1

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges, and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

Article

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

Jet G. Sarvida
Bato Institute of Science and Technology, Philippines

Ermina C. Milloren
Bato Institute of Science and Technology, Philippines

Jelly Q. Sarvida
Bato Institute of Science and Technology, Philippines

ABSTRACT

The increasing demand for English as a Second Language (ESL) education has led many Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) graduates to pursue online ESL tutoring as an alternative career path. This study explores their motivations, challenges, and competencies in online ESL teaching and proposes recommendations to enhance their readiness for this profession. Using a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, the study gathered quantitative data from BEED graduates engaged in online ESL tutoring, followed by qualitative interviews to gain deeper insights. Findings reveal that flexibility, skill development, and income potential are key motivators, while student behavior management, technological proficiency, time constraints, and cross-cultural communication are major challenges. Additionally, many BEED graduates face difficulties in adapting to varying student proficiency levels and struggle with workload management despite the flexibility of online teaching. The study highlights a misalignment between pre-service teacher training and the realities of online ESL instruction, emphasizing the need for enhanced digital literacy, differentiated instruction strategies, and simulated ESL teaching practice in BEED programs. Recommendations include curriculum integration of digital teaching tools, structured training on online platforms, and continuous professional development opportunities. Future research should examine long-term career trajectories and the effectiveness of pre-service training in online ESL education.

KEYWORDS: Online ESL tutoring, BEED graduates, digital literacy, virtual classroom management, ESL tutor development

Introduction

Teaching is no longer confined to the traditional classroom setting. The rise of online ESL tutoring companies has created new opportunities for educators to meet the diverse learning needs of students worldwide, particularly in English language acquisition. In recent years, the demand for English as a Second Language (ESL) education has grown significantly, fueled by its increasing

2

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges, and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

role in higher education and professional development (Tang, 2020; Vu, 2020). Morales (2020) further highlights that during the peak of the pandemic, online ESL teaching emerged as a stable and sought-after career option, attracting educators seeking flexible employment.

For Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) graduates, online ESL tutoring presents a viable alternative, especially for those who are either waiting for permanent placements in formal schools or seeking additional teaching experience. While BEED programs primarily prepare graduates for in-person classroom instruction, many choose to apply their pedagogical skills in the online ESL industry due to the immediate employment opportunities it offers. Given this shift, understanding the motivations and challenges that drive BEED graduates toward online ESL careers is essential for developing strategies that enhance their preparedness for this evolving profession.

While most graduate tracer studies (Daguplo et al., 2019; Pardo et al., 2021; Basagre, 2025) reported that the majority of BEED graduates were employed, these studies primarily focused on full-time teaching positions in formal school settings, particularly within the Department of Education (DepEd). In contrast, Salendab and Sanchez (2023) explored the reasons why some BEED graduates remained unemployed, identifying waiting for a permanent teaching position in DepEd, lack of work experience, and pending rank results as the primary barriers to full-time employment. As a means to gain relevant teaching experience while awaiting formal appointment, many BEED graduates seek alternative employment, including online ESL tutoring in private companies.

Panaligan and Curran (2023) further contextualize this trend, noting that Filipino online English tutors often sign up with various platforms as freelancers, teaching students on a per-lesson basis rather than securing permanent, structured teaching positions. This explains the seeming discrepancy between graduate tracer studies which primarily assess employment within traditional, full-time teaching roles and studies that highlight the increasing engagement of BEED graduates in online ESL teaching. While tracer studies categorize BEED graduates as "employed" only if they secure full-time teaching roles in formal education settings, the reality is that many take on online ESL tutoring jobs as a transitional or supplementary career path while waiting for tenured positions.

This distinction is particularly relevant in the Philippine context, where the teaching profession is tenure-based and public school positions are highly competitive. However, in other contexts where the teaching profession does not rely on a tenure-track system, this employment pattern may not be as pronounced. By acknowledging this structural employment characteristic, the study offers a more nuanced understanding of why BEED graduates turn to online ESL tutoring as an alternative career path.

Like any other jobs, being an online ESL tutor share myriads of difficulties. The study of Sabidalas and Esparar (2022) revealed that online ESL tutors find difficulty in dealing with students' behavior, self-mastery, and negotiating with parents. Similarly, Cuenca and Angoya (2019) identified several key challenges that negatively affect the performance of online ESL tutors. These include difficulties in effectively teaching students, managing the technical aspects of online instruction and handling classroom management. Teachers also reported that many students exhibited low motivation or interest in online learning (Fikriyah and Susyla, 2023).

