Learning Activity Sheets in English (LAS): The Structure, Innovation, and the Learning Experience of Junior High School Students during the Pandemic

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Abstract— *This study is meant to validate the characteristics of a learning activity along with its structure, innovation, and the learning experience of Junior High Schools students during the pandemic. It employed a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative research design. Eight junior high school students shared their learning experiences on the use of LAS. Eight English teachers participated in the study and had common assumptions that the LAS is not sufficient to meet the student's need to discover and develop their respective learning abilities. The instrument utilized was 64 LAS from the school year 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 and the LAS criteria evaluation tool. The results showed that the developed LAS did not fully meet the standards of high-quality learning material as disclosed by the adept professionals. Based on the results, the structure of the LAS and the innovations included are fairly aligned with the Most Essential Learning Competencies but did not address to cater to all types of learners. Hence, it is recommended that English teachers should be equipped with sufficient knowledge on how to develop well-designed LAS, intensify the Quality Assurance, and be given sufficient time in the production of learning material to carry out and ensure that each topic and lessons are accessible to students.*

Keywords— *Learning Activity Sheet (LAS), Modular Distance Learning Modality (MDLM), Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCS).*

I. INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 outbreak had resulted in numerous changes such as in education sector. Traditional face-to-face classes shifted to online platforms to contain the spread of the virus. This led the Department of Education to adopt a new mode of learning modality to continue education despite the pandemic. The said agency embraced the modular approach in learning wherein teachers crafted their own Learning Activity Sheets (LAS) under Deped Order no. 18 s. 2020. In Gabao National High School, each teacher in different grades worked for hand in hand in creating the LAS.

Research Objective

This study validates the characteristics of the learning activity sheets, the innovations made by the teachers as well as the experiences of Junior High School students learning English for S.Y 2020-2021.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The eagerness of the agency to continue education resulted in DepEd Order No. 018, s. 2020 or the Policy Guidelines for the Provision of Learning Resources in the Implementation of the Basic Education Learning Continuity Plan. The mandate aimed to ensure that learning continues through different modalities without risking the health of the learners.

Several educators were claiming about how distance education is likely to change education. Simonson et.al (2019) reported that starting in 2013, distance education was significantly more popular and mainstream in delivering courses. His claim was relevant to the present study since the education sector implemented distance education.

To maintain and continue the education of millions of Filipino learners to still attain its mission and vision which is to provide quality education to every learner, the Department of Education implemented Modular Distance Learning (Dangle & Sumaoang, 2020). This was relevant to the present study since it discussed the modality of learning that was adapted momentarily by the Department of Education under Deped Order no. 4, s. 2020.

Martinez (2020), shared about Modular Distance Learning (MDL). It involves individualized instruction that allows learners to use self-learning modules (SLMs), The self-learning module provides independent and individualized learning. Learners then become more responsible in accomplishing tasks with or without the guidance of the teachers. They learn how to learn, and progress on their own thus making them more empowered Ambayon, (2020).

Clarindo et.al (2020) stressed that Learning Activity, introduces learners to a new activity that marks the way in which they learn and develop their lives in this period of learning. It is a new way of relating to knowledge that can change their ways of dealing with reality. His study was relevant to the present study wherein the learning materials followed Deped Order No. 128, s. 2021 or Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs) thus deviating from Self Learning Module to learning Activity Sheets.

Amila et.al (2018) also studied the effectiveness of students' worksheets based on Ethno science in improving students' understanding of rigid body concepts. The results showed that the worksheet was effective in learning and improving conceptual understanding which is indicated by the differences in test results between the control and the experimental class.

The previous study is relevant to the present one when it comes to the effectiveness of the Learning Activity Sheets that were provided by the teachers in English. Hence, the

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participants examined the LAS using the evaluation tool from the Department of Education.

Schuell (1986 p.429) mentioned that one of the teacher's fundamental tasks is to get students to engage in learning activities that are likely to result in achieving [the intended learning] outcomes. Thus, it is helpful to remember that what the student does is actually more important than what the teacher does. Biggs (2003) p. 360), also supports this claim, teachers need to be clear about what they want their students to learn and how they would manifest that learning in terms of performances of understanding.

The above literature was an indication of how important the structure of learning activities is. This is significant as it is one of the focused of the analysis of the present study, which investigates the characteristics of learning activity sheets, the innovations used by the teachers, and the learning experience of Junior High School learners.

Animba (2021) examined the use of instructional materials as one of the prerequisites for effective teaching and learning among secondary school students in Enugu Education zone. The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant difference between students taught with instructional materials compared to those not engaged with it. Thus, commended the use of the learning materials in teaching and learning regularly.

