

The Development of English Modules in Senior High School: The Teachers' Journey

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Abstract

The study focused on the journey of senior high school teachers of English in developing modules during the pandemic. In addition, it used the phenomenological approach, specifically the hermeneutic phenomenological method of inquiry. The informants of the study are the seven Senior High School English teachers in DepEd Cebu City Division. Moreover, the study made use of the Collaizi method to analyze the data. The study yielded three core themes which are (1) the Genesis, (2) the Acts, and (3) the Fruits of Labor. Similarly, the study concluded that the module writers' journey was arduous due to the various challenges they faced, but they nonetheless executed their task of ensuring quality education despite the pandemic.

Keywords: Module writers, pandemic, phenomenology

1. Introduction

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic caused worldwide disruption in all sectors, including the educational sector. The daily routine of social interaction and face-to-face learning activities were now prohibited to avoid further community transmission. This resulted in a school shutdown which affected over a billion students globally. Even with the current dreadful situation caused by the pandemic, English teachers still want to ensure that the students' education will not be put on hold. As a result, there was a redrafting of English language teaching. Subjects like writing and literature are now taught using distance learning. Teaching modalities, from face-to-face classes to modular and online lessons, are now being utilized and with the founding of these new modalities arises a heavy burden to the teachers teaching those subjects.

Furthermore, teachers are burdened with various tasks as a result of the pandemic, including designing modules, duplicating them, and ensuring that each student receives a copy. In addition, the teacher must collect the modules and assess the students' performance after they have completed them, and this must be done every week. Being a teacher in the COVID-19 pandemic is difficult, and completing all of the tasks necessitates perseverance.

The Department of Education delayed the start of normal classes to battle the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic but did not opt for an academic freeze, despite the requests of parents, some of which had lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic. The Department of Education was able to offer distance learning as a result of this. In addition, policies were developed to ensure the stakeholders' continued adherence, with a particular focus on teacher and student training in educational and preventive policies such as providing alternative delivery modes of education and quarantine requirements. This assures that, even if the pandemic occurs, students can continue their studies at home without jeopardizing their health or safety. "Adoption of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan (BE-LCP) for School Year 2020-2021 given the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency," according to DepEd Order (DO) No. 012, s. 2020.

To ensure that students continue to have access to learning opportunities while also safeguarding the health and safety of both staff and learners, various learning delivery modalities (LDMs) will be used by the Department of Education. Despite the hurdles it had in adapting to the quick and drastic shift to distance learning, the said department eventually surmounted them. Furthermore, the Department

of Education recommended using online learning as well as modular learning as a way of distance learning in both private and public institutions.

According to Ali et al. (2010), a learning module is a collection of learning opportunities. It is organized around a comprehensible topic and incorporates specific objectives, aspects of instruction, teaching-learning activities, and an evaluation based on criteria. Because each learner paces his or her own learning according to his or her own needs and abilities, they are effectively self-sufficient, self-instructional products. A learning module might be a sole content topic or a collection of content topics that make up a distinct subject matter unit. Additionally, students are given self-learning courses during the pandemic (SLMs). The SLMs are distributed to the learners' parents or guardians. Students are given a set amount of time to complete the activities. The activity sheets must be presented to the teachers or picked up at a specified retrieval area when the allotted time for responding to the SLMs has passed.

After completing the first set of SLMs, students will be handed additional activity sheets. This configuration will ensure that, despite the threat of the coronavirus, pupils' education will not be jeopardized (Magsambol, 2020). Similarly, Olivo (2021) stated that teaching in the new normal is difficult. Teachers have spent sleepless nights printing the modules for distribution to the students' homes, which is a sacrifice. In today's new normal, these modules are critical teaching tools, therefore teachers ensure that these printed materials will meet the needs of their pupils even if they are not present.

As attested by the researcher's personal experiences, teaching in the traditional classroom setup is already tricky given that the students are at a different pace of learning, and things even became worse with the threat of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional researches were conducted on the effectiveness of the modules as a pivotal instructional material in today's new standard of learning. However, fewer to no studies were achieved regarding teachers' experiences who were tasked to be module writers. Likewise, frameworks and works of literature in module writing are still

unavailable to guide teachers in developing modules for their students. Furthermore, many students and parents complain about the quality of the module being used, even becoming viral on social media.

