PANTAO
(International Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences)
Volume 5, Issue 3
ISSN 3028-0877 | DOI 10.69651/2022PIJHSS

From classroom to podium: Narratives of the winning strategies of English teachers in Junior High School Festival of Talents

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative narratological research aimed to explore the winning strategies and success stories of junior high school English teachers who served as coaches in the English-related events of the Festival of Talents in the Division of Mati City. In-depth interviews were conducted and their responses were carefully transcribed to unearth the coaching experiences, winning strategies, coaching adaptations, insights, and lessons learned of the three teacher-coaches who were: Seasoned Coach, Passionate Coach, and High-Achieving Coach. Results and responses of the participants on personal and professional narratives include: time, commitment, and dedication; influence of former teachers and coaches on pedagogical approach; full alignment of personal values with institutional demands of festival of talents; and pressure of expectations after competitive success. For the strategies, challenges, and decision-making processes, the following themes emerged: personalized scaffolded coaching as drivers of performance; student chemistry and interpersonal dynamics in performance; setback and failures as driving force to continue training the students; holistic preparation; failures as stepping stones to success; and modelling as strategy for coaching. Results on teachers' experiences that shape their evolving strategies from classroom instruction to podium victory were: pressure of expectations after competitive success; student commitment, adaptability, and focus as prerequisites for podium success; unlocking and transforming student potential through coaching; and flexibility and empathy. Future researchers may include students' narratives on how their skills and talents have transformed with the help of their winning coaches.

Keywords: Festival of talents, winning coaches, English teachers, narratology, Mati City, Philippines.

Date Submitted: July 03, 2026
Date Accepted: July 07, 2026
Date Published: July 13, 2026

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Recommended citation:
Vidal, M. J. & Neri, S. (2026). From classroom to podium: Narratives of the winning strategies of English teachers in Junior High School Festival of Talents. Pantao (International Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences) 5 (3), 1307-1342.

INTRODUCTION

The Festival of Talents is an educational event organized by the Department of Education (DepEd) once annually whose primary purpose is to encourage talents and skills among students (DepEd, 2024). The Festival of Talents serves as a significant platform for students to showcase their English-speaking abilities, functioning not only as a competition but also as an opportunity for teachers to develop their coaching and mentorship skills. This dual purpose makes it a valuable context for examining how instructional support shapes language performance. Despite its growing prominence in school-based programs, little attention has been given to understanding the specific coaching strategies that teachers employ to develop students' oral communication skills in preparation for such events. Moreover, teacher coaches in the Festival of Talents have complex responsibilities that extend beyond the teaching duties. Their greatest challenge is maintaining classroom instruction high and yet learn to use a lot of time and energy to prepare the students to compete.

Academic competition has become an integral feature of educational environments in Southeast Asia, as such competitions, including Science and Mathematics Competitions, Youth Global Innovations, GELOSEA (the Global English Language Olympiad of Southeast Asia) are being distributed in different member states of ASEAN (Zhang & Sihes, 2023). These competitions are significant arenas to find talent and develop skills, and they shine the light on the ability to obtain a quality education and potential development of students. However, issues of teacher coaches of academic events have been addressed in the scholarly quarters in the region. In Myanmar, foreign coaches training students to compete both nationally and internationally faced numerous issues such as language issue, unavailability of materials, the inability to schedule time and most importantly lack of institutional support despite its central role to train the students (Alfante et al., 2024). In addition, a study by Wang et al. (2021) in China of teachers as coaches noted that there were challenges facing teachers to develop new skills, technologies and techniques in order to coach students in various competitions of talent. Thailand also came up with similar outcomes because education research indicates that teachers experience difficulties in coaching student performers in multi-disciplines because of lack of diversified coaching practice knowledge (Damnjanovic et al., 2020). These regional trends in the overarching context, indicate that teacher-coaches in Southeast Asia encounter such plight due to ineffective orientations, lack of resources and support by the systems.

The Department of Education in the Philippine context has also come to understand the importance of teachers as coaches in a number of competitions such as the Festival of Talents making this positioning a critical approach towards the enhancement of SDG 4 by identifying talents, developing them and giving them equal access to learning opportunities. The Festival of Talents is a school-based activity designed to cultivate students' English language and speaking skills in a meaningful and engaging way. As a performance-driven event, it provides students with authentic opportunities to develop essential communication competencies, including fluency, confidence, audience rapport, and vocabulary development. Nevertheless, Philippine teacher-coaches have to bear the same pressure as those in ASEAN. A case study of an English teacher in Metro Manila has been discovered to have significant difficulties when it comes to teaching students how to enhance their presentation of research findings through better communication (Combo & Ramos, 2023). The National Capital Region survey of schools revealed a prevalence of professional stress in teachers that are required to ensure adherence to curriculum standards and at the same time, prepare their students to meet local and national competitions in the English language (Banderlipe, 2022). This has been more pronounced with the high school juniors with the Department of Education introducing talent showcases that have put extreme pressure on teachers who might not be that proficient in the development of core language skills. Teachers complain about the contradictory nature of their

roles, as they have to follow the given curriculum, and simultaneously spend much time and efforts on coaching talented students participating in competition activities like creative writing, speech contests, recitation of poems, dramatic reading (Ligudon & Ilodefonso, 2022). Despite the educational benefits of the Festival of Talents, English teachers often encounter significant challenges in coaching and mentoring students for such academic events. Preparing students for a performance-based competition demands considerable time, effort, and expertise beyond regular classroom responsibilities. Additionally, the lack of structured coaching frameworks and limited training in mentorship strategies can leave teachers uncertain about the most effective approaches to employ. These challenges highlight the need for a deeper understanding of the coaching strategies that can meaningfully support students' English-speaking development within the context of the Festival of Talents.

In the local setting of Mati City, Davao Oriental, the Festival of Talents has also turned out to be at once a great possibility and a great burden of the English teachers in junior high schools in the province. The peculiarities of the geographic and cultural features of the region also form certain contextual preconditions with the help of which English teachers should treat the development of talent and competition preparation. Research in this region has to address some other difficulties of educators engaging in resource constraints, diverse student preparation, and persevering a local tradition of expression against nationalized competition demands. The pressure to display student abilities through competitive channels of the provincial education system leads to new professional expectations of educators who now need to be proficient in matters related to some other fields than actual language instruction, such as performance coaching, mentoring in a creative dimension, and psychological support of student participants in the competitions. There are reports of teachers who feel ill-prepared about this new expanded role and yet are enthusiastic about their students' offerings and accomplishments (Quines & Albutra, 2023).

Despite the growing body of international and national research on teacher-coaches, a significant research gap persists regarding the specific winning strategies employed by English teachers in the Junior High School Festival of Talents (Zhang & Sihes; Alfante et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2021). While existing studies document challenges and general support systems, limited empirical evidence examines the concrete pedagogical approaches, training techniques, and success factors that distinguish award-winning coaches from their peers (Damnhanovic et al., 2020; Combo & Ramos, 2023). This study is urgent given the critical role of English proficiency in academic achievement and the growing prominence of the Festival of Talents as a platform for showcasing student excellence in language performance. Identifying and documenting the best practices of effective English teacher-coaches is both timely and necessary, as these insights can directly inform the teaching and learning of English, such as shaping how educators develop learners' communicative competence and prepare students for competitive academic engagements. With the Festival of Talents continuing to expand, there is a pressing need to capture and disseminate these coaching practices before valuable knowledge remains undocumented and inaccessible to those who need it most.

This study has a social implication to various stakeholders in the educational ecosystem. In the case of students, the knowledge of a proven coach can be used to improve the caliber of the mentorship provided, which, in turn, may lead to better performance results and a more positive approach toward speaking in front of the audience and mastering the English language. Teachers will have access to documented strategies that will decrease trial and error methods of coaching, and school leaders will be capable of using the findings to create specific support programs and strategies of distributing resources. The parents and community members would understand the intricacies in the coaching process, which may make them more supportive of

teacher-coaches. The publication of this research will be carried out in several forms: participation in regional and national education conferences, publication in peer-reviewed journals dedicated to the issues of Philippine education, distribution of research results to DepEd Division Offices to attend to their integration into the training programs, and distribution of the research findings to schools that take part in the Festival of Talents competitions. The researcher will also ensure that findings are availed to a vast audience through his or her institution and perhaps through online educational systems, where research findings are best utilized in practice.

Statement of the problem

The purpose of this narratological study is to explore the winning strategies and success stories of junior high school English teachers who served as coaches in the English related events of the Festival of Talents in the Division of Mati City. At this stage of research, the central phenomenon of interest, the winning strategies and success stories of English teacher coaches, is generally defined as the deliberate methods, intentional practices, and reflective decisions that English teachers employ in training, mentoring, and coaching students toward competitive success in the Festival of Talents, particularly in English communication related events such as oration, declamation, storytelling, impromptu speaking, and poetry interpretation. These strategies encompass not only the technical preparation of students for performance but also the purposeful development of their English language skills, including fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and expressive delivery, that progressively strengthen students' communicative competence both inside and outside the competition setting. Examining the narratives of these winning coaches, this study seeks to uncover the turning points, challenges overcome, and professional insights that have shaped their coaching journeys, with the ultimate goal of generating evidence-based knowledge that can inform English language teaching, talent development, and coaching practice in junior high school education.

1. What personal and professional narratives do English teachers construct about preparing students for the Festival of Talents?
2. How do these narratives reveal the strategies, challenges, and decision-making processes behind achieving competitive success?
3. How do teachers' experiences shape their evolving strategies from classroom instruction to podium victory?

METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the research methodology employed in the study, including the procedures followed in collecting and analyzing data, and encompasses the research design, research participants, the role of the researcher, data sources, data collection procedures, data analysis, the trustworthiness of the study, and the ethical considerations that guided the conduct of the research.

This study employed a qualitative narratological research design to explore and understand the experiences, meanings, and success stories of English teachers and their coaching practices in the Festival of Talents. Qualitative research, as defined by Creswell (2009), is an inquiry that emerges with questions and procedures in which data is usually gathered within the natural environments of the participants, analyzed inductively from details to general themes, and interpreted based on what significance individuals or groups attach to the phenomenon under study. This approach is particularly appropriate for studies that seek to capture the complexity, richness, and depth of human experience, as it allows the researcher to

engage closely with the participants' perspectives and give voice to their lived realities. Qualitative research design was particularly used in this study given the nature of the narratology being investigated. The winning strategies and success stories of English teacher-coaches in the Festival of Talents cannot be fully understood through numbers, statistics, or standardized measures alone, as they are deeply personal, context-dependent, and meaning-laden experiences that require an approach sensitive to the experiences of human expression and professional reflection. Qualitative research was therefore highly useful in analyzing the strategic procedures and experiential processes through which successful coaches prepare and participate in competitive talent festivals, allowing the researcher to tap into the tacit knowledge, situational aspects, and embedded practices that have enabled these teachers to achieve excellence. Furthermore, the qualitative approach regards the views and opinions of the participants as valid and legitimate sources of knowledge, making it especially fitting for a study that seeks to capture the shades of coaching excellence as experienced and narrated by the teachers themselves.

Narratology, as the scientific study of how stories are made, patterned, and understood to create meaning of human experience, served as the specific lens through which the data were examined. In the field of language studies, narratology offers a strong framework that studies how people make and construct meaning using language and narrative structure, focusing on how narratives are told, the linguistic decisions people make, and how speakers construct identities and meaning through discourse (Labov & Waletzky, 1967). The narratological approach was particularly applicable in investigating how English teacher-coaches narrate their experiences in developing winning strategies for the Junior High School Festival of Talents. Specifically, it allowed the researcher to examine the narrative patterns through which teachers construct their coaching experiences, including the storyline and character development of their success stories, as well as the cultural scripts, professional knowledge, and authoritative knowledge that teachers absorb and pass on to their students through narration (Caracciolo, 2024). This study adopted a narratological research design, which was justified by the nature of the participants and the focus of the inquiry. The selected participants, who were the English teacher-coaches who had demonstrated notable success in preparing students for the Festival of Talents, possessed significant professional experiences, success stories, and journeys that are inherently narrative in character. Their coaching trajectories, marked by challenges overcome and victories achieved, were best understood and analyzed through the lens of narratology. This narratological design was also fitting given the limited previous research in this area, as it was particularly influential in gaining knowledge of perceptions, attitudes, and processes as revealed through narrative accounts. Furthermore, this design was suitable given its capacity to derive meaning through the narrative lens of the participants, recognizing that the success stories of the participants, as narrated and interpreted, are just as legitimate as the analytical frameworks of the researcher (Cohen, 2019). Through this narratological lens, the study revealed how complex professional experiences in talent development are made meaningful, capturing what strategies teachers employed, how they story their success, the meanings they assign to their experiences, the turning points they identify, and the insights they construct through the process of narration itself.

The participants of this study were junior high school English teachers who served as coaches for English communication related events in the Festival of Talents (FOT) within the Division of Mati City during the school year 2025-2026. The research sample consisted of three participants who underwent in depth interviews. Wise (2020) highlighted that three is the minimum number of participants for narratological research. Since the analysis of narrative is highly qualitative and the emphasis is on discussing the specifics of experiences and strategies

of English teachers who had succeeded in the English Junior High School Festival of Talents, a limited number of participants chosen with careful selection was most suitable for this research. This sample size was sufficient to provide deep and detailed analysis of each teacher's story without sacrificing the depth needed to discover subtle meanings, turning points, and professional insights captured in their narratives. What makes these participants uniquely suited for a narratological study was the fact that their professional journeys as English teacher-coaches in the Festival of Talents were inherently rich in narrative significance. Unlike ordinary teaching experiences, their coaching trajectories were marked by distinct turning points, or moments where a student's performance shifted from ordinary to outstanding, where a strategy that once failed was reimagined and eventually led to victory, or where a personal breakthrough as a coach transformed their entire approach to talent development. Their success stories were not merely accounts of winning but were deeply layered narratives shaped by perseverance, professional growth, creative problem solving, and the meaningful relationships forged between teacher and student throughout the preparation process. Furthermore, as English teachers, their narratives were inherently linguistic in nature, in that they communicate, reflect, and make meaning through language, making their stories especially well-suited for analysis through the lens of narratology, which is fundamentally concerned with how meaning was constructed and conveyed through narrative and discourse. It was precisely this combination of narratively significant experiences, linguistic richness, and professional depth that made these English teacher-coaches not just winning coaches, but ideal participants for a narratological inquiry. Their diversity in teaching backgrounds, coaching styles, and interpretative frameworks further reflected the multidimensional nature of the coaching experience, allowing for a more informative insight into how teacher participants construct meaning from their coaching effectiveness (Riessman, 2008).

Purposive sampling was utilized for participant selection, as it allowed the researcher to identify English teachers whose experiences directly corresponded to the subject of this research, which were the winning strategies and effective talent development methods in English communication related FOT events. As argued by Garg (2016), the use of inclusion and exclusion criteria in research is important as it ensures that the sample is dependable and consistent with the scope of the study. The inclusion criteria for this study were as follows: the participant must be a junior high school English teacher in the Division of Mati City; must have served as a coach in English communication related FOT events, such as oration, declamation, storytelling, impromptu speaking, or poetry interpretation, during the school year 2025-2026; must have won at least two events or competitions as a coach in the Festival of Talents or other related English communication competitions; and must have at least one (1) year of teaching experience, irrespective of position. On the other hand, the exclusion criteria were as follows: teachers who have not served as coaches in Festival of Talents events were not included; teachers coming from other school divisions or districts outside the Division of Mati City were likewise excluded; junior high school English teachers with less than one (1) year of teaching experience did not qualify; English teachers who have won fewer than two (2) events or competitions as coaches were also excluded; and coaches who have handled FOT events not related to English communication, such as those involving mathematics, science, arts, or sports, were excluded as their experiences fall outside the scope of this research. Narratological studies involve a conscious choice of participants whose narrative accounts have enough continuity and diversity to provide insights into the phenomenon being studied (Herman, 2002). In this study, the selected English teacher-coaches were chosen with reference to the categories of their successes in the Festival of Talents and their readiness to describe these experiences in detail. The purposive selection of participants who have succeeded in English communication related FOT events would guarantee that the narratives gathered were rich in experience and

tactical acumen, ensuring that the sample size was adequate to respond to the research questions of this study.

The role of the researcher in narratological studies took the form of active participation in the narrative accounts of the participants and required the performance of multiple tasks, such as the assurance of ethical conduct of the research, data gathering, conducting narrative in depth interviews, appropriate recording of the narratives, transcribing recorded audios, translation into the standard form of the English language, and primary data analysis (Collins & Stockton, 2022). Qualitative narratological studies were not a simple endeavor in terms of data collection since the subjects involved were expected to provide personal accounts and reveal inner aspects of life experiences. In this research, the researcher made sure that ethical considerations were observed throughout the research process. Some narrative experiences could be comfortable to relate or easy to state, while others could be emotionally sensitive or institutionally sensitive, making participants feel uncomfortable telling another person. All these functions were guided by ethical standards at every stage so that the integrity and confidentiality of the participants' narratives would be safeguarded. In addition, to accomplish all of these roles diligently, the researcher consulted a research adviser who was an expert in narrative inquiry and ethical research procedures (Chesebro & Borisoff, 2007).

Another important role that the researcher assumed was that of interviewer. This was not an easy task. The researcher established rapport with the participants as a storyteller and joint meaning maker. To accomplish this, the researcher conducted preliminary discussions with interviewees through face-to-face communication to give them the dialogical space and proceed to formal narrative elicitation. Prior to the narrative interviews, the researcher sought the consent of the participants regarding whether the interview could be audio taped, so that the participants would be aware of how their stories would be recorded and stored (Fink, 2000). The researcher was also a translator of vernacular terms into standard English format. The participants used words that were in their vernacular or within their local cultural context, and thus the researcher had to translate them without altering their narrative meaning, ensuring that the responses were converted to standard English format without losing any of the narrative or contextual meaning. Furthermore, in this research it was vital to focus not only on what was told by participants but on how they told it, including the rhythm of their narration, hesitations, emphases, and embodiment, and their narratives were transcribed and recorded in detail. This careful transcription task ensured that all information spoken, even pauses, sighs, inflections in the voice, and commentaries about gestures or facial expressions, were recorded as part of the narrative record. Nonverbal and paralinguistic aspects were an inseparable part of narrative meaning making and could not be omitted from the analysis (Lasco et al., 2021).

