Printed Distance Learning Modality and Teaching Strategies in English in the New Normal

Aireen Angeles Aguirre-Lachica[1], Jesusa E. Pineda, Phd[2]

[1]San Antonio Elementary School, Philippines

[2]Carlos Hilado Memorial State University, Philippines, Orchid Id: 0000-0001-9190-4977

ABSTRACT: This qualitative study utilized the narrative approach to determine the advantages and disadvantages of printed modular distance learning in terms of lesson preparation and assessment of students' outputs based on the experiences of six teachers in a public elementary school in Negros Occidental in the School Year 2021-2022, the strategies they employed in lesson preparation and assessment of students' outputs, and the insights they gained into their strategies when they engaged in printed modular distance learning modality. The findings reveal the following: (a) Modules are readily available for the only advantage of the printed modular distance learning in terms of lesson preparation; (b) Students' outputs are well-thought-out for the only advantage of the printed modular distance learning in terms of assessment of students' outputs; (c) Lessons are inappropriate and lesson preparation is delayed for the disadvantages of printed modular distance learning in terms of lesson preparation; (d) The authenticity of students' outputs is dubitable for the only disadvantage of printed modular distance learning; (e) Be creative and flexible for the strategies employed by teachers in lesson preparation; (f) Verify the authenticity for the only strategy employed by teachers in the assessment of students' outputs; (g) Flexibility and creativity may make lesson preparation easy for the insights gained by teachers into their strategies in terms of lesson preparation; and (h) Time management and appropriate assessment tools may facilitate assessment of students' outputs for the insights gained by teachers into their strategies in terms of assessment of students' outputs. The teachers were able to prepare their lessons and assess their students' outputs despite the drawbacks of printed modular distance learning with effective strategies.

KEYWORDS: New Normal, Printed Distance Learning Modality, Teaching Strategies in English

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has compelled schools to adopt distance learning, which most teachers of English found challenging to implement. Indeed, COVID-19 has affected the education system to an undesirably great degree (Khan, Kamal, Illiyan, & Asif, 2021; Grynyuk, Kovtun, Sultanova, Zheludenko, Zasluzhena, & Zaytseva, 2022). As a result of the pandemic, distance education has become the principal means of teaching (Casacchia et al., 2021).

In the Philippines, the Department of Education and Commission on Higher Education exhorted educational institutions to engage in distance learning that gives students freedom in how, what, when, and where they learn, and blended learning, online learning, remote learning, modular learning, and a combination of these (Department of Education, 2020; Commission on Higher Education, 2020, as cited in Tugano, Tria, & Tonio, 2022). The different modes of learning that schools in the Philippines have adopted are the following: Modular (Printed), Modular (Digitized), Online, Educational TV, Radio-Based Instruction, Home Schooling, and Blended (Anzaldo, 2021, p. 263).

In particular, learners in rural areas have preferred modular (print) learning to other learning modalities since internet accessibility in such areas is impossible. Usually, learners are assisted by their parents or guardians, who function as their teachers (Anzaldo, 2021). The researcher is teaching in a public elementary school currently implementing printed modular distance learning. As observed, some teachers of English have encountered difficulties in the delivery of lessons, such as an insufficient number of printed modules, the urgency to create learning materials since some modules are not readily available, and students' poor reading comprehension of concepts presented in their modules.

Talimodao and Madrigal (2021), Dangle and Sumaoang (2020), Gueta and Janer (2021), Labrado, Labrado, Rosal, Layasan, and Salazar (2020), and Castroverde and Acala (2021) examined teachers' experiences in printed modular distance learning. However, none thoroughly investigated the strategies teachers employ in lesson preparation and assessment of students' outputs through printed modular distance learning. Hence, this study was conducted. This study will serve

as a basis for identifying the appropriate and effective strategies for preparing lessons and evaluating students' outputs through the printed modular modality.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
This study aimed to determine the teaching strategies employed by teachers of English for printed learning modality in the New Normal in an elementary school in Negros Occidental in the School Year 2021-2022.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
Research Design
To effectively address the research problem, this qualitative study utilized the narrative inquiry approach, which, to Trahar (2013, as cited in Wang and Geale, 2015), enables participants to share their experiences and investigates meanings that could be derived from such experiences. Narrative inquiry delves into the individual experiences of humans (Ford, 2020).

