

*Original Research Article*

**EMBRACING THE UNKNOWN: ADAPTABILITY AND RESILIENCY OF OUT-OF-FIELD TEACHERS TEACHING ENGLISH IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**ABSTRACT**

**Background:** Out-of-Field Teaching has become one of the common concerns of different educational institutions globally. Its prevalence has become a major issue in the quality of education and the efficacy of teachers. Due to the shortage of specialized teachers, school heads hire out-of-field teachers, which detrimentally affects professional growth, teachers' performance, and their well-being. There is substantial literature on out-of-field teachers; however, only a few studies have been conducted on out-of-field secondary teachers in public schools, and even fewer on out-of-field teachers teaching English. Thus, this qualitative phenomenological paper explored the lived experiences of out-of-field teachers teaching English in public schools.

**Methods:** Philosophical assumptions such as ontological, epistemological, axiological, and methodological were observed because they show the views and brackets the personal beliefs of the researcher. Six (6) participants were identified using the purposive sampling technique and were determined using inclusion criteria: non-English major, public secondary school teacher, and have at least two (2) years of experience in teaching English. A conducive venue for the interview, safety health protocols, and other preferences of the participants were considered. Informed consent was secured after they were informed of the purpose and scope of the study, the importance of the interview, ethical considerations, the analysis of the data, and the confidentiality of the whole research process. The data were gathered using an unstructured in-depth interview guided by an interview protocol and analyzed using the modified van Kaam described by Moustakas (1994): horizontalization, reduction and elimination of data, clustering and thematizing, validation, construction of textural description, construction of structural description, and incorporating the textural and structural descriptions into themes. A summary was provided to encapsulate the essence of the experiences of out-of-field teachers, which were validated by credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

**Results:** Four (4) themes with ten (10) subthemes emerged from the data analysis that captured the lived experiences of out-of-field secondary teachers teaching English in public schools. These themes unfold the stories of the participants in out-of-field teaching English. The first theme is Encountering the Challenges of Unpreparedness, where the participants narrated their struggles in teaching English. Three (3) subthemes were clustered in this theme, the first one the Lack of Knowledge of the Content, the second is the Lack of Mastery of the Content, and lastly, Emotional Unreadiness. The participants shared their difficulty in teaching the subject because of their lack of mastery of the subject content, their hardships in choosing the appropriate teaching strategies, and their anxieties in teaching English which is not their major subject. The second theme is Enduring the Newness of the Field, wherein the participants shared how they cope with all the challenges they encountered, as mentioned in the first theme. This comprises four

(4) subthemes: the Flexibility of OFT, Self-Confidence at its Finest, Dedication, and Passion for Work. The participants shared how essential flexibility, self-confidence, passion, and dedication to work are and how these helped them overcome the phenomenon's demands. The third theme is Embracing the New Version of One's Self. Under this are four (4) subthemes: Well-Learned, Passionate, Optimistic, and Self-fulfilled. The participants in the study shared how their experiences as OFT molded them to become better versions of themselves. The last theme extracted from the transcripts is Opening New possibilities. Out-of-field teaching has become an avenue for the participants to continue their pursuit of professional development by enrolling in graduate school with English as their major. The results of this study show the challenges and triumphs experienced by out-of-field teachers.

**Conclusion:** From the themes extracted from the analysis, it can be concluded that the lived experiences of out-of-field teachers in teaching English have become an avenue for them to realize their full potential as educators. Though the start of their out-of-field teaching journey was negative because of their unpreparedness and newness to the field and their lack of content knowledge and strategies, they were able to overcome them. They endured all the challenges and embraced the better version of themselves as OFT, which opened new opportunities for them. Out-of-field teachers' resilience and adaptability anchored them to successfully teach outside their specialization.

This phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of out-of-field secondary teachers teaching English in public schools in Negros Occidental. This only involved six participants who fit the inclusion criteria and were willing to participate in the study. Moreover, one male participant is present in the study, which denotes that it does not represent the whole population of out-of-field teachers teaching English. Moreover, this study does not include out-of-field teachers teaching other subjects but is limited to non-English majors teaching English. Lastly, this study was only conducted for a limited time. Thus, results may vary.

**Practical Value of the Paper:** The findings of this study can be utilized by school administrators as a guide in drafting professional development programs, seminars, and other activities relevant to the needs of out-of-field teachers. Moreover, this serves as a guide for school heads in building capacity programs that would strengthen out-of-field teachers' knowledge and skills. This may also serve as an inspiration for teachers experiencing the same phenomenon because they can see how the participants endure all the struggles they faced in out-of-field teaching and the effective strategies and coping mechanisms they can utilize given the situation.

The findings of this study focused on the lived experiences of out-of-field secondary teachers teaching English in public schools. Hence, future researchers may conduct the same study with private school out-of-field teachers as participants. Moreover, since this is a qualitative study, other researchers may opt to conduct the same study using quantitative research to show a wider scope of out-of-field teachers. Furthermore, they can also study the lived experiences of out-of-field teachers teaching multiple subject areas, and the lived experiences of English teachers teaching other subject areas.

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

Out-of-field teaching (OFT) has become one of the common concerns of different educational institutions in the global arena (Kim, 2011). It is prevalent worldwide and has become a major issue because of its impact on the quality of education and the efficacy of teachers (Du Plessis, 2019). Since teachers are assigned to teach a subject they do not specialize in, their performance, knowledge, and skills in delivering instruction are compromised (McConney & Price, 2009; Weldon, 2016). Thus, this phenomenon affects not just the value of education but also the well-being of the teachers teaching outside their area of specialization (Hobbs & Porsch, 2021).

OFT occurs because of many factors, including mismatches between the teacher's area of specialization, teaching assignments, and the shortage of teachers in a particular field (Ingersoll, 2019). This phenomenon indicates the teachers' inadequate knowledge of the subject matter and lack of specialized skills and training, which affect the value of education (Kola & Sunday, 2015). Because of out-of-field teachers' unpreparedness and inadequate cognitive skills, they need to allocate more time to prepare, study and understand the subject area given to them (Pillay et al., 2005). Thus, OFT contributes to the teachers' stress and difficulty (McConney & Price, 2009; Kola & Sunday, 2015).

In the Philippines, out-of-field teaching is one of the concerns in the educational system (Bayani & Guhao, 2017; Caylao, 2015). Teachers teaching out-of-field do not have a certification or specialization in the subject they are assigned to teach (Lopez & Roble, 2022). This phenomenon is prevalent in the country because of the shortage of teachers brought about by implementing the Department of Education's K-12 program (Bayani & Guhao, 2017). Because of the unavailability of specialized teachers in the field, school heads hire alternative teachers to teach the specific subject area (Magano, 2014). Thus, this contributes to the increasing number of out-of-field teachers in the country, which affects the educational development of both learners and teachers (Tenorio, 2022).

In the locale of the study, out-of-field teaching was also evident. There are unavailable specialized teachers in the field, which resulted in an increasing number of out-of-field teachers. This denotes that most teachers lack the educational qualifications to teach the subject area they will teach (Malahay, 2021). This affects the learning and the teaching process affecting both students and teachers (Cruz et al., 2017). In addressing this, out-of-field teachers double their time and efforts to research and prepare their lessons, which adds to their busy schedules (Pillay et al., 2005).

Several studies about out-of-field teaching were conducted, particularly on the problem of out-of-field teacher employment (co & Kurum, 2015) and teaching out-of-field challenges for teacher education (Hobbs & Porsch, 2021). Moreover, studies about the travails of out-of-field teachers as they teach General Education subjects (Bugwak, 2021), out-of-field teaching experiences of non-Filipino majors (Bayani & Guhao, 2017), and lived experiences of out-of-field mentors were also conducted (Augusto, 2019). A study about the pragmatic sentiments and coping strategies of out-of-field English teachers in public senior high schools was also done. However, there have been limited studies on out-of-field teachers in both junior and senior high schools in the Philippines. Moreover, there is a dearth of studies that specifically explore the lived experiences of

out-of-field teachers teaching English in public secondary schools. Thus, these are the research gaps that the researcher sought to address.

Henceforth, this study explored the lived experiences of the out-of-field teachers teaching English in a public secondary school in Negros Occidental.

### **Purpose Statement**

This phenomenological study aimed to explore the lived experiences of out-of-field secondary teachers teaching English in public schools in Negros Occidental.

### **Review of Related Literature -**

**Out-of-field teaching.** Out-of-Field teaching (OFT) occurs when the teachers teach a subject that is not their area of specialization (Du Plessis, 2015; Hobbs, 2021). Moreover, it refers to teaching a discipline without having specialized cognitive skills and training (Ingersoll & Collins, 2018). This means that teachers teach English or other subject areas that are not their major at their tertiary level. Thus, the prevalence of this phenomenon in the educational system affects not just the learners but also the teachers (Bugwak, 2021).

Du Plessis (2015) said that OFT is a worldwide phenomenon. This entails that many teachers worldwide are given the role of teaching a subject they are not knowledgeable of. Thus, the study by Akram et al. (2017) revealed the effect of out-of-field teaching not only on the learners' level of learning but also on the professional growth, teaching quality, and well-being of the teachers. Moreover, the qualitative study conducted by Pacaña et al. (2019) revealed that this phenomenon affected the self-efficacy, self-confidence, competence, and performance of teachers because of the pressure, difficulty, and stress brought about by OFT. The article authored by Lagria (2021) revealed that out-of-field teachers struggled a lot. However, they found ways to cope with the challenges.

According to Price et al. (2019), OFT happens because of the lack of teachers that will teach the specialized subject. Thus, for this reason, and with the school principal's discretion, out-of-field teaching happens. The same goes for the Philippine educational setting. There is also a shortage of teachers, which is brought about by the K-12 Curriculum, so out-of-field teaching exists (Bayani & Guhao, 2017). In Australia, South Africa, and Korea, school principals had difficulty looking for teacher applicants that are qualified, specialized, and experts in the field, which are the reasons why they assigned teachers to teach across disciplines (Weldon, 2016; Hofmeyer, 2015; Kwak, 2019).

**Lack of knowledge of the content.** One of the challenges in teaching a subject outside the area of specialization is the lack of knowledge of the content (Kim et al., 2018). Because of the inadequate cognitive skills and exposure to the subject, out-of-field teachers feel ineffective and inefficient, especially in lesson delivery (Childs & McNicholl, 2007; Co et al., 2021). Hence, out-of-field teachers are expected to learn, study, and understand the content of the subject as well as the structure of the lesson, which are necessary for the effective delivery of instruction (Ramli et al., 2017; Nixon et al., 2017).

In the study of Arendain and Limpot (2022), it was discovered that out-of-field teachers were not satisfied with teaching and spent most of their time studying the subject area. Moreover, it was found in their study that out-of-field teachers experienced

difficulty in choosing the right content to teach due to a lack of mastery. This also corresponds to the statement of Du Plessis (2019) that teachers who are not knowledgeable about the subject area tend to be afraid of what they are going to teach, which affects the teaching process. Thus, mastery of the learning content of out-of-field teachers is vital for effective teaching (Du Plessis, 2015).

