

Words or numbers:

The essence of language teachers' unappreciation of mathematics

Leomar S. Galicia

Faculty, College of Arts and Sciences,
University of Perpetual Help System Laguna, Philippines

Abstract:

As proved by varied researches, English language teachers, with their burning passion in the realm of words, have constantly updated themselves with educational trends and timely methods and techniques with regard to teaching this discipline so that they can be efficient and effective in the learning process. Armed with pedagogical skills in language teaching, language teachers, as observed, apparently do not dwell themselves so much on the world of numbers, or simply, world of Mathematics, which in their roles as educators, plays a vital role with regard to measurement of student learning. Hence, this paper considered this inquiry as an attempt to understand language teacher's unappreciation of Mathematics at the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna.

Research questions occurred as to what unappreciation of mathematics meant to the participant and as to how they experienced this phenomenon.

The study, employing psychological phenomenology, analyzed the participants' verbatim responses which resulted in six themes (Inevitable Unappreciated Discipline, Adjusting for Oneself, Mental Burden Experience, Complicating Life, Avoiding Expansion of Intellectual Horizon, Realizing Reality) categorized into textural (what) and structural (how) descriptions of the phenomenon.

The research study concludes with the participants having clear images of Mathematics as evidenced and detailed that they truly dislike the subject as it creates much difficulty and puzzlement in their minds. The varied scenarios depicting the participants' unpleasant experiences with Mathematics clearly affected and heightened their unappreciation of this area of study.

Keywords:

Words, numbers, language teachers, unappreciation, mathematics, phenomenology

Citation:

Galicia, Leomar S. (2017); Words or numbers: The essence of language teachers' unappreciation of mathematics; Journal of Social Sciences (COES&RJ-JSS), Vol.6, No.2, pp: 211-223.

Introduction

Study of the English language has been, in no doubt, greatly considered throughout the course of research history. Being the international language, English is used in all parts of the world and serves as a tool in bringing about global understanding among the various nations. In fact, it has remained a medium of instruction from elementary grades up to higher education, both in government and private educational institutions in the Philippines which is why English language teachers, with their burning passion in the realm of words, have constantly updated themselves with educational trends and timely methods and techniques with regard to teaching this discipline so that they can be efficient and effective in the learning process (Gabriel, 2005).

Armed with pedagogical skills in language teaching, language teachers, as observed, apparently do not dwell themselves so much on the world of numbers, or simply, world of Mathematics, which in their roles as educators, plays a vital role with regard to measurement of student learning (Monsen, 2005).

Indeed, the study and appreciation of mathematics can satisfy a wide range of interests and abilities. It develops the imagination. It trains in clear and logical thought. It is a challenge, with varieties of difficult ideas and unsolved problems, because it deals with the questions arising from complicated structures. Yet it also has a continuing drive to simplification, to finding the right concepts and methods to make difficult things easy, to explaining why a situation must be as it is. In so doing, it develops a range of language and insights, which may then be applied to make a crucial contribution to our understanding and appreciation of the world, and our ability to find and make our way in it.

In the teaching profession, assessment plays a vital role in the teaching and learning process (Monsen, 2005). The use of assessment, which is directly related to Mathematics as it deals with numerical equivalents, is often an advantage tested on the quality of the work a teacher can produce, as well as the ability to do that work quickly and under pressure. It is becoming more important to show that a teacher can produce well thought-out work to a high standard, and that he can communicate what he knows, both in writing and orally considering his knowledge of numbers.

Realistically, however, Mathematics seems to be unappreciated by others, specifically by language teachers. Though it is a challenging and functional subject, how it works and why it seems difficult, are not matters which are easy to understand, even by its practitioners.

Considering the anticipated phenomenon, which is unappreciation of Mathematics, the researcher undertook this study with a view of understanding and describing the lived experiences of the participants from University of Perpetual Help System Laguna.