In line with these views, the researcher, being an English teacher, is determined to explore the experiences of English teachers tasked to write modules in the Senior High School Department and address the gaps in knowledge regarding the teacher's journey in developing the modules used by their students. This paper aims to share with the community the teachers' sacrifices to guarantee that students can still access Education despite this difficult time.

Review of Related Literature

The following literature and study have a direct and indirect bearing on the current study. Moreover, the literature and studies are categorized into English language teaching and module writing, the transition from face-to-face to remote learning, experiences of teachers in the pandemic, flexible learning modalities, and Dep-Ed memorandum.

English Language Teaching and Module Writing

It is obvious that English has evolved into a lingua franca that allows speakers of different first languages to communicate (Seidlhofer, 2005). (Brumfit, 2004). According to Kirkpatrick (2011), the number of colleges that utilize English as a medium of teaching has expanded in tandem with English's changing status as an international language. Furthermore, the K-12 English Curriculum was created in response to pupils' low performance in various areas. It is based on the idea that language, thinking, and learning are all intertwined, and that language is the bedrock of all human interactions. Its ultimate purpose is to produce multiliterate and communicatively competent pupils capable of competing in today's highly competitive economy (Department of Education, 2016).

Additionally, the new k12 English curriculum is less congested than previous English curricula because students are no longer required to master the least learning standards and competencies in ten years; instead, those are taken in twelve. Students study less learning abilities annually in a 12-year primary school

curriculum. Meanwhile, increasingly sophisticated English courses are offered as core subjects in senior high school.

In addition, one excellent component of the present English curriculum is the establishment of multiple requirements that students at all levels must meet. These criteria, on the other hand, fail to adequately represent the advancement of 21st-century qualities like innovative thinking, technological literacy, effective communication, and high productivity. These standards are solely concerned with strengthening language abilities and comprehension of literature in order to obtain a better understanding of Philippine culture as well as other cultures throughout the world. This illustrates that effective communication is an important part of 21st-century skills (Barrot, 2018). Along with these developments, the English curriculum is being evaluated and modified in order to take the initiative in developing a population of English-speaking talent. For a variety of reasons, several textbook authors and educators have stated that they are having difficulty adopting the new English curriculum. Teachers, for example, remarked that they were unsure how-to re-plan their classes in light of the curriculum changes.

Some authors claimed it was difficult to incorporate the required weekly competencies into a single condensed and coherent lesson when it came to textbook authoring. One reason for these challenges is a degree of uncertainty and accuracy in the curriculum. Teachers must understand the curriculum's underlying principles and significance for instructional strategies, as well as the pedagogical approaches it promotes before they can successfully implement it (Rahman, 2014) (Wang et al., 2008). As a result, the new English curriculum must be succinct, explicit, and consistent, as well as adhere to well-established pedagogical concepts like 21st-century learning. Whereas transparency, specificity, consistency, and adherence to 21st-century language learning principles are important elements of effective curriculum implementation, they may not be enough to improve language instruction.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, several modifications were made in the field of education to help contain the disease's spread.

Reynolds (2020) further stated that the pandemic's impacts are sweeping the globe, affecting billions of pupils whose schools have been closed, leaving them, their families, and teachers in disbelief. For some, online learning is a major loss, while for others, it is a challenge, with many issues with online networks, psychosocial well-being, and motivation. These issues lead to a potentially catastrophic vacuum in school-based demand planning and alternative management throughout the broader education sector. In addition, Measures were created to guarantee that stakeholders maintained to follow instructional and preventive policies aimed primarily at teachers and students, such as the availability of alternative delivery modalities of education and quarantine regulations. the year 2020 (Department of Education).

In their classes, English teachers were forced to employ a distance learning strategy. They were using the synchronous or asynchronous way of communication. The modular learning technique is the most popular, in which teachers create their own modules and distribute them to their pupils. One of the most extensively utilized and well-known teaching-learning approaches in the world is modular teaching. Modular Education is employed in almost every subject, including biological sciences, political science, and information science. Modules are used to teach a variety of subjects. Modular learning is also a fairly novel concept based on the eminent phenomenon of virtual learning (Sejpal, 2013).

In connection, modules are comparable to self-instructional module bundles in that each student paces their learning according to their individual needs and skills. A module is a distinct subject matter unit that includes one content component or a group of content features. It serves as a training technique focusing on the discrete development of skills and information, as well as a virtually self-contained unit of work in the course of training. (Taneja, 1989). Similarly, it is a compilation of educational activities centered on a distinct subject that comprises educational fundamentals, teaching-learning activities, specified objectives, and criterion-referenced assessments for evaluation. (1988, UNESCO).

