EXTERNAL CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS AFFECTING THE IMPACTS OF ONLINE DISTANCE LEARNING ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF MACRO SKILLS AMONG GRADE 8 STUDENTS

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Abstract

Background: In terms of how learning is made to happen without face-to-face interaction, the two distance learning modalities-online and modular-are different. Online platforms like Google Meet and Zoom are used for video calls during Online Distance Learning (ODL), which combines teaching and learning. The study was decided upon by the researchers in the hopes of assisting schools, particularly teachers, in bettering the development of macro skills among students by offering appropriate activities aligned with their learning preferences and styles without compromising the standards and competencies set forth by DepEd and MELCs.
Methods: In this quantitative study, the effects of new normal learning modalities on the development of macro skills were evaluated, described, and differentiated using survey questionnaires and interviews as data-gathering instruments. Data collected through the descriptive-comparative survey approach was incorporated utilising concurrent nested design to support the data collected through multivariate analysis as the quantitative procedure.
Result: If given all the resources needed to qualify any modality, 100% of the ODL students would still choose ODL. The presence of MKO who'd give those supplements to the lessons and who'd be there to assess and monitor them, as well as the wider opportunities given in ODL where they could practice their productive skills justified their decision.
Conclusion: The teacher's competence in lesson content, planning and delivery affect the development of macro skills among ODL students. Parents' support affects ODL students' mental and emotional health.

Keywords: Learning Modality, Macro Skills, Online Distance Learning, Modular Distance Learning.

Background

EFL students' perceptions of online distance learning for enhancing English language learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, Hazaymeh (2021), was able to collect information from students about how they would rank the four skills based on how successfully they had mastered them in an ODL setting. Based on the results, 86.66% of the respondents who were students ranked the ability to read as the first skill they were able to successfully acquire through ODL. The listening skill was placed second among the four macro talents by 78.34% of the respondents, right behind the reading skill. 70% of students chose speaking as the third most successfully learned skill.

Hazaymeh and Tercan concurred after comparing the two research that not all four skills are developed equally in online and modular distance learning settings. However, the least successfully learned and developed skill varied between the two experiments. According to Hazaymeh's research, writing ability development appears to be falling behind for ODL.

However, Tercan's study's findings for MDL revealed that speaking ability is the least developed among the four talents. The aforementioned studies gave a foundation for understanding how ODL and MDL affected the growth of macro abilities. The following research were evaluated in order to get information of the potential elements that might influence the incidence of such impacts:

According to Lassoued et al.'s paper from 2020, An Exploratory paper of the Obstacles for Achieving Quality in Distance Learning During the COVID-19 Pandemic, there are a number of challenges that both teachers and students must overcome to ensure that distance learning is of a high standard. The researchers categorised the challenges into four primary groups, including human, pedagogical, technical, financial, and organisational challenges. The data acquired from the student and instructor responses showed a considerable variation in how they ranked the perceived barriers, according to the findings.

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By providing appropriate activities that are in line with students' learning preferences and styles while not jeopardising the standards and competencies established by DepEd and MELCs, the researchers hope to help schools, and more specifically teachers, improve the development of macro skills among students. By offering advice and suggestions based on their research findings, instructors and parents would be helped by this study in providing learners with the proper scaffolding, especially given the new learning modalities.

Methods
Research Design
This study aimed to ascertain the impacts of new normal learning modalities on developing macro skills among the grade 8 students of Calasiao Comprehensive National High School S.Y. 2020-2021. As quantitative research, it used survey questionnaires and interviews as data-gathering tools to assess, describe and differentiate the impacts of new normal learning modalities on developing macro skills. Using concurrent nested design, data gathered using descriptive-comparative survey method used was embedded to supplement the data gathered from multivariate analysis as the quantitative procedure. Both descriptive and experimental methods were used in the research study.

Respondents of the Study
In selecting the respondents for the study, the researchers applied multistage sampling, wherein they employed two sampling methods. The researchers first applied a purposive sampling method in choosing the school and the grade level. Calasiao Comprehensive National High School as the school selected for the study was chosen for aside from it being the largest school within the locale of the researchers, it also offers more than one distance learning modality. For the grade level (Grade 8 – S.Y. 2020-2021), such was chosen because they are the batch who experienced at least one (1) school year each for face-to-face and distance learning. Second, the researchers employed convenience sampling because of the time-frame allotted for the accomplishment of the study. Students and teachers who were readily available served as the respondents of the study.

In selecting the target number of respondents, the researchers made sure that the number of teacher and student-respondents under each learning modality is equal in order to assure the accuracy of treatment and analysis of data. Due to the limited time allotted for the accomplishment of the study, the set minimum requirement of twenty-five (25) respondents served as the basis of the researchers to decide on selecting (1) teacher-respondent and twelve (12) student-respondents under each learning modality to have a total of twenty-six (26) respondents.

