



International Review of Pedagogical Innovation and Learning Sciences

Volume 1, Issue 1, 2026 |

<https://www.azalpub.com/index.php/IRPILS>

RESEARCH ARTICLE

OPEN ACCESS

Article Info

Received: 3/18/2026

Accepted: 05/30.2026

Published: 06/18/2026

Keywords

pedagogical practices, learning styles, lived experiences, qualitative case study, elementary education, Philippines

UNPACKING PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES AND LEARNERS' LIVED EXPERIENCES AND LEARNING STYLES IN VILLA VERDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: A QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY

¹**Maybelin I. Baligod**

Northeastern College, Santiago City, Philippines
Villa Verde Elementary School

²**Ulysses B. Daquioag**

Department of Education

Abstract

This qualitative case study explores the pedagogical practices of teachers and the lived experiences and learning styles of elementary learners in Villa Verde Elementary School. Grounded in constructivist learning theory and Kolb's experiential learning framework, the study investigates how instructional strategies align with diverse learner needs and how these practices shape students' engagement and learning outcomes. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis involving purposively selected teachers and learners. Using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, four major themes emerged: (1) Adaptive Pedagogical Practices in Diverse Classrooms, (2) Experiential and Contextualized Learning Engagements, (3) Learner Agency and Participation in Meaning-Making, and (4) Tensions Between Learning Preferences and Instructional Constraints. Findings reveal that while teachers employ varied and inclusive strategies, structural limitations and resource constraints influence the extent of responsiveness to learners' styles. Learners demonstrate active engagement when instruction aligns with their experiential and collaborative preferences. The study underscores the need for continuous professional development and context-sensitive pedagogical innovations to enhance inclusive and learner-centered education.

*Corresponding author: mhay25.mb@gmail.com/ulysses.daquioag@deped.gov.ph

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary educational discourse increasingly emphasizes the importance of aligning pedagogical practices with learners' diverse needs, experiences, and learning styles. In elementary education, where foundational skills and dispositions are developed, the role of responsive and adaptive teaching becomes critical. Learners are not passive recipients of knowledge; rather, they actively construct meaning based on their lived experiences, sociocultural contexts, and individual learning preferences.

The concept of learning styles, while debated, remains a useful lens in understanding how learners engage with content, whether through visual, auditory, kinesthetic, or experiential modalities (Kolb, 1984). Similarly, pedagogical practices grounded in constructivist and learner-centered frameworks promote active participation, collaboration, and contextualized learning (Vygotsky, 1978; Bruner, 1996). In the Philippine educational context, the Department of Education's emphasis on inclusive and learner-centered pedagogy further highlights the need to examine classroom practices in relation to learner diversity.

Despite policy support, there remains a gap in understanding how pedagogical practices are enacted in real classroom settings and how learners experience these practices. Specifically, limited qualitative studies explore the intersection of teaching strategies, learner experiences, and learning styles in elementary schools situated in local contexts.

This study addresses this gap by examining the pedagogical practices of teachers and the lived experiences and learning styles of learners in Villa Verde Elementary School. It seeks to provide in-depth insights into how teaching and learning processes interact and shape educational outcomes.

Research Questions

This study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What pedagogical practices are employed by teachers in Villa Verde Elementary School?
2. How do learners describe their lived experiences in the classroom?
3. What learning styles do learners exhibit in their engagement with instructional activities?
4. How do pedagogical practices align with or diverge from learners' learning styles and experiences?

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Constructivist Learning Theory (Vygotsky, 1978), which posits that learners construct knowledge through social interaction and meaningful experiences, and Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (1984), which emphasizes learning as a cyclical process involving concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation.

These frameworks support the examination of how teaching strategies facilitate or hinder meaningful learning experiences and how learners' preferences influence their engagement and understanding.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative case study design to provide a rich, in-depth exploration of pedagogical practices and learners' lived experiences within the natural context of Villa Verde Elementary School. Anchored in an interpretivist paradigm, the case study approach enabled the researchers to capture the meanings, perspectives, and interactions of both teachers and learners as they occur in real classroom settings. The study was conducted in a public elementary school characterized by diverse learner backgrounds and typical resource constraints found in Philippine public schools, including large class sizes, varied learner readiness, and limited instructional materials. Such a context provided a meaningful setting to examine how teachers adapt their instructional strategies and how learners experience and respond to these practices.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling to ensure relevance and depth of insight. The study involved six elementary teachers handling Grades 4 to 6 and twelve learners from the same grade levels, representing varied academic abilities, participation levels, and learning preferences. Ethical considerations were strictly observed, including informed consent, voluntary participation, and the assurance of confidentiality and anonymity. Data were gathered using multiple methods to ensure triangulation, including in-depth semi-structured interviews with both teachers and learners, classroom

observations to document actual teaching-learning interactions, and document analysis of lesson plans and instructional materials to examine the alignment between planned and implemented pedagogy.

