

# Metaphorical Descriptions of Teaching and Learning of English during Pandemic

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**Abstract:-** The present study aimed to examine what multilingual English learners and teachers were like during the Covid-19 Pandemic based on the English language teachers. Specifically, it attempts to show what metaphors multilingual English language teachers identify to describe their learners and themselves during the Covid-19 pandemic; and what these metaphors disclose about the English language teachers' sense of teaching while handling their learners. A prompt, "English learners are like" and "teachers are like ..." that formed as written narratives of the respondents, was utilized to collect the data. The data were qualitatively analyzed using the in vivo coding, using the respondents' words. These words were listed and categorized using the themes. Findings indicate that multilingual English teachers identify various metaphors to describe their learners. These metaphors describe struggles in their English learning process, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, and multilingual English teachers should serve as a provision to ease these struggles experienced by the learners. Furthermore, metaphors disclose that multilingual English teachers are shifting from seeing their learners' needs to survive and become successful in their English language learning to seeing themselves as the need to act as helping hands for their learners. Implications for teacher education indicate that greater emphasis still needs to be exerted on exploring language learning and teaching for multilingual learners.

**Keywords:-** English Learning and Teaching, Metaphor, Covid-19 Pandemic, Multilingual, Masbateño

## I. INTRODUCTION

*Closed schools and higher education institutions. Imposed lockdowns. Stay-at-home rules. Alternative teaching methods. Dramatic change.*

These scenarios describe the present situation in most, if not all, parts of the world during this Covid-19 Pandemic. With the impacts of this pandemic, the English language teaching and learning process took its share in this universal shift from face-to-face to flexible/blended learning. Expectedly, the transition has created difficulties for the learners (Zboun & Farrah, 2021; Maican & Cocoradă, 2021; UNESCO, 2020).

With the unexpected emergence of a pandemic comes the challenges that heightened the innate complexities of

English language teaching and learning for multilingual (Egbert, 2020; Gacs et al., 2020). Countries from all parts of the world continuously focus on provisions such as policies regarding education and training (e.g., White Paper on Education and Training, Commission of the European Communities, 1995; European Union, 2019) and upholding quality standards and sustainability for language learning in support of online and digital tools (European Union, 2019).

In the Philippines, the government is extending efforts to improve the quality of education through the DepEd and CHED's initiatives (e.g., revising learning standards; alternative learning delivery modalities) during this pandemic. However, it is still necessary to examine first-hand how teachers and learners cope with these educational system changes and how they handle their learners and portray their language learning and teaching processes.

With the gap in the literature concerning English language teaching and learning in the Philippines (Tarrayo et al., 2021) in the middle of this global effect of the pandemic, considering an analysis of the multilingual English language teachers and students' representation through metaphors can bring meaningful information on sustaining valuable English language learning and teaching undertakings for multilingual.

To achieve this goal, is to employ metaphorical perceptions about multilinguals' English language teaching and learning process during this pandemic. Espousing this framework on metaphors originated with Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) publication on "Metaphors We Live By," underlying a principle that "the locus of metaphor is not in language at all, but in the way we conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another" (p. 185). This means that with this theory, the multilingual English language teachers will portray the kind of English teachers and the learners they hone to become proficient in English.

A vast number of metaphor studies in English language or foreign language have been conducted setting learners' perceptions of learning English (Woon, 2016), learners' perspectives on English instructors (Erarslan & Asmali, 2017; Nikitina & Furuoka, 2008; Ahkemoğlu & Kesen Mutlu, (2016); ESL teachers and attitudes (Aktekin, 2013); Views on the learning process (Fang, 2015); Mudra & Aini, 2020); learning motivation and experiences (Jin et al., 2014); multilingual's floral Englishes (Carmen, in press); and teachers' views towards research assistant (Yalcin et al., 2016). However, these above-cited studies delved into

metaphorical perceptions participated by learners towards teachers or learners' views towards learning and teachers towards teachers and learners in a global context. No study yet has been conducted by multilingual master of arts in education in English (MAED English) students in the Philippines focusing on themselves and their multilingual learners currently at the pinnacle of the Covid-19 Pandemic using metaphoric perceptions. This present study will fill this literature gap. This research attempts to answer the following questions; What metaphors do multilingual English language teachers identify to describe their learners and themselves during the Covid-19 pandemic? Moreover, what do these metaphors disclose about the English language teachers' sense of teaching while handling their learners?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### ➤ *The Nature of Metaphor*

A metaphor is "a novel or poetic linguistic expression where one or more words for a concept are used outside of its normal conventional meaning to express a similar concept" (Lakoff, 1993, p. 202). Metaphors can do many things. It allows us to understand clearly the world surrounding us while seeing a well-known idea or a thing in a different aspect. It shows what is in people's minds and describes tacit knowledge such as experiences, beliefs, and attitudes. It is also "the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5).

George Lakoff's and Mark Johnson's "Metaphors We Live By" (1980) posit that metaphor is beyond creative and imaginative language but says something about our thinking and actions. Lakoff and Johnson used several examples: "I am feeling up today, Your spirits soar or sink; you wake up; you fall asleep" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, pp. 14- 15); Love is a journey (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 44). These metaphors imply meanings such as feeling good today, we cannot always be in permanent situations, or love needs time and action to make it work for the lovers.

