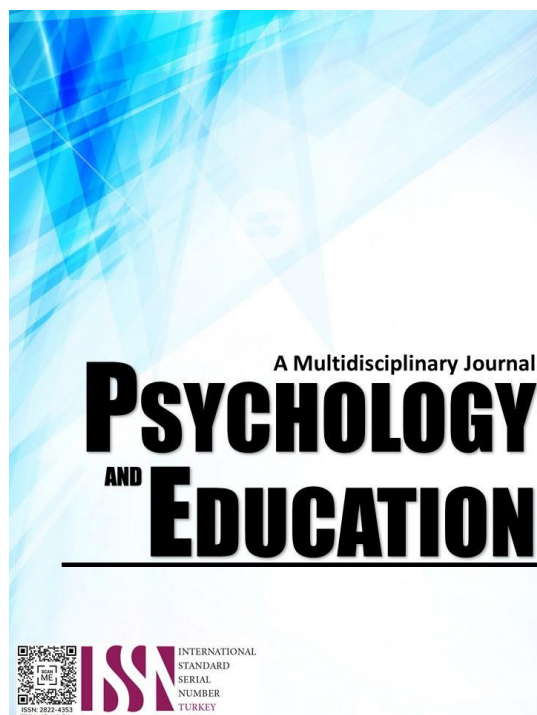


UNFOLDING THE SAGA OF ONLINE ESL TEACHERS: A DESCRIPTIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY



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Unfolding the Saga of Online ESL Teachers: A Descriptive Phenomenological Study

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Abstract

This study investigated and thoroughly analyzed the saga of Online ESL Teachers. Using Collaizi's Descriptive Phenomenological Data Analysis, the researchers interviewed eight (8) Online ESL Teachers who are currently employed in various Online Companies offering English as a Second Language to foreign students. Adapting the seven steps of Collaizi – Familiarization, Identification of Significant Statements, Formulation of Meanings, Group Related Concepts, Creation of Extensive Description, Creation of Basic Structure, and Validation of the Fundamental Structure, the researchers were able to extract the five (5) themes namely: (a) The significant experiences of Online ESL, (b) The incentives of Online ESL Teaching, (c) Opportunities for learning and development, (d) Challenges and difficulties, and (e) The meaning of these experiences. Based on the findings and related studies, the following conclusions were derived: Firstly, Online ESL Teaching provides vast opportunities for teachers for personal, professional, and financial growth. Secondly, Online ESL teaching serves as a perfect avenue for teachers to harness their skills while achieving financial independence. Thirdly, the leadership competencies of Online ESL teachers can be enhanced through mentorship and coaching. Fourthly, developing self-mastery is vital in ensuring quality lesson delivery in the context of Online ESL Teaching. Lastly, reflective teaching is necessary to find true meaning in the Online ESL Teacher's existence.

Keywords: *online ESL teachers, descriptive phenomenological data analysis*

Introduction

English as a second language instruction online has increased dramatically over the past ten years in both the corporate and educational sectors. The demand for English courses is rapidly increasing since non-native English speakers (such as Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, and Koreans) are eager to take them in addition to the obligatory English subjects in their respective curricula. Because of this, the country's need for English as a Second Language (ESL) instructors is barely being addressed by the tiny number of ESL instructors who are natives of the Philippines (Cuenca & Angoya, 2019).

More than that, research has shown that non-native English speakers admire Filipino ESL instructors, making them one of the most in-demand English teachers globally (Pontillas, 2021). Teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) specialize in imparting formal English grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation to non-native speakers of all ages and skill levels. These instructors help students become more comfortable speaking to native English speakers (ESLteacherEDU.org).

Along these lines, applying to teach ESL is less rigorous than applying to teach English in any public or private school. To teach English as a second language, one does not require a degree in teacher education or any prior teaching experience. Raso

(2020), however, asserted that ESL instructors must possess a bachelor's degree in any subject area and have completed courses in TEFL, TESL, and TEL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) (TESOL). Similar to this, Haynes (2015) thought that certified professionals, empathic educators, communicators, and advocates made up English language teachers.