**Lack of appropriate teaching strategies.** Employing the appropriate teaching strategies is one of the difficulties that out-of-field teachers face (Co et al., 2021). Knowledge of effective and relevant teaching strategies is necessary to promote a quality education (Harry & Klingner, 2014; Griner & Stewart, 2013). Hence, a gap between the teacher and the teaching strategy occurs because of the lack of mastery and the absence of belongingness of the teacher to the subject taught, which compromises the delivery of instruction (Du Plessis, 2018).

Teaching a different subject requires the utilization of different and appropriate teaching strategies (Oyelekan et al., 2018). The study conducted by Co et al. (2021) revealed that teachers teaching outside the area of their specialization faced complex challenges, especially in preparing the lesson, employing the teaching strategy, and teaching itself. With these, out-of-field teachers need to double their time and exert extra effort in studying and planning the appropriate activities, approaches, and strategies to ensure successful learning (Co et al., 2021; Stronge, 2018).

**Emotional unreadiness.** The emotional aspect of teachers as primary sources of education is often overlooked (Du Plessis, 2013). Many factors affect teachers' emotional state, including students' behavior, promotions, teachers' workloads, etc. (Bower & Carroll, 2017; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). Teachers assigned to teach outside their specialization are stressed, anxious, and burnout because of their unpreparedness, lack of cognitive skills in teaching another subject, and misaligned workload (Du Plessis, 2013; Hobbs & Torner, 2019).

Research conducted by Hobbs (2013) has shown that the successful teaching of out-of-field teachers highly depends on their emotional growth and adaptability in their assigned area of discipline. Moreover, teachers must learn to adapt, be emotionally ready, and be open to the learnings the experiences out-of-field offer as it is relevant to their professional growth (Hobbs & Quinn, 2020). However, as shown in the findings of the study conducted by Cinkir and Kurum (2015), teachers are emotionally unstable and unready because they feel the absence of belongingness in the field that they are teaching and the difficulty for them to adapt to the given task, and so they become frustrated and stressed.

**Flexibility in teaching out-of-field.** As bearers of knowledge, teachers need to become flexible in delivering instruction (Lubke et al., 2021). As for the out-of-field teachers, approaching their role flexibly is vital for meaningful learning (Hobbs & Porsch, 2021; Naparan & Alinsug, 2021). Moreover, for teachers to adjust to the newness and difficulty of the subject assigned to them, they must be flexible and open to new learnings that will benefit them and develop them professionally (Augusto, 2019).

In the study conducted by Lgria (2021), it was found that teachers employed diverse strategies that would help them cope with the situation that they are in. It also shows how adaptable teachers are given their situation. According to the study by Bayani and Guhao (2017), teachers become flexible when they are tasked to teach outside of

their specialization because they are expected to manage the lesson and situation. Hence, flexibility embodies a competent and responsible teacher (Kelly, 2016).

**Self-confidence in content delivery.** The success of out-of-field teachers in delivering quality instruction depends highly on their self-confidence level (Du Plessis & McDonagh, 2021). It is important in the workplace since it triggers the teachers' passion for teaching, influences their performance, and protects their well-being as they are assigned out-of-field (Bower & Carroll, 2017; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). Self-confidence can be achieved by the out-of-field teachers with the help of the co-teachers and other school stakeholders who support, guide, and provide learning in the field. However, a lack of support from these people leads to out-of-field teachers' diffidence which influences their teaching performance (Hobbs & Porsch, 2021).

According to Sharplin (2014), teaching outside the area of specialization adversely affects the self-confidence of the teachers. It entails that the assigned role to the teachers negatively creates a problem not just in the quality of teaching but also in their professional growth (Schmidt et al., 2020). Hobbs (2012) agrees with the statement that teaching out-of-field impacts the performance, professional growth, and well-being of teachers. Thus, experts are needed to guide and stimulate teachers' confidence (Price, 2015).

**Dedication and passion to work.** Teachers' passion and dedication to their work are important factors for a successful teaching and learning process (Mart, 2013). However, out-of-field teaching affects the teachers' feelings toward work since they are misaligned and given another subject to teach. This resulted in teachers' lack of commitment and lesser passion for teaching the subject, which affected their effectiveness as educators (Du Plessis, 2014).

For out-of-field teachers to prevent the impact of the situation on their teaching career, they passionately double their time preparing the lesson and strive to learn the subject content (Loughran, 2012; Du Plessis, 2015). Moreover, even if teachers teach out-of-field, their passion and dedication to teaching are still the same; they find ways for the lesson to become interesting and relevant to students learning (Khan, 2020). With these, teachers could cope and endure their experiences as out-of-field.

**Openness.** Out-of-field teachers struggled with the content of the subject they were assigned to teach. They admit that their learning styles, strategies, professional skills, and learning abilities were challenged because of the newness of the subject (Du Plessis, 2019). However, with years of exposure to the subject and the extra efforts they made to teach quality education to learners, they were able to cope with it, develop effective teaching strategies, and embrace pedagogical knowledge in teaching across the discipline (Nixon et al., 2017).

According to Hobbs and Törner (2019), many factors affect the out-of-field teachers' learning of the subject content. However, if these teachers apply their learnings in the field and practice what they know regardless of the subject's newness, they will not be affected by any external or internal factors. Since learning never stops, out-of-field teachers become well-learned as they experience firsthand teaching subjects, share ideas, and ask relevant queries from the experts, which additional information aid them in bettering their teaching (Sai & Siraj, 2015; Bajar et al., 2021).

**Passion.** Good teachers are passionate teachers who strive to teach learners to the best of their abilities and make the lesson interesting (Khan, 2020). Out-of-field teachers,

irrespective of their role, are committed to ensuring that learners learn from them (Hobbs, 2013). However, these teachers face different problems and challenges that affect their commitment and passion as educators (Du Plessis, 2014).

In the study conducted by Sharplin (2014), out-of-field teachers' passion can be stimulated with the help of external factors like the school and community. Once teachers feel that they are supported and that they are not alone, their passion and commitment to work increase. In the Philippine setting, out-of-field teachers feel lucky that they are given a chance to teach, so their passion for work is not affected by the circumstance, and so they strive to study the subject given to them (Pacaña et al., 2019). This denotes how passionate Filipino teachers are. Regardless of their assignment, they are committed to their work and feel fortunate to be accepted to teach.

**Optimism.** Optimism is an important tool for the success of teachers in the educative process (Lu, 2021). For out-of-field teachers, being optimistic is indispensable because it influences how they deal with students and their view of the subject. It also serves as one of their coping mechanisms in battling the challenges they face in their professional life (Sanchez & Rue, 2019). Furthermore, the lived experiences of out-of-field teachers mold them to become optimistic as they strive to look at the brighter side of the teaching and learning process (Augusto, 2019).

According to Arendain and Limpot (2022), out-of-field teachers' embrace their circumstances by having a sense of optimism at work. Moreover, they become cheerful as they develop the skills and knowledge in teaching a subject that is not their specialization. However, the optimism of the out-of-field teachers depends highly on the working environment, the support of the school administrators and fellow teachers, the cooperation and dedication of the students they are teaching, and of course, the teachers' willingness to teach (Barth et al., 2016). Hence, having a positive attitude at work can minimize teachers' stress and creates a sound learning environment (Jennings et al., 2013).

**Self-fulfillment.** The fulfillment of out-of-field teachers is important in their professional life and well-being (Acton & Glasgow, 2015; Du Plessis, 2021). In the study conducted by Augusto (2019), findings revealed the fulfillment the teachers' felt after all the struggles they went through in teaching the subject outside their area of specialization. Moreover, they expressed the silver linings that come with being out-of-field teachers. The love for teaching always exemplifies out-of-field teachers' capacity to teach, creating a sense of fulfillment after all their endeavors (Hobbs, 2013).

However, the reality of out-of-field teaching is that it is faced with diverse challenges, and it is up to the teachers how they handle them. Some teachers look at the situation differently, and there are those who, regardless of being out-of-field, feel the need to fulfill their duties as professional teachers (Hobbs, 2013; Arendain & Limpot, 2022). Over time, teachers embraced the subject assigned to them and realized their full potential as out-of-field (Bayani & Guhao, 2017).

## Methodology

**Research design.** This study utilized descriptive phenomenology in the analysis of the purpose statement. This research design explores and describes the participants' experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Thus, this study explored and described the lived

experiences of the out-of-field teachers teaching English in public schools. Ethical considerations were also observed in the conduct of the study.

**Philosophical assumptions.** The following philosophical assumptions played an important role in the phenomenon being studied as they show the views and bracket the personal beliefs of the researcher.

**Ontological.** This assumption relates to the nature of the study's reality and its characteristics (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher believes that out-of-field teachers must be given attention, especially since they are given the role of teaching the subject outside the area of their specialization. Due to the shortage of specialized teachers in the field, school heads assigned these teachers to teach across disciplines. However, this phenomenon affected and compromised the quality of education, the teacher's professional growth, and well-being. These realities interest the researcher to explore the lived experiences of out-of-field secondary teachers teaching English in public schools.

**Epistemological.** This refers to how the researcher knows what she knows. The researcher becomes an insider to get close to the participants being studied (Creswell et al., 2018). The researcher graduated with a degree in Education, majoring in English. Her 2-year experience in the public school gave her understanding and observations about the people surrounding her. In this study, the researcher played the role of an academic scholar. Hence, she utilized the social constructivist framework in this study to explore how the participants understand their world (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Moreover, to fully understand the lives of out-of-field teachers teaching English, the researcher immersed herself in their situation by going to their workplaces.

**Axiological.** This assumption is about the role of values in research. The researcher reports her values and biases and the value-laden nature of information gathered from the field (Creswell et al., 2018). In this study, the researcher believed that all teachers are important and that their welfare, professional growth, and well-being as teachers must be given enough attention. Moreover, the researcher believed in the right of the learners to quality and responsive education. Thus, out-of-field teachers should be given the assistance and attention they need.

**Methodological.** This assumption is about the methods used in the process of the research (Creswell et al., 2018). In this study, the researcher employed an inductive method to explore the lived experiences of the participants. The researcher started with the research specifics, like the study's setting and method. In the data analysis, the modified Van Kaam popularized by Moustakas (1994) was followed.

**Participants.** This research study focused on out-of-field secondary teachers. Six (6) participants were identified using the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is widely used in qualitative research to identify and select information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Palinkas et al., 2015). The following inclusion criteria were used in determining the participants of the study: non-English major, public secondary school teacher, and have at least two (2) years of experience in teaching English.

**Research instrument.** An unstructured in-depth interview was used in the study to extract the essence of the phenomenon deeply. No set of questions was used. Only open-ended questions were used regarding the phenomenon being studied (Creswell et al., 2018). This was the instrument used because phenomenological studies rely mainly on interviews as sources of data (Litchman, 2014). This was also significant in revealing

the participant's "what," "how," and "why" in their lived experiences. Moreover, the researcher probed questions to further elucidate the responses of the participants.