Teachers' multifarious task is undeniable. From preparing the lessons for a day to maintaining conducive learning atmosphere, not to mention monitoring the behaviour and performance of the learners, as well as computing grades among others, they, indeed, need to be armed with knowledge of the educational realm and skills needed in the workplace demands. With all these multifaceted tasks rolled into one profession, it is observed however, that teachers, particularly language teachers, tend to be disinterested in

Mathematics. For this reason, the researcher considered this inquiry as an attempt to understand teachers' unappreciation of Mathematics, an-always-present- discipline they can't avoid since it is always partnered with assessment and evaluation wherein they need to utilize their numerical knowledge and appreciation.

Specifically, this study may help school administrators provide relevant and functional programs which focus on developing the Mathematics self-efficacy of their teaching staff so as to motivate and encourage them to be motivated in assessment and evaluation of their students. Improving teachers Maths self-efficacy can also pave way for teachers to expand their horizons and dwell themselves into the research realm, particularly quantitative research which covers statistical analysis and presentation, so as to widen their field of experience and what-how principle.

Findings of the study would also be beneficial to the field of educational management particularly with regard to the timeframe they give to their teachers in terms of grades submission deadlines, financial reports and other related concerns.

Results of this study could also be of most help to the future educators as they will definitely be involved in the world of evaluation and assessment of their learners. Insights of this study may somehow alter their mindset in case they also unappreciate Mathematics.

Outcomes of this endeavour could also benefit future researchers as they may come up with a more in-depth study of unappreciation of Mathematics and its possible effects to any educational or psychological variables.

To the English language teachers, who are the primary beneficiaries of this study, so that they would be able to improve their Mathematics self-efficacy and gain confidence and competence so as to better their performance in the educational world ever changing and demanding, resetting their minds that language teachers could be good not only in words but also in numbers, once they appreciate and enjoy Mathematics.

Methodology

Since the research problem of this study focused on understanding language teachers' unappreciation of Mathematics, which is an example of phenomena, the researcher employed phenomenological research design.

The aim of phenomenology is the return to the concrete, captured by the slogan 'Back to the things themselves!' (Moustakas, 1994) as cited by Creswell (2007). Specifically, the researcher employed Psychological Phenomenology (also termed Empirical, Transcendental) which was expounded by Moustakas (1994) as cited by Creswell (2005) wherein it focuses less on the interpretations of the researcher and more on a description of the experiences of the participants. The researcher employed the procedures which consist of identifying a phenomenon to study, bracketing one's experiences, and collecting data from several persons who have experienced the phenomenon, as illustrated by Moustakas (1994). Furthermore, the data were analyzed by reducing the information into significant statements or quotes and then combining them into themes. Moreover, the researcher developed a textural description of the experiences of the persons (what participants experienced), a structural description of their experiences (how they

experienced it in terms of the conditions, situations, or context) and a combination of the textural and structural descriptions to convey an overall essence of the experience.

In a phenomenological study, the participants, who have all experienced the phenomenon being explored and can articulate their lived experiences, may be located at a single site, although they need not be (Creswell, 2007). The researcher opted to study six (6) language professors from the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna utilizing Purposeful Criterion Sampling strategy through which the researcher intentionally selected the individuals and sites for study because they could purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study thus providing quality assurance (Miles & Huberman, 1994) as cited by Creswell (2007). The researcher collected primary sources of data through in-depth interviews from 6 individuals who have experienced unappreciation of Mathematics as recommended by Polkinghorne (1989) cited by Creswell (2007) stating that investigators need to interview 5 to 25 individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon.

This study utilized multiple in-depth interview using a protocol, that is a predesigned form containing the research questions which are general and open-ended considering the guidelines of Moustakas (2004) as reintroduced by Creswell (2007). Since, the interview form was self-constructed and not standardized, it was presented to some experts in the field of qualitative research such as the thesis adviser and the thesis committee members to give comments and recommendations for validity and reliability .

Long and in depth-interview is important to describe the meaning of a phenomenon for a small number of individuals who have experienced it (McCraken,1988) as cited by Creswell (2007). Through the interview protocol, the researcher was able to take notes during the interview about the responses of the participants. It also helped the researcher organize thoughts on items such as headings, information about starting the interview, concluding ideas, information on ending the interview, and thanking the respondent.

