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Speaking Difficulties of Philippine Indigenous Learners in English Phonology

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Abstract

The study uncovered speaking difficulties of indigenous learners in English phonology. It determined deficiencies in Alphabet Knowledge; Phonics and Word Recognition; and Phonological Awareness. It was a qualitative research conducted through case studies of five mainstreamed Grade 2 indigenous learners in Isabela, Philippines. Data were obtained through observation and oral assessment via checklist and constructed oral assessment. Information were descriptively analyzed. Findings exposed that Alphabet knowledge inadequacies comprised arranging words alphabetically; distinguishing distinctions between Filipino and English alphabets used in same words; and sounding beginning consonant of illustrated words. Phonics and word recognition problems involved matching CVC words and basic sight words with pictures; phonemic manipulations; and segmenting sounds of CVC words. Phonological Awareness concerns encompassed recognizing rhyming words; identifying ending sound; and remembering sequence of sounds. Results imply an intervention to cultivate fundamental skills in English phonology. This investigation is an option to examine concerns in other language domains.

Keywords: Speaking difficulties, Indigenous learners, Alphabet Knowledge, Phonics and Word Recognition Phonological Awareness.

Introduction

Learning of English Phonology, the study of patterns and functions of sounds, greatly challenges indigenous learners in mainstreamed Philippine classrooms. During instruction, many of them experience difficulties in acquiring basic skills in language literacy domains such as Alphabet Knowledge, Phonics and Word Recognition and Phonological Awareness. In the K to 12 Language Arts Curriculum (Department of Education, 2016), Alphabet Knowledge highlights ability to distinguish, name and sound out letters in upper and lower cases. Familiarity with English alphabets warrants learner's success in language learning particularly in speaking. Learners who unsuccessfully gains

understanding of letters starting from school age, may face hardship in building awareness and skills of Alphabets (Chard & Osborn, 2017).

Phonics and Word Recognition stress pupil's competence in sight word recognition and phonic analysis. The learner is assumed to decipher unfamiliar words and use patterns of sounds in words for correct meaning and precision (Department of Education, 2016). Phonics is a technique to have pupils follow connections between letters and sounds. In phonemic awareness, the child's capacity to sense sequence of sounds is significant to his/her comprehension of alphabetic rule (Chard & Osborn 2017). Word Recognition is one's skill in perceiving spoken or written words correctly, effectively and easily. During the process, basic sight words, for example, are provided not just to develop language skills in English but also to assess progress of learners in attaining desired objectives in language acquisition. The term "sight words" pertains to two, somehow, connected but different implications in language instruction. First, these refer to various common words in English that do not adapt to rules of Word Analysis or phonetic decoding – words such as *said*, *would*, *night*, *was*, *were*, *etc*. Other people consider these words as "non-phonetic". Second, sight words relate to any word a reader can discriminate right away without sounding them out. In this study, the IP learner's ability to articulate sight words was also assessed. Phonological Awareness is learner's ability to perceived and explain letter-sound relationship between Filipino and English for successful transfer of learning (Department of Education, 2016). It depicts one's ability to distinguish phonemes or sounds that make up a spoken word. If Grade 1 or 2 indigenous learner cannot identify rhyming words s/he lacks phonological cognizance, since rhyming skill marks a child's rigorous phonological knowledge (GEMM Learning, 2017).

The IP children in this study, speak Tagalog as their Mother Tongue, although people in the research locality speaks Yogad, the Indigenous language of the community. Hence, when Mother Tongue Based Multi-Lingual Education (MTB-MLE) policy (Philippine Department of Education, 2012) is implemented in the Philippines, very young learners from Kindergarten up to Grade 3 have to face the problem of learning another language or the Yogad, which is the local dialect of the community. MTB-MLE provides the use of the community lingua-franca as the medium of instruction from Kindergarten up to Grade 3 and English is taught as a subject area from the second semester in Grade 1, onwards. Obviously, the indigenous learner already used to speak several languages before his/her exposure to English language. This makes English not a second but the third language or "another language" for the indigenous learner to learn. Initially, s/he has to deal with Phonology, which is considered the most important language element.

