
COMPARATIVE STUDY ON ONLINE VERSUS TRADITIONAL ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) INSTRUCTION IN THE LENS OF MIGRANT FILIPINO TEACHERS IN CHINA: EFFECTIVENESS AND LEARNER ENGAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

This study compared online and traditional English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) instruction as perceived by migrant Filipino teachers working in China, with particular attention to instructional effectiveness and learner engagement. Using a descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 55 Filipino ESL teachers through a validated survey that rated effectiveness across five domains (instructional delivery, behavioral engagement, cultural adaptation, institutional support, and assessment/feedback) and learner engagement across five dimensions (behavioral, emotional, cognitive, social interaction, and instructional responsiveness). Results indicate that both modalities were perceived as effective, but traditional (face-to-face) instruction consistently received higher ratings. Overall means were 4.20 (Highly Effective) for online instruction and 4.55 (Very Highly Effective) for traditional instruction; differences were statistically significant ($F = 41.20$, $p < .001$). Learner engagement followed the same pattern (overall means: online = 3.91; traditional = 4.47; $F = 42.61$, $p < .001$). Older and more experienced teachers tended to view online instruction as less effective (negative correlations), while sex showed a significant relationship with perceptions of traditional instruction in some domains. Findings reveal the continuing strengths of in-person contexts for immediacy, social interaction, and formative feedback, while acknowledging the relative strengths and adaptability demonstrated in online delivery. Based on these results, the study proposes a targeted capability-building program emphasizing digital pedagogy, online classroom management, culturally responsive practices, and assessment literacy to strengthen ESL outcomes across modalities.

Keywords: Online ESL Instruction, Traditional ESL Instruction, Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers, Effectiveness, Learner Engagement

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the shift in pedagogical practices on a global scale that has lasting implications for educational systems in terms of guidelines. English as a Second Language (ESL) teaching is among the most affected domains, especially for migrant teachers transitioning into new instructional modalities. It is noteworthy that migrant Filipino teachers were assigned to China, one of the countries with a growing need for English proficiency. This backdrop necessitates an inquiry into the comparative effectiveness and engagement outcomes of online versus traditional classroom ESL instruction. Their experience and perception of these Filipino educators reflect on instructional dynamics, pedagogical adaptation, and student interactivity in different learning environments (Gonzales & David, 2022).

One of the most critical issues in ESL instruction focuses on the delivery of content. Traditional face-to-face teaching remains essential because it allows teachers to interpret body language, manage the classroom effectively, and respond to feedback in real time. These elements contribute to a more contextualized and interactive learning experience (Torres and Salazar, 2022). On the other hand, online ESL instruction relies on both synchronous and asynchronous methods, which demand a high level of technological proficiency and adjustments in teaching strategies. Various factors, such as digital infrastructure, institutional support, and cultural differences, influence the effectiveness of online teaching for migrant Filipino educators (Martinez and De Leon, 2022). In addition, uneven access to technology across different regions in China presents further challenges to consistent instruction and student participation.

The present study addresses this oversight by examining instructional effectiveness and learner engagement from the perspective of Filipino ESL teachers who work in China. By doing so, it aims to provide a more nuanced and comprehensive view of ESL instruction within a transnational educational setting. This approach helps illuminate how teaching practices, support structures, and cultural integration intersect to shape both teacher experiences and learner outcomes—an intersection that has been largely underexplored in the existing body of ESL research.

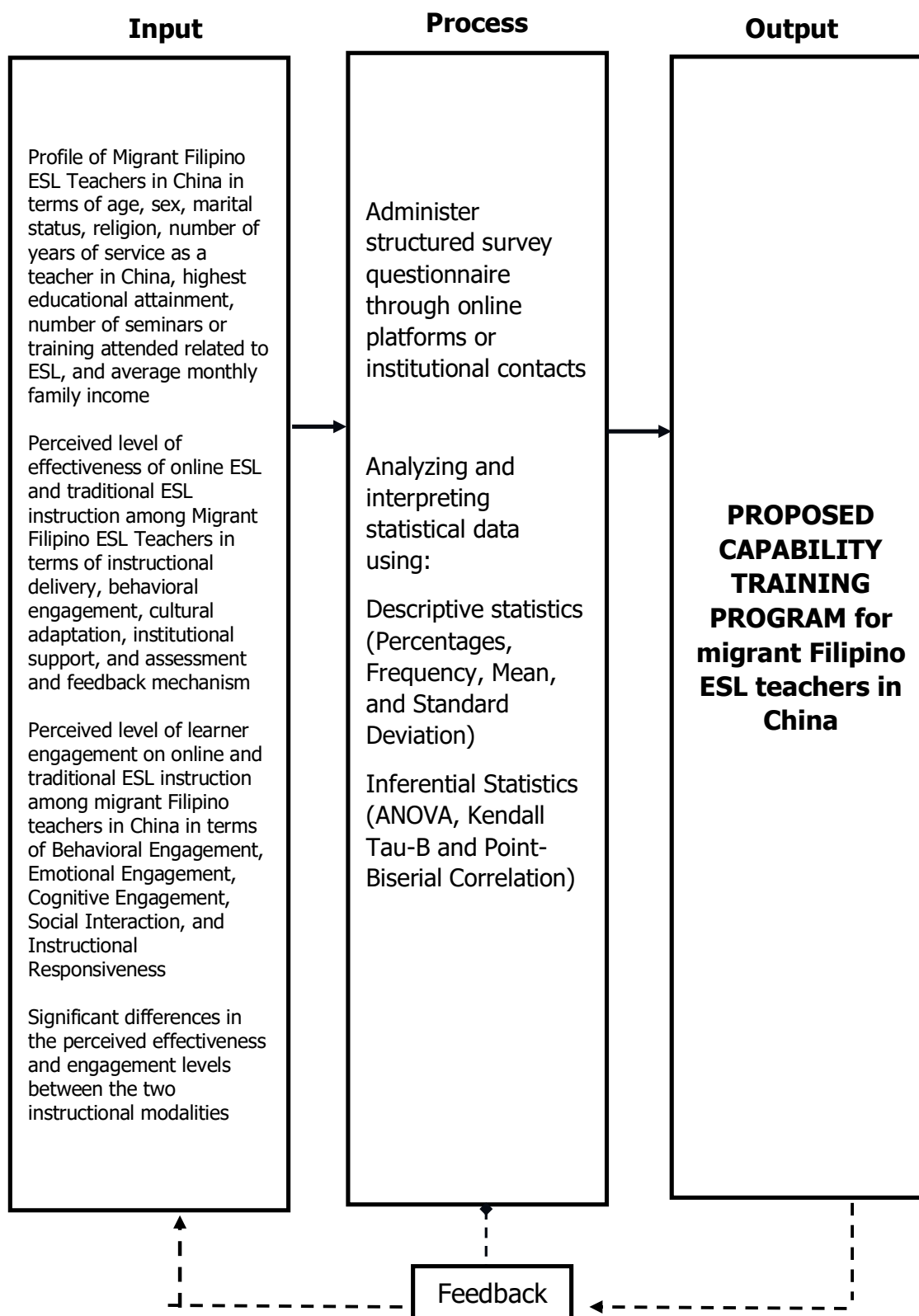
Statement of the Problem

The main purpose of this study is to compare Online versus Traditional ESL Instruction from the perspective of Migrant Filipino Teachers in China, focusing on Effectiveness and Learner Engagement. Specifically, it intends to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China in terms of:
 - a. age;
 - b. sex;
 - c. marital status;
 - d. religion;
 - e. number of years of service as a teacher in China;
 - f. highest educational attainment;
 - g. number of seminars or training attended related to ESL; and
 - h. average monthly family income?

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2. What is the perceived level of effectiveness of online ESL and traditional ESL instruction among Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China in terms of:
 - a. Instructional delivery;
 - b. Behavioral engagement
 - c. Cultural adaptation;
 - d. Institutional support; and
 - e. Assessment and feedback mechanism?
 3. What is the perceived level of learner engagement on online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino teachers in China in terms of:
 - a. Behavioral Engagement;
 - b. Emotional Engagement;
 - c. Cognitive Engagement;
 - d. Social Interactions; and
 - e. Instructional Responsiveness
 4. Is there a significant difference in the perceived level of effectiveness of online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino teachers in China?
 5. Is there a significant difference in the perceived level of learner engagement on online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino teachers in China?
 6. Is there a significant relationship between the perceived level of effectiveness of online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino teachers in China and their profile variables?
 7. Is there a significant relationship between the perceived level of learner engagement in online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino teachers in China and their profile variables?
 8. What capability training program may be proposed based on the results of the study?

Figure 1. *Paradigm of the Study*



METHODS

This chapter presents the method and procedures used in this study and the treatment of data. It outlines the research design, research context, and participants, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques employed to compare the online versus traditional ESL instruction in the lens of migrant Filipino teachers in China for its effectiveness and learner engagement.

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research design, specifically adopted a descriptive correlational approach, to systematically examine and compare the perceived effectiveness and learner engagement in online versus traditional English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction among migrant Filipino teachers in China. Quantitative research was grounded in the collection and statistical analysis of numerical data, enabling the objective measurement of variables and the identification of patterns and relationships within a defined population (Lim, 2024). The descriptive correlational design, in particular, was a non-experimental method that facilitated the exploration of associations among variables without altering the natural settings in which the phenomena occurred (Akinlua, 2019). This approach was appropriate for understanding both the characteristics of the respondents and the connections among the variables of interest.

The descriptive component of the research provided a detailed account of the demographic and professional profile of migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China. These included age, sex, marital status, religion, years of service as a teacher in China, highest educational attainment, number of ESL-related seminars or training sessions attended, and average monthly family income. The correlational component was used to assess the strength and direction of statistical relationships between selected profile variables and respondents' perceptions of ESL instructional effectiveness and learner engagement.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents in this study were Filipino nationals currently or recently employed as ESL instructors in China, with professional experience in both online and traditional (face-to-face) teaching modes. This population was selected for their dual exposure to the instructional formats under examination, ensuring that participants could provide informed comparisons of effectiveness and learner engagement.

