

Collaborative Learning, Reflective Practices and Psychological Resilience of Low - Performing ESL Learners in a Philippine Local College

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Abstract

This study examined collaborative learning, reflective practices, and psychological resilience among low-performing English as a Second Language learners at a selected local college in Cavite. It was anchored in Zimmerman's Self-Regulated Learning Theory and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, which explain how learners develop through self-monitoring, reflection, social interaction, scaffolding, and peer support. A quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design was employed. Respondents were purposively selected undergraduate ESL learners with English grades ranging from 75 to 81. Data were collected using a validated 47-item questionnaire covering collaborative learning, practical, cognitive, affective, and metacognitive reflection, and psychological resilience. Weighted mean, standard deviation, Pearson's product-moment correlation, the Shapiro-Wilk test, scatterplot inspection, and outlier analysis were used. The respondents demonstrated a very high level of collaborative learning ($M = 4.28$, $SD = 0.389$), a very high overall level of reflective practices ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.518$), and a high level of psychological resilience ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 0.536$). Collaborative learning had a weak, positive, but non-significant relationship with reflective practices ($r = .232$, $p = .217$). However, collaborative learning was moderately and significantly related to psychological resilience ($r = .480$, $p = .007$). Reflective practices were also significantly associated with psychological resilience, with affective and metacognitive reflection showing the strongest relationships. The study concluded that collaboration and reflection function as distinct but complementary learning approaches that may strengthen learners' resilience. It recommended integrating structured collaborative activities with journaling, guided reflection, self-evaluation, and targeted support for emotional regulation and proactive coping. The study supports SDG 4 on Quality Education, SDG 3 on Good Health and Well-Being, and SDG 8 on Decent Work and Economic Growth. Its sustainability impact lies in informing inclusive, evidence-based learner-support systems that promote academic persistence, emotional well-being, institutional responsiveness, and future employability.

Keywords: Collaborative Learning, English as a Second Language, Low-Performing Learners, Psychological Resilience, Reflective Practices, Self-Regulated Learning, Sociocultural Theory

1. Introduction

The academic success of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners in higher education is shaped by the interaction of instructional, metacognitive, and psychological factors. In college settings, low-performing ESL learners often experience language anxiety, reduced confidence, weak motivation, and difficulty adapting to academic demands. This study focuses on collaborative learning, reflective practices, and psychological resilience among low-performing ESL learners in a Philippine local college, particularly learners whose English grades range from 75-81 under the grading system of a selected local college in Cavite.

1.1 Background of the Study: Collaborative Learning, Reflective Practices, and Psychological Resilience among Low-Performing ESL Learners

The academic performance of ESL learners in higher education is increasingly viewed as a multifaceted concern involving social interaction, metacognitive awareness, and psychological coping. In college and university settings, where academic expectations are demanding, effective pedagogical approaches are needed to support learners who struggle with language proficiency (Pontillo & Adriano, 2025). Recent studies emphasize that successful language learning extends beyond linguistic competence and is shaped by learners' interactions, reflective capacities, and ability to manage academic

challenges (Fan, Li, & Cui, 2025). Collaborative learning has gained attention because it promotes engagement, peer interaction, and knowledge sharing among ESL learners (Alzubi et al., 2024; Wu, 2023; Wulandari et al., 2024). Reflective thinking and self-evaluation also strengthen academic well-being, self-awareness, and self-improvement (Al-Rashidi & Aberash, 2024). Psychological resilience supports learners in coping with language-learning difficulties and sustaining academic persistence (Xu & Xu, 2025). Together, these variables provide a holistic basis for understanding how low-performing ESL learners manage learning challenges in higher education.

