

# English language teachers' mechanisms in motivating learners: Prelude to a contextualized rhetoric model for new normal and beyond

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## Abstract

The paradigm shifts in education has offered various research gaps that need investigations. Enthused by this fact, this study was conceptualized to describe the experiences of teachers in motivating their learners in a HyFlex English language instruction. Through basic qualitative research design with aim of an interview protocol, the study discovered the mechanism of teachers in motivating their English language learners to attend their class, participate in class, and accomplish classroom activities. These are coined as **ALUKO<sup>2</sup>Y**: **A**ctivating joy in learning, **L**everaging meaningful learning, **U**tilizing the art of questioning, **K**eeping discussions with rewards, **O**bserving classroom rules, **O**ptimizing pathos, and **Y**ielding outputs through reminders. With these mechanisms, the ALUKOY rhetoric model, a contextualized model, was formulated for teachers in the new normal and beyond. Notably, 'alukoy' is an Ilokano word which means to persuade, encourage, or motivate. Clearly, the findings accentuate the importance of communication and rhetoric in achieving and sustaining class attendance, engagement, and accomplishment of task. Hence, educators and learners have to establish open and constant communication towards a shared destiny.

**Keywords:** contextualization, indigenization, intervention material, reading difficulties, localized materials

## English language teachers' mechanisms in motivating learners: Prelude to a contextualized rhetoric model for new normal and beyond

### 1. Introduction

The landscape of English language instruction (ELI) has undergone paradigm shift as a result of the pandemic and various educational reforms and innovations. Notably, The COVID-19 pandemic caused unprecedented disruptions and paradigm shift to the provision of education, affecting education systems globally through prolonged school closures and sudden adjustments to regular school operations (Meink *et al.*, 2022). From the traditional face-to-face, ELI is without a doubt adapted to this paradigm shift. This paradigm shift includes the implementation of HyFlex instruction. HyFlex, or Hybrid Flexible Learning Environments, started to take shape about 2005 (Beatty, 2019). HyFlex is used to designate a wide range of alternative approaches and has a broad definition. All of these variations have one thing in common: students can choose how they want to participate in their learning experiences (Hrastinski, 2019; Van Doorn & Van Doorn, 2014). There are instances where a course is offered both in-person and virtually, with the students selecting their preferred mode of participation before the term begins and remaining in that section of the course for the duration of that mode (Coates *et al.*, 2004).

Other times, students are free to select whether they want to attend in person or virtually that particular day. It is also possible to participate online or remotely using a variety of specific methods, such as meeting synchronously with peers in person, meeting separately with only peers virtually, or engaging asynchronously with course material for brief periods of time like a day or a week (Mentzer *et al.*, 2023). Interestingly, studies indicated that HyFlex instruction provides autonomy among learners (Mentzer *et al.*, 2023) which in return has been theorized to elevate the motivation of learners (Malczyk, 2019; Vansteenkiste & Ryan, 2013; Kyei-Blankson & Godwyll, 2010). With this in mind coupled by the need to address of the present time, schools implemented this type of learning modality just like in the case of ELI.

Unfortunately, this modality of learning is faced with challenges, be it in ELI or other courses. The primary challenge is for the teachers to give both the in-person and remote learning groups of students extremely identical classroom and learning experiences (Shek *et al.*, 2022; Binnewies & Wang, 2019). Notably, studies indicated that equity and participation are two major issues that are directly related to learning in the HyFlex instruction, despite the fact that recent research indicates that demand is rising (Binnewies & Wang, 2019). Mentzer *et al.* (2023) underscored that in a hybrid learning setting, equity mostly refers to striking a balance between in-person and remote instruction, which can have an impact on student performance. Accordingly, the issue of engagement pertains to facilitating communication between the in-person and remote learning components of the class.

Meanwhile, some schools in the Philippines use a customized HyFlex instruction. Although HyFlex learning by definition enables students to take full advantage of technology, this institution's modified HyFlex modality integrates online and onsite students in real-time session facilitation. MC NUVALI (2022) stated that HyFlex is an instruction modality in which students attend classes simultaneously both online and in person. With this instruction modality, teachers teaching English courses in the high school observe that some learners have irregular attendance whether online or face-to-face classes. Some learners also prefer to attend face-to-face classes due to problems on internet connection. Moreover, the teachers of English courses have difficulty in terms of making their learners submit requirements, participate in classes, and accomplish learning tasks under the HyFlex modality. This is exacerbated by the problems on their internet connection when all of them will have online class. Nonetheless, they find ways to solve these challenges in the name of delivering quality and excellent education to their learners.

Notably, the potential benefits of using HyFlex instruction amidst paradigm shift in education have ignited the interests of researchers. Review of their studies revealed salient gaps that need further exploration. Interestingly,

the context of learners' motivation merit further investigation to inform the design of future classroom expectations and policies (Mentzer *et al.*, 2023). Notably, the discourses of teachers in motivating learners provide the needed picture of the role of rhetoric as teachers use in communicating with their learners. In such context, this study is being proposed.