The study utilized purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique in which participants were selected based on specific characteristics aligned with the research objectives. In purposive sampling, the researcher used judgment to identify individuals most likely to provide relevant, rich, and diverse data (Nyimbili, 2024). This method was appropriate for the current research, as it targeted a specific subset of ESL teachers—those with direct experience in both online and traditional teaching settings—whose insights were essential for exploring the perceived differences in instructional effectiveness and engagement.

Approximately 55 respondents were recruited through professional teaching networks, expatriate community forums, and communication platforms such as WeChat, which were commonly used among Filipino educators in China. This sample size was deemed sufficient to capture a range of perspectives and experiences while remaining

manageable for data collection and analysis. The selection aimed for diversity in terms of years of teaching experience, institutional affiliation (e.g., private language centers, public schools, international schools), and geographical locations within China, to enhance the representativeness and depth of the findings.

Target Respondents of the Study

Respondent Category	Frequency
Filipino ESL Teachers in China	55
Total	55

Data Gathering Instrument

The primary instrument used for data collection in this study is a structured survey questionnaire. A survey questionnaire enables researchers to efficiently gather standardized, quantifiable information from a broad sample (Kuphanga, 2024). This instrument is particularly appropriate for descriptive-comparative research as it captures complex constructs such as instructional effectiveness and learner engagement through measurable indicators.

The questionnaire is composed of three main parts, each aligned with the specific objectives and research questions of the study:

Data Gathering Procedure

This study was conducted in a structured, ethical manner to verify the accuracy, reliability, and credibility of the collected data. The primary instrument for data collection was a self-administered online survey questionnaire, designed to gather quantitative data on the perceived effectiveness and learner engagement in both online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino teachers in China.

The data collection took approximately four weeks to allow sufficient time for participants to complete the survey at their convenience. All data was collected electronically and stored securely, accessible only to the researcher. Upon completion of data collection, responses were organized, coded, and analyzed statistically to answer the research questions and support evidence-based conclusions.

Statistical Treatment of Data

This study employed both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to analyze the quantitative data collected from migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China. The application of these methods ensured comprehensive and objective analysis to address the research questions and yield meaningful insights regarding the comparative effectiveness and learner engagement in online versus traditional ESL instruction.

To address Research Question 1, which sought to determine the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, marital status, religion, number of years of service as a teacher in China, highest educational attainment, number of ESL-related seminars or training attended, and average monthly family income, descriptive statistics were utilized. Specifically, frequency counts and percentage distributions were computed to summarize and present the categorical variables, providing a clear picture of the respondent population's characteristics.

For Research Questions 2 and 3, which assessed the perceived level of effectiveness and learner engagement in both online and traditional ESL instruction, the data were analyzed using measures of central tendency, particularly the mean, and measures of variability, such as the standard deviation. Responses were based on a five-point Likert scale, and the data were treated as interval-level data to enable strong statistical interpretation. These descriptive statistics allowed for comparison of average responses across key dimensions of effectiveness (instructional delivery, behavioral engagement, cultural adaptation, institutional support, and assessment and feedback mechanisms) and learner engagement (behavioral, emotional, cognitive, social interaction, and instructional responsiveness). The following interpretation scale was used:

For Effectiveness and Learner Engagement:

Statistical Range	Mean Range	Descriptive Rating
5	4.51 – 5.00	Very Highly Effective
4	3.51 – 4.50	Highly Effective
3	2.51 – 3.50	Moderately Effective
2	1.51 – 2.50	Low
1	1.00 – 1.50	Very Low

To address Research Questions 4 and 5, which aimed to determine whether there were significant differences in the perceived levels of effectiveness and learner engagement between online and traditional ESL instruction, repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed. This inferential statistical test was appropriate for comparing the mean scores of two related groups—in this case, the same group of respondents evaluating both online and traditional instruction. The repeated-measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to assess whether the observed differences in means were statistically significant, with a standard significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$.

For Research Questions 6 and 7, which examined the potential relationships between the respondents' profile variables and their perceived levels of instructional effectiveness and learner engagement, Kendall Tau-B and Point-Biserial Correlation were used for continuous variables (e.g., age, years of experience, number of trainings), and Kendall Tau-B was used for ordinal or non-normally distributed data. These analyses revealed whether there were statistically significant correlations between respondent characteristics and their perceptions of online and traditional ESL instruction.

Finally, in response to Research Question 8, the findings of the study, particularly the results of the descriptive and inferential analyses, served as the empirical basis for the formulation of a capability training program. This program aimed to address the gaps and challenges identified in both online and traditional ESL teaching contexts and enhance the professional competencies of migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the data gathered, the statistical analysis results, and the interpretation of the findings. The data were systematically organized and presented in tables to address the research problems.

Profile of the Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China

The first problem of the study analyzed the profiles of 55 migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China in terms of age, sex, marital status, religion, years of service in China, highest educational attainment, number of ESL-related seminars or training attended, and average family monthly income. This is presented in Table 1 on the next page.

Age

Most respondents (49.1%) are aged 36 to 45, followed by 36.4% aged 26 to 35. Only 12.7% are aged 46 to 55, while a small minority (1.8%) are 25 years old and below. No respondent was aged 56 and above. This age distribution suggests that the ESL workforce in China is largely composed of mid-career professionals. According to Garcia and Lim (2022), mid-career teachers often exhibit a balance between pedagogical adaptability and teaching efficacy.

Level of Effectiveness of Online ESL and Traditional ESL Instruction among Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China in Terms of Instructional Delivery

The second problem of the study explored the perceived level of effectiveness of online ESL and traditional ESL instruction among Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China in terms of instructional delivery, behavioral engagement, cultural adaptation, institutional support, assessment, and feedback mechanisms. This was presented and discussed in Tables 2 – 6.

Table 2
Level of Effectiveness of Online ESL and Traditional ESL Instruction among Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China in Terms of Instructional Delivery
n=55

Indicators		Level Of Effectiveness									
		Online					Traditional				
		VHE	HE	ME	L	VL	VHE	HE	ME	L	VL
can deliver the lessons in a clear and organized manner.	F	26	22	7	0	0	39	15	1	0	0
	%	47.3	40.0	12.7	0.0	0.0	70.9	27.3	1.8	0.0	0.0
can effectively use instructional technologies or tools.	F	24	24	7	0	0	40	13	2	0	0
	%	43.6	43.6	12.7	0.0	0.0	72.7	23.6	3.6	0.0	0.0

can implement differentiated instruction based on students' needs.	F	22	24	9	0	0	40	13	2	0	0
	%	40.0	43.6	16.4	0.0	0.0	72.7	23.6	3.6	0.0	0.0
can maintain instructional flow with minimal disruptions.	F	15	29	10	1	0	33	16	6	0	0
	%	27.3	52.7	18.2	1.8	0.0	60.0	29.1	10.9	0.0	0.0
can incorporate multimedia or teaching aids to enhance instruction.	F	31	21	3	0	0	39	14	2	0	0
	%	56.4	38.2	5.5	0.0	0.0	70.9	25.5	3.6	0.0	0.0
Mean		4.29 - Highly Effective					4.65 – Very Highly Effective				

Note: Highest frequencies are in bold face

1.00-1.50 Very Low (VL)

1.51-2.50 Low (L)

2.51-3.50 Moderately Effective (ME)

3.51-4.50 Highly Effective

(HE)

4.51-5.00 Very Highly Effective (VHE)

Table 2 presents the perceived level of effectiveness of online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China, specifically in terms of instructional delivery. The data show that both instructional modalities were perceived positively; however, traditional instruction was consistently rated higher across all indicators. The overall mean rating for traditional ESL instruction was 4.65, interpreted as *Very Highly Effective*, while online ESL instruction received a mean rating of 4.29, interpreted as *Highly Effective*. This indicates that although both modalities were effective, traditional instruction provided a clearer edge in terms of delivery quality, according to the ESL teachers.

The differences in effectiveness ratings between the two modalities can be further understood through Constructivist Learning Theory and the Community of Inquiry Framework, which emphasize the importance of immediacy, instructional clarity, and teaching presence. In traditional settings, migrant Filipino teachers have more control over the physical learning environment, better classroom management, and richer real-time social cues. All of which contribute to clearer, more organized, and more responsive instructional delivery. These findings are consistent with studies by Del Rosario & Bautista (2022) and Teng (2023), who found that instructional effectiveness is strongly linked to the teacher's ability to adapt instruction in real-time, something more easily done in face-to-face settings.

Both online and traditional modalities were deemed effective by migrant Filipino ESL teachers; however, traditional ESL instruction was consistently rated more highly across all instructional delivery indicators. These findings reinforce the value of face-to-

face interaction in achieving clear, organized, and responsive instruction, and underscore the need for more targeted training and technological support for teachers experiencing the challenges of online delivery.

Level of Effectiveness of Online ESL and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China in Terms of Behavioral Engagement

Table 3 presents the comparative effectiveness of online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China in terms of behavioral engagement. The results show that both modalities were perceived as effective; however, traditional instruction was rated significantly higher, with an overall mean of 4.56 (*Very Highly Effective*) compared to 4.01 (*Highly Effective*) for online instruction. This suggests that traditional classroom settings are more conducive to sustaining students' behavioral engagement, such as participation, attentiveness, and task completion.