Furthermore, teaching ESL is difficult. A participant, who has worked in the online sector for eight (8) years, shared his experience in a study conducted by Pontillas (2021), highlighting the potential and difficulties he faced as a remote online teacher. According to data gathered by Cuenca and Angoya (2019.), online English teachers actually deal with a number of challenges at work, such as challenges managing lessons, challenges with students, and technical problems.

Nonetheless, despite of the ESL teachers' ups and downs, it is an established fact that teaching English online is a promising career today. Fernandez (2020) presupposed that by 2021, the number of online English learners would increase to two (2) billion, which means that online English teaching jobs have no shortage. Consequently, this gives the unemployed and underemployed teacher education graduates a chance to land online teaching jobs.

In addition to examining the real-world experiences of ESL teachers working with non-native English

speakers, this research paper aimed to provide teacher education institutions (TEIs) with information about potential areas for curriculum and instruction improvement to better prepare graduates for teaching positions in both traditional classroom settings and online industries. Specifically, this study wanted to delve into the lived experiences of ESL teachers, hence, the participants of the study were the purposely chosen eight (8) teachers with three (3) or more years teaching experience and were connected to companies offering English as a second language lessons to foreign students.

Research Questions

This study aimed at exploring the lived experiences of ESL teachers teaching foreign students. Specifically, this study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of the ESL teachers?
2. What is the meaning of an ESL teacher to them?

Literature Review

The number of online ESL teaching positions in the Philippines is steadily rising, creating employment prospects for unemployed Filipinos and underemployed graduates of teacher preparation programs. In fact, at the height of the pandemic, online ESL teaching is one of the secure and in-demand careers (Morales, 2020). ESL instructors were safe and secure when teaching their classes on virtual platforms. Education that takes place online is referred to as online teaching and learning. This type of learning, which is also referred to as remote education or web-based training, is now the newest and most well-liked and has become a crucial component of various educational programs (Sadiku, et al., 2018).

Characteristics of EL Teachers

Haynes (2015) outlined the traits of ESL instructors. According to Haynes, effective ESL instructors are certified experts, compassionate educators, communicators, and champions. certificated because working with ELs requires particular training. If they have had professional training, teachers are confident in their ability to teach English. Because they can relate to their EL students' emotions, show compassion and support for their unique needs, and are aware of how their students' cultures and learning styles may affect their academic performance, ESL teachers are empathetic. ESL teachers are communicators because they need to be able to interact with their coworkers,

their pupils, and the parents in order to be successful. Since they speak for the kids and their families inside the ESL classroom, ESL teachers are advocates. Similar to this, Yoshimi (2020) cited Meer (2018), who said that teachers should have outstanding communication abilities, exceptional listening skills, deep understanding of the subject matter, can build strong relationships with students, and so forth.

Opportunities and Challenges of Online Teaching

Deady (2020) provided 12 reasons for teaching English online. Making decent money, having complete control over the schedule, working from home, gaining valuable ESL teaching experience, working in comfortable clothing, starting out is simple, meeting people from all cultures and opening up future possibilities, being the boss and having a big impact, working with children or adults, and leaving the 9 to 5 job are some of the benefits. Deady's claim is supported by Morales (2020) whose article revealed that the demand for online tutors soured following the lockdown of schools in China, Japan, and other countries. That is to say, online teachers were among the professions that experienced the least stress in terms of providing for their families' needs during the height of the pandemic as they were more financially secure during that time. According to the findings of Muresan et al. in 2021, life happiness, including financial fulfillment, will have an impact on one's quality of life. These findings are consistent with Deady's position.

In line with this, Pontillas (2021) conducted a case study on the benefits and drawbacks of a Filipino educator in the home-based online EFL market. According to his research, Filipino teachers are famous for their excellent characteristics in the teaching profession both at home and abroad, with English teaching being one of the most sought-after specialties. According to studies, non-native English speakers value Filipino teachers at ESL/EFL institutions.