Narrative inquiry as a research design befitted this study that looked into teachers' experiences with the advantages and disadvantages of printed modular distance learning, their teaching strategies, and insights into such experiences. In particular, the participants' experiences with printed modular learning, the strategies they employed in lesson preparation and assessment of student learning, and the things they learned about their experiences were investigated.

Participants of the Study
Five female and one male teacher who taught English in a public elementary school in Negros Occidental in the School Year 2021-2022 took part in this study.

These six participants were the only teachers (aside from the researcher) in the small school where this study was conducted, so only they were considered to get involved. Throughout this study, the participants were presented under pseudonyms.

Data Gathering Instrument
This study utilized an interview protocol to inquire into the experiences of six elementary school teachers in teaching in the New Normal using the printed modular distance learning modality. The interview protocol asked the participants to include their sex, years of service, age, and degree. It consisted of questions about the advantages and disadvantages of printed modular distance learning, the teaching strategies that the participants employed, and their insights into their experiences.

To establish the validity of the interview protocol, the expertise of teachers of English was sought using the BRUSO Model for Writing Questionnaire Items. BRUSO stands for brief, relevant, unambiguous, specific, and objective. All three validators agreed that each interview protocol question was brief, relevant, unambiguous, specific, and objective.
To establish the trustworthiness of this study, the criteria set by Lincoln & Guba (1985, as cited in Korstjens & Moser, 2018) were used.

Data Explication
Braun and Clarke's (2006, as cited in Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017) thematic analysis was used to analyze the participants' responses to generate themes. Specifically, thematic analysis is "a method for analyzing, organizing, describing, and reporting themes found within a data set" (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017, p. 2).
The following are the stages of Clarke and Braun's thematic analysis:

1. Familiarizing Yourself with Your Data. The participants' responses were transcribed and carefully read to take note of essential ideas.

2. Generating Initial Codes. The notes taken down were examined to generate themes and to discover relationships among them.

3. Searching for Themes. Probable themes were gleaned from the salient information from the participants' responses.

4. Reviewing Themes. A thematic map of the analysis was created to check whether the identified themes were pertinent to the coded participants' responses and the complete information provided by the participants.

5. Defining and Naming Themes. Specific details about the themes were scrutinized to come up with clear labels and descriptions of the themes.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION
A. Advantages of Printed Modular Distance Learning in Terms of Lesson Preparation
The participants asseverated that the printed modular distance learning had benefits regarding lesson preparation.

Modules for the printed modular modality were readily available.
The participants claimed that they did not find preparing their lessons onerous since the modules that needed to be distributed among students were made ready for use by the Department of Education (DepEd).

Printed Distance Learning Modality and Teaching Strategies in English in the New Normal

Participant Brave averred, "In elementary, the modules were ready-made, which gives teachers the luxury of time in lesson preparation." Participant Love said, "The advantages of printed modular distance learning in terms of lesson preparation are that the lesson can be readily available." Participant Hope mentioned, "The readiness of the modules is one advantage." Participant Grace held that "In the distance, modular printed learning, the availability of the modules are time-saving in lesson preparation."

The fact that the participants reckoned the availability of modules an advantage indicates that they were nonchalant about preparing their lessons. The modules the participants gave their students were developed and made available by the Department of Education in the Philippines.

Self-learning modules (SLMs) based on the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MECS) were provided by the Department of Education in the Philippines to cater to the needs of Filipino students (Guiamalon, Alon, & Camsa, 2021) who were confronted with the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

B. Advantages of Printed Modular Distance Learning in Terms of Assessment of Students' Outputs
The participants held that the printed modular distance learning was beneficial in terms of assessment of learning

Students' outputs were well-thought-out.
The participants believed that the outputs of their students were carefully planned.
Participant Happy claimed, "The good thing about it is that, as a teacher, you will be amazed to see the outcome of your pupils' works." Participant Brave said, "In assessing the students' output, I can say that its pros are that you will get to see the willingness of the pupils to finish the task given."

This finding implies that the participants felt sure that their students were conscientious.

Nardo (2017, as cited in Betlen, 2021) held that modules developed in students a sense of responsibility through the tasks assigned to them. Anzaldo (2021) held that modular learning enables students to learn lessons. As a consequence, they can produce meaningful outputs.