An additional essential aspect of metaphor is that "by investigating people's use of metaphors, we can better understand their emotions, attitudes, and conceptualizations, as individuals and as participants in social life" (Cameron & Maslen, 2010 in Mudra and Aini, 2020, p.72). Therefore, metaphor is an appropriate method to describe the concepts of multilingual English learners and teachers as perceived by multilingual Masbateño English teachers, especially amid the Covid-19 pandemic times.

### ➤ *Metaphors in English Language Teaching and Learning*

Ahkemoglu and Kesen Mutlu (2016) investigated the conceptual metaphors of ELT major and non-ELT primary learners for their perception of an English teacher. The study used metaphor elicitation sheets, semi-structured interviews, and personal essays to gather data. The results indicated metaphors considered peculiar to English language teachers,

such as Oracle, schizophrenic, and gum, and some common metaphors, such as "light," "guide," and "bridge."

Nikitina and Furuoka (2008) focused on student-generated metaphors about language teachers and examined their dimensions through quantitative analysis. Distributed metaphor-related questionnaires to 98 students at the Universiti Malaysia Sabah; the study used factor analysis to identify the metaphor dimensions. The findings relate to the metaphor taxonomy of Oxford et al. (1998) and Chen (2003).

by the participants, composed of 30 instructors and 156 students from the Foreign Languages School of a Turkish university. Utilizing the metaphor elicitation method wherein learners completed the prompt question, 'Learning/Teaching English is like ... because...' using a metaphor, findings depicting teachers' beliefs for language teaching and their roles in the classroom, and learners' beliefs towards language learning process were attained. The study proved the usefulness of metaphor elicitation as valuable in describing the second language learning and teaching process.

Mudra and Aini (2020) examined the attitudes and types of metaphorical perceptions of male and female prospective English teachers (PETs) towards their English learning process. The study employed an elicitation sheet with the prompt "English learning is (like) ... because ..." to gather the data. The data were qualitatively analyzed by listing, naming, categorizing, and determining the metaphors. The findings revealed metaphors of male and female PET's attitudes towards the English learning process to be positive, negative, ambivalent, and neutral. However, distinctions between male and female PETs were discovered as males viewed English learning negatively while females viewed English learning positively. Moreover, the metaphors elicited were categorized into different types: enjoyable activity, construction work, movement/journey, experience, planting/farming, exploration, and things. In conclusion, the study proved that metaphors help determine suitable strategies, methods, and materials for English teaching and learning.

Erarslani and Asmali (2017) focused on understanding university preparatory class students' mental images of their English language instructors through metaphors. One hundred forty-eight students participated in the study and wrote metaphors on the metaphor elicitation task with the prompt "my English instructor is like.....because....." The data gathered were subjected to a metaphor analysis technique that included naming, elimination, deciding unit of analysis, categorization, and quantitative data analysis. The result revealed nine conceptual themes out of 153 metaphors elicited. The top category to describe was the metaphor 'teacher as nurturer' noted by the female participants and followed by "teacher as someone good-hearted," according to the male participants. In sum, students took notice of the good side of the teachers hence this kind of optimistic view.

## RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

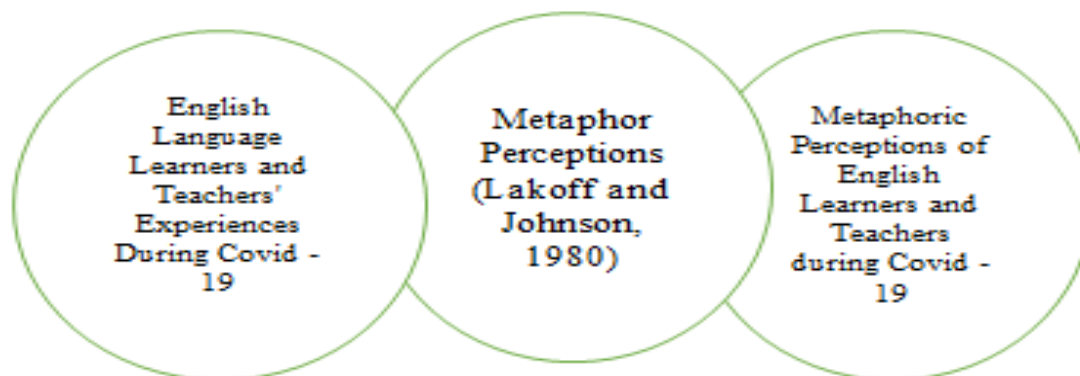


Fig 1 Research Framework

Employing this framework served as massive assistance in comprehending the study's findings. These English language experiences of teachers and learners during this Covid-19 pandemic were vividly appreciated, as portrayed in the metaphors applied by the participants. Through these metaphors, we were able to understand and experience what the multilingual teachers and learners are feeling and seeing while conducting these English language processes, even in times of difficulties, with the aid of "another thing" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5) that assisted in describing the concept in focus.