Moreover, the study of Bhattarai and Scholar (2020) revealed that ESL language teachers perceive conducting online classes as both an opportunity and a challenge. They can attempt something new, but they are challenged because, despite their best efforts, they are unable to make online classes as participative as face-to-face classes.

Additionally, workplace difficulties were commonly experienced by Filipino online English teachers. The data gathered by Cuenca and Angoya (2019) summarized the main difficulties that have a negative

impact on the teaching performance of online ESL teachers as follows: 1) difficulties in teaching students, 2) difficulties in the technical aspect, 3) difficulties in managing classes, and 4) difficulties that have a negative impact on teachers' motivation to teach English online.

Furthermore, Steenbergh (2021) described how teachers face and overcome problems in acquiring and implementing best practices for serving the academic demands of English language learners (ELL) in general education settings. The study's major findings revealed that instructors are driven to overcome hurdles of ELLs through three channels: feelings of accomplishment in working with ELL families, empathy for ELLs, and effectively implementing techniques and resources, which led to enhanced self-efficacy. This study's implications include developing programs for teachers that focus on opportunities for success in satisfying student needs. There were signs of a need for intensive pre-service training and early professional development experiences for teachers in educating diverse learners to promote feelings of high self-efficacy early in teachers' tenures.

The Meaning of Being Teachers

According to Tuner and Thielking (2019), teachers found significance in their profession by having a good influence on their students' lives and by fostering relationships with both students and coworkers. However, there was a disconnect between the activities that teachers really engaged in on a daily basis and the ones that they found significant. Teachers' well-being may be enhanced by providing them with assistance in finding meaning in their job and participating in meaningful work activities.

Furthermore, Lavy and Ayuob (2019), who hypothesized that teachers' sense of meaning at work would be related to their performance and that their relationship with their students would mediate this relationship, discovered that their sense of meaning at work is a potential contributor to their performance. The findings also revealed that this may contribute to the resilience of pupils in lower socioeconomic class schools. Teachers' sense of meaning is regarded as a potential resource for teachers, and the necessity of cultivating and growing it has been emphasized in many programs and activities such as teacher training, teacher development, and organizational routines.

Methodology

This research aimed to delve into the lived experiences of teachers teaching ESL to foreign non-native English speakers. To cull their experiences, this study employed the Qualitative Research Design.

Phenomenology can be traced back to the time of the great philosophers: Plato, Socrates, and Aristotle during their struggle to understand phenomena. It thrived in the early 20th century under the philosopher Edmund Husserl, who aimed to establish a rigorous and unbiased approach leading to an essential understanding of human consciousness and experience. Hence, phenomenology aims to (1) gain an in-depth understanding of people's usual experiences and direct the understanding of the phenomenon that is consciously experienced by people themselves (Abu Shosha, 2012).

Similarly, Lester (1999) explained that phenomenological techniques are built on a paradigm of individual subjectivity and knowledge, emphasizing the individual's perspective and interpretation. Phenomenology focuses on the similarities in the lived experiences of the target population. The approach's primary objective, according to Creswell (2013), is to determine the nature of the specific phenomena.

This study used a qualitative research design since it was thought that it would best capture the real-world experiences of the ESL teachers who were teaching foreign non-English native speakers. This study specifically adopted Colaizzi's 1978 strategy for phenomenological data analysis modified by Abu Shosa (2012) and Morrow (2015). The seven steps of this technique include familiarization, identification of significant statements, formulation of meanings, clustering of topics, creation of an extensive description, production of the basic structure, and verification of the fundamental structure.

Although this method is founded on a paradigm of personal knowledge and subjectivity emphasizing personal perspective and interpretation, the participants' lived experiences offered insights not only to the ESL teachers but also to the administrators and mentors of Teacher Education Institutions on what kinds of improvements they need to integrate to the Teacher Education Curriculum and to other curricular programs to prepare their graduates, should they be interested in becoming ESL teachers.

