Teaching English in a Gen Z Classroom through Traditional, Digital, and Eclectic Approaches in UST Education High School: A Comparative Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This action research explores the effectiveness of employing an eclectic approach in teaching English to Generation Z learners at UST Education High School by integrating traditional and digital instructional materials. Grounded in Constructivist Theory and Achievement Goal Theory, the study investigates how a balanced combination of these instructional methods influences learners' academic performance, motivation, and overall learning experience. The research employs a mixed-method approach, including pre-tests and post-tests to assess cognitive development, Likert scale surveys to gauge learner perception, and thematic analysis of interviews to gather qualitative insights. Data is collected over three instructional phases: traditional teaching, digital learning, and a hybrid eclectic approach. Results aim to determine the differences in learners' performance across these modalities and the correlation between instructional approaches and learner engagement. Findings will contribute to understanding how an eclectic approach can enhance 21st-century competencies, ensuring an inclusive, engaging, and effective learning environment for digital-native learners.

Keywords: Generation Z learners, English language teaching (ELT), eclectic teaching approach, traditional teaching methods, digital learning tools, mixed-method research, instructional strategies, 21st-century skills, learner engagement, academic performance

INTRODUCTION

English as a subject was introduced to the early Filipino learners ever since the Philippine Educational System was introduced by the Americans (Esquivel, 2019 & Rafael, 2015). Its delivery has been further developed in the implementation of the various national curricula essentially like in 2001 the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum, the K-12 Curriculum in 2012, and the soon-to-be-implemented MATATAG Curriculum in 2024 (Department of Education, 2016 & British Council, 2023). Forsooth, the Philippines is noted to be one of the largest English-speaking nations as demonstrated in the level of degree of the Filipinos' fluency given the reality that the language is primarily used as the language of law and commerce and the primordial medium of instruction (Cabigon, 2015). As every Filipino learner of the English subject, it is assumed that he or she develops a number of competencies in reading, speaking, writing, and many more after attending the subject.

In the long run of education, the mode of facilitating the teaching-learning process among learners revolves around either of the three major teaching approaches, namely the teacher-centered, learner-centered, and subject-centered approach, depending on the nature of the subject matter or barely based on a specific time period (Garrett, 2008 & Lathan, 2023) Each approach has its own implication in managing the classroom as well as demonstrating the lesson effectively towards enhancing teachers' teaching practice targeted on the development of various levels of knowledge (Schwerdt et al., 2010, Barnes, 2017, & Lefebvre et al., 2023).

Essentially, the traditional approach being mostly teacher-centered and subject-centered in nature, has become reflected in the teachers' practice, specifically in their use of traditional approach such as the use of a marker and a board, cartolinas, manila papers, flashcards, and other printed paraphernalia more evidently in English

classes. While the integration of such authentic approach and other digital technological approach accessed from the internet has been considered in recent years in working out for the delivery of the subject by using cultural and real-life situations and establishing a learner-centered atmosphere (Ciornei et al., 2015; Rao, 2019, & Moorhouse et al., 2023).

Inconsistencies are viewed to rise in the implementation of a sole traditional teaching mode per quarter in classes with learners who mostly come from Generation Z (Cilliers, 2017). It is implied by a standard operating protocol setting a limit on the teachers' utilization of traditional approach and digital learning approach in alternate quarters. Generation Z members who are regarded as digital natives in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 era appear to be limited in maximizing their learning opportunities given the said teaching mode since they are noted to be avid users of the digital and technological tools available on the web (Chen, 2023 & Erzad et al., 2020).

Recognizing the potential of digital technology in the realm of education is critical to addressing the prevalent issue of inconsistencies in teaching modality. This suggests that incorporating this aspect can improve the learning experience of the learners. However, to ensure versatility in learning, a striking balance of traditional approach and digital learning approach per quarter is vital. Implementing an eclectic approach is a way to innovate the teaching and learning system as it follows the changes of generation and innovation of technology. Research conducted by Suleimanova (2020) revealed that combining traditional and digital teaching methods makes learning efficient and enjoyable. Furthermore, the eclectic approach based on flipped learning helped the learners to enjoy and become motivated to learn English grammar and writing performance (Helwa, 2022). The combination of both traditional and digital approaches results in a better teaching and learning system that helps the learners to learn and develop their skills while being motivated and engaged in learning.

According to Bakare and Orji (2019), Olelewe et al. (2020), Orji and Ogbuanya (2020), and Rebecca et al. (2019), there are newer innovative teaching approaches that could be added to the teaching repertoire and utilized to supplement or enhance the traditional teaching method. Thus, innovative pedagogy is defined as a proactive approach to incorporating more creative teaching strategies and methods into classroom learning (Zhang et al., 2020). The goal is to ensure learners accept full responsibility for their learning and actively pursue their learning goals. Simultaneously, the teacher serves as a facilitator in achieving the stated learning objectives. As validated by Mandula et al. (2012), innovative pedagogy is the creative utilization and application of appropriate teaching methods and learning approach for the advantage of learners. This necessitates a striking balance of teaching and learning approaches that allow for active teaching techniques that help teachers develop their learners' learning abilities (Zhang et al., 2020). This includes integrated studies, project-based and performance-based learning, learner-centered classrooms, and the integration of technology to cultivate 21st-century competencies.

Ultimately, the fast-changing world presents new challenges and places new demands on our educational system. Within this context, there has been a growing awareness of the need to change teachers' modalities of teaching learners who come from Generation Z.

This study is the springboard for determining whether the combination of traditional approach and digital learning approach can equip learners at UST-Education High School for success in the demands of the 21st-century learning environment. Furthermore, it seeks to identify the following research questions:

Based on the results of pre- and post-tests of UST-Education High School learners, whak,,kt is the difference among the use of the following?