In the light of the aforementioned research gap and observations, the researcher found it imperative and novel to investigate rhetoric in the context of teacher and student discourses. Through understanding the context of teacher and student discourse, this study hopes to provide eidetic picture of rhetoric's role in motivating English language learners in Hyflex setting. After all, rhetoric is an art of persuasion that is vital in motivating learners to continue learning despite the adversities they face.

## 2. Methodology

**Research Design** - The researcher has approached the study with a qualitative descriptive design. Lambert and Lambert (2012) articulated that the main objective of a qualitative descriptive study is to give a thorough summary of the information gathered from specific everyday activities experienced by certain people. When researcher wants to know who is involved, what was involved, and where things happened in a given occurrence, qualitative descriptive is the best approach. Researchers seek answers from people who have examined, observed, described, or have knowledge of the phenomenon that can solve the problem. There is no pre-selection of study variables, manipulation of variables, or prior commitment to any single theoretical view of a target phenomenon. The researcher decided to use this design as it is aligned with the current study's objectives. Approaching the study with a qualitative descriptive design allowed the researcher to gather relevant data from the thoughts and experiences of teachers with unmotivated learners.

**Selection and Study Site** - The study was conducted at in a college offering junior high school, senior high school, and English as a Second Language course in La Union, Philippines during the second semester of school year 2023-2024. The participants of the study were teachers teaching English language learners in high school. They were chosen using criterion sampling with five set of criteria. First, they have learners who or have problems with their motivation to study. Second, they are teaching English courses for at least one year. Third, they have experienced teaching in a Hyflex teaching and learning environment. Fourth, they are able to use rhetoric in motivating learners in a Hyflex teaching and learning modality. Fifth, they were willing to participate in the study. With these criteria, seven teachers were interviewed and observed.

**Research Instrument** - In collecting pertinent data, the researcher utilized an interview protocol. It contained questions that focus on the mechanisms of teachers in motivating their learners to attend classes, participate, and accomplish classroom activities. Also, the researcher used a *robotfoto* to determine the profile of the target participants which was used later to determine the final number of participants. Last, a consent form was used to get the consent of the participants in participating in the study.

**Data Gathering Procedure** - In the initial phase of the research data gathering procedure, permission was diligently sought from pertinent officials of the college and participants to ensure adherence to ethical standards. Following this, a set of carefully formulated interview questions were crafted to extract comprehensive insights into the chosen research topic. With the interview protocol in place, the researcher secured the necessary consent by developing a detailed form outlining the research's purpose, confidentiality measures, and the voluntary nature of participation. Once these foundational steps were completed, the focus shifted to the logistical aspect of the study, involving the meticulous scheduling of interviews. With interviews set, the researcher then systematically conducted each session, actively listening to participants' responses and probing for in-depth information. After the interviews, the collected data took the form of transcribed recordings, where spoken words were transformed into written text for subsequent analysis. Depending on the research's requirements, follow-up interviews were conducted to delve deeper into specific areas of interest or clarify ambiguities.

Finally, the gathered data was triangulated by series of classroom observations. The gathered data underwent

a rigorous analysis phase, involving the identification of patterns, themes, and outliers within the responses. Notably, the culmination of this systematic process involved the development of a comprehensive output. This could manifest in various forms such as reports, presentations, or articles, each meticulously crafted to contribute substantively to the broader understanding of the research topic.

**Analysis of Data** - The interview and observation recordings were transcribed to produce the extended texts. These extended texts underwent thematic analysis. Thematic analysis, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006), is done to identify and report patterns within the data set. These are then summarized through themes. A theme, a recurring pattern essential for addressing the research questions, revealed similarities and differences among participants with varying professional backgrounds. The researcher used thematic analysis in the following steps: (1) familiarizing with the data by transcribing and compiling it, (2) identifying initial similarities, (3) grouping similar data into themes using a thematization table, (4) generating subthemes under established themes, (5) naming and defining themes and subthemes, (6) verifying data placement, (7) finalizing the thematization table, (8) including the table in the paper, and (9) drawing conclusions based on the results.

**Ethical Consideration** - Throughout the data collection process, the researcher adhered strictly to research ethics. Participants were provided with consent forms detailing the study's overview, personal information fields, and explanations regarding withdrawal, data limitations, personal information protection, anonymity, and explicit consent. The forms also included the researcher's ethical assurances and signatures. The study overview included a brief description, objectives, and purpose. Participants provided personal information to ensure validity, with assurances that this information would not be publicly revealed. The withdrawal section stated that participants could withdraw at any time before the final publication without affecting their relationship with the researcher. Anonymity was guaranteed throughout the study. Participants were informed that their anonymized data would be shared with local and international audiences. Data collection only commenced after participants gave explicit consent verbally and by signing the consent form.