### III. METHODOLOGY

#### ➤ Context

To materialize exploring the use of metaphors in the language learning and teaching process, 18 MAED students, currently teachers of English in the province, participated in the study. Of these 18 participants who participated in this study, 66% (n=12) were female, and 33% (n=6) were male. With their experiences and knowledge, these participants are believed to produce deep understanding and extended metaphors helpful in this study.

#### ➤ Data Collecting Procedures

The data were collected using written narratives that elicit metaphors, with a prompt "English learners during this COVID-19 pandemic are like...English teachers during this COVID-19 pandemic are like.... (like). It follows some discussions or justifications about the metaphors given. Before writing their narratives, several data collection steps were followed. First, the participants were informed about metaphors and how they will use them in their narratives. This was done to clarify things that will deepen their understanding of metaphors in the English learning-teaching processes. Also, they were given examples to serve as their pattern in thinking of their metaphors. Second, they were given enough time to write their narratives and requested to send their outputs via messenger or email.

#### ➤ The Methodology of Metaphor

The researcher suggested to the participants for their metaphors. However, she gave an example. She also used Thomas and Beauchamp's definition of metaphor: "A metaphor is another way of saying whom you are using an object or a role to represent the way you see yourself as a teacher. For example, you could say that I am a gardener because I help children grow." Since metaphors highly reflect personal interpretations of phenomena or anything focused at hand, the researcher is aware that their metaphors may be influenced by the lenses of class, gender, race, ethnicity, and educational and life experiences. Therefore, their kind of metaphor was not questioned, especially since their responses were with explanations.

#### ➤ Data Analysis Process

This present study is a descriptive one utilizing the qualitative method. Since the participants were small in number, the researcher coded the data by hand. She started by identifying the metaphor from each participant. Utilizing the iterative approach, she grouped the metaphors according to themes about language learners and teachers that emerged as possible categories. Moreover, during this open coding phase, she used "in vivo codes, that is, the exact words of the participants as labels for the categories" (Creswell, 2002, p. 448). To achieve reliability in the analysis, the researcher used the participants' own words to reflect the actual intent of the participants. When done with coding, the researcher reread the participants' narratives and re-examined the identified thematic categories. The researcher checked that all the metaphors were placed accordingly in their categories.

### IV. FINDINGS

In the study of Fang (2015) and Mudra and Aini (2020), they focused on employing a similar prompt of metaphor elicitations "English learning is like..." and presented a variety of metaphors to describe the teachers and learners during the time wherein the innate complexities of English language teaching and learning for multilingual are found as factors to create a more significant impact. In this study, the participants used metaphors that mainly describe the teaching and learning of the English language amid the complexities

of the Covid-19 pandemic. In response to our first research question: What metaphors do multilingual English language teachers identify to describe their learners and themselves during the Covid-19 pandemic? The study identified metaphors for both English learners and teachers.

#### ➤ *Metaphors for English Learners*

The researcher found that the metaphors collected from the written narratives of the participants describe the English learners at this time of Covid-19 as a person, thing, activity, animal, and plant. Understandably, these metaphors focus on the 'learners' needs for guidance, 'proper direction,' and 'dreams.' Other metaphors described are 'can turn into reality,' 'slow learning,' 'need nurturing,' 'push,' and 'can be defensive at times.' Moreover, 'need a proper connection from teachers,' 'must follow steps to go to the top,' 'delicate,' 'a treasure hunter,' 'determination,' 'can win a battle with focus and determination,' and 'encounters a huge challenge,' and 'frustrating experience.' Examples include:

- Like a wanderer with only a lamp in hand
- Like lost souls in the vast ocean
- Like travelers on strange roads
- Like a maze
- Like traveling to an island
- Like a mountain climber
- Like a miner
- Like David (of the Battle of David and Goliath)
- Like a turtle
- Like plants
- Like a seedling
- Like a cactus
- Like a ladder
- Like a pearl
- Like a sharp as a tack
- Like a boat swallowed by gigantic waves

#### ➤ *Metaphors for English Teachers*

The participants' metaphor's second focus is describing teachers handling their students in this Covid-19 time. These descriptions reveal a thing, an animal, a person, a plant, a part of the body, nature, and a goal. Interpreting these tell us about accommodating, with high tolerance, serving as guidance and defense of and for the students, open for more knowledge, support of the delicate (students), with a helping heart, equipped, giver of hope, nurturing, strong, hopeful/ambition, knows how to anticipate, and alert. Examples of metaphors from their narratives include:

- *Like fitting yourself into an array of books*
- *Like Camel's endurance under the heat of the sun and long-distance travel*
- *Like the person to water and nurture them*
- *Like a farmer constantly watering the plants*
- *Like a guardian angel*
- *Like a mountain climber with a helping hand*
- *Like a cactus*
- *Like a book*
- *Like a pearl oyster*
- *Like a hand*

- *Like Mining tools*
- *Like sunshine*
- *Like a gardener*
- *Like a Nito Vine*
- *Like reaching a star from above*
- *Like a compass that gives direction*
- *Like a detective*

In response to the second question: 2) What do these metaphors disclose about the English language teachers' sense of teaching while handling their learners?