With the nature of ESL teaching, tutors need to be proficient in using technology as it plays a crucial role in teaching and learning (Bakic-Tomic, Dvorski, and Kirinic, 2015). However, the study of Punla and Farro (2022) found that their BEED graduates' least learned competencies were that of English communication skills, technological competencies, and personality development. Given this, Ma and Yang (2021) suggest that strategies need to consider flexible and interactive approaches to better help future teachers build their digital skills alongside with communication and personal skills.

3

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges, and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED
Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

Despite the growing demand for online ESL education and the increasing interest of BEED graduates in this field as reflected on the study of Pontillas (2021), there is a significant research gap in understanding their motivations in applying for an online ESL job. In addition, while previous studies have identified the difficulties online ESL teachers face, such as student engagement, classroom management, and technical challenges, there is a lack of focus on the specific competencies BEED programs need to enhance to better prepare graduates for these challenges. This gap underscores the need for targeted research to develop strategies that can bridge the disconnect between BEED training and the practical demands of online ESL careers, ensuring that graduates are equipped with the necessary skills and resilience to succeed in this field.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to explore the motivations driving BEED graduates to pursue online ESL tutoring, examine the challenges they face in this field, and propose actionable recommendations to enhance their readiness for such careers.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a sequential explanatory mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively explore the motivations, challenges, and recommendations for enhancing BEED graduates' readiness for online ESL careers. In the first phase, a quantitative survey was conducted to identify trends in motivations, perceived challenges, and levels of preparedness among BEED graduates engaged in online ESL teaching. The second phase involved qualitative interviews with selected participants to provide deeper insights into the quantitative findings, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the underlying factors influencing their career decisions.

The sequential explanatory approach ensures that the initial quantitative results establish a broad pattern, which is then further explained through qualitative exploration (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). By combining the generalizability of statistical data with the depth of personal experiences, this design enhances the reliability of the study in capturing the realities of BEED graduates transitioning into online ESL teaching.

Research Respondents

This study selected 16 BEED graduates from the Bato Institute of Science and Technology (BIST) as respondents, utilizing convenience sampling due to their accessibility and relevance to the research objectives. Convenience sampling, as described by Etikan et al. (2016), is a practical approach when time, resources, and respondent availability limit the feasibility of probability-based sampling methods. Given that this study employs a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, convenience sampling allowed for the efficient collection of quantitative survey data from BEED graduates who have direct experience in online ESL tutoring.

Furthermore, this approach ensured that participants for the qualitative phase—which involved in-depth interviews—were readily available and willing to provide insights that enriched the survey findings. While convenience sampling may limit generalizability, its alignment with the exploratory nature of the qualitative phase strengthens the study's ability to provide contextual depth and practical recommendations for BEED graduates entering the online ESL tutoring industry.

4

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges, and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to institutional ethical guidelines set by the Bato Institute of Science and Technology (BIST) Research Ethics Committee, ensuring the protection of participants' rights and confidentiality. Prior to data collection, ethical clearance was obtained from the institution, affirming compliance with established research protocols.

Participants were fully informed about the study's objectives, procedures, potential risks, and benefits through a written informed consent form, which they reviewed and signed before participation. They were explicitly informed of their right to voluntarily participate, decline, or withdraw at any stage without any consequences.

To maintain confidentiality, all personal identifiers were removed, and responses were anonymized. Digitally collected data were stored in a password-protected encrypted drive, while physically collected documents were kept in a locked cabinet within the institution's research office, accessible only to authorized researchers. These measures ensured the secure handling, storage, and disposal of sensitive information in compliance with data protection protocols and institutional research ethics standards.

Data Gathering Procedure

A researcher-made questionnaire was developed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, incorporating a Likert scale to assess perceptions and motivations, alongside open-ended questions to gather in-depth insights from respondents. To ensure validity and reliability, the questionnaire underwent content validation by three faculty members specializing in educational research and ESL instruction. Their feedback was used to refine the clarity, relevance, and comprehensibility of the items. To assess the reliability of the instrument used in the study, Bayesian Scale Reliability Analysis was conducted on data collected from eight (8) pilot test participants. The Bayesian coefficient alpha (α) was computed to determine the internal consistency of the scale. The analysis yielded a posterior mean α of 0.880, with a 95% credible interval (CI) ranging from 0.775 to 0.967.