Table 3
Level of Effectiveness of Online ESL and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China in Terms of Behavioral Engagement
n=55

Indicators		Level Of Effectiveness									
		Online					Traditional				
		VHE	HE	ME	L	VL	VHE	HE	ME	L	VL
can facilitate active student participation in tasks and discussions.	F	16	27	12	0	0	35	19	1	0	0
	%	29.1	49.1	21.8	0.0	0.0	63.6	34.5	1.8	0.0	0.0
can keep students attentive and focused during lessons.	F	11	29	13	2	0	28	24	3	0	0
	%	20.0	52.7	23.6	3.6	0.0	50.9	43.6	5.5	0.0	0.0
can encourage consistent class participation.	F	16	27	12	0	0	36	17	2	0	0
	%	29.1	49.1	21.8	0.0	0.0	65.5	30.9	3.6	0.0	0.0
can ensure that students regularly complete learning activities and assignments.	F	18	26	10	1	0	30	24	1	0	0
	%	32.7	47.3	18.2	1.8	0.0	54.5	43.6	1.8	0.0	0.0

can effectively manage off-task behavior or distractions.	F	12	28	13	2	0	33	21	1	0	0
	%	21.8	50.9	23.6	3.6	0.0	60.0	38.2	1.8	0.0	0.0
Mean		4.01 - Highly Effective					4.56 – Very Highly Effective				

Note: Highest frequencies are in bold face

1.00-1.50 Very Low (VL)

1.51-2.50 Low (L)

2.51-3.50 Moderately Effective (ME)
(HE)

3.51-4.50 Highly Effective

4.51-5.00 Very Highly Effective (VHE)

On the specific indicator of facilitating active student participation in tasks and discussions, a higher percentage of respondents (63.6%) rated traditional instruction as *Very Highly Effective*, whereas only 29.1% gave the same rating for online instruction. Similarly, 65.5% rated traditional instruction as *Very Highly Effective* in encouraging consistent class participation, in contrast to only 29.1% for online. This notable difference is attributed to the immediate and reciprocal interaction that occurs in face-to-face settings, where teachers can respond to students' cues, body language, and verbal contributions more effectively. As mentioned by Zheng and Li (2021), in-person instruction naturally supports more spontaneous and fluid participation, which is often constrained in digital environments due to lag, limited visibility, and muted interactions.

The data reveal a consistent pattern: traditional ESL instruction is perceived to be more effective than online instruction in fostering behavioral engagement among learners. The face-to-face setting appears better equipped to promote active participation, sustain attention, encourage task completion, and manage distractions. These results suggest that even though online instruction is considered *Highly Effective*, it still faces notable challenges in fully replicating the behavioral dynamics of the traditional classroom. Therefore, further professional development focused on digital engagement strategies, coupled with improved institutional support and access to effective tools, is recommended to enhance behavioral engagement in online ESL contexts.

Level of Effectiveness of Online ESL and Traditional ESL Instruction among Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China in Terms of Cultural Adaptation

Table 4 shows the perceived effectiveness of online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China regarding cultural adaptation. The data reveal that both instructional modalities were considered effective in helping teachers address cross-cultural aspects of teaching. However, traditional instruction garnered a higher overall mean rating of 4.54 (Very Highly Effective) compared to 4.17 (Highly Effective) for online instruction. This suggests that cultural adaptation is achievable in both settings, but face-to-face teaching environments better facilitate the integration of culturally responsive practices.

In terms of integrating culturally inclusive materials into lessons, 52.7% of teachers rated traditional instruction as *Very Highly Effective*, slightly higher than the 45.5% who gave the same rating for online teaching. Teachers find it easier to localize and

contextualize teaching materials when they can observe students' reactions in real time and make spontaneous adjustments. These advantages are less accessible in online modalities. As noted by Dela Cruz & Reyes (2023) and Tan (2025), traditional classroom interactions provide immediate cultural feedback, allowing teachers to calibrate their approaches effectively.

A more significant contrast emerges in teachers' ability to respond appropriately to students' diverse cultural backgrounds. Although 63.6% of respondents rated traditional instruction as *Very Highly Effective*, only 32.7% did so for online instruction. This 30.9% gap illustrates a key limitation of the digital setting: the reduced ability to observe cultural cues such as body language, tone, and classroom etiquette. These findings align with Sociocultural Theory (Vygotsky), which emphasizes that meaningful learning is mediated through social and cultural interactions.

Table 4
Level of Effectiveness of Online ESL and Traditional ESL Instruction among Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China in Terms of Cultural Adaptation
n=55

Factors		Level Of Effectiveness									
		Online					Traditional				
		VHE	HE	ME	L	VL	VHE	HE	ME	L	VL
can integrate culturally inclusive materials into my lessons.	F	25	20	10	0	0	29	25	1	0	0
	%	45.5	36.4	18.2	0.0	0.0	52.7	45.5	1.8	0.0	0.0
can respond appropriately to students' diverse cultural backgrounds.	F	18	23	14	0	0	35	18	2	0	0
	%	32.7	41.8	25.5	0.0	0.0	63.6	32.7	3.6	0.0	0.0
can promote mutual respect across cultural differences in the classroom.	F	24	20	11	0	0	33	20	2	0	0
	%	43.6	36.4	20.0	0.0	0.0	60.0	36.4	3.6	0.0	0.0
can facilitate students' comfortable engagement in culturally diverse discussions.	F	18	24	13	0	0	29	24	2	0	0
	%	32.7	43.6	23.6	0.0	0.0	52.7	43.6	3.6	0.0	0.0
can adapt my communication style to match	F	22	22	11	0	0	31	22	2	0	0
	%	40.0	40.0	20.0	0.0	0.0	56.4	40.0	3.6	0.0	0.0

cultural expectations.	
Mean	4.17 - Highly Effective
	4.54 – Very Highly Effective

Note: Highest frequencies are in bold face

1.00-1.50 Very Low (VL)

1.51-2.50 Low (L)

2.51-3.50 Moderately Effective (ME)
(HE)

3.51-4.50 Highly Effective

4.51-5.00 Very Highly Effective (VHE)

On the indicator of promoting mutual respect across cultural differences, 60.0% of respondents rated traditional instruction as *Very Highly Effective*, compared to 43.6% for online instruction. Although both settings received favorable evaluations, the in-person format allows teachers to more authentically model inclusive behavior and establish classroom norms that promote equity and mutual understanding. This supports Mercer & Dörnyei (2020), who asserted that teacher presence and physical proximity contribute to building a respectful and cohesive multicultural learning climate.

Regarding students' engagement in culturally diverse discussions, 52.7% rated traditional instruction as *Very Highly Effective*, while only 32.7% did so for online instruction. In virtual classrooms, limitations in turn-taking, audio delays, and restricted visual feedback may inhibit open and confident participation in sensitive or culturally nuanced topics. As Borup et al. (2014) highlighted, fostering trust and openness in online learning communities requires intentional scaffolding. This is something that happens more naturally in physical classrooms where rapport develops more organically.

Finally, on the ability to adapt communication style to match cultural expectations, 56.4% rated traditional instruction as *Very Highly Effective*, compared to 40.0% for online. This reflects how physical classrooms offer more opportunities for mirroring cultural norms through tone, gestures, and immediate responsiveness. According to Putra and Lestari (2021), adapting communication styles is essential for building rapport with students from different cultural backgrounds, especially in East Asian educational systems, where formality and indirectness are often expected.

Taken together, the data indicate that traditional instruction offers migrant Filipino ESL teachers more favorable conditions for culturally responsive teaching, including integration of inclusive materials, communication adjustment, and facilitation of intercultural dialogue. However, online instruction was still rated as *Highly Effective*, demonstrating that many teachers have successfully adapted culturally sensitive approaches to digital contexts. This ability can be attributed to their experience, training, and resourcefulness. These factors are emphasized in Castro & Mendoza (2021) and supported by the presence of advanced degrees and training attendance in the respondents' profiles.

Cultural adaptation is feasible in both instructional modalities; however, traditional ESL settings were consistently perceived to provide richer opportunities for promoting inclusion, intercultural respect, and responsiveness to diverse learners. These findings reinforce the necessity of designing digital environments that are not only technically sound but also culturally attuned, especially for teachers operating in cross-cultural contexts like China.

Level of Effectiveness of Online ESL and Traditional ESL Instruction among Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China in Terms of Institutional Support

Table 5 illustrates the perceived effectiveness of online and traditional ESL instruction in terms of institutional support as experienced by migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China. Both instructional modalities were rated positively, with mean scores of 4.18 for online instruction and 4.46 for traditional instruction, both interpreted as *Highly Effective*. Nevertheless, consistent with the trends observed in earlier domains, traditional instruction received higher ratings, indicating that institutional support is perceived to be more readily available or accessible in face-to-face teaching contexts.

On the first indicator, “access to sufficient training for the teaching platform or environment,” 56.4% rated online instruction as *Highly Effective* and 27.3% as *Very Highly Effective*. For traditional instruction, slightly more respondents rated it as *Very Highly Effective* (50.9%) and *Highly Effective* (41.8%). Though this initially suggests stronger support for online training, the difference points to a potential gap in advanced or in-depth training specifically tailored for online environments. The 14.5% who rated online support as only *Moderately Effective* reinforce the concerns raised by Barrot et al. (2021) and Rasheed et al. (2020) about the uneven access to digital pedagogy training during the rapid transition to online teaching.

Table 5
Level of Effectiveness of Online ESL and Traditional ESL Instruction among Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China in Terms of Institutional Support
n=55

Factors		Level Of Effectiveness									
		Online					Traditional				
		VHE	HE	ME	L	VL	VHE	HE	ME	L	VL
can access sufficient training for the teaching platform or environment.	F	15	31	8	1	0	28	23	4	0	0
	%	27.3	56.4	14.5	1.8	0.0	50.9	41.8	7.3	0.0	0.0
can receive support from administrators or supervisors when needed.	F	19	22	13	1	0	33	17	5	0	0
	%	34.5	40.0	23.6	1.8	0.0	60.0	30.9	9.1	0.0	0.0
can access adequate teaching materials and	F	21	22	12	0	0	30	19	6	0	0
	%	38.2	40.0	21.8	0.0	0.0	54.5	34.5	10.9	0.0	0.0

resources from my institution.											
can stay informed through timely updates about institutional policies.	F	26	21	8	0	0	30	22	3	0	0
	%	47.3	38.2	14.5	0.0	0.0	54.5	40.0	5.5	0.0	0.0
can feel professionally supported and valued in my role.	F	25	20	9	1	0	29	22	3	1	0
	%	45.5	36.4	16.4	1.8	0.0	52.7	40.0	5.5	1.8	0.0
Mean		4.18 - Highly Effective					4.46 – Highly Effective				

Note: Highest frequencies are in bold face

1.00-1.50 Very Low (VL)

1.51-2.50 Low (L)

2.51-3.50 Moderately Effective (ME)

3.51-4.50 Highly Effective

(HE)

4.51-5.00 Very Highly Effective (VHE)

In terms of receiving support from administrators or supervisors, traditional instruction again received higher *Very Highly Effective* ratings (60.0%) compared to online (34.5%). This suggests that supervisory support is more visible and felt in physical school settings, where immediate interactions and direct oversight are more feasible. Online settings may have introduced a sense of isolation or reduced access to direct communication, as corroborated by König et al. (2020), who noted that many teachers lacked strong administrative presence in virtual teaching contexts during the pandemic.