If the intention of English language instruction is to have an indigenous learner speak understandably to others in such language, it is important that the learner attains a better comprehension of letter-sound combinations, vibrant understanding of word and its constructions, and satisfactory pronunciation. For instance, the indigenous child tries to identify and name objects or happenings using his/her own Mother Tongue, at the same time, s/he has to learn their equivalence in a foreign language like English. For an indigenous learner, these intricate processes, bring various phonetic and phonological difficulties that may surely obstruct his/her learning and block him/her to gain expected competency in speaking English language. Advocacy to indigenous learner's success in learning English language prompted the conduct of this investigation, which aimed to uncover the speaking difficulties of mainstreamed indigenous learners in the Philippines on

English phonology. Specifically, it determined language deficiencies of said participants in language literacy areas such as alphabet knowledge, phonics and word recognition and phonological awareness.

Literature review

In the Philippines, although numerous group of indigenous learners comprised both marginalized and mainstreamed classes, Mother Tongue (Tagalog), Filipino and English are still used as the languages for instruction. Most printed textbooks and references used as instructional materials are written in English language. This necessitates teachers to shift their language from English to Filipino or in Mother Tongue when students seem to misunderstand concepts or topics discussed in English. Through the policy on Bilingualism (Department of Education, 1987) teachers in higher grades (Grades 4-6) are permitted to use either English or Filipino during class discussions to make ideas clearer for learners. Policy on Mother Tongue Based – Multi-Lingual Education (MTB-MLE) likewise encourages teachers to use lingua franca as medium of instruction (Philippine Department of Education, 2012). Ball (2016) in a Paper commissioned for UNESCO states the meaning of “mother tongue”. He described mother tongue as the lingo which one has acquired first. It may also means the dialect/s that someone is recognized with or the vernacular which somebody excellently uses and understands. Mother tongue (Ball, 2016) is also mentioned as first or primary language.

Through the United Nation Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the relevance of aboriginal children education (UNESCO, 2016) was highly supported by the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child in Articles 29 point c and d, and 30. As stated, indigenous children need a kind of tutelage that emancipate them from ignorance and lack of power to fight for their rights and privileges without being represented before legal process. Minority overrepresentation in Special Education (SPED) has been a topic of research and debate for decades (Zhang, Katsiyannis, Ju, & Roberts, 2012) and remains a challenge (Zhang & Katsiyannis, 2002). In collaboration with Indigenous Peoples (IP), UNESCO strives to sustain IPs while overcoming these multiple challenges and maintain recognitions of their significant role in sustaining the diversity of the world’s cultural and biological landscape. In its Medium-term Strategy (2008-2013), UNESCO targeted the needs of indigenous peoples among its priority areas for response. UNESCO is mandated to promote education, and peace as its ultimate goal. It has also been taking the test to attain Education for All (EFA) to ensure worldwide basic education for all boys and girls. Foremost, is the advocacy for quality learning for all especially to the indigenous learner. It upholds access and attainment of free and compulsory eminent instruction for IP learners as well.

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on Education for All - Global Monitoring Report (EFA-GMR) (2016), uncovered that in many countries, school children are taught in languages that they do not speak at home. The said report gave emphasis that teachers, regardless of the learner’s locality, must appreciate his/her culture and get to know his/her indigenous language to enrich learning. As the only tool for knowledge and communication, language carries the vital attribute and empowerment of a culture of the individual and his group (Ball, 2011).

The Language Support Program (LSP) of Victoria State Government Education and Training (2016), reflected the influences on the indigenous child, being socio-economically disadvantage. It also regarded the languages of the IP child at home, as facets that affect indigenous oral language

development. Language, culture and poverty correlate to produce a tremendously high probability of being left behind. This previous study pointed out that the key component of personal identity and group connection is the child's speaking of his/her indigenous language. However, this may be a cause of being academically disadvantaged. This case also indicated that in many countries, children are taught and take tests in languages they do not understand. Assessment conducted in 2011 reported that 10% of students in seven countries take test in a language that is different from the language they speak at home. In Turkey, Guatemala and Peru, pupils who are indigent and are speaking minority languages are lowest performers in math. This is because findings in one study revealed that teachers in bilingual education cannot speak the indigenous language of the locality (Education for All-Global Monitoring Report, 2016).

In many developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region (UNESCO - Asia-Pacific Regional Education Conference, 2014), the curriculum that centres on foundational skills, however, is not tailored to the needs and abilities of IP learners, especially those from marginalized groups. This is evident as most schools world-wide provides curricula that encompasses so many subjects within a short time or at a very fast pace. This situation may bring chances of having many IP children being left behind their peers in class and fail to learn solid basic numeracy and literacy skills in. Speaking as a germinal ability in language literacy, was the core of the present study. This was described by the Centre for Applied Linguistics (2016) as an interactive process of constructing meaning that secures obtaining, processing and producing of information. It is what somebody say about anything that s/he perceives, feels and believes (Ubaydillah, 2013). As regards Intellectual and Policy Foundation of the 21st Century Skills Framework and Wilczynski (2009) identified Collaboration Skills and Communication Skills as prominent among the others proficiencies. This further explains that a learner who is unable to communicate well could hardly strive with the demands of the modern society. Therefore, to make effective speaking, a learner must be able to use the language in the any social context. These are desirable goals for every IP learner, with special attention to those with speaking struggles in English.