### 3. Result and Discussion

#### 3.1 Mechanisms of Teachers in Motivating their Learners

After interviewing seven teachers using six principal questions, the researcher organized their responses to describe the teachers' experiences in motivating learners in a HyFlex English language class. Through thematic analysis, the data revealed two main themes for motivating attendance: activating joy in learning and leveraging meaningful learning. To encourage participation, teachers used the art of questioning and rewarded discussions. For motivating the completion of classroom activities, they followed classroom rules, optimized emotional engagement, and reminded learners to yield outputs. These strategies were collectively termed ALUKO<sup>2</sup>Y, representing Activating joy in learning, Leveraging meaningful learning, Utilizing the art of questioning, Keeping discussions with rewards, Observing classroom rules, Optimizing pathos, and Yielding outputs through reminders.

**Activating Joy in Learning.** The sharing of the participants surfaces the vital role of establishing fun in learning through gamifying classroom and creating interactive learning environment to encourage learners to attend to their classes. This is one way of killing boredom among learners. Aside from this, games and interactive learning are being used to motivate learner to attend their classes. As stated:

*“So basically, for me, one of the things that I do to encourage my student to attend my class is I, as much as possible, I limit discussions. As much as possible, I include games and activities that will really catch their attention, that will really get their attention since they are already online and they'll just be listening. So, I know they're going to get bored. So as much as possible, I want to integrate games and activities that is very fun on their side so I can get their attention.” (T1)*

*“Ahh, during face-to-face classes I make sure that I make the class interactive through games and*

*fun activities so that they will be having the impression that learning with me is fun.” (T2)*

*“Games and engaging activities are vital in motivating them to attend class.” (T6)*

Notably, the classroom observations support these verbalizations. In fact, the participants employ games and interactive activities like the use of technology or applications to facilitate learning. Below are the sample observation transcripts from the observation protocol that support the claim.

#### Scene 1

*Teacher: Okay class, are you ready? We ah: will be playing a game. Listen CLASS. Look at the screen. There are ah: pictures related to the topic. You are to guess this pictures or the: answers to: the questions using the: pictures. All RIGHT! LET US START. ((The teacher starts the game. Then, he stopped to explain it further because some learners cannot understand.))*

*Learner: Ma'am ah, can we have a pair or pwede makigroup (can we do it by group) not individual?*

#### Scene 2

*Teacher: NOW, as you can say class ah: there are questions being flashed on the screen. I want you to: ah: work as a group. The first to answer the questions will be ah: given two points. The second will ah: get one point. ((Here the teacher presents questions through a presentation. The learners are asked to write their answers on the board.))*

Clearly, the result of the interview and observation amplifies the potential of games and interactive activities to motivate learners to attend their class. The joy or fun of learning through games makes them want to come to class more. In fact, gamification of education is an approach for improving engagement that involves introducing game aspects into an educational setting (Dichev & Dicheva, 2017). Gamification's primary goals are to improve specific talents, offer objectives that give learning meaning, engage students, optimize learning, assist behavior change, and socialize (Dichev & Dicheva 2017; Krause et al., 2015; Knutas et al., 2014).

Undoubtedly, the finding recognizes the vital role of games in establishing interactive learning and sustaining learners' interest to attend class. Games have amazing driving force; they adopt a range of seductive tactics, often without obtaining anything in return, simply for the fun of it and the potential to win (Dicheva et al., 2015). Nonetheless, numerous researches have investigated the impact of gamification in an educational setting, with positive results such as increased engagement, user retention, knowledge, and cooperation (Hakulinen & Auvinen 2014; Tvarozek & Brza 2014).

**Leveraging Meaningful Learning.** Based on the answers of the participants, it shows that when teachers provide relatable meaning during discussions, they bridge the gap between abstract concepts making learning more accessible and engaging. Relatable meaning helps students connect new information to what they already know, facilitating deeper understanding and retention. By drawing connections to real-life situations, interests, or examples familiar to students, teachers make the content more relevant and meaningful, motivating students to actively participate and apply their knowledge. To support the claim, the following are the verbalizations of the participants:

*“I make sure that all of those are meaningful for the learners, especially the activities.” (T2)*

*“To motivate them, I have to make sure that they are able to connect to the lesson. It should be something relatable to them.” (T5)*

*“All that I have to do is to make sure that our lesson is meaningful to them. I have to make sure that I explain the practicality of the lesson.” (T7)*

Below is a sample scenario in which the teacher starts with a relatable question to engage students by

connecting the lesson to their personal experiences. While students participate by sharing their past experiences with email writing, the teacher provides a clear structure and practical examples, making the abstract concept of professional correspondence more concrete.