Additionally, while the majority of learning module packages are totally customizable, group experiences can be included. The primary motivation for incorporating modules into the teaching-learning process is to aid in the resolution of critical educational difficulties. This is primarily due to the fact that they fit the essential prerequisites for efficient learning and may be applied in a variety of ways. Individual differences are considered, and students can work at their own pace (Ali, Ghazi, Khan, Hussain & Faitma, 2010). According to Loughran and Berry (2000), people learned best through their own time because listening isn't learning and telling isn't teaching. However, learning and then communicating ideas is a two-step process. As a result, the most successful strategy is self-learning.

The present study discovered the experiences of English teachers in senior high school on the development of the modules. It will shed light on the different challenges' teachers encounter in developing the modules they use for their students in the new normal.

The transition from face to face to remote learning

Notably, in educational contexts, the severity of COVID-19 has resulted in the closure of tens of thousands of schools worldwide. Based on the confirmed cases, the COVID-19 pandemic had a severe impact on some schools in the Philippines. The country chose for online learning right away. Some teachers recorded and uploaded their classes to the internet for pupils to view. Some teachers (Fox, 2007) were even more creative, using Google Classrooms, WebQuest, and other online resources, but the vast majority of teachers are unprepared to deal with online learning. The truth is that after three days, many private and public higher education institutions in the Philippines are still unable to deploy this online system (Toquero, 2020).

In addition, the pandemic has disrupted all school activities and imposed a lockdown across the country. All of the institutions were closed, with all academic activities halted and several trials for the stakeholders (Jena, 2020). Bakalar (2018) also mentioned a number of issues, including the lack of school infrastructure, such as Internet networks, that all

schools previously lacked, particularly in rural areas, as well as the high cost of obtaining pricey data packages. In a similar vein, Reynolds (2020) stated that the pandemic impacts are sweeping the globe and have impacted billions of pupils whose schools have been closed, leaving them, their families, and teachers in amazement. For some, online learning is a tremendous loss, while for others, it is a difficulty, with many issues with online networks, as well as psychosocial well-being and motivation. These issues hint to a potentially dangerous gap in school-based demand planning and alternative management within a more complete education sector preparation strategy.

Furthermore, the school's numerous endeavors, such as admission, examinations, entrance tests, and school examinations, have been postponed. Many entrance exams for higher education were canceled, creating a significant challenge in the life of a student seeking admission to a higher education institution. The most difficult part was having to go through the teaching-learning process while students, instructors, and staff were no longer physically present. Similarly, the majority of external exams have been rescheduled, and nearly all internal evaluations have been canceled. The deletion of reviews has a negative impact on pupils' ability to learn. Many schools have been employing various digital solutions to manage internal exams in an online fashion. Nonetheless, the deferral of external evaluations has a direct impact on students' educational and occupational futures. Because they are locked in the same grade/class without promotion, this uncertainty has caused anxiety among students (Jena, 2020).

Jena (2020) also stated that the COVID-19 has both unfavorable and beneficial research implications. Taking the contrary viewpoint has made it impossible for researchers to travel and collaborate with others across the country and around the world. Some collaborative study or project work is made more difficult to finish. Some scientific laboratory tests and research projects were unable to be completed. On the plus side, academicians now have more time to strengthen their theoretical studies. Teachers improved their research by becoming more familiar with

technology methods. Webinars and e-conferences have become common ways for students and teachers all around the world to share their expertise on similar themes.

The current study will showcase the lived experiences of teachers in the development of their module. Likewise, it will reveal their transition from traditional face-to-face classes to remoter or distance learning.

Experiences of Teachers in the Pandemic

Many instructors were forced to stop teaching because to the COVID-19 pandemic, creating chances to restructure education, teacher education, and educational institutions (Flores 2020). Traditional pedagogical tools such as the Smartboard and PowerPoint are well-known and widely used, but using technology-supported education for pedagogical purposes is a whole new level (Romeo, Lloyd, and Downes, 2012).

Furthermore, due to the unique circumstances of the pandemic, the characteristics of traditional teacher professional development programs are not appropriate. As a result, in this rare pandemic condition, the entitlement to universal training to apply technology in education (Amhag, Hellström, and Stigmar, 2019) might be rejected. Even though most schools, digital learning venues, and support systems were not fully prepared, pandemic teachers were required to begin teaching as soon as possible. They place a heavy burden on instructors, who may lack the social-emotional skills to deal with such situations (Hadar et al., 2020).