**Data collection procedure.** Upon the approval of the panel, the researcher secured permission from Negros Occidental and its component city to conduct the study. A conducive venue for the interview, safety health protocols, and other preferences of the participants were also considered. Informed consent was secured from the participants after they were informed of the purpose and scope of the study, the importance of the interview, ethical considerations, the analysis of the data, and the confidentiality of the whole research process. Preliminary questions were asked to establish rapport with the participants.

During the interview, the researcher employed bracketing, where she suspended all preconceived ideas about the topic. According to Creswell (2018), bracketing is a process that allows the participants to express themselves and justify their ideas. The researcher used probing questions to elucidate or further clarify points from the narratives of the participants. Probing questions also help achieve data saturation of their lived experiences. The participants were allowed to answer in any language they were comfortable with during the interview. The researcher jotted down the participants' non-verbal cues and signals during the interview. The one-on-one interviews lasted from 30 minutes up to 90 minutes. The researcher used her smartphone to record the whole interview, with the participants' consent.

After the interview, the researcher debriefed the participants by gradually taking them back into casual conversation. Moreover, the researcher asked if the participants had additional information or questions to clarify. Since none, the researcher thanked them for their participation. After the interview session, the researcher transcribed the responses in preparation for data analysis.

**Data analysis procedure.** The modified van Kaam analysis described by Moustakas (1994) was used to analyze the participants' transcripts. The analysis followed the seven steps laid out by Moustakas. The seven steps were as follows:

**Horizontalization:** Bracketing was utilized in this step, wherein the researcher suspended all her preconceived ideas about the topic. Hence, horizontalization is the process of listing and grouping significant responses from the participants through reading and rereading the verbatim transcription. All relevant information is listed, including words, phrases, sentences, or emotional responses. The researcher suspended all her preconceived ideas about the topic in this step.

**Reduction and elimination of the data.** This step determined the invariant constituents by reducing and eliminating insignificant data. Moreover, data that are seen to overlap, repeat, and appear vague are eliminated. In this study, the researcher omitted the insignificant data and retained the relevant data to the phenomenon being studied.

**Clustering and thematizing.** The invariant constituents related to each other were clustered into thematic categories. Emerging from the analysis, these thematic categories are the core themes of the data that reflect the common perceptions and experiences of the participants. In this study, four (4) themes were clustered with ten (10) subthemes after omitting the insignificant data.

**Validation.** This step determines whether or not the themes and the invariant constituents are valid. The researcher evaluated whether the invariant constituents and themes are expressed explicitly in the transcript and are compatible; otherwise, these data

are eliminated. The validation was first conducted by the researcher. Afterward, an external auditor with a Doctor of Philosophy major in Educational Management was asked to validate the transcripts and perform the audit trail. This external auditor also gave her comments and suggestions to further enhance the themes.

***Construction of textural description.*** Textural descriptions are constructed to describe the individual experiences of the participants. In this study, these descriptions were constructed using the relevant, validated invariant constituents and themes and included verbatim examples from the transcription.

***Construction of structural description.*** This step requires an imaginative variation to contextualize the experience of the phenomenon. Hence, in this study, the perspectives of each participant regarding their experience of the phenomenon were described.

***Incorporating the textural and structural descriptions into themes.*** The final step involves the construction of a descriptive transcript with all the themes. These themes represent the conclusion of the analysis that addresses the purpose of the study. This study incorporated the textural and structural descriptions into themes and presented the participants' experiences.

***Essence.*** From the themes identified, the researcher described the essence of the experience of the out-of-field teachers.

***Data trustworthiness.*** To show that the data analysis has been conducted precisely, consistently, and comprehensively, the researcher determined the trustworthiness by using the criteria set by Lincoln and Guba (1985): credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Trustworthiness is how the researcher can show that the study is valid and reliable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, as cited in Nowell et al., 2017).

***Credibility.*** This criterion refers to the truth of the data or the participant's views and the interpretation and representation of the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, as cited in Polit & Beck, 2012). The participants were oriented to give accurate and concrete information while ensuring confidentiality. The probing questions let the participants elaborate on their experiences as out-of-field teachers teaching English. Moreover, member checking was applied in the study to ensure the truthfulness of the transcripts.

***Transferability.*** Transferability refers to results that can be used in another setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, as cited in Houghton et al., 2013). This is achieved by providing sufficient information on the informants and research context to enable the reader to assess the findings' capability of being "fit" or "transferable." In this study on the lived experiences of public secondary out-of-field teachers teaching English, the researcher provided a thick, rich account of descriptive data, methods, procedures, and interview transcriptions.

***Dependability.*** Dependability refers to the consistency of the researcher in adhering to the steps in the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, as cited in Nowell et al., 2017). In this study, the researcher ensured that the research process was rational, traceable, and well-documented. This was demonstrated by keeping all recorded data, such as transcripts, field notes, and the researcher's journal, until there was no further editing. Moreover, the researcher strictly followed and observed the modified van Kaam method in analyzing the data to ensure the stability of the findings.

**Confirmability.** Confirmability is concerned with the ability of the researcher to demonstrate that the data derived represents the participants' responses and not the researcher's biases or viewpoints (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, as cited in Nowell et al., 2017). In this study, the researcher showed how interpretations and different conclusions emerged by responsibly securing all notes on decisions made during the process, including reflective thoughts, research materials, and other important details. Moreover, an audit trail was utilized to validate the correctness of the data. Confirmability was also established because of credibility, transferability, and dependability.

**Ethical considerations.** The researcher addressed the general ethical principles of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice to ensure the ethical soundness of the study.

**Social value.** It was time to study and explore the lived experiences of the out-of-field teachers teaching English in public schools to address the pressing needs of the teachers and to enhance the educational system of the country. Moreover, this study can be taken as a reflection instrument and guidance to help cope with the demands of the participants. The results of this study may benefit all teachers who experience challenges in out-of-field teaching. Through the lived experiences of the participants, they can discover strategies and coping mechanisms that they can apply in their practice. This may also benefit the school principals and the Department of Education in crafting programs and development plans that will help mitigate and address the needs of their teachers. Moreover, future researchers can utilize this study to support related literature on the lived experiences of out-of-field secondary teachers teaching English in public schools.

**Informed consent.** Informed consent was reviewed and signed by all the participants. The informed consent includes the name and affiliation of the researcher, the invitation to participate and reasons thereof, and the purpose and procedure of the research. With this, the participants were assured that their participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw if they felt uncomfortable during the data gatherings.

**Vulnerability of the research participants.** No participant in this study is vulnerable, given that the participants are public secondary teachers with the ability and capability to participate fully in the research study. Thus, out-of-field secondary teachers teaching in a public school in Negros Occidental are fit and have the potential to become research participants.

**Risk and benefits.** Since the focus of this study pertained to the participants' personal experiences, the risk of emotional and psychological issues may be unearthed. In addressing this, the researcher allowed the participants to settle down before continuing the interview and reminded them that they were free to share only the experiences they were emotionally and psychologically comfortable opening up about. At the end of this study, their shared experiences were given societal value.

**Privacy and confidentiality.** The participants were assured of utmost confidentiality on whatever information they shared. Moreover, their identities were kept under pseudonyms made by the researcher in adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012. No information was disclosed about their identity, and their verbatim transcriptions were only analyzed after member checking. The transcripts containing their information were disposed of by manual shredding after some time.

**Transparency.** This research was an academic requirement to complete graduate education. Thus, the researcher disclosed any monetary benefits and declared no conflict

of interest in the conduct of this study. Moreover, the researcher disclosed the research findings by making them accessible and transparent.

**Qualifications of the researcher.** The researcher graduated with a Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English and is continuing her master's degree. The researcher has been in the school setting for almost three years and is knowledgeable about confidentiality and other school-related matters. The researcher also underwent several qualitative research training and seminars.

**Justice.** A fair selection of the participants based on the criteria was employed. Their participation in this study was voluntary. To reimburse for their willingness to participate, they were given snacks during the interview process, tokens of gratitude, and transportation allowance. All participants were respected regardless of their economic status, gender, or race.

**Adequacy of facilities.** The researcher prioritized the safety of the participants during data gathering concerning the protocols implemented by the civil authorities to avoid getting infected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The venue for the interview was made sure to be safe, conducive, and sanitized before and after use. Extra masks and alcohol were also ensured. Moreover, library resources were utilized in the conduct of the study.

**Community involvement.** The researcher sought the participation of the Department of Education and the six public secondary school teachers to conduct the study. School heads and the division offices assisted me in the identification of the participants for the study. Their help was of great help in the findings of this study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Participants

Participant one is 36 years old, married, and has two sons and a daughter. Participant one graduated from college with a Bachelor of Secondary Education degree in Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE). She has been with the Department of Education for nine (9) years and has been an out-of-field teacher teaching English for seven (7) years. Participant one was happy and excited when I asked her to be one of my participants. When I arrived in her classroom, she was cheerfully listening to the speech of her student for the graduation ceremony. She told me that it was her job as an assigned English teacher to evaluate students' speeches in school. During the interview, she got teary-eyed while sharing her experiences as an out-of-field English teacher. She became emotional because she remembered the struggles she faced as an out-of-field teacher and the joy and pride she felt. She was straightforward in sharing her experiences. She concluded her narrative by telling me how happy she was about becoming an English teacher and that her heart was full of pride and fulfillment as an English teacher. Her shared experiences reflect her resilience as an out-of-field.

Participant two is 27 years old and married. Participant two graduated from college with a Bachelor of Secondary Education degree, majoring in Mathematics. She has been with the Department of Education for five (5) years and has been an out-of-field teacher teaching English subjects for two (2) years. She was enthusiastic when I asked her to become one of my participants. During the interview, she told me that she was

interested in my research study, which is why she immediately agreed to participate. She genuinely narrated her experiences in teaching English as well as her struggles. Moreover, she told me that all that she went through as an out-of-field made her realize how likable the English subject is and that she is happy teaching it.

Participant three is 37 years old, married, and has two (2) sons. Participant three graduated from college with a degree in Bachelor in Secondary Education, major in Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE). She has been with the Department of Education for six (6) years and has been an out-of-field teacher since her first year until now. She was eager and excited as I approached her to become one of my participants. During the interview, she elaborated on her challenges and struggles as an out-of-field. Moreover, she shared her positive thoughts and experiences in teaching English. There was joy and pride in her eyes and voice as she narrated her journey as an out-of-field English teacher. Her narrations encapsulated how fulfilled and resilient she was as a teacher.

Participant four is 27 years old and married. He graduated with a Bachelor of Secondary Education, majoring in Music and Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH). He was with the Department of Education for two years and seven months and has been an out-of-field teacher teaching English since then. He was happy and excited as I asked him to be my participant. During the interview, he confidently narrated his experiences as an out-of-field teacher. He told me that he was really into English. He loved to join in English contests like spelling, essays, and journalism. He also shared his struggles and triumphs in his out-of-field journey. The interview concluded with his statement of how happy she was in teaching English and that he was about to take supplemental with English as his major.