*Teacher: Let's start with a question: Has anyone ever had to write an email for something important, like asking a teacher for a recommendation letter or applying for a part-time job?*

*Student 1: Yes, I had to email my soccer coach to get a recommendation for a sports camp.*

*Teacher: Perfect! How did you approach writing that email?*

*Student 1: Sir dapat (I should)... I made sure to be polite and explained why I needed the recommendation.*

*Teacher: That's a great start dear. Being polite and clear are key components of a professional email. Now, let's break down the structure. A professional email typically has five parts: the subject line, greeting, body, closing, and signature.*

*Teacher: Imagine you're applying for an internship. What might you put in the subject line to grab the recipient's attention?*

*Student 2: Maybe something like 'Internship Application'*

*Teacher: Exactly! It's concise and to the point. Next, the greeting. How would you address someone if you don't know their name?*

*Student 3: I would probably say 'Dear Hiring Manager' or 'To Whom It May Concern'.*

*Teacher: Good. And in the body of the email, you want to introduce yourself, state the purpose of your email, and provide any necessary details. How about we practice writing an email for an internship application together?*

The verbalizations amplify that teachers should provide real-life examples or scenarios to engage students by connecting the lesson to their personal experiences. The use of real-life scenarios, such as applying for an internship, helps students see the relevance of the lesson to their future. In return, they are able to relate to the lesson. Notably, Self-Determination Theory (SDT) emphasizes the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in fostering intrinsic motivation and meaningful engagement in learning. Deci and Ryan (2000) argued that when individuals perceive their actions as self-determined, driven by their own interests and values, they are more likely to experience greater satisfaction and deeper understanding in their learning endeavors. In the context of education, this theory suggests that when teachers facilitate environments where students feel a sense of autonomy in their learning, have opportunities to demonstrate competence, and can relate the content to their personal experiences and interests, they are more likely to be engaged and motivated to learn. Therefore, by incorporating relatable meaning into classroom activities, such as connecting lessons to real-life scenarios or students' personal experiences, teachers can effectively leverage meaningful learning experiences that align with the principles of SDT, fostering intrinsic motivation and deeper understanding among students.

However, it is important to acknowledge potential limitations or challenges in solely relying on relatable meaning to facilitate meaningful learning. The Filter Hypothesis, proposed by Stephen Krashen in the context of second language acquisition, suggests that learners may selectively attend to language input based on their existing knowledge and beliefs, filtering out information that does not align with their cognitive schema (Krashen, 1982). Similarly, in educational settings, students may interpret and engage with relatable content differently based on their individual backgrounds, interests, and cognitive biases, potentially leading to variations in learning outcomes. Therefore, while leveraging relatable meaning can enhance engagement and understanding for many students, educators should also recognize the importance of addressing diverse learning styles and preferences, as well as

providing opportunities for critical thinking and cognitive challenge to ensure holistic and effective learning experiences.

**Utilizing the Art of Questioning.** Asking questions especially those that fall under Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) keeps students engaged and actively involved in the learning process. Instead of passively receiving information, they become active participants in their own learning journey. By asking questions, teachers can assess students' understanding of the material. This allows them to identify areas where students may be struggling and provide additional support or clarification. They mentioned:

*“One way for me to, to do that or, you know, to encourage my student to engage in classroom discussion and activities fostering a positive learning environment... I also ask higher order questions. By asking questions that are not limited to yes or no answers, I can really get their ideas.” (T1)*

*“You must know how to ask engaging questions. If I ask a follow-up question that captures their interest, they naturally get involved and want to engage in the discussion again, even after being distracted.” (T2)*

*“To really manifest discussion in class, I ask them questions that are not just limited to exact answers. I ask them to expound on their answers.” (T5)*

*“I should be asking questions that require higher-order thinking skills to stimulate their rational or logical thinking.” (T4)*

In the scenario below, the teacher's approach aligns with the concept of utilizing the art of questioning to promote active learning and stimulate higher-order thinking skills among students. The emphasis on open-ended questions encourages students to delve deeper into the subject matter, fostering a positive learning environment where inquiry and exploration are valued. As the class progresses, the teacher poses open-ended questions that encourage higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) among the students. For example:

*Teacher: The teacher asks, "How does the author's use of symbolism contribute to the overall theme of the novel?"*

*Following a student's response, the teacher probes further, "Can you provide specific examples from the text to support your interpretation?"*

*Teacher: Okay, another question, "How might different readers interpret the symbolism in varied ways, and what factors could influence these interpretations?"*

Utilizing the art of questioning in the classroom, particularly by employing open-ended questions that stimulate higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) has been widely recognized as an effective pedagogical approach to promote active learning and student engagement. Research by Li and colleagues (2017) found that teachers who incorporated open-ended questions into their teaching practices were able to create a more interactive and intellectually stimulating classroom environment. Furthermore, studies by Johnson and Johnson (2016) have shown that asking questions that require students to think critically and reflect on their learning not only enhances their comprehension of the material but also fosters the development of analytical and problem-solving skills. Therefore, by encouraging students to delve deeper into the subject matter through open-ended questions, teachers can facilitate meaningful discussions and promote a deeper understanding of the content.