Data collection was conducted online using Google Forms, allowing for convenient access to respondents while maintaining data integrity. However, sampling is acknowledged as a limitation of this study due to challenges in identifying all BEED graduates currently employed in online ESL tutoring. The restricted access to comprehensive employment records stems from the absence of a centralized database tracking BEED graduates' career trajectories and the varying employment structures of private ESL companies, many of which do not publicly disclose hiring records. Consequently, the study relies on voluntary participation and referrals to reach eligible respondents, which may affect the representativeness of the sample.

Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data were systematically arranged and analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods to ensure a comprehensive interpretation of the findings. For quantitative data, descriptive statistical methods were employed, including frequency, mean, and standard deviation, with results displayed in tables and graphs. The use of descriptive statistics was selected due to the exploratory nature of this study, which aims to identify trends and patterns in BEED graduates' motivations and challenges rather than establish causal relationships. Since the sample size is relatively small, inferential statistical analysis was deemed unnecessary, as the focus is on presenting distributions and summarizing key tendencies within the dataset.

5

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges, and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

In analyzing the quantitative survey data, the study employed a five-point Likert scale to measure respondents' levels of agreement on various statements related to their motivations and challenges in online ESL teaching. The Likert scale was structured as follows:

Table 1. Respondents' levels of agreement related motivations and challenges in online ESL teaching

Scale Point	Response Category	Numerical Equivalent
5	Strongly Agree	4.21 - 5.00
4	Agree	3.41 - 4.20
3	Neutral	2.61 - 3.40
2	Disagree	1.81 - 2.60
1	Strongly Agree	1.00 - 1.80

For qualitative data, thematic analysis was utilized following the six-step framework of Braun and Clarke (2006): (1) Familiarization with data, (2) Generating initial codes, (3) Searching for themes, (4) Reviewing themes, (5) Defining and naming themes, and (6) Producing the report. Thematic analysis was used as it allowed for a flexible yet structured examination of common themes across participant responses, providing rich, contextual insights without being constrained by predefined coding frameworks. Focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted to gain collective insights and shared experiences among participants. The FGD facilitated dynamic interactions, allowing participants to expand upon, clarify, and contrast their perspectives, thereby enhancing the depth of qualitative findings.

Declaration on the Use of AI

In the preparation of this research paper, the researchers utilized ChatGPT-4o and Grammarly to assist with specific aspects of the research and writing process while ensuring full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the content. AI assistance was strictly limited to idea generation and outlining, where ChatGPT-4o facilitated brainstorming, organizing thoughts, and structuring outlines to ensure a logical and coherent flow of information. Additionally, grammar and style enhancement were refined using Grammarly, which assisted in correcting grammatical errors, improving sentence structure, and enhancing overall readability without altering the original meaning of the text.

No AI-generated content was directly incorporated as final work without thorough verification, critical review, and necessary modifications by the researchers. All intellectual contributions, interpretations, and conclusions remain the sole responsibility of the researchers, ensuring adherence to ethical standards and academic integrity.

Results and Discussion

Table 2. Profile of BEED Graduates in Terms of Sex and Number of Years Working as an Online ESL Tutor

Sex	Number of Years Working as an ESL Tutor							
	Below 1 year		1 year		2 years		3 years	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Males	1	14%	1	50%	1	20%	0	0
Females	6	86%	1	50%	4	80%	2	100%
All	**7**	**100%**	**2**	**100%**	**5**	**100%**	**2**	**100%**

6

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges, and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

Table 2 presents the profile of Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) graduates who are currently working as online ESL tutors. The data shows that the majority of these graduates are female, representing 86% of those with less than one year of experience and 80% of those with two years of experience. Notably, all graduates with three years of ESL tutoring experience are female, indicating a trend of longer retention among female tutors.

On the other hand, male graduates are present across different experience levels but do not continue beyond two years in online ESL tutoring. This suggests potential differences in career longevity between male and female BEED graduates in the online ESL industry.