Moreover, distance learning differs from traditional learning in that it requires professors to deviate their pedagogy from traditional pedagogy in Higher Education to the online mechanism. Many teachers found adapting technology for online instruction in a short amount of time to be a considerable problem. They were also compelled to complete the tests online, which added to their difficulties (Joshi, Vinay & Bhaskar, 2020). Teachers have had a bad time teaching online lessons during the lockdown, according to Punit (2020).

Many scholars have recently done studies to address the challenges associated with online teaching and learning during the pandemic. Nonetheless, the majority of studies

focus solely on the issues that students face, ignoring the issues that teachers face. Only a few scholars have discussed the difficulties that teachers face when teaching and learning online (Joshi, Vinay & Bhaskar, 2020). For example, a study conducted by Gratz and Looney (2020) looked into teachers' readiness to teach online and their struggle to adapt, and found that teachers said they lacked the skills to do so, lacked the time to prepare for an online course, and the subject they were teaching did not lend itself to online teaching.

Internet connectivity issues, insufficient training, inadequate knowledge, demotivated, lack of personal touch, and lack of engagement are just a few of the issues teachers experience in the online teaching-learning process. According to Arora and Srinivasan (2020). Furthermore, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Kaup et al. (2020) identified obstacles relating to technology, training, and student dedication in meeting school standards. Teachers lack the necessary infrastructure, such as well-organized laptops, internet access, and microphones, to effectively communicate education. Many teachers reported connectivity challenges, system failures, and bandwidth concerns during piloting online sessions, and they were unable to remedy the issues due to a lack of technical help. Asad Srivastava & Verma (2020) agreed, pointing out that many schools lacked educated teachers who could operate haphazardly through online channels and would struggle to accept the change. Without clear standards and directions, the schools asked their professors to conduct classes from their homes. They expected seasoned teachers who aren't technically savvy to teach online (Sharma, 2020). Teachers in distance education likewise struggled to deal with their students. In numerous windows, students routinely cause disruption by playing online games, eating, listening to music, making loud noises, and writing insulting remarks using spam accounts. Furthermore, the teachers described teaching in the house as a draining and demotivating experience (Punit, 2020).

Flexible Learning Modalities

Flexible learning is a set of fundamental educational theories and practices aiming at providing students with greater flexibility, accessibility, and personalization (Shurville et

al., 2008). Students can select where, when, and how they learn with flexible learning. Flexible learning approaches are typically created using a variety of teaching and learning theories, beliefs, and approaches to allow students to acquire knowledge and expertise, contribute thoughts and opinions, and engage with other learners and mentors, according to Joan (2013). This can be done through internet-based tools like Virtual Learning Environments or Learning Management Systems, discussion boards, or chat rooms, or by using a "blended" method that combines electronic and remote content with "face-to-face" classroom tutorials and lectures.

Flexible learning appears to be the most suited teaching method at the height of COVID-19. Flexible learning allows learners more freedom over where, when, and how they learn, while requiring internet-based resources such as a virtual learning environment and learning management systems. In other words, it is becoming increasingly free of study place, time, and pace constraints. Furthermore, unlike fully online learning, the majority of flexible learning's learning and teaching duties are not accomplished online. The advantage of an adaptive learning environment is that it does not require both the teacher and the students to be present at the same time, making it a viable option for providing lessons during COVID-19. Amid this context, despite the issues that it entails, the university administration has advocated flexible learning as an alternative instructional paradigm in the current educational crisis (Cortes, 2020).

In traditional classrooms nowadays, various distant technologies are frequently used (Dillon & Grene, 2003). We need to support learners' learning processes both on and off campus, as Hurst (2001) described, by combining diverse tools and methodologies. It's critical to give students the academic help they need, to create varied learning circumstances and experiences that suit their learning styles, and to provide social engagement through the techniques they choose. Many distant learning systems deliver lecture notes and materials in one format and attempt to establish social engagement through media such as chat, forum, voice, and video conference. Because many of today's distance learners are digital immigrants,

they are unfamiliar with such platforms and consequently refuse to use them. Furthermore, cultural differences make these systems less usable. Furthermore, technological and pedagogical advancements are insufficient to enable traditional distant education delivery systems to meet the needs of the next generation of learners.

