

Research Article

Modular Distance Learning Modality in Creative Writing among Students of Lobo Senior High School

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Abstract: The study “Modular Distance Learning Modality in Creative Writing among the students of Lobo Senior High School” aimed to determine the experience of the students during Modular Distance Learning Modality and whether it had been an effective way in the subject Creative Writing with Written Tasks, Performance Task and Summative Assessment, to enhance the process of this modality to further improve the learning of the students in Lobo Senior High School. The researchers made use of descriptive method in this study. A survey questionnaire was distributed to 59 students which describe their experience in learning Creative Writing under a Modular Distance Learning. The research findings revealed that students “Agree” that Modular Distance Learning had been effective in carrying out their subject, Creative Writing. The significance of this research is to guide students into meaningful learning and to enhance their academic performance under Modular Distance Learning.

Keywords: Performance, Learning, Modular Distance Learning.

Introduction

Education is the most important tool in life. Struggles and challenges tested the resiliency of education in the Philippines. As the Covid Pandemic enveloped the globe, the whole world is put into a full stop. Pursuant to DepEd Order No. 12 S. 2020 or “Adoption of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan for School Year 2020-2021. Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) under the Department of Education Order No. 012, s. 2020 aims to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of the learners, teachers, and personnel in the time of COVID-19, while finding ways for education to continue amidst the crisis. In particular, the BE-LCP has been designed with a legal framework responsive to the “new normal,” keeping in mind the constitutional mandate to uphold the right of all citizens to quality education at all times. In Light of the Covid-19 Public Health Emergency” it stands on the principle that ensures learning continuity through K-12 curriculum adjustments, alignment of learning materials, deployment of multiple learning delivery modalities, training of school heads and teachers, and orientation of parents and learners. In the Philippines, ensuring the welfare of more than 27 million learners in basic education alone requires indomitable commitment especially amidst this crisis. However, UNESCO reiterates its stand in spite of the circumstances: “Education cannot wait. If learning stops, we will lose human capital.” Meeting the needs of the most vulnerable populations during these times is essential to achieving SDG4 (UNESCO, 2017). Consequently, the Bureau of Curriculum Development ensures that learning standards are relevant and flexible to address the complex, disruptive, volatile, and ambiguous impact of COVID-19 in the Philippines particularly in the basic education sector.

(Talaue, 2021) stated that the Department of Education (DepEd) in the Philippines offered two alternative distance learning modalities, namely, pure online and hybrid (online and offline), which were supplemented with contextualized and standardized self-learning modules (SLM) crafted by teachers for each region of the country. Working on the said premise, the Department came up with the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) to be used nationwide by field implementers for SY 2020-2021. In addition, the DepEd generated the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELC) as a way of decongesting the curriculum and making schooling during the pandemic less stressful (DepEd, 2020a). The MELC-aligned SLM is the backbone of distance learning aimed at making education accessible to students, both online and offline, most especially to those who live in far-flung rural areas without internet access (DepEd, 2020b). The release of the MELCs is not just a response to addressing the challenges of the current pandemic but is also part of the Department's long-term response to the call of SDG4 to develop resilient education systems, most especially during emergencies.

Different Learning Delivery Modalities were introduced and made meaning. Among the modalities are: Online Delivery Modality, Modular Distance Learning Modality, TV- Based Instruction, Radio-Based Instruction and Blended Delivery Modality. Each region conducted a survey in order to get the pulse of the parents, learners and other stakeholders for the Department of Education to decide which Learning Delivery Modality is most suited and applicable with the resources that each region have. Since the Philippines ranked lowest among the countries of the world when it comes to internet connectivity, and insufficiency of gadgets as tools for the online learning is already a problem, the most applicable is the modular distance learning modality in CALABARZON. Modular Learning is the most popular type of Distance Learning. This learning modality is currently used by all public schools because according to a survey conducted by the Department of Education (DepEd), learning through printed and digital modules emerged as the most preferred distance learning method of parents with children who are enrolled this academic year. Bernardo, (2019). This is also in consideration of the learners in rural areas where internet is not accessible for online learning. The distribution of print and digitized SLM would facilitate distance learning with minimized risks of COVID-19 infection among students and school personnel.