After taking the abovementioned steps, the researcher assumed multiple roles in the narratological inquiry process. First, as the main narrative analyst, the researcher analyzed the narratives gathered through narrative thematic analysis, examining narrative structures, tracing theme patterns through the stories of the participants, identifying narrative tensions and contradictions, and categorizing units of narrative into core ideas and themes. These were set and deliberated in the context of the research questions, with much attention given to the construction, negotiation, and transformation of narrative meanings between the accounts of the participants. This analytic role was not limited to the categorization of content but extended to the interpretation of the creation of professional identity in narrative form, the experience of institutional situations, and how the participants made sense of their roles as coaches (Slembrouck, 2015). In order to guarantee data integrity and safety during this process, all audio tapes, transcripts, and coded stories were safely stored in password protected devices and organized through a systematic coding system that allowed clear connections to be maintained

between the participants and their narrative information. These materials were made available to the researcher alone, and any personally identifiable information was anonymized in transcripts and code files. To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the analysis, the researcher also involved participants in member checking, whereby the researcher provided them with preliminary findings and thematic interpretations and sought their validation and opinions on the analysis. Experts in the field of narratology were also consulted in reviewing the analytical framework and coding processes to strengthen the rigor of the narrative analysis process. Finally, as narrator and presenter of the story, the researcher organized and presented the narratives of the teachers in a way that would not alter the authenticity and complexity of their success stories and would render their experiences and perceptions accessible to other teachers. This presentation role entailed creating an engaging narrative that brought the voices of the participants into focus and embedded the individual narratives within a meaningful but complex narrative space that reveals the winning techniques and professional insight woven through their coaching experiences.

To answer the research questions concerning the narration by English teachers of their winning strategies at the Festival of Talents, the study involved a goal driven synthesis of primary and secondary data from a narrative perspective. These sources of data were chosen and combined in accordance with the study's policy of producing rich, multidimensional narrative descriptions while remaining scholarly and valid. Narratological inquiry relies on in depth interviews as the main data collection technique. Riessman (2008) notes that narrative interviews are especially appropriate methods for narratological research because they prompt participants to build and tell their stories using their own words, which exposes the narrative forms and meaning making processes that lie at the core of the experience of being. The researcher in this study engaged in face to face semi structured interviews with English teachers who had positively demonstrated success as coaches in the Festival of Talents. The interviews were audio taped with informed consent, transcribed word for word, and narratologically analyzed in order to reveal the narrative patterns, themes, and linguistic and discursive strategies used by teachers to make sense of their coaching experiences. Interview questions were open ended, and follow up questions were aimed at prompting participants to elaborate further on their narratives, decision making, and professional knowledge. Member checking procedures were carried out to facilitate trustworthiness, as participants were given the chance to check and confirm the researcher's interpretation of their narratives. The identities of the participants were safeguarded during the analysis and presentation of data through the use of pseudonyms, and debriefing was provided after each session to address ambiguities and record reflections regarding the interview and audio tapes.

The primary narrative data were supported and placed within the context of secondary sources, such as peer reviewed journals, books, and institutional documents. Creswell (2009) argued that secondary sources offer theoretical framework and contextualized understanding that reinforce the meaning of primary data. The secondary sources utilized in this study consisted of research on coaching methods, talent management in schools in the Philippines, and narratological research methodology. These sources guided the analysis framework and allowed the personal stories of teachers to be placed within a larger institutional, cultural, and professional context. Analysis of school records on festival participation and student achievement was also incorporated into the document analysis where necessary to support or enrich the understanding derived from the narratives gathered. In brief, the combination of in-depth interviews as the main source of data with secondary sources of scholarly and documentary information constituted the essence of the study, upholding the lived experiences of teachers while basing the analysis on established educational and linguistic research. This dual source methodology guaranteed the credibility of individual narrative reports as well as

their academic credibility, allowing the study to address the research questions with depth, rigor, and reliability.

In all research studies, researchers achieve accurate results by following systematic research procedures (Creswell, 2009). As the researcher of this study, careful attention was given to how data were obtained and collected, and the following procedures were followed to attain sound results. First, clearance was sought from the SCMTI ethics committee, followed by endorsement from the dean of the graduate school, after which a letter was submitted to the school's division superintendent, and permission was also sought from school principals following approval of the request letter. Second, a copy of the informed consent form (ICF) was given to selected junior high school English teachers for them to read and understand the purpose of their participation; the ICF was explained to them, and all their questions were answered to their satisfaction. Consent was sought from participants, who were requested to sign a letter of consent to document their voluntary participation in the study and their freedom from any coercion, and they were informed about the benefits, risks, and goals of the study, with informed consent obtained from both the junior high school English teachers and the school principals. Third, the research objectives and methodology were explained, and each participant was individually oriented regarding the core purpose of the study, including how the study would benefit them, particularly in exploring their winning strategies as coaches in the Festival of Talents and other academic competitions. Fourth, the resources needed for the research were prepared, including interview guides and an audio recorder. Interview guides in the form of open-ended questions aligned with the research questions were developed, along with follow up prompts, and a smartphone was used to record the interviews so that the recordings could be reviewed during transcription, with the rights of the participants to the information strictly adhered to throughout. Fifth, in depth interviews were conducted and the audio sourced responses of participants were transcribed to obtain comprehensive data concerning the winning techniques, success cases, and stories of junior high school English teachers who emerged as winners in the Festival of Talents. Consent was again sought from participants regarding the recording of the entire interview session, and the winning English coaches were asked to explain how they navigated their stories and winning concepts in the Festival of Talents. Questions were posed in open ended form, and further discussion was allowed to proceed according to the direction taken by the participants rather than being directed solely by the researcher. Participants were also given the opportunity to review, approve, and correct the transcription made by the researcher, allowing them to validate their statements and responses.

In contrast to generic thematic analysis, which finds common ground between the subjects discussed across multiple interviews, narratological analysis examines the way stories are told, the linguistic structures and methods of narrating, and the meaning making processes within both individual and group narratives. The analysis in this study used the narrative structure framework introduced by Labov (Labov & Waletzky, 1967), which offers a systematic method for studying the formal characteristics of tales and the ways in which narrators create coherence and meaning through storytelling. Labov's theory established a set of six structural elements of a complete narrative, and each element performs a unique purpose in the way educators construct and recount their winning strategies. The abstract is the first element, presenting an overview of what the narrative will be about, such as the key winning strategy or event in the teaching profession that has transformed the coach; the researcher examined how teachers narrate their stories and what they identify as important, since this reflects what the teacher develops as significant in his or her experience. The orientation supplies contextual information that helps establish the time, place, characters, and

circumstances of the story told; the researcher examined the contextual information teachers provided, or did not provide, in narrating their coaching experiences in the Festival of Talents, because the decisions teachers made in this regard were used to understand how they position their professional identity in institutional and social life. The complicating action includes the sequence of events that produced tension or challenge in the story, and it was normally introduced by phrases such as and then or what happened was; in the stories of teacher participants, this element exposed the unique challenges teachers faced in developing strategies and coaching students, and the researcher determined the order in which teachers took such actions and identified the turning points that resulted in their eventual success. The evaluation consists of embedded commentary in which the narrator breaks the action to convey meaning, feeling, or judgment, manifested through linguistic devices such as intensifiers, comparative constructions, or direct assertions of meaning; the researcher examined the evaluative behavior of teachers regarding the events and strategies they used and what they identified as most important to their winning experience and professional identity. The resolution or result was defined as the outcome of the complicating action, marking the point at which the narrative arrives at its present position; the researcher analyzed how teachers resolved their stories, particularly whether success was framed in terms of ultimate achievement, professional learning, or a change in coaching practice. The coda, the final structural element, was carefully examined by the researcher because it provided responses to the third research question concerning the insights teachers had to offer, as these statements revealed how personal experience was converted into generalized knowledge about the professional setting. Through conducting this structural analysis, the researcher examined not only what winning strategies were narrated by teacher participants but also how these narratives were formed linguistically and rhetorically. Specific focus was placed on narrative tensions, referring to contradictions between what teachers say and how they say it, narrative positioning, referring to how teachers position themselves as heroes, victims, or students, and discourse strategies such as metaphors, repetition, and reported speech that constituted the creation of meaning. The method thus went beyond describing thematic categories to examining the narrative structure through which teachers accord their professional experiences meaning and communicability to others.

The trustworthiness of a research study is essential to evaluating its worth and importance and is one of the main ways to determine the value and credibility of a study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain trustworthiness in qualitative research on the basis of four main criteria, namely credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability, which serve as the qualitative counterparts of the validity and reliability criteria used in quantitative research. The systematic application of these criteria was necessary to maintain the rigor and integrity of the qualitative research (Shenton, 2004). Trustworthiness refers to confidence in the credibility of findings and analysis, as well as in the process of narrative analysis, ensuring the quality and authenticity of the research (Polit & Beck, 2014). For the purposes of this study, trustworthiness encompassed the dependability, or reliability, of narrative analyses; the credibility, or plausibility, of themes grounded in teachers' lived experiences and validated through member checks with participants; the confirmability, or validity, of processes used to identify themes through audit trails and documentation; and the transferability of findings to other contexts in which teachers develop coaching strategies within talent development programs.

Credibility required the researcher to demonstrate a clear connection between the research findings and reality, reflecting truth and honesty in those findings. It ensured that the study measured or tested what was intended and addressed the congruency of findings with actual and lived realities (Haq et al., 2023). Lincoln and Guba (1985), as cited by Shenton (2004), argue that ensuring credibility is one of the most important factors in establishing trustworthiness, and they proposed techniques such as iterative questioning and member

checking for this purpose. Polit and Beck (2014) further note that researchers should adopt concrete measures to attain these constructs, such as member checking, reflexivity, strategies to ensure the honesty of participants, and iterative questioning. Member checking was the most crucial technique for establishing credibility, increasing the accuracy of data collection and the appropriateness of interpretations, as participants received a copy of their transcripts after the interview for feedback. Checks that are consonant with data accuracy can be strengthened by incorporating reliable data sources and effective data collection procedures (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Member checking was implemented as a technique through which interpretations, data, and conclusions were shared with study participants, allowing them to clarify their intentions, correct errors, and provide additional information where necessary, in accordance with the recommendation of Lincoln and Guba (1985) as one of the most significant steps for enhancing the plausibility of a study. In this research, participants were requested to read the narrative transcripts of the dialogues in which they had participated. Each participant was provided with a version of their narrative transcript and asked to agree with it, correct it, or react to its accuracy, and to indicate, for each instance, whether the transcript was true or false, making revisions or edits as needed. All participants were given the opportunity to accept or decline the researcher's summary interpretation and were asked to compare the description attentively to identify any needed clarification, correction, addition, or deletion, after which they were given a form to sign verifying the absence of error.

