

## PERCEPTIONS OF COMPETENCE, CHALLENGES, AND NEEDS OF NON-MAJOR FILIPINO TEACHERS: A BASIS FOR A TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM

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### ABSTRACT

This study examined the perceptions of thirty (30) non-major Filipino teachers handling Filipino subject at the Junior High School level in the Schools Division of San Pedro City, focusing on their teaching competence, challenges, and professional needs, with the aim of developing an appropriate and suitable training program as an intervention. A descriptive-correlational research design was utilized. Data were collected using a researcher-constructed questionnaire and analyzed through weighted mean, Mann-Whitney U Test, Kruskal-Wallis H Test, and Spearman Rank-Order Correlation using SPSS Version 24. Results showed that the majority of respondents were female (96%), aged 30 to 39 years (74%), with a college major in English (84%), and had five to ten years of teaching experience (77%). Teachers reported high levels of perceived self-efficacy, particularly in constructing test items ( $M = 3.74$ ) and modifying lessons based on learners' ability levels ( $M = 3.70$ ), while relative weaknesses were noted in grammar knowledge ( $M = 3.30$ ) and literature instruction ( $M = 3.48$ ). The primary challenge identified was the lack of instructional materials ( $M = 2.61$ ). The study likewise found high levels of need for continuous professional development ( $M = 3.43$ ) and targeted in-service training ( $M = 3.35$ ). Inferential analysis indicated no significant differences in professional needs across all demographic profile variables ( $p > 0.05$ ). A statistically significant negative correlation was found between teaching competence and challenges (Spearman  $\rho = -0.550$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ), suggesting that higher teacher confidence was associated with fewer reported challenges. In contrast, the relationship between competence and professional needs was not significant ( $\rho = -0.028$ ,  $p = 0.900$ ), confirming that the demand for professional support remained high regardless of confidence level. Based on these findings, a Training Program comprising three modules was developed: (1) Content Knowledge and Grammar, (2) Pedagogy and Assessment, and (3) Development of Instructional Materials.

**Keywords:** non-major teachers, Filipino subject, teacher self-efficacy, teaching challenges, professional development needs, training program, descriptive-correlational research

### METHODS

#### Research Design

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive component was used to characterize the demographic and professional profile of the participants and to measure their perceived teaching competence, teaching challenges, and professional needs. The correlational component examined whether significant relationships existed among these variables and whether significant differences were present when participants were grouped by

profile characteristics. No variable was experimentally manipulated; data reflected the natural conditions, perceptions, and experiences of the participants.

### Participants and Sampling

Purposive sampling was employed to select participants from the Schools Division of San Pedro City (Campbell et al., 2020; Memon et al., 2025). The inclusion criterion was being a teacher currently assigned to teach the Filipino subject at the Junior High School level whose college major or professional license specialization was not Filipino. From a total population of thirty-one (31) eligible non-major Filipino teachers across the division, thirty (30) voluntarily completed the questionnaire, yielding a response rate of 96.77%. These teachers constituted the primary data source as they were the individuals directly experiencing the challenges and professional demands inherent in teaching a subject outside their area of specialization.

### Instrumentation and Validation

The primary instrument was a researcher-constructed questionnaire organized into four parts: (1) respondent profile, covering sex, age, educational attainment, college major, and years of teaching experience; (2) perceived teaching competence, with ten (10) items assessing confidence in grammar knowledge, literature instruction, MELCs alignment, use of instructional strategies, Filipino as medium of instruction, test construction, lesson adaptation, learning assessment, and overall teaching effectiveness; (3) teaching challenges, with ten (10) items covering difficulties arising from non-major status, lack of training, literary analysis, language use, lack of materials, assessment construction, lesson preparation time, student engagement, grammar instruction, and institutional support; and (4) professional needs, with ten (10) items addressing needs for grammar training, literature seminars, materials development workshops, assessment guidance, mentoring, strategy exposure, reference access, in-service training, professional development, and specialized programs for non-major teachers.