Modular Distance Learning is a kind of learning delivery modality adapted by the Department of Education in times of pandemic. It is an alternative learning delivery mode in which students are given self - learning modules for them to learn at their own pace. A WHLP or a weekly home learning plan serves as the student guide in budgeting their time for each subject per day. Since the students adapt a learning delivery which is new to them, it is the utmost responsibility of the teachers to know the challenges they experienced in order to provide the best learning experience in spite of the modality used. Ensuring the quality of education is still the ultimate goal and the top most priority of the teachers. Creative Writing is one of the specialized subject in the HUMSS Strand of Senior High School. The subject gives the students the ability to showcase their creative writing skill; enhance their communication proficiency; develop a positive self- identity and gain confidence and most of all it gives them the academic avenue to express themselves. These are the significance of the subject which needs to be established among the 21st century learners. It is for this reason that the researchers conducted this study to know the experiences and challenges encountered by HUMSS 12 students of Lobo Senior High School in the Modular Distance Learning in Creative Writing. It will be easy for the teachers to provide a better approach in delivering the subject once this study is conducted.

Research Objectives

This action research aimed to study Modular Distance Learning Modality in Creative Writing among the students of Lobo Senior High School. More specifically, the study attempted to answer the following issues: Describe the Modular Distance Learning Modality in Creative Writing pertaining with the delivery of the instruction and submission of outputs; What are the challenges encountered by the students in the answering these parts of assessment in Creative Writing, namely: written tasks,

performance tasks and summative assessment? Determine the academic level of students in Creative Writing. Lastly, the plan of activities which can be proposed for the delivery of Creative Writing among students under the Modular Distance Learning?

Research Methodology

This research utilized descriptive design in quantitative approach. The 59 Students who served and participated as respondents of this study were Grade 12 HUMSS Students of Lobo Senior High School during the School Year 2021-2022. It employed random sampling technique in identifying the number of students as Creative Writing is a Specialized Subject for the HUMSS Strand.

Survey questionnaire was the major data gathering instrument in this research. It was validated by experts in education and was subjected to reliability testing. Descriptive statistical tools like frequency, percentage, ranking, and weighted mean were used in treating and analyzing the data.

Scoring for the Student Experience on Modular Distance Learning in Creative Writing

Range	Verbal Interpretation
4.01–5.00	Strongly Agree
3.26–4.00	Agree
2.51–3.25	Neither Agree nor Disagree
1.76–2.50	Disagree
1.00–1.75	Strongly Disagree

Results and Discussion

This part covers the presentation, interpretation and analysis of the data gathered by the researcher. Dangle and Sumaoang (2020) concluded on their research that the great number of activities in each module is one of the main problems that emerged in the implementation of Modular Distance Learning.

The Department of Education should consider this problem, reduce the activities, and take out the unnecessary topics so that mastery will be attained as much as possible. As what some of the parents said, the lesser the better. One of the concerns of the students is that they do not have enough time to answer all the modules within a week. Therefore, if DepEd cannot extend the duration of accomplishing the modules, they must lessen the activities.

Table 1. Description of Students' Experiences in regards with the Delivery of Instruction in Creative Writing

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
I can understand the instructions in the LAS very well	3.83	Agree	1.5
I am well instructed on how to answer the activity sheets	3.02	Neither Agree nor Disagree	5
I am aware of the topics in learning activity sheets	3.83	Agree	1.5
I comprehend the transition from one topic to another in our subject	3.71	Agree	4
I can say that there is a smooth process of the delivery of lessons under the modular distance learning	3.78	Agree	3
	3.63	Agree	

From table 1 it could be observed that the indicator with highest mean are numbers 1 and 3, **“I can understand the instructions in the LAS very well”** and **“I am aware of the topics in learning activity sheets”** while the lowest mean is indicator 2, **“I am well instructed on how to answer the activity sheets”**. But then with the composite mean of 3.63 with the verbal interpretation of “Agree”, still the students express a positive experience overall when it comes to the delivery of instruction with the subject. This is in contrast with the findings of Amboyan (2019) in which in his study modular instruction is more effective in teaching learning method compared to usual teaching approaches because in this modular approach the students learn at their own stride. Apparently, students need the teachers to facilitate the lesson to learn effectively.