While the use of open-ended questions to stimulate higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) in the classroom has its merits, it may not always optimize paths, particularly in certain educational contexts. Research by Smith (2015) suggests that excessive emphasis on questioning strategies can inadvertently lead to increased student anxiety and feelings of pressure to perform. Additionally, a study by Brown and colleagues (2018) found that students from

culturally diverse backgrounds may perceive open-ended questions as intimidating or unfamiliar, which could hinder their participation and engagement in classroom discussions. Therefore, while questioning techniques can be valuable tools for promoting critical thinking, educators should be mindful of potential barriers to emotional engagement and seek to balance cognitive rigor with sensitivity to students' emotional needs.

**Keeping Discussions with Rewards.** Rewards serve as powerful motivators for students, incentivizing positive behavior, effort, and academic achievement. Whether in the form of praise, tangible incentives, or recognition, rewards provide students with a sense of accomplishment and validation for their hard work. By acknowledging and celebrating their successes, students are encouraged to continue striving for excellence, fostering a cycle of self-motivation and engagement in their learning journey. In fact, they shared:

*“I give plus points or small gifts to those reciting.” (T6)*

*“To have an alive classroom, I have to give some rewards like simple tokens and plus points.” (T7)*

The scenario below illustrates the theme of "Keeping Discussions with Rewards" by demonstrating how rewards plus points and small prizes can incentivize positive behavior and active participation.

*The teacher writes three sentences on the white board:*

- 1. Recycling reduces environmental impact.*
- 2. Shakespeare's plays are the most influential works in English literature.*
- 3. The school should implement a no-homework policy on weekends.*

*Teacher: He asks, can anyone identify the type of claim in each sentence?*

*Students: One student raises his hand and says, Sir I think, the first one is a claim of fact.*

*Teacher: The teacher responds, Excellent, dear! You get a plus point for that correct answer.*

*Student: Later, another student, Ang alam ko Sir, the third sentence is a claim of policy.*

*The teacher smiles, that's correct, dear. Plus, point for you as well!*

The use of rewards in educational settings has been extensively studied and is generally supported as a means of enhancing student motivation and engagement. Deci and Ryan's Self-Determination Theory posits that rewards can foster intrinsic motivation when they are aligned with students' need for competence and recognition (Deci & Ryan, 2015). Additionally, a study by Reeve (2016) demonstrated that verbal praise and tangible rewards can significantly boost students' participation and enthusiasm in the classroom. By providing rewards, teachers can create a positive reinforcement loop that encourages students to engage more actively in their learning processes, as seen in the illustrative classroom scenario provided. This practice can also help in establishing a lively and interactive learning environment where students feel valued and recognized for their contributions (Reeve, 2016).

Moreover, tangible incentives and praise can serve as powerful motivators, especially for younger students who may require more immediate forms of recognition to stay motivated (Schunk, 2016). When students see that their efforts are being acknowledged, it fosters a sense of accomplishment and encourages continued effort. For instance, the teachers' practice of awarding plus points and small gifts for correct answers, as depicted in the scenario, can effectively maintain student interest and participation. This is supported by Cameron and Pierce (2016), who found that rewards, when used appropriately, do not undermine intrinsic motivation but rather complement it by providing students with clear, immediate feedback about their performance.

Despite the positive aspects, there is a body of literature that argues against the use of rewards in educational settings, suggesting that they may have unintended negative consequences. Kohn (2018) contends that extrinsic



rewards can undermine intrinsic motivation by shifting students' focus from the joy of learning to the pursuit of rewards. According to Kohn, when students are conditioned to expect rewards for their efforts, they may develop a dependency on these external incentives, which can diminish their natural curiosity and intrinsic interest in the subject matter. This perspective is supported by Ryan and Deci (2017), who found that over-reliance on extrinsic rewards, can lead to a decrease in self-motivation and a lower likelihood of sustained engagement once the rewards are removed. Furthermore, the use of rewards can create a competitive environment that may not be conducive to cooperative learning and intrinsic enjoyment of academic tasks (Deci, Koestner, & Ryan, 2017). In classrooms where rewards are prominently used, students might engage in learning activities primarily to receive tangible incentives, rather than to satisfy their own intellectual curiosity or to achieve mastery.

**Observing Classroom Rules.** Establishing clear rules and expectations is crucial in creating a structured and conducive learning environment for students. Rules provide students with a framework for behavior, guiding them in how to interact with peers, engage in lessons, and participate in activities. By setting boundaries and guidelines, teachers create a sense of order and consistency, promoting respect, responsibility, and accountability among students. As mentioned:

*“You know, every first day of class, like the very, very first day of class, I always make sure to establish rules and regulations. And that rules and regulations are something that me, as a teacher, have decided. And my students have decided as well. So, I make sure that when I establish a rule, it is the consensus of the student and me. So, for example, when it comes to submission of classroom activities, that deadlines are like this and like that.” (T1)*

*“For ensuring that my students are accomplishing my classroom activities is of course, having a definite deadline and using Google classroom to keep track of their activities. I have to set the rules.” (T3)*

Furthermore, the conversation supports the verbalizations of the participant. It also shows the collaborative process of establishing classroom rules and expectations. The teacher involves students in decision-making, ensuring that the rules are clear and mutually agreed upon. By discussing deadlines and incorporating student suggestions, such as reminders and the possibility of extensions, the teacher fosters a sense of responsibility and accountability.