The three-year cutoff in this data set was determined based on the maximum number of years reported by respondents, as none indicated an online ESL tutoring experience exceeding three years. However, further research may be needed to assess whether graduates remain in this profession beyond the given timeframe. The data also does not specify whether these BEED graduates are awaiting permanent teaching positions in schools or have chosen to pursue online ESL tutoring as a long-term career shift. Future studies could explore their career motivations and professional aspirations to provide deeper insights into the employment patterns of BEED graduates in the online ESL tutoring industry.

Table 3. Reasons for Applying as an Online ESL Tutor

Particulars	Mean	StDev	Description
1. Demand for ESL teachers	4.31	0.70	Strongly Agree
2. Explore different cultures	4.69	0.48	Strongly Agree
3. Flexibility of working hours	4.56	0.73	Strongly Agree
4. Income potential	4.31	0.79	Strongly Agree
5. Passion for teaching the English language	4.25	0.86	Strongly Agree
6. Gain experience still in line with teaching	4.75	0.45	Strongly Agree
7. Work-life balance	4.44	0.63	Strongly Agree
8. Further enhance my English-speaking skills	4.81	0.54	Strongly Agree

Table 3 presents the primary reasons for applying as an online ESL tutor, highlighting common motivations among respondents. The highest mean score corresponds to the desire to enhance English-speaking skills, indicating that many applicants view online ESL tutoring as an opportunity for language proficiency development. This is closely followed by the motivation to gain teaching experience, suggesting that respondents, many of whom are BEED graduates, see online ESL tutoring as a way to apply their teaching skills in a real-world setting.

It is important to note that this engagement in online ESL tutoring does not necessarily equate to formal Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for tenured or permanent teachers. Rather, for many respondents, particularly those still seeking permanent teaching positions, online ESL tutoring serves as a practical stepping stone in their teaching careers, allowing them to refine instructional strategies in online settings, gain exposure to diverse learners, and develop professional confidence while working in an education-related field.

The flexibility of working hours and the opportunity to engage with different cultures rank highly among the reasons for pursuing online ESL tutoring, highlighting these factors as major contributors to its appeal. Additionally, the high demand for ESL tutors and the potential for competitive income serve as strong motivators, underscoring the practical benefits of this career path. These benefits include the ability to earn while waiting for permanent teaching positions, the option to work from home, and the opportunity to supplement income without the constraints of traditional classroom teaching.

7

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges, and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED
Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

Furthermore, passion for teaching the English language and the desire to achieve work-life balance are also notable motivations, though slightly less emphasized compared to other factors. Unlike traditional full-time teaching positions in the Philippines, which typically require an eight-hour straight work schedule, online ESL platforms allow tutors to choose their preferred tutoring hours. This flexibility enables educators to schedule work around personal responsibilities, making it easier to balance professional and personal life.

The data presented in Table 4 highlights several significant challenges faced by BEED graduates as they transition into online ESL tutorial roles. These challenges are categorized under four main themes: Student Behavior, Students' Knowledge, Time Management, Teaching Practice, and Technological Problems.

Table 4. Challenges Encountered by the Online ESL Teachers

Theme	Description	Significant Statement Samples
Student Behavior	Challenges related to managing student discipline, engagement, and participation in class	I find it hard handling students that are 5-8 years old because they really have short attention span. Sometimes some students seem to be out of focus during class. *Respondent 15* At times, there are unruly students. Some kids do not participate in class and just seem to play in their room. *Respondent 8*
Students' Knowledge	Difficulties arising from varying levels of prior knowledge and language proficiency among students that impact the lesson	Some parents select lesson materials that are not suited to their child's language proficiency level. *Respondent 2* There are lessons cannot be done within the given time frame because some students have "zero English" skills. *Respondent 5*
Time Management	Issues with managing time	I usually conduct 10 consecutive classes with only 5 minutes break in between. I find it hard to do my personal needs like eating lunch or going to the restroom. *Respondent 13*
Teaching Practice	Issues with language skills	Whenever the adult students choose a free-conversation lesson, I find it hard to express my thoughts due to my limited grammar. I can work well with children though. *Respondent 10*
Technological Problems	Technical difficulties such as connectivity issues and software navigation that affect the lessons	Sudden loss of internet connection greatly affects our lesson. It leads us to low ratings from our students thus affecting also our bookings. *Respondent 7* At the start, I found it hard to navigate the Skype and ClassIn platform because we didn't have hands-on activities regarding this in our undergrad years. *Respondent 6*