More recent studies highlighted the difficulties in language speaking that significantly affect language acquisition among indigenous pupils and students. Hafiz Ahmad Bilal et al. (2013) and Nor Jalaluddin (2006) underscored that even in a longer period of time learning of English, students in rural areas are still incompetent in language and incapable to speak the target language. Muhammad Younas (2013) noted that self-confidence and motivation are very essential in English as Foreign Language (EFL) Learning. However, in Pakistan, Rashid, Adnan and Abbas (2013) and Haider (2012) short stories, poems, novels, plays, etc. are written and are named in English. So as a result, many countries recently recognized that English, as a functional language, is necessary to the students. According to Rashid, Rana Adnan and Abbas (2013) the Pakistan English syllabus accentuates proper linguistic form rather than building creative thought in students. As a result, students even in college especially rural areas' are not successful in learning to speak English fluently. Abdul Rashid, Rana Adnan and Abbas, (2013) citing Kannan (2009), unveiled that in schools, students learn English as international language, which requires constant practice and persistence. Despite their sustained effort studying English, students are unable to construct a single sentence without grammatical errors. This confirms that they study it only for examination purposes.

In the study of Nguyen and Tran (2016), factors affecting students' speaking performance at Le Thanh Hien High School were revealed. They had worked with two hundred and three grade 11 students and ten teachers of English using questionnaires and class observation. Their findings signified that the student were confronted with various struggles in speaking which comprised motivation and anxiety (Nguyen & Tran, 2015). They communicate very scarcely or never at all. They could not think about anything to say. They used Vietnamese instead of English during interactions with peers. Their involvement was limited or uneven and have no eagerness to voice themselves.

Nation and Newton (2009) added some conditions such as time pressure, planning or organization of thoughts, the performance standards, and level of support to pupils. Same observation was backed up in several studies conducted (Hosni, 2014 & Morozova, 2013) that linguistic domain such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and discourse represents the most critical aspect of difficulty in speaking as these learners did not had enough language facilities.

Other literature noted some serious conditions that make it difficult for children to express themselves verbally. These issue may generate troubles with conversation. The Understood Team (2016) mentioned that some children can have more than one among these difficulties, which are expressive language difficulties, mixed receptive-expressive language difficulties, and social communication difficulties.

Methodology

The study was a qualitative research which entailed observation and discovery of crucial characteristics of persons or groups associated with a social problem (Creswell, 2013). The researcher recorded information as these occurred. Purposive sampling was utilized in this study. Case studies were carried out among five indigenous learners in Tuguegarao-Sto. Domingo Elementary School, Echague, Isabela, Philippines. Their teacher in English was also considered in gathering of information. Data were collected through observation and oral assessment activities. Instrument used was a checklist that comprised indicators of speaking difficulties in English Phonology. These were re-aligned with literacy domains such as Alphabet Knowledge, Phonics and Word Recognition and Phonological Awareness based from the existing Curriculum Guide in English for Grades 1-10 (Philippine Department of Education, 2016). Oral assessment in English phonology that jived with the item-indicators of the checklist was constructed.

With the checklist, data collection process engaged the researcher and teacher-participant in separate oral assessment activities with each of indigenous learner participant. The checklist was being accomplished by ticking either YES or NO as to whether the indigenous learner experiences the problem based on the result of his/her Oral Assessment. During Oral Assessment, field notes on the speaking difficulties of the indigenous learners were noted. An interview was conducted with teacher-participant to supplement the results. Data were qualitatively and thematically analyzed. Analysis underscored speaking insufficiencies of subjects based from minimum learning competencies in English that said indigenous learners need to acquire to allow them to cope with curriculum ladders in content and performance standards in English for Grade 2.

Results

The findings refer to the speaking difficulties of Philippine indigenous learners in English related to Phonology. Results are reported on three areas: (i) speaking deficiencies of indigenous learners in alphabet knowledge, (ii) speaking difficulties of indigenous learners in English phonics and word recognition, and (iii) speaking deficiency of indigenous learners in phonological awareness.