The utilization of self-made instructional materials was also emphasized in the study of Tety (2016) among selected community secondary schools in Rombo District in Tanzania. The study's findings disclosed that learning materials are the key to teachers' and students' performance and the application of different strategies in the instructional materials made by teachers is highly encouraged to minimize the challenges of attaining and using quality instructional materials.

There was a relevance between the cited literature and the present study when it comes to strategies applied in a learning material or the innovations utilized in the Learning Activity Sheets in English. Wasserman et.al, (n.d) highlighted that an effective high-quality learning activity begins with the observance of a clear design process in which during and after each activity, student learning must be assessed to verify that the237ctiveity produced the depth of understanding that was desired.

The above-mentioned manuscript was ominously related to the present study as it helped the researcher to understand the substance of Learning Activity Sheets that influenced the learners while using the printed Modular Distance Learning. Similarly, the present study also enquired about the characteristics of Learning Activity Sheets, the innovations employed, and the learning experience of the students.

Sejpal (2013), stressed how modular learning using instructional materials affects in building up of the knowledge and skills of students. The task to search for ideas on their own in order to learn individually boost their confidence since they worked on their own. In the same way, Moradi et.al (2018) added that modular distance learning will allow learners to become independent and responsible to perform the tasks given without the aid of the teachers. However, some teachers claimed that not all the learners were really doing everything

that was asked in the module. Some returned the materials unanswered.

The cited literature was significant to the present study as it emphasized the importance of having a logical scheme included in learning materials so that students even learning on their own would still achieve the skill in a certain topic presented. A learning activity affects a learner to perform better and may achieve the desired learning depending upon the quality of the material presented by the teacher. The present study crafted a teacher's guide based on the results of the data collected and the experiences of students in the modular distance learning modality in Gabao National High School to overcome the existing glitches and achieve the desired learning goals.

The related literature cited in this study supported the researcher to come up with reliable data, thus making the research possible. The information gathered served as a blueprint for the researcher to know the necessary and essential views regarding this study, hence the researcher became well-informed after citing the previously stated literature.
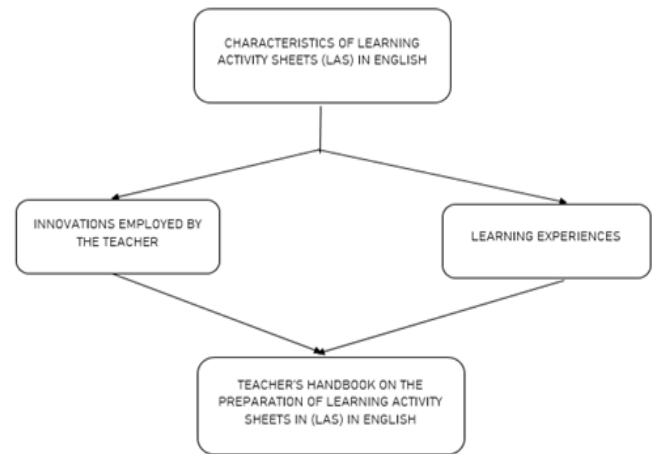

Figure. 1
Conceptual Paradigm

III. METHODOLOGY

Participants

Eight teachers from Gabao National High School were among the participants. Alias are provided for confidentiality. Ms. De Leon, is 20 years in teaching. Ms. Reyes and Ms. Peña taught for 8 years. Mr. Lim has 6 years of service. Ms. Labrador and Galicia have been in Deped for 5 years, while Ms. Delos Santos is 4 and Ms. Policarpio has been in the service for 2 years.

There were also 8 students who were interviewed. Most of them loved to use social media and play online games. Jenalyn, Leny, Berna, Daniel, Sofia were all Grade 10 students, Carol grade 9, and Lucia and Ben were both grade 8 students. Also, eight English teachers from Gallanosa National High School assessed the Learning Activity Sheets (LAS).

Instrument

As a key instrument for collecting responses, the researcher created an unstructured interview guide for English teachers

and students. Learning Activity Sheets and LAS evaluation tools were also utilized to elicit responses from the respondents. The researcher made slight modifications to the LAS evaluation tool from Deped Order no. 001, s. 2021. Originally, there is no descriptions under the indicators for each content however to make it clearer descriptive ratings such as not aligned, poorly aligned, moderately aligned, fairly aligned, and highly aligned were added. The researcher also used a voice recorder to ensure the accuracy of the responses obtained during the in-depth interview.

Validation of Instrument

The following data analysis