The questionnaire employed a four-point Likert scale: 4 — Strongly Agree, 3 — Agree, 2 — Disagree, 1 — Strongly Disagree. An even-numbered scale was intentionally used to avoid neutral responses. Validity was established through face validation — confirming clarity, coherence, and appropriateness of item language — and content validation through expert review by specialists in Filipino language, education, and research, who verified alignment with study variables and research questions. All reviewers' feedback was incorporated in the final instrument revision.

Table 1. Scoring Scale and Verbal Interpretation

Weight	Weighted Mean Range	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.25 – 4.00	Strongly Agree / High Level
3	2.50 – 3.24	Agree / Moderate Level
2	1.75 – 2.49	Disagree / Low Level
1	1.00 – 1.74	Strongly Disagree / Very Low Level

## Data Collection Procedure

A systematic and ethical data collection procedure was strictly observed. Prior to fieldwork, formal written permission was secured from the Schools Division Superintendent and the principals of covered schools. Participants were individually briefed on the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, and confidentiality assurances. Informed consent was obtained before questionnaire distribution. Questionnaires were distributed personally and through school coordination; participants were given adequate time to complete the instrument. Of the thirty-one (31) target respondents, thirty (30) submitted complete and usable responses. Data were subsequently coded and entered into SPSS for statistical processing.

## Statistical Treatment of Data

All data were analyzed using SPSS Version 24. Non-parametric tests were selected given the ordinal nature of the Likert-scale data. The following procedures were applied: (1) frequency count and percentage distribution for respondent profile; (2) weighted mean for levels of perceived competence, challenges, and professional needs; (3) Mann-Whitney U Test for dichotomous profile variables and Kruskal-Wallis H Test for multi-group variables to examine significant differences in professional needs by profile; and (4) Spearman Rank-Order Correlation to assess the relationships between competence and challenges, and between competence and professional needs. The level of significance was set at  $\alpha = 0.05$  for all inferential analyses.

## PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

### 1. Profile of Respondents

Table 2 presents the demographic and professional profile of the thirty (30) non-major Filipino teachers who participated in the study.

Table 2. Demographic and Professional Profile of Respondents (n = 30)

Profile Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
<b>SEX</b>			
Female	29	96	1
Male	1	4	2
<b>AGE</b>			
20–29	1	3	4
30–39	22	74	1
40–49	2	6	3
50 and above	5	17	2
<b>EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT</b>			
Bachelor's Degree	12	39	1.5
Units in Master's	11	39	1.5
Master's Degree	6	19	3
Units in Doctorate	1	3	4
<b>COLLEGE MAJOR</b>			
English	25	84	1
Mathematics	4	13	2
Home Economics	1	3	3

## YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Less than 5 years	3	10	3
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The participant pool was predominantly female (96%;  $n = 29$ ), with only one male respondent (4%). The majority (74%;  $n = 22$ ) belonged to the 30–39 age cohort, indicating a mid-career group with substantial classroom experience. In terms of educational attainment, 39% held a bachelor's degree and another 39% had graduate units, while 19% had completed a master's degree, suggesting a group professionally oriented toward advanced academic preparation. College major distribution showed that 84% ( $n = 25$ ) held an English specialization, 13% Mathematics, and 3% Home Economics. With respect to teaching experience, 77% ( $n = 23$ ) reported five to ten years of service. This profile — predominantly female, mid-career, and English-specialized — carries direct implications for the design of targeted professional support.

## 2. Perceived Teaching Competence of Non-Major Filipino Teachers

Table 3 presents the weighted mean scores and verbal interpretations for the ten teaching competence indicators.