Data analysis was conducted using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis, which involved systematic processes of familiarization, coding, categorization, and theme development. This approach allowed for the identification of recurring patterns and meaningful insights related to pedagogical practices and learner experiences. To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, the researchers adhered to established qualitative criteria, including credibility, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was achieved through data triangulation and member checking, dependability through detailed documentation of research procedures, and confirmability through the use of audit trails and reflexivity. Overall, these methodological strategies ensured that the findings were rigorous, authentic, and grounded in the lived realities of the participants.

RESULTS

Theme 1: Adaptive Pedagogical Practices in Diverse Classrooms

Teachers demonstrated a high degree of pedagogical flexibility in navigating the diverse learning needs, abilities, and classroom dynamics present in Villa Verde Elementary School. Rather than adhering to a single, rigid instructional approach, they employed a range of adaptive strategies that allowed them to respond to learners' varying levels of readiness, interests, and preferred modes of engagement. This flexibility was evident in how teachers adjusted lesson pacing, modified content delivery, and utilized multiple representations of concepts to ensure comprehension across heterogeneous groups of learners.

A prominent practice observed was differentiated instruction, wherein teachers intentionally designed activities that catered to different ability levels. For instance, learners who demonstrated advanced understanding were given enrichment tasks that required higher-order thinking skills such as analysis and application, while those who needed additional support were provided with scaffolded activities, guided practice, and simplified instructions. This approach reflects an awareness of individual differences and aligns with inclusive education principles, ensuring that no learner is left behind while still challenging those who are ready to progress further.

In addition, the use of visual aids and multimodal instructional materials played a crucial role in enhancing understanding, particularly among learners who are visual and kinesthetic in nature. Teachers frequently incorporated charts, diagrams, flashcards, realia, and digital presentations to supplement verbal explanations. These visual supports not only clarified abstract concepts but also sustained learners' attention and engagement. In some observed classes, teachers integrated storytelling, demonstrations, and hands-on activities, which allowed learners to interact directly with the lesson content, thereby deepening their comprehension.

Moreover, collaborative and group-based learning activities were widely implemented as a strategy to foster peer interaction and cooperative learning. Through group work, learners were given opportunities to exchange ideas, negotiate meaning, and support one another in completing tasks. This approach not only enhanced academic learning but also developed essential social skills such as communication, teamwork, and empathy. Teachers strategically grouped learners to balance abilities, allowing more capable students to assist their peers, thereby creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

Despite these adaptive practices, the implementation of flexible pedagogy was often shaped by contextual realities such as class size, time constraints, and availability of instructional resources. Teachers frequently relied on their professional judgment and experience to make real-time adjustments during instruction, indicating that flexibility was not merely planned but also emergent and responsive to immediate classroom needs. This highlights the dynamic nature of teaching, where pedagogical decisions are continuously negotiated based on learners' responses and situational demands.

Therefore, the observed flexibility in instructional approaches underscores the teachers' commitment to creating inclusive, engaging, and responsive learning environments. Their ability to integrate differentiated instruction, visual supports, and collaborative strategies reflects a nuanced understanding of learner diversity. However, it also points to the need for sustained professional development and institutional support to further strengthen and systematize these practices, ensuring that flexibility in pedagogy translates into consistently effective learning experiences for all students.

Responses:

"Iniiba ko ang paraan ng pagtuturo depende sa kakayahan ng bata."

(I adjust my teaching depending on the learner's ability.)

"Mas natututo sila kapag may activities at hindi puro lecture."
(They learn better when there are activities, not just lectures.)

Despite these adaptive practices, the implementation of flexible pedagogy was often shaped by contextual realities such as class size, time constraints, and availability of instructional resources. Teachers frequently relied on their professional judgment and experience to make real-time adjustments during instruction, indicating that flexibility was not merely planned but also emergent and responsive to immediate classroom needs. This highlights the dynamic nature of teaching, where pedagogical decisions are continuously negotiated based on learners' responses and situational demands.