Traditional Approach

1. Digital Approach
2. Eclectic Approach

1. Based on the Likert Scale survey, what is the difference among the use of traditional, digital, and eclectic approaches in UST-Education High School learners' learning experience in English class?
2. Based on Achievement Goal Theory, how does integrating innovative learning through an eclectic approach affect learners' academic performances and motivation?

Additionally, the researchers hypothesize that using an eclectic approach will be administered by facilitating, implementing, and evaluating the learners' academic performance, motivation, and learning experience.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study will be beneficial to the following:

Students. The result of the study will help the students explore different learning styles and use the combination of traditional learning and digital technology as part of the efficient and motivational delivery of the learning process.

Teachers. The result of the study will help the teachers adapt innovative teaching methods and strategies that will make the learning engaging and motivating for the learners. Through this research, the teachers will gain knowledge about the use of eclectic approach and its effectiveness to the learning process of the learners.

Pre-Service Teachers. The result of the study will help the pre-service teachers enhance and develop teaching skills through innovative teaching methods and strategies that will benefit the learners.

Future Researchers. The result of the study will provide a guide to future researchers that are interested in conducting a similar study.

Definition of Terms

The major terms and concepts used in this study are defined as follows:

Achievement Goal Theory. A theory proposed by Dweck in 1986, Elliott in 1999, Nichols in 1984, and Maehr in 1989 focusing on the individualized perception of competence in accomplishing a task or a goal influenced by a motivation to do so (Kaplan & Urdan, 2020 & Chazan, et al, 2021).

Constructivist Learning Approach. A learning approach grounded in Jerome Bruner's Constructivist theory promotes active learning by empowering learners to construct new knowledge from their pre-existing knowledge and experiences (Arik, 2020).

Digital Approach. A teaching approach employed by a teacher where technology-assisted learning tools like laptops, Smart TVs, and mobile devices and digital approaches such as PowerPoint presentations, audio-visuals, and gamified activities are solely used in facilitating the teaching-learning process (Haleema, et al., 2022).

Eclectic Approach. A teaching approach employed by a teacher where both digital and traditional approaches are used in facilitating the teaching-learning process. This may involve the use of handwritten visuals, posters and PowerPoint Presentations, and gamified activities at the same time in implementing discussions, activities, and assessments (Garrett, 2008 & Lathan, 2023).

Gen Z Classroom. A classroom that holds learners coming from the generation born between 1996 to 2010 who are regarded as *digital natives* and *tech-savvy*. This generation is also described as the *new learner generation* (Aharon, 2021).

Innovative Teaching. An approach that employs technology, relevant experiential activities, and other tasks in the teaching-learning process which aids to the learners' meaningful learning (Serdyukov, 2017).

Likert Scale. A five-point rating tool in a survey questionnaire used to identify the level of a respondents' agreement or disagreement on a specific descriptive statement (Likert, 1932).

Pre-test. A short formative assessment administered among learners in the beginning of the teaching-learning process which aims to check the class' prior knowledge toward the lesson to be discussed by the teacher (Janelli, et al., 2021).

Post-test. A short post assessment administered among learners at the end of the teaching-learning process which aims to check the overall retention of the learners on the lesson discussed by the teacher (Malik, 2019 & Janelli, et al., 2021).

Traditional Approach. A teaching approach employed by the teacher where traditional approaches such as textbooks, manila papers, pen and paper assessment activities, and other hand-written visuals are solely used by the teacher in facilitating the teaching-learning process (Evanick, 2023).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

English as an Academic Subject

The Philippine education system underscores the importance of English as one of its prime subjects, tracing to the implementation of the K-12 Curriculum in 2012, where 3,120 learning competencies are designed for Filipino learners to acquire knowledge and proficiency (Hernando-Malipot, 2023). The change in educational administration of the Department of Education (DepEd) birth to the era of the MATATAG Curriculum, which stands for *"Make the curriculum relevant to produce job-ready, Active and responsible citizens; TAke steps to accelerate the delivery of basic education services and provision facilities; TAke good care of learners by promoting learner well-being, inclusiveness learning, and positive learning environment; and, give support for teachers to teach better."* With this revision, one thing has remained steadfast: English as a subject top the highest number of competencies from 3,120 to 670.

The transition of the curriculums contextualizes that the education system in the Philippines has a direct goal in mind: to hone the Filipino learners in mastering English. Dela Cruz (2022) asserted that English has taken to Filipino consciousness, meaning it already exists in the normalcy of the country where it is considered as its second language next to Filipino. The development of English in the curriculum propagates a significant and perceived outcome for its learners to be globally competitive. Reddy (2016) affirmed that English is a vessel for communication that links a globalized and interconnected world. Institutions are the breeding ground for training, which delivers erudition for the learners to engage and apply the real-world context of the matter being discussed to understand its relevance profoundly. Teaching English as an academic subject is past its complexities and technicalities that accentuate the rule of grammar. It anchors progress in communication and cognition of the vast capability of English found at the micro level, such as literature, linguistics, pragmatics, and macro success, such as globalization.

Generation Z

Generation Z or Gen Z (Elridge, 2023), according to Prensky's book titled "Digital natives," is distinctly influenced by the various mediums of technology, such as phones, computers, the internet, and video games (Maqbool et al., 2020). This is underpinned by Pavlukovic et al. (2023), stating that digital natives are one of the distinctive characteristics that set Generation Z apart. Born from 1997-2012 (Britannica, 2024), this group constitutes innovative, creative, and technology-proficient individuals. They are adept at using various digital tools and platforms and inclined to incorporate new technologies. Thus, a study conducted by Aharon (2021) delineated that Gen Z is the new learner generation. They are called digital natives because they can comprehend and process information differently than earlier generations. His study highlighted McCrindle's key domains (2014) that influence and shape Gen Z. This is supported by Grace & Seemiller (2017), who claimed that students from Generation Z are known for their high levels of self-confidence, creativity, competitiveness, authenticity, curiosity, and independence. Moreover, Housand (2018), as cited in Giray (2022), amplified the need for them to be contingent on technology as it serves as an avenue for self-expression, obtaining news and information, communicating, and connecting with other people. In addition to having a learning style geared toward online platforms, they have a strong connection to productivity, efficiency, and technology (Cuza, 2019). They are continually searching for engaging activities that encourage their sense of self-development while stimulating creativity.