1.2 Related Literature on Collaborative Learning, Reflective Practices, and Psychological Resilience in ESL Learning

Research in Second Language Acquisition indicates that successful language learning is influenced by both social engagement and learners' internal psychological resources (Fan, Li, & Cui, 2025). Structured collaborative activities, including group discussions, peer-led tasks, and cooperative projects, enhance linguistic competence and social interaction among students (Alzubi et al., 2024). Collaborative learning also strengthens engagement, knowledge sharing, and academic performance through peer interaction and group activities (Wu, 2023; Wulandari et al., 2024; Almonia, 2023). As a cornerstone of modern classrooms, collaborative learning uses structured small-group discussions, peer tutoring, and joint problem-solving to help learners co-construct knowledge, share responsibilities, and support one another (Wu, 2023; Wulandari et al., 2024). Studies also show that formalized group activities such as Jigsaw and think-pair-share promote distributed knowledge and higher-order thinking skills (Cheng et al., 2022; Johnson & Johnson, 2021). Reflective practices enable learners to develop autonomy, self-awareness, and greater control over their learning processes (Al-Rashidi & Aberash, 2024). These practices help learners build metacognitive awareness and self-regulation by encouraging them to evaluate learning experiences and refine learning strategies, which is especially useful in ESL contexts (Al-Rashidi & Aberash, 2024; Aliyu et al., 2023; Razali et al., 2024). Reflection is a systematic, intentional, and continuous process of examining experiences, thoughts, emotions, and actions to improve future performance (Al-Rashidi & Aberash, 2024). It requires active engagement, critical thinking, and self-questioning to construct meaning, promote cognitive growth, and develop learner autonomy (Aliyu et al., 2023). In higher education, students who regularly reflect are better able to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning strategies (Suharto et al., 2025). As a component of self-regulated learning, reflection helps students adjust strategies, sustain effort, process academic stress, and transform mistakes into learning opportunities (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011). Psychological resilience enables learners to cope with academic challenges, maintain motivation, and adapt to difficulties, thereby supporting well-being and sustained engagement (Dalmış et al., 2025; Eumage & Rafols, 2024; Pontillo & Adriano, 2025). Resilience is understood as the capacity to cope with challenging circumstances, sustain well-being, recover from stress, and regain emotional balance. Within positive psychology, resilience emphasizes strengths and developable resources such as optimism, hope, and self-efficacy (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Smith et al., 2008). In higher education, resilience, emotional engagement, and coping resources predict academic achievement (Kotzé & Kleynhans, 2013). In ESL contexts, resilience protects learners from language anxiety, communication apprehension, and fear of negative evaluation (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). Resilient language learners are more willing to take linguistic risks, accept feedback, and persist despite errors because they view setbacks as part of the learning process (Oxford, 2017).

1.3 Local, National, and Global Context of Low-Performing ESL Learners in Higher Education

Within the Philippine educational context, collaborative learning is supported as an effective alternative to conventional individualized approaches. Local studies show that scaffolded collaborative activities, group investigations, and peer dialogues improve academic achievement, motivation, and problem-solving abilities (Almonia, 2023; Burgos, 2022; Santos et al., 2023). Active group engagement is also associated with stronger learner self-efficacy and deeper cognitive processing (Cagatan & Quirap, 2024; Mahilum & Escarlos, 2025). These findings position collaborative learning as an evidence-based model aligned with instructional equity, active engagement, and lifelong learning competencies. Low-performing ESL learners are described as students who struggle to master fundamentals and are unable to manage required learning tasks (Zohar et al., 2001, as cited in Vrapı, Alia & Brese, 2021). In this study, low-performing learners are identified based on the grading system of a selected local college in Cavite, particularly students with grades ranging from 75-81, which indicate developing or borderline mastery in English despite being passing marks. Globally, students with weak reading skills at age 15 are more likely to drop out of school and experience long-term disadvantages in education, employment, and social participation (OECD, 2016). This underscores the need to support ESL learners who have difficulty meeting literacy benchmarks in English. In the Philippine context, resilience factors such as coping strategies, self-efficacy, and social support contribute to improved academic outcomes and grade point averages among Filipino adolescents, as confirmed by Pagaoa, Uy-Gomes, and Antiporda (2024). These findings support the relevance of examining psychological resilience among low-performing ESL learners in local college settings.