The researcher found several patterns among the metaphors used by the participants. Five different themes were determined for the metaphors from the first focus of the written narrative. They are "needs," "goal or success," "traits," "process," and "challenges as a natural course of life." The responses indicate that these participants saw the needs of the students in their language-learning process. These students have their own goals as learners, and to achieve these goals, they may ask for help or assistance from their teachers. Students have unique qualities or traits that will help them reach their highest potential as learners. Although they may possess positive (e.g., determination, defensive) and negative (e.g., slow, delicate) traits, they may be honed into the most acceptable learners in the class.

Students are also likened to a process that must be followed from step one to the last part. It means they must experience things following the step-by-step process without shortcuts or in sequence to become fully developed individuals. Finally, students may be in the middle of challenges or circumstances that could hinder their success in school or their general learning. This implies that the lives of the learners are only sometimes smooth-flowing. They are not free from worries and trials. Selected excerpts below demonstrate these experiences of the learners.

*S1: The metaphor suited for my learners is like a wanderer with only a lamp. That lamp is none other than us. These learners are like lost travelers in the field of language. They may not know where and when to start; once they start, they may not know how to continue. Learning the English language is indeed tricky. You will get lost and stumble on the ground, but most importantly, you get on your feet and continue learning; just like us, learners sometimes feel disappointed once they do not understand the topic. That is why we are the light to guide them in this metaphor. We are not placed in the classroom to ridicule their subject-verb agreement or criticize their accent. We are there to lessen the burden and illuminate the light of a welcoming atmosphere where everyone is free to make mistakes and learn from them.*

"Like a wanderer with only a lamp at hand" is a metaphor that implies students sense the need for direction and assistance. They see themselves as unique people who, on their educational path, will need guidance and encouragement from others. The inference is that students want guidance, support, and tools to help them study more efficiently.

*S2: My pupils in language lesson respond slowly, but at the end of the session, **they can reach the finish line** and my only way to hold on even waiting, which sometimes make me feel inactive, is my continuous and never-ending patience because I believe in achieving goals, the most important step is starting and keep moving. Moreover, I thank you! No matter how slow it is, it is still better than nothing.*

This metaphor suggests that teaching a new language is worthwhile despite the difficulty and time involved. The learners' journey may be more like a marathon than a sprint, but at some point, they will cross the finish line. A teacher's job is to help learners to become educated adults gently. Moreover, the excerpt highlights patience as a crucial trait for a language teacher. It implies that having continual patience is crucial even when progress appears slow, or the teacher feels passive. The metaphor suggests that a teacher's unwavering patience is essential for fostering a positive learning environment and maintaining students' interest and engagement.

In addition, perseverance and determination are also emphasized by its meaning. According to the excerpt, the most vital part of reaching one's objectives is to get started. It suggests that all development, no matter how incremental, is worthwhile and should be celebrated. The metaphor as a whole suggests that a conviction in the significance of slow, steady improvement is essential for any language teacher. The educator's role in creating a welcoming atmosphere and motivating pupils to keep going is emphasized. The comment conveys appreciation for any improvement, highlighting that any improvement is preferable to none.

*S3: I would **compare my students to plants**. Each one of them is beautiful and unique in its way. They have different learning approaches because of their different interests, experiences, and needs. Thus, each one requires extra care to grow and be successful based on their differences. As a teacher, I must water and nurture them to watch them grow fully.*

Students are compared to plants in this metaphor, which is meant to highlight each student's uniqueness, beauty, and growth potential. Like a different plant species, each student has their own qualities and requirements, reflected in the metaphor. The statement stresses the significance of individualizing care and instruction for each student by gaining insight into their unique learning styles. The metaphor suggests that a teacher's job is similar to that of a gardener in that both the teacher and the learners benefit from the nurture and support they get. The teacher's role in fostering a classroom where all students feel safe learning and growing is emphasized.

*S4: **Learners are travelers to strange roads**. Students get to learn many things in school; there are many things they need to learn along the process. They are traveling on an unknown or strange road where there is no probability of going to the exact destination.*

This metaphor suggests that students are similar to wayfarers with uncertain destinations and travel plans. This statement implies that there is some degree of unpredictability in the learning process, as students are likely to come across information and ideas that are new to them and may present some degree of difficulty. This suggests that the goal or result of the educational process is only sometimes transparent or predictable. Instead, kids learn to navigate through school, accumulating skills and knowledge, even if they do not know where they are headed. The metaphor highlights the significance of welcoming the opportunity to learn, remaining receptive to new information, and being flexible in the face of change.

*S5: Every student is a potency whereby he/she is subjected to becoming an actor. It is inevitable for a student to have difficulties in various subjects, matters, and learning areas because of insufficient knowledge resources. Analogically, **a student is an epitome of a plant sown on rocky ground lacking the soil's nutrients**, especially during the dry season. A plant can grow, flourish, and bear much fruit to a learner. A plant on the rocky ground needs a stable water resource to survive and accomplish its purpose in its nature, so he/she can be produced globally, but his/her foundation is unfortunately not concrete during his/her early stage of learning.*

This metaphor suggests that every learner can achieve and become successful, but some students may have a more challenging time getting there because they have different advantages or access to resources than others. In this metaphor, students are like seeds put on rough terrain, with the ability to grow and flourish. It implies that, similar to how a plant needs sufficient soil nutrients and a steady water supply, kids need the sustenance and support of a stable learning environment. The metaphor suggests that students need to lay a solid groundwork in their earliest academic experiences to succeed and reach their full potential. It stresses the need to assist students in obtaining the tools, direction, and encouragement they need to succeed.