Participant five is 23 years old and single. She graduated from college with a Bachelor of Secondary Education degree, majoring in Mathematics. She has been with the Department of Education for four (4) years and has been an out-of-field teacher teaching English since then. She agreed immediately when I asked her to become one of my participants. During the interview, she enthusiastically shared and narrated all her experiences. She enumerated her struggles as an English teacher. She told me how shocked she was when her head offered to teach the subject. But with her resilience and positive outlook, she could teach English well. The interview concluded with her statement that teaching English is a sense of pride.

Participant six is 30 years old and has two (2) children. Participant six graduated from college with a Bachelor of Secondary Education degree, major in Filipino. She has been with the Department of Education for five (5) years and has been an out-of-field teacher for three (3) years. She was enthusiastic about becoming my participant. During the interview, she shared how she became an out-of-field teacher when transferring to another school. She emotionally narrated all her frustrations and her struggles in teaching English. Moreover, she shared how she was able to overcome all those. She enumerated all the factors that helped her encompass her battle as an out-of-field teacher. Her lived experiences reflect how dedicated and passionate she is as a teacher.

### **Thematic Analysis**

After interviewing the six participants and transcribing their verbatim, the researcher followed the Van Kaam method popularized by Moustakas in identifying relevant information from individuals' data. Composite descriptions that derived the

essence of the phenomenon were developed. The descriptions contextualized “what” they experienced and “how” they experienced the phenomenon. Similar insights were organized into four (4) themes and ten (10) sub-themes as follows:

**Theme 1: Encountering Challenges of Unpreparedness**

- a. Lack of Knowledge of the Content
- b. Lack of Appropriate Teaching Strategies
- c. Emotional Unreadiness

**Theme 2: Enduring Newness of the Field**

- a. Flexibility in Teaching Out-of-Field
- b. Self-confidence in Content Delivery
- c. Dedication and Passion to Work

**Theme 3: Embracing the New Version of Oneself**

- a. Openness
- b. Passion
- c. Optimism
- d. Self-fulfillment

**Theme 4: Opening New Possibilities**

**Theme 1: Encountering Challenges of Unpreparedness**

The participants shared their experiences as they encountered challenges of unpreparedness as out-of-field teachers. Similar statements were organized into three subthemes: Lack of knowledge of the content, lack of skills and training, and emotional unreadiness.

*Lack of Knowledge of the Content.* Out-of-Field Teachers (OFT) faced challenges in the field as they were tasked to teach English which is not their major subject. Their lack of knowledge of the content affected their day-to-day life as teachers. Thus, the participants shared their experiences as they struggled with the mastery of the English subject content. They shared:

*Ginbutang ko nila as English so kinahanglan ko magtuon everyday daw parehas lang nagbalik ko sa pagka estudyante kay everyday matuon gid ko before ko magsalang kay kabudlay magsalang ka sa tunga kag magtudlo sa bata nga lain ang ginatudlo mo. (They assigned me to teach English and so I need to study every day the subject just like a student because it is difficult to teach the wrong content to the students) (Participant one, personal communication, June 28, 2022, lines 7-9)*

*Ang struggle or difficulty naman is sang 1st to 2nd year ko nga pag teach ko sang English kay I need to study the subject matter. I need to master and of course unlike sa computer maskin indi kana magdala sang imo nga books and then ano daw mamemorize mo naya bala imo nga klasi. Sa English ya and struggles ko amo na every night I need to study the lesson, and I need to master it and paranoid ko kis-a nahadlok ko questionon ko nga indi ko makasabat (My struggle or difficulty was in my first to 2nd year teaching English because I needed to study the subject matter, I needed to master it unlike in my major subject which is Computer Services that I do not have to bring books anymore because I have already memorized the lesson, I sometimes get paranoid with the possibility that students will ask me questions and I cannot answer them)(Participant three, personal communication, July 05, 2022, lines 54-59)*

*Budlayan ka pano mo impart sa imo mga student kay wala mo siya na ano eh, bale ang imo nga knowledge daw kanabaw lang pero ang sa lesson is padalman mo pagid so medyo ma challenge ka gid. (It is difficult to impart [knowledge] to my students because of the limited knowledge that I have regarding the subject matter, and so I have to go in-depth, which is a challenge (Participant five, personal communication, July 07, 2022, lines 3-5)*

*Budlay, budlay gid siya kay indi siya akon major, so hambl ko kagina indi sila similar sa filipino. But when it comes sa complex na daw dira nako daw kumbaga mahanging, so ang akon ginaubra sa dira is gapangayu ko bulig sa akon department head. (It was really hard because it is not my area of specialization, it is not the same with Filipino...but when it comes to the complexity of the subject, I think I found it really difficult and so I asked for my Department Head's help) (Participant six, personal communication, July 16, 2022, lines 28-32)*

***Lack of Appropriate Teaching Strategies.*** The participants experienced difficulty employing the appropriate teaching strategies, given that they were teaching outside their area of specialization. Thus, they shared the followings sentiments:

*Kabudlay kay bangud sang una-una ko gid ya nga pagtudlo wala ko ya cellphone nga parehas ni sbong. Sang una ya ang cellphone is keypad lang, so matake time pako makadto pako ya sa internet café kag mag research pa. Amo na nga nabudlayan gid ko during that time sang first ko nga pag ano but later on, tapos gna keep ko gid na ang gina research ko, ara gid na subong naka compile gid na sa isa ka ano para pag ka next indi nako mabudlayan (It is hard because the first time I teach I do not have any touchscreen cellphone, mine was just a keypad phone, so I have to take time to go to the internet café and do my research, I compiled what I have researched on so that it will be easier next time). (Participant one, personal communication, June 28, 2022, lines 26-31).*

*Imbis nga mapuli nako kay inugpuli na indi pako anay magpuli kay maano pako danay maresearch pako. Tapos kung kis-a tig palanyaga na indi pako danay manyaga matake time pako anay para lang mag research kag gina sacrifice mo ang self mo. (I need to research first before going home; I need to skip my lunch for me to research and to devote myself as an OFT) (Participant one, personal communication, June 28, 2022, lines 33-36).*

*Gina research ko anay, gina dig ko gid deeper ang amo na nga topic or lesson nga eklasi ko pagka bwat, gina prepare ko gid akon klasi, damo ko materials nga gina gamit tapos before mag klasi motivation anay. Tapos eprepare mo syempre ang activities pagid kada adlaw sa imo nga subject kag para ang imo students ma- engage man sa imo lesson eh kay te budlay pa daan ang subject tapos indi mo pa field. Kis-a gina dala mo nalang sa imo visual aids da, sa imo powerpoint, videos mga mao na. (I research first and study for the upcoming day Tuesday's or the topic deeply; I really for my class, I bring with me lots of materials, but before I start with the lesson proper, I give motivation, then I prepare the activities and make sure that they are engaging to the students because the subject is already difficult and is not my field, and so sometimes I just cope and make up using the visual aids like PowerPoint presentations and videos) (Participant three, personal communication, July 05, 2022, lines 62-67).*

*Ang struggle ko gid mam is sa materials mam nga mga ano ang gamitun ko, especially ang sa Lesson Plan. Kay sa amon nga school head every week siya gacheck snag amon nga lesson plan so as a freshman nga bag-o kapa lang sa DepEd, yawan ko pangita sang mga materials, lesson plans, plus pa ang imo nga preparation pagka bwat, ang itudlo mo nga lesson sang imo powerpoint. Syempre magamit kagid powerpoint, kay syempre indi gd na dapat madula kay intergration of ICT that makes the students become more*

*interested in your lesson te amo na siya ang mga struggles ko mam. (My struggle is with what materials I should use, especially in the lesson plan, because our school head checks our lesson plan every week, so as a freshman, I had a hard time looking for materials, lesson plans, plus the preparation for my class, what I should teach, my PowerPoint presentations, and of course, the integration of ICT that makes the students interested in your lesson...so those are my struggles) (Participant three, personal communication, July 05, 2022, lines 79-85).*

*As a teacher, it is always difficult to be an OFT in English, unlike in MAPEH, which is more on applying the knowledge, and more hands-on than English. In English, you are the one who will feed your students with information, unlike in MAPEH, where students learn on their own. That is why it is difficult for students and our use. We need to adjust because we are unfamiliar with how to handle the class in English compared to MAPEH. As a teacher, we are using a different strategy in teaching my major, MAPEH, compared to English, which is ang strategy nga akon gina gamit sa mapeh magamit ko sa English class ko which is not effective sometimes. (As a teacher, it is always difficult to be an OFT in English, unlike in MAPEH, which is more on application, applying the knowledge, more hands-on compared to English, in English, you are the one who will feed your students with information, unlike in MAPEH that students learn on their own. That is why it is difficult for students and our use. We need to adjust. Because we are not familiar with how to handle the class in English compared to MAPEH. As a teacher, we use a different strategy in teaching my major, MAPEH, compared to English. The strategy I used in MAPEH I also used in MAPEH class is not effective sometimes) (Participant four, personal communication, July 07, 2022, lines 44-51).*

*So ang amon gina ubra is gina research ka naman which mag include ka naman time and effort para maano mo lang gid sa imo bata so budlay gid sa kung indi mo sa major. Ma double imo time sa preparations mam kay wala labot nga lantawon mo imo elesson maresearch kapa kung paano mo siya ubrahun, paano mo siya itudlo. So double effort kagid tapos ang imo time mas malawig in terms of preparing sang lesson so budlay gid sa. (So, what we do is to research which really take time and effort, so it is really hard if you are an OFT. Your length of preparation will double because you will not only look into your subject but you will research on how to teach it, and so your effort will double and your time of preparation will be longer so it is really difficult) (Participant five, personal communication, July 07, 2022, lines 5-7).*

*Pero sang nagsugod gid kme as nangapa gid kme, wla gid kami idea kung diin kami mangita [resources]. Tapos namangkot kami sa amon head may ara pagid iban nga resources kay that time extension school palang kami so our resources are very limited so budlay gid ya pangita. Kung kis-a gapanaog pa kme di sa municipality para lang gid maka signal. (When we started, we really found it hard, we have no idea where to look for resources. We even asked our head if there are other available resources which are really very limited, so it was hard to look for. Sometimes, we go to the municipality to look for signals) (Participant five, personal communication, July 07, 2022, lines 11-14).*

*Pag math imo major so may mga strategies ka na nga ginagamit para mas mainchindihan sa mga bata ang imo ginatudlo pero kung English kay indi mo mabal-an if ma swak ang imo strategy sa bata. Biskan lain ang gusto mo ipa inchindi sa bata, pero lain ang ila nga mainchindihan. And isa pagid mam wala labot sa strategies kag sa content mo nga ihatag sa bata, may ara pagid times nga mabudlayan ka kay ang students gid mismo hate nila ang subject. (If your major is Math, you already have strategies so that the learners can understand your lesson, but if you are teaching English, you do not have any idea if the strategy you will use is suited. Sometimes, the learners do not understand what you want them to understand. And one thing aside from strategies and content, there are also times that you will have a hard time because the students themselves hate the subject) (Participant five, personal communication, July 07, 2022, lines 36-41).*