DepEd Memorandum

COVID-19 has triggered a global epidemic, requiring the Department of Education to think outside the box to provide high-quality, meaningful, and appropriate education. DepEd created the BE-LCP, also known as the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan, as an approach to this issue, to guarantee that learning opportunities are successfully provided to our students through a variety of channels. In this regard, the Department's Regional and Schools Division Offices are tasked with developing, producing, and disseminating learning resources in accordance with its purpose. In addition, the Policy Guidelines for the Provision of Learning Resources in the Implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan are stated in the DepEd Order no. 18, s. 2020. The Department of Education will be able to offer instructional materials as a result of this policy. It also creates strategies for the distribution, utilization, and liquidation of funds used to print and distribute self-study modules and other educational products. (Dep Ed, 2020).

Flexible learning and materials issuances were also issued under Dep Ed Order No. (DO) 21, s. 2019, or the Policy Guidelines on the K to 12 Basic Education Program. It creates Flexible Learning Options (FLOs), that are different delivery modes and educational resources that address the needs, circumstances, and diversity of the students (Dep Ed, 2020). Furthermore, as part of the BE-LCP implementation for School Year 2020-2021, this policy establishes standards that will allow the Department of Education to provide learning resources. It also outlines standards for the release, use, and disposal of support funds used to print and distribute self-study modules and other educational materials (Dep Ed, 2020).

All the literature and studies have presented the gaps that warrant the undertaking of this study. There is still no study piloted that

specifically explores the experiences of English teachers in developing modules during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. Methods and Materials

The study utilized the phenomenological approach, precisely the hermeneutic phenomenological inquiry method. The study explored the lived experiences of English teachers in the senior high school that served as module writers in the COVID-19 pandemic. The study was conducted in the Division of Cebu City, and there are approximately two hundred (200) Senior High School module writers. There are approximately forty (40) module writers in the English Department for the core subjects, applied subjects, and specialized subjects. The seven (7) Senior High School English instructors that were assigned to develop Self-Learning Modules (SLM's) in response to the interruption of traditional classes because of the COVID-19 pandemic participated as the informants of this study.

The researcher evaluated the data using the Colaizzi method. The seven-stage approach developed by Colaizzi (1978) assures a thorough investigation, with each phase remaining true to the facts. The final product is a concise yet thorough summary of the experiences of the Senior High School English teachers who were assigned to be module developers, which has been verified by the informants. Online interviews are used to acquire thorough first-person descriptions of experience

Ethical Consideration

The protection of human rights is imperative in this research study. Thus, the implication of the connection between the researcher and the participant of the study must be emphasized. The researcher will maintain the three essential ethical principles for using humans as a participant in a research study: First is the **Respect for Person**. The researcher respects the participant as being independent, unique, and free. Their capability to make independent judgments will be accepted and thus, they can make their own decision. In this study, the participants are given facts concerning their participation in this study within their level of understanding. Moreover, their private lives are not bothered because confidentiality will be maintained at all times. The second principle is

Beneficence. The current study has negated any harm that might occur to the participant. They are guaranteed that the interview will take place during their time of convenience and the place of their choosing. They will not be required to answer questions that they think are delicate or those that do not want to answer for any other reason at all. And the third **Justice**. The participant will be selected fairly based on the need of the study. All the participants will be assured that the research study is justified. The researcher follows the process of selecting participants fairly,

3. Results

The study explored the journey of English Senior High School Teachers that were assigned as module writers during COVID-19 pandemic. The information acquired through interviews and observations is presented in this section. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data obtained by the Colaizzi technique after it reached saturation.

Theme 1: The Genesis

The first theme of the study is the beginning of the journey of the teachers in module writing. This theme is composed of two sub-themes. The first subtheme tackles the qualifications of how they were chosen as module writers, and the second subtheme is about taking off with basic preparations.

Subtheme 1.1: Assembling the Chosen Ones: Possessing the Required Attributes

This subtheme discusses how teachers are chosen for module writing. The informants confirmed that the teachers chosen are mainly Master Teachers and they are chosen because they are knowledgeable about the content of the subjects.

“Sa amoang department, ang module writers kay Master Teacher, ubay ubay man mi nga English teachers gud. Sakto pud kaayu nga MT ko, maong napilian jud. Aside from that, we were also chosen based on the subjects we taught so that we are already familiar with the content or the topics of the subject. I was assigned to write EAPP and Oral Comm since those were the subjects I was teaching since I became a Senior High School teacher”. – Informant 5 (Because there are so many English teachers in our department, the module writers

were the Master Teachers. I was selected as a module writer since I am one of the MT Teachers. Aside from that, we were also chosen based on the subjects we taught so that we are already familiar with the content or the topics of the subject. I was assigned to write EAPP and Oral Comm since those were the subjects I was teaching since I became a Senior High School teacher.)