*S6: **Learners learn best in a ladder-like way**. Learning starts from the basics. These basic skills are considered indispensable in the process of learning. A child will experience difficulty in acquiring complex knowledge if his foundational skills are not adequately established. The ladder shown in the picture above represents the learning steps. The people around are the educators and persons who can guide and teach the learners systematically through step-by-step processes to be directed on their path.*

This metaphor suggests that education is a process that unfolds through time and builds upon prior knowledge. Each rung of the ladder represents a new accomplishment in one's educational pursuits. This remark implies that students must lay a solid groundwork of knowledge and skills before moving on to more advanced topics. It suggests that students may need help grasping and applying more complex ideas if they first mastered the foundations. The metaphor also suggests that teachers and mentors play an essential part in ensuring students stay on track by guiding them through the

learning process, offering necessary support, and teaching in a methodical fashion. It stresses the value of an organized and sequential curriculum, where students are led by the hand toward mastery.

*S7: The plant, on the other hand, represents our students. They must be given much attention and proper nourishment to grow as we want. The water, the fertilizer, and proper sanitation serve as the knowledge, skills, and values we want to instill in them. Ultimately, we can harvest the excellent fruit they might give us and be the best version of plants they can be.*

This metaphor implies that students are like plants, requiring care, sustenance, and direction to flourish and bloom to their full potential. Water, fertilizer, and adequate sanitation represent knowledge, skills, and values. Teachers hope to establish their students' ideal traits and characteristics by equipping them with these fundamentals. The metaphor suggests that if learners are adequately cared for and cultivated, they will blossom into their highest potential and become their best selves. It stresses the significance of creating a welcoming and stimulating classroom for students to learn and develop.

Teachers have also embraced their roles, centering themselves on their students than focusing on their curriculum or their manner of teaching (Thomas & Beauchamp, 2011). For the second focus of the narratives, on the part of the teachers, they see themselves the necessity to acquire abilities that will feed the needs of the learners. There are many ways to support the learners. Participants regard themselves "as a guardian angel" (guidance); "like a compass which gives direction" (guidance); "like a cactus" (defense); "like a pearl oyster" (support of the delicate); and "like a mountain climber with a helping hand," (support/pull up the learners).

- The following are some metaphoric elicitations describing a teacher as perceived by the research participants.

*S1: Being an English language teacher is like fitting into various books. As a language teacher, I embody the metaphor of being a book, fitting into an array of books during this short but meaningful journey. You will need more than just the knowledge you acquired from your four years' stay in college as a language teacher. It takes more than that. In teaching English, you depend not only on what is learned based on grammar, syntax, and pragmatics. You go beyond what the usual teaching of language demands. It is like using an interdisciplinary approach to teach the language you do effectively.*

This metaphor suggests that English language teachers are like librarians, with access to vast and varied knowledge and resources. The analogy implies that effective language teachers must be adaptable in using a wide range of resources and strategies. The phrase stresses that language instruction requires more than the skills learned in college. In other words, more than knowing grammar, syntax, and pragmatics is required when teaching English. The metaphor implies that

successful language instruction goes beyond the norms of classroom practice.

In addition, this implication implies that a language teacher should take an interdisciplinary approach. This would involve using knowledge and methods from other disciplines to improve language instruction. The language teacher can provide a more prosperous and exciting learning environment by incorporating content from other disciplines. The metaphor as a whole suggests that teaching English is a fluid and ever-changing profession. Teaching a language effectively calls for a commitment to lifelong study, curiosity, and change. To ensure practical language training, the metaphor highlights the need for instructors to be adaptable, resourceful, and open to drawing from a variety of methods and perspectives.

*S2: Climbing mountain as a metaphor. If you ever climb a mountain, you know it is hard work. You are often taking it one step at a time. However, you get a great sense of ecstasy when you reach the top. You can look down at the views and enjoy that you conquered a significant challenge. My role as an English teacher is to uplift the English proficiency of my students and give them the extra mile to become proficient and productive individuals. I would not be selfish to impart my knowledge, give the best of my ability, and help them grow to the fullest.*

This metaphor suggests that instructing English is like scaling a mountain. It is a metaphor to remind us that learning a new language is like climbing a steep hill: it takes a lot of hard work and determination. The metaphor implies a methodical approach to learning English and highlights the value of baby steps. However, the reward for making it to the pinnacle is a sense of accomplishment and pride. The statement suggests that an English teacher's primary responsibility is to improve their students' linguistic abilities so that they can succeed more in life. The goal of every good educator is to help their students develop and flourish to achieve their full potential as human beings.