Reflexivity can be described as a critical consideration of one's own beliefs, values, assumptions, and experiences in order to better comprehend how these could affect the research process, the interpretation of data, and the findings in general (Olmos-Vega et al., 2023). The researcher was aware of her insider identity and potential biases as an assistant coach operating within the environment of the Festival of Talents. In addressing reflexivity, the researcher employed several strategies, including maintaining a reflexive journal to record personal reactions and presuppositions beyond the scope of the participants, bracketing her own coaching experiences when reflecting on the narratives, using member checking to verify interpretations against the accounts of the interviewed teachers, and engaging in peer debriefing with a research consultant outside the participant group to identify potential blind spots. These procedures helped anchor the interpretations in the experiences of the participants rather than in the prior experience or beliefs of the researcher regarding coaching.

Strategies used to ensure the honesty of participants included establishing rapport and maintaining a non-judgmental environment during the interviews so that participants felt comfortable and willing to share their genuine experiences and coaching narratives. The researcher also assured participants of the confidentiality of their responses and the voluntary nature of their participation, thereby encouraging openness and truthfulness throughout the data collection process. Korstjens and Moser (2018) indicated that research integrity is a dynamic pursuit of the ethical norms and professional principles critical to research practice, instilling values such as trust, respect, honesty, responsibility, and fairness that are most suitable for communal research work. Honesty in this study was upheld in several ways: the researcher openly explained the research objectives and confidentiality procedures during the pre-interview orientation session, assuring participants that their answers were confidential and encouraging them to provide honest and genuine responses; the accuracy of participants' responses was checked through follow up questions; and honesty was further maintained by acknowledging the work of others, conveying valid interpretations that faithfully represent participants' narratives, and making claims based solely on the research findings.

Iterative questioning was also applied in this study, as proposed by Shenton (2004), who noted that eliciting detailed data through iterative questioning, in which the researcher

revisits issues raised by participants and scrutinizes related responses through further questioning, is important for establishing credibility. Long durations of interaction with the participants were also ensured to strengthen credibility, as the researcher engaged with participants on multiple occasions rather than a single time, generating more responses and seeking clarification where responses were vague, and enabling participants to elaborate on their intentions, correct mistakes, and provide additional information where necessary, which in turn verified the accuracy of the summarized experiences (Streubert & Carpenter, 2011). In this study, iterative questioning was employed by asking participants some questions repeatedly to check the consistency of their answers. Rapport was likewise established so that participants felt comfortable and confident in responding to the questions asked; although the prepared interview guide already provided probe questions, these were revised or simplified when participants had difficulty understanding or expressing themselves, and where participants were reluctant to answer, such questions were revisited later once participants felt more confident and open. Attention was also given to whether participants believed that what they had said could be connected to what they had previously stated, since a tape recorder was used to capture and store their responses, and participants were kept informed about the data, interpretations, and conclusions drawn from their accounts.

Dependability played a crucial role in trustworthiness, as it establishes the consistency and repeatability of research findings (Patton, 2002). Polit and Beck (2014) described dependability as the consistency and reliability of study findings and the extent to which research procedures are well documented, allowing an outside party to audit, follow, and critique the research process. As emphasized by Lincoln and Guba (1985), credibility and dependability are closely related, since credibility is one of the elements used to guarantee dependability. To bring reliability into this narratological research on the winning strategies of teachers in the Festival of Talents, the researcher employed measures such as developing detailed documentation of the narrative analytical process, consulting the adviser on a regular basis, and keeping reflexive memos as the research progressed. The establishment of comprehensive documentation of the narrative analytical procedure made the transformation of raw narrative data into conclusions about winning strategies clear and traceable, including the recording of narrative structures, plot patterns, thematic matters, and strategic frameworks in the stories of teachers, demonstrating that conclusions followed logically from narrative evidence rather than arbitrary interpretation. This analysis documentation enabled external reviewers to evaluate whether the results concerning the success strategies of teachers were grounded in the actual stories of these teachers and whether the narratological analysis was applied consistently across all participant stories.

Likewise, all study resources, including raw data, analytic memos, and interpretive records, were systematized to ensure that the research process remained organized, traceable, and consistent throughout the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The analytical records kept in this research indicated the progression from raw narrative segments to the recognition of narrative elements such as turning points, challenges, and resolutions, as well as strategic themes and general patterns of success in festival competitions. The process of coding narrative structures, recognizing common plot lines across the stories of teachers, and identifying how certain strategies were narrated across various competitive situations was also recorded. To show how the researcher's understanding of winning strategies developed throughout the reading of additional teacher stories, several versions of the narrative analysis were saved, along with any contradictory narrative accounts or alternative interpretations of success strategies and the reasoning behind the final narratological interpretations. This systematized record allowed an external reviewer to trace how the stories of particular teachers were extracted and developed into the more general findings regarding winning approaches in the Festival of Talents. Moreover, the systematic and consistent application of narratological

procedures was further guaranteed through regular consultation with an adviser (Zamora, 2022), whereby a qualified mentor periodically reviewed how the researcher was dissecting teachers' stories, identified inconsistencies in interpreting the success stories, and evaluated the analytical performance in ways that advanced the rigor of the narratological analysis. This professional guidance helped maintain uniformity in recognizing narrative patterns and discerning strategic aspects across the narrations of different teachers regarding successful festival participation. In this research, frequent meetings were arranged with the adviser to discuss the elicitation and analysis of teachers' accounts of winning strategies, review initial narrative interpretations, and address any analytical issues encountered in identifying themes or patterns in the success stories. These consultations were recorded, along with feedback on the narratological course of action and subsequent adjustments to the interpretation of teachers' accounts regarding the Festival of Talents. This continuous professional oversight increased the uniformity of the narrative analysis, ensuring that the principles of narratology were applied coherently across all teacher stories and strengthening the overall reliability of the results regarding winning strategies.

Confirmability refers to the degree of neutrality to which research results are shaped by the participants rather than reflecting the motivations, interests, or bias of the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Shenton (2004) described confirmability as analogous to the concept of objectivity in qualitative inquiry, emphasizing that it must be considered to ensure that the findings of the study are the product of the thoughts and stories of the participants rather than the bias and preferences of the researcher. To make the research on winning strategies of teachers in the Festival of Talents confirmable, the researcher utilized in depth interviews and maintained an audit trail, which helped reduce the level of investigator bias through the acknowledgment of personal beliefs and assumptions and through detailed description of how the research was conducted. Clear acknowledgment of researcher beliefs and assumptions entailed recognizing pre-existing experiences and opinions that could affect the ability to gather and interpret the stories of teachers. According to Shenton (2004), one of the important criteria of confirmability is the extent to which the researcher acknowledges his or her predispositions; such reflexive practice does not remove bias but offers transparency regarding how the researcher's position may be reflected in the research outcomes, allowing readers to determine the extent to which conclusions are based on the stories of the participants rather than the assumptions of the researcher. In this work, the researcher explained her personal background, experiences with academic competitions, assumptions regarding successful teaching strategies in a festival setting, and preconceptions regarding what could be considered a successful experience within the Festival of Talents. The researcher recorded her philosophical position on the interpretation of stories and how her educational background and experiences of attending festival competitions affected her ability to listen to and analyze the success stories of teachers. Bringing these predispositions to the forefront helped readers differentiate between findings that emerged genuinely from the narratives and interpretations of the participants and those that might be influenced by the researcher's own outlook, thereby increasing the confirmability of the study's findings on winning strategies.

In depth methodological description entailed detailed accounts of research processes, analysis procedures, and decision making throughout the research. Such transparency enabled readers and outside critics to examine the integrity of the research findings by reviewing how the data were gathered, how the stories were examined, and how conclusions regarding winning strategies were reached. Detailed methodological reporting allows others to determine whether results were logically derived from the data and the methodological procedures applied. In this research, detailed accounts were given of the methods used to select participating teachers, the

design of interview guidelines intended to elicit rich accounts of festival success, the organization of interviews and recording of transcripts, and the use of the narratological approach in identifying winning tactics. The exact method of analysis followed to identify narrative structures, strategic themes, and patterns of success was outlined, along with an explanation of how narrative attributes were coded, how recurring patterns and motifs across teachers' stories were identified, and how findings on success patterns were generalized. This overall methodological clarity enabled readers to follow the research process and determine whether the findings regarding the winning strategies of teachers in the Festival of Talents were validly based on the accounts of the participants and reasonable analytical practices.

An audit trail refers to a systematic record of all research procedures undertaken from the inception of the project to the reporting of findings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) described the audit trail as significant to confirmability because it allows an outside observer to trace the procedures of the research. The audit trail provides documented records that allow external researchers to investigate, scrutinize, and question how data were gathered, analyzed, and interpreted, ensuring that conclusions can be linked to legitimate sources of data. In this research, detailed records were kept of the entire research process, including the recruitment of participants, interview schedules, verbatim audio records, the full text of teachers' stories, coding schemes, analytical notes, theme building, and analysis decisions regarding the winning strategies. These materials were organized in a logical manner that allowed the research panel and adviser to review how the interpretations and conclusions regarding the success of teachers in the Festival of Talents could be traced to valid evidence in the actual stories of the participants. This audit trail demonstrated that the findings on winning strategies resulted from the narratives of the teachers rather than the preferences or assumptions of the researcher, and it allowed outside reviewers to trace the direction of analysis from raw narrative material to final conclusions. The interpretations were based on the data itself and on the narrative patterns and strategic aspects that teachers themselves described in their success stories, ensuring that the results presented the experiences of the participants rather than the bias of the researcher.