Overall, both modes were seen as highly effective in terms of institutional support, yet traditional instruction consistently outperformed online instruction across all indicators. These findings affirm that face-to-face environments offer more opportunities for direct communication, visible support, and tangible access to resources but the relatively high effectiveness ratings for online instruction also reflect the respondents' adaptability, training exposure, and efforts made by institutions to provide support in digital settings. Online ESL instruction has proven to be a viable mode of teaching, yet the experiences of migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China suggest that traditional instruction still provides a stronger support system, both in infrastructure and professional affirmation. The results call attention to the need for a more structured institutional framework that can sustain teacher support in online environments, particularly for migrant educators who face unique challenges related to distance, cultural dislocation, and role recognition.

Level of Effectiveness of Online ESL and Traditional ESL Instruction among Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China in Terms of Assessment and Feedback Mechanism

Table 6 presents the comparative data on the perceived effectiveness of online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China, specifically in

terms of assessment and feedback mechanisms. The overall mean ratings show that both modalities are effective in this area, with online instruction rated 4.36 (Highly Effective) and traditional instruction rated slightly higher at 4.56 (Very Highly Effective). These results suggest that both teaching modes support effective assessment and feedback practices, but traditional instruction provides a slight edge, especially in delivering more personalized and performance-enhancing responses.

For the indicator “can use appropriate tools to evaluate student performance,” 58.2% of respondents rated traditional instruction as *Very Highly Effective*, compared to 41.8% for online instruction. Online platforms offer a variety of digital tools for testing and evaluation; however, the data suggest that teachers still feel more confident in evaluating student performance in face-to-face settings where observation, hands-on tasks, and immediate clarification are more feasible. This aligns with the findings of Reimers et al. (2020), who emphasized the limitations of online assessments in capturing the depth and complexity of learner understanding, particularly in language learning contexts.

Table 6
Level of Effectiveness of Online ESL and Traditional ESL Instruction among
Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China in Terms of Assessment and Feedback
Mechanism
n=55

Factors		Level Of Effectiveness									
		ONLINE					TRADITIONAL				
		VHE	HE	ME	L	VL	VHE	HE	ME	L	VL
can use appropriate tools to evaluate student performance.	F	23	24	8	0	0	32	19	4	0	0
	%	41.8	43.6	14.5	0.0	0.0	58.2	34.5	7.3	0.0	0.0
can provide timely and constructive feedback to students.	F	28	22	5	0	0	33	18	4	0	0
	%	50.9	40.0	9.1	0.0	0.0	60.0	32.7	7.3	0.0	0.0
can offer feedback that helps students improve their performance.	F	27	21	7	0	0	38	13	4	0	0
	%	49.1	38.2	12.7	0.0	0.0	69.1	23.6	7.3	0.0	0.0
can design assessments aligned with learning objectives.	F	26	23	6	0	0	36	15	4	0	0
	%	47.3	41.8	10.9	0.0	0.0	65.5	27.3	7.3	0.0	0.0

can use assessment results to guide my instructional planning.	F	26	23	6	0	0	36	15	4	0	0
	%	47.3	41.8	10.9	0.0	0.0	65.5	27.3	7.3	0.0	0.0
Mean		4.36 - Highly Effective					4.56 – Very Highly Effective				

Note: Highest frequencies are in bold face

1.00-1.50 Very Low (VL)

1.51-2.50 Low (L)

2.51-3.50 Moderately Effective (ME)

3.51-4.50 Highly Effective

(HE)

4.51-5.00 Very Highly Effective (VHE)

The results indicate that both online and traditional instruction are highly effective in implementing assessment and feedback mechanisms, but traditional instruction was consistently rated more favorably across all indicators. This slight advantage stems from the immediacy, flexibility, and richness of in-person interaction that support more valid evaluation and feedback. Nevertheless, the strong effectiveness ratings for online instruction demonstrate that migrant Filipino ESL teachers are competent in incorporating digital tools for assessment and feedback. It shows both their adaptability and commitment to instructional quality. These findings underscore the importance of providing teachers with continuous training in assessment literacy and digital evaluation tools when transitioning between instructional modalities.

Summary of the Level of Effectiveness of Online ESL and Traditional ESL Instruction among Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China

Table 7 presents the consolidated summary of the level of effectiveness of online and traditional ESL instruction as perceived by migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China. The results clearly indicate that even though both instructional modalities are deemed effective, traditional ESL instruction consistently achieved higher effectiveness ratings across all dimensions. The overall mean for online instruction is 4.20, interpreted as *Highly Effective*, while traditional instruction received a significantly higher mean of 4.55, interpreted as *Very Highly Effective*.

In terms of instructional delivery, traditional ESL instruction achieved the highest individual rating among all categories, with a mean of 4.65, indicating *Very Highly Effective*. This supports earlier findings where most respondents pointed to the clarity, organization, and control afforded by face-to-face teaching. Online instruction, while still rated *Highly Effective* at 4.29, was comparatively limited in managing real-time interaction and adapting on the spot—challenges as corroborated by Bao (2020) and Rasheed et al. (2020), who documented similar difficulties in synchronous online learning settings.

Table 7
Summary of the Level of Effectiveness of Online ESL and Traditional ESL Instruction among Migrant Filipino ESL Teachers in China

Level of Effectiveness of Online ESL and Traditional ESL Instruction	Online ESL		Traditional ESL	
	Mean	Description	Mean	Description
Instructional delivery	4.29	Highly Effective	4.65	Very Highly Effective
Behavioral engagement	4.01	Highly Effective	4.56	Very Highly Effective
Cultural adaptation	4.17	Highly Effective	4.54	Very Highly Effective
Institutional support	4.18	Highly Effective	4.46	Highly Effective
Assessment and feedback mechanism	4.36	Highly Effective	4.56	Very Highly Effective
Overall Mean	4.20	Highly Effective	4.55	Very Highly Effective

Note: Highest frequencies are in bold face

1.00-1.50 Very Low (VL)

1.51-2.50 Low (L)

2.51-3.50 Moderately Effective (ME)
(HE)

3.51-4.50 Highly Effective

4.51-5.00 Very Highly Effective (VHE)

For behavioral engagement, traditional instruction again outperformed online, with a mean of 4.56 (Very Highly Effective) compared to 4.01 (Highly Effective). Teachers reported greater success in fostering participation, managing distractions, and encouraging attentiveness in physical classrooms. This aligns with Zheng & Li (2021) and Aguilera-Hermida (2020), who noted that behavioral cues and immediate feedback are vital in keeping students engaged. These are the elements that are naturally limited in virtual platforms.

The summary reveals that although online ESL instruction is a competent and effective modality, traditional ESL instruction remains the more effective approach in the perception of migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China. The consistently higher scores for traditional instruction across all five dimensions affirm the continuing value of face-to-face education, particularly in culturally diverse and linguistically complex contexts like ESL teaching abroad.

Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China in Terms of Behavioral Engagement

The third problem of this study determined the perceived level of learner engagement on online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino teachers in China in terms of behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, cognitive engagement,

social interactions, and instructional responsiveness. This was presented and discussed in Tables 8 – 12.

Specifically, Table 8 presents the comparative data on learner behavioral engagement in online and traditional ESL instruction as perceived by migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China. The findings reveal that although both modalities were perceived as effective, traditional instruction received higher ratings, with an overall mean of 4.43 (*Highly Effective*) compared to 3.91 (*Highly Effective*) for online instruction. This result indicates that traditional face-to-face teaching better promotes consistent behavioral engagement, such as class participation, task completion, attention, and resilience.

Table 8
Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China in Terms of Behavioral Engagement
n=55

Indicators		Level Of Effectiveness									
		Online					Traditional				
		VHE	HE	ME	L	VL	VHE	HE	ME	L	VL
actively participate in class discussions and activities (e.g., posting, raising hands)	F	14	27	13	1	0	31	22	2	0	0
	%	25.5	49.1	23.6	1.8	0.0	56.4	40.0	3.6	0.0	0.0
submit tasks and assignments on time, demonstrating diligence and responsibility	F	10	35	8	2	0	26	25	3	1	0
	%	18.2	63.6	14.5	3.6	0.0	47.3	45.5	5.5	1.8	0.0
attend classes consistently, showing regular presence and willingness to engage	F	11	30	13	1	0	25	27	3	0	0
	%	20.0	54.5	23.6	1.8	0.0	45.5	49.1	5.5	0.0	0.0
maintain sustained attention and concentration during lessons with minimal distractions	F	10	26	16	2	1	24	29	2	0	0
	%	18.2	47.3	29.1	3.6	1.8	43.6	52.7	3.6	0.0	0.0
persist in completing tasks	F	11	31	10	2	1	26	27	2	0	0

despite difficulties, demonstrating resilience	%	20.0	56.4	18.2	3.6	1.8	47.3	49.1	3.6	0.0	0.0
Mean		3.91 - Highly Effective					4.43 – Highly Effective				

Note: Highest frequencies are in bold face

1.00-1.50 Very Low (VL)

1.51-2.50 Low (L)

2.51-3.50 Moderately Effective (ME)
(HE)

3.51-4.50 Highly Effective

4.51-5.00 Very Highly Effective (VHE)

This can be attributed to the convenience of asynchronous submissions, automated reminders, and digital recordkeeping that characterize online platforms. However, 3.6% of teachers still noted *Low Effectiveness* in online settings, indicating that digital convenience does not always equate to student accountability, especially without strong teacher monitoring or intrinsic motivation, as discussed by Rasheed et al. (2020).