C. Disadvantages of Printed Modular Distance Learning in Terms of Lesson Preparation
The participants claimed that printed modular distance learning had drawbacks vis-à-vis lesson preparation.
The participants asseverated that the lessons in the self-learning modules did not suit their students' needs and that they experienced delays in the distribution of modules for some apparent reasons.

The lessons in the modules were inappropriate.
Participant Happy said, "However, its major disadvantage is the lesson given were not fit for all the level of learners considering that each student's styles and level differ." Participant Faith held that "the disadvantage is as a teacher it is better if you will be able to prepare your lesson because you in the first place know the level, differences, and capacity of your learners…"

This finding suggests that though self-learning modules are well-prepared beforehand, a delay in their printing and distribution may occur, and the lessons developed may not suit the needs of students.

Talimodao and Madrigal (2021) found that teachers found some module activities inappropriate for the learners' needs and disagreed with the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCS) provided by the Department of Education.

Lesson preparation was delayed.
Participant Brave declared, "but its setback is that the uploading of ready-made modules in the google drive sometimes was late." Participant Hope averred, "but its disadvantage has to do with the equipment and supplies needed to print it to distribute the modules…"

In their study, Castroverde and Acala (2021) discovered that teachers considered insufficient financial resources and time for and lack of assistance in printing modules as drawbacks of printed modular learning. Additionally, Talimodao and Madrigal (2021) held that a need for more supplies and functional equipment for printing was regarded by teachers as a downside gleaned from printed modular learning.

D. Disadvantages of Printed Modular Distance Learning in Terms of Assessment of Students' Outputs
Despite its advantages, printed modular distance learning also had a drawback, according to the participants.

The authenticity of students' outputs was dubitable.
All six participants averred that the genuineness of the outputs of their students was questionable.
Participant Happy declared… "However, without your teacher seeing your pupils do their chores makes you doubt and wonder if they are the ones who did it." Participant Brave said …" But for some instances, you cannot tell if the pupils themselves did the answers." Participant Faith mentioned… "but its advantage is that teachers will have a hard time determining the authenticity of the output." Participant Love held …" And its disadvantage is that sometimes we do not know if the students made or created the output." Participant Hope claimed …" but its disadvantage is that its authenticity is questionable sometimes." Participant Grace averred, "For almost two years, I can say that it is hard to tell if the student does the output."

Printed Distance Learning Modality and Teaching Strategies in English in the New Normal

This finding indicates that all participants were surprised to find out the originality of the outputs their students would submit. Anzaldo (2021) held that teachers could not tell whether their students made their outputs. This finding is in congruence with the participants' assertion that the genuineness of the outputs their students submitted was at stake.

Strategies Employed by Teachers in Lesson Preparation

Be creative and flexible.

When asked how they dealt with the disadvantages of printed modular learning in terms of lesson preparation, all six participants asseverated that they needed to be creative and flexible.

This finding suggests that each of them believed they could surpass the challenges of preparing lessons for printed modular learning by customizing their learning activities and adapting techniques that would suit their students' needs. Raba (2017) claimed that effective teaching strategies produce desirable learning outcomes. Specifically, effectual teaching strategies can foster teamwork and active involvement among students, afford teachers opportunities to set high expectations that may stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning, and consider different learning styles and students' privilege to search for topics they find interesting.

Castroverde and Acala (2021) found that teachers would schedule their activities, balance their tasks, spend their own money, and request students to contact those without gadgets so that modular learning would be supported. Nedamo and Pineda (2021) divulged that teachers would engage in beneficial ways and means for the transfer of learning to be effective. Agayon, Agayon, and Penang (2022) discovered that teachers would spend their money communicating with their students to maintain the teaching-learning process. Roman (2021) mentioned that teachers would do home visitation, translate modules in Tagalog, contact their students through online group chats, carry out tutorials, and present videos to facilitate learning.

Strategies Employed by Teachers in Assessment of Students' Outputs

The participants utilized just one strategy to judge the value of each student's work.

Verify the authenticity of students' outputs.

To evaluate the outputs of their students, the participants would check whether those were genuine.

Agayon, Agayon, and Penang (2022) held that teachers monitored their students' progress. Nedamo (2021) declared that teachers made sure that the transfer of learning occurred among students. Raba (2017) stated that effective teaching strategies could provide teachers with opportunities to give feedback on students' learning.