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of a qualitative study can be extrapolated to other settings, respondents, or contexts, and is considered the interpretative counterpart of generalizability (Bitsch, 2005). In qualitative research, transferability provides readers with evidence that the findings of a study could be applicable to other contexts, situations, times, and populations. To establish transferability in this study, the researcher employed thick description, providing rich, detailed, and comprehensive accounts of the research context, participant characteristics, data collection procedures, and findings. Thick description of the narratives under scrutiny served as another important construct in establishing credibility. Holloway (1997) described thick description as a detailed account of experiences in which the researcher makes patterns explicit and contextualizes their cultural and social relationships, while Shenton (2004) argued that thick description characterizes the process of attending to contextual detail in observing and interpreting social meaning within qualitative research. In this study, thick description was used to provide a detailed account of the success stories and narratives of junior high school English teachers as winning coaches, in which the researcher made explicit the pattern of social relationships within their narrative and success stories. The extent to which the findings of the present study agreed with previous studies of similar focus was also considered relevant to transferability (Shenton, 2004), and findings of related studies were utilized where necessary in framing the study's findings. It is important to clarify that the researcher did not claim that the findings of this study were directly applicable to all contexts; rather, the researcher's responsibility was to present sufficient evidence and contextual information to allow others to judge the relevance of the findings to their own situations. As Bassey (1981) suggested, readers who find that their own circumstances closely resemble those described in the study may draw connections between

the findings and their own professional contexts, a view further supported by Lincoln and Guba (1985), as cited by Shenton (2004), who asserted that it is the researcher's duty to provide rich and detailed descriptions of the research setting and fieldwork conditions so that readers are equipped to make informed judgments about whether and to what extent the findings may be transferred to their own contexts.

In this study, detailed and thick descriptions of the methodology and of the narratives being studied were provided, and data were assured to be on file to strengthen the credibility and transferability of the study. Transferability was also addressed by ensuring that backup data and copies of the study and its resources were secured, with the researcher providing a database that made transferability judgments possible for potential readers. To address transferability more directly, the procedures within the study were reported in detail, thereby enabling future researchers to repeat the work, though not necessarily to obtain identical results. In addition, the researcher employed overlapping methods, such as multiple data gathering procedures including in depth interviews, from initial stages onward to test findings across various contexts and strengthen the assurance of evidence. Readers were thus provided with evidence that the findings of the research study could be applicable to other contexts; however, as a researcher, it could not be proven that the findings would be directly applicable elsewhere, and instead the responsibility for judging applicability and transferability rested with potential readers. Lincoln and Guba (1985) accordingly suggested providing background data to establish the context of the study, along with detailed description of the narratives in question, to allow comparisons to be made. Detailed description of the method and narratives serves as an important provision for promoting credibility, as it helps convey the actual situations under study and, to an extent, the circumstances surrounding them; in the absence of this insight, it would be difficult for readers to determine the extent and degree to which the findings ring true (Shenton, 2004).

Ethical considerations were fundamental to this narratological inquiry, as the study involved human participants who were asked to share their personal and professional experiences through in-depth interviews. The research protocol underwent ethical review by the Research Ethics Committee (REC) to ensure that all aspects of the study met the standards of ethical research practice. The conduct of this study adhered to the ten principles outlined in the 2022 National Ethical Guidelines for Research Involving Human Participants (NEGRIHP) by the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB), which served as the primary ethical framework governing research involving human participants in the Philippines. These ten principles were social value, informed consent, vulnerability of the research participants, risks, benefits, and safety, data privacy and confidentiality, justice, transparency, qualification of the researcher, adequacy of facilities, and community involvement, each of which was carefully observed and operationalized throughout the entire research process, from the planning and data collection stages to the analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of findings.

Social value refers to the possible value and contribution of the research to society through answering meaningful questions that justify the participation of human subjects (Lairumbi et al., 2008). In this study, the success stories and winning techniques of English teachers as coaches in the Festival of Talents were recorded, providing evidence-based information on talent development in education. The findings were disseminated through school seminars, division research conferences, and educational journals so that educators and administrators could adopt effective coaching approaches in their respective schools. This study held significant social value, as it had the potential to improve English language instruction, strengthen teacher coaching competencies, inform the design of professional development programs, and guide institutional policy decisions related to the Festival of Talents. Furthermore, the documented practices served as practical references for aspiring

coaches, contributed to the growing body of knowledge in English language teaching, and provided future researchers with a foundation for further studies on coaching excellence and talent development in competitive academic settings.

Informed consent is a procedure through which potential participants in a research study are given detailed information regarding the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and the risks and benefits, before deciding whether to take part (Manti & Licari, 2018). Informed consent guaranteed the autonomy and right of participants to make free and voluntary choices regarding their participation in the research. Prior to the conduct of the study, the researcher secured the necessary approvals in the following order, the Schools Monitoring Committee (SMC), the Schools Division Superintendent (SDS), the Public Schools District Supervisor (PSDS), and the respective school heads of the identified participants, before approaching individual participants for their written informed consent. The Informed Consent Form (ICF) was personally distributed by the researcher to each participant, written in clear and understandable language to ensure full comprehension of the nature, purpose, and scope of the study. Before retrieving the accomplished ICF, the researcher conducted a pre-interview orientation session with each participant to explain the objectives of the study, the procedures involved, the expected duration of participation, and the potential benefits and risks of joining the research, during which participants were given ample time to ask questions and seek clarification. Once all concerns had been addressed and willingness to participate had been confirmed, the accomplished ICF was retrieved and kept in a secure location, with each participant assured of their right to confidentiality, voluntary participation, and free withdrawal from the study at any point without any negative consequence.

Vulnerability refers to the increased susceptibility of some people or groups to exploitation or harm as a result of weak autonomy, decreased capacity to make choices, or social disadvantage (Thompson et al., 2021). This study acknowledged that English teachers might feel vulnerable and experience concern regarding job security, performance appraisal, and emotional distress when reflecting on and sharing their coaching experiences. To address these vulnerabilities, the researcher maintained a high level of confidentiality through the use of pseudonyms and secured data storage. Interviews were conducted in neutral environments, away from the presence or surveillance of any administrative personnel, to ensure that participants felt safe and at ease in sharing their experiences. Participants were likewise allowed to skip sensitive questions, request a break, or withdraw from the study at any point without any penalty or negative consequence. Furthermore, in the event that a participant found certain questions emotionally distressing or triggering, the researcher provided emotional support resources, including referral information to school-based guidance counselors, mental health professionals, or employee assistance services available within their respective institutions, to ensure that the well-being of the participants was prioritized and protected throughout the entire data collection process.

According to the principle of risks, benefits, and safety, researchers should use all possible methods to reduce potential harms and maximize possible benefits so that the ratio between risks and benefits remains favorable (Hasan et al., 2021). The risk to participants in this narratological research was minimal, as the study was aimed at presenting the professional coaching story without probing sensitive health, psychological, or socioeconomic issues. The study was useful to teachers, school administrators, DepEd officials, and aspiring educators, as it provided evidence-based information on effective talent development strategies and coaching. The researcher undertook protective measures to keep participants safe, such as conducting interviews in a confidential location, specifically a private room or enclosed office within the school premises, such as an empty classroom, a faculty room after school hours, or a designated private office, where no other individuals were present or able to overhear the conversation, ensuring that participants could speak freely and without fear of being heard by

colleagues or administrative personnel. Additionally, the researcher posed questions that did not make participants feel emotionally upset, protected the personal reputation of participants through the use of anonymity and pseudonyms, and offered emotional support services in the event that participants felt distressed during the interview process.

Data privacy and confidentiality involved safeguarding the personal data of participants and ensuring that identifying information would not be shared without the consent of subjects (Indriasari & Karman, 2023). In this research, the personal data of the participants remained strictly confidential and were handled with the utmost secrecy and anonymity in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, as well as the provisions stipulated in the Informed Consent Form (ICF) and the Data Privacy Notice (DPN) signed by each participant prior to data collection. To protect the identity of the participants, code names or pseudonyms were assigned throughout the study, ensuring that no real names or identifying information appeared in any part of the research manuscript, transcripts, or published outputs. All data gathered through interviews, including audio recordings, written transcripts, and field notes, were stored in password protected digital files accessible only to the researcher, with physical copies kept in a locked storage facility. The collected data were used exclusively for the purposes of this research and were not shared with any third party without the explicit consent of the participants, and upon completion of the study, all raw data would be permanently deleted or destroyed in a manner that ensured complete confidentiality. The researcher remained vigilant in upholding integrity, respect for participants, and the protection of their personal information, recognizing that failure to do so could compromise or threaten the rights and well-being of the participants.

Justice in research ethics presupposes the equitable distribution of research benefits and burdens among populations, with vulnerable groups not being exploited by the research and instead benefiting from it on equal grounds (Strauss et al., 2021). In this study, the researcher ensured that the participants were suitable for the study, and the inclusion criteria were consistently observed in the selection process. Subjects were selected without any prejudice or discrimination based on socioeconomic status, sex, ethnicity, or religion. Because participation in the research required an investment of time during the interviews, the researcher acknowledged the participants' involvement with a certificate of appreciation or token to recognize their valuable contribution to the study.