1. Speaking deficiencies on Alphabet Knowledge

Alphabet Knowledge refers to the Filipino learner's ability to recognize, name and sound out all the upper and lower case letters of the alphabet both in English and Filipino (Department of Education, 2016.) If a learner, in his/her early literacy period, was unable to achieved expertise in this field of language, he/she is likely to struggle in complexities of learning to speak English. For indigenous Filipino learners, it is fundamental to look into their obstacles in attaining full awareness of alphabets in English. Table 1 presented six speaking deficiencies of indigenous Filipino learners in alphabet knowledge.

Table 1 Speaking deficiencies of indigenous learners in alphabet knowledge

Indicators of deficiency in Alphabet Knowledge	Teacher assessment	Researcher assessment
Naming and sounding letters either in Filipino or in English.	IPL- 5	IPL- 5
Reciting letters of English alphabets in sequence.	IPL- 5	IPL- 5
Recognising proper arrangement of words based on sequence of English alphabets.	IPL- 2, 3, 4 & 5	IPL- 2, 3, 4 & 5
Distinguishing beginning letters of illustrated words in English.	IPL- 2, 4 & 5	IPL- 2, 4 & 5
Differentiating alphabets in Filipino and English.	IPL- 2, 3, 4 & 5	IPL- 2, 3, 4 & 5
Identifying and labelling beginning consonant sounds of illustrated English words.	IPL- 2, 3, 4 & 5	IPL- 2, 3, 4 & 5

IPL – Indigenous Peoples Learner

Table 1 shows that teacher-observer and the researcher had same assessment concerning speaking deficits of indigenous learners in Alphabet Knowledge (AK). As gleaned, four out of five (5) IP learner-participants had 3 out of the 6 indicated articulation problems. These include complexities in recognizing alphabetical arrangement of words; distinguishing parallels of alphabets used in same English and Filipino word; and identifying beginning consonant sounds of illustrated English words. Only one participant experienced problem in citing letters either in Filipino or in English and reciting English alphabets in sequence. Participant number 5 had the most number of utterance shortcomings in alphabet knowledge domain. Participant number 1 did not manifest inconvenience in this area.

2. Speaking Difficulty in Phonics and Word Recognition

Phonics (K5Chalkbox, 2015) is demonstrating to learners the process of connecting the printed word with its speech sounds. Phonics instruction (Nashville Public Television) should be clear, organised and should involve many senses. The system of word recognition proficiencies are aligned in naming and distinguishing of words. Same learning processes are used when students pronounce unfamiliar words and are able to comprehend their meaning in the viewpoint of the statement. Instruction also involve phonic analysis, getting through the word parts or structure and familiarity in using context clues (K5Chalkbox, 2015). When learners failed to acquire these basic skills in speaking English as a language, this may adversely affect gaining of competencies with other domains of English language literacy such vocabulary building, oral language and/or grammar. Table 2 gleaned four speaking difficulties of indigenous Filipino learners in English phonics and word recognition.

Table 2 Speaking difficulties of indigenous learners in English Phonics and Word Recognition

Indicators of difficulty in Phonics and Word Recognition	Teacher assessment	Researcher assessment
Segmenting sounds in English words with CVC Patterns (e.g., "Tell me each sound you hear in the word 'cat'?")	IPL- 2, 3, 4 & 5	IPL- 2, 3, 4 & 5
Matching of English words in CVC Patterns with pictures.	IPL- 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	IPL- 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Pairing basic sight word with its picture (e.g., Dolch Sight Words/Fry Words)	IPL- 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	IPL- 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Discriminating sound of a word after deleting some letters in it (e.g., "Say 'chair'. Now say it without 'ch'.")	IPL- 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	IPL- 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5

IPL – Indigenous Peoples Learner

In handling English language instruction of indigenous Filipino learners, a thorough understanding of their speaking difficulties on English phonics and word recognition is very important. This helps in designing and developing instructional programs in English that are suited to their levels of comprehension, preparedness, needs and problems.

Table 2 displays that teacher-participant and the researcher had the same assessment on indigenous Filipino learners' speaking inconveniencies in Phonics and Word Recognition. Complications comprised matching of English words in CVC Patterns and basic sight word with pictures, and phonemic manipulation. Participant number 1, did not undergo strain in separating sounds in words with CVC Patterns, while participant numbers 2, 3, 4, and 5 met this as articulation problem including other hindrances in Phonics and Word Recognition in English.