*Teacher: Alright, class, as we discussed on the first day, let's review some of our agreed-upon rules. What do we do when we submit our classroom activities?*

*Student: Sir we have to submit them by the deadline you set, and we turn them in through Google Classroom.*

*Teacher: That's CORRECT. And why do we: have this rule in place?*

*Student: Sir para at least... It helps us stay organized and make sure everyone is on the same page with our work. Plus, it makes it easier for you to keep track of all our assignments.*

*Teacher: Exactly. It promotes responsibility and ensures that everyone has a fair chance to complete their work on time. Does anyone have any questions about this process?*

*Student: No, it makes sense. We'll stick to the deadlines and use Google Classroom for all submissions.*

*Teacher: Oh very good. Remember, these rules are here to help us all succeed and maintain a smooth and respectful learning environment.*

The collaborative process of establishing classroom rules and expectations, as illustrated in the conversation, aligns with rhetorical theory, particularly the concept of audience adaptation. According to Foss (2015), audience

adaptation involves tailoring messages to the specific characteristics, needs, and expectations of the audience to enhance communication effectiveness. In the classroom context, teachers must consider the perspectives and preferences of their students when formulating rules and expectations to ensure they are relevant and meaningful.

By involving students in the decision-making process and addressing their concerns, teachers demonstrate a commitment to audience adaptation, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility among students towards the established rules. This approach not only promotes a respectful and conducive learning environment but also enhances student engagement and compliance with classroom expectations (Foss, 2015). While the collaborative approach to establishing classroom rules may seem beneficial, it could potentially lead to challenges in maintaining discipline and authority within the classroom. According to Heath and Heath (2010), maintaining clear authority and boundaries is essential for effective communication and leadership within any group setting. Allowing students to participate in decision-making regarding rules and regulations may inadvertently diminish the perceived authority of the teacher, leading to challenges in maintaining discipline and order within the classroom. Moreover, excessive collaboration in rule-setting may result in leniency or ambiguity, which can compromise the enforcement of standards and expectations, ultimately hindering the learning process (Heath & Heath, 2010). Therefore, while student input can be valuable, it is imperative for teachers to maintain a balance between collaboration and authoritative guidance to uphold discipline and facilitate effective learning outcomes.

**Optimizing Pathos.** Optimizing pathos involves strategically appealing to emotions to persuade and connect with an audience on a deeper level. By evoking empathy, compassion, or other emotional responses, communicators can create a compelling narrative that resonates with their audience, influencing attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. Pathos can be harnessed to foster a sense of shared understanding and empathy, compelling individuals to take action. To justify these, below are the sample verbalizations.

*“For some learners who do not want to their activities, I really need to talk to them personally. I explain to them the importance of the activity, what will happen to them if they feel. I also tell them how their parents will feel if they fail, and of course their future.” (T4).*

*“Not all learners are responsible, I have to discuss with them the importance of the activity. I explain to them that they will fail if they will not do the activity. I really have to appeal to their emotions by bringing out the consequences for them and their family.” (T6)*

The conversation below demonstrates how the teacher appeals to the student's emotions by highlighting the consequences of not completing assignments, fostering a sense of accountability and motivation.

*Teacher: Good morning, Andrei. I noticed you haven't been completing your assignments lately. Okay ka lang? (Is everything okay?) Adda problemam? (Do you have a problem)*

*Student: Wala po Sir, may inasikaso lang po akong iba. (I've just been really busy with other stuff.)*

*Teacher: I understand, but these assignments are important for your learning and your future. If you don't complete them, you might struggle in this class and beyond. Plus, think about how proud your parents will be when they see your progress.*

*Student: I guess you're right. I'll try to make more time for them.*

*Teacher: That's great to hear, Andrei. Remember, I'm here to support you every step of the way. Let's work together to ensure your success.*

The use of pathos in educational settings has been widely studied and shown to be an effective tool for motivating students and fostering academic success. Research by Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2014) highlights the importance of creating a supportive classroom environment where students feel emotionally connected to their learning experiences. By appealing to students' emotions and highlighting the potential

consequences of their actions, teachers can encourage a sense of responsibility and accountability (Farrington et al., 2012). Moreover, studies by Yeager and Walton (2011) emphasize the role of social-psychological interventions, such as conveying the importance of academic tasks and the potential impact on students' future success, in promoting academic engagement and achievement. Therefore, the teacher's approach of discussing the importance of assignments with Andrei and appealing to his emotions aligns with established strategies for optimizing paths in education.