*S3: My patience and sacrifice as a language teacher are like the camel's endurance under the sun's heat and long-distance travel. Teaching the language will always be my life as long as I am in the field. Like Camel, along the way, there is scarcity like in the desert, but at my back, I have stirred something I can feed to myself to feed my learners. As a professional, I gather ideas and continuously learn to always pour the emptiness in the learners' cap through my survival and consistently impart knowledge and skills.*

This metaphor suggests that, like a camel, a language teacher must have tremendous endurance to face the hardships of the desert. Teaching a language, as the metaphor implies, is a career-long commitment that requires the teacher to be resilient in the face of shortage and challenge. But just as a camel stores food and water for the journey, a good language teacher stores information and ideas for themselves and their students. By constantly expanding their knowledge and expertise, teachers can bridge the gaps in their students' understanding, as suggested by this metaphor. This displays

the teacher's dedication to their learners' success and resolves to persevere in adversity.

*S4: Children as pearls, teachers, and the education as the pearl oysters as with all metaphors in appreciation of it depends on some understanding of at least one of the elements of being compared... Creating a pearl is gradual, with the oyster covering the object with more substance each day to make it a pearl, transforming the worthless piece of clay and sand little by little into a beautiful and valuable pearl. Education and guidance can also transform a piece of clay or sand into a being, into a beautiful creation. Without guidance and education, we remain worthless pieces of clay. As teachers, we need to transform the irritants in our shells into beautiful beings by bathing them daily with the education they need.*

This metaphor compares learners to pearls and educators and schools to pearl-laying oysters. The metaphor implies that, like a pearl being formed, children are gradually shaped into beautiful and valuable creatures via education and guidance. Teachers must guide and educate students so they might become amazing adults, just as an oyster covers an irritant with layers of substance to make a pearl. Without education, people are like inert bits of clay or sand, and the metaphor highlights the transformational power of education. The importance of educators in fostering students' development and helping them blossom into unique individuals is emphasized.

*S5: They say knowledge is power, but knowledge is a treasure to me. Buried deep in this earthly world, like a mine hole for students to dig. For them to discover and explore such intriguing existence. As students, they symbolize the miner finding their answers in a dark tunnel. However, we teachers are a tool. We light, we give them something to use to find and dig knowledge as tools for education. We must be sharp and study as a pickaxe. Not dull as a rusty iron.*

This metaphor portrays knowledge as a priceless gem buried far below the globe's surface. Students are compared to miners who must dig and explore to find this gold. Teachers are compared to tools in this metaphor because they help shed light on the path to knowledge and direct pupils in the right direction. They are shown as powerful pickaxes as a mark of their proficiency and readiness. This metaphor suggests that to serve their students best; teachers should be committed to their own academic development. It emphasizes the collaborative nature of learning and the significance of teachers having the expertise and resources to enable students' knowledge discovery and acquisition.

*S6: An educator is a guardian angel. Teachers are genuinely becoming guardian angels for every learner in their custody. They are responsible for safeguarding and nurturing the students when learners are on their job. We, teachers, are considered their second parents, which signifies huge responsibility to let students feel the referent power, which actively demonstrates the feeling of being loved, welcomed, and belonging to a conducive learning environment. Similar to a guardian angel, teachers must find*

*different ways to teach our learners in the English language differently since they are diverse in many aspects. For instance, learners want their teachers to be more approachable, make learning fun, encourage verbal practice, be understandable and forgiving, make connections between the lessons and students' lives, and guide them to become the best version of themselves.*

Teachers are referred to as guardian angels in this metaphor because of the way they look out for, care for, and direct their charges. The metaphor implies that educators have a heavy burden, playing the role of a second parent and establishing a nurturing classroom setting. Love, acceptance, and a feeling of belonging are qualities that kids should see reflected in their teachers. Teachers, like guardian angels, must change their approaches to teaching to meet the requirements of their students so that learning is engaging and meaningful to each individual. As the metaphor implies, teachers should be friendly, open, patient, and forgiving toward their charges. Teachers are also responsible for encouraging their students to develop personally and reach their full potential. It highlights the positive influence that teachers have on their pupils' lives, both academically and personally.

*S7: Cactus as a teacher. A Cactus is like a teacher who can be a complex species. There are life lessons that we all can learn from this plant. Lessons that will serve as a reminder whenever we drift from our personal.*

In this metaphor, a cactus stands in for an inspiring teacher who shares their one-of-a-kind wisdom and experiences with their students. Teachers, like cacti, can have several layers to their pedagogical philosophy and approach, as this metaphor implies. If one gets off track or has trouble, the cactus might be a helpful reminder. Teachers, like cacti, are able to guide and support their students despite difficult circumstances. Moreover, teachers are steadfast and wise, providing students with lessons that will aid them as they face the ups and downs of their own lives. The cactus metaphor highlights the significance of respecting and valuing the knowledge and direction imparted by teachers.