On class attendance, both modalities were rated as *Highly Effective*, but traditional instruction still received a higher mean, with 45.5% *Very Highly Effective* ratings versus only 20.0% for online. The higher level of consistency in traditional settings stems from the structured nature of physical class routines, institutional enforcement, and the greater sense of commitment and formality expected in face-to-face setups. Online instruction suffers from absenteeism due to technical issues or reduced learner motivation, particularly in settings where students are unsupervised.

The data show that although online instruction can support behavioral engagement, it is perceived as more limited in key areas such as attention, participation, and persistence. Traditional ESL instruction remains the stronger modality in promoting active, consistent, and motivated learner behavior. This is especially relevant in ESL contexts, where language barriers, cultural differences, and learning anxiety are common; the social and interpersonal richness of face-to-face teaching helps mitigate these challenges more effectively than digital environments.

Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China in Terms of Emotional Engagement

Table 9 presents the level of emotional engagement of learners as observed by migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China under both online and traditional instructional modalities. The data show that traditional ESL instruction is perceived to be more effective, with an overall mean of 4.50, compared to 3.94 for online instruction. Although both modes fall under the *Highly Effective* category, the consistent advantage of traditional instruction across all indicators suggests that face-to-face environments better support learners' emotional involvement, confidence, and positivity in ESL settings.

Table 9
Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China in Terms of Emotional Engagement
n=55

Indicators		Level Of Effectiveness									
		Online					Traditional				
		VHE	HE	ME	L	VL	VHE	HE	ME	L	VL
show interest and enjoyment in learning experiences, reflecting positive emotional involvement	F	13	27	15	0	0	32	22	1	0	0
	%	23.6	49.1	27.3	0.0	0.0	58.2	40.0	1.8	0.0	0.0
demonstrate a sense of belonging through comfort and connection with peers and the teacher	F	13	25	15	2	0	32	21	2	0	0
	%	23.6	45.5	27.3	3.6	0.0	58.2	38.2	3.6	0.0	0.0
display confidence and self-efficacy in their ability to succeed	F	21	21	11	2	0	29	24	2	0	0
	%	38.2	38.2	20.0	3.6	0.0	52.7	43.6	3.6	0.0	0.0
experience reduced negative emotions such as anxiety or frustration during lessons	F	12	23	18	2	0	28	23	4	0	0
	%	21.8	41.8	32.7	3.6	0.0	50.9	41.8	7.3	0.0	0.0
maintain a positive attitude toward the learning environment and content	F	14	24	16	1	0	29	22	4	0	0
	%	25.5	43.6	29.1	1.8	0.0	52.7	40.0	7.3	0.0	0.0
Mean		3.94 - Highly Effective					4.50 – Highly Effective				

Note: Highest frequencies are in bold face

1.00-1.50 Very Low (VL)

2.51-3.50 Moderately Effective (ME)

(HE)

4.51-5.00 Very Highly Effective (VHE)

1.51-2.50 Low (L)

3.51-4.50 Highly Effective

This supports the findings of Zheng & Li (2021) and Aguilera-Hermida (2020), who concluded that physical proximity and live interaction create stronger emotional connections between learners and the content.

The overall interpretation of the data indicates that online ESL instruction can support emotional engagement, yet it does so less effectively than traditional instruction. The relational richness, immediacy, and shared social space offered by in-person classes appear to create a more emotionally secure and motivating environment for learners. This is particularly important in ESL contexts, where learners already face emotional barriers such as anxiety, self-doubt, or language-related apprehension. According to Del Rosario & Bautista (2022), the emotional climate of the classroom significantly influences language acquisition in multicultural and international contexts. The results underscore the importance of teacher empathy, social presence, and emotionally responsive pedagogy in both settings, particularly for migrant Filipino ESL teachers working in culturally diverse environments like China.

Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China in Terms of Cognitive Engagement

Table 10 illustrates the level of learner cognitive engagement in online and traditional ESL instruction as perceived by migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China. The findings reveal that both modes were rated as *Highly Effective*; however, traditional instruction obtained a higher overall mean of 4.39, compared to 3.88 for online instruction. This suggests that cognitive engagement is stronger in face-to-face learning environments, where learners can more effectively process, retain, and apply new information.

Table 10
Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China in Terms of Cognitive Engagement
n=55

Indicators		Level Of Effectiveness									
		Online					Traditional				
		VHE	HE	ME	L	VL	VHE	HE	ME	L	VL
actively participate in class	F	10	26	16	3	0	24	27	4	0	0
discussions and activities (e.g., posting, raising hands)	%	18.2	47.3	29.1	5.5	0.0	43.6	49.1	7.3	0.0	0.0
submit tasks and assignments on time,	F	9	31	14	1	0	27	25	3	0	0
demonstrating	%	16.4	56.4	25.5	1.8	0.0	49.1	45.5	5.5	0.0	0.0

diligence and responsibility											
attend classes consistently, showing regular presence and willingness to engage	F	13	26	15	1	0	25	26	4	0	0
	%	23.6	47.3	27.3	1.8	0.0	45.5	47.3	7.3	0.0	0.0
maintain sustained attention and concentration during lessons with minimal distractions	F	16	20	18	1	0	25	27	3	0	0
	%	29.1	36.4	32.7	1.8	0.0	45.5	49.1	5.5	0.0	0.0
persist in completing tasks despite difficulties, demonstrating resilience	F	14	23	17	1	0	26	24	5	0	0
	%	25.5	41.8	30.9	1.8	0.0	47.3	43.6	9.1	0.0	0.0
Mean			3.88 - Highly Effective					4.39 – Highly Effective			

Note: Highest frequencies are in bold face

1.00-1.50 Very Low (VL)

1.51-2.50 Low (L)

2.51-3.50 Moderately Effective (ME)

3.51-4.50 Highly Effective

(HE)

4.51-5.00 Very Highly Effective (VHE)

The indicator “maintain sustained attention and concentration” yielded notable contrasts: 45.5% of respondents gave *Very Highly Effective* ratings for traditional instruction versus 29.1% for online. Moreover, 32.7% of teachers considered online instruction only *Moderately Effective* in maintaining focus. This underscores a consistent issue in virtual education such as limited capacity to ensure deep, focused learning over extended periods. As Aguilera-Hermida (2020) noted, cognitive engagement suffers in online learning when learners are exposed to competing digital stimuli, technological issues, or passive content delivery.

In the final indicator, “persist in completing tasks despite difficulties,” traditional instruction scored higher with 47.3% *Very Highly Effective*, compared to 25.5% for online instruction. This reflects the greater motivational scaffolds provided in physical classrooms, where immediate teacher support, peer encouragement, and the presence of learning routines foster resilience. As Del Rosario & Bautista (2022) highlighted, persistence and mental effort are strongly reinforced in environments that support learner autonomy while still offering structured guidance. These are the characteristics more inherent to traditional instruction.

The overall means—3.88 for online and 4.39 for traditional—reveal that learners in traditional ESL classes engage more cognitively with learning tasks, showing stronger attention, critical thinking, and perseverance. These findings are important given the complexity of ESL learning, where learners must process language input, apply it meaningfully, and overcome communication barriers. Although online platforms may offer flexibility and convenience, traditional classrooms better support mental discipline, sustained concentration, and cognitive rigor. Thus, enhancing online cognitive engagement would require integrating more interactive, reflective, and personalized learning tasks, along with mechanisms for sustained attention and progress monitoring.

Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China in Terms of Social Interactions

Table 11 presents the level of learner engagement in terms of social interactions under online and traditional ESL instruction, as perceived by migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China. The results reveal that traditional instruction is significantly more effective, with an overall mean of 4.56, classified as *Very Highly Effective*, while online instruction was rated with a mean of 3.93, still within the *Highly Effective* category. This finding reinforces the notion that face-to-face environments remain more conducive to building and sustaining meaningful social interaction, a crucial aspect of language learning and classroom engagement.

Table 11
Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China in Terms of Social Interactions
n=55

Indicators		Level Of Effectiveness									
		Online					Traditional				
		VHE	HE	ME	L	VL	VHE	HE	ME	L	VL
actively participate in class discussions and activities (e.g., posting, raising hands)	F	15	26	13	1	0	31	22	2	0	0
	%	27.3	47.3	23.6	1.8	0.0	56.4	40.0	3.6	0.0	0.0
submit tasks and assignments on time, demonstrating diligence and responsibility	F	12	24	16	3	0	31	23	1	0	0
	%	21.8	43.6	29.1	5.5	0.0	56.4	41.8	1.8	0.0	0.0
attend classes consistently, showing regular presence and	F	13	23	16	3	0	33	21	1	0	0
	%	23.6	41.8	29.1	5.5	0.0	60.0	38.2	1.8	0.0	0.0

willingness to engage											
maintain sustained attention and concentration during lessons with minimal distractions	F	15	27	12	1	0	32	22	1	0	0
	%	27.3	49.1	21.8	1.8	0.0	58.2	40.0	1.8	0.0	0.0
persist in completing tasks despite difficulties, demonstrating resilience	F	14	27	12	2	0	34	19	2	0	0
	%	25.5	49.1	21.8	3.6	0.0	61.8	34.5	3.6	0.0	0.0
Mean			3.93 - Highly Effective				4.56 – Very Highly Effective				

Note: Highest frequencies are in bold face

1.00-1.50 Very Low (VL)

1.51-2.50 Low (L)

2.51-3.50 Moderately Effective (ME)

3.51-4.50 Highly Effective

(HE)

4.51-5.00 Very Highly Effective (VHE)

These differences may reflect the impact of social presence and peer expectations in motivating learners, which tend to be more prominent in traditional settings, as discussed by Borup et al. (2014).