Table 3. Perceived Teaching Competence of Non-Major Filipino Teachers

Competence Indicator	WM	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
I have sufficient knowledge of Filipino grammar.	3.30	Strongly Agree	10
I am confident in teaching literature in Filipino.	3.48	Strongly Agree	8
I adequately understand the MELCs for Filipino.	3.57	Strongly Agree	3
I can explain Filipino language concepts clearly.	3.43	Strongly Agree	9
I can select appropriate instructional strategies.	3.52	Strongly Agree	6
I effectively use Filipino as medium of instruction.	3.57	Strongly Agree	3
I can construct test items and assessments in Filipino.	3.74	Strongly Agree	1
I can adapt lessons to students' ability levels.	3.70	Strongly Agree	2
I have sufficient knowledge of learning assessment.	3.52	Strongly Agree	6
I believe I am an effective Filipino teacher as a non-major.	3.57	Strongly Agree	3
<b>OVERALL MEAN</b>	<b>3.54</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>—</b>

All ten competence indicators received a verbal interpretation of 'Strongly Agree,' yielding an overall mean of 3.54. The highest-rated items were the ability to construct test items and assessments ( $M = 3.74$ , Rank 1) and the capacity to adapt lessons to students' ability levels ( $M = 3.70$ , Rank 2). Conversely, the relatively lowest-rated items were knowledge of Filipino grammar ( $M = 3.30$ , Rank 10), ability to explain Filipino concepts clearly ( $M = 3.43$ , Rank 9),

and confidence in literature instruction ( $M = 3.48$ , Rank 8). Although all scores remain within the 'Strongly Agree' range, the lower scores on grammar and literature indicate content knowledge areas requiring further development. These findings are consistent with Shulman's (1986) PCK framework, which predicts that non-specialist teachers will demonstrate weaker subject matter knowledge even while maintaining adequate general pedagogical skills (Bausa & Marbella, 2024).

### 3. Level of Teaching Challenges of Non-Major Filipino Teachers

Table 4 presents the weighted mean scores for the ten teaching challenge indicators.

Table 4. Level of Teaching Challenges of Non-Major Filipino Teachers

Challenge Indicator	WM	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
I find it difficult to teach Filipino because it is not my major.	2.83	Agree	4
I lack adequate training for teaching Filipino.	2.90	Agree	3
I find it challenging to teach literary analysis and text evaluation.	2.74	Agree	6
I have difficulty using Filipino effectively as medium of instruction.	2.70	Agree	7
I lack sufficient instructional materials for Filipino.	2.61	Agree	1
I have difficulty constructing assessments in Filipino.	2.65	Agree	8
I have limited time to prepare lessons in Filipino.	2.97	Agree	2
Students show low interest and participation in Filipino.	2.83	Agree	4
I find it difficult to explain grammatical rules in Filipino.	2.68	Agree	7
I lack sufficient support and guidance from school administration.	2.61	Agree	9
<b>OVERALL MEAN</b>	<b>2.75</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>—</b>

The overall mean for teaching challenges was 2.75, corresponding to an 'Agree' verbal interpretation, indicating a moderate level of challenge. The most frequently cited challenge was the lack of sufficient instructional materials ( $M = 2.61$ , Rank 1), followed by limited lesson preparation time ( $M = 2.97$ , Rank 2) and insufficient training for teaching Filipino ( $M = 2.90$ , Rank 3). Challenges related to literary analysis, language use as medium of instruction, grammatical explanation, and lack of administrative support were similarly present. No challenge reached the 'Strongly Agree' range, suggesting that while difficulties are real and pervasive, teachers generally maintain the capacity to manage them (Du Plessis & McDonagh, 2021; Porsch & Hobbs, 2024).

### 4. Level of Professional Needs of Non-Major Filipino Teachers

Table 5 presents the level of professional needs reported by the respondents.

Table 5. Level of Professional Needs of Non-Major Filipino Teachers

Professional Need Indicator	WM	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Training in Filipino grammar and structure.	3.30	Strongly Agree	9
Seminars on teaching literature in Filipino.	3.35	Strongly Agree	6
Workshops on developing instructional materials.	3.40	Strongly Agree	4
Guidance on constructing assessments and test items.	3.27	Strongly Agree	10
Mentoring or coaching from a Filipino major teacher.	3.35	Strongly Agree	6
Exposure to diverse instructional strategies for Filipino.	3.40	Strongly Agree	4
Access to updated and relevant Filipino references.	3.38	Strongly Agree	8
Filipino-focused in-service training.	3.35	Strongly Agree	6
Continuous professional development.	3.43	Strongly Agree	1
Training programs specifically for non-major Filipino teachers.	3.35	Strongly Agree	6
<b>OVERALL MEAN</b>	<b>3.36</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	—