Participants

The participants of the study were the purposely chosen eight (8) ESL teachers connected to online ESL

companies offering lessons to foreign students. These participants have a minimum of three (3) years of experience as online ESL teachers. This was done in order for the researcher to know whether these participants have commonalities in terms of experience in teaching using the online platform. Selection of the participants were based on the following criteria: 1) they should be either holder of any bachelor's degree or graduate degree, 2) three (3) years and above teaching online ESL, 3) they should be connected to ESL Companies offering lessons to foreign students, and 4) they should have at least booked 55 slots per cut off (every 15 days).

Instruments of the Study

Given that narratives can be told either orally or in writing, this research used the Written Interview Form (WIF) to capture the participant's responses to the research questions. In accordance with the Data Privacy Act, the participants in this study shared their experiences through the WIF. The WIF included questions concerning the information required as well as inquiries about the lived experiences of ESL teachers and what it means to them to be ESL teacher.

Procedures

One of the duties of the researchers is to collect baseline data that will form the foundation for administrative decisions. The administration's commitment to ensuring that graduates have employment and career prospects once they leave the school is one of its key priorities. Regardless of their fields of study, graduates can find jobs in the ESL online sector, which is currently seeing rapid growth. The COVID-19 pandemic's delimiting conditions have made it difficult for many graduates to obtain employment. As a result, the researchers—who have been working as online ESL teachers made the decision to carry out this study.

This study's main goals were to look into the participants lived experiences as ESL teachers. Based on these experiences, the researchers hoped to determine the areas where HEIs can use as a starting point for reviewing and enhancing their curricula. After this, the researchers contacted the intended participants to ascertain their interest in taking part in the study. The researchers began formulating the proposal and writing communications to the participants asking for their consent to participate in the study. After that, the researchers consulted other experts and devised interview questions. On the advice of internal and outside specialists, the research

instrument was modified. The researchers used the WIFs and sent these to the participants via their social media accounts while adhering to the Data Privacy Act. Following this, the participants' lived experiences were gathered and analyzed using Colaizzi's (1978) strategy of descriptive phenomenological data analysis (Abu Shosha, 2012 & Morrow, 2015). The participants were, likewise, informed that a verification interview would be conducted to ensure that the transcribed responses were valid.

The primary researcher and a second independent researcher conducted a method parallel to data collecting to establish the degree of data saturation. Then, both researchers' opinions served as the basis for determining saturation. After the formulation of themes based on the identified significant statements, the researchers returned the interpreted data to the participants for verification of the fundamental structure of their responses. In the end, a freelance researcher with expertise in qualitative research double-checked the transcripts.

To clearly explain the procedures, the following steps adapted from Abu Shosa (2012) and Morrow (2015) were carried out in this study:

Step 1. Familiarization

Reading through each participant's narrative multiple times allows the researcher to become familiar with the data during the phase known as familiarization. In this study, the WIF included detailed questions on the participants' lived experiences as online ESL teachers as well as what it meant to be an online ESL instructor. The researchers read the response of each participant to every question several times in order to get a sense of his/her answer.

Step 2. Identification of significant Statements

In the second stage, known as identifying significant statements, the researchers acknowledged all narrative assertions that are relevant to the online ESL teachers' experiences. The analysis at this step consisted of extracting significant phrases and sentences from each narrative that were connected to the participants' actual experiences working as online ESL teachers. These were recorded on distinct sheets and labeled with "transcript, page, and line numbers." After extracting the essential remarks from the transcripts, the researchers analyzed their findings and reached an agreement.

Step 3. Formulation of Meanings

Meanings relevant to the online ESL teachers' experiences are selected from noteworthy statements

made by participants in this step. In this investigation, the researchers bracketed their assumptions in order to stay as close to the phenomenon as possible. Colaizzi, on the other hand, claims that perfect bracketing is difficult to achieve.

Step 4. Group Related Concepts

The researchers organized the identified meanings into themes that are shared by all narratives. Again, bracketing presuppositions are critical, especially to eliminate any potential effect of existing theory.