After the validation of the instrument to be utilized in the study , the researcher went through the process of finding the participants, gaining access and establishing rapport, which are all important to procure good data (Creswell, 2007). Permission was also sought from the Graduate School Dean of the University of Perpetual Help System Laguna where the researcher studied so as to study the potential harmful impact and risk to participants. Consent of the participants was equally considered because it is important to have access and rapport to the vulnerable individuals participating in the study (Anderson & Spencer, 2002). The consent form contained: the right of the participants to voluntarily withdraw from the study at any time; the central purpose of the study and the procedures to be used in the data collection; comments about protecting the confidentiality of the respondents; a statement about known risks associated with participation in the study; the expected benefits to accrue to the participants in the study; and the signature of the participant as well as the researcher (Creswell, 2007).

With the participants already identified utilizing purposeful criterion sampling procedure (Miles & Huberman, 1994) as cited by Creswell (2007), the researcher determined the type of interview, which was one-on-one and open-ended interview and obtained the permission of the participants with regard to the audio-recorded interview for accurate transcription of responses.

As to the treatment and analysis of data, the researcher utilized Moustakas's (1994) approach as redetailed by Creswell (2007) since it has systematic steps in the data analysis and procedures and guidelines for assembling the textual and structural descriptions. Bracketing is the first step to consider, in which the researcher set aside all preconceived experiences he has to best understand the experiences of participants in the study. Then, after conducting multiple interviews, the researcher proceeded with horizontalization, by which data were built from the first and second central research questions as well as probing questions by going through the data, that is interview transcriptions, highlighting significant statements which were sentences or quotes that provided an understanding of how the participants experienced unappreciation of Mathematics. The researcher, then, developed clusters of meaning from these significant statements into themes which were then used to write a textual description of what the participants experienced. Significant statements were also used to write a description, called imaginative variation or structural description, of the context or setting that influenced how the participants experienced the phenomenon. From the structural and textual descriptions, the researcher wrote a composite description that presents the "essence" of unappreciation of Mathematics, called the essential or invariant structure.

To establish research rigor, verification, validation and validity were applied (Meadows & Morse, 2001). The researcher achieved verification through in-depth literature readings, sticking to the phenomenological method of inquiry, suspending past experiences, keeping research notes and journals, utilizing a sufficient sample of participants (Polkinghorne, 1989 as cited by Creswell, 2007), and conducting multiple interviews, as well as clarifying the responses of the participants, until data were refined. Validation was reached through multiple data collection (observations, in-depth interviews), data analysis utilizing Moustakas' approach and coding by the more experienced phenomenological researcher. To attain validity, the researcher presented the study to competent researchers for external review to establish trustworthiness of research work.

After describing the overall "essence" of the phenomenon under study, the researcher went back to the field and asked the participants to verify the synthesis of their responses. This was the last step taken so that the participants themselves could clarify and modify their responses so the validity of the essence was obtained thus establishing credibility.

Stages of communication were strictly considered in this paper by sending and securing letter of approval to the Dean of the Graduate School of the University of Perpetual Help System for the approval to conduct the study. Confidentiality of the participants' identity and responses was strictly maintained as they were informed that the pieces of information that they provided were used for research purposes only.

Results and Discussion

The study focused on understanding participants' unappreciation of Mathematics to better decipher why language teachers in particular seem to be disinterested in this discipline. To solve the main problem, the following central questions were worked out by the researcher: 1) What does unappreciation of Mathematics mean to the participants?; and 2) How have the participants experienced Math unappreciation?

