real-life situations. It would also be worthwhile to explore how factors such as age, cultural background, and prior language exposure affect the method's success. Understanding these variables could help educators adapt the approach to meet learners' diverse needs better.

Additionally, Future research could also benefit from focusing on specific learner groups, such as indigenous students or those from linguistically marginalized communities, to determine how culturally responsive adaptations of the Audio-Lingual Method can foster more inclusive and effective language instruction. For instance, studies might explore how incorporating Indigenous Knowledge Systems, native language support, or culturally relevant materials into the method could impact learners' motivation and comprehension. Such inquiries would not only broaden the scope of the method's applicability but also promote equity in English language education across diverse contexts.

Moreover, future studies could investigate how integrating modern technologies—such as interactive multimedia, language apps, or online tools—might enhance the audio-lingual method and boost student engagement and outcomes. Research could also focus on modifying the method to address common learner challenges, such as limited vocabulary and difficulty with sentence construction. Exploring how the audio-lingual method can be combined with other instructional approaches may reveal more comprehensive strategies for developing learners' linguistic competence and communicative confidence. Additionally, exploring blended instructional models that combine the audio-lingual approach with other teaching strategies may offer a more holistic learning experience that supports linguistic accuracy and real-world communication and fluency.

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