Step 5. Creation of an Extensive Description

The fifth process is developing a comprehensive description, in which the researchers constructed a detailed account of the online ESL teachers' experiences that incorporates all of the topics developed in step 4.

Step 6. Creation of the Basic Structure

In this step, the researchers condensed the extensive description into a compact, packed statement that only covers the aspects deemed critical to the structure of the online ESL teachers' experiences.

Step 7. Verification of the Fundamental Structure

The researchers returned the basic structured statements to all participants to see if they accurately represented their experiences as online ESL teachers. They questioned the participants about the portions of their comments that needed clarification, and earlier steps in the analysis were updated in response to the latter's feedback.

Results and Discussion

The eight (8) online ESL teachers who teach students from non-English speaking nations shared their own experiences in this descriptive phenomenological study. Following Colaizzi's descriptive phenomenological approach, five (5) themes were derived: (1) The Significant Experiences of Online ESL, (2) The Incentives of Online ESL Teachers, (3) Opportunities for Learning and Development, (4) Challenges and Difficulties, and (5) The Meaning of These Experiences.

Table 1. *First Theme (The Significant Experiences of Online ESL)*

Learning New Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Striving hard to make the lessons enjoyable • Improving one's communication skills • using appropriate teaching methods. • Multi-tasking and proper use of time • Adapting to the online teaching modality
Loving and Caring Students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaining students' love and respect • Getting appreciated by students • Making friends with students
Expanding One's Horizon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning the students' culture and their language • Understanding foreign students' characteristics • Nurturing one's professional growth
Validating One's Purpose of Existence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeing the students' improvement

As shown in Table 1, the participants revealed that their experiences in Online ESL Teaching gave them the opportunity to learn new skills since they need to strive to make the lessons enjoyable, improve their communication skills, use appropriate teaching methods, multi-tasking and proper use of time, and adapting to the online teaching modality. In addition, they also experienced love and care from their students. Through Online ESL Teaching, they were able to gain the love and respect of their students, appreciation, and even make friends with them. Moreover, Online ESL Teaching has broadened their horizons since they learn the students' culture and language, understand foreign students' characteristics and constantly nurture one's professional growth. Furthermore, they can validate the purpose of their existence through their students' improvement. Generally, Online ESL Teaching has a positive impact on the teacher's holistic development since it encompasses various aspects of personal and professional growth. The findings of the study support the characteristics identified by Meer (2018 as cited in Yoshimi (2020) have excellent communication skills, superior listening skills, deep knowledge of and passion for the subject matter, the ability to develop strong relationships with the students, friendliness and approachability, preparation and organization skills, strong work ethics, and the ability to build a community. Since many formal schoolteachers also do Online ESL teaching as their part-time job, this allows regular teachers to enhance their skills for the benefits of both formal and online ESL students. Additionally, it can be gleaned from these findings that the inclusion of foreign languages as well as the study of the culture

of non-English native speakers who enroll in online ESL lessons can be beneficial to the students should they engage in online ESL teaching jobs.

Table 2. *Second Theme (The Incentives of Online ESL Teaching)*

<p>Nurturing an Innate Growth Mindset</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing one's knowledge of the use of ICT • Learning about the students' culture • Enhancing teaching strategies and class management • Enhancing communication, social, and technology skills <p>Meeting the Financial Needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earning money to sustain the needs of the family • Earning extra income for oneself • Increasing financial stability <p>Basking in flexibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working at home enables teachers to multi-task • Working at one's own pace • Stress-free working environment

Table 2 presents the second theme which is "The Incentives of Online ESL Teaching". Apart from the experience, there are more in Online ESL Teaching than anyone can imagine. For instance, Online ESL Teaching provides the opportunity to nurture one's growth mindset by enhancing one knowledge of ICT, learning about students' culture, enhancing teaching strategies and class management, and enhancing communication, social, and technology skills. In addition, Online ESL Teachers will be able to meet financial needs by earning money for their families and for themselves and increasing one's financial stability. Moreover, Online ESL Teachers can also bask in the flexibility of online teaching by working from home, working at their own pace, and stress-free working environment. The responses of the participants simply suggest that satisfaction in work brings joy and contentment. The findings are supported by the study conducted by Layard (2011, as cited in Muresan et al., 2021) hypothesized that happiness and life satisfaction are the ultimate goals of human life. Consequently, the study of financial satisfaction and the contributing factors are essential in strengthening individual financial happiness (Xiao 2008; Xiao et al., 2009; Joo, 2008 as cited in Muresan et al., 2021). In other words, according to Michalos (2008, as cited in Muresan et al., 2021) the quality of life will be affected by life satisfaction including

financial satisfaction.