*Ma study kaman liwat, kay maresearch ka, kag mainvent ka games para macatch mo ang attention ka bata kay para mamotivate man sila mamati sa imo class. And then maask*

*kagid sa imo peer kung paano ubrahan sa ilar, madugangan gid kaayu imo nga creativity. (You will study again, you will research, and you will invent games just to attract the attention of the students and for them to be motivated to listen to the class. And then you will also ask your peer how to become more creative) (Participant five, personal communication, July 07, 2022, lines 55-57).*

**Emotional unreadiness.** The participants struggled emotionally because they were shocked to know they would teach the subject outside of their specialization. They shared how unready they were as out-of-field teachers and how this affected their experiences in their everyday lives as teachers. They narrated the following:

*Syempre nakulbaan ka nga pag face mo sa imo students basi mag ask sa imo questions nga wala ka bala sang mga foundations sang sina nga subject kay syempre indi mo sa field or specialization. (Of course, I am nervous that if I face my students, they will ask me questions given that I have no foundations about the subject because it is not d or specialization) (Participant three, personal communication, July 05, 2022, lines 18-20).*

*Sa English ya ang struggles ko amo na every night I need to study the lesson, and I need to master it. Paranoid ko kis-a nahadlok ko questionon ko nga indi ko makasabat, so gina visualize ko nga basi questionon ko sa amo ni, tapos gnasearch ko ang background sang amo na nga character or literature, basahun ko naman so daw gatuon ko balik. (In English, my struggles were every night, I needed to study the lesson, and I needed to master it, and I was paranoid sometimes because if my students questioned me and I could not answer them, so I visualized the questions, and then I researched the background character or literature, then I will read it and learn it all over again) (Participant three, personal communication, July 05, 2022, lines 56-60)*

*The first time the school offered me to be an out-of-field teacher, I was so shocked. Feeling nga kaya ko ni? Indi mani amo akon major. So naka hambl ko nga daw indi ko gd ni kaya. I tried to talk to our school head nga "sir feeling ko indi ko di kaya," but the thing is, we are short of teachers, so I have no choice. (The first time the school offered me to become an out-of-field teacher, I was shocked. Can I do this? It was not my major. So, I said to myself I cannot do this. I tried to talk to our school head, saying, "Sir, I feel like I cannot do this," but the thing is, we are actual teachers, so I have no choice) (Participant four, personal communication, July 07, 2022, lines 63-66).*

*Shock gid ko the first time nga nabal-an ko nga out-of-field teacher ko, grabe gid ko kashock. Kay ara balang pagsulod mo sa field nga abi mo ang tudluan mo ang imo major lang gid, amo na ang sa amon eh kay amo na ang gintutukan ta sang college, akon kay Math gid. Tapos pagsulod mo sa field paghatag na sang loading kag maghambal ang imo principal nga amo ni imo loads, tapos paglantaw mo may English, galalain ko eh kay syempre anhun ko mani, indi ko mayu kabalo sini kag indi ko ni mayu familiar. Familiar siya tuod pero arang hapaw lang gid ang akon pag inchindi sina. (I was shocked the first time I knew that I am an out-of-field teachers, I was super shocked of the fact that when I entered the field, I thought I will be teaching my major subject, because what we focused in college was my major which is actually Math, and then when I entered the field, when the loading was given, it was English, I was upset because I do not know the subject and I am not that familiar of it. It's familiar but my knowledge about it is just limited) (Participant five, personal communication, July 07, 2022, lines 22-28).*

*Stress gid una-una, as in super-duper stress gid ko sang una. Kay instead nga mag-abot di sa balay 5:30 instead nga matig-ang or mapahuway, indi nako ya kapahuway. Kay pag abot ko palang mabukad na ko dayun para sa tomorrow nga klasi kay indi ka kabalo kung san-o masulod sa classroom mo ang Principal so pag abot bukad sang tanan tanan, research gid about sa tanan tanan, it takes 2-3 hours gid igo matapos. Kung indi ko tawgon ka husband ko manyapon indi ko mag untan. (I was stress at first, super stress. Because intead of coming home at 5:30 pm, instead of preparing for dinner or having rest, I cannot do it because when I arrived home, I will open my lesson for tomorrow's*

class because I do not know when the principal will enter my classroom, and so I study and research everything, it will take me 2-3 hours to study. if not for my husband reminder for us to eat dinner, I will not stop what I do) (Participant six, personal communication, July 16, 2022, lines 155-160).

*Pero super-duper gid nga frustrations mam kay mafrustrate ka kay mamangkot ang bata “mam paano na siya gamitun sa sentence,” indi ko kasabat hambalon ko lang ang bata “that would be your assignment” pero deep inside mam sakit, nga guilty, nga grabe. Tapos nakahambal ko gani nga kaunfair man isa DepEd man nga indi mani akon ngaa diri ko ginpa klasi syempre indi ko kainchindi kay from Victorias Filipino gid ko ya. (It was super-duper frustrating, especially when students would ask how to use the word in a sentence, and I could not answer, I just told them that that would be their assignment, but deep inside, I was hurt, guilty, and sometimes I told myself how unfair the DepEd is because this is not my major why did they put me here because I cannot understand because when I was in Victorias, I was teaching Filipino) (Participant six, personal communication, July 16, 2022, lines 109-113).*

## **Theme 2: Enduring the Newness of the Field**

After the participants encountered the challenges as out-of-field teachers, they shared their experiences of enduring their newness in the field. Similar statements were organized into three subthemes: Flexibility is the key, self-confidence in content delivery, and dedication and passion for work.

***Flexibility in Teaching Out-of-Field.*** One of the factors that helped the participants cope with their difficulties in the field is their sense of flexibility. They adapted to the changes willingly, which helped them to endure hardships as out-of-field teachers. They narrated the following:

*As a teacher, I learned that I have to be flexible. Indi kaya magsiling nga Tle major ko dapat amo gid ni ang itudlo ko. We have to bear in mind nga gina butang ta sang superior ta sa isa ka ubra because they have found potential in us. Never say NO, most especially if we are talking about our students, indi ka magsiling nga indi mo na masarangan. I realized sa akon nga kaugalingon, I found as a person, we should love our students, we have to find ways nga indi ta sila mapatumbayaan. Put into your minds nga kung ano ka dapat iimpart mo sa mga bata, kag dapat iinstill mo sa ila nga someday you would also be like us you will also be professionals, kag kung mag professionals na kamo do not choose any field, tanan kita masarangan if we are just going to find ways kung paano na natun ma conquer ang tanan nga ina. (As a teacher, I learned that I have to be flexible. Just because I am a TLE major, I have to teach TLE. We have to bear in mind that we are given this task by our superior because they have found potential in us. Never say no, most especially if we are talking about our students, we cannot say that we cannot do it. I realized that we should love our students and we have to find ways to care for them. Put into your minds how to impart and instill to the mind of the students that if they are in the field of work, they must not choose any field because everything can be done if we are just going to find ways on how to conquer everything) (Participant one, personal communication, June 28, 2022, lines 91-99).*

*As a public-school teacher, natural gid naya to teach subjects nga indi imo major that is the reality. So as a teacher, wala gid ta choice, wala taya power, we have to accept it, especially if we want to be a public teacher. Indi pwede nga maghambal ta nga “Indi ko ya magtudlo English kay Math Teacher ko.” We cannot do that. So biskan indi atun major, need ta magtudlo subject kag loads nga ihatag sa atun especially sang head natun. Ako yabi mam indi ko ang teacher nga gakumod, kung ano da ang ihatag sa akon I go with it. (As a public school teacher, it is natural to teach a subject that is not your major. That is the reality. So as a teacher, we have no choice and power, and we have to accept it, especially if we want to be public teachers. We cannot say no just because it is not our major. We cannot do that. So, we must teach the subject even if it is not our major. I am*

the kind of teacher who accepts what is given to me, especially by my head) (Participant two, personal communication, July 04, 2022, lines 24-27, 29-30)

*As teachers, we are flexible. So, we must embrace and accept nga amo na ang itudlo mo. We have to be positive indi mangin close-minded. We have to be open to whatever subject we are to teach. Indi ka maghambl nga we cannot do it because as teacher we are capable of learning, we are teachers, we are learning and we learn and learn, ma learn lang gid na ang isa ka bagay kag ang isa ka subject matun-an lang gid na nimo. (As teachers, we are flexible. So, we must embrace and accept that we will teach English. We have to be positive and not become close-minded. We have to be open to whatever subject we are to teach. Do not say that we cannot do it because, as teachers, we are capable of learning. We are teachers, we are learning)* (Participant three, personal communication, July 05, 2022, lines 115-119).

*Of course, at first sa first-year ko sa DepEd, so I was given English 8. Hesitant pako sang una but then of course teacher ta, we have no right to refuse kay hambal gani nila makalearn kaman lang. (Of course, at first, in my first year in DepEd, I was given English 8 as my load, I was hesitant at first, but then, of course, we are teachers we have no right to refuse)* (Participant six, personal communication, July 16, 2022, lines 111-112).

*So biskan tuod indi siya akon field, gapaninguha man ko as a teacher, garesearch tapos gapamangkot kung ano, then asta nga naokay na, sa subong mahambal nagid ko nga "daw English major nako indi Filipino." (So even if it's not really my field, I gave my best as a teacher, I researched then I asked questions until I understand the lesson, for now, I can really say that perhaps I am an English major and not Filipino major)* (Participant six, personal communication, July 16, 2022, lines 46-49).

*Kay teacher ka dapat flexible ka. Indi ka ka balibad. Indi ka pwedi kabalibad kung patudluon ka English, kung out-of-field kada indi ka pwedi kabalibad kay teacher ka. Accept mo gid ang challenge, kag positive gid ka always kay kung negative ka maluya ka kag indi mo gid mahimo ang imo task kay amo gid ko na at first ka negative gid sa akon. (You must be flexible because you are a teacher. You must not reason out if you are given the task to teach English. Accept the challenge and be positive always because once you become negative you will not become motivated to do the task just like what I felt the first time I become an out-of-field)* (Participant six, personal communication, July 16, 2022, lines 137-140).

***Self-Confidence in Content Delivery.*** Even if English is not their area of specialization, the participants, because of their experiences, were able to build and gain self-confidence in teaching the subject. This, at its finest, helped the teachers become effective in the field. They shared the following narratives:

*We have to bear in mind nga gina butang ta sang superior ta sa isa ka ubra because they have found potential in us. We also have to believe in ourselves and have self-confidence. (We must bear in mind that we are assigned here by our superiors because they found potential in us. We also must believe in ourselves and have self-confidence)* (Participant one, personal communication, June 28, 2022, lines 92-93, 99-100).