Insights Gained by Teachers into their Strategies in Terms of Lesson Preparation

The participants understood that employing strategies in lesson preparation would lead to successful lesson delivery.

Flexibility and creativity make lesson preparation easy.

All six participants held that being flexible and creative could facilitate learning. This belief is evident in the following extracts from the participants' responses.

Overall, effective teaching strategies are tantamount to good learning outcomes as such encourage collaboration and learning by thinking among students, providing feedback about students' progress, and considering diverse learning styles (Raba, 2017).

Insights Gained by Teachers into their Strategies in Terms of Assessment of Students' Outputs

The participants were also aware that working out details about rating each student's work was favorable.

Time management and appropriate assessment tools may facilitate the assessment of students' outputs.

The participants claimed that being in charge of time and using suitable assessment tools may make evaluating students' outputs easy.

Teachers did scheduling activities and balancing tasks to deal with the drawbacks of printed modular learning (Castroverde & Acala, 2021). Assessing students' outputs indeed entails time management. Furthermore, the evaluation of the performance of students could be more straightforward if assessment tools are utilized. When schools were closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers would plan their activities (Nedamo, 2021) for assessment, one of the significant components of instruction, to be made more accessible.

CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of this study.

1. To the participants, printed modular distance learning was advantageous for lesson preparation because modules were available without delay. The assessment of students' outputs was beneficial since the students' work was well-thought-out. As for the disadvantages of printed modular distance learning, the participants discovered that the lessons in the modules were inappropriate and that preparing lessons seemed late. In addition, the originality of the students' outputs was a question vis-à-vis the assessment of students' outputs. The participants were creative and flexible when preparing lessons and checked the genuineness of their

students' outputs during the assessment process. The participants learned that flexibility and creativity might make lesson preparation easy and that time management and appropriate assessment tools may facilitate the assessment of students' outputs.

2. The Department of Education expends time and effort to produce ready-made self-learning modules. However, rigorous checking of the appropriateness of lessons and monitoring of prompt distribution may not be consistent. To address Filipino students' needs, the Department of Education in the Philippines had to develop self-learning modules based on the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCS) (Guiamalon, Alon, & Camsa, 2021). Unfortunately, Talimodao and Madrigal (2021) discovered that the modules were not congruent with the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCS) and contained activities that did not befit students' needs.

3. The students were determined to submit outputs, but authenticity was at issue. Nardo (2017, as cited in Betlen, 2021) held that modules helped students become responsible. Anzaldo (2021) claimed that modular learning enables students to learn lessons. As a consequence, they can produce meaningful outputs. However, she divulged that the participants in her study could not tell whether their students made their outputs.

4. Despite the drawbacks of printed modular learning, the teachers believed that lesson preparation and assessment of students' outputs would be facilitated if they employed effective teaching strategies. Raba (2017); Castroverde and Acala (2021); Nedamo (2021); and Agayon, Agayon, and Penang (2022) discovered that teachers might strategize to give rise to effective teaching and learning.

REFERENCES

1) Agayon, A. J., Agayon, A.K., & Pentang, J. (2022). Teachers in the new normal: Challenging and coping mechanisms in secondary schools. *Journal of Humanities and Education Development, Vol. 4, Issue-1.* https://www.theshillonga.com/index.php/jhed/article/view/296

2) Anzaldo, G. (2021). Modular distance learning in the new normal education amidst Covid-19. *International Journal of Scientific Advances Vol. 2, Issue 3.* https://www.ijscia.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Volume2-Issue3-May-Jun-No.79-263-266.pdf

3) Betlen, E. (2021). Effect of modular learning approach on the academic achievement of students. *Global Scientific Journals. Vol. 9, Issue 7.* https://www.globalscientificjournal.com/researchpaper/EFFECT_OF_MODULAR_LEARNING_APPROACH_ON_THE_ACADEMIC_ACHIEVEMENT_OF_STUDENTS.pdf

4) Cassachia, M. et al. (2021). Distance education during COVID-19: An Italian survey on the university teachers' perspectives and their emotional conditions. https://bmcmededuc.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12909-021-02780-y