Table 1	List of Significant Statements of Language Professors Who Unappreciate Mathematics
Sample of Significant Statements	
1.	Unappreciating Mathematics is tantamount to inescapable jungle whose wild animals act like numbers.
2.	I really don't like numbers...I always have embarrassing, unpleasant and frustrating moments with Math.
3.	Mathematics has been taught and applied from early years of education up to the college level, not to mention graduate education. From doing simple arithmetic when you're riding on a jeepney or paying your bills up to solving complicatedly structured algebra which contains variables whose practicality I do not even appreciate, Mathematics abounds.
4.	Numbers most of the time seem to be stars at bright night which you can see but you can't decipher why they need to be there.
5.	I would normally daydream that the world of Mathematics may be simple if I would just study and focus on it, yet, after trying several times, I could still find myself in a room of no improvement, irritation and boredom.

Table 2 Six Theme Clusters Categorized into Two Groups With Their Associated Formulated Meanings from the Significant Statements
<p><i>Category A: Textural (What)</i></p> <p>Theme 1: Inevitable Unappreciated Discipline Almost always aligned with school curriculum Applied in everyday living</p> <p>Theme 2: Adjusting for Oneself Relying on trusted ones Changing the mindset Coping Mechanisms</p> <p><i>Category B: Structural (How)</i></p> <p>Theme 3: Mental Burden Experience Challenges analytical and critical thinking Brings an experience of varying degrees of difficulty Causes boredom and irritation</p> <p>Theme 4: Complicating Life From difficult to extremely difficult Results in low self-efficacy Affects the image as learner Slow and questionable performance as teacher No room for improvement</p> <p>Theme 5: Avoiding Expansion of Intellectual Horizon Disinterested and Unmotivated Repetition of Experience</p> <p>Theme 6: Realizing Reality Knowing what not-to-do Not the cup of tea Other things but not math</p>

1) As to the meaning of Mathematics unappreciation to the participants

Theme 1: Inevitable Unappreciated Discipline. Focusing on the negative sides of numbers was the prevailing image of language teachers for Mathematics. Responding quickly and spontaneously, a participant described Mathematics as:

... a subject which is useful as far as societal contribution is concerned, to the training of the mind...a discipline taught and applied from early years of education up to the college level, not to mention graduate education. From doing simple arithmetic when you're riding a jeepney or paying your bills up to solving complicatedly structured algebra which contains variables whose practicality I do not even appreciate, Mathematics abounds and is unavoidable, yet I don't like it.

The sense of not being able to escape was evident in the description of Math as "Numbers most of the time seem to be stars at a bright night which you can see but you can't decipher why they need to be there." Another stated, "Unappreciating Mathematics is tantamount to inescapable jungle whose wild animals act like numbers." Recalling her high school experience, a teacher recalled with a happy face during the conversation:

When examinations after examinations are given, and low scores after low scores are revealed, I realize more how much I unappreciate Math. If only zeroes could be collected to make dozens of eggs to sell, I could have been very rich as there is a high demand of eggs at present.

Theme 2: Adjusting for Oneself. Language teachers unappreciation of Mathematics was actually controlled by them, at least, when they were still students. This was evident in the following responses: "Mathematics is just an academic and mental challenge. I have this mindset thinking the famous adage that "it is just in the mind," but my heart shouts the otherwise- that is -it is not for my mind." Another molder of the youth nodded and described:

Setting my mind of math unappreciation, I would always opt to sit beside my classmates whose mathematical wit was undeniable. I even experienced cheating, unfortunately, being caught by the teacher who consequently gave me a grade disappointing enough to add up my disinterest in numbers.

Similarly, one more teacher articulated, "To perform better in school, I made some coping mechanism considering my dislike of numbers. I asked the help of my friends to simplify Mathematics for me. Honestly, their explanation was great but my application was a troublesome experience."