*Na-embrace ko na ang English to the point nga ako nalang gahambal nga ako ang matudlo sang 21st century literature, kag nakaamat-amat nako napangtipon ko na ang akon materials, PowerPoint ko, lesson plans ko, so daw gahambal nko nga wala nako nabudlayan. (I have embraced English to the point that I volunteered to teach 21st-century literature, and I have already compiled the needed materials like PowerPoint presentations and my lesson plans, so I can say that it is not hard)* (Participant three, personal communication, July 05, 2022, lines 111-114).

*To be honest, for me, it is not that difficult to teach English because, in my high school days, I entered campus journalism, so I liked English very much at that time. (To be honest, it is not difficult to teach English because, in my high school days, I entered campus journalism, so I like English very much) (Participant four, personal communication, July 07, 2022, lines 2-3).*

*Gina hambal ko na gani sa akon mga upod mam nga basi nasala lang ko sa akon major. Basi English gid ya ang akon major galing kay Filipino lang kay wala nagid ya kumbaga sa English sbong indi man gid hambal nga mastery pero dako nagid ya difference. Sang una kay kung subong paubrahan ko plan kung 2 weeks sang una, subong 2 days nalang or 3 days bi ang pinakalawig, pero kung arang e-ano naman sa klasi may time man gid nga mapause pero indi nagid parehas sang una. Kag mas kabalo ko subong sa English kaysa sa Filipino. (I told my co-teachers that maybe I am really an English major and not Filipino, because I cannot really say that I master the subject but I can say that I have learned so much in this subject, I can actually create a lesson plan now for 2-3 days unlike before that I need to do it for 2 weeks to finish, in terms of teaching it to the students I pause not so often now unlike before. And now I know a lot in English than in Filipino) (Participant six, personal communication, July 16, 2022, lines 83-88).*

*So subong kung may ara kami classroom observation kag maghambal akon head nga ako ma demo English gahambal gid ko nga okay gid mam ah wala gid problema unlike sang una. (Now, when the department head asks us who would like to have a demonstration in English, I raise my hand and say that I will do it, unlike before when I was nervous) (Participant six, personal communication, July 16, 2022, lines 165-167).*

***Dedication and Passion to Work.*** Amidst the struggles faced by the participants as OFT, they have endured the newness in the field because of their dedication and passion for work. These helped them thrive in their assigned area. They shared the following narratives:

*Siguro ang dedikasyon and passion of work syempre, tungod kay as a teacher I always find ways kung paano ko indi mastress eh. Kay as a teacher stress kana daan sa pamilya mo stress kapa gid sa work, ano nalang gid naya ang gwa mo as a teacher te tapos gatudlo kapa out-of-field. Syempre kung dibdibun ah te buang nagid naya ang gwa mo ya sa pila ka adlaw ya. Wala lang ko ya gapa stress kung ano lang da ya ang masarangan sang research ko amo lang na gina hatag ko sa bata, tapos na the next day kung may additional gina add ko lang ya sa ila ya eh. Unlike before lawig gid ang time ko nga ginahatag sa self ko para mag research subong ya indi na amo na kalawig. Subong ya ang mga notes ko nga natipon sang una gaadditional nalang ko. Compare sang una ya nga masugod gid ko sa uno, subong daw ka smooth nalang gid ko ya magtudlo English. (Maybe my dedication and passion for work because as a teacher I always find ways not to stress myself because as a teacher we have a lot of stressors given that we are out-of-field teachers so we don't have to be stressed in our work, what will happen to us if that is the case. I don't stress myself, instead, I just research what I can research and continue it the next day, unlike before when I really take all my time researching. Now I have a lot of compiled notes, I just add some notes. Compare to the first time I taught English; I can say that it is better now) (Participant one, personal communication, June 28, 2022, lines 155-164).*

*I studied a lot, I read a lot of books, and I watched YouTube, especially videos/tutorials about the subject that I needed to discuss. The slide share we need to research on the topic you will discuss will be perfect for the students. (I studied a lot, I read a lot of books, and I watched YouTube, especially videos and tutorials about the subject that I needed to discuss and the slide share. We need to research the topic to be discussed to see*

if it is suited for the learners) (Participant four, personal communication, July 07, 2022, lines 42-44).

*Challenging it is because it is not my field, it is not my major, but I keep on teaching it to the students, and so I need to study every day.* (It is challenging because it is not my field and not my major, but I keep on teaching it to the students, so I need to study every day) (Participant four, personal communication, July 07, 2022, lines 84-85).

*So, sa amon, may ara kamigina kadtuan nga English teacher para maghelp sa amon. Kung indi kme kabalo sang amon buhaton sa amon nga elesson kag kung ano amon ubrahun para mateach namun sang tsakto ang lesson and how we could simplify the lesson for the students. So amo na, daw ka peer teaching nalang gid sa amon. Then nag help pagid cope sa akon is self-discovery nalang gid, more research and more on reading pagid, and then make use of different visuals para mas makita sang bata, mga instructional materials para mas mainchindihan sang bata.* (So, in our case, we go to an English teacher to teach us about the lesson and how we could simplify the lesson for the students. It is like peer teaching for us. Then, what helped us cope with the situation was our self-discovery as teachers. We research more, read more, and then use different visuals so that the students will understand the lesson more) (Participant five, personal communication, July 07, 2022, lines 63-69).

*So biskan tuod indi siya akon field, gapaninguha man ko as a teacher. Garesearch tapos gapamangkot kung ano, then asta nga naokay na, sa subong mahambal nagid ko nga "daw English major nako ndi filipino."* (Even if it is not my field, I do my best as a teacher, I researched, I asked questions, until I finally understand the lesson. And now I can say that I am more likely an English major and not Filipino major) (Participant six, personal communication, July 16, 2022, lines 46-48).

### **Theme 3: Embracing the New Version of Oneself**

After all the struggles and circumstances the teachers faced, they could see the silver lining of being Out-of-Field teachers. They discovered, learned, and appreciated their journey in the field. The participants shared their experiences in the field as they embraced the new version of themselves. Similar statements were organized into four subthemes: Openness, passion, optimism, and self-fulfillment.

**Openness.** Amidst the difficulties faced by the teachers, they were able to cope by embracing the beauty of English as Out-of-Field Teachers. Their openness to experiences and learning helped them to cope with teaching out-of-field. They narrated the following learnings:

*Naggraduate lang ko sa college indi gid ko kabalo mag identify sang intensive kag reflexive pronoun nagasala pako na sang una. Pero when I become a teacher mas naghapos lang gid gali magidentify in-between sang duha. Tapos, kadamo gid ko sang nalaearn paano mag construct sentences paano mag identify error sa sentence, kay kung kis-a kita mahambal nga "Oh ka correct naman ni sang sentence ko, pero ang iban nga mga expert gid ya gali maglantaw sang sentence may makit-an sila gali ya nga sala sang una pawarat lang ko ya magsulat subng ya aware nagid ko ya sang akon mga grammar. Amo gid na ang natun-an ko nga as an English teacher gali kinahanglan kung iinstill tagid sa mind sang bata kung paano gid ang tsakto nga pagamit sang mga words kay even a single word ang is kag ang are kung magsala kalang da sa pagamit wrong gd ya ang sentence sang bata.* (I graduated in college without even knowing the differences between the intensive and the reflexive pronoun, but when I became an English teacher, I realized that it is just easy to identify them. Also, I learned a lot like on how to construct sentences, how to identify errors in a sentence, and I became aware of my grammar. Most importantly, I learned that as an English teacher we must instill to the learners the basic knowledge in language, specifically, the use of is and are in the sentence which causes errors in the sentence) (Participant one, personal communication, June 28, 2022, lines 80-90)

*It was fun nalang kag daw of course as a teacher naka learn kapa gid. Ikaw man mismo nadiscover mo ang mga things kag mga history about sa literature, mga stories, kag amo pagid na may nadiscover kapa gid para man sa imo self. Subong ang realization ko bala kanami gali kung gatudlo ka English. (It was fun and of course as a teacher I learned better and I discovered many things like histories about literature, stories, and I also discovered many things about myself. Now, my realization is that it is really nice to teach English) (Participant three, personal communication, July 05, 2022, lines 21-24)*

*I have learned to become versatile. I learned that even if it is not your major, you must study these subjects. Knowledge is power. We need to be versatile and know more, not just in our field. You have to go out of the box so that you may know and teach many things because you are a teacher. Indi ka dapat mag atras kung ano gin offer sa imo sang school, but all the struggles, I have almost conquered everything because someone is there helping me. We need to study. It is the most important thing. Even if we are already a teacher, we must study all the things we have to know to teach and mold our students well. (I have learned to become versatile. I learned that you must study the subjects even if it is not your major. Knowledge is power. We need to become versatile and know more, not just in our field. You must go out of the box to know many things because you are a teacher. You must not refuse the offer given to you by the school. With all the struggles that I faced, I conquered everything. Someone is there to help me. We need to study even if we are already teachers to effectively mold the learners) (Participant four, personal communication, July 07, 2022, lines 76-82).*

*Kay teacher ka dapat flexible ka. Indi ka ka balibad. Indi ka pwedi kabalibad kung patudluon ka English, kung out-of-field kada indi ka pwedi kabalibad kay teacher ka. Accept mo gid ang challenge, kag positive gid ka always kay kung negative ka maluya ka kag indi mo gid mahimo ang imo task kay amo gid ko na at first ka negative gid sa akon. Tanan tanan nga impact negative gid para sa akon tapos pa COhun pagd ko sa English daw nakulbaan ko kay puro daan English majors, what if masala ko di karun sa akon nga grammar, what if masala ko di karun sa akon klasi. So tanan nga what ifs turn to possible man gali. (Because you are a teacher you must be flexible. You must not reason out. You must not refuse when task to teach English, since teachers do not refuse. Accept the challenge and be positive always because once you are negative you really cannot do the give tasks, which I did before. At the end, all my what ifs turned into something possible) (Participant six, personal communication, July 16, 2022, lines 137-143).*

**Passion.** Even if the participants are non-English majors, their passion for teaching is inexplicable. Because of this, they embraced their circumstance as OFT and learned how to appreciate and love English as their subject. Their experiences in the field lit their way to realizing how nice the subject is. The following are the narratives given by the participants:

*Syempre ginpalangga ko na lang gid ni saya. Kay daw halos kada tuig daw ako nalang gid ya. Last time ginhambalan ko ni Sir Sumugat nga mabalik ko sa TLE, hambal ko “Sir ma English nalang gid ko ya kay nanamian nalang gid ko ya sa English kay at least damo ko may natun-an nga beyond na sa mga natun-an nakon sang college. Kay syempre sang college kaya nag mas gina tagaan mo focus is ang imo major, ang other subject nga mga English daw wala mo nana ya gina tutukan. (Of course, I learned to love the subject. Because almost every year I was assigned to teach English. The last time the principal told me to go back teaching my major, I refuse, and I told him that I want to handle English because I really liked the subject and that I can learn by teaching it way beyond the learnings I have in college) (Participant one, personal communication, June 28, 2022, lines 120-123).*