Transparency means transparent and truthful communication on all aspects of the research, such as methods, funding sources, conflicts of interest, and results, so that participants and the broader population can make informed decisions (Robertson, 2020). Within this research, the researcher observed transparency by ensuring that participants could clearly perceive and comprehend the nature of the research, the procedures involved, and the extent of their participation. As part of the measures to ensure transparency, member checking was employed, wherein the researcher returned the transcribed interview data, emerging interpretations, and preliminary findings to the participants for their review and verification, ensuring that the findings accurately reflected their experiences and intended meanings. Anyone interested and competent in evaluating the outcomes of the study was likewise encouraged to scrutinize, evaluate, and examine the findings further. The study also made results available by publishing the research in a peer reviewed journal, and the researcher provided a full copy of the research output to the school and government agency concerned. Additionally, the researcher planned to keep the raw data safely for at least three years after publication, in accordance with ethical standards for data retention and transparency in research.

Qualification of the researcher encompasses the education, training, experience, and competence necessary to conduct research ethically and scientifically (Drolet et al., 2022). In this study, the researcher demonstrated competence in research work along with social awareness and cultural sensitivity regarding the ethical dimensions of human studies, and possessed the requisite expertise and know-how to carry out the study. The researcher had also undergone training and seminars on qualitative research methods, including interview techniques and phenomenological approaches, which served as testimony to her qualification to undertake this area of inquiry, and she was skilled in the collection and analysis of qualitative data through in-depth interviews. With respect to the qualification of the adviser, she holds a graduate degree of Doctor of Philosophy, is an expert in research, and has numerous publications and citations of her research work. The examining panel included three faculty members holding advanced degrees, either Ph.D. or its equivalent, each knowledgeable in the areas of educational research, language education, and qualitative research techniques.

Adequacy of facilities means the provision of the right equipment, infrastructure, and resources needed to safely conduct research and ensure the welfare of participants (Steinert et al., 2021). The researcher in this study accounted for the resources required in the implementation of the research. The library provided access to online and non-online journals, books, and theses that served as additional readings and references offering diverse literature to support the study of teachers' experiences as coaches in talent development programs. Moreover, the researcher was adequately equipped with the equipment, facilities, and budget needed to complete this research, given her connection to educational institutions in the Division of Mati City, and she also drew on the services of experts to guide the conduct of the study.

Community involvement entailed engaging the community in the planning, implementation, and interpretation of the research in order to achieve cultural sensitivity, meet the needs of the community, and develop trust (Akondeng et al., 2022). Specific actions involved obtaining official authorization from the Schools Division Superintendent and school principals, soliciting the assistance of school heads in identifying participants, liaising with department heads regarding the logistics of conducting interviews, and undertaking a post-research dissemination workshop in which the findings of the research would be made available and feedback sought. These measures helped make the school community active partners in the research throughout the study. Additionally, the research results would be distributed to teachers, school administrators, DepEd officials, and other stakeholders to promote information sharing, awareness, and potential application of the results through LAC sessions, fora, and conferences, as well as through the development of policy briefs, programs, and interventions aimed at advancing teacher development and talent coaching initiatives within schools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the results and discussion of the study, which examined the coaching experiences of three junior high school English teachers who served as coaches in the English related events of the Festival of Talents in the Division of Mati City. Three participant coaches, purposively selected on the basis of their sustained, documented experience preparing students for regional and national level Festival of Talents competitions, took part in the study. The research employed a qualitative narrative inquiry design, in which the lived coaching experiences of the participants were gathered through in depth, semi structured interviews conducted in the participants' preferred mix of English and the local vernacular, then transcribed, translated, and organized into individual narrative accounts before being analyzed thematically across cases. The discussion that follows is grounded entirely in the data gathered from these three coaches and is interpreted in direct relation to the objectives of the study,

namely to understand how English teacher coaches conceptualize and undertake student preparation for the Festival of Talents, to examine the personal and professional experiences that have shaped their coaching philosophies and practices, and to determine the broader implications of these experiences for teaching practice and future research. No statistical testing was undertaken in this study, consistent with its qualitative narrative design; the results reported below therefore consist of thematic patterns, illustrative participant accounts, and interpretive commentary rather than numerical indices, and all thematic findings, sub themes, and participant statements have been retained and interpreted in full fidelity to what was originally reported.

The three coaches who took part in this study, given the pseudonyms Seasoned Coach, Passionate Coach, and High Achieving Coach, each offered a narrative distinct in tone and emphasis, yet the three accounts converge on a shared conviction that competitive coaching in English is inseparable from the broader work of forming the whole student. Read together, their stories address the study's objectives by showing, in granular and often deeply personal detail, what preparation actually consists of when it is done well, what relational history shaped each coach's present practice, how each coach experiences the demands the Festival of Talents places on personal values and institutional identity, and how each coach has learned, through both triumph and failure, to sustain a coaching practice across many competitive seasons.

The Seasoned Coach's narrative is a portrait of quiet, sustained excellence built across decades of practice. What distinguishes her account is not an accumulation of wins but the consistency of her values across changing cohorts of students and shifting competition formats. Across every theme she raised, from time, commitment, and dedication, to personalized and scaffolded coaching, to setbacks treated as instruction rather than defeat, her approach remains stable: invest time, give honest feedback, and commit to seeing in each student what the student has not yet seen in themselves. This refusal to be defined by outcomes, paired with an unwavering commitment to process and purpose, makes her account particularly instructive for the wider teaching community.

Her professional identity did not emerge in isolation but through relationship, most significantly through her experience with a former high school teacher she calls Mrs. Trainer, whose quiet strictness and sincerity modeled a coaching philosophy grounded in care expressed through honesty. Honest feedback, delivered with genuine investment in the student rather than as empty affirmation, proved far more transformative for her than gentler but less truthful alternatives, and this conviction has remained at the center of her practice ever since; as she put it, sometimes a little hurt is necessary to bring about real change. Her coaching philosophy rests on three interdependent commitments: time, dedication, and consistency. Excellence, in her understanding, is not a gift but the product of showing up, repeating, and investing over time, regardless of what expectations principals, department heads, parents, or peers place on the outcome. She reports no conflict between her personal values and the institutional demands of the Festival of Talents, seeing the event as a natural extension of the Department of Education's own values around student welfare and holistic development, so that coaching functions for her simply as another teaching methodology rather than a separate professional identity. At the same time, she is candid about the asymmetry of credit and blame that competitive coaching carries: when a student loses, the teacher is blamed, and when a student wins, the compliments arrive in abundance, yet she has resisted building her professional identity around either verdict, anchoring her sense of worth instead in the preparation, the relationship, and the formation that occurred in the rehearsal room regardless of what the stage eventually produced.

Her coaching strategies are neither accidental nor purely intuitive. She operates through a scaffolded, individualized process that begins with close observation, proceeds through

gradual and responsive skill building, and culminates in a formula the student comes to own. In the regional Festival of Talents she described, two students, a reserved tenth grade boy and a similarly introverted twelfth grade girl who barely knew each other beforehand, went on to represent their school and exceeded her own expectations; she attributed their success not to chance but to deliberate preparation, genuine interpersonal chemistry that developed through shared rehearsal, and a full hearted collaborative investment from both students. The challenges she has navigated, including time constraints, seasons without a placement, and the structural asymmetry between how success and failure are attributed, have not altered her fundamental approach; every setback was treated as a specific lesson about preparation, structure, or a student's emotional readiness and folded into the following season's practice. She also described her growth as a practitioner as inseparable from her students, crediting individual students with teaching her that silence in performance carries its own weight, that shyness can be a form of depth waiting for the right conditions, and that rigid preparation sometimes produces rigid performers. Her emotional regulation as a coach has similarly matured: she has learned that how a coach expresses frustration is as consequential as what she says, treating anger management not as a peripheral courtesy but as a central coaching discipline.

These dimensions of her professional identity align closely with the scholarship on teacher identity formation. Fabillar and Matillano (2025) argued that teacher identity does not emerge autonomously but is shaped by relational and institutional contexts, a pattern the Seasoned Coach's account confirms directly: she became the coach she is through the mentorship of a teacher who formed her, through years of deliberate practice, and through the ongoing reshaping that occurs with every new coaching relationship. This continuous process of identity formation is further supported by self-efficacy theory, which holds that belief in one's own capacity to perform is constructed through mastery experiences, vicarious learning, and sustained social reinforcement, all of which are present in her narrative: the mentor who modeled excellence, the students who returned transformed, and the championships that validated her methods each contributed to a professional self-concept that has grown stronger rather than more rigid over time. The scaffolded, individualized nature of her coaching strategy finds further support in situated learning theory, which holds that meaningful learning occurs not in the abstract but through authentic participation in real contexts alongside a more experienced practitioner (Lave & Wenger, 1991); the rehearsal room, in her practice, functions precisely as this kind of situated environment, where students learn performance through repeated, contextually embedded engagement with a coach who adjusts her level of support to what each student demonstrates. This is further consistent with Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory, which identifies feedback and the quality of the teacher student relationship as among the most potent influences on learning outcomes, and with Zhang and Sihes (2023), who affirmed that expert performance in any domain is produced not by innate ability but by long term, deliberate practice, a principle the Seasoned Coach lives by even without invoking its academic terminology. Her pattern of growth through reflective, student informed practice is addressed directly by cognitive coaching theory, which frames effective coaching as a metacognitive process in which the coach supports the learner's capacity for self-directed thinking rather than simply transmitting technique (Costa & Garmston, 2002), while her emotional development as a coach is supported by Banderlipe (2022), who identified emotional wellness and regulatory capacity as significant factors in both classroom management and relational effectiveness. For the Seasoned Coach, holding frustration and remaining steady under competitive pressure is not a soft skill but a professional discipline that directly shapes the coaching relationship and, by extension, the performance her students are able to produce.