For “class attendance,” 60.0% of respondents perceived traditional instruction as *Very Highly Effective* in promoting consistent participation, while only 23.6% gave the same rating to online instruction. Though online classes offer convenience, some learners may disengage due to distractions or a lack of structure. The findings are in line with Rasheed et al. (2020), who observed that learners’ sense of social obligation and engagement is weakened in isolated or asynchronous learning environments.

The findings support the view that social interaction is not only a peripheral component of learning but a central mechanism of engagement, particularly in ESL instruction, where language is both the subject and the medium of learning. Grounded in Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory, this dimension demonstrates the importance of interpersonal exchanges and socially mediated learning processes, which are more organically cultivated in traditional classroom environments. These insights should inform future instructional designs, encouraging blended approaches that retain social interaction even within digital platforms.

Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China in Terms of Instructional Responsiveness

Table 12 illustrates the level of learner engagement in terms of instructional responsiveness in both online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China. The data reveal that both modes were perceived as *Highly Effective*, but

traditional instruction achieved a higher overall mean of 4.45, compared to 3.87 for online instruction. The findings indicate that traditional classroom environments are more conducive to fostering immediate, consistent, and responsive learner behavior, especially in the context of ESL instruction, where real-time feedback and adaptation are critical.

Table 12
Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China in Terms of Instructional Responsiveness
n=55

Indicators		Level Of Effectiveness									
		Online					Traditional				
		VHE	HE	ME	L	VL	VHE	HE	ME	L	VL
actively participate in class discussions and activities (e.g., posting, raising hands)	F	12	26	16	1	0	29	25	1	0	0
	%	21.8	47.3	29.1	1.8	0.0	52.7	45.5	1.8	0.0	0.0
submit tasks and assignments on time, demonstrating diligence and responsibility	F	9	29	15	2	0	28	25	1	1	0
	%	16.4	52.7	27.3	3.6	0.0	50.9	45.5	1.8	1.8	0.0
attend classes consistently, showing regular presence and willingness to engage	F	11	27	13	3	1	24	26	5	0	0
	%	20.0	49.1	23.6	5.5	1.8	43.6	47.3	9.1	0.0	0.0
maintain sustained attention and concentration during lessons with minimal distractions	F	11	29	13	2	0	28	25	2	0	0
	%	20.0	52.7	23.6	3.6	0.0	50.9	45.5	3.6	0.0	0.0
persist in completing tasks despite difficulties, demonstrating resilience	F	14	26	13	2	0	26	28	1	0	0
	%	25.5	47.3	23.6	3.6	0.0	47.3	50.9	1.8	0.0	0.0
Mean		3.87 - Highly Effective					4.45 – Highly Effective				

Note: Highest frequencies are in bold face

1.00-1.50 Very Low (VL)

1.51-2.50 Low (L)

2.51-3.50 Moderately Effective (ME)
(HE)

3.51-4.50 Highly Effective

4.51-5.00 Very Highly Effective (VHE)

For the indicator “actively participate in class discussions and activities,” 52.7% of respondents rated traditional instruction as *Very Highly Effective*, while only 21.8% gave the same rating to online instruction. The disparity suggests that the immediacy of face-to-face interaction enables learners to respond more confidently and spontaneously, reinforcing the importance of social and instructional presence. These results are supported by Zheng and Li (2021), who noted that physical classrooms facilitate natural dialogic exchanges and higher rates of learner responsiveness.

Overall, the data reveal that even though online ESL instruction maintains a strong level of instructional responsiveness, traditional instruction offers a more conducive environment for nurturing immediate learner reactions, task follow-through, and sustained engagement. The findings affirm Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory, which underscores the importance of interaction, feedback, and responsive mediation in the learning process. ESL instruction, by nature, requires high levels of responsiveness, both from teachers and learners, to effectively facilitate language acquisition and communication skills.

Traditional instruction is perceived as more effective in supporting learner responsiveness, reinforcing the role of direct interaction and classroom structure in shaping engaged and active learning behavior. For migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China, these results reveal the need to incorporate interactive strategies and frequent feedback mechanisms in both face-to-face and virtual settings to enhance learner responsiveness across instructional modalities.

Summary of the Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China

Table 13 presents a comparative summary of learner engagement across five dimensions - behavioral, emotional, cognitive, social, and instructional responsiveness, under both online and traditional ESL instruction as perceived by migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China. The results show that traditional ESL instruction consistently outperformed online ESL instruction in all domains, with an overall mean of 4.47 (*Highly Effective*) compared to 3.91 for online ESL instruction (*Highly Effective*).

Table 13
Summary of the Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China

Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction	Online ESL		Traditional ESL	
	Mean	Description	Mean	Description
Behavioral Engagement	3.91	Highly Effective	4.43	Highly Effective

Emotional Engagement	3.94	Highly Effective	4.50	Highly Effective
Cognitive Engagement	3.88	Highly Effective	4.39	Highly Effective
Social Interactions	3.93	Highly Effective	4.56	Very Highly Effective
Instructional Responsiveness	3.87	Highly Effective	4.45	Highly Effective
Overall Mean	3.91	Highly Effective	4.47	Highly Effective

Note: Highest frequencies are in bold face

1.00-1.50 Very Low (VL)

1.51-2.50 Low (L)

2.51-3.50 Moderately Effective (ME)
(HE)

3.51-4.50 Highly Effective

4.51-5.00 Very Highly Effective (VHE)

Lastly, instructional responsiveness also favored traditional instruction (4.45) over online (3.87), suggesting that learners are more reactive, diligent, and adaptive to instruction in physical classrooms. Teachers reported that students in traditional setups are more likely to seek clarification, complete tasks under pressure, and adjust based on feedback. These results affirm findings by Zheng and Li (2021), who noted that timely interaction and immediate feedback in traditional formats strengthen learner agency and instructional responsiveness. The overall mean score across all dimensions shows that traditional ESL instruction is perceived as more effective in fostering learner engagement than online ESL instruction. This corroborates multiple studies—including those by Teng (2023) and Rasheed et al. (2020)—which identified engagement as a critical yet often challenging component of online ESL delivery, particularly when social and instructional cues are limited.

Significant Differences in the Perceived Effectiveness of Online and Traditional ESL Instruction

The fourth problem of this study analyzed the significant difference in the perceived level of effectiveness of online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino teachers in China. Table 14 presents the comparative analysis of the perceived level of effectiveness of online and traditional ESL instruction across five instructional domains: instructional delivery, behavioral engagement, cultural adaptation, institutional support, and assessment and feedback mechanisms. Utilizing Multivariate Analysis (MANOVA) with Wilks' Lambda, the statistical test yielded a Wilks' Lambda value of 0.567, $F = 41.20$, $p = 0.000$, indicating a statistically significant difference in the overall perceived effectiveness between the two instructional modalities.

Table 14
Difference in the Perceived Level of Effectiveness of Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China

Level of Effectiveness of Online and Traditional ESL Instruction	Online ESL	Traditional ESL	Multivariate Test		
	Mean	Mean	Wilks' Lambda	Fc	Sig.
Instructional delivery	4.29	4.65	0.567	41.20*	0.000
Behavioral engagement	4.01	4.56			
Cultural adaptation	4.17	4.54			
Institutional support	4.18	4.46			
Assessment and feedback mechanism	4.36	4.56			

*Significant

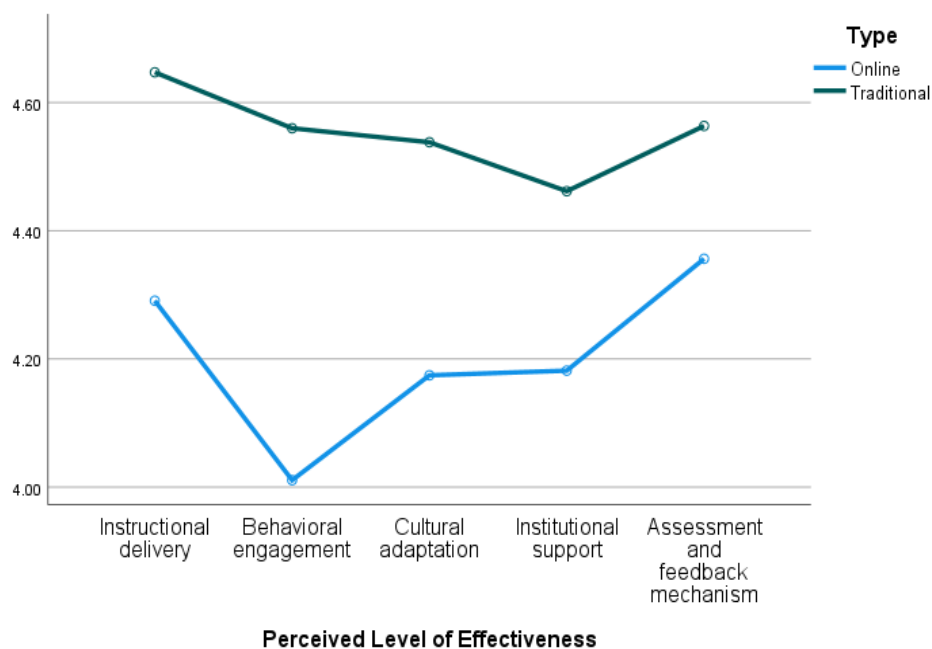
Among all domains, instructional delivery showed the most notable difference, with traditional ESL instruction rated at 4.65 (*Very Highly Effective*), compared to 4.29 for online ESL (*Highly Effective*). This underscores the superior capacity of face-to-face teaching to facilitate clear lesson delivery, minimize disruptions, and optimize the use of instructional tools and strategies. This result supports the findings of Martin and Bolliger (2021) and Castro & Mendoza (2021), who discussed the limitations of online modalities in maintaining instructional clarity and flow, particularly in ESL contexts where nonverbal cues and classroom management play pivotal roles.