The generational aspect indicates that this generation has been surrounded by significantly more approach,

technological, and formal educational stimuli than prior generations due to the culture of global abundance. The technology aspect implies that this is the generation born into the technological era, utilizing, dependent on, and relying on it in all facets of life. Hence, given that such a generation has been immersed in various technological tools and applications, it is inevitable and indubitably for them to have a much shorter attention span (Nicholas, 2020). In connection with this, the average human attention span is eight and twenty-five seconds. In research conducted by Azmy et al. (2022), the duration of human attention span decreases with Generation - 12 seconds for millennials and eight seconds for Gen Z. Likewise, Demir & Sömnez (2021) and Micoleta (2012) as cited in Guinta (2017) affirmed that given the time and era that they were born, their attention span is limited as they are used to such instant gratification, and having information on the tips of their hands.

Given the Generation Z learners' reliance on technology, Chicca and Shellenbarger (2018) argued the need for educators to consider capitalizing on innovative resources to supplement and refine education through strategies such as the incorporation of multimedia tools along with their traditional approaches. The authors further emphasized that although technology cannot replace good pedagogical practices, it can undisputedly be maximized to augment learning and teaching.

If technology is used in the classroom, learners may become more involved in learning. Because this generation is so acclimated to using electronic devices, introducing them into the classroom would help foster their interest and increase their involvement levels (Haleema et al., 2022). In addition, the information needs include a preference for visual and graphic consumption over reading, messaging built on symbols and visuals as an alternative to verbosity, and Internet searches rather than books. Moreover, education underscores that learning is continual and not an autonomous chapter; mobile devices are integrated into learning experiences for people of all ages.

Traditional Approach

According to Evanick (2023), traditional classroom instruction is the time-tested method that has survived the centuries in delivering education. It is an effective way of teaching, especially in addressing many classes at once. It grounds the learner's thinking to transition to complex concepts anchored by direct instruction. In this case, it offers teaching strategies that are authentic and thoroughly prepared by the facilitator to further the proficiency of the learners.

Postulating the idea of teaching English as a subject, Al-Madani (2021) asserted that this method creates a mindset for learners that learning language is a requirement instead of a necessity for their communicative growth. Zilberman (2020) affirmed Al-Madani (2021) that traditional instruction in teaching English does not allow for the acquisition of Intuitive Grammar, wherein learners should be able to obtain knowledge with the help of their feelings and not solely based on facts.

Ordu (2021) negated Zilberman (2020) and argued that traditional approaches provide first-hand learning experiences to the learners, making them participate in the simulation. However, Ordu (2021) also expounded that the rise in educational transition and the emergence of technology impact the learners' learning process and language acquisition, which Al-Madani (2021) confirmed as traditional instruction set out limited knowledge of the language.

Eurokids (2023) concurred with the idea of Zilberman (2020) and Al-Madani (2021) that traditional approaches have proven to be effective for years but inadequate in terms of flexibility and adaptability to learners' needs since it is constructed for their purpose. Eurokids (2023) also added that traditional approaches are mainly theory-based instead of experimentation to target the holistic learning of the learners, which directs it to the need for more process-oriented since it focuses more on memorization and repetition rather than actual application.

Studies have shown that a traditional approach can aid learners in building their foundation of knowledge, but they are limiting when contextualizing its importance. The approach's inclusivity should also be considered since each learner has different learning styles. Traditional approach lacks in supporting the various needs of the learners since it is a generalized overview of a 'learner-specific" (Evanick, 2023).

Digital Approach

Quality education is essential to the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Its goal is to provide all learners with an inclusive and equitable quality education. In achieving this goal, digital technology has emerged as a fundamental instrument. Consequently, this platform is being utilized proactively. Haleema et al. (2022) emphasized that the globalization of education has already entailed the use of digital technologies with the significant rise in online instruction, notably remote instruction with online resources during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was also a rise in teaching approach designed to be exhibited online or digitized for online use (Ortiz & Rice, 2021).

The digital era has been shown to have transformed most education systems and processes worldwide. Teachers are encouraged to use these digital tools in class, even if most instruction occurs in person (Kalolo, 2019). Videos, content presentations, animations, educational games, online articles, and educational resources based on traditional print texts scanned and uploaded are examples of digital approach (Ortiz & Rice, 2021). It is supported by Aniuranti & Suwartono (2018), who state that digital (video/ photo) cameras, laptop computers, and LCD projectors are commonly seen in schools. A teacher may download songs, games, texts, photographs, or other online resources, integrate them with the media/tools mentioned above, and use them to enhance his or her teaching and learning. Video files, for example, can be accessed from YouTube and used in a speaking class.

Technological advancements in almost every aspect of life have reached the language classroom. Teachers should embrace technological progress and use it as a medium to help their teaching and learning. Aniuranti & Suwartono (2018) and Demirkan (2019) explained that creativity in using technology in the language classroom has resulted in teaching innovations. Online systems were provided for conducting classes, exchanging resources, completing assessments, and managing academic institutions' day-to-day operations. Using projectors, computers, and other innovative technology in the classroom can make learning more exciting and enjoyable for pupils. Establishing assignments in class that include technology resources, oral presentations, and group participation can make student learning more dynamic and engaging. Involvement can go beyond verbal communication (Haleema et al., 2022).