*It changed my life a lot because it made me love English more and appreciate English subjects, and it made me flexible as a teacher to embrace the changes and the new*

*learnings. It makes me want to transfer to Academics from Tech-Voc. It challenged me as a teacher since it is not my major, but as time passed by, I realized that English subject is good to learn. The best thing about being an OFT is that if you successfully teach the subject, you become fulfilled as a teacher, discover something new, and become inspired. (It changed my life because it made me love English more and appreciate English subjects, and it made me flexible as a teacher to embrace the changes and the new learnings. It makes me want to transfer from academics to tech-Voc. It challenged me as a teacher since it is not my major, but as time passed, I realized that English is a good subject to learn. The best thing about being an OFT is that if you successfully teach the subject, you become fulfilled as a teacher because you discover something new. You become inspired) (Participant three, personal communication, July 5, 2022, lines 125-130).*

*Now, honestly, I can say that I like English now more than MAPEH because I love the subject. And If I were to choose between English and my major, I would choose English over MAPEH. (Now, honestly, I can say that I like English now more than MAPEH because I love the subject, and If I were to choose between English and my major, I would choose English over MAPEH) (Participant four, personal communication, July 7, 2022, lines 97-99).*

**Optimism.** The experiences of the participants molded them into becoming a better version of themselves. Because of their optimism in the field, they could cope with the difficulties that came along their way. They narrated the following experiences:

*I will embrace being an English teacher nagid lang, cge palanggaun tana lang gid ka, tutukan tana lang gid ka. Matudlo nalang gid ko tuod tuod bilang isa ka English teacher. (I will embrace being an English teacher, I will love the subject, focus on it, and I will teach the subject seriously like a true English teacher) (Participant one, personal communication, June 28, 2022, lines 143-145).*

*Daw is Superwoman [ko], daw si Wonderwoman kay syempre you are going to find ways. If Wonderwoman finds ways to save people, ako ya I am saving students who do not know English. Amo na gani one of our students nga nag graduate, dako gd ang pasalamat ya sa gntudlo ko ila kay biskan sa limited time (It felt like I am Superwoman, like I am Wonderwoman too, because you are going to find ways. If Wonderwoman finds ways to save people, I, on the other hand, am saving students who do not know English. That is why one of my students who graduated was very grateful for what they learned from me, even just for a limited time) (Participant one, personal communication, June 28, 2022, lines 149-152).*

*I would choose English though indi ko English major. (I would choose English even though I am not an English major) (Participant two, personal communication, July 4, 2022, lines 38-39).*

*There is progress mam. May progress. As time goes by, I feel great sa mga na accomplish ko man sa English kay indi ko tuod English major kay gaparticipate man ko sa mga language festival, after to nga naka daog kme sa verse choir so gin hamblan nako nga ako na matrain sa mga bata and maintra kami liwat sa mga competition. It is amazing. The feeling is great. Daw ka feeling accomplished ka bala. Ka fulfilling! (There is progress. As time went by, I felt great about everything I accomplished in English because if not because of English, I would not have joined the language festival. After winning the verse choir competition, my head told me I would train the students, and we would join another competition. It was amazing. The feeling was great. I felt*

accomplished. It is very fulfilling!) (Participant three, personal communication, July 5, 2022, lines 96-100).

*I can say that I am a strong person, given that I am an OFT, strong because I have conquered so many experiences in my life, just as teaching English and handling my students. The very fulfilling feedback I received is that I am one of the best English teachers they have encountered. Honestly, I can say that I like English now more than MAPEH because I love the subject, and If I were to choose between English and my major, I would choose English over MAPEH.* (I can say that I am a strong person, given that I am an OFT. I conquered so many life experiences by teaching and handling English. The very fulfilling feedback I received was that I am one of the best English teachers my students encountered. Honestly, I can say that I like English more than MAPER because I love the subject, and if I were to choose between the two, I would choose English) (Participant four, personal communication, July 7, 2022, lines 94-99).

*It is very inspirational, I think, in a way. Moreover, it can help you grow as a teacher because you learn to accept that instead of your path, there is another one open for you, so you grow as a person and as a teacher, and then you touch the students in unexpected ways.* (It is very inspirational, in a way. Moreover, it can help you grow as a teacher because you learn to accept that instead of your path, there is another one that is open for you, so you grow as a person and as a teacher, and you touch the students in unexpected ways) (Participant five, personal communication, July 7, 2022, lines 81-84).

*Being an out-of-field teacher, you get to experience more. Because if you stay in your subject, comfort zone mo nana eh kay amo na ang imo nga gin studyhan for pila ka years, but once you get out of that, for example, you move to the English subjects, so it is very rewarding because you get to see the improvement of the students not only in your field but also in other areas. Also being an Out-of-field can be a sense of pride because it is a sense of accomplishment kay nakuha mo siya nga itudlo sa bata nga indi mo siya field. Accomplishment sa imo self nga nadugangan ang imo nga knowledge, and you have imparted that knowledge to your students.* (Being an out-of-field teacher, you get to experience more because if you stay in your subject, that is already your comfort zone, but once you get out of that, it is very rewarding because you get to see the improvement of the students not just in your field but also in other areas. Also, being Out-of-field can be a sense of pride. It is a sense of accomplishment because you can impart knowledge to your students even if it is not your field) (Participant five, personal communication, July 7, 2022, lines 117-126).

**Self-fulfillment.** Out-of-field teachers felt accomplished and fulfilled because even if English is not their area of specialization, they could impart knowledge to the learners and play the role of an English teacher. These are their narrations:

*Happy. I am satisfied and fulfilled teaching the subject even if it is not my major. Mas piliun ko magteach English kaysa math. As a whole, I can say that it is a fulfilling and fun experience – to be able to teach English even now.* (Happy. I am satisfied and fulfilled teaching the subject even if it is not my major. I would choose to teach English more than Math. As a whole, I can say that it is a fulfilling and fun experience – to be able to teach English even now) (Participant two, personal communication, July 5, 2022, lines 47-49).

*Other teachers told me that it feels like I am an English major, especially when I teach, which makes me happy and proud kay biskan indi na amo akon gin graduatan, but you are comfortable with it.* (But other teachers told me that they see me as a major English teacher, especially when I teach, this makes me happy and proud because even if it is not my major subject, I am comfortable with it) (Participant four, personal communication, July 7, 2022, lines 90-92).

*Pero subong happy gid, super happy gid ko sa English kay damo man ko nalearn. Hambal ko amo lang ni gali kahapos, naaa gin pabudlayan ko akon kaugalingon. Kay sang una daw may barikada nga that is why hambalan ko nga akon bana nga buldayan ka sa English kay syempre sa imo kaugalingon may barikada ka nga indi ka sa English, so amo to mam daw gin let go nakon ang barricade sa amon duwa. Kag namian man ko magteach English. (But now I am super happy in English because I learned so many things. Before there was a barricade between myself and English, and then my husband told me to let go of the barricade. And so, I learned to love English. And now, I love to teach English) (Participant six, personal communication, July 16, 2022, lines 161-165).*

#### **Theme 4: Opening New Possibilities**

The experiences of the participants as out-of-field teachers open new possibilities for them. They realized the beauty of teaching English to the students and how being an English teacher made them the best version of themselves. They decided to take supplements in English and enroll in graduate school to continue their pursuit of professional development. They shared the following narratives:

*I am planning to take up English in grad school to earn units man sa English kag para mas makalearn pagd ko. Gusto ko gid ni kay nanamian ko sa English kag para man maka gain ko additional knowledge. Kay ang hambal ka upod ko nga teacher which is also teaching in KCC makwa ko units sa English para may mastery ko. (I plan to take up English in grad school to earn units in English and, of course, to learn. I want to do this because I like English and to gain additional knowledge about it because my co-teacher told me to get units in English in KCC for me to have a master of the subject) (Participant two, personal communication, July 5, 2022, lines 41-45).*

*Sa subong, after how many years, to be honest, I am planning to take units in English. Kay feeling ko bala kung sagad ka sa English, if you were an English major daw ka alam alam gid sa imo. Gina pacheck sa imo ang mga speeches, tapos maka speak ka gid ya fluently sa english daw ka taas bala sa imo. Aminun ta diba kung sagad ka mag English daw ga look up gid sa imo ang mga tawo. (After many years now, to be honest, I am planning to take units in English because I feel like when you master English and if you are an English major, you are brilliant. You check the speeches; you also speak fluently. Other people look up to you if you speak English well) (Participant three, personal communication, July 5, 2022, lines 100-104).*

*I studied again at Tanon College, taking the major subjects in English and supplemental subjects in English to teach and permanently teach English because I am now comfortable teaching English, and I love English subjects. Now I am comfortable teaching English because I have taken my supplemental subjects in English. (I studied again at Tanon College, taking the major subjects in English and the supplemental subject in English so that I could teach English permanently since I am now comfortable teaching it and I love it) (Participant four, personal communication, July 7, 2022, lines 52-55).*

#### **Eidetic Insight**

#### **Embracing the Unknown: Adaptability and Resiliency of Out-of-Field Secondary Teachers Teaching English in Public Schools**

The occurrence of out-of-field teaching in the educational system of the country affected the professional lives and well-being of the teachers. Given the role, they

encountered many difficulties in teaching English subjects which is not their area of specialization. The newness to the subject, lack of knowledge of the content, and the employment of appropriate teaching strategies influenced the quality of their teaching, hampered their professional growth, and caused them stress and frustrations.

Despite the challenges the out-of-field teachers faced, they were able to cope with them because of the valuable qualities they possess, which are flexibility in teaching out-of-field, self-confidence in content delivery, and dedication and passion for work. These addressed the challenges they encountered in teaching English helped, which helped and empowered them in their teaching journey across specializations. Moreover, their experiences in out-of-field teaching made them embrace the new version of themselves as they learned to love and appreciate the silver linings of teaching English subject even if it is not their major in college.

The journey of out-of-field teachers started with their challenges to the opening of new possibilities in their professional lives. This indicates that their experiences shaped them to become resilient and adaptive teachers. Their triumphs and breakthroughs as OFT were made possible because they showcased the essential qualities of effective teachers. Thus, the adaptability and resiliency of the participants were proven as they endured and embraced the adversities and successes in teaching English. The emergence of these essentially helped out-of-field teachers in teaching another subject, hence, embracing the unknown.

## Discussions

**Encountering Challenges of Unpreparedness.** Teaching a subject outside of their specialization became one of the reasons why teachers struggled in their teaching careers. They encountered challenges of unpreparedness, particularly because of their lack of knowledge of the content. They find it hard to choose the right content because they lack mastery of the lesson (Arendain & Limpo, 2022; Du Plessis, 2019). Mastery of the subject matter is a strong determinant of teachers' strengths and weaknesses inside the classroom since it enables them to affect students' understanding, mastery of skills, and lifelong learning (Petalla & Madrigal, 2017). Moreover, their competence in teaching is an important aspect of their teaching career for delivering quality education (Malunes & Dioso, 2020). This influenced the self-esteem of teachers because they felt that the lack of cognitive skills made them ineffective and inefficient teachers (Childs & McNicholl, 2007; Co et al., 2021). Thus, out-of-field teachers addressed this challenge by spending their time studying, learning, and researching the subject matter (Ramli et al., 2017; Nixon et al., 2017; Arendain & Limpot, 2022).