The Passionate Coach's account is not simply the story of how someone became a coach but of how someone became a more complete person through coaching. What stands out most is the moral courage embedded in her telling: the moment a student cried under the weight of

her early strictness became, in her retelling, not a source of defensiveness but the foundation of an entirely different coaching philosophy. Her holistic coaching framework, encompassing physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual readiness, was not drawn from a textbook but built from her own experience as a collegiate storytelling champion, shaped by the teachers who guided her, and then extended to every student placed in her care. From those teachers she inherited two convictions that continue to anchor her practice: authenticity and discipline, values she reports as fully aligned with the demands of the Festival of Talents, which she frames not merely as a space for demonstrating ability but as a platform for the formation and expression of identity. Her account of the financial dimension of preparation reveals a role that extends beyond pedagogy into material advocacy, as she positions herself as an economic protector who works to ensure that a lack of resources does not silence a talented student.

Her coaching strategies are scaffolded, dialogic, and closely responsive to the individual student. She begins by giving students a low stakes opportunity to perform, observes what they already carry, identifies what must be added or removed, and builds toward a structural formula that the student co-constructs and genuinely owns, a process she illustrated through the detailed account of building an advocacy pitch formula together with her students, incorporating imagery, evidence, a transitional question, a named advocacy linked to the Sustainable Development Goals, and a closing quotation. This collaborative process extended into how she handled the pressures of competition itself: when a student competed while ill with a cold and cough, she did not withdraw the student but secured medicine and, in her words, placed the outcome in God's hands; when a sudden change in competition format compressed her preparation timeline to three days before the regional competition, she restructured the process without allowing the disruption to become her students' disruption. Her account of failure follows the same logic, treating every defeat or near miss as a stepping stone that reveals precisely what needs to be reinforced rather than as a verdict to be accepted passively.

The most consequential moment in her professional growth was the experience of a student who cried at the edge of a regional stage after being scolded in the final moments before performing, an episode that did not merely prompt regret but restructured her entire understanding of what the coach student relationship requires. From that point she rebuilt her practice around empathy, two-way feedbacking, and effective communication, recognizing that a broken relationship between coach and student is a wound no competitive skill can compensate for. This holistic orientation finds strong support in the literature: Martinez et al. (2022) identified comprehensive preparation across multiple dimensions as among the conditions that produce the strongest competitive outcomes, and Balalle (2024) confirmed that students prepared in this integrated way demonstrate superior and more sustained performance. Her coaching values of authenticity and discipline align with Zhang and Sihes (2023), who found that the greatest benefit in English language competition arises when performances are grounded in genuine passion and expressed in the student's own voice, and with Lacson (2023), who affirmed that the deeper educational purpose of the Festival of Talents lies in character development rather than technical conformity. Ruixue and Policarpio (2024) and Ubaidila et al. (2025) both found that the strongest developmental outcomes in English language competitive settings occur when talent development, skill building, and authentic character expression are treated as integrated rather than separate goals, a principle the Passionate Coach has lived by throughout her career. The scaffolded, dialogic character of her coaching strategy is further consistent with Ramadhona et al. (2025), who noted that schools adopting structured pedagogical language frameworks demonstrate higher rates of competitive success, and with Munna and Kalam (2021), who found that a shared coaching vocabulary becomes most valuable when preparation is translated into clear, actionable steps for improvement.

Groenewald et al. (2024) confirmed that students exposed to English competitions develop a stronger capacity for expressing sophisticated thoughts and communicating confidently under demanding conditions, while Alfante et al. (2024) and Wang et al. (2021) established that the benefits of competition are most evident when content is meaningful, relevant, and authentically the student's own, precisely the condition the Passionate Coach works to create in every preparation cycle. Xu (2024) added that students who develop critical thinking and metacognitive awareness bring an intentionality to their language use that mechanical learning alone cannot replicate. Her trajectory from rigidity to developmental responsiveness is well documented in the coaching literature: Casey (2021) identified the tension between high expectations and student emotional reality as a significant challenge for teachers transitioning into coaching roles, noting that the most consequential professional development often occurs precisely at the moment of rupture, as it did for the Passionate Coach; Aroca et al. (2022) documented that teacher coaches who do not remain rigid through their early experiences undergo a gradual transformation toward more developmental and student centered approaches, a pattern her narrative confirms in precise detail. Her evolved practice of two way feedbacking aligns with Passmore and Evans-Krimme (2021), her use of question based strategies to support student self-regulation corresponds to Contrino et al. (2024), her interpretation of failure as a learning opportunity is consistent with Halliwell et al. (2023) and with Schad et al. (2022), who identified resilience as central to the sustainability of the coaching role, and Fabillar and Matillano (2025) further confirmed that winning coaches possess the ability to learn from every competition regardless of outcome, while Reddy (2023) and Wexler et al. (2025) both established that beneficial coaching is prolonged, relational, and requires deliberate time investment to produce enduring improvement.

The High-Achieving Coach's narrative represents a teacher coach who has quietly reoriented the purpose of competitive coaching away from the podium and toward the person, developed over more than ten years of coaching in a resource limited barrio school. His professional identity was constructed rather than discovered, shaped by former teachers and coaches who instilled the macro skills, by supervisors who taught him to extend learning beyond the classroom, and by a graduate education and continuing membership in Cambridge's professional learning community that have kept his practice current. His most important operating principle is that his role is to unlock rather than install: a student is ready to compete not when the coach is satisfied with the preparation, but when the preparation has been so fully internalized that the student can stand independently on stage. He reported full alignment between his personal values and institutional demands, grounding that alignment explicitly in Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and framing the Festival of Talents as a structural recognition that learners possess different forms of intelligence deserving of development and recognition.

His coaching strategies are systematic, scaffolded, and oriented from the outset toward student independence, beginning with an analysis of each student's existing talents and building preparation around what is already present. He identified geographical location as a specific and structural, rather than motivational, barrier to student resourcefulness in his barrio setting, noting that students there tend to depend more heavily on what is directly given to them because of limited access to resources, libraries, and connectivity. His responses to real world constraints have been consistently adaptive: proactive coordination with the Parent Teacher Association to secure transportation and other budget allocations, advance communication with families about the financial demands of competition season, and the strategic use of club organization to build a pipeline of potential participants ahead of any competition memo. The most revealing episode in his account concerns a season in which he coached through serious illness; rather than allowing his own condition to disrupt preparation, he and his co-teachers built a documented, shared coaching system that allowed the students' training to continue

without him at the center of it, an episode he treats not merely as a logistical solution but as evidence of the value of collaboration and of building systems larger than any single coach.

This construction of professional identity through sustained relational and institutional engagement is consistent with Fabillar and Matillano (2025), who found that teachers navigating the dual role of academic instructor and coach face complex challenges with significant implications for both teacher performance and student success. His philosophy of unlocking rather than installing aligns with cognitive coaching theory's emphasis on developing the learner's own metacognitive capacity for self-direction, and his sustained focus on student independence and initiative reflects the situational awareness and adaptive delivery that Kochmanski and Cobb (2023) identified as hallmarks of the most effective coaches. His use of macro skills as foundational preparation aligns with Zhang and Sihes (2023), who found that English language competitions accelerate vocabulary acquisition, strengthen grammatical competence, and build public speaking confidence. The resource challenges he navigates are well documented in the broader literature: Ekanem et al. (2025) reported increased complexity in time management and resource allocation for teacher coaches managing multiple professional roles, while Soliven and Genuba (2025) confirmed that competitive preparation responsibilities compound rather than replace existing classroom workload; his adaptive response to these pressures exemplifies the resourcefulness that Cakir et al. (2023) identified as characteristic of successful coaches who bridge the gap between formal preparation and the realities of coaching in under-resourced settings, and his practice is further supported by situated learning theory's emphasis on authentic, community-embedded participation. His independent pursuit of graduate study and professional network membership reflects a pattern that Milinga (2025) associated with instructor acquisition methodology, in which coaches who actively seek out learning rather than waiting for it to be provided demonstrate consistently stronger capacity to adapt instruction to diverse learner needs, while Yang (2024) found that educators who integrate coaching strategies into their practice as deliberate professional development report higher professional satisfaction and experience coaching as enriching rather than burdensome, a description that closely matches his own account. The collaborative system he built to sustain preparation through his illness extends the findings of Toh et al. (2022), who identified mentorship networks and professional learning communities as critical resources for teacher coaches facing ongoing challenges, and Manalang (2023) identified the willingness to share responsibility and trust collaborative systems as a marker of mature coaching competence, a maturity his experience confirms as necessary for the long term sustainability of effective coaching practice.

As schools nationwide continue to expand their co-curricular programs, English teachers are increasingly expected to serve dual roles as subject specialists and competition coaches at events such as the Festival of Talents. The accounts of the Seasoned Coach, the Passionate Coach, and the High Achieving Coach show that this double role is not a simple addition to existing duties but a distinct professional identity, one built informally and often through years of trial, mentorship, and reflection rather than through any structured preparation.

The first practical implication is that effective coaching prepares the whole student, not only the performance. The Passionate Coach's practice of preparing students across physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual dimensions, and the Seasoned Coach's cultivation of what she calls the eye, the ability to see potential a student has not yet recognized in themselves, both point to the same conclusion: technical rehearsal alone does not produce a student ready to walk onto a competition stage. For English teachers coaching Festival of Talents entries, this means preparation should deliberately include time for building trust and addressing a student's emotional state before a performance, not only refining delivery and content.