1.4 Theoretical and Conceptual Basis of Self-Regulated, Socially Mediated, and Resilient ESL Learning

The study is anchored on theories explaining how cognitive processes and social interactions influence learners' development, behavior, and language-learning success. Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) Theory developed by Barry Zimmerman (2000) explains that self-regulation is a cyclical process involving forethought, performance, and self-

reflection (Panadero, 2017). The forethought phase involves task analysis and goal setting; the performance phase includes self-control and self-observation; and the self-reflection phase involves self-judgment and self-reaction (de la Fuente et al., 2022). In language learning, these processes allow students to set goals, monitor comprehension, regulate motivation, and evaluate their progress. The study is also grounded in Lev Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978), which explains cognitive development as a socially mediated process. A key concept is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), defined as the distance between what learners can do independently and what they can achieve with guidance from capable peers or instructors (Shabani, 2016). In ESL learning, collaborative tasks, peer interaction, dialogue, and scaffolding help learners bridge the gap between current performance and target language proficiency. The connection between Zimmerman's SRL Theory and Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory lies in the transition from socially supported learning to autonomous regulation. Self-regulation is first co-regulated and socially shared within the learner's ZPD (Hadwin et al., 2018). Learners develop forethought, strategic performance, and self-reflection through scaffolding, modeling, and feedback from instructors and peers (Quackenbush & Bol, 2020). As social speech and interpersonal prompts are internalized, they become the basis of self-control and monitoring. At the same time, highly self-regulated learners are better able to seek help, use feedback, and benefit from socially mediated learning tasks (Bransen et al., 2022). Conceptually, collaborative learning represents engagement in group activities, peer support, shared responsibility, and cooperative interaction. Reflective practices refer to intentional reflection on experiences, learning processes, and feedback to promote self-awareness and academic improvement. Psychological resilience refers to the learners' capacity to cope with challenges, persist through setbacks, and adapt in academic contexts. The framework assumes three relationships: collaborative learning and reflective practices, collaborative learning and psychological resilience, and reflective practices and psychological resilience. These relationships suggest that cooperative environments and structured self-regulation may strengthen coping mechanisms among low-performing ESL learners.

1.5 Research Gaps and Rationale for Examining the Relationships among the Three Variables

Although collaborative learning, reflective practices, and psychological resilience have been widely studied (Pardo-Tolentino & Aggabao, 2020; Radhamani & Kalaivani, 2021), existing research often examines these variables separately. This fragmented approach limits understanding of how the three factors collectively support students who struggle with English language skills. Limited studies have focused specifically on low-performing ESL learners in higher education institutions, even though these learners often experience language anxiety, low self-confidence, and difficulty adapting to academic demands. This study addresses the gap by determining the levels of collaborative learning, reflective practices, and psychological resilience among low-performing ESL learners in a Philippine local college. It also examines whether significant relationships exist between collaborative learning and reflective practice, collaborative learning and psychological resilience, and reflective practice and psychological resilience. Reflective practice is further examined in terms of Practical Reflection, Cognitive Reflection, Affective Reflection, and Metacognitive Reflection. The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design and purposive sampling to select low-performing ESL learners who met the established criteria. The instruments were adapted from validated sources: collaborative learning items from Fernandez-Rio and colleagues' cooperative learning questionnaire, reflective practice items from Rahimi and Weisi's study on reflective practice and self-efficacy among EFL teachers, and psychological resilience items from the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-25). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, and correlation analysis to determine the strength and direction of relationships among the variables.

1.6 Alignment with SDG 3, SDG 4, and SDG 8 in Supporting Low-Performing ESL Learners

This study aligns most directly with SDG 4 - Quality Education because it focuses on improving ESL learning experiences, academic engagement, reflective learning, and learner support for low-performing college students. By examining collaborative learning and reflective practices, the study supports inclusive and effective educational strategies that may help learners develop stronger academic skills and self-directed learning behaviors. The study also aligns with SDG 3 - Good Health and Well-Being because it examines psychological resilience, coping ability, motivation, emotional regulation, and academic well-being among ESL learners. Since low-performing learners may experience stress, anxiety, and reduced confidence, understanding resilience can contribute to learner-centered support that promotes both academic and emotional well-being. The study is also connected to SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth because weak literacy skills are associated with long-term disadvantages in education, employment, and social participation (OECD, 2016). By addressing challenges among low-performing ESL learners, the study may contribute to educational preparation that supports future employability and participation in society.