One of the primary challenges identified in online ESL tutoring is managing student behavior in a virtual environment, particularly in keeping young learners engaged and attentive. In the context

8

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges, and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

of online ESL tutoring jobs, a certain tutor can be booked by students aged 5-20 years old or even beyond. In the study of Asprilia et al. (2020), respondents noted difficulties in maintaining discipline, engagement, and participation, especially among students aged 5-8 years, who have shorter attention spans. Observations during a one-hour in-class activity revealed that first graders could only sustain 'on-task' behavior for about 5 to 7 minutes, after which their attention often shifted to unrelated activities (Schaefer & Millman, 1981). While maturation in attentional abilities varies among children (Tremolada et al., 2019), these findings emphasize the difficulty of maintaining engagement in young online learners, where distractions are more prevalent, and teacher supervision is limited.

Additionally, the lack of physical presence in online classes can lead to reduced teacher control over student behavior. Some respondents observed that students appear to be playing or distracted instead of actively participating in lessons. This aligns with previous research indicating that many teachers struggle with delivering content and engaging students effectively due to the absence of face-to-face interaction (Kebritchi et al., 2017). As a result, online educators may experience a sense of insufficiency and decreased control over their synchronous classes, making it difficult to manage student participation effectively.

This challenge underscores the need for BEED graduates to develop classroom management strategies that are specifically tailored to the online teaching environment. Unlike traditional face-to-face classrooms, where teachers can use physical cues, proximity, and direct intervention, online instruction requires alternative engagement techniques, such as interactive activities, gamification, and structured lesson pacing, to sustain student attention and minimize behavioral issues.

Another challenge in online ESL tutoring arises from the varying levels of prior knowledge and language proficiency among students. In many online ESL platforms, parents have the option to select lesson materials for their children rather than the tutors, often based on their personal expectations or assumptions about their child's abilities. However, this can lead to misaligned lesson content, where students are presented with materials that exceed or fall below their actual proficiency level, making effective instruction difficult.

This issue is particularly pronounced when working with students who have no prior exposure to the English language like beginners with no receptive or productive English skills in listening, speaking, reading, or writing. These learners, sometimes referred to in second language acquisition (SLA) literature as pre-production or silent period learners (Krashen, 1982), often require more visual, kinesthetic, and scaffolded instruction before they can engage meaningfully in structured language learning activities. In such cases, completing lessons within the allocated time becomes a significant challenge, as tutors must first establish basic linguistic foundations before progressing to the lesson's objectives.

To address this variation in student knowledge, teachers must implement flexible teaching strategies, which refer to adaptive, responsive, and student-centered approaches that accommodate different levels of readiness, engagement, and learning styles (Tomlinson, 2017). This involves differentiated instruction, a pedagogical framework that modifies lesson content, instructional processes, and assessments based on students' needs, abilities, and learning preferences (Hall, Strangman, & Meyer, 2003). For example, tutors might use simplified language, multimodal resources, interactive activities, or real-life contextualization to make lessons accessible to beginner-level students while providing more complex, analytical discussions for advanced learners.

Ultimately, the diversity in learner needs within online ESL settings highlights the importance of instructional flexibility and differentiation to ensure that all students receive meaningful and level-appropriate language instruction. Further research into best practices for aligning student proficiency levels with instructional content in online ESL platforms could help bridge these gaps and improve lesson effectiveness.

9

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges, and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

The transition to online teaching has also exposed gaps in the personal skills of some BEED graduates, particularly in time management. One respondent noted the difficulty of conducting multiple consecutive classes with minimal breaks, highlighting the challenge of balancing teaching responsibilities and personal needs. In many online ESL platforms, a standard class lasts only 25 minutes, meaning that for example, a three-hour straight teaching schedule consists of six back-to-back lessons with only five-minute breaks in between. This limited time for basic needs, such as eating or using the restroom, can contribute to burnout and decreased job satisfaction.