In addition, teachers were divided into groups. Each team included five teachers who worked together to create the given module. The teachers were overjoyed because they realized they were not working alone, but as part of a team, and they believed that working together would make the task easier.

“Depending on the modules we were assigned so nag team up mi para madali ang trabaho namo.” – Informant 7 (We were formed into a team so that our work as module writers will be easier.)

Likewise, apart from being a Master Teacher, a strong internet connection was also needed. During the selection, the teachers were asked if they have a strong internet connection.

Mainly, one of the requirements to be a module writer in our school is to be a Master Teacher. Aside from that, since we were working at home at that time, you also have to have a strong internet connection. -Informant 2

With this given task, the teachers realized further how important strong connection is. It is very necessary in collaborating with their teammates. Since there were times that they have to work from their respective homes, the best way that they can communicate is through online conference.

Subtheme 1.2: Taking Off with Basic Preparation

This sub-theme signified that teachers only attended a half-day orientation on the formatting of the modules, but there were no seminars, training, or write shops on module writing.

“Walay ingun nga trainings, we were only oriented sa formatting ug sa parts, ADM ang format. Nya gi orient pud mi about sa most

essential competency nga dapat ma reflect sa module”. – Informant 1 (We didn’t experience any trainings, we were only oriented about the format, which was ADM, Alternative Delivery Method, and the parts. We were also oriented about the Most Essential Competencies that should be reflected on the module)

“Sadly, wala. Wala man guy time mag prepare para seminar kay everything happened unexpectedly because of the pandemic. What happened was that we were only oriented about the format and the content of the modules. We were told that it should be student-friendly as it is a self-learning module. – Informant 3 (Sadly, no. We don’t have the luxury of time for seminars as everything happened in a snap because of the pandemic)

The informants' dissatisfaction was apparent as they shared that no seminars had been planned to prepare them for the work at hand. Despite the fact that they were aware of the spread of the COVID-19 virus that had robbed them of any opportunities for a seminar, they still wished there was one.

Theme 2: The Acts

This theme describes the significant process of writing the self-learning modules. This theme is categorized into three subthemes, the first is following the prescription, the second is finding the sources, and the third is putting the finesse.

Subtheme 2.1: Following the Prescription

This subtheme indicates that teachers have to follow the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) mandated by the Department of Education in writing the Self Learning Modules. In general, the teachers agreed that following the competency was a task, but they have to make sure that the modules they develop follow the MELCs delegated by the Department of Education.

“Writing the module, ma’am was really a challenge, especially katung pagsugud pa we have a competency to follow, and we make sure nga ang among na develop na module (that the module we develop) follows the competency given by DepEd. We have to read para sa reference of our modules”. – Informant 1 (Writing the module was really challenging,

especially during the initial stage. We need to follow the competencies given by DepEd and we really have to make sure that it is reflected in the modules we were creating. Aside from that, we have to look for references for our modules)

“I especially have to adjust. Daghan oras nga igahin, daghan kayo e take into consideration, the competencies given to us by DepEd kinahanglan ma achieved, finding the references, the activities, nya editing with my co teachers sa module” – Informant 4 (I have to adjust. I need to set aside enough time, and I need to think about a lot of things. We must achieve the DepEd-assigned competencies. To do so, we'll need to find references, include them into our activities, and then edit the module with my co-teachers)

The informants aired their sentiments on the challenges they encountered throughout the module writing process. One of which was the compliance of the DepEd-given competencies. MELCs are the writers' guides, but at some point, it became a burden to them. They had to consider how to incorporate all the competencies into their activities. There were a lot of competencies to be met, but they were only given a month to prepare a module, as they have to prepare one per quarter. Although there were 3-4 writers in a team, it was still a challenge for them because of the time constraint.

Subtheme 2.2: Struggling with Sources

This subtheme explains that teachers have to find the references to be used as materials in developing the modules. Overall, the teachers established that they have years of experience in teaching. However, finding a reliable source for references to be used in developing modules during the pandemic is still a tedious chore.