Therefore, the observed flexibility in instructional approaches underscores the teachers' commitment to creating inclusive, engaging, and responsive learning environments. Their ability to integrate differentiated instruction, visual supports, and collaborative strategies reflects a nuanced understanding of learner diversity. However, it also points to the need for sustained professional development and institutional support to further strengthen and systematize these practices, ensuring that flexibility in pedagogy translates into consistently effective learning experiences for all students.

Theme 2: Experiential and Contextualized Learning Engagements

Learning activities were frequently designed to connect with learners' real-life experiences, allowing abstract concepts to be translated into concrete and meaningful understanding. Teachers intentionally contextualized lessons by integrating familiar situations, local examples, and everyday scenarios that resonated with the learners' environment. For instance, mathematical problems were framed using daily transactions in the community, while language and reading activities incorporated stories, dialogues, and situations reflective of students' lived realities. This approach not only enhanced comprehension but also enabled learners to see the relevance of what they were learning beyond the classroom. By situating knowledge within real-world contexts, teachers facilitated deeper cognitive processing, as learners were able to anchor new information to prior experiences and existing knowledge structures.

Moreover, contextualized learning significantly increased learner engagement and motivation, as students found the lessons more relatable, practical, and enjoyable. When learners recognized that classroom activities mirrored real-life situations, they became more participative, confident, and willing to share their own experiences. This dynamic created a more interactive and learner-centered environment, where students were not merely passive recipients of information but active contributors to the learning process. Such practices also supported the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as learners were encouraged to analyze and apply concepts in realistic contexts. Overall, linking learning activities to real-life experiences fostered meaningful learning, strengthened retention, and promoted a sense of relevance that is essential in sustaining learners' interest and holistic development.

Responses:

"Mas naiintindihan ko kapag may halimbawa sa totoong buhay."
(I understand better when there are real-life examples.)

"Kapag may group work, mas masaya at natututo ako."
(I learn more when we have group work; it's more enjoyable.)

The findings suggest that experiential learning plays a crucial role in deepening learners' engagement and improving knowledge retention, as it allows students to actively participate in the learning process rather than passively receive information. When learners are involved in hands-on activities, real-life applications, and reflective tasks, they are more likely to internalize concepts and make meaningful connections. This aligns with Kolb's experiential learning theory, which posits that learning becomes more effective when individuals cycle through concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and application. In this context, the observed increase in learner participation and enthusiasm indicates that experiential approaches not only capture attention but also sustain cognitive involvement, leading to more durable learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the integration of contextualized instruction serves as a critical bridge between abstract academic content and learners' everyday realities. By grounding lessons in familiar experiences, teachers enable learners to better understand complex ideas and see their practical relevance. This connection reduces cognitive barriers often associated with abstract learning and supports the construction of knowledge in a more accessible and meaningful way. As a result, learners develop a stronger sense of ownership over their learning, as they are able to relate concepts to their own lives. This interpretation underscores the importance of designing instruction that is both experiential and contextually grounded, particularly in diverse classroom settings where learners benefit from approaches that validate and incorporate their lived experiences.

Theme 3: Learner Agency and Participation in Meaning-Making

Learners consistently demonstrated active engagement in the classroom through their participation in discussions, collaborative tasks, and problem-solving activities. Rather than remaining passive recipients of instruction, they contributed ideas, asked questions, and interacted meaningfully with both peers and teachers. During group activities, learners were observed negotiating roles, sharing insights, and collectively working toward task completion, indicating a sense of shared responsibility for learning. In classroom discussions, many learners expressed their thoughts and opinions, often building on the ideas of others, which reflects not only comprehension but also confidence in articulating their understanding. These participatory behaviors highlight a shift from teacher-centered instruction to a more interactive and learner-centered environment.

Moreover, such active involvement suggests that learners were developing a strong sense of ownership over their learning processes. By engaging directly in problem-solving tasks and collaborative activities, they were able to construct knowledge through experience and interaction rather than relying solely on teacher input. This sense of ownership was evident in their willingness to take initiative, persist in completing tasks, and reflect on their own understanding. Learners appeared more motivated and invested when given opportunities to explore, discuss, and apply concepts independently and collaboratively. Overall, their active participation signifies not only engagement but also the development of autonomy, responsibility, and deeper cognitive involvement in the learning process.

Responses:

"Gusto ko kapag nakakapag-share ako ng idea ko."

(I like it when I can share my ideas.)

"Mas natututo ako kapag ginagawa ko mismo."