This concern, however, appears to contradict the respondents' strong agreement that online ESL tutoring offers work-life balance and flexible working hours. The key distinction lies in how tutors manage their schedules. While online ESL platforms provide autonomy in selecting work hours, some tutors may choose or feel pressured to maximize their earnings by accepting consecutive bookings without sufficient breaks. This scheduling flexibility can be a double-edged sword, allowing for control over work hours but also creating challenges in workload distribution if not managed effectively. The strain of continuous teaching sessions suggests that work-life balance is highly dependent on how tutors structure their schedules rather than an inherent guarantee of the job itself.

Furthermore, some teachers struggle with their language skills, particularly when conducting free-conversation lessons with adults. In the study of Separa et al. (2015) a self-assessment of oral communication skills among Filipino college students revealed that many identified various aspects of oral communication as problem areas, indicating that difficulties in expressing themselves in English persist even at the tertiary level. This finding underscores the reality that not all college graduates in the Philippines possess excellent language skills, challenging the assumption that completing a degree equates to proficiency in English communication.

Additionally, the study noted that some BEED graduates who work as online ESL tutors experience challenges teaching adult learners, particularly during free-conversation lessons. This raises questions about whether these difficulties stem from their career selection or systemic factors within ESL platforms. Unlike traditional classroom teaching, online ESL platforms typically operate on a booking system, where tutors are booked directly by learners who subscribe to the platform. This means that tutors have limited control over the age group of their students, as learners can book lessons based on availability rather than the tutor's specific preference. As a result, BEED graduates who may have expected to teach younger learners aligning with their elementary education training often find themselves assigned to adult students, requiring a different set of communicative competencies.

Technological issues present a major hurdle for online ESL teachers, particularly in the initial stages of their teaching careers. Sudden loss of internet connectivity and difficulties navigating online platforms have a direct impact on lesson quality and student engagement. Many ESL tutors rely on platforms such as Skype and ClassIn, which serve as virtual classrooms for online learning. Skype is a widely used video conferencing tool that allows real-time communication, file sharing, and screen sharing, making it a common choice for online language instruction. Meanwhile, ClassIn is an interactive virtual classroom software designed specifically for online education, offering features such as digital whiteboards, breakout rooms, and lesson management tools.

These challenges are particularly pronounced at the beginning, as these tools are not widely studied at the locale of this study. Teacher education programs focus on general digital literacy but do not provide hands-on exposure to specific online teaching platforms. While some ESL tutoring companies provide extensive training, others offer only minimum or no structured onboarding, leaving new tutors to navigate these tools on their own.

To bridge this gap, schools and teacher education institutions could identify potential software or platforms commonly used in online ESL instruction and integrate discussions about them into professional education subjects, such as Technology for Teaching and Learning. This would allow

10

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges, and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

pre-service teachers to gain familiarity with virtual teaching environments before entering the workforce, making their transition to online ESL tutoring smoother.

Table 5. Recommendations for Enhancing Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

Particulars	Mean	StDev	Description
1. Focus on improving students' ability to use online teaching tools and digital platforms (Skype, ClassIn, Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams)	4.63	0.81	Highly Recommended
2. Improve the use of effective ESL teaching methods, such as Total Physical Response (TPR), contextualized learning, etc.	4.69	0.70	Highly Recommended
3. Lesson Planning	4.06	0.99	Recommended
4. Enhance strategies for managing student behavior in online learning environments, such as setting clear expectations, using positive reinforcement, etc.	4.81	0.40	Highly Recommended
5. Knowledge on effective assessment methods	4.69	0.48	Highly Recommended
6. Enhance cross-cultural competency	4.63	0.50	Highly Recommended
7. Enrich students' communication skills	4.88	0.34	Highly Recommended
8. Support students in pursuing continuous professional development through conferences, certifications, and skill-building programs	4.75	0.45	Highly Recommended
9. Practice conducting ESL/online classes	4.69	0.60	Highly Recommended
10. Proper grooming and decorum in online settings	4.69	0.60	Highly Recommended

Table 5 outlines essential recommendations for enhancing graduates' readiness for online ESL careers. The data reveals a strong consensus on the importance of several key areas: enriching communication skills, improving ESL teaching methods and assessment strategies, and managing student behavior in online settings. Emphasis is also placed on developing cross-cultural competency and engaging in ongoing professional development, both of which are essential for enhancing BEED graduates' readiness for online ESL tutoring. Given that online ESL tutors receive students from diverse countries such as China, Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea, understanding cultural differences is crucial in building rapport, adapting teaching approaches, and effectively communicating with learners from various backgrounds. Cross-cultural competency enables tutors to navigate different learning styles, language expectations, and classroom behaviors that may vary across nationalities.