“References, hmmm, was also part of the task. We have to make sure to find reliable sources for making our module. Although I've been teaching this subject for a while already, looking for references is still a task”. - Informant 2

“I sometimes have problems with my internet connection kay may pagka bukid naman amo place nya work from home mi that time, mao na sometimes, looking for the references is

a struggle. When I don't have strong connection, so I don't have a reference, as a result, malangan kos akong paghimu sa module”. – Informant 7 (Because we live on the outskirts of a mountainous area, I occasionally have trouble connecting to the internet. We were working from home at that time, so when I needed to look for references and had a slow internet connection, it would severely slow down my module-making process)

The authors found it difficult to obtain online references for their assigned modules. Despite the vast amount of references available on the internet, writers experienced difficulty finding reliable information. In addition, poor internet connection fueled this problem. The exasperation in the informants' voices as they recalled their struggle with how poor internet connection delayed their task was evident.

Subtheme 2.3: Putting the Finesse

This theme signified that after writing, the module is submitted. The development module will then undergo a series of scrutiny and editing from the members of the quality assurance composed of coordinators, principals, and supervisors.

“We still have to submit it to our coordinator then to our principal, then they will submit it to our supervisor. This is for the Quality Assurance”. – Informant 2

“Next step was about the quality assurance. We want to give our students quality education despite the pandemic so we have to make sure that our modules were proofread properly”. - Informant 4

The faces of the participants revealed a range of emotions. There was a hint of worry, as they were afraid of their work being evaluated and, if it would end up with revisions. Whether major or minor, the corrections are to be made within a week after the suggestions were given. Their dedication, on the other hand, was visible as they believe that proofreading is necessary to ensure that even without them, their students will be guided and equipped with the necessary information needed to face tertiary education through the help of self-learning modules.

Theme 3: Fruits of Labor

The third theme of the study is Fruits of Labor, this is about the benefits given to teachers who participated in the writing or the development of modules. This theme is categorized into two subthemes namely; reaping a certificate and giving credence.

Subtheme 3.1: Reaping a Certificate

This subtheme is about the certificates of recognition given to teachers who were involved in the development of the module.

"We are also given certificate of recognition. Nya at least naa puy allowance from the city government nga 100 per day." - Informant 1 (Also, we were given at least 100 pesos worth of allowance from the city government).

"I'm very honored to be recognized and was awarded with a certificate". – Informant 3

Overall, the teachers were ecstatic to receive a certificate of appreciation for their contributions to the module's development. They were gratified by the appreciation they received after developing a self-learning module for each of the four grading quarters. Although there were times when the release of modules was delayed because they still had to work on some suggestions for improvement, they were still glad that their efforts were recognized. A certificate may not equate to their months of effort, but the simple recognition still gave them enormous joy.

Subtheme 3.2: Giving Credence

This subtheme implied that the teacher was given service credits for their partaking in the development of modules. Overall, the teachers are happy because the service credits will be used to spend time with their families.

"We were given also service credit and for me, it is very helpful since I have children". – Informant 3

"Yes, although, it's not really something big, but I still am grateful for it. We were given a certificate of recognition and then service credit". - Informant 5

In the study, teachers were given service credits because of their service as module writers. Gratitude was written all over their faces as they recall the benefits they received for taking the work of a module writer.

4. Discussion

The selection process wherein teachers who are ranked as Master Teachers are chosen to partake in developing the modules. Laude, Ralar and Arcenal (2016) described that Master Teachers as self-directed learners who aim to increase their own knowledge in order to provide good instructions to their students and peers. A Master Teacher's main responsibility is to provide high-quality instructional competency to their pupils as well as professional development for career teachers. They are regarded as the "creme de la creme" of the teaching profession, and their methods of instruction will differ from those of non-master teachers (Ibrahim, Aziz & Nambiar, 2013).

The study revealed teachers only attended orientation on the formatting of modules. There was no teacher training conducted on module development. Peklaj (2015), described that teacher competency is a factor that impacts students learning. In his study, it showed that teachers' competencies are vital for promoting cognitive, motivational, and social processes. The development of these processes would eventually lead to students' achievement. Furthermore, according to Francisco and Nuqui (2020), teachers stay watchful and have begun attending seminars and training to prepare for the new normal education. Also, Pollard and Tomlin (2001) noted that expert teachers identified teacher preparation and training as the greatest need, according to Pollard and Tomlin (2001). They beg for this to serve as a wake-up call.