2) As to how the participants experienced Math unappreciation

Theme 3: Mental Burden Experience. In this cluster, participants focused on the mental difficulties associated with Mathematics. Math thinking experience was vividly narrated as "I would normally daydream that the world of Mathematics may be simple if I would just study and focus on it, yet, after trying several times, I could still find myself in a room of no improvement, irritation and boredom." One participant communicated, *Studying college courses containing numbers became extra burden. Filled with numerical analyses: algebra, statistics, taxation in economics, seem to be disciplines which transform into a destructive tornado in my mind."*

Another participant described his image of Math by saying, *Mathematics stimulating analytical and critical thinking makes it more complex. Doing simple solving may sometimes be a worthwhile activity in the classroom but facing radical and algebraic expressions causes ennui to me as they rack my brain and dry up my mind.*

Reminiscing her experience, one more woman disclosed, “When my teacher would explain, honestly, I could understand. What I couldn’t comprehend is when the pen and paper test is given, my mind, eyes and hands seem not to be coordinating properly.” Another recalled by telling his story in her way home to a friend’s apartment during her vacation in Manila with her two colleagues:

Upon paying the LRT fare which was then Php14/person, I was with my two co-teachers. I was confident that 2 individuals’ fare would cost Php28 because you just have to double it (laughing during the interview)...I was really troubled when odd numbers come into place because it so happened that we were three, and I really didnt know what is 14x3...I just gave Php50 to the fare collector who then gave me Php8 as a change. Hesitant and unsure, I asked her how much it costs for three persons...She then just threw me an amused cynical look, perhaps thinking that I was accusing her of giving me a wrong change. Apologetic, I just told the woman- my apology, I am poor at math.

She finished her story by stating , “I really don’t like thinking about numbers...I always have embarrassing, unpleasant and frustrating moments with Math.” Her response of aversion is almost akin to a different participant stating and evoking, “Way back to my schooling, Mathematics oral recitation is like having a roller-coaster ride where my mind separates from my body and everything goes blank.” Consistent with their responses, another language teacher revealed:

I have this one unforgettable practice teaching experience which disclosed my troublesomeness in Math: After a group activity, I tallied the scores on the board to determine the winning group. I miscalculated the points and received defensive reactions from competitive students. To lighten the embarrassing situation I cunningly said, “Sorry, I’m an English teacher not a Math teacher.” After the class burst into laughter, I corrected my computation and everything ended smoothly.

Theme 4: Complicating Life. Participants bring back their experiences into memory. A 34-year-old language teacher told, “ I met teachers who placed Mathematics to a higher notch- making it extra difficult for me to both visibility and mental ability.” She furthered her details by recounting:

It was a Math class after lunch. I do not know if it was really destined that the Algebra class be set at the hour I considered sleep-inducing and hallucinating. My teacher arrived...in her hands were just chalk and eraser. After checking the attendance by names and faces, she proceeded with her algebraic discussion. Of course, she gave examples when she taught. The first one seemed easy but the rest I assumed difficult and even extremely hard. Variables with x and y plus numerics was the lesson which I pretended I could understand. But in fact, they seem to be horrible creatures in my sight and battling snakes in my head...I just wish that I was sick so I could be absent.

Bringing into mind her considered upsetting experience , one participant remembered, “When my teacher conducts algebra lesson, I listen to her...of course as a form of some respect, but when I’m asked to solve, I’d wish I had the power to be invisible and be in a

place where numbers don't exist." One more language teacher stated, "My High School teacher's college style in teaching heightened my disinterest in Mathematics. Normally, she would discuss and immediately give assessment without even assuring that the whole class understood the lesson. It simply didn't help." Her response was almost supported by the other saying, "Having Math as a Waterloo, I almost lost my self-esteem way back to my school years, I would hear my classmates silently giggling when I could not even solve a simple Math question, whose answer, intentionally written by my teacher, was there on the board...It was simple they say, but I firmly believe, its too good to be true. I would never improve on Math." Another educator recollected her experience as follows: *Mathematics unappreciation frequently leads to my low self-efficacy as I do not enjoy dealing with numbers. Most of the time, I procrastinate computing the grades of my students and consequently receive reprimand from my immediate superior who, in fact, always reminded me of the deadlines of submission I even memorized but seldom met.*

Another one patiently uttered her experience, stating:

During my younger years, elderly people especially teachers introduced Mathematics to me as a necessity and a ticket to almost all professions. During that time, intellect was oftentimes equated with one's arithmetic abilities. "Kapag magaling sa Math, matalino." this concept of Math had changed as I reached a certain level of employment stability. I know for a fact that we owe all the technological advancement that we enjoy today to Mathematics and Science, which both involve equations, but I also come to realize that people do not live on Math alone and that excelling in a lot of other fields is possible even without mastering this subject matter. Never did I receive a failing grade in Math and other related subjects, however I am aware that I am not interested and good in it since first grade which gave me a feeling of inferiority at some points of my student life. I understand that we were given tons of Math problems to solve for us to develop analytical thinking, still I hated it when teachers started to complicate the value of letters x and y. I'm just glad that I am through with that stage and I finally learned to focus and specialize on my other skills which later on recompense my "not so good numerical ability". I know Math for survival, the basic equations that I make use of everyday for personal and professional purposes but beyond that "No, thanks". I'm grateful that my linguistic competence affords me to pay accountants or statisticians if ever I have their service. We get paid for what we can do well. That's how people make a living and that's how I survive without embracing numbers.

Theme 5: Avoiding Expansion of Intellectual Horizon. Some made a firm decision to at least forget or be totally unmotivated in Mathematics which, in reality, always exists. Surprisingly, some of the participants reported not to expand their professional growth as manifested by the following remarks:

My colleagues used to encourage me to take my Masterate degree, but since I got to know that masteral thesis normally employs quantitative analysis of data, I have lost my interest and motivation with respect to my professional growth though they say that there's the mathematical power of the statistician. Yes, there is the statistician to help me, but what if, I can't understand him? The rest will be history again.

Another teacher pursuing masteral degree shared:

Mathematics creates an atmosphere of different intellectual experience, but coming across statistics as preparation for quantitative research brings a haven of mental

difficulty. From Elementary up to College, I battled with numbers and I was always on the losing ends. Then in Masteral degree, Statistics was challenging my weakness again, I could really do nothing to heighten my interest in Math. It is simply not for me.

Theme 6: Realizing Reality. In this theme, participants descriptions centered on a general acceptance of Math disinterest. Accepting the fact of numbers unappreciation was seen as vital to self-adjustment. Language teachers readily assessed their realization. One of them expressed:

Taking Licensure Examinations for Teachers positioned a great challenge before me. As a language teacher, I was confident I could pass the majorship section of the test but I was more than afraid that I would fail the exams since Math was contained in the General Education section...I realized that Math section would consume much of my time, and so I just encircled the bubbles creating a pleasing pattern before my eyes, then presto!Tapos ko ang Math. I was thinking that the other examinees were staring at me and were equally amazed as I finished solving mathematics problem in a speed of light...Hindi lang nila alam na bilog lang ako ng bilog without even reading the questions.

Interestingly, her experience almost had resemblance with another one depicting a scenario, thus:

National Standardized Tests' Mathematics portion was what I hated most when I was in High School. It would actually consume one-third of the allotted time. Surprisingly, when I turned to Science section, there I go again, facing scientific problems where calculations was badly needed.

Another two participants who have been teaching English for more than 5 years now confidently uttered words of acceptance with respect to Math weakness by stating, "Teaching inside the classroom is a fulfillment of the noblest profession; however, computing the grades of the learners makes my job extra challenging since I love words but dislike numbers." "Assessing and evaluating the performance of the learners is part of the teacher's role. I vehemently admit that in so doing, compliance sways in my mind, compliance and nothing else...I admit, I just compute and deal with numbers just to do my job, and thats the reality." At the end of the interview with one more language teacher declaring his Math disinterest, she bluntly addressed:

Metaphorically, there's only one thing I know about Mathematics, Physics or Statistics: their spellings. I came to realize, numbers are not for me, but I love counting money, and that is a different story. Ipagawa mo na lahat, wag lang Math. Hahahaha.