2. Speaking Deficiencies Associated with Phonological Awareness

This domain describes and consciousness of phonetic or sound construction of English words. For a young child, his/her rhyming skill shows a good phonological awareness (GEMM Learning, 2017). Lack of phonological awareness is signalled with the child's incapacity to identify sounds such as rhymes and /initial/end sounding of words. For second language English learner like an indigenous child, these may influence his/her capacity to gain the vital proficiencies in speaking English. Hence,

it is necessary to find out these speaking deficiencies of indigenous learners in English to provide them with instructional remedies and better assist them in achieving goals in learning English as an academic subject. Table 3 displayed eight speaking deficiencies of Philippine indigenous learners in phonological awareness.

Table 3 Speaking deficiencies of indigenous learners associated with phonological awareness

Indicators of Inadequacies in Phonological Awareness	Teacher assessment	Researcher assessment
Recognizing words that rhyme among the choices (e.g., tell the two words that rhyme: bed, red, net)	IPL- 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	IPL- 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Determining among the choices the word that rhymes with the given English word (e.g., "What rhymes with 'key'?")	IPL- 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	IPL- 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
Distinguishing sound variation between two words (e.g., pan and fan)	IPL- 2, 3 & 5	IPL- 2, 3 & 5
Identifying initial sound of the English word (e.g., "What is the first sound of the word 'santan'?")	IPL- 2, 4 & 5	IPL- 2, 4 & 5
Perceiving ending sound of the English word (i.e., "What sound do you hear at the end of 'santan'?")	IPL- 1, 2, 4 & 5	IPL- 1, 2, 4 & 5
Remembering the sequence of sounds in English words.	IPL- 1, 2, 4 & 5	IPL- 1, 2, 4 & 5
Subdividing syllables in a word (e.g., "Clap for each syllable you hear in the word 'sampagita').	IPL- 2, 4 & 5	IPL- 2, 4 & 5
Blending syllables to form a new English word (e.g., "I am going to say parts of a word. Tell me what the word is. 'bas-ket.')	IPL- 2, 3 & 5	IPL- 2, 3 & 5

IPL – Indigenous Peoples Learner

Table 3 displays the signs of verbal inefficiencies of indigenous learners in the area of phonological awareness in English. As presented, the researcher and teacher-participant had equal observations regarding spoken language weaknesses of said learners in phonological awareness. These covered shortcomings in recognizing rhyming words, and determining which word rhymes with given English word. These oral deficits were greatest in number of participant with specified indicators. There were markers of language inadequacies, however, that had least number of indigenous learners with such language shortfalls in English. These were complexities in distinguishing sound variation between two words (e.g., pan and fan); identifying the initial sound of a word; subdividing of syllables (e.g., "Clap for each syllable you hear in the word 'sampagita'); and blending of syllables (e.g., "I am going to say parts of a word. Tell me what the word is. 'bas-ket.'). Furthermore, participant number 1 and 3 had least verbal language inconvenience in phonological awareness, while participant numbers 2 and 5 had the greatest. Most of the indigenous learners in this study, struggled in perceiving the ending sound of the English word and remembering sequence of sounds in words.

Discussion

This study determined the speaking difficulties of Philippine indigenous learners in English Phonology, or study of the sound system of English language. These were associated with speaking problems on three domains of language literacy such as deficiencies in alphabet knowledge, difficulties in phonics and word recognition and deficiencies in phonological awareness. An evident-based knowledge on these speaking hardship of indigenous learners is of great help in providing remedial or intervention language program that both English language teachers and parents can employ during the process of instruction.

In this study, indigenous learners confronted difficulties in obtaining skills in English alphabets because names and sounds of the letters in L1 and L2 are different. Similarly, Farnen (2017) stated that diverse manners to spell same sound in English confuses learners. Messer (2011) uncovered that recognizing letters of the English alphabets are difficult for L2 learners considering that there 26 letters and there are some letters that have similar shapes. It also complicates L2 learner to recognize the fonts of the alphabets both in upper and lowers cases. Case (2011) revealed that students have obstacles in identifying letter combinations when ending consonant connects with beginning vowel sound proceeding letter (e.g., FA can sound like “e fei” instead of “ef ei”). Many L2 students are confused on some pairs of letter-sounds such as C/K, C/S, G/J, K/Q, etc. Thus, leading to confusions and troubles in obtaining skills in speaking English language. Farnen (2017) and Case (2011) posted concerns on sound systems and on combinations of letters when consonants are at the end of the pronunciation of a letter, which resembles indigenous learner’s troubles in recognizing the ending consonant letter-sounds in English words.