Table 2. Description of Students’ Experiences in regards with the Submission of Learning Activity Sheets in Creative Writing

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
I am in favor of the 3-week time submission of outputs	3.98	Agree	2
I am given enough time to answer my activities in Creative Writing	3.90	Agree	3
I think that the number of activities per week in Creative Writing is acceptable	4.00	Agree	1
I can finish answering all the given activities on the submission date given	3.86	Agree	4
I can work independently on my own given the time of submission	3.78	Agree	5
	3.90	Agree	

Table 2 presents the submission of their outputs in Creative Writing. Indicator number 3, **“I think that the number of activities per week in Creative Writing is acceptable”** has the highest weighted mean of 4.00 while the indicator with the lowest is number 5, **“I can work independently on my own given the time of submission”**. This result revealed that the greatest challenge under the Modular Distance Learning is the student’s lack of independence on answering the activities on their own. Though time has not been their problem as they were given 3 weeks to submit their outputs. From the study of (Sadiq *et al.*, 2014) it was proven that Modular as a way of teaching is more effective in teaching learning process as compared to ordinary teaching methods. The modular approach helps to maximize the chances of student participation in the classroom in respect to fulfil the given tasks at the spot, so the students feel free to learn in their own style.

Table 3. Challenges encountered by the students in Written Works of Creative Writing

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
I can understand clearly the activities like imagery, literary devices and elements of a short story	3.95	Agree	1
I find the writing activities like essay and reflection writing easy to answer	3.73	Agree	5
I can comprehend the topics such as poetry, fiction and drama and answer on my own	3.80	Agree	3
I ask the teacher when I have some questions regarding the activities	3.85	Agree	2
I learn and understand better in Modular Distance Learning Modality	3.76	Agree	4
	3.82	Agree	

This table revealed the experiences of the students in answering the Written Works of their Learning Activity Sheets in Creative Writing. Out of 5 correct item.

The indicator which has the highest weighted mean is number 1” **I can understand clearly the activities like imagery, literary devices and elements of a short story**” while the lowest is indicator 2, **“I find the writing activities like essay and reflection writing easy to answer”**.

The composite mean is 3.82 which shows how students express their positive experience in Modular Distance Learning in Creative Writing. Malik (2012) stated that the teaching approach in modularized program should allow students to proceed at their own pace, give opportunity to choose their own learning style, and allow them to identify their strengths and weaknesses. They stressed that modular instruction requires instructors to check students’ learning progress regularly with feedbacks.

Table 4. Challenges encountered by the students in Performance Tasks of Creative Writing

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
I can understand easily the activities to be performed	3.78	Agree	4
I am well instructed on how to answer the performance task such as writing a short story and developing a one-act-play in our LAS	3.85	Agree	2
I follow the rubrics in order to create my own short story in Creative Writing	4.03	Strongly Agree	1
I am able to fix my confusion in the lesson by asking a classmate or my teacher	3.66	Agree	5
I can independently answer on my own using the Modular Distance Learning Modality in Creative Writing	3.81	Agree	3
	3.83		

Table 4 below presents the challenges in answering the Performance Task in Creative Writing. The researcher made use of five items in characterizing student’s experience in answering Performance Tasks in Creative Writing. It could be seen from the results obtained that indicator no.3 **“I follow the rubrics in order to create my own short story in Creative Writing”** obtained the highest weighted mean which was 4.03 with the verbal interpretation of Strongly Agree.

The Performance Task of the student is the culmination of their learning for the particular topic which is recorded by the teacher. It is significant to know that students understand the importance of rubric in doing their task. While the indicator which has the lowest weighted mean is indicator 4 **“I am able to fix my confusion in the lesson by asking a classmate or my teacher”** with 3.66 weighted mean.