(I learn better when I do things myself.)

This finding reflects key principles of constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that knowledge is not transmitted directly from teacher to learner but is actively constructed through interaction, experience, and social engagement. The observed participation of learners in discussions, collaborative tasks, and problem-solving activities indicates that learning is occurring through shared meaning-making processes. As learners exchange ideas, question assumptions, and build on one another's contributions, they engage in co-construction of knowledge, consistent with the perspectives of Lev Vygotsky. This social dimension of learning highlights the importance of interaction and dialogue in deepening understanding and promoting higher-order thinking skills.

Furthermore, active participation contributes significantly to deeper cognitive engagement and the development of self-efficacy among learners. When students are given opportunities to take part in meaningful tasks and successfully navigate challenges, they begin to develop confidence in their abilities to learn and perform. This sense of competence reinforces their motivation to engage further, creating a positive cycle of participation and achievement. Learners who actively contribute to their own learning process are more likely to retain information, apply concepts in new situations, and view themselves as capable individuals. Thus, fostering participatory and collaborative learning environments not only enhances academic outcomes but also supports the development of independent, confident, and self-regulated learners.

Theme 4: Tensions Between Learning Preferences and Instructional Constraints

Despite teachers' deliberate efforts to employ varied and adaptive instructional strategies, instances of mismatch between teaching methods and learners' preferences were still evident. These discrepancies were largely influenced by structural and contextual constraints within the classroom. Time limitations, for instance, often compelled teachers to prioritize content coverage over differentiated or experiential activities, resulting in a reliance on more traditional, lecture-based approaches. Similarly, the demands of the prescribed curriculum required teachers to adhere to pacing guides and learning competencies, which sometimes restricted their ability to fully tailor instruction according to individual learner needs and preferred learning styles.

Additionally, limited access to instructional resources further constrained the implementation of diverse and responsive teaching methods. The lack of adequate materials, technological tools, and flexible learning spaces made it challenging for teachers to consistently provide varied learning experiences that cater to visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners. As a result, some learners experienced difficulty fully engaging with the lesson when the mode of instruction did not align with their preferred ways of learning. These mismatches highlight the tension between pedagogical ideals and classroom realities, underscoring the need for systemic support, resource provision, and flexible curriculum implementation to better accommodate learner diversity.

Responses:

"Minsan lecture lang kasi kulang sa oras."

(Sometimes it's just lecture because time is limited.)

"Hindi lahat nabibigyan ng pagkakataon mag-participate."

(Not everyone gets the chance to participate.)

The findings indicate that structural constraints significantly limit the consistent and effective implementation of learner-centered pedagogies in the classroom. While teachers demonstrate awareness of inclusive and differentiated approaches, factors such as limited instructional time, rigid curriculum requirements, large class sizes, and insufficient resources restrict their capacity to fully operationalize these practices. This suggests that the challenge is not merely at the level of teacher competence or willingness, but is deeply embedded within the broader educational system. As a result, learner-centered strategies are often applied selectively or intermittently rather than systematically, leading to uneven learning experiences among students.

This interpretation underscores the presence of systemic barriers that impede the realization of inclusive and differentiated instruction in practice. The gap between policy ideals such as inclusive education and learner-centered frameworks and actual classroom implementation reflects the need for institutional and structural reforms. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts, including policy adjustments that allow for greater instructional flexibility, increased provision of teaching resources, and sustained professional development for teachers. Without such systemic support, the goal of creating equitable and responsive learning environments remains difficult to achieve, particularly in contexts characterized by diversity and resource limitations.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The findings suggest that pedagogical practices in Villa Verde Elementary School are largely characterized by adaptability and a strong orientation toward learner-centered instruction, which significantly enhances student engagement and supports experiential learning. Teachers' efforts to incorporate interactive activities, collaborative tasks, and real-life applications indicate a conscious move away from traditional, teacher-dominated approaches toward more dynamic and participatory learning environments. These practices enable learners to become actively involved in constructing knowledge, thereby fostering deeper understanding, motivation, and meaningful learning experiences. The emphasis on experiential and contextualized strategies further highlights the effectiveness of connecting instruction to learners' lived realities, making learning both relevant and impactful.