While leveraging pathos to motivate students can be effective in some cases, it may not always lead to sustainable behavior change or academic improvement. Research by Deci and Ryan (2018) on self-determination theory suggests that intrinsic motivation, rather than external rewards or emotional appeals, is crucial for long-term engagement and learning. Furthermore, caution against over-reliance on extrinsic motivators, such as emphasizing the approval of parents or teachers, as they may undermine students' intrinsic motivation and autonomy. Therefore, while the teacher's approach with the student may yield temporary compliance, it may not foster genuine interest or self-directed learning in the long run, thus questioning the effectiveness of optimizing pathos in education.

**Yielding Outputs through Reminders.** On the part of the teachers, it is very important to them to give reminders in which it is serve as invaluable tools for yielding outputs, as they help individuals stay organized, focused, and on track with their goals and responsibilities. By prompting regular reflection on tasks and deadlines, reminders minimize the likelihood of procrastination and ensure timely completion of tasks. Whether through digital alerts, written notes, or verbal cues, reminders provide gentle nudges that reinforce commitment and accountability, ultimately enhancing productivity and facilitating the achievement of desired outcomes. As verbalized:

*"When it comes to deadline, make it a habit like you follow up them and remind them all the time that you are really sensitive to deadlines, or to do due dates." (T4)*

*"I ensure that everything is posted in Google Classroom and that my Google Classroom is organized. I constantly remind them of the activities of tasks to be performed." (T2)*

*"I have to remind them of the things that they will be doing." (T5)*

In the scenario, the teacher demonstrates how reminders serve as invaluable tools for helping students stay organized, focused, and on track with their goals and responsibilities. By reminding the students of their deadlines and the resources available to them (e.g., guidelines in Google Classroom), she minimizes the likelihood of procrastination and ensures timely completion of tasks.

*Teacher: Good morning, class! Uhm, before I start my class, I just want to give some reminders because I have found out, that there are still a lot of students who was not able to submit their task in our Google Classroom. When you will submit it??*

*Students: Sir mabalin agextend? Sir, please give us more extension kasi ang dami po naming PT sa ibang subjects...Please Sir...*

*Teacher: Ah... It is included in the rubric of your PT that there will be deduction to those who can't comply with the said deadline. Deadline is deadline.*

Reminders are essential tools in the educational process, significantly contributing to students' organizational skills and productivity. According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which emphasizes the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in motivation, reminders can enhance students' perceived competence and autonomy by providing clear guidelines and regular prompts, thereby reducing cognitive load and anxiety associated with task management (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Regular reminders align with the principles of SDT by helping students to stay focused and on track, ensuring that they meet their academic responsibilities without

unnecessary stress. This structured support fosters a learning environment where students are more likely to engage with their tasks actively, thereby improving their overall performance and satisfaction with the learning process. Additionally, frequent reminders can act as a form of positive reinforcement, encouraging students to develop better time management skills and a greater sense of accountability, which are critical for their academic and personal growth (Ryan & Deci, 2020).

Despite their benefits, constant reminders may inadvertently undermine students' intrinsic motivation and autonomy, key elements emphasized in the Affective Filter Hypothesis. This theory suggests that students' emotional states can impact their ability to learn; too many reminders can create a high-pressure environment, increasing anxiety and potentially leading to resistance or dependency (Krashen, 1982). Over-reliance on external prompts can also diminish students' ability to self-regulate and develop their own organizational strategies, essential skills for lifelong learning and success. Furthermore, from a rhetorical perspective utilizing ethos, pathos, and logos, while reminders may appeal logically (logos) by providing clear structure and deadlines, they might fail to address the emotional (pathos) and ethical (ethos) aspects of learning. Excessive reminders can erode the teacher's credibility (ethos) if perceived as overly controlling or punitive, and may negatively impact students' emotional engagement (pathos) by fostering a sense of external pressure rather than internal motivation. Thus, while reminders can be useful, they must be balanced with strategies that support students' intrinsic motivation and emotional well-being.

### 3.2 Contextualized Rhetoric Model for English Language Teachers in the New Normal and Beyond

In this context, this contextualized rhetoric model for motivating learners in a HyFlex learning context was termed as **ALUKOY**. The word **ALUKOY** is an acronym which stands for **A**ctivating joy in learning, **L**everaging meaningful learning, **U**tilizing the art of questioning, **K**eeping discussions with rewards, **O**bserving classroom rules, **O**ptimizing pathos, and **Y**ielding outputs through reminders. Notably, 'alukoy' is an Ilokano word which means to persuade, encourage, or motivate.