Another finding of the study is the process of producing the module since in writing them, the teachers must follow the Department of Education's Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs). To counteract the impact of COVID-19 in the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) reiterates its commitment to providing high-quality education in line with the "Sulong Edukalidad" framework (Pascua, 2020). The release of the Most Essential Learning Competencies is more than just a reaction to the present pandemic's issues. As we anticipate obstacles in learning delivery, it will also allow the Department to focus instruction on the most fundamental and crucial competencies that our learners must acquire. It

will also make the task of turning classroom-based learning resources into distance-learning-friendly learning resources easier (Department of Education, 2020). Additionally, after each quarter, course requirements are given to ensure that the targeted learning outcomes are met. Likewise, finding references to employ in the creation of modules, takes time according to the module writers. In modular courses, learning objects are more closely linked to a comprehensive approach to learning, which often incorporates a problem-oriented approach (Tseng, Su, Hwang, Hwang, Tsai, & Tsai, 2008).

Moreover, the study revealed quality assurance in the writing process of the modules. Before being distributed, learning materials generated for use by students in public schools are subjected to quality assurance, according to the Department of Education (DepEd, 2020).

Likewise, Pulukadang (2020) explained that there are three primary stages to the module preparation process. First is to determine relevant learning methodologies and learning media. At this stage, it's critical to consider the many aspects of the competencies to be learned, as well as the characteristics of the students and the context and circumstance in which the module will be used. Produce or realize physical modules as a second step. Learning objectives, necessary learners' requirements, substance or learning material, kinds of learning activities, and supporting components are among the module's component contents. Develop assessment tools as a third step. In this instance, it's critical to ensure that all components of competency (knowledge, abilities, and related attitudes) can be evaluated using predetermined criteria.

An important component for remote learning, according to Thompson et al. (2004), is to guarantee that the courses suit the demands of the customer by improving the quality of instructional materials. Mugridge (2006) contends that distant learning courses should strive to incorporate educational processes that enable active learning into learning materials in order to provide a rich learning environment for students. It is thought that the interpretation and communication of the modules to the end-users, in this case, students, is critical to the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Likewise,

it is critical to guarantee that course delivery is of the greatest possible quality, particularly in the case of distance learning, when students rely heavily on the modules provided to them for study reasons. Unlike traditional face-to-face instruction, these modules are more available for public review (Melton, 2002).

Furthermore, the study yielded benefits given to the teachers after finishing writing the modules. One of the possible benefits of recognizing and rewarding exceptional teaching in school is the retention of outstanding teachers. Undeniably, according to Kalis and Kirschenbaum (2008), teaching prizes do improve retention and morale. Similarly, as teaching awards are intended to stimulate and incentivize teachers to achieve greatness, monitoring the impact of prizes is critical. Teaching awards can help teachers advance in their careers (Seppala & Smith, 2019), influencing their pay development. Similarly, Smith et al. (2017) discovered that the award acts as a significant external indicator of teacher validation.

In the study, teachers were given service credits because of their service as module writers. Gratitude was written all over their faces as they recall the benefits they received for taking the work of a module writer. Furthermore, the Department of Education (DepEd, 2020) respects our teachers' significant contributions, particularly during the pandemic, and is committed to providing them with the entire range of benefits provided by the laws and rules.

5. Conclusion

This study sheds some light with regards to the experience of the module writers of the English subjects in senior high school. It is inferred that no matter how expert a teacher is, being designated as a module writer is an utterly challenging responsibility.

The journey was characterized by a challenging take-off. Although the chosen module writers were the best in their teaching field, they were master teachers with years of teaching experience that worked as a team. Still, they were caught off guard by the challenges brought by being a module writer. They began with less preparation, having only an orientation on the module's content and format. They were

both unhappy and concerned that they would be embarking on a new adventure with less abilities and that they would be unable to achieve the work at hand. The less preparation brought challenges to the writers. The overwhelming number of MELCs per quarter and the lack of reliable online sources affected their module writing process. The unintended lapses eventually resulted to revisions from the Quality Assurance which takes so much from the module writers' time. Nevertheless, through the collaboration and the dedication of the members of the team, they were able to overcome these challenges.

At the end of this journey, they were nevertheless victorious since they were able to complete their task despite their lack of preparation and the difficulties they encountered when they were still developing a module. Given the small reward of a certificate and a service credit for their efforts, the educators' commitment is unwavering. The journey of these educators exemplifies how committed educators may be to providing high-quality education even in perilous situations.

6. Reference

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