However, despite these positive practices, notable gaps persist in achieving full alignment between teaching strategies and the diverse learning styles of students. Structural and contextual limitations such as time constraints, curriculum demands, and limited resources continue to challenge the consistent implementation of differentiated and inclusive pedagogy. These constraints result in occasional mismatches between instructional approaches and learner preferences, which may affect the overall effectiveness of teaching and learning processes. Nonetheless, learners' lived experiences clearly point to a strong preference for interactive, collaborative, and context-based learning environments, underscoring the need for sustained efforts in enhancing pedagogical responsiveness and providing systemic support to bridge these gaps.

REFERENCES

- Bruner, J. (1996). *The culture of education*. Harvard University Press.
- Florian, L., & Black-Hawkins, K. (2011). Exploring inclusive pedagogy. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 41(4), 495–510.
- Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning*. Prentice Hall.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society*. Harvard University Press.
- Bulusan, F. (2019). College ESL learners' politeness in using linguistic taboos and euphemisms: Looking through the socio-pragmatic lens. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 9(3), 148–157. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v9n3p148>
- Bulusan, F. (2019). Language policies and challenges in promoting minority languages in Asia: A systematic literature review. *Asian EFL Journal*, 24(4.2), 230–247.
- Bulusan, F. (2019). Selecting potential instructional materials for literature teaching in the 21st century milieu: Findings from a systematic review of literature. *Asian EFL Journal*, 21(2.5), 218–231.

- Bulusan, F. (2024). An emerging instructional materials design model for English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL) senior high school contexts. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2024.2431890>
- Bulusan, F. (2025). Phenomenologizing Filipino language teachers' lived experiences on exposure to destructive leadership via emotion-based doodles. *Discover Education*, 4(319), 1–18.
- Bulusan, F. (2026). A critical hermeneutic phenomenology of the fears of artificial intelligence (AI) as experienced by retiring university English language teaching (ELT) professors. *Discover Artificial Intelligence*.
- Bulusan, F., Antonio, R. B., & Gabriel-Dumaga, S. (2019). Correct me if I'm wrong: Exploring the attitudes and preferences of ESL learners on oral corrective feedback in a multicultural milieu. *The Asian ESP Journal*, 15(1.2), 83–104.
- Bulusan, F., Bautista, T., Pascual, S., Respicio-Pascual, V., & Garcia, P. (2025). Graduate students' confidence level and dimensions of anxiety in doing empirical studies in the 21st century: A convergent-parallel exploration. *Journal of Lifestyle and SDGs Review*, 5(02), 01–20.
- Bulusan, F., Cabacang, K. M. A., Duero, M. G. C., Malate, R. A. L., Mangao, J. F., & Parcon, D. P. (2025). Emerging strategies in imbibing learner-centered education in the 21st century language classrooms: A decade scoping review in Southeast Asia. *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Translation*, 8(6), 46–57.
- Bulusan, F., Codamon-Dugyon, E. M., & Bolintao, J. J. M. (2022). Exploring the challenges of tertiary students in non-laboratory courses after the first year of emergency remote teaching. *European Journal of Educational Research*, 11(1), 481–492. <https://doi.org/10.12973/eu-jer.11.1.481>
- Buncag, R. (2022). Parent-Assisted Modular Reading Program: Its Effect on Reading Performance During the Covid-19 Pandemic of Grade 5 Pupils of Biwag Elementary School, Tallag Cabagan Isabela. *International Journal of Arts, Sciences and Education*, 3(July Special Issue), 39–50. <https://ijase.org/index.php/ijase/article/view/154>
- Caliboso, J., Bagalay, B., Santiago, M., Bayan, R., Aguinaldo, I., & Belo, J. (2025). Literary Texts as Cultural Tools: A Study on Contextualized Learning Strategies in Philippine Higher Education. *International Journal on Culture, History, and Religion*, 7(SI2), 340–355. <https://doi.org/10.63931/ijchr.v7iSI2.205>
- Camiring-Picpican, H., Flores, K., Caban, R., Mohadali, S., Galdonez, D., & Alih, C. (2025). Pedagogical Innovations Based on Philippine Cultural Practices: A Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching in Higher Education. *International Journal on Culture, History, and Religion*, 7(SI2), 433–451. <https://doi.org/10.63931/ijchr.v7iSI2.168>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method/approaches* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Custodio, Z. U., Bulusan, F., & Raguindin, P. Z. J. (2024). Keeping them in the workplace: A grounded theory study of Filipino administrators' motivation. *Library Progress International*, 44(03), 9953–9965.
- Daguay-James, H., & Bulusan, F. (2020). Metacognitive strategies on reading English texts of ESL freshmen: A sequential explanatory mixed design. *TESOL International Journal*, 15(1), 20–30.