Meanwhile, Figure 2 visually illustrates the comparison between the perceived level of effectiveness of online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino teachers in China. As reflected in the profile plot, traditional ESL instruction consistently outperforms online ESL across all five domains: instructional delivery, behavioral engagement, cultural adaptation, institutional support, and assessment and feedback mechanisms. The steepest gap is observed in behavioral engagement, where online instruction dips lowest, suggesting that student participation and motivation are significantly more challenging to foster in virtual contexts. This visual trend supports the results shown in Table 14, where multivariate analysis revealed a statistically significant difference (Wilks' Lambda = 0.567, F = 41.200, p = 0.000) in the perceived effectiveness of the two instructional modes.

Figure 2. Profile Plot Showing the Difference in the Perceived Level of Effectiveness of Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China

The graph emphasizes how traditional classroom environments allow for more direct, adaptive, and responsive instruction, especially in behaviorally intensive domains like engagement and communication. This finding aligns with social constructivist theories and Vygotsky's sociocultural framework, which highlights the importance of face-to-face interaction, scaffolding, and shared cultural experiences in language learning. It also

suggests that while online instruction can be effective, its design must account for the social and behavioral dynamics that are more organically supported in traditional settings.



Significant Differences in Learner Engagement Between Online and Traditional ESL Instruction

The fifth problem of this study analyzed the significant difference in the perceived level of learner engagement on online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino teachers in China. In line with this, Table 15 presents the comparative perceptions of migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China regarding the level of learner engagement in both online and traditional ESL instruction. The results of the Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) yielded a Wilks' Lambda value of 0.559, $F = 42.61$, $p = 0.000$, indicating a statistically significant overall difference between the two instructional modalities in terms of perceived learner engagement.

Table 15
Difference in the Perceived Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China

Level of Learner Engagement	Online	Traditional	Multivariate Test		
	Mean	Mean	Wilks' Lambda	Fc	Sig.
Behavioral Engagement	3.91	4.43	0.559	42.61*	0.000

Emotional Engagement	3.94	4.50
Cognitive Engagement	3.88	4.39
Social Interactions	3.93	4.56
Instructional Responsiveness	3.87	4.45

*Significant

The domain with the largest disparity was social interaction, with traditional instruction earning a mean score of 4.56 (*Very Highly Effective*), compared to 3.93 for online instruction (*Highly Effective*). This suggests that traditional classroom environments significantly enhance students' ability to engage socially such as through group tasks, peer conversations, and real-time feedback, compared to the often-isolated structure of online platforms.

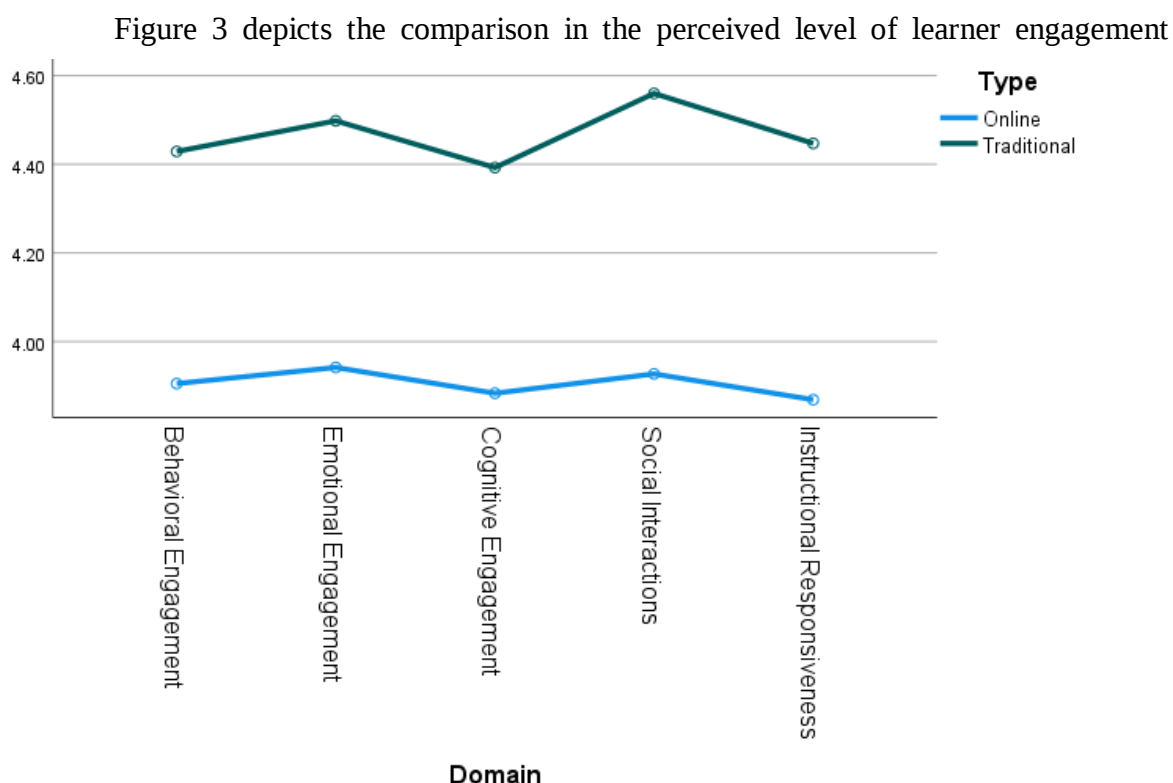
Similarly, behavioral engagement (4.43 vs. 3.91), emotional engagement (4.50 vs. 3.94), and cognitive engagement (4.39 vs. 3.88) were all rated higher in traditional instruction. These data points reflect the broader sentiment that students exhibit more consistent class participation, attention, motivation, and perseverance when immersed in a structured and socially stimulating environment. These findings are in line with Del Rosario and Bautista (2022), who emphasized that affective factors such as enjoyment, sense of belonging, and learner resilience are more easily cultivated in physical classroom settings than through screens.

The indicator instructional responsiveness, which includes learners' initiative in acting upon teacher feedback, class participation, and persistence, also scored significantly higher in traditional settings (4.45 vs. 3.87). These results mirror previous studies by Borup et al. (2014) and Teng (2023), which concluded that responsiveness in virtual settings can be inhibited by delayed communication, technological barriers, and reduced interpersonal presence. In contrast, traditional instruction fosters immediate interactions, making learners more likely to respond to feedback, clarify misunderstandings, and sustain academic effort.

The statistically significant result ($p < 0.001$) affirms that traditional ESL instruction is more effective than online instruction in promoting holistic learner engagement across all five domains: behavioral, emotional, cognitive, social, and instructional responsiveness. While online ESL platforms have the potential to support engaged learning, particularly when enhanced with interactive tools, multimedia, and real-time communication features, the data underscore the inherent strengths of in-person teaching in activating and sustaining learner engagement.

These findings strongly support the proposition that face-to-face instruction remains superior in promoting deeper and more consistent learner engagement, which is crucial for language acquisition success. The results validate the earlier quantitative findings (Tables 8–12) and reinforce the need for ESL program designers to intentionally integrate engagement-enhancing strategies into online modalities to replicate the effectiveness of traditional classrooms.

Figure 3. Profile Plot Showing the Difference in the Perceived Level of Learner Engagement on Online and Traditional ESL Instruction Among Migrant Filipino Teachers in China



between online and traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino teachers in China, across five key domains: behavioral engagement, emotional engagement, cognitive engagement, social interactions, and instructional responsiveness. The profile plot reveals a consistent trend where traditional instruction outperforms online instruction in all dimensions of engagement. The largest visible gap occurs in social interactions, where the traditional modality peaks, while online instruction remains notably lower. This suggests that physical presence and classroom-based interactions enhance peer and teacher connections, a critical component of engaged learning.

The flatter trajectory of the online instruction line shows a relatively uniform but modest level of engagement, never reaching the same peak scores as traditional instruction. This finding supports the statistical results in Table 15, where a significant difference in learner engagement was confirmed (Wilks' Lambda = 0.559, $F = 42.609$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that engagement in traditional settings is perceived as significantly higher. These

findings align with educational theories such as Fredricks et al.'s (2004) model of engagement. It also corroborates research showing that face-to-face learning environments naturally nurture interaction, immediacy, and emotional connectedness, elements that are often difficult to replicate online. The implication is clear: while online platforms can deliver content effectively, generating deep learner engagement, especially in terms of interaction and responsiveness, requires intentional instructional design that mirrors the relational dynamics of traditional settings.

PROPOSED CAPABILITY-BUILDING PROGRAM FOR MIGRANT FILIPINO ESL TEACHERS IN CHINA

I. Introduction

The study revealed that although both online and traditional ESL instruction are effective, traditional teaching consistently obtained higher ratings in effectiveness and learner engagement. Teachers reported challenges in online delivery, particularly in sustaining student interaction, providing timely feedback, and adapting culturally responsive strategies. To address these gaps, this capability-building program aims to enhance teachers' skills in digital pedagogy, classroom engagement, and assessment practices, thereby strengthening ESL instruction across modalities.

II. General Objective

To improve the instructional effectiveness and learner engagement of migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China through targeted professional development in online and face-to-face teaching strategies.

III. Specific Objectives

1. To enhance teachers' competence in using digital tools and platforms for online ESL instruction.
2. To develop strategies for sustaining behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement in both online and traditional classes.
3. To strengthen culturally responsive teaching practices for diverse Chinese learners.
4. To improve assessment literacy and feedback mechanisms in online and face-to-face modalities.
5. To establish sustainable support systems for continuous professional development.