Instruments of the Study
Teacher-respondents under each learning modality were made to answer a survey questionnaire regarding students' achievement of competencies set for each macro skill.

Student-respondents under each learning modality were made to answer a survey questionnaire wherein they will be assessing themselves with regards to their level of achievement of the competencies set for each macro skill.

Data Gathering Procedure
Seeking Permission to conduct the study. The researchers' first task was to ask permission from the school head of Calasiao Comprehensive National High School to allow them to conduct data-gathering procedures online.

Preparation of the Research Instruments. The researchers based the research instruments on the competencies stated in the MELCs and narrowed them down based on the skills they cover. The research adviser checked and validated the survey questionnaires and questions after they were created.

Data Processing Method
This study's data processing method took eight days. The researchers began by contacting the teachers whose names had been supplied by the English Department head. The researchers scheduled and conducted a separate Google meeting with the teachers after contacting them. In addition to the interview, it was ensured that the teachers completed the survey questionnaires.

Following the completion of data collection among teacher-respondents, the researchers requested a copy of the class list containing the names of the grade 8 students they had worked with the previous school year. For their convenience, the researchers were added to their former class messenger group chats. Before collecting data from student respondents, it was ensured that the students had no classes during that time period. To begin with the data-gathering, instructions and the link to the survey questionnaire were sent to the class messenger group chats. After five days, the survey questionnaire was able to receive twelve (12) responses for each learning modality. Lastly, data were then recorded and prepared for data analysis.

Results
1. Teacher
a. Mental and emotional health
"This is very much important- the support of the family. I have students na kapag hindi

napagtutuunan ang mental and emotional health, kahit gaano kagaling ang bata, wala, nawawala siya sa focus sa pag-aaral..."
"Napakaimportante ng mga magulang…"

The statements above were lifted from the interview with the ODL teacher-respondent. This shows that ODL students were directly affected by what's happening around them, especially in their families. Their academic performances were affected since they lose focus and carry the burdens in classrooms. She also stated that their skills and abilities wouldn't be maximized if they don't receive emotional support from their parents.

b. Students' personal factors
Students' personal factors such as students' low level of listening comprehension (initial competence), poor self-discipline towards learning, limited attention-span, as well as their low level of motivation set limitations to students especially in terms of their concentration which had a direct impact on their learning experience in virtual classrooms and in the development of their 4 macro skills.

c. Conduciveness of learning environment
Environmental factors such as noise pollution also affected the development of the 4 macro skills among students. According to the ODL students, having a learning conducive environment during online classes would positively affect their academic performance.

d. Teacher-related factors
Teachers' competence in lesson content, planning and delivery affect the development of students' 4 macro skills. Learners' content knowledge is directly dependent on the teacher being the class' MKO. Also, the learners' overall experience depends on teachers' ability to provide a variety of meaningful at the same time appropriate activities aligned with students' diversified needs, preferences and styles.

2. Students
a. Family and financial problems
MDL students answered that they weren't able to concentrate on answering their modules due to family problems. Aside from family problems, financial problems were also prevalent.

b. Answer from one of the MDL students: "No writing materials"
MDL teacher's statement: "Meron din kaming group chat kaso mahirap kasi na pilitin ang mga bata na mag-online kahit sabihin pa nating free data. May mga estudyante kaming walang-wala talaga. Kadalasan walang cellphone…"

Most of the MDL students don't have Internet access and solely rely on their modules. Some lacked even the basic writing materials such as pad paper and pen.

c. Module-related factors
The distributed modules were printed poorly and were congested which resulted in almost unreadable font size and small supplementary illustrations and pictures. Modules were given per unit so students couldn't really do an advanced reading even if they wanted to. It was also mentioned that there were also instances where some of the modules' pages were missing.

3. Students' preferred learning modality
If given all the resources needed to qualify any modality, 100% of the ODL students would still choose ODL. The presence of MKO who'd give those supplements to the lessons and who'd be there to assess and monitor them, as well as the wider opportunities given in ODL where they could practice their productive skills justified their decision.

On the other hand, 33.33% of the MDL students answered that they'd shift to ODL if the lack of resources wasn't an issue. This was for them to have a more in-depth explanation on their topics and have a teacher guide them. While 66.66% of the MDL students would still choose their current modality because of its flexibility.

Conclusion
The teacher's competence in lesson content, planning and delivery affects the development of macro skills among ODL students. Parents' support affects ODL students' mental and emotional health. The learner's learning environment and resources directly affects his capacity to concentrate or stay motivated. The quality of learning materials (modules) greatly affect students' capacity to develop such skills.

Conflict of Interest
The authors declare that there are no significant competing financial, professional, or personal interests that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this manuscript.

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