According to a study by Tosh et al. (2020), digital educational approaches are becoming a more prominent resource for teachers. According to the American Teacher Panel, almost all teachers use online tools and resources: 95% percent of teachers in elementary schools and 97 % of secondary teachers. In a study by Javier (2022), in the Philippine context, particularly among public High School teachers, it was concluded that the use of digital teaching and learning tools during the COVID-19 pandemic was evident, with teachers motivated to practice, maximizing the benefits of utilizing the tools, and demonstrating best practices in the field of education. Furthermore, digital approaches have a more comprehensive range of adaptability and individualized features, and they have a more significant potential for accessibility to learners with special needs (Ortiz & Rice, 2021). Individual engagement can be strengthened with digital learning resources. The Internet provides unlimited sources (Aniuranti & Suwartono, 2018). In a research conducted by Demirkan (2019), incorporating technology in the learning environment makes instruction more engaging and motivating because the content and lessons are delivered effectively. Findings from the study mentioned above affirm that relating pre-service teachers' perspectives on how digital teaching approach could contribute to the learning and teaching process and reveal the following responses: make the learning process easy, stimulate active participation of learners, enhance motivation, communicate effectively, establish a positive atmosphere, draw attention and raise interest, make the lessons fun, produce vivid, creative and compelling content, and encourage practice and increase retention.

Eclectic Approach

In the realm of education, eclecticism or an eclectic approach suffices the various academic needs of the learners. Thus, based on its primary proponent, Rivers (1981), it enables educators to comprehend the most suitable techniques from the different preeminent methods into their teaching philosophies (Joseph & Joy, 2019). As it aims to arbitrate among different pedagogies in curating meaning in learning, this approach requires a selection, evaluation, and application of the most fitting teaching techniques to ensure an all-encompassing, inclusive, and positive learning environment that is not solely anchored to one pedagogical model (Tabassum, 2018).

Consequently, a considerable amount of approaches, methods, and strategies have been employed and developed by eminent experts that echoed its effectiveness than the conventional ways (Alsayad et al., 2019, as cited in Chernus et al., 2022).

Grounded by its intention to go beyond the trajectory of constructive and restrictive ways of traditional teaching techniques, Larsen-Freeman (2000), as cited in Al-Khasawneh (2021), amplified its significance in the learning and teaching process, stating that the said procedure is "pluralistic, consistent, and entails," such inclusive tasks and activities that correlate with their various learning styles and needs. To illustrate, a quasi-experimental study conducted by Dizon & Sanchez (2020) deduced that utilizing an eclectic reading model has substantially improved the Grade 7 Filipino learners reading performance as it promotes innovation among the facilitators and provides an authentic reading apprehension. In addition, Al-Jarrah et al. (2019) concluded that (a) an eclectic approach incorporates the use of technology to teaching approach that suffice the various learning styles and interests of the learners, (b) enables learners to perceive such different kinds of teaching pedagogies that unravel monotony, and lastly, (c) diminishes the conflict from accuracy and fluency.

Indeed, the eclectic pedagogical approach links all the applicable and various teaching theories and techniques to facilitate and mediate a much more effective learning and teaching process.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Constructivism

Constructivism is a byproduct of observations and scientific studies on how people learn (Olusegun, 2015). It asserts that individuals construct their understanding and knowledge of the world, particularly through experiences and reflection (Bereiter, 1994). Derived from the respective works of multiple psychologists who have published their distinct views and assertions on the subject (Dewey, 1929; Bruner, 1961; Piaget, 1967; Vygotsky, 1978), constructivism emphasizes the requisite roles of prior knowledge, personal experience, and social interaction in knowledge acquisition. Hence, learners are active recipients of information who create meaning by integrating new ideas with their existing knowledge (Naylor & Keogh, 1999, as cited in Jones & Barder-Araje, 2002).

Furthermore, grounded on Bruner's (1961) notion of discovery learning, a constructivist approach to education, 21st-century learning is meant to prioritize autonomy and exploration by providing varied opportunities that will enhance and equally cater to the relevant needs and preferences of the learners. Such an approach would evoke creativity and motivation, exposing learners to new ideas with independence or within a group, which will result in a higher level of retention due to their active engagement and motivation within the process (Stapleton & Stefaniak, 2018).

Achievement Goal Theory

Achievement Goal Theory is focused on the learners' achievement and motivation. The theory was developed by Carole Ames, Carol Dweck, Martin Maehr, and John Nicholls during the late 1970s. These four (4) proponents expressed that motivation has different ways to achieve, and the learners' qualities and well-being are significant in determining their types of motivation (Kaplan & Urdan, 2020). The initial model of the achievement goal model presents the essentiality of mastery goals for the increasing competence of the learners and performance goals to demonstrate this competence as an approach to their desired outcomes of achievement (Chazan, Daniels, & Pelletier, 2021).

Moreover, the mastery goal delves into the determination to develop such competence through a) self-referential standards (i.e., transcending prior best scores) or b) task-based standards (i.e., answering a test in a correct manner) (Senko, 2016). In the educational context, such mastery orientations are frequently interconnected with the content of the subject matter and the actual learning and teaching process (Miller, 2018). Thus, according to the theory, achievement goals are perceived as cognitive manifestations of the intended learning outcomes (Hulleman et al., 2010, as cited in Chazan et al., 2021).