5) Castroverde, F. & Acala, M. (2021). Modular distance learning modality: Challenges of teachers in teaching amid the Covid-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education, Vol. 10, No. 8, 7-15.* https://www.researchgate.net/profile/MichellAcala/publication/352746170_Modular_distance_learning_modality_Challenges_of_teachers_in_teaching_amid_the_Covid-19_pandemic/links/60d87dcf299bf1ea9ec46c1b/Modular-distance-learning-modality-Challenges-of-teachers-in-teaching-amid-the-Covid-19-pandemic.pdf

6) Dangle, Y.R. & Sumaoang, J.D. (2020). The implementation of modular distance learning in the Philippine secondary public schools. 3rd International Conference on Advanced Research in Teaching and Education. https://www.dpublication.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/27-427.pdf

7) Ford, E. (2020). Tell me your story: Narrative inquiry in LIS research. https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1249733

8) Guimalon, T., Alon, S.A., & Camsa, S. (2021). Teachers issues and concerns on the use of modular learning modality. http://ijasos.ocerintjournals.org/en/download/article-file/1878859

9) Grynyuk, s., Kovtun, O, Sultanova, L., Zheludenko, M., Zasluzhena, A., & Zaysteva, I. (2022). Distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic: The experiences of Ukraine's higher education system. https://academic publishing.org/index.php/ejel/article/view/2198

10) Gueta, M.F. and Janer, S.S., 2021. Distance Learning Challenges on the Use of Self-Learning Module. *United International Journal for Research & Technology (UIJRT), 2(7),* pp.58-71. https://uijrt.com/paper/distance-learning-challenges-use-self-learning-module

11) Khan, M.A., Kamal, T., Illiyan, A., & Asif (2021). School students' perception and challenges towards online classes during COVID-19 pandemic in India: An econometric analysis. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/351196875_School_Students'_Perception_and_Challenges_towards_Online_Classes_during_COVID-19_Pandemic_in_India_An_Econometric_Analysis

12) Korstjens, I. & Moser, A. (2017). Series: Practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4: Trustworthiness and publishing. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13814788.2017.1375092

13) Labrado, M.G., Labrado, I.P., Rosal, E., Layasan, A., & Salazar, E. (2020). Initial implementation of printed modular distance learning in the city of Naga-Cebu during COVID-19 pandemic https://www.journalcra.com/sites/default/files/issue-pdf/39921.pdf

14) Nedamo, N. & Pineda, J. (2021). Teaching in the new normal through the lenses of the English teachers. https://theshillonga.com/index.php/jhed/article/view/461

15) Nowell, L., Norris, J., White, D. & Moules, N. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria.https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320188032_Thematic_Analysis_Striving_to_Meet_the_Trustworthiness_Criteria

16) Raba, A.A.A. M. (2017). The impact of effective teaching strategies on producing fast and good learning outcomes. *International Journal of Research Granthaalayah.* https://www.academia.edu/31137752/THE_IMPACT_OF_EFFECTIVE_TEACHING_STRATEGIES_ON_PRODUCING_FAST_AND_GOOD_LEARNING_OUTCOMES

17) Roman, A. (2021). Experiences of teachers on using modular distance learning (MDL) in teaching mathematics during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Southeast Asian Journal of Science and Technology Vol., Issue 2*. https://www.sajst.org/online/index.php/sajst/article/view/171

18) Talimodao, A.J. & Madrigal, D. (2021). Printed modular distance learning in Philippine public elementary schools in time of COVID-19 pandemic: Quality, implementation, and challenges. https://philssj.org/index.php/main/article/view/391/211

19) Tugano, M., Tria, J.Z. & Tonio, J. (2022). Modular learning amidst COVID-19 pandemic: Satisfaction among students in a higher education institution. *International Journal of Professional Development, Learners and Learning.* https://www.ijpdll.com/download/modular- learning-amidst-covid-19-pandemic-satisfaction-among-students-in-a-higher-education-12075.pdf

20) Wang, C.C. & Geale, K. (2015). The power of story: Narrative inquiry as a methodology in nursing research. https://reader.elsevier.com/reader/sd/pii/S2352013215000496?token=B024B364E17C9DCB083D93AF48BAA40445DE93EEB4DD633082DF74D063A3969F058AA9215E66CAE82B9E1C41FE312CD3&originRegion=us-east-1&originCreation=20220628113008