All ten professional need indicators received a 'Strongly Agree' verbal interpretation, with an overall mean of 3.36. The highest-rated need was continuous professional development ( $M = 3.43$ , Rank 1), followed by workshops on developing instructional materials and exposure to diverse instructional strategies (both  $M = 3.40$ , Rank 4). The pattern of uniformly high needs across all items reinforces the collective professional demand for sustained, comprehensive, and subject-specific support among non-major Filipino teachers — consistent with Liu's (2025) finding that context-aligned professional development is the most effective means of strengthening teacher self-efficacy.

### 5. Differences in Professional Needs by Respondent Profile

Table 6 presents the results of the Mann-Whitney U Test and Kruskal-Wallis H Test examining differences in professional needs when respondents were grouped according to their profile variables.

Table 6. Differences in Professional Needs by Respondent Profile ( $\alpha = 0.05$ )

Profile Variable	Statistical Test	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Sex	Kruskal-Wallis	0.783	Fail to Reject $H_{01}$	Not Significant
Age	Kruskal-Wallis	0.562	Fail to Reject $H_{01}$	Not Significant
Educational Attainment	Kruskal-Wallis	0.521	Fail to Reject $H_{01}$	Not Significant
College Major	Kruskal-Wallis	0.325	Fail to Reject $H_{01}$	Not Significant
Years of Experience	Kruskal-Wallis	0.561	Fail to Reject $H_{01}$	Not Significant

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis H Test revealed that no significant differences existed in the professional needs of non-major Filipino teachers when grouped by sex ( $p = 0.783$ ), age ( $p = 0.562$ ), educational attainment ( $p = 0.521$ ), college major ( $p = 0.325$ ), or years of teaching experience ( $p = 0.561$ ). All  $p$ -values exceeded the significance level of 0.05, leading to the retention of  $H_{01}$ . This finding indicates that professional needs among non-major Filipino teachers constitute a collective, cross-cutting demand rather than one differentiated by individual demographic characteristics. Professional development interventions for this population should therefore be universally available and collectively delivered, regardless of individual profile variables (Liu, 2025; Shi et al., 2025).

## 6. Relationship Between Perceived Competence and Teaching Challenges

Table 7 presents the Spearman Rank-Order Correlation results between perceived teaching competence and teaching challenges.

Table 7. Correlation Between Perceived Competence and Teaching Challenges

Variables	Test	Correlation Coefficient (rho)	p-value	Decision
Competence vs. Challenges	Spearman's rho	-0.550	0.007	Reject $H_{02}$

The Spearman Rank-Order Correlation analysis yielded a correlation coefficient of  $\rho = -0.550$  with a  $p$ -value of 0.007 ( $p < 0.05$ ), leading to the rejection of  $H_{02}$ . This indicates a statistically significant moderate negative relationship between perceived teaching competence and teaching challenges: as teacher self-efficacy and confidence increase, the level of experienced teaching challenges correspondingly decreases. Conversely, lower competence perception is associated with higher challenge levels. This finding is consistent with Bandura's (1997) Social Cognitive Theory, which posits that higher self-efficacy serves as a protective mechanism against professional difficulties (Recede et al., 2023). Practically, this relationship suggests that programs targeting the enhancement of self-efficacy — through mastery experiences, peer mentoring, and reflective practice — will simultaneously improve instructional quality and reduce experienced challenges (Guskey, 2002).

## 7. Relationship Between Perceived Competence and Professional Needs

Table 8 presents the Spearman Rank-Order Correlation results between perceived teaching competence and professional needs.