*S8: In the context of the metaphorical statement on students in the English language subjectively, the mentor should have the correct and factual knowledge to teach and guide the learner. As the philosopher said: "nemocud nun habet" means you cannot give what you do not have. Thus, a mentor equipped with a concrete foundation should provide a concrete foundation to a learner. I am confident of the knowledge and foundation acquired from others, and knowledge learned intrinsically. Also, I have faith and know that every learner is unique and capable of becoming a good and productive individual, further in the analogy of a student and plant. **The teacher would also be the farmer analogically.** The farmer will toil and water the plants to grow, flourish and bear fruits since it is his nature, so a teacher will provide the essential learning resources to the learners from him/ her to be able to cope with every task given to him/her. Both the teacher and the student will feel the contentment of the fruits of their labor.*

This metaphor suggests that to be a good mentor; a teacher must have extensive and precise knowledge to share with their students. Since providing what one does not have is impossible, this metaphor implies that teachers with a strong background should impart the same to their students. The instructor thinks highly of themselves and the knowledge they have amassed. Each student's individuality and potential are celebrated, as is their development into contributing members of society. The teacher's function is like that of a caring farmer, and the analogy between a student and a plant emphasizes this. Like a farmer, a teacher works hard and provides students with the tools they need to develop into productive members of society. The metaphor emphasizes the sense of accomplishment the instructor and student felt upon witnessing the fruition of their combined efforts.

*S9: Teacher represents as a book. Teaching language subject is a challenging task. It requires skill and passion for learning different approaches to fit learners' differences. Books symbolize wisdom. I chose the book as the representation of a teacher because the teacher is the one who gives insights and guides learners on what to do. Though a role of a teacher today is only a facilitator, he/she plays a vital role in the teaching-learning process. As a neophyte English teacher, I have experienced difficulty teaching English language subjects, knowing I have different kinds of learners. I should utilize appropriate teaching strategies catering to their diversity to fulfill their needs. In promoting effective teaching, teachers should be acquainted with the various approaches that / can produce globally competitive quality learners, just like the picture. Helping learners learn their ways and letting them collaborate are some life-long that are necessary to build a productive nation.*

If a teacher is like a book, then they must be wise and have the ability to guide and enlighten their students. The metaphor emphasizes the difficulty of teaching a foreign language and the importance of teachers having the ability to adapt their methods to meet the demands of their students. Despite the current focus on facilitation, the teacher is still considered an integral part of the teaching-learning process. This metaphor recognizes a neophyte English teacher's challenges while instructing a class with such a wide range of linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It stresses the significance of tailoring instructional methods to meet the needs of individual students. The metaphor also implies that educators need a wide range of expertise to effectively educate students so that they can compete successfully on a global scale. The implication goes far beyond the classroom, stressing the importance of educators in molding valuable citizens who contribute to a country's progress.

*S10: Nurturing a plant as a metaphor for teaching English. The outcome and product of a particular thing depend on the process it underwent. It depends on how strong the foundation is made. The picture above shows a concrete situation of teaching the English language to the learners. Teaching English to students is as you invest in a plant you nurture. Planting then is not just simply putting the seed into the soil. Indeed, there is no assurance whether the*

*plant will successfully grow, as is English Language Teaching. Teaching English is indeed always compared to nurturing a plant.*

This metaphor implies that instructing English is analogous to tending a plant, stressing the significance of the method and the groundwork for producing the desired results. This metaphor implies that, just as the success of a plant depends on many things, including where and how the seed was planted, so too does the success of an English language classroom. The importance of putting in time and effort to acquire the English language is emphasized rather than merely transmitting knowledge. Tending to a plant and instructing English come with their fair share of unknowns and difficulties, as reflected in the metaphor. Like tending to a plant, teaching English successfully needs time, care, and attention to guarantee its students' flourishing.

*S11: The hands represent the teacher. The hand is much responsible for taking care of the plant. All the needed things must be done and provided so the plant will prosper and grow. Thy hand must water and cultivate the soil for complete nourishment and proper growth. The teacher might nurture a different breed of plants. Even if so, it is always what is best in his/her mind, so the plant will successfully grow until it bears good fruit. Same as teaching English to diverse learners. The teacher must address Learners with different learning styles, multiple intelligences, personalities, and needs.*

The hands in this metaphor reflect the teacher tasked with nurturing their students as one would care for a plant. The metaphor implies that the teacher, like hands for nurturing a plant, must carry out several functions and supply students with materials to enable their development and progress. As a metaphor for the teacher's role in offering direction and encouragement to foster learning, this process includes watering the plant. The teacher's obligation to cultivate a healthy learning environment and provide students with the necessary resources is represented by planting seeds in the ground. This metaphor reminds educators to prepare for a classroom full of unique students with varying aptitudes, interests, and requirements. This calls for teachers to be flexible and sensitive to meet the needs of their students' unique situations, as they all want their students to succeed in their pursuit of English language fluency.

## V. DISCUSSION

As shown in Table 1, learners' metaphors describe their experiences and needs in the learning process. These metaphors provide insights into their perceptions, attitudes, and expectations as students, as Nikitina and Furuoka (2008) and Aktekin (2013) agree. Combining all the ideas from the descriptive coding conducted, themes that discuss needs, goals or success, traits, processes, and challenges as the natural journey of life.

Needs, goals or success, traits, processes, and challenges as the natural journey of life all interact along the natural path of life for English language learners. Practical



communication skills, linguistic fluency, and cultural awareness are just a few of the many requirements placed on these learners. These requirements serve as the impetus for them to study and improve their command of the English language. Learners of English may define success as reaching a certain level of fluency, scoring well on language competence tests, or making effective use of English in their studies or careers. For successful language learning, students need to have well-defined objectives.