Table 3. *Third Theme (Opportunities for Learning and Development)*

<p>Growing While Working</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing career path for teachers • Participating in professional development activities • Getting promotions through training <p>Coaching and Mentoring</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading other online ESL • Mentoring and coaching other teachers • Validating and evaluating one's skills through mentorship and coaching <p>Traversing the Elephants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing through obstacles and challenges • Overcoming difficulties • Learning from experiences <p>Encouraging People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivating people by loving their work • Upskilling oneself • Getting promotions through training

Table 3 presents the third theme which is on the Opportunities for Learning and Development in Online ESL Teaching. The participants were candid in sharing this aspect of their experiences in online teaching. They consider their work experience significant for their growth while working since it provides career paths, through their participation in professional development activities and getting promotions through training. Coaching and mentoring have also been a part of Online ESL Teaching. Online ESL Teachers have also the opportunity to lead other online ESL through coaching and mentoring which provides them the avenue to validate and evaluate their skills. Despite the presence of elephants in the room, obstacles and challenges have become part of Online ESL's growth and development through overcoming difficulties and learning from various experiences. The importance of learning and development opportunities for teachers regardless of what platform one uses is crucial to the success of teaching and learning. In the study conducted by Barrow and Markman-Pithers (2016, as cited in Steenbergh, 2021) the lack of credentialed educators available to teach has been plaguing English Language Learners (ELL) Teaching. Interestingly, in the US, the short-term projections show a need for 24% increase of ESL educators to meet the growing demand (Barrow & Markman-Pithers, 2016 as cited in Steenbergh, 2021). This means that there is really a need to train more ESL teachers to address the

shortage. Despite the challenges experienced by Online ESL teachers, Pontillas (2021) posited that these opportunities and challenges that online teachers faced have paved the way for their professional and professional development.

Table 4. *Fourth Theme (The Challenges and Difficulties Encountered by Online ESL Teachers)*

<p>Dealing with Students' Behavior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' adverse behavior, attitude, and personality • Negative feedback from students • Diversity of learners <p>Negotiating with Parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents' behavior • Challenging one's patience <p>Self-Mastery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hectic schedule • Fatigue • sustaining one's energy • controlling one's emotions • language barrier • incurring penalties <p>Bracing through internet and power outages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor internet connection • power interruption • power outage
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Table 4 shows the challenges and difficulties encountered by Online ESL Teachers in the conduct of online classes. The number one challenge is dealing with students' adverse behavior, negative feedback from students after the lesson, and the diversity of learners. Also, negotiating with parents has become a real struggle for Online ESL Teachers since there are parents who have negative behavior which challenges the teacher's patience. Self-Mastery is also one of the many skills an Online ESL teacher must master especially in managing his or her hectic schedule, fatigue due to overwork, sustaining one's energy all throughout the lesson, controlling one's emotions, language barrier, and incurring penalties. Lastly, the teacher's internet connectivity also plays a vital role in his or her teaching. Poor internet connection, power interruption, and outages have become common issues for Online ESL Teaching and this can lead to frustrations among Online ESL teachers since sudden power outages can incur penalties. In the study conducted by (Adnan & Anwar, 2020; Lestiyawati & Widyanoto, 2020, as cited in Hashemi, 2021), a common problem encountered in online education is the poor network connection of both students and