IV. Training Design

Key Findings	Strategies / Activities	Objectives	Responsible Persons	Sources of Funds & Budget	Timeframe	Success Indicators

Online ESL instruction is highly effective but rated lower than traditional in instructional delivery, cultural adaptation, and institutional support.	Conduct a 2-day Digital Pedagogy Workshop (interactive lesson design, online discipline management, digital feedback).	To strengthen teachers' capacity in delivering engaging, interactive, and well-structured online ESL lessons.	Program Head, TESOL experts, ICT coordinators	Institutional training funds; partner schools support = ¥8,000	Semi-annual	Teachers produce online lesson plans integrating 3+ interactive strategies.
Learner engagement in online ESL is lower than in traditional settings, especially in social interaction and instructional responsiveness.	1-day Engagement Strategies Workshop (building teacher presence, virtual role-plays, gamification).	To improve teachers' ability to sustain student participation, motivation, and interaction in online environments.	Teacher trainers, Senior Filipino ESL teachers	Host institutions, NGO grants = ¥5,000	Annual	Demonstration teaching shows improved online engagement techniques.
Teachers report challenges in cultural adaptation, especially in aligning with Chinese students' expectations.	1-day Seminar on Culturally Responsive Teaching (case studies, role-play, classroom)	To equip teachers with strategies for bridging Filipino pedagogy with Chinese educational values.	Cultural consultants, veteran Filipino ESL teachers in China	School funds, Local cultural exchange programs = ¥5,000	Annual	Teachers submit context-specific cultural adaptation strategies.

	strategy design).					
Institutional support and feedback mechanisms are weaker in online ESL contexts.	Orientation on LMS use and institutional resource mapping; peer-sharing on maximizing support systems.	To enhance teachers' awareness and use of institutional resources for online and blended ESL.	ICT staff, Academic coordinators	Institutional support budget = ¥3,500	Bi-annual	Teachers create institutional support action plans.
Assessment in online classes is perceived as less effective and vulnerable to issues of integrity.	1-day Assessment and Feedback Workshop (digital quizzes, rubrics, integrity protocols).	To enhance teachers' competence in designing reliable online assessments and providing constructive feedback.	Assessment experts, Program supervisors	Training budget, institutional resources = ¥4,000	Annual	Teachers design sample digital assessments with rubrics.
More experienced teachers perceive online ESL as less effective and less engaging (negative correlation with years of service).	Peer Mentoring Program pairing experienced teachers with digitally adept peers; reflective practice sessions.	To help senior teachers adapt traditional strategies to online formats and reduce digital resistance.	Senior teacher leaders, ICT mentors	Institutional development funds = ¥6,000	Ongoing (every semester)	Reflective journals and peer mentoring reports show improved adaptation.

Female teachers rated traditional ESL higher in engagement and cultural adaptation.	Gender-Sensitive Pedagogy Forum to share strategies and highlight strengths in engagement approaches.	To promote inclusive teaching practices and integrate gender perspectives in ESL instruction.	Gender advocates, TESOL trainers	Grants from education-focused NGOs = ¥5,000	Annual	Policy briefs and teaching resources reflect gender-sensitive practices.
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V. Monitoring and Evaluation

- Pre- and post-training surveys to measure changes in teacher competence and confidence.
- Classroom observations (online and traditional) to track implementation of strategies.
- Learner feedback surveys to assess perceived improvements in engagement and feedback.
- Progress reports submitted by mentors and coordinators after each training cycle.

VI. Sustainability Plan

- Establish Teacher Learning Communities (TLCs) for peer mentoring and sharing of best practices.
- Partner with Philippine consulate offices, local schools, and ESL companies for funding and resource support.
- Integrate the program into annual teacher development plans to ensure continuity.
- Encourage digital resource creation (lesson banks, recorded webinars, teaching guides) for long-term use.
- Promote a culture of reflective practice by requiring self-evaluations and action plans after every semester.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary of the key findings of the study, the conclusions drawn from these results, and the recommendations formulated in light of the evidence presented.

Summary of Findings

This study aimed to compare the effectiveness and learner engagement of online versus traditional ESL instruction among migrant Filipino teachers in China. It specifically

examined the perceived levels of effectiveness and learner engagement in both modalities and explored how these perceptions relate to the teachers' demographic profiles. Quantitative data were gathered from 55 respondents using a validated survey questionnaire, and the findings were statistically analyzed and interpreted.

1. The respondents were predominantly female (76.4%) and mid-career professionals, with the majority aged 36–45 years (49.1%). Most had extensive teaching experience, with 34.5% serving in China for ten years or more. Educational attainment was relatively high, as 21.8% held master's degrees and 52.7% held bachelor's degrees. A significant proportion (40%) had attended seven or more ESL-related trainings, underscoring their professional preparation. These demographic characteristics indicate a diverse yet experienced teaching population, capable of evaluating both online and traditional instructional contexts.

2. Findings revealed that both online and traditional ESL instruction were perceived as highly effective. However, traditional ESL instruction obtained an overall mean of 4.55, rated as very highly effective, compared to 4.20 for online ESL, which was rated highly effective. Traditional ESL was consistently rated higher across all domains—instructional delivery, behavioral engagement, cultural adaptation, institutional support, and assessment and feedback mechanisms. Teachers emphasized that traditional classrooms enable richer interaction, adaptive feedback, and culturally responsive strategies. These findings reflect strong confidence in conventional teaching in attaining instructional effectiveness.

3. In terms of learner engagement, both modalities were again rated highly effective, but traditional ESL achieved a higher overall mean of 4.47 compared to 3.91 for online ESL. Traditional instruction particularly excelled in the domains of social interactions and emotional engagement, which were rated very highly effective. The higher means imply a clear teacher preference for in-person conditions when measuring perceived overall learner engagement.

4. A statistically significant difference was found (Wilks' Lambda = 0.567, $F = 41.200$, $p = 0.000$), favoring traditional instruction. Across all domains (delivery, engagement, cultural adaptation, institutional support, and assessment), traditional instruction scored higher. This validates that even though online ESL is effective, traditional ESL is consistently perceived as the superior mode of instruction in this context.

5. The results of the multivariate test (Wilks' Lambda = 0.559, $F = 42.609$, $p = 0.000$) confirmed significant differences across all engagement domains (behavioral, emotional, cognitive, social, and instructional responsiveness), with traditional ESL consistently scoring higher. The largest disparity was in social interaction, indicating that in-person instruction uniquely promotes peer-to-peer and teacher-student connections, which are harder to replicate online.

6. Analysis of the relationship between teachers' profile variables and their perceived effectiveness of online ESL instruction showed that age and years of service showed significant negative correlations with instructional delivery, cultural adaptation, institutional support, and assessment ($r = -0.003$ to -0.014 , $p < 0.05$). This suggests that more experienced teachers tended to perceive online ESL instruction as less effective. For traditional ESL instruction, sex was significantly correlated with perceived effectiveness, particularly in behavioral engagement and cultural adaptation ($r = 0.014$ to 0.023 , $p < 0.05$). Female teachers tended to rate the effectiveness of traditional instruction higher in these

areas compared to their male counterparts, while other demographic variables did not show significant relationships.

7. The relationship between teacher profiles and learner engagement in online instruction revealed that years of teaching experience were significantly negatively correlated with all dimensions of learner engagement ($r = -0.010$ to -0.037 , $p < 0.05$). More experienced teachers were more likely to perceive lower student engagement in online ESL settings. In contrast, sex was positively correlated with perceived learner engagement in traditional ESL ($r = 0.003$ to 0.046 , $p < 0.05$), indicating that female teachers were more likely to perceive high levels of learner engagement in face-to-face instruction. Other variables, such as age, education, and income, showed no significant correlations.

8. A capability training program is proposed based on the results of the study. The program aims to enhance teachers' skills in digital pedagogy, classroom engagement, and assessment practices, thereby strengthening ESL instruction across modalities.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on these findings, the following conclusions were formulated to encapsulate the key insights of the study.

1. The migrant Filipino ESL teachers in China reflected a diverse demographic and professional profile. Their varied backgrounds contributed to differing perspectives on ESL instructional modalities.

2. Both online and traditional ESL instruction were perceived as effective. Traditional instruction received consistently higher ratings and aligned more strongly with teachers' preferred modes of delivery.

3. Learner engagement was viewed as effective in both modalities. Traditional instruction showed higher levels of engagement across all dimensions and sustained stronger interpersonal interaction.

4. A significant difference in perceived instructional effectiveness favored traditional ESL instruction. The results affirm the continued strength of face-to-face teaching environments.

5. A significant difference in learner engagement also favored traditional instruction. The findings confirm the advantage of physical classroom settings in promoting emotional, behavioral, and social involvement.

6. Teachers' age and years of service showed significant relationships with perceptions of online instructional effectiveness. Differences in teaching experience contributed to varying levels of comfort and confidence in digital instruction.

7. Years of service in online instruction and sex in traditional instruction were associated with differences in engagement perceptions. Personal and professional characteristics shaped how teachers viewed learner engagement across contexts.

8. The findings support the development of a capability training program for ESL teachers. The program strengthens digital pedagogy, cultural responsiveness in virtual settings, and engagement-focused instructional strategies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In response to the conclusions drawn, corresponding recommendations were made to inform practice, enhance instructional delivery, and support the professional growth of ESL educators in diverse educational settings.

1. Educational institutions may consider maintaining detailed records of migrant Filipino ESL teachers' demographic and professional backgrounds to better tailor faculty development initiatives and support systems suited to their unique profiles.
2. Improving online ESL instruction may be explored by integrating more interactive features, learner-centered strategies, and engaging content delivery to parallel the strengths of traditional face-to-face settings.
3. Institutions are encouraged to adopt pedagogical approaches that foster emotional, behavioral, and cognitive engagement in online environments. This may include collaborative activities, virtual breakout rooms, gamified learning, and active feedback mechanisms.
4. As traditional ESL instruction has been perceived as more effective and engaging, it is advisable to retain its key strengths while exploring ways to integrate its effective practices into online or hybrid models for more balanced learning experiences.
5. It may be beneficial to conduct periodic assessments comparing online and traditional ESL instruction to inform data-driven improvements. This could involve learner feedback, engagement metrics, and instructional audits.
6. Offering training programs focused on digital tools, virtual classroom management, and online pedagogy may help more experienced teachers adjust more confidently to online teaching environments, addressing the gaps observed in their perceptions.
7. Given the differences in engagement perception across sex, teacher training programs may incorporate modules on inclusive practices and culturally responsive teaching to better support diverse learning dynamics.
8. A well-structured training program may be crafted focusing on core areas such as digital instruction, learner engagement, cultural adaptability, and assessment strategies. Collaboration with practicing migrant ESL teachers may enrich its relevance and effectiveness.

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