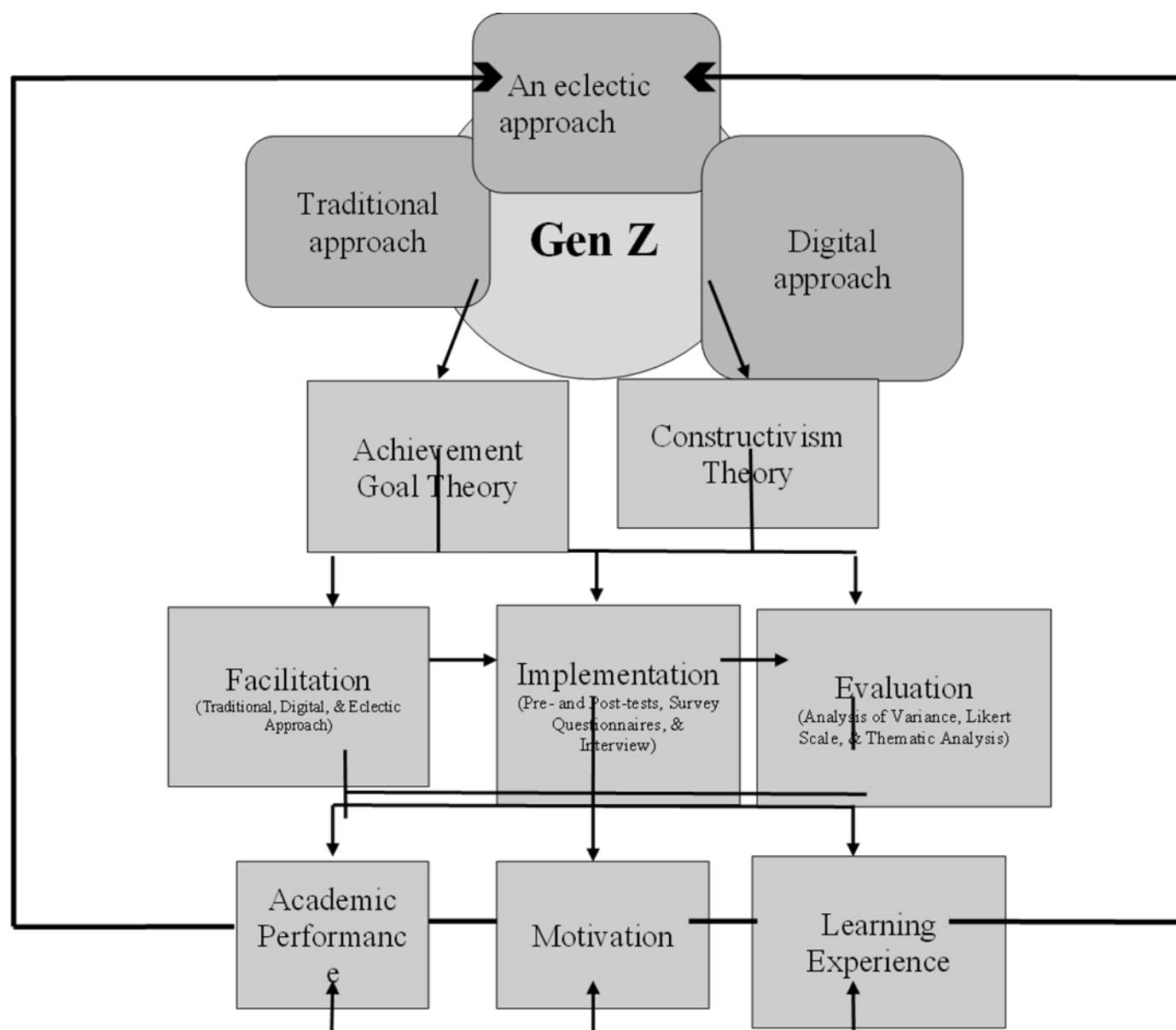## Conceptual Framework

Figure 1. The Use of An Eclectic Approach in Teaching English in a Gen Z Classroom

The figure above illustrates the utilization of an eclectic approach in teaching English in a Gen Z classroom. It indicates that both Traditional and Digital approaches were employed, which are pertinent for Gen Z learners. This framework is underpinned by two theories: Achievement Goal Theory (AGT) by Carole Ames, Carol Dweck, Martin Maehr, and John Nicholls, and Constructivism theory by Jerome Bruner.

The use of an eclectic approach was administered through the process of facilitating, implementing, and evaluating the learners' academic performance, motivation, and learning experience.

METHOD

Research Locale

The study is conducted at the University of Santo Tomas - Education High School (EHS). The Education High School, also known as the *UST-EHS,* is an independent institution among the other departments and colleges of the University of Santo Tomas, located on the 4th floor of the Albertus Magnus Building, Ruaño Drive, Sampaloc, Manila City. The UST-EHS is a laboratory school of the university's College of Education designated for the training and development of 4th year - Bachelor of Secondary Education Students specializing in English,

Filipino, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Religious and Values Education. Since its establishment during the time of Rector Magnificus Rev. Fr. Angel de Blas, O.P in 1950, is regarded as a school championing Catholic education at the secondary level committed to attaining the country's educational goals among gifted learners coming from financially challenged families given the opportunities charged with minimal fees. Furthermore, the academic institution puts a high emphasis on producing learners who are academically and globally competitive. Specifically, training students to be competent in the global arena is expected through the delivery of English classes.

With the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the school resorted to conducting classes through Enriched Virtual Mode or pure digital approach to continue the delivery of teaching-learning despite the global health emergency. And as government restrictions and protocols eased, the school gradually shifted back to conducting face-to-face classes along with having the Enrich Virtual Mode in alternate weeks in 2022. These two modalities are still in implementation in alternate weeks up to the present school year. Whereas pre-service teachers are expected to deliver lessons in face-to-face classes by implementing a traditional approach for the 1st and 2nd quarters and a digital approach for the 3rd and 4th quarters in accordance with a recurring protocol.

Being a laboratory school, 4th year BSEd students serve as pre-service teachers of the Education High School (e.g., Grades 7, 8, 9, and 10) while supervised by a supervising teacher for each subject, except for Music, Arts, PE, and Health (MAPEH) and Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE), given that specialization for the said areas are no longer offered by the college beginning 2015.