Findings imply that during initial stage of teaching English alphabets, letter-sounds should be given more emphasis before its name. Once the indigenous learner had achieved the ability to name and sound the letter, this allows him/her to decipher connections of sounds with other letters for both Filipino and English alphabets. This adeptness concretes way to acquire aptitudes in other language literacy domains in English. Local resources and multi-media can be of great help to concerned indigenous learner during oral his/her activities and trainings in gaining awareness and proficiency on alphabets. Parents and teachers of indigenous learners should be partners in providing an intervention in a wholesome and rich learning environment in order to motivate him/her to obtain the knowledge and abilities on alphabets.

Indigenous learners evidently faced speaking obstacles associated with phonics and word recognition. This impediment in remembering sounds and meaning of English words affects their speaking and comprehension of words. These were evident when they mispronounced or just guessed the articulation of English words. Their lack of skills in pronouncing English words correctly, influences their inability to comprehend meaning and importance of English words or expressions.

Segmenting of sounds in CVC words is a noted speaking trouble of indigenous learners. Chad and Osborn (2017), further reported that many pupils experience obscurity in phonemic manipulation when they are hassled in fragmenting sounds in spoken word, and reconstructing it by putting back the sounds together to arrive at same word. Messer (2011) added that once the learner succeeded in naming letters and sounds, next challenge is to decipher their connection. In the process, learner finds it hard to perceive sounds of a word from the manner it is spelled in English alphabets. Similarly, Hagan (2010) revealed that indigenous learners had inadequate skills in

transferring their phonics knowledge from L1 to L2, which cause the tendency for them to pronounce second language phoneme as it is pronounced in their first language (Gasser, 2006). These outputs denote that intensive home and classroom instructions on verbal activities in letter-sounds and word recognition in English should be a part of the indigenous child's learning program. Provide indigenous learners with early experiences on English language. English terms must be parts of daily conversations with these learners in school and at home. The case study who has difficulty in pronouncing English words should be given more practice in pronouncing letter-sounds and English terminologies. Involve the indigenous learner in speaking engagement activities in English during classes.

The researcher and teacher-participant affirmed the same observations that all the indigenous learners in this study had deficiency in Phonological Awareness. These incorporated limitations in identifying rhyming words, sound variation between two words, and beginning sound of words. Some learners manifested striving in subdividing of syllables, and combining of syllables to form another word. Messer (2011) likewise identified other pressing problems of L2 learners related to phonemic manipulations such as identifying of sounds of words being heard (e.g. the 'c' of 'cat'), and complexity in determining words that have the same initial sounds (alliteration) or end with the same sound (rhyming words). Alimemaj, (2014), and Nkamigbo, & Obiamalu, (2016) exposed that disparate phonetic and phonological complications which learner faced, stemmed from several essential reasons. These were differences between Mother Tongue and target language, Mother Tongue interference, and consonants and tones as key areas of Phonology complications. Gasser (2006) stressed critical issues on the ways in which language phonology matches with the second language phonology. Findings in the aforementioned study posted that there are more of the differences in language phonology between L1 and L2, which resulted to negative transfer or hindrance in acquiring skills in the second language. Hagan (2010) concluded that once a learner is able to reflect sounds in his/her native language, then s/he can transmit the same ability to the second language.

Results denote that by the time an indigenous learner engages in learning L2, his/her primary catches are ending-letter sounds of words, syllables and rhyming words. Therefore, language teachers should invest time in providing verbal activities to IP English learners that focus more on Phonological aspects. Teachers and parents should provide language intervention program of activities, with customized instructional materials, techniques and positive approaches that are in line with phonological consciousness, to improve the speaking skills of concerned indigenous learners. Once the indigenous learner internalizes such skills, s/he shall be of advantage to learn abilities in other English language literacies.

Conclusion

Most of the indigenous learner-participants failed to attain basic literacies on alphabets (e.g., internalizing the letter-sound relationship), which are prerequisites in acquiring competence in recognizing and articulating English words and expressions. Letter-sounds, words and English expressions are differently pronounced in English as compared with Mother Tongue and Filipino, and this makes it hard for some indigenous pupils to speak English. Furthermore, said learners had very limited engagement with oral or verbal activities in English. Hence, they declined to internalize

English language sound system, which eventually influence acquisition of efficiency English Phonology.

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