Additionally, ongoing professional development plays a key role in ensuring that BEED graduates remain competitive and well-equipped for the demands of online ESL teaching. By pursuing continuous professional development through conferences, certifications, and skill-building programs, tutors can refine their teaching methods, stay updated on best practices, and develop specialized expertise in ESL instruction.

While lesson planning is acknowledged as important, it is slightly less prioritized compared to other aspects of online ESL tutoring. This is primarily because most ESL platforms already provide pre-designed lesson materials and structured curricula, reducing the need for tutors to create lessons from scratch. Instead of focusing on planning content, tutors are expected to concentrate on effective lesson delivery, student engagement, and classroom management within the virtual setting.

Since the lesson materials are standardized and pre-selected by the ESL platform or the learners themselves, the tutor's role shifts from curriculum development to instructional adaptation—customizing delivery methods, pacing, and engagement strategies to fit the student's level and learning style. As a result, while lesson planning remains a valuable skill, it takes a secondary role

11

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges, and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

compared to more immediate concerns such as technology proficiency, student behavior management, and communication effectiveness in online instruction.

Additionally, practice in conducting online classes and maintaining proper online decorum are recognized as crucial for success. Providing simulated teaching experiences allows BEED graduates to develop confidence, refine their instructional techniques, and familiarize themselves with virtual classroom dynamics before transitioning to actual online ESL tutoring. These structured practice sessions help tutors learn how to navigate online teaching platforms, manage student engagement, and address common challenges such as connectivity issues and varying student proficiency levels.

Conclusion

This study examined the motivations, challenges, and competencies of BEED graduates working as online ESL tutors, highlighting both the opportunities and difficulties they face in virtual teaching environments. While flexibility, income potential, and skill development motivate graduates to enter the field, they encounter significant challenges in managing student behavior, adapting to varying proficiency levels, handling technological issues, and balancing their workload. The findings suggest that although BEED graduates possess foundational teaching skills, gaps in digital literacy, cross-cultural competency, and online classroom management hinder their full effectiveness in ESL tutoring. Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of continuous professional development, as well as the need for better alignment between pre-service teacher training and the realities of online ESL instruction to better equip graduates for long-term success in the industry.

Recommendations

While the primary objective of BEED programs is to prepare graduates for formal elementary education, the increasing number of BEED graduates entering online ESL tutoring suggests a need to consider how teacher education programs can better equip graduates for diverse teaching contexts. Given that online ESL tutoring operates outside traditional classroom settings and follows a different pedagogical structure, it is not necessarily the BEED curriculum's responsibility to ensure a seamless transition. However, integrating fundamental digital teaching skills, virtual classroom management, and exposure to technology-enhanced instruction into existing courses, such as Technology for Teaching and Learning, could provide graduates with a broader skill set applicable to various teaching modalities, including online ESL instruction.

Additionally, collaborations between higher education institutions and ESL companies could facilitate optional training, certification programs, or elective courses for students interested in pursuing online tutoring. Future research should further investigate whether online ESL tutoring aligns more closely with traditional ESL teaching or functions as a distinct profession, as well as assess the long-term career pathways of BEED graduates in online ESL instruction.

References:

Asprilia, Tioni & Qodariah, Laila & Purba, Fredrick. (2020). First Grader's Attention Span During In-Class Activity. *GUIDENA Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Psikologi Bimbingan dan Konseling*. 10. 144-150. 10.24127/gdn.v10i2.3151

Bakic-Tomic, L., Dvorski, J., & Kirinic, A. (2015). Elements of teacher communication competence: An examination of skills and knowledge to communicate. *International Journal of Research in Education and Science, 1*(2), 157. https://doi.org/10.21890/ijres.54372

12

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges, and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED
Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

Basagre, R. (2025). Employability status of Bachelor of Elementary Education graduates of school
    year 2014-2018. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5022085.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in
    Psychology, 3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa.

Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2018). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (3rd
    ed.). SAGE.