Specifically for the English Learning Area for the A.Y. 2023-2024, a number of 35 English pre-service teachers are teaching over the eight (8) classes of the Education High School in which the large number has been divided and distributed to different grade levels. Whereas, every class has four (4) to five (5) English pre-service teachers. A rotation system from one teacher to another within the group is being observed to ensure a fair teaching load considering the large number of pre-service teachers. Therefore, learners encounter different English teachers every week (University of Santo Tomas, n.d).

Research Design

The study utilized an experimental research design. According to Skidmore (2008), experimental designs are the *best* method to respond to questions of causality. Jones & Bartlett (n.d.) affirmed that this design was developed to reduce bias in the research.

The research aimed to compare the effectiveness of different approaches in increasing the motivation and academic performance of UST-Education High School learners. The data collection procedure commenced with the administration of a pretest and post-test to determine the significant difference in the effectiveness of the employment of the traditional, digital, and eclectic approach in the teaching-learning process, followed by a questionnaire to determine the differences in the learning experiences of the learners on the three (3) approaches and concluded it with an interview to strengthen its reliability and validity.

In experimental research, samples are randomly selected and assigned to avoid biases and manipulation (Jones & Bartlett, n.d.). This action research utilized randomized and targeted sampling to implement the aim of the research. The research compared the three (3) approaches: traditional, digital, and eclectic.

Quantitative-qualitative research or mixed methods have been employed in data analysis. This method enhances validity (Fiske, 1959). The pre-and post-tests and survey underwent quantitative analysis, and the interview was analyzed qualitatively.

Research Population and Sample

The participants of the study consisted of Grades 7 to 10 learners of the University of Santo Tomas - Education High School as its primary respondents. Each section comprised 40 to 45 students from each section and level across the school's eight (8) classrooms and sections. These learners are identified to belong to the Generation Z community who are known to be diverse and *digital natives* in the presence of extensive digital technologies,

given that they are part of the era of Web 3.0 (Spivack, 2007; Williams, 2015; Yu, 2020).

Moreover, the pre-service teachers from the English learning area, a total of 35 are currently enrolled and undergoing their practicum administered the learning and teaching process across all grade levels. Thus, the topics discussed are solely anchored to the DepEd's K-12 curriculum guide, the curriculum map approved by the principal and the supervising teacher for English, and the textbook titled *"Language in Literature"* authored by Espitona et al. (2020).

Likewise, considering that such topics are aligned with the aforementioned documents, the lessons covered by pre-service teachers in English are consistently uniform. Hence, the involved pre-service teachers are primarily determined by the randomized rotation assigned and administered by the supervising teacher within the English learning area.

Data Collection Procedure

As for the conduct of the study, the allocated time period in UST-EHS for Grades 7-10 English classes is grounded in accordance with the school calendar for the academic year 2023-2024. The pre-service teachers in English implemented the traditional approach during the first week of the implementation, the digital approach in the second week, and the eclectic approach in the third week. Onsite classes for the first and third weeks of the administration of the data collection were held in the learners' respective classrooms. In contrast, the online class on the second week was conducted in the official Google Meet room that was assigned to the learners by their respective English pre-service teachers.

Withal, this research utilized the results of the pre- and post-tests as the primary data gathering tool for finding the difference among the use of traditional, digital, and eclectic approaches in English class. In implementing this, the English pre-service teachers administered pre-tests anchored in the topics from the curriculum map and textbook before the discussion in English class across grade levels and sections.

After the conduct of the pre- and post-tests, a survey questionnaire was conducted to the respondents of the study who participated in the pre- and post-tests in the 20% of the entire population. The *Pareto Principle* is a proven principle widely used by different researchers in which its validity is based on anecdotal evidence. (Pareto, 1896). Using targeted sampling, only the respondents who accumulated the highest, middle, and lowest scores proceeded to the interview survey of the research. Correspondingly, the researchers utilized the *T-test for two sample means* to compare the results of the English pre-and post-tests and find the difference between the approaches mentioned above.

Furthermore, the results from the survey questionnaires conducted by the English pre-service teachers using a Likert Scale served as the primary data gathering tool for finding the differences among the use of traditional, digital, and eclectic approaches in UST-EHS learners' preferences and learning experience in English class.

After gathering the results, learners who gained the lowest, mid-score, and highest scores were interviewed. The various insights elaborated by the chosen interviewees were analyzed and thematized according to the data pattern to be drawn after analysis. Thus, the interpretation done is qualitative in nature.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is an essential aspect of the research to obtain the results of the data gathered. The data analyzed in this research is both quantitative and qualitative. The researchers utilized a mixed-method approach. Campbell and Fiske (1959) proposed a mixed method approach in research, wherein quantitative and qualitative design are used to measure the results to strengthen validity.

T-test for Two Sample Means

The t-test for two sample means is employed to deduce the objectives of the present study. This involved examining the gathered data from the pre- and post-tests from traditional, digital, and eclectic approaches. *T-test*

for two sample means is a statistical method that compares the mean difference between two in a single sample (Boston University, 2016).

The analysis focused on acquiring significant differences among the use of traditional, digital, and eclectic approaches in the English subject's pre- and post-tests of the UST-Education High School learners. Furthermore, the data were analyzed and treated by a licensed statistician for accuracy, validity, and reliability, ensuring a robust and comprehensive evaluation of the approaches implemented.

Likert Scale

A survey questionnaire was administered to the participants that measured their individual learning experiences based on their level of agreement and disagreement towards each of the teaching approaches, i.e., traditional, digital, and eclectic. Utilizing a Likert Scale, the participants rated their answers to the items on a 5-point ordinal scale (Likert, 1932). Such a scale will employ the following format presented in Table 1.