The second implication concerns the coaching relationship itself. Both the Seasoned Coach and the Passionate Coach described an early period of strict, directive coaching that produced compliance rather than confidence, most vividly the Passionate Coach's account of a student who cried under the pressure of her early strictness, a moment that reshaped her entire approach toward two-way feedback and empathetic communication. This finding is a direct caution to teacher coaches: enforcing high standards without investing equally in the relational and communicative dimensions of coaching risks producing technically drilled but fragile performers. Coaches should treat dialogic feedback and relationship building as core coaching skills, not as concessions made only after standards have been set.

The third implication is that school leaders determine whether this kind of coaching is even possible. All three coaches prepared students under real constraints: the Passionate Coach compressed an entire preparation cycle into three days after a structural schedule change and coached a student through illness; the High Achieving Coach built his program in a resource limited barrio school and, when he himself fell seriously ill, relied on a documented, shared coaching system he had built with colleagues so that preparation continued without him. These accounts point to specific forms of support principals can provide: releasing coaches from competing administrative duties during preparation periods, coordinating with the PTA for financial backing in the way the High Achieving Coach did, and encouraging coaches to build shared, documented preparation systems rather than carrying the coaching plan alone, so that a single teacher's illness or overload does not end a student's chance to compete.

The fourth implication concerns professional development. None of the three coaches in this study received formal training in coaching before taking on the role; each built their practice through their own experience as competitors, informal mentorship, and years of trial and error. The High Achieving Coach's independent pursuit of graduate study and membership in a professional teaching network is the clearest example in this study of what happens when a coach seeks structured development on their own initiative, and it points to what division and regional offices could offer more broadly. Rather than generic teaching seminars, professional development for teacher coaches should address the specific skills this study identified as decisive: reading a student's emotional readiness, shifting from directive to dialogic feedback, and building shared systems that make a coaching program resilient to a single coach's absence.

This study examined the winning strategies and success stories of junior high school English teachers who served as coaches in the English related events of the Festival of Talents in the Division of Mati City. These teacher coaches frequently navigate their demanding dual roles under severe real-world constraints, including acute resource limitations in barrio settings, compressed preparation timelines, and an absolute lack of formal coaching preparation. This institutional gap forces coaches to rely on informal trial and error, creating a risk of performance fragility or emotional distress for students when preparation remains strictly directive and technically isolated. To address these challenges, the following concrete and actionable measures are proposed to refine coaching methodologies and support frameworks.

To optimize school level preparation for the Festival of Talents, schools should establish year-round, structured English club organizations rather than relying on last-minute, high-pressure talent searches. These co-curricular platforms can function as long term pipelines in which teacher coaches use early, continuous observation to cultivate the capacity to look beneath the surface and uncover latent potential in introverted or quiet students who might otherwise be overlooked. Rehearsals within these clubs should deliberately move away from rigid, directive instruction toward a scaffolded, dialogic environment in which the coach and student collaboratively construct the final performance formula, an approach that helps ensure the language content is meaningful, relevant, and authentically reflective of the student's own voice, and that directly supports the development of public speaking confidence and independent stage ownership.

To elevate the coach participant relationship, aspiring or less experienced coaches should deliberately replace a purely technical rehearsal format with a holistic preparation model, carving out time to build mutual trust and to address a student's physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual readiness before the student ever steps onto a competitive stage. Developing coaches should also cultivate deliberate emotional regulation, learning to hold their own frustration and manage competitive pressure so that it does not project onto the performer, and should integrate empathetic communication and two-way feedback loops into daily practice so that coaching moves away from harsh strictness that breeds compliance and instead nurtures resilient performers capable of adapting to unexpected disruptions or illness. Systematically documenting the lessons of past seasons, treating every defeat as an analytical opportunity concerning student emotional readiness or structural preparation, and folding those insights into the next competitive cycle is recommended as a concrete practice for coaches seeking to strengthen their programs over time.

School principals and institutional leaders should introduce concrete structural support mechanisms to protect teacher coaches from competing workloads, including administrative relief policies that release coaches from heavy clerical or classroom duties during active preparation windows, and the institutionalization of a shared, documented preparation system among a network of co-teachers so that a coaching program remains resilient even in the event of an individual coach's illness or absence. School administrations should also proactively coordinate with the Parent Teacher Association and local stakeholders to secure dedicated funding for materials and travel logistics, so that under-resourced schools are not structurally disadvantaged in competitive preparation.

Division and regional offices are encouraged to reorient professional development away from generic pedagogical seminars toward specialized coach acquisition methodologies, launching structured training initiatives that address high stakes competitive competencies such as reading a student's emotional readiness, shifting from directive to dialogic feedback, and designing shared institutional training systems. Division offices should also actively incentivize and support pathways for teacher coaches to pursue independent professional advancement, such as graduate studies in English language education or membership in established professional learning networks, so that isolated trial and error can be replaced with evidence-based strategies that equip a broader range of coaches with the competencies this study identified as decisive to effective, sustainable practice.

Taken together, the narratives of the Seasoned Coach, the Passionate Coach, and the High Achieving Coach answer the study's objectives by showing that competitive coaching excellence in the Festival of Talents is not a matter of natural talent, institutional privilege, or technical drilling alone, but a professional identity built relationally, over time, through mentorship, honest feedback, deliberate scaffolding, emotional regulation, and a willingness to be changed by the very students being coached. Each coach arrived at this identity through a distinct pathway, whether through the quiet, patient consistency modeled by a beloved former teacher, the moral reckoning that followed a student's tears under early strictness, or the disciplined, systems-oriented resourcefulness demanded by coaching in a barrio school, yet all three converge on the same underlying conviction: that a coach who invests in the whole student, sustains that investment through setbacks, and builds preparation practices resilient enough to survive constraint, illness, or disappointment, is the coach most likely to produce students who not only succeed on the competitive stage but carry that transformation into the rest of their lives. These findings contribute to the field by offering a grounded, contextually rich account of what effective English language competition coaching actually requires in practice, particularly within resource-constrained Philippine public-school settings where

formal coaching preparation remains largely absent, and by translating that account into concrete implications for teaching practice and actionable recommendations for schools, division offices, and future researchers. The chapter that follows presents the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study as a whole, drawing together the threads established here into a final synthesis of what this inquiry has revealed about the preparation of students for the Festival of Talents in English.

CONCLUSION

When a teacher agrees to coach a student for the Festival of Talents, they are agreeing to something far larger than a preparation schedule and a competition date. They are agreeing to accompany a young person through an experience that will test not only their performance skill but their confidence, their resilience, their sense of self, and their capacity to carry what they have learned into a world that is wider and more demanding than any classroom. It was an understanding that the three teacher-coaches whose stories are shared in this study knew so well that it was more than any strategy or technique they ever used that brought about a transformation in their coaching.

In this study, I found that most studies on the topic of competitive excellence in schools focus on student outcomes or on program design of the school, whereas I opted for a different perspective – the lived experience of the teacher-coach, represented in the voice of the teacher-coach, using the method of narrative, as a form of qualitative inquiry. I wanted to know what it felt like to be inside the winners and to know what it takes to prepare in order to be a winner - what it costs a teacher to give what these three give and what it gives back.

Along the conduct of this study, I came to realize that the most powerful thing a teacher can give a student is not a strategy or a formula, but a relationship - the experience of being seen, believed in, and accompanied through something difficult by someone who refuses to give up on them. Each of the three participants in this study gave their students exactly this, in their own distinctive way, and the results they produced were not merely competitive placements but transformations of identity. Students who walked into training as one version of themselves walked out of competition as something measurably and visibly more. Witnessing this through the accounts of the coaches themselves was, for me as a researcher, one of the most moving and most instructive experiences of this entire scholarly journey.

During the course of this research, I realized that the greatest gift a teacher could bestow on the student is not a strategy, a formula, but a relationship - a lived-in experience that is experiencing a difficult thing together, on which the teacher does not give up. In this study, each of the three teachers did all of this in his/her unique style, and the outcomes they created with his/her students were more than just competitive rankings—they were identity changes. The students who entered training as one person came out as a different one, one who was measurably and visibly more. It was one of the most impressive and most inspiring experiences of this entire research process for me as a researcher to be able to listen to the coaches themselves tell the stories.

In addition, teachers of English in the present day and in the future may find this research useful as they coach their colleagues or wish to do so, as it provides them with the wisdom of three people who have come to develop their coaching philosophy not on theory alone, but through their own experience of caring deeply, failing at times, being honest with themselves, and always returning to the coaching profession with new purpose. The research results also have the potential to inform the school administrators and curriculum planners who seek evidence-based information to better support the Festival of Talents at the institutional level. It may also benefit future researchers who want to explore the coaching experiences of teachers in other subjects, other grade levels, or other competitions, enriching the

understanding of teachers and what it means to be a coach in the Philippine educational system today.

As a teacher and a researcher, myself, I can say with conviction that the Festival of Talents is not simply a competition. It is one of the most powerful developmental opportunities available to junior high school students in the public school system - and it is made powerful not by the mechanics or the criteria for judging, but by the teachers who pour themselves into it. The Seasoned Coach, the Passionate Coach, and the High-Achieving Coach are each, in their own way, a testament to what teaching looks like when it is lived as a vocation rather than merely performed as a job. Their stories deserve to be told, to be read, and to be carried forward by every teacher who has ever stood at the edge of a student's potential and chosen, despite everything, to believe.

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