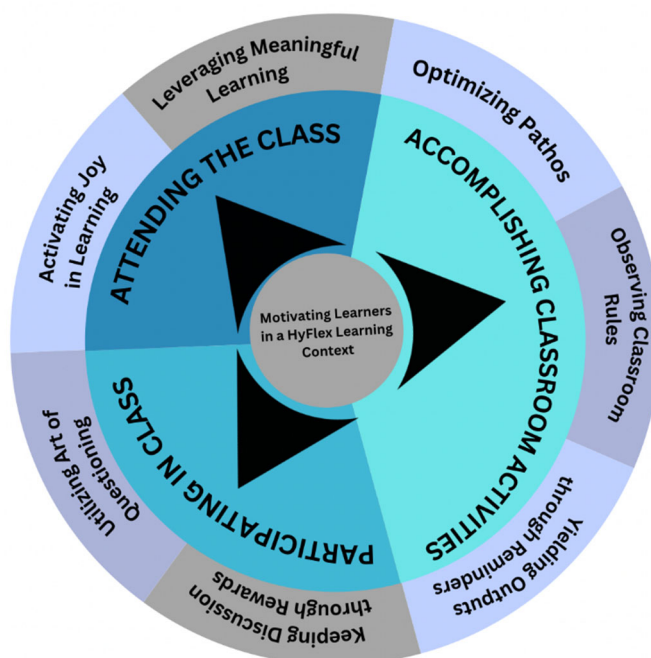


Figure 1. ALUKOY as Contextualized Rhetoric Model

Below is a comprehensive explanation of each component of the **ALUKOY** model:

**Activating Joy in Learning.** This component focuses on creating a positive and enjoyable learning atmosphere. Joy in learning can be activated through interactive activities, gamification, and incorporating students' interests into the curriculum. By making learning fun, students are more likely to be engaged and

motivated.

**Leveraging Meaningful Learning.** Meaningful learning occurs when students can connect new information to their existing knowledge and experiences. This involves using real-world examples, case studies, and practical applications of theoretical concepts. By making learning relevant, students are more likely to see the value in their education and stay motivated.

**Utilizing the Art of Questioning.** Effective questioning techniques can stimulate critical thinking and deeper understanding. Open-ended questions, Socratic questioning, and encouraging students to ask their own questions can foster a more interactive and thought-provoking learning environment.

**Keeping Discussions with Rewards.** Encouraging active participation in discussions through positive reinforcement and rewards can enhance student engagement. Rewards can be intrinsic, such as praise and recognition, or extrinsic, such as grades and tokens. This component highlights the importance of recognizing and valuing student contributions.

**Observing Classroom Rules.** Establishing and maintaining clear classroom rules ensures a respectful and orderly learning environment. This includes setting expectations for behavior, participation, and academic integrity. A well-managed classroom supports a focused and productive learning experience.

**Optimizing Pathos.** Pathos, or emotional appeal, can be used to connect with students on a personal level. By sharing stories, showing empathy, and addressing students' emotions, instructors can create a more supportive and motivating learning environment.

**Yielding Outputs through Reminders.** Regular reminders about deadlines, upcoming assignments, and learning objectives help keep students on track. This component emphasizes the importance of consistent communication and feedback to ensure students stay engaged and meet their learning goals.

#### 4. Conclusion

The identified mechanisms of teachers in motivating their English language learners to attend their class, participate in class, and accomplish classroom activities amplify the vital role of teachers' rhetoric. The findings call for teachers to navigate the value of communicating with learners in achieving something for the class and achieving the desired behaviors from the learners. Rhetorical communication guarantees success in both academic and professional settings and can develop learners' capacity for effective thought and communication. Furthermore, the findings resonate that it is crucial to motivate students; this cannot be emphasized. Since it is an engine that propels learning, motivation is necessary for pupils to reach their greatest potential. Motivated learners are more attentive, focused, and ready to learn. To support students' success, educators must establish a welcoming and stimulating learning environment. Teachers can motivate and enable learners to accomplish their academic objectives by being aware of their unique needs and interests and by offering them chances for development and achievement. Notably, successful learners are motivated learners.

Moreover, understanding how to motivate learners is crucial in achieving educational success. By tapping into what drives individuals to learn and succeed, educators can create engaging learning environments that inspire and empower students to reach their full potential. Motivated learners are more likely to stay focused, participate actively, and retain information effectively. Therefore, knowing how to motivate learners is not just beneficial, but essential for fostering a positive and productive learning experience. Finally, the findings accentuate that learners, being the core of the educational process, are part of the two way communication within the bounds of their classrooms. Establishing a habit of communicating their needs and learning to their teachers is vital in the success of English language instruction. As such, they must fortify the beauty of communication for a better teaching and learning experience.

##### 4.1 Recommendation

In the midst of the findings and conclusions of the study, teachers are encouraged to establish an open communication with their learners. The merit of rhetoric or modes of persuasion may be explored to enhance learner's retention at school. The developed model and other rhetoric model may be employed to effect change in behavior among learners and to inculcate the value of education to them. Finally, future studies may be conducted to describe the context of using rhetoric in motivating the learners to attend their class, participate in class, and accomplish classroom activities in public schools since the study took place in a private learning institution.

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