Table 1. 5-point Ordinal Scale

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Moreover, the formula of the Likert Scale adapted from Wanjohi and Syokau (2021) is used to evaluate the results of the survey questionnaire, which was validated by a professional statistician for accuracy and reliability.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis, a tool used to identify, analyze, and report repeated patterns across the dataset toward addressing the gaps in the study, was used to analyze the learners' responses to the interview. The researchers adopted the six steps identified by Braun and Clarke (2006), commencing from familiarization of the data, initial code generation through manifest content-coding, latent content-coding and identification of themes, and review of themes until the presentation of the report or conclusions.

The responses were from an in-depth interview with UST-Education High School learners. The researchers transcribed the learners' responses to ensure reliability and validity. All the responses gathered conveying similarities were grouped into themes, reviewed, and labeled with one concept espoused by all the grouped comments. Afterward, conclusions from the responses were drawn to determine their answers' underlying meaning on how the traditional, digital, and eclectic approach impacted their learning.

Scope and Limitations

This study investigated the learners of Grade 7 to Grade 10 at the Education High School of the University of Santo Tomas in the third quarter of the A.Y. 2023-2024. The research employed a mixed-method approach to explore the learners' perspectives on traditional, digital, and eclectic approaches. To achieve this, the researchers only gathered 20% of the learners from each grade level. These participants underwent pre- and post-tests to assess their cognitive skills before and after exposure to the different teaching modalities. The topics included in the tests vary in the lesson and quarter of the learners. They are based on the pre-made curriculum map of each grade level anchored from the textbook titled *"Language in Literature"* from Grades 7 to 10.

The supervising teacher validated the test contents before distributing it to the learners. With the use of targeted sampling, only the respondents who accumulated the highest, middle, and lowest scores proceeded to the interview survey of the research to get an in-depth understanding of their perspectives on the various teaching modalities through the use of thematic analysis and Likert scale for the results of the survey questionnaires. The utilization of t-test for two sample means was used to compare the results of the English pre- and post-tests of the learners and find the differences among traditional, digital, and eclectic approaches.

In accordance with the Education High School (EHS) calendar of activities for the A.Y. 2023–2024, this study only took place within the selected weeks in the chosen quarter. Three (3) learning weeks were assigned for the implementation proper. Each of these weeks focused on one teaching modality; the traditional approach was implemented in the first chosen week, the digital approach in the second chosen week, and the eclectic approach in the third chosen week. The researchers chose the most appropriate weeks for the learners based on the UST-EHS calendar of activities for the A.Y. 2023-2024. However, due to time constraints, there were instances where post-test administration was delayed, which happened if the main teachers for the selected weeks did not finish their classes on time. With that, any delays that occurred were carefully considered as factors that may affect the outcomes of this study.

Lastly, it is worth noting that the research was conducted exclusively within the EHS community. As this study progressed, insights and suggestions that arose were tailored to the dynamics and nature of this institution.

Ethical Considerations

Anonymity. Respondents' names were optional during the survey and interview. They were required to include their names in the pre-test and post-test papers for the teacher's recording purposes. However, no names were disclosed, apart from the grade level, in analyzing and discussing the test results.

Confidentiality. The researchers were ensured that the data collected will remain confidential by keeping it among the researchers and their advisers only. Disclosing it to people not involved in the research will be prohibited among them.

Informed Consent. The researchers personally gave the informed consent letter or through email to the respondents and would also directly collect after they have read the terms and signed the letter. In case of any questions or inquiries about the study and their participation, they were advised to not hesitate to contact the researchers with the information provided in the informed consent letter.

Potential for Harm. Potential risks may be encountered during the study. Should a respondent be uncomfortable doing so, they were given the freedom to refuse answering some questions in the interview or leave blank surveys.

Results Communication. The study's key components were guaranteed to be free of plagiarism and research misconduct. The results, conclusions, and recommendations were conveyed and represented in a precise,

transparent, and ethical manner.

Voluntary Participation. Respondents' participation was voluntary. The participants were given the freedom to pursue their participation in the study or to discontinue at any time during the survey or interview.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of traditional, digital, and eclectic approaches among UST-Education High School learners. The differences among the approaches were determined by pre- and post-tests and analyzed through a t-test, which was paired with two samples for means. Anchored with the Achievement Goal and Constructivist Theories afforded the identification of the learners' learning experiences through a survey questionnaire and interview and identified the effect of the eclectic approach on the learners' academic performance and motivation.

The results from the pre- and post-tests indicate that among the three approaches, the eclectic approach emerged with higher scores compared to traditional and digital approaches. This outcome was also supported by the survey questionnaire results from the UST-EHS learners, who highly recommend an eclectic approach as a teaching procedure. The responses were equaled through the interview, resulting in the central theme, the Triple E's of the Eclectic Approach: Equitable, Engaging, and Effective.

Quantitative Analysis

The quantitative data for this study was gathered from 20% of the entire population of each grade level at UST-Education High School, based on the Pareto Principle.

Pre- and post-tests were administered to Grades 7-10 English classes to evaluate the impact of the three approaches—traditional, digital, and eclectic. Additionally, a Likert scale survey was conducted to assess the learners' individual learning experiences with each approach. Following the Pareto Principle, only 17 responses from the two instruments were analyzed.

The effectiveness of the eclectic approach is supported by the data, which was analyzed using a t-test and paired two samples. The results showed that the eclectic approach had a positive impact on students' academic performance. The mean score for the eclectic approach increased from 4.0221 in the pre-test to 4.75 in the post-test, indicating a significant enhancement in learning. This improvement was statistically significant.

The Likert scale survey further reinforced these findings, with the eclectic approach receiving the highest favorability from learners. It was noted that the digital approach received the least favorable responses, with many learners expressing neutral or low agreement. In contrast, learners strongly agreed that the eclectic approach helped them grasp lessons and stay engaged. This suggests that the eclectic approach, which combines traditional and digital methods, is the most effective in fostering in-depth content knowledge, motivation, and academic achievement.