Table 8. Correlation Between Perceived Competence and Professional Needs

Variables	Test	Correlation Coefficient (rho)	p-value	Decision
Competence vs. Professional Needs	Spearman's rho	-0.028	0.900	Fail to Reject $H_{03}$

The analysis revealed a Spearman  $\rho$  of  $-0.028$  with a  $p$ -value of 0.900 ( $p > 0.05$ ), leading to the retention of  $H_{03}$ . The relationship between perceived teaching competence and

professional needs was not statistically significant. This finding is particularly instructive: even among non-major Filipino teachers who expressed high levels of self-efficacy, the demand for professional development and institutional support remained equally high. Professional needs thus represent a constant and universal condition of the non-major teacher population, independent of individual confidence levels (Shi et al., 2025). This challenges the assumption that once teachers develop confidence, their need for institutional support decreases, and reinforces the imperative for school administrators to maintain robust and permanent structures for professional development (Liu, 2025).

## THE PROPOSED TRAINING PROGRAM

### Rationale and Design Principles

Based on the integrated findings of this study, a Training Program for Non-Major Filipino Teachers was developed as the primary intervention output. The program was designed in accordance with three theoretical principles: (1) the strengthening of teacher self-efficacy through mastery experiences, observational learning, peer encouragement, and systematic reflection (Bandura, 1997); (2) the development of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) through the integration of Filipino grammar and literature with subject-specific instructional and assessment strategies (Shulman, 1986); and (3) the cultivation of sustained changes in teacher beliefs, classroom practice, and student outcomes through structured professional development cycles (Guskey, 2002).

The program addresses the three key deficiency areas identified in the study: (a) content knowledge gaps in grammar and literature; (b) a limited repertoire of pedagogical strategies and assessment tools; and (c) scarcity of instructional materials. It also provides a mechanism for ongoing mentoring and professional learning community engagement to address the universal professional development needs of the target population.

### Program Structure

The Training Program is organized into three modules, each designed to address a distinct but interrelated set of competence, challenge, and need dimensions identified by the data. The program spans one full academic year, organized into four phases: (1) Needs Assessment and Planning (Month 1); (2) Module Implementation (Months 2–7); (3) Monitoring, Mentoring, and Practice Sharing (Months 8–10); and (4) Evaluation and Planning for Continuation (Months 11–12).

Table 9. Overview of the Training Program Modules

Module	Focus Area	Key Topics	Training Activities
Module 1A	Filipino Grammar and Structure	Sentence structure, verb morphology, common grammatical errors and remediation, teaching grammar at the JHS level	Micro-teaching, grammar workshop, peer review of grammar materials
Module 1B	Philippine Literature Instruction	Selection of literary texts aligned with MELCs, literary approaches, designing literature-based tasks for JHS	Lesson exemplar development, reading guide construction, peer critique of lesson plans
Module 2A	Pedagogy and Instructional Strategies	MELCs-aligned lesson objectives, learner-centered and task-based approaches, strategies for low student	Demo teaching, lesson study cycles, collaborative lesson

		engagement	planning
<b>Module 2B</b>	Assessment Design in Filipino	Principles of validity and reliability in Filipino assessment, constructing test items, performance tasks, rubrics	Full assessment package development, peer review, assessment data for remediation planning
<b>Module 3A</b>	Instructional Materials Development	Low-cost high-impact materials, visual/audio/textual Filipino materials, technology integration, division-level resource bank	Materials design and piloting, materials fair, shared digital repository
<b>Module 3B</b>	Mentoring and Professional Learning Community (PLC)	Mentoring structures (Filipino major as mentor), monthly LAC/PLC sessions, documentation of teacher change, IPCRF/RPMS integration	Lesson observation and conferencing, reflective journal, annual in-service planning

### Implementation and Evaluation

The program will be managed by a Program Management Team (PMT) composed of representatives from the Schools Division Office, Filipino major teachers serving as core trainers and mentors, and selected non-major teacher-leaders. Training sessions are scheduled as two to three whole-day workshops per module, with between-session classroom implementation and reflection periods. Monthly Professional Learning Community (PLC) sessions provide ongoing collegial support and practice sharing.