Textural Description. As stated, the participants candidly evidenced and detailed their prevailing negative image of Mathematics, thus, the responses answering the first central question of this inquiry, that is, what unappreciation of Mathematics means to the participants, are supportive that they really dislike numbers as indicated by Theme 1: Inevitable Unappreciated Discipline with its ideas (almost always aligned with school curriculum and applied in everyday living) and Theme 2: Adjusting for Oneself with its associated meanings (relying on trusted ones, changing the mindset and coping mechanism). Theme 1 clearly focused on the descriptions of Math unappreciation while Theme 2 centered on the scenarios proving the participants disinterest in numbers. Meanwhile, it is also worth noting that partnered with the verbal responses of the participants were their nonverbal cues such as nodding, smiling and laughing. Putting the two themes and their underlying concepts together with the nonverbal elements during the

interviews leads to the inference that the participating language teachers undeniably dislike the world of numbers and remained disinterested no matter how hard they tried thus not seeing themselves in the room of learning. This result is consistent with the study of Hidi & Harackiewicz (2000) asserting that individuals' appreciation, motivation and degree of interest and experience are significant factors that influence learning. Hardre et al (2007) and Koller et al (2001) also support this claim stating that motivation is among the most powerful determinants of success or failure; therefore, individual's own lack of appreciation or interest can deter understanding.

Structural Description. Four themes: Theme 3 (Mental Burden Experience); Theme 4 (Complicating Life); Theme 5: Avoiding Expansion of Intellectual Horizon and Theme 6 (Realizing Reality) evidently specified the contexts and scenarios which affected the participants unappreciation of numbers. Synthetically, they experienced challenge of analytical and critical thinking; varying degrees of difficulty; boredom and irritation; low self-efficacy, bad image as learner and teacher; much disinterest and unmotivation from different instances and circumstances like when they were still students in High School up to their teaching experience or higher degree of study not to mention in their everyday living, from paying their fees up to taking varied exams among others. Consequently, these experiences made them realize and decide that Mathematics is really not their field of interest as it negatively affects their performance and self-efficacy as a student and as a teacher. This is clearly supported by the study of Betz & Hacket (1983) as reintroduced by Rao et al (2009), stating that Mathematics self efficacy deals with "individuals' judgements of their capabilities to solve specific math problems, perform math-related tasks, or succeed in math-related courses". In other words, once a person, appreciates a particular mathematical task, computation of grades for example, his self-efficacy is high and thus he can be very goal oriented and productive. On the other hand, unappreciation of a task would lead to low efficacy resulting to low achievements (Bong, 2004). Truly, even they strived to excel on it, they still don't appreciate and understand its sense or meaning. Mathematics complexity always seems to puzzle and bewilder their minds as individuals. Aligned with this idea is the study of Van de Walle (2001) revealing that individuals, mostly students perceive mathematics as a difficult subject, which has no meaning in real life. Also consonance with this is the inquiry of Even and Tirosh (2005) who assert that the rules and procedures of mathematics make little or no sense to learners. They memorize examples, they follow instructions, they do their homework, and they take tests but they cannot say what their answers mean. Undeniably, the negative varied experiences of the participants in Math brought them to a place where they would hope numbers don't exist.

Essence. Whenever and wherever, a language teacher decides for himself and for his students; from the clothes to wear to the style of teaching to employ, he undoubtedly doesn't stop thinking. But bringing Mathematics into the spotlight makes him think more. Thinking about it in different instances and circumstances leads to frustration, embarrassment, and irritation thus creating different negative images of Mathematics-images that vividly describe his disinterest of the subject. In the course of this study, the researcher proved as evidenced and detailed by the responses of the participants that no matter how language teachers try, simple fact remains: they don't like numbers. Numbers which, as far as they are concerned, can never jibe with the enjoyment and passion they have in the world of words. Thus, it is seldom a question of " Do you love Mathematics

and English?” , but more often than not , it is a question of “ Do you love Mathematics or English?”

Future Directions

Despite of language teachers' unappreciation of Mathematics, they are still encouraged to at least be extra sensitive when mathematical task is to be performed especially when it has something to do with their job as educators. Consistent with the adage, that “teacher is forever a student”, language teachers are enjoined to pursue their higher studies no matter what difficulty that may come along the way, be it Mathematics, Statistics or their counterparts. School administrators are encouraged to update Mathematics teachers with the timely methods and techniques in teaching the subject so learners will be more interested and motivated in numbers. Future qualitative researchers are exhorted to conduct another inquiry considering the phenomenon to validate its findings or explore more its implications. Future quantitative researchers are likewise urged to deal with this study employing statistical tool and having higher number of respondents.