Qualitative Analysis

The effect of the eclectic approach on the academic performances and motivation of UST-EHS learners was obtained from their responses and analyzed through Thematic Analysis. The main themes are the following: Equitable, Engaging, and Effective.

Equitable

The eclectic approach, which combines digital and traditional approaches, plays an important role in promoting equity in the classroom. With the combination of these approaches, teachers can effectively address the diverse learning needs of the learners, which creates a more inclusive learning environment as it proactively identifies and confronts the barriers to academic progress (Fink, 2023). As supported by the responses of the learners including high, middle, and low of the equitable row, learners have a variety of reasons for choosing the eclectic approach as the most equitable teaching approach.

Biloon (2016), as cited in Khan (2022), mentioned that through the eclectic approach, learners could process the information presented as it aligns with their learning styles and needs. With this, the eclectic approach supports personalized and culturally responsive teaching by offering different tools and resources, enabling teachers to attend to varied learning needs.

Engaging

The eclectic approach allows learners to engage in learning as teachers provide varied teaching strategies and techniques. Based on the overall responses, including the high, middle, and low scorers of the engaging row, learners have a variety of reasons for choosing the eclectic approach as the most engaging teaching approach.

Studies have supported the importance of engagement in learners as an effective learning approach. One of these is a study conducted by Isabayevna (2023), which supports the responses of high and middle scorers that teaching English as a foreign language improves the engagement and motivation of the learners as one of its advantages. Thus, learning the English language provides better outcomes when an eclectic approach to teaching is used for the students.

Further, it makes the learning and teaching experience innovative and immersive through various resources.

Using diverse materials, including cutouts, textbooks, pull-out papers, presentations, videos, research articles, and songs, and employing gamification increases learners' engagement, interest, and motivation to participate in class activities. This is affirmed by the study of Al-Khasawneh (2022), which shows that an eclectic approach empowers maximum participation and meaningful interaction between the teacher and the learners.

Effective

The implementation of the eclectic approach in the learning-teaching process implies effectiveness in the learners' experience and academic performance. The interview process exhibited striking similarities in the responses, suggesting that the effectiveness of the eclectic approach relies on the flexibility of the utilized instructional materials and activities. Hence, the learners underscored how the said approach aided them to easily understand the lesson.

Moreover, due to the dynamism and fascination these add to English classes, Sarifa (2020) affirms that learners' diversified needs are accommodated, which strengthens their comfort and motivation in class, as evident in students' responses.

In essence, the use of varied strategies exemplified in the eclectic approach stimulates the visual, tactile, and auditory facilities of the learners, constituting a holistic and effective approach to diverse learning needs and conditions.
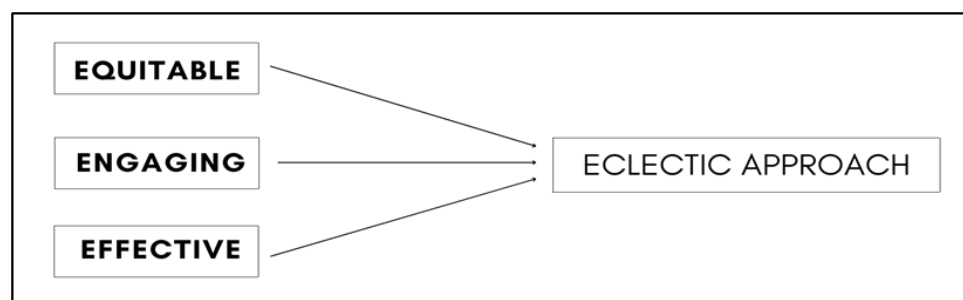

Figure 2. Themes from the UST-EHS Learners' Interview Response

Figure 2 illustrates the central themes extracted from the qualitative data, highlighting the effects of innovative learning on learners' academic performance and motivation through the eclectic approach.

CONCLUSION

The qualitative-quantitative inquiry anchored with the Achievement Goal and Constructivist Theories afforded the identification of the outcome of implementing traditional, digital, and eclectic approaches, which resulted in the eclectic approach as the most suitable procedure for increasing the learners' academic performance, motivation, and learning experience according to the UST-EHS learners' post-tests, survey, and interview. This result is supported by Larsen-Freeman (2000), as cited in Al-Khasawneh (2021), that an eclectic approach amplifies significance in the learning and teaching process, as it is pluralistic, consistent, and entails inclusive tasks and activities that correspond to learners' various learning styles and needs.

Garrett (2008) and Lathan (2003) stated that employing various teaching methods has implications for the learner's learning environment, which is revealed in the study that implementing the eclectic approach has proven effective based on UST-EHS learners' overall response to the study that resulted in the central theme: *Triple E's: Equitable, Engaging, and Effective*, denoting the practicality of combining two (2) approaches to put balance into addressing learners' conditions and diverse learning styles of the 21st-century learners.

Conclusively, applying the eclectic approach in the classroom consisting of a fusion of the three approaches, namely the teacher-centered, subject-centered, and learner-centered approach, provides an opportunity for the teacher to set an equilibrium in facilitating the teaching-learning process while empowering the learners in their own pace of learning (Mwanza, 2019 & Lelenza, 2021).

RECOMMENDATIONS

As evident in this study's findings, it is strongly recommended to implement the eclectic approach with consistency in UST-Education High School classrooms to enhance learners' academic performance, motivation, and learning experience. Pre-service teachers and administrators should research more about the eclectic approach and adapt the various eclectic strategies and teaching methods in the learning-teaching process to effectively integrate the approach and encourage effective, engaging, and equitable learning experiences for the learners. Moreover, the school curriculum and subject teachers must undergo annual reevaluation to guarantee that appropriate and consistent content strategies meet the needs of diverse learners.

Future studies should further examine specific strategies and techniques employed within the eclectic approach and their respective implications for learner outcomes to provide extensive and comprehensive insights for the improvement of overall quality of education.

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