This shows that students Agree that they were able to seek for assistance in their teacher and classmates has it been a necessity to ask them about the lessons in the subject. They have to provide the student with immediate and continuing feedback. They further underlined that the purpose of assessment in modularized program includes assessment of prerequisite skills, the diagnosis of difficulties, and a confirmation of mastery. Moreover, it should consider individual difference by providing flexibility with respect to the pacing, format, and contents of the instruction (Hernandez, 2012).

Table 5. Challenges encountered by the students in Summative Assessment of Creative Writing

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
I can easily answer the summative assessment in Creative Writing	3.78	Agree	4
I am guided properly by my teacher or by my classmate in answering it	3.90	Agree	2
I can answer independently on my own	3.69	Agree	5
I am given enough time to answer the summative test	4.00	Agree	1
I am confident that my answer is acceptable and correct	3.80	Agree	3
	3.83	Agree	

The highest weighted mean is indicator 4, **“I am given enough time to answer the summative test”** with the verbal interpretation of “Agree” while the lowest is indicator 3, **“I can answer independently on my own”** with weighted mean of 3.69. Although they have the same interpretation, the table shows that students still need the teacher to facilitate the instruction to guide the students in answering their summative assessment.

Table 6. Learner’s Academic Performance in Creative Writing

Academic Performance	Interpretation	Frequency	Percentage
95-99	Outstanding	0	0
90-94	Advanced	12	20
85-89	Proficient	15	25
80-84	Approaching Proficiency	24	41
75-79	Developing	8	14
Below 75	Beginning	0	0
	Total	59	100

In this table, the academic performance of the student respondents was described. Out of 59 respondents, the most number 24 or 41% are students who are Approaching Proficiency and has grades from 80-84, this is followed by 15 students or 25% who have Proficient level from 85-89. While there are 12 students or 20% which are under Advanced level and has academic performance of 90-94. While only 8 students or 14% is under Developing level or 75-79. This shows that majority of the student respondents are on the Approaching Proficiency or Proficient level or students who are doing well in the subject Creative Writing. The result is in line with the result of a study conducted by of Creus and Angeles (2019) where they found out that Module-based localized learning materials resulted to increase performance of most learners. The academic performance involves factors such as the intellectual level, personality, motivation, skills, interests, study habits, self-esteem or the teacher-student relationship.

Conclusion

The students have a positive experience in the delivery of instruction and the submission of their outputs provide an easy avenue given the time spent in answering their learning activity sheets in Creative Writing under the Modular Distance Learning. It was found out that Independence in answering the Learning Activity Sheets in Creative Writing on their own is the biggest challenge that students encountered in Modular Distance Learning as they still need the guidance and facilitation of their teacher to clearly validate their learning and apply those into written outputs. The written works, performance tasks and summative tests are easy for the students since they follow the rubrics and the time spent in answering is long enough for them. The results showed that the academic performance of the respondents are “Approaching Proficiency” from 80-84 which comprise 40% of

the respondents. There is no significant relationship between the level of academic performance and the challenge they encountered in Modular Distance Learning in Creative Writing. It is important to take note that guiding the students in understanding the Most Essential Learning Competency in Creative Writing is the basis for the plan of activities for a better approach in Modular Distance Learning in Creative Writing.

Recommendation

The three week delivery and retrieval shall need to be continued as it gives the students ample time to answer their activities. Guidance and facilitation of the teachers to the students from time to time should need to be done more conscientiously in order to help the students in answering the tasks assigned to them. Also, the students need to be properly informed of the significance of the written works, performance tasks and summative assessment in evaluating their performance in Creative Writing. School administrators and teachers shall employ the result of this study in creating a concrete plan in strengthening Modular Distance Learning to improve the academic performance of students. For the plan of activities: A systematic Delivery and Retrieval of Modules and the process of Modular Distance Learning through School Learning Resources Evaluation and Assessment Team shall be improved through action plan in order to aid learners in improving their academic performance in all subject learning areas amidst pandemic. Module evaluation, assessment, providing meaningful feedback to students should give them a guide in answering their modules no matter how short or long they were given their time in answering their activities. A smooth process is therefore what makes Modular Distance Learning a success both for the teachers and students and to the school in general. Lastly, the result of this study shall be properly communicated and disseminated to all concerned for information and guidance.

Conflicts of interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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