References

- Abraham, A. (2008). *Developing Your Personality by Positive Thinking*. Yogyakarta: Quills Book Publisher.
- Ampiah, J.G., Hart, K., Nkhata, B., & Nyirenda, D.M.C. (2003). *Teachers' guide to numeracy assessment instrument (DfID-funded research project report)*. Nottingham: University of Nottingham.
- Ashford, J. B., & LeCroy, C. W. (2010). *Human behavior in the social environment: A multidimensional perspective* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.
- Bandura, A. (2005). *The evolution of social learning theory*. In K.G. Smith & M.A. Hitt (Eds.) *Great Minds in Management*. (p.1) Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Borich, G. D., & Tombari, M. L. (1997). *Educational psychology: A contemporary approach*. New York, NY: Longman.
- Collaizzi, P.F. (1978). *Psychological research as the phenomenologist view it*. In R. Vaile & m. King (Eds.), *Existential phenomenological alternatives for psychology* (pp.48-71). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Creswell, J.W. (2005). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.
- Creswell, J.W., & Plano Clark, V.L. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Driscoll, M. P. (2005). *Psychology of learning for instruction* (3rd ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Even, R., & Tirosh, D. (2005). Teacher knowledge and understanding of students mathematical learning. In L.D. English (Ed.). *Handbook of international research in mathematics education* (pp. 219- 240). New Jersey:Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Huberman, A.M., & Miles, M.B. (1994). *Data management and analysis methods*. In N. K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 428-444). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Killen, R. (2003). *Effective teaching strategies: Lesson from research and practice* (3rd ed.). Sydney, Australia: Social Science Press.
- Krzemien, G. L. (2004). A community college basic arithmetic course: Predictive factors for success. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 64, 12.
- McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- Monsen, L.I. (2005). *School-based Evaluation in Norway: Why is it so Difficult to Convince Teachers of its Usefulness?* in D. Nevo (ed.). *School-based Evaluation: An International Perspective*. JAI Press: Oxford. pp. 73-88.
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage
- Meadows, L.M. & Morse, J.M. (2001). Constructing evidence within the qualitative project. In J.M. Morse, J.M. Swansen, & A. Kuzel (Eds.), *Nature of qualitative evidence* (pp. 187-200). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. (2002). *Principles and standards for school mathematics*, Reston: Virginia.
- Nevid, J. S. (2009). *Psychology: Concepts and applications* (3rd ed.). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.
- Pajares, F. (2009). *Toward a positive psychology of academic motivation: The role of self-efficacy beliefs*. In R. Gilman, E. S. Huebner & M. J. Furlong (Eds.), *Handbook of positive psychology in schools* (pp. 149-160). New York: Taylor & Francis.
- Polkinghorne, D.E. (1989). *Phenomenological research methods*. In R.S. Valle & S. Halling (Eds.), *Existential-phenomenological perspectives in psychology* (pp.41-60). New York: Plenum Press.
- Rooney, A. (2008). *The Story of Mathematics*. London: Arcturus Publishing Limited.
- Smith, A. 2004. *Making Mathematics Count*. London: The Stationery Office.
- Stiggins, R.J. (2002). *Where is our assessment future and how can we get there from here?* In R. W. Lissitz and W.D. Schafer (Eds.). *Assessment in educational reform: Both means and ends* (112-125). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Sukmadinata, N. S. (2007). *Landasan Psikologi Proses Pendidikan*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Van de Walle, J. A. (2001). *Elementary and middle school mathematics*. New York: Longman.
- Van Kaam, A. (1966). *Existential foundations of psychology*. Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press.
- Van Manem, M. (1990). *Researching lived experience: Human Science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. London, Ontario, Canada: The University of Western Ontario.