Moreover, the lack of appropriate teaching strategies also became a dilemma for out-of-field teachers, which relates to the study conducted by Co et al. (2021) that employing appropriate teaching strategies is one of the difficulties faced by OFT. Since they do not master the content of English subjects, they find it hard to decide what teaching strategies to employ that are suited to the lesson as well as to the interest of the learners (Harry & Klingner, 2014; Griner & Stewart, 2013; Oyelekan et al., 2018). To address this, out-of-field teachers researched the effective strategies they can use in their

lessons. Moreover, they invented games and other approaches that caught the attention of the learners.

Furthermore, OFTs were also emotionally unready to teach English. Thus, they encountered challenges as they taught the subject. This resonates with the study by Du Plessis (2013) that the emotional aspect of teachers is often overlooked. Thus, the participants expressed their sentiments about out-of-field teaching. They felt anxious, stressed, and frustrated because of their difficulty adapting to the given task and their lack of connection to the subject they were assigned to teach (Cinkir & Kurum, 2015).

However, no matter what the struggles came in the lives of the out-of-field teachers, they encountered all of those successfully. Encountering difficulty has become one of the factors that shaped them to become stronger as out-of-field. Moreover, because of their challenges, they pushed themselves to study, strive, and appreciate the subject even more.

**Enduring Newness of the Field.** The notion of the out-of-field teachers that flexibility in teaching out-of-field is important in enduring the newness of the field resonates with the study by Lubke et al. (2021) that it is an essential factor in the delivery of instruction. For valuable learning to happen, teachers must adapt to their role (Hobbs & Porsch, 2021; Naparan & Alinsug, 2021). Furthermore, the flexibility of the teachers uncovers when they are assigned to teach other subjects as English resonates with the study conducted by Bayani and Guhao (2017). Hence, adaptability is an important tool for teachers' success.

Furthermore, the participants of the study were able to endure all the difficulties they faced because of their self-confidence in content delivery. According to Du Plessis and McDonagh (2021), the effectiveness and success of teachers' instruction highly depend on the level of self-confidence of teachers. The participants expressed that they cope with the difficulties brought about by the phenomenon because they believe in their capability to teach and that no matter how new the subject is, they can find a way to better themselves in teaching it. Self-confidence is important in out-of-field teachers' lives because it triggers their passion for teaching and protects their well-being (Bower & Carroll, 2017; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). Because the out-of-field teachers are confident, they were able to attain their pursuit of teaching English to their students.

Moreover, the dedication and passion of out-of-field teachers to their work helped them surpass all the challenges in teaching English. They shared how important it was to be dedicated and passionate about work because it became their driving force to teach the subject, even if it was outside their specialization. This relates to the findings of the study conducted by Loughran (2012) that out-of-field teachers strive in their teaching career because they are passionate about teaching. Participants shared their various ways and strategies to effectively teach the subject and make it more interesting for learners. This resonates with the findings of the study by Khan (2020) that teachers find ways to teach quality content to learners.

**Embracing the New Version of Oneself.** Out-of-field teachers become well-learned because of their openness to the English subject. They not only know their major but also learn the strategies, concepts, and lessons of the subject. This resonates with the findings in the study of Nixon et al. (2017) that the years of teaching out-of-field of teachers developed their skills and knowledge of the subject matter. Moreover, their

knowledge widened because experts surround them in the field with whom they shared ideas and other collaborative works (Sai & Siraj, 2015; Bajar et al., 2021)

Moreover, the participants shared that they became more passionate about teaching because of their learning experiences as OFT. Since teaching other subjects requires effort and dedication, the participants expressed how they strive to teach English to the learners to the best of their abilities. This relates to the study of Hobbs (2013) that teachers ensure that they teach effectively and commit to their duties, no matter what role is assigned to them.

Furthermore, the out-of-field teaching phenomenon helped the teachers to become more optimistic (Lu, 2021; Augusto, 2019). After all that they went through as out-of-field, the participants embraced positivity which helped them cope with their situation and strengthened their hopes for the success of the delivery of instruction. This relates to the findings of the study conducted by Sanchez and Rue (2019) that optimism is one of the important factors that help teachers cope with their struggles. Moreover, the desired outcome can be achieved once a teacher possesses a positive attitude (Petalla, 2022).

The participants were also vocal about how fulfilling teaching out-of-field was. Their openness and appreciation for teaching the subject, even if it is not their major, brought them a sense of satisfaction. Fulfillment of out-of-field teachers is important in their professional lives and their well-being (Acton & Glasgow, 2015; Du Plessis, 2021). The participants expressed in this study how much they learned to love the subject and how fulfilling it is to teach it to the students. This relates to the findings of the study conducted by Bayani and Guhao (2017) that the out-out-field teachers embraced and saw their full potential in teaching other subjects.

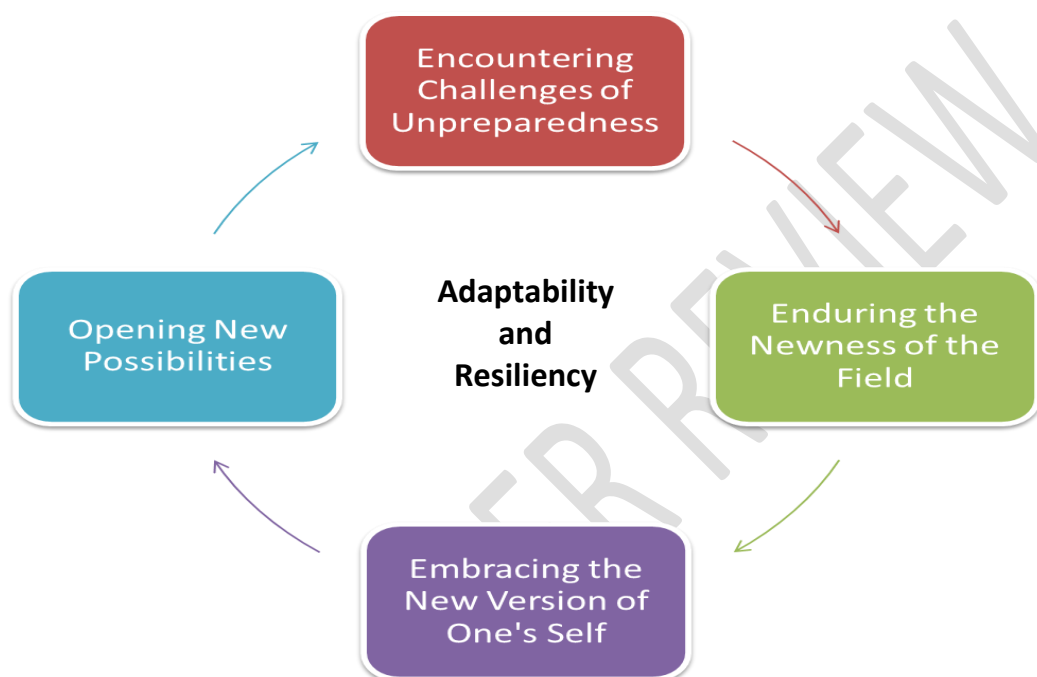
**Opening New Possibilities.** Opening new possibilities for teachers resonates with the study of Hobbs (2021) about professional development (PD), which is an avenue for out-of-field teachers' learning opportunities. The participants need opportunities to learn. Thus, they initiated taking up courses that helped them gain additional knowledge of the English subject.

However, out-of-field teachers' professional development learning highly depends on their motivation and interests (Lünne et al., 2020; Donista-Schmidt et al., 2020). In the context of the study, the participants are motivated to gain additional knowledge about English. They are most likely enticed by the fact that engaging in professional development will help them become competent and effective English teachers.

### **Synthesis**

Out-of-field teachers teaching English in public schools faced challenges and struggles with adaptability and resiliency. Adaptability was shown in their flexibility in teaching the subject despite its newness. On the other hand, they manifested resilience in coping and recovering from all the setbacks in their teaching career.

The lived experiences of the participants molded them to become better teachers. Their shared struggles turned into their story of hope. Because of out-of-field teaching, they could also see the advantages of teaching another subject. Moreover, they could see their full potential as knowledge bearers because of the love, appreciation, and beauty they learned from teaching English. Thus, this phenomenon opened new opportunities and horizons for these resilient teachers.



**Figure 1. Illustration of the Lived Experiences of Out-of-Field English Teachers**

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

### Summary of Findings

The lived experiences of out-of-field secondary teachers teaching English in public schools are thematically described into four (4) themes: encountering challenges of unpreparedness, enduring the newness of the field, embracing the new version of oneself, and opening new possibilities. Essentially, these teachers revealed that openness, optimism, passion, and self-fulfillment that optimism, flexibility, openness, and receptiveness are vital in their lives as out-of-field teachers. Thus, adaptability and resiliency emerged as the essence of the experiences of the participants.

## **Conclusion**

From the themes extracted from the analysis, it can be concluded that the lived experiences of out-of-field teachers in teaching English have become an avenue for them to realize their full potential as educators. Though the start of their out-of-field teaching journey was negative because of their unpreparedness and newness to the field and their lack of content knowledge and strategies, they were able to overcome them. They endured all the challenges and embraced the better version of themselves as OFT, which opened new opportunities for them. Out-of-field teachers' resilience and adaptability anchored them to successfully teach outside their specialization.

## **Limitations of the Findings**

This phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of out-of-field secondary teachers teaching English in public schools in Negros Occidental. This only involved six (6) participants who fit the inclusion criteria and were willing to participate in the study. Moreover, only one male participant is present in the study, which denotes that the sex of the participants is limited. This denotes that it does not represent the whole population of out-of-field teachers teaching English. Moreover, this study does not include out-of-field teachers teaching other subjects but is limited to non-English majors teaching English. Lastly, this study was only conducted for a limited time. Thus, results may vary.

## **Practical Application**

The findings of this study can be utilized by school administrators as a guide in drafting professional development programs, seminars, and other activities relevant to the needs of out-of-field teachers. Moreover, this serves as a guide for school heads in building capacity programs that would strengthen out-of-field teachers' knowledge and skills. This may also serve as an inspiration for teachers experiencing the same phenomenon because they can see how the participants endure all the struggles they faced in out-of-field teaching and the effective strategies and coping mechanisms they can utilize given the situation.

## **Direction for Future Research**

The findings of this study focused on the lived experiences of out-of-field secondary teachers teaching English in public schools. Hence, future researchers may conduct the same study with private school out-of-field teachers as participants. Moreover, since this is a qualitative study, other researchers may opt to conduct the same study using quantitative research to show a wider scope of out-of-field teachers. Furthermore, they can also study the lived experiences of out-of-field teachers that are teaching multiple subject areas that are outside the area of their specialization.

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