Cuenca, L. & Angoya, V. Jr. (2019). Exploring the Challenges of English online Teaching in the
    Philippines.
    https://www.academia.edu/38642890/Exploring_the_Challenges_of_English_online_Tea
    ching_in_the_Philippines

Daguplo, M., Lee, P., Capili, G., Rose, A., Estrella, C., & Bano, A. (2019). Tracking the
    Employment and Employability Characteristics of the Graduates of the College of Teacher
    Education. Part III Asia Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, 7(2), 67–74.
    https://www.apjmr.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/APJMR-2019.7.02.03.09.pdf.

Etikan, I. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. American Journal
    of Theoretical and Applied Statistics, 5(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtas.20160501.11.

Fikriyah, A., & Susyla, D. (2023). English Teachers' challenges in online teaching English at State
    and Private Senior High School in Bengkulu City. Al Qalam Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan Dan
    Kemasyarakatan, 17(4), 2958. https://doi.org/10.35931/aq.v17i4.2500.

Kebritchi, M., Lipschuetz, A., & Santiague, L. (2017). Issues and Challenges for Teaching
    Successful Online Courses in Higher Education. Journal of Educational Technology
    Systems, 46(1), 4–29. https://doi.org/10.1177/0047239516661713.

Krashen, S. D. (1982). Principles and practice in second language acquisition. Pergamon.

Morales, N.J. (2020, March 23). Online tutors boosting incomes as demand surges due to
    coronavirus lockdowns. Reuters.

Panaligan, J. H., & Curran, N. M. (2023). Adapt, acquire, defuse, learn: Filipino online English
    tutors as intercultural bricoleurs. Language & Communication, 91, 21-31.
    https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2023.05.002.

Pardo, C. G., Relon, L. P., Manzano, M. T. S. L., Galapon, E. U., Raquepo, L. R., & Romo, N. C.
    V. (2021). Employability Characteristics of the Education Graduates in a State
    University. *The Asian Journal of Education and Human Development
    (AJEHD)*, *2*(1). https://doi.org/10.69566/ajehd.v2i1.25.

Pontillas, M. (2021). Opportunities and challenges of a Filipino educator in a home-based online
    EFL industry: a single case study. Journal of Education Management and Development
    Studies, 1(1), 77–88. https://doi.org/10.52631/jemds.v1i1.21

Punla, C. S., & Farro, R. C. (2022). Are we there yet?: An analysis of the Competencies of BEED
    Graduates of BPSU-DC. International Multidisciplinary Research Journal, 4(3), 50–59.
    https://doi.org/10.54476/ioer-imrj/86523.

Sabidalas, M.A., Esparar, J., (2022). Unfolding the Saga of Online ESL Teachers: A Descriptive
    Phenomenological Study. Psychology and Education: A Multidisciplinary Journal, 5(9),
    701-709. https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7341739.

Salendab, Fahad & Sanchez, Richard. (2023). Graduates Tracer Study: The Employability Status
    of Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEED) of Sultan Kudarat State University –
    Kalamansig Campus. 2. 642-655.

Schaefer, C. E., & Millman, H. L. (1981). How to Help Children with Common Problems.
    Ontario: Van Nostrand Reinhold Company.

Separa, L. A., Generales, L. J., & Medina, R. J. (2015). Self-assessment on the oral communication
    of Filipino college students. Advanced Science Letters, 21(7), 2312-2314.
    https://doi.org/10.1166/asl.2015.6261.

Strangman, N., Meyer, A., Hall, T., & Proctor, P. (2005). Improving foreign language instruction
    with new technologies and universal design for learning. IALLT Journal of Language
    Learning Technologies, 37(2), 33-48. https://doi.org/10.17161/iallt.v37i2.8441.

Tang, K. N. (2020). Challenges and importance of teaching English as a medium of instruction in
    Thailand International College. Journal of English as an International Language, 15(2), 97-
    118.

Tomlinson, C. A. (2001). How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms. ASCD.

13

Teaching Beyond Borders: Insights into the Motivations, Challenges, and Recommendations for Enhancing BEED Graduates' Readiness for Online ESL Careers

Tremolada, M., Taverna, L., & Bonichini, S. (2019). Which factors influence attentional functions? Attention assessed by KITAP in 105 6-to-10-year-old children. Behavioral Sciences, 9(1). https://doi.org/10.3390/bs9010007.

Vu, N. T. (2020). A case study of constructivist learning and intercultural communicative competence in English-majoring pre-service teachers. Journal of English as an International Language, 15(2), 52-76.