Evaluation occurs at two levels. At the teacher level, pre- and post-tests in grammar and literature, self-efficacy scales, lesson plan and materials quality assessments, and demo-teaching observation checklists will measure growth in competence. At the program level, participant feedback forms, documentation of materials produced, PLC session records, and narrative reports on observable changes in teacher practice will be used to assess program effectiveness. Results from the first implementation cycle will inform the design of subsequent cycles, with potential for expansion to non-major teachers of other subjects using the same program model.

### CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Non-major Filipino teachers in the Schools Division of San Pedro City are a predominantly female, mid-career population with English as their primary specialization and five to ten years of teaching experience — a profile that carries specific implications for the design of targeted professional support.
2. Non-major Filipino teachers demonstrate a generally high level of perceived teaching self-efficacy, particularly in assessment construction and lesson adaptation. However, content-knowledge dimensions — specifically grammar and literature — represent areas of relative weakness that require purposeful and sustained content-focused professional development.
3. Non-major Filipino teachers experience a moderate but consistently present level of teaching challenges, with the lack of instructional materials and limited lesson preparation time emerging as the most pervasive institutional and structural barriers to effective instruction.

4. Professional development needs are uniformly high across all demographic subgroups, establishing that the need for professional support is a collective and standing condition of the non-major Filipino teacher population, rather than a characteristic of any particular subgroup.
5. The significant negative correlation between teaching competence and teaching challenges ( $\rho = -0.550$ ,  $p = 0.007$ ) confirms the operation of the self-efficacy protective effect: interventions that strengthen teacher self-efficacy will simultaneously reduce experienced challenges, supporting both teacher wellbeing and instructional quality.
6. The non-significant relationship between competence and professional needs ( $\rho = -0.028$ ,  $p = 0.900$ ) establishes that professional development is a permanent and universal need that cannot be assumed to diminish even as teacher confidence increases — demanding sustainable institutional support structures.
7. The Training Program comprising three focused modules on Content Knowledge and Grammar, Pedagogy and Assessment, and Instructional Materials Development — grounded in Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, Shulman's PCK framework, and Guskey's Model of Teacher Change — is an appropriate, contextualized, and evidence-based intervention for addressing the identified competence, challenge, and need dimensions of non-major Filipino teachers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations are advanced:

**For Non-Major Filipino Teachers.** Actively engage in the proposed Training Program and in monthly Professional Learning Community (PLC) sessions. Utilize the mentoring relationships established with Filipino major teachers as an ongoing resource for content knowledge deepening, materials development, and reflective practice. Document personal professional growth using the Guskey reflection framework to monitor changes in beliefs, classroom practice, and observed student outcomes.

**For School Administrators and Heads.** Prioritize the implementation of the proposed Training Program as an annual in-service learning initiative for all non-major Filipino teachers in their schools. Establish structured mentoring programs that pair non-major teachers with Filipino major teachers. Ensure the adequacy of instructional materials and provide time and institutional resources to support materials development. Avoid overburdening non-major teachers with excessive out-of-field assignments without corresponding professional support.

**For the Schools Division Office.** Institutionalize the Training Program within the Schools Division's annual capacity-building plan for non-major subject teachers. Design a division-level resource bank of Filipino instructional materials developed by trained teachers. Explore the replication of the program model for non-major teachers of other subjects using the same evidence-based framework.

**For Curriculum Planners and DepEd Officials.** Develop national-level support mechanisms for non-major Filipino teachers, including modular self-learning resources, online training platforms, and community of practice networks anchored in PCK and self-efficacy frameworks. Incorporate evidence from this and similar studies into the design of pre-service teacher education programs to ensure future teachers are equipped with strategies for effective teaching even in out-of-field assignments.

**For Future Researchers.** Conduct longitudinal studies to examine the sustained effects of the Training Program on teacher self-efficacy, classroom practice, and student learning outcomes. Extend the scope of research to non-major teachers in other subject areas and in different regional divisions. Pursue mixed-methods approaches that combine quantitative

survey data with qualitative teacher narratives to achieve a more holistic understanding of the out-of-field teaching experience in the Philippine context.

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