teachers in countries with poor internet infrastructures access to learning materials from the internet can be a real challenge. In addition, Aslam et al. (2021) revealed that external factors, such as unstable internet connection, electricity, and internal ones, like management, online platforms, access to proper devices, internet literacy, and concentration difficulties have impacted the quality of Online teaching. This was also supported by the findings of the study conducted by Cuenca and Angoya (2021) revealing the technical challenges that online teachers experience such as slow internet connection, basic troubleshooting, and electricity sudden outage. In addition, Cuenca and Angoya (2021) cited major challenges in teaching students that include unclear pronunciation, unpredictable behavior, less responsive and difficult to comprehend, being condescending and rude, sensitive to correction, being overly shy, and cultural differences.

Table 5. *Fifth Theme (The Meaning of These Experiences)*

<p>The Dawning Insights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health is wealth • Experiences are the best teachers • Championing diverse learners • Educational Qualifications and Achievements are not equal to teaching effectiveness and efficiency • Teachers don't have full control over whom to teach • Online teaching is not easy <p>The Hacks of Successful Online ESL Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination, • Hard work • Positive thinking • Compassion • Strong heartedness • Reflection • Multi-tasking • Technology savviness • Empathy • Trustworthiness • Future-changer <p>The Perks of Online ESL Teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra income • Being appreciated by students • Seeing students learn and improve • The comfort of teaching at home • Establishing friendship and trust • Being considered as a family member by the students • Being part of a noble cause
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Table 5 shows the fifth theme which is "The Meaning of These Experiences". Insights dawned on the participants as they look back at their experiences as Online ESL Teachers. They realized that health is wealth, experiences are best teachers, championing diverse learners, and educational qualifications are not equal to teaching effectiveness, no control over whom

to teach, and online teaching is never easy. The participants were also able to identify important characteristics of Online ESL Teachers such as determination, hard work, positive thinking, compassion, strong-heartedness, reflection, multitasking, technology savviness, empathy, trustworthiness, and future changer. Moreover, the perks of Online ESL Teachers are best enjoyed with extra income, being appreciated by students, seeing students learn and improve, the comfort of teaching at home, establishing friendships and trust, being considered as a family member, and being part of the noble cause. The findings support the 12 awesome reasons why teachers teach online by Deady (2020) which are earning money, enjoying flexibility, working from home, gaining valuable ESL teaching experience, working in pajamas, getting started is easy, meeting people from different cultures, opening doors for the future, being your own boss, making positive impact, working with kids and adults and ditching 9-5 jobs.

Conclusion

Based on the above findings, the following deductions were made: (1) Firstly, Online ESL Teaching provides vast opportunities for teachers for personal, professional, and financial growth. Online ESL teaching is a decent alternative job for professionals, especially teachers who are seeking growth both in their personal and professional careers while productively making use of their time to earn extra money in the comfort of their homes. (2) Secondly, Online ESL teaching serves as a perfect avenue for teachers to harness their skills while achieving financial independence. While unemployment is a problem in all countries, Online ESL teaching provides a promising platform for both employed and unemployed teachers to continuously develop their skills while providing for their families, therefore, enhancing understanding of foreign culture and inclusion of foreign languages in the tertiary level curricular programs particularly in the teacher education curriculum can be beneficial to potential ESL teachers in general. (3) Thirdly, leadership competencies of Online ESL teachers can be enhanced through mentorship and coaching. Learning and development are vital aspects of one's professional life and therefore should be given paramount importance. In the context of 21st-century learning, mentorship, and coaching are significant tools for harnessing both the competencies of mentors and mentees, as well as that of the coaches and coachee. (4) Fourthly, developing self-mastery is vital in ensuring quality

lesson delivery in the context of Online ESL Teaching. Online ESL teachers are prone to stress, fatigue, and mental exhaustion. Thus, self-mastery is important to be able to control oneself to strike a perfect work-life balance. (5) Lastly, reflective teaching is necessary to find true meaning in the Online ESL Teacher's existence. Teaching works best when teachers reflect on their teaching. Through it, they would be able to adjust, modify, and change their actions to suit the needs of their students.

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