As supported by Mudra and Aini (2020), characteristics also play a crucial influence in the development of English language learners. Characteristics like perseverance, curiosity, and an open mind can help someone learn and use English. Learning, practicing, and exposure to natural language resources are also essential for English language learners to develop linguistic and communicative competence. Participation in activities involving listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as well as interaction with native speakers or other language learners, are essential to these procedures. However, difficulties are inherent in any journey. Challenges in English grammar, vocabulary,

pronunciation, or cultural nuances need students to be patient, persistent, and creative in finding solutions. If they want to improve their English language skills and reach their goals, English language students must view these obstacles as learning opportunities. These findings relate to the study of Fang (2015), who shared the perspectives of English learners, describing not only the advantage of English learning but also the negative aspect that described both the positive and negative attitudes of the learners toward English learning.

In sum, English language learners' everyday experiences contain several factors that influence their linguistic development. Their English language abilities grow in response to a web of interrelated elements, including their needs, goals or success, qualities, processes, and difficulties. English learners can succeed if they take stock of their situation, formulate realistic goals, foster desirable characteristics, employ efficient learning techniques, and enthusiastically embrace obstacles along the way.

➤ *Learners' Metaphor*

Table 1 Learners' Metaphors

IN VIVO CODING/	DESCRIPTIVE CODING	THEMES
<b>Like a wanderer with only a lamp in hand</b>	Needs guidance and direction Need proper direction Need nurturing need push	needs
<b>Like lost souls in the vast ocean</b>		
<b>Like travelers on strange roads</b>		
<b>Like a maze</b>		
<b>Like plants</b>		
<b>Like a seedling</b>	Dreams can turn into reality A treasure hunter	Goal/Success
<b>Like a mountain climber</b>		
<b>Like traveling to an island</b>		
<b>Like a miner</b>	Can win a battle when with focus and determination Slow Determination Can be defensive at times, need the right connection from teachers Delicate	Trait
<b>Like David (of the Battle of David and Goliath)</b>		
<b>Like a turtle</b>		
<b>Like a sharp as a tack</b>		
<b>Like a cactus</b>	You must follow the steps to go to the top	Process
<b>Like a pearl</b>		
<b>Like a ladder</b>	A learner encounters enormous challenges and frustrating experience	Challenges/Natural course of life
<b>Like a boat swallowed by gigantic waves</b>		

On the part of the teachers' metaphors, the study indicates teachers' traits, roles, and abilities, as shown in Table 2, which are considered necessary in teaching English, especially during the pandemic. These traits, roles, and abilities of English teachers significantly impact their learners' language learning progress. Teachers must have a command of the English language, including all its intricacies and subtleties, first and foremost. To effectively assist their students through the language-learning process, they need to have a solid grasp of the target language's grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and cultural characteristics. Language acquisition can be difficult and unpleasant for learners, so teachers must have patience, empathy, and support, as agreed by Ahkemoglu and Kesen Mutlu (2016). They must cultivate a safe space for learners to experiment and make errors in the classroom. Similarly, Erarslani and Asmali (2017) agreed by showing the result in their study employing metaphors of 'teacher as

nurturer' followed by "teacher as someone good-hearted," according to the participants. In sum, students took notice of the good side of the teachers hence this kind of optimistic view.

Table 2 Teachers’ Metaphors

IN VIVO CODING/	DESCRIPTIVE CODING	THEMES
Like fitting yourself into an array of books	Accommodating	Traits
Like Camel’s endurance under the heat of the sun and long-distance travel	High tolerance	
Like the person to water and nurture them		
Like a farmer constantly watering the plants	Nurturing	
Like a gardener		
Like a book	Open for more knowledge	
Like a hand	Helping	
Like an eagle	Alert	
Like a Nito Vine	Strong	
Like reaching a star from above	Hopeful/ ambition	
Like a guardian angel	Guidance	Roles
Like a compass that gives direction		
Like a cactus	Defense	
Like a pearl oyster	Support of the delicate	
Like a mountain climber with a helping hand		
Like sunshine	Giver of hope	
Mining tools	Equipped	Abilities
Like a Detective	Anticipate	

Showing their support for the students through metaphors, these participants are already giving clues to their learners about the kind of teachers they have become while living their teaching careers. Overall, the responses in this section display positive support for the learners, indicating their passion for supporting them in achieving their own educational goals and becoming productive individuals when they are out in the real world. In summary, teachers’ metaphors emphasize on traits, roles, and abilities of the teachers.

**AUTHOR NOTE**

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**VI. IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION**

The connection between how English language teachers see themselves and their learners is a viable feature toward understanding the relationship between teachers and learners in the English language classroom. Employing metaphors in this study offered an explicit exploration of how multilingual teachers might help multilingual learners by giving them a clue to focus on the needs of the learners rather than themselves. With the metaphors utilized in the study, we were given a concrete idea that English language teaching and learning is not easy and needs understanding teachers with a heart for their struggling learners. The study's findings will serve as a hint for other multilingual English language teachers of what to expect in teaching learners, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, this study signifies the richness of metaphors when used to describe the experiences of English language teachers and learners in a multilingual context amid this challenging time. The researcher has realized that even during hardship, teaching could be a source of comfort when there is a passion for achieving teachers' goals for learners' sake.

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