1.7 Importance of the Study to Educational, Socio-Economic, and Institutional Sustainability

The study contributes to educational sustainability by generating evidence on how collaborative learning, reflective practices, and psychological resilience relate to the learning experiences of low-performing ESL learners. Its findings may inform instructional strategies and targeted interventions that strengthen engagement, self-awareness, coping ability, and academic performance in ESL contexts. The study also supports socio-economic sustainability by addressing factors connected to language proficiency, academic persistence, and long-term participation in education and employment. Since students with weak literacy skills may face future educational and employment disadvantages (OECD, 2016), improving

support for low-performing ESL learners can help reduce learning barriers and strengthen learners' capacity for continued academic and social participation. In terms of institutional sustainability, the study provides local empirical data that may guide a selected local college in Cavite and similar higher education institutions in designing learner support systems responsive to the needs of low-performing ESL students.. By linking social learning, reflective regulation, and resilience, the study offers a multidisciplinary basis for developing inclusive, responsive, and evidence-based academic interventions.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a quantitative, descriptive-correlational research design to investigate the relationship between collaborative learning, reflective practices, and psychological resilience among low-performing ESL learners. It was quantitative because it measured the three variables using numerical data that could be statistically analyzed (Creswell, 2014; Williams, 2007). It was descriptive because it described the levels of collaborative learning, reflective practices, and psychological resilience through survey responses, and correlational because it examined the relationships among these variables without manipulating the study environment (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

2.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted at a selected local college in Cavite, Philippines. The institution's grading system was used as the basis for identifying low-performing ESL learners, particularly students whose English grades fell within the lower passing range. This local college context provided the setting for examining how collaborative learning, reflective practices, and psychological resilience relate to the experiences of students facing challenges in English language learning.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents were low-performing ESL learners classified according to the grading system of a selected local college in Cavite. Students with grades of 2.50 or 79-81 were described as "Satisfactory," those with 2.75 or 76-78 as "Fair," and those with 3.00 or 75 as having the minimum passing grade. Although these grades are passing, they represent the lower end of academic achievement and indicate developing mastery rather than full English proficiency. English proficiency in higher education includes academic communication skills such as reading comprehension, academic writing, and critical language use, yet some students who meet minimum passing requirements may still show limited proficiency in reading and writing (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001).

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study used purposive sampling to select respondents who met the criteria for low-performing ESL learners. This classification is supported by literature that distinguishes low-performing students based on academic achievement, learning behavior, cognitive strategies, and motivation. In the study of de Jong et al. (2017), low-performing students were identified as those who received a non-remediated final grade lower than 7 on a 10-point summative assessment scale and showed lower self-determination and less proactive feedback-seeking behavior. Similarly, Vrapı et al. (2021) defined low-performing students as those who scored below the low international benchmark of 400 points, showing basic procedural knowledge rather than deeper conceptual problem-solving skills. In Ghimire (2023), low-performing students were described as learners with lower academic achievement and persistent struggles in Mathematics due to less structured, less systematic, and passive learning habits. These studies justify the classification of low-performing students as a distinct academic, behavioral, and cognitive group. For low-performing ESL learners in a Philippine local college, this classification is important because they face complex language demands and may require targeted instructional scaffolding. This provides the basis for examining their collaborative learning, reflective practices, and psychological resilience.

2.5 Research Instrument

The study used a 47-item research instrument to measure collaborative learning, reflective practices, and psychological resilience. The instrument consisted of 10 items for collaborative learning, 12 items for reflective practices, and 25 items for psychological resilience. It was subjected to face and content validation by experts in language education, research, and statistics. Pilot testing was conducted with 30 low-performing ESL students from a local college. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The results showed .791 for collaborative learning, indicating acceptable internal consistency; .896 for reflective practices, indicating good internal consistency; and .924 for psychological resilience, indicating excellent internal consistency. The instrument used a 5-point Likert scale to determine the respondents' level of agreement or frequency of responses. For collaborative learning, the scale ranged from 1 as "Strongly Disagree" to 5 as "Strongly Agree." For reflective practices, the scale ranged from 1 as "Never" to 5 as "Always." For psychological resilience using the standardized CDRISC25, the scale ranged from 1 as "Not True at all" to 5 as "True nearly all the time."

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

Data were gathered through the administration of the research instrument to the selected respondents. Before participation, the respondents were informed about the rationale, purpose, risks, and benefits of the study. They were also provided with statements regarding anonymity and confidentiality in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The study used descriptive and inferential statistics. Weighted mean and standard deviation were used to describe the level of collaborative learning, the level of reflective practices in terms of practical, cognitive, affective, and metacognitive reflection, and the level of psychological resilience. Pearson's r Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the relationships between collaborative learning and reflective practices, collaborative learning and psychological resilience, and reflective practices and psychological resilience. The Shapiro-Wilk test was used to test the normality of the data distribution. Since the generated p values were greater than the alpha level of 0.05, the data were normally distributed. Visual inspection of the scatterplot also indicated a linear relationship among the variables, with data points reasonably distributed around the regression line. Boxplot inspection and standardized scores were examined to identify extreme outliers, and no cases exceeded the ± 3.29 threshold, indicating the absence of extreme outliers (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). Therefore, Pearson's correlation was considered appropriate for the study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Levels of Collaborative Learning, Reflective Practices, and Psychological Resilience

3.1.1 Level of Collaborative Learning among Low-Performing ESL Learners

The respondents demonstrated a very high level of collaborative learning, with an average weighted mean of 4.28 and a standard deviation of 0.389. The highest-rated indicator was the importance of sharing materials and information to accomplish tasks, followed by listening to the opinions and viewpoints of colleagues. Active participation, interaction among group members, and the belief that group success depends on individual contributions were also rated very high. The lowest-rated indicators, although still interpreted as high, were the idea that tasks cannot be completed without colleagues' contributions and decision-making during conflicts. These findings indicate that low-performing ESL learners possess strong collaborative learning behaviors marked by communication, cooperation, mutual respect, and shared responsibility. However, the lower ratings on dependence on colleagues and conflict-related decision-making suggest that some learners may still show partial independence or encounter minor difficulties in group processes. This result supports Chen et al. (2023), who found that collaborative learning enhances student engagement and academic performance through shared knowledge construction. It also agrees with Zhang and Cui (2022), who emphasized that peer interaction and cooperative strategies improve critical thinking and collective problem-solving skills.

3.1.2 Practical Reflection among Low-Performing ESL Learners

The respondents showed a high level of practical reflection, with an average weighted mean of 4.17 and a standard deviation of 0.623. The highest-rated indicator was observing classmates' use of English to learn strategies for improvement, which was interpreted as strongly agree. Keeping written records of English learning experiences was also strongly practiced, while discussing learning experiences with peers received the lowest rating but was still interpreted as agree. These results suggest that the respondents generally engage in reflective learning through observation, self-monitoring, and written reflection. However, verbal reflection with peers appears to be slightly less practiced than individual and observational reflection. This finding aligns with Nguyen and Le (2022), who found that reflective practices, particularly journaling and observation, improve language learning outcomes. It is also supported by Saito and Hanzawa (2021), who highlighted that reflective thinking helps learners develop greater awareness of their learning strategies and achieve better academic performance.

3.1.3 Cognitive Reflection among Low-Performing ESL Learners

The respondents demonstrated a high level of cognitive reflection, with an average weighted mean of 3.98 and a standard deviation of 0.691. The highest-rated indicator was reflecting on classroom experiences to understand strengths and difficulties in learning English. The use of various learning materials and strategies also received a positive rating, while participation in English-related workshops, tutorials, or support activities received the lowest score but remained within the agree range. These findings indicate that the respondents are cognitively engaged learners who analyze their learning processes, identify areas for improvement, and use different strategies to enhance performance. However, their lower participation in support activities suggests a need for stronger encouragement to engage in external academic support. This finding is supported by Panadero et al. (2022), which emphasized that cognitive reflection contributes to self-regulated learning and academic success. It also agrees with Lim and Kim (2023), who found that students who evaluate their learning strategies show improved problem-solving skills and academic achievement.

3.1.4 Affective Reflection among Low-Performing ESL Learners

The respondents demonstrated a high level of affective reflection, with an average weighted mean of 4.01 and a standard deviation of 0.615. They frequently reflected on their feelings toward learning English, especially during difficulty or failure, and considered whether they enjoyed or struggled with English learning activities. They also reflected on how their background, confidence, or motivation affected their English performance. These findings show that the respondents are emotionally aware of their English learning experiences. Their reflection on difficulties and failures aligns with Zheng's (2021) assertion that reflecting on learning failures serves as "constructive emotional labor," allowing students to view challenges as learning milestones rather than personal weaknesses. The result also supports Dörnyei and Ryan (2015), who emphasized that emotional self-evaluation is an important part of the "Psychology of the Language Learner." Likewise, Oxford's (2017) theory on affective strategies views the identification of emotional states as a key feature of self-regulated learning. The findings further suggest that continued reflection may help lower emotional barriers associated with anxiety and low motivation, consistent with Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis.

3.1.5 Metacognitive Reflection among Low-Performing ESL Learners

The respondents showed a high level of metacognitive reflection, with an average weighted mean of 4.13 and a standard deviation of 0.598. The highest-rated indicator was thinking about the importance of learning English for future studies or career, which was interpreted as strongly agree. The respondents also reflected on their personal learning goals, learning strategies, past learning experiences, attitudes, and motivation toward learning English. These findings indicate that low-performing ESL learners recognize English as important for academic and professional growth and are generally aware of their learning goals and strategies. This aligns with the Self-Determination Theory by Ryan and Deci (2017), which explains that learners become more motivated and metacognitively engaged when they view a task as personally meaningful for future goals. The findings are also consistent with Flavell (1979), who emphasized that metacognitive experiences are shaped by past successes and failures, and Schraw and Dennison (1994), who explained that the "Regulation of Cognition" allows learners to plan, monitor, and evaluate strategies. This also supports Anderson (2002), who argued that metacognition involves selecting appropriate strategies for specific tasks.

3.1.6 Overall Reflective Practices among Low-Performing ESL Learners

The respondents demonstrated a very high level of overall reflective practices, with an overall weighted mean of 4.07 and a standard deviation of 0.518. Practical reflection ranked highest with a weighted mean of 4.17, followed by metacognitive reflection with 4.13, affective reflection with 4.01, and cognitive reflection with 3.98. All domains remained within the very high range, indicating that the respondents consistently practiced reflection despite their academic challenges. These results suggest that low-performing ESL learners possess a strong reflective profile covering practical, cognitive, affective, and metacognitive dimensions. Their reflective orientation may help them monitor comprehension, regulate emotions, evaluate strategies, and persist in language learning. Although cognitive reflection ranked lowest, it still remained very high, showing that learners continue to analyze their understanding, strategies, and academic performance.

3.1.7 Level of Psychological Resilience among Low-Performing ESL Learners

The respondents exhibited a high level of psychological resilience, with an average weighted mean of 4.06 and a standard deviation of 0.536. The highest-rated indicator was the belief that they could achieve their goals despite obstacles, followed by making their best effort and not giving up even when hopeless. Belief that things happen for a reason and knowing where to find help during stress were also rated very high. Lower-rated indicators included feeling in control, preferring to lead in problem-solving, handling unpleasant emotions, and liking challenges, although these were still interpreted as high. These findings show that low-performing ESL learners possess emotional strength, perseverance, optimism, adaptability, and support-seeking behaviors. Their resilience may help them cope with language learning challenges and maintain engagement despite academic difficulties. However, the relatively lower ratings on control, leadership in problem-solving, emotional regulation, and openness to challenges suggest areas that may still need strengthening to support learners' self-efficacy and proactive coping.

3.2 Relationships among Collaborative Learning, Reflective Practices, and Psychological Resilience

3.2.1 Relationship between Collaborative Learning and Reflective Practices

The results showed that collaborative learning had weak positive and non-significant relationships with the dimensions of reflective practices. The highest correlation was between collaborative learning and metacognitive reflection, with $r = .316$ and $p = .089$, while the lowest was between collaborative learning and cognitive reflection, with $r = .211$ and $p = .262$. The overall relationship between collaborative learning and reflective practices was $r = .232$ with a p-value of .217, indicating a weak positive and non-significant relationship based on Evans (1996). These findings suggest that participation in collaborative learning does not necessarily increase reflective practices among the respondents. While social interaction may slightly encourage metacognitive reflection, the relationship was not statistically significant. This supports Rodgers (2002), who argued that collaboration leads to deep reflection only when supported by a structured environment designed for that purpose. It also agrees with Thompson et al. (2022), who suggested that collaborative tools often emphasize social

output more than the internal cognitive and affective processing required for higher-level reflection. Thus, collaborative learning and reflective practices may function as separate pedagogical components in the respondents' learning experience.

3.2.2 Relationship between Collaborative Learning and Psychological Resilience

The statistical findings revealed a significant positive relationship between collaborative learning and psychological resilience. Pearson's r value was .480, interpreted as a moderate correlation, with a p -value of .007, which was below the .05 level of significance. This indicates that as collaborative learning increases, psychological resilience also tends to increase. These findings imply that shared learning experiences may support learners' emotional and mental durability. Collaborative learning may provide peer support, shared responsibility, and group-based problem-solving that help students cope with academic stress. This result conforms with Raden (2026), who highlighted that collaborative environments foster belonging and well-being that help students manage pressure. It is also supported by Arriola and Beltran (2025), who noted that collaborative practices create a supportive instructional ecosystem that buffers the negative effects of academic stress. Similarly, Reyes et al. (2024) emphasized that collective problem-solving provides social resources that enhance individual resilience.

3.2.3 Relationship between Reflective Practices and Psychological Resilience

The results showed that all dimensions of reflective practices had significant positive relationships with psychological resilience. Affective reflection had the highest correlation with psychological resilience, with $r = .671$ and $p < .001$, followed closely by metacognitive reflection with $r = .665$ and $p < .001$, both interpreted as strong significant relationships. Practical reflection also showed a significant relationship with $r = .479$ and $p = .007$, while cognitive reflection had the lowest correlation with $r = .416$ and $p = .022$, interpreted as a moderate significant relationship. Overall, reflective practices and psychological resilience showed a moderate significant relationship, with $r = .479$ and $p = .007$. These findings indicate that reflective practices are strongly connected to psychological resilience, especially when learners engage in emotional and self-regulatory reflection. Affective reflection suggests that learners who process emotions effectively are more capable of handling stress, while metacognitive reflection shows that self-monitoring and awareness support adaptive problem-solving. Although cognitive reflection showed the lowest relationship, it remained significant, suggesting that all reflective dimensions contribute to resilience. Overall, the results emphasize that integrated reflective competence may strengthen learners' capacity to transform learning experiences into active coping, self-understanding, and persistence.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

The study concluded that low-performing ESL learners in a local college demonstrated a very high level of collaborative learning, particularly in mutual respect, resource sharing, cooperation, and collective responsibility, while still maintaining some degree of independence in completing tasks. They also showed very high overall reflective practices, especially in practical and metacognitive reflection, indicating that they actively monitor their learning strategies, recognize the value of English proficiency, and reflect on their emotions and motivation. The learners likewise exhibited a high level of psychological resilience marked by optimism, persistence, and goal-directed effort, although personal control, proactive problem-solving, and emotional regulation still require strengthening. The findings further showed that collaborative learning and reflective practices function independently, while collaborative learning is significantly related to psychological resilience and reflective practices are strongly linked to resilience, particularly through affective and metacognitive reflection.

Based on the findings, ESL instruction should adopt an integrated approach that combines structured collaborative activities with guided reflective practices to support the psychological resilience of low-performing ESL learners. Since reflective thinking does not automatically develop from group-based learning, strategies such as journaling, self-evaluation, and guided reflection prompts should be deliberately incorporated during and after collaborative tasks. Collaborative learning and reflective practices should be treated as distinct but complementary approaches. Future studies may examine teacher facilitation styles, instructional practices, and classroom implementation to better understand how these factors contribute to reflective thinking and emotional resilience. Experimental research designs may also be used to explore the causal relationships among collaborative learning, reflective practices, and psychological resilience.

The study was limited to undergraduate ESL learners at a selected local college in Cavite, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other local colleges, state universities, or private higher education institutions with different student profiles and resources. The participants were also limited to low-performing learners classified under the institution's grading system within the 2.50 to 3.00 or 75-81 percent range, so the results may not apply to average or high-performing ESL students. Methodologically, the study used purposive sampling and included only students who met the specific academic criteria during the data collection period. Since the study followed a quantitative, descriptive-correlational design, it identified only the existence and strength of relationships among collaborative learning, reflective practices, and psychological resilience and did not establish direct causality.

Compliance with ethical standards

The study observed ethical considerations by informing the respondents about the rationale, purpose, risks, and benefits of the study. Statements on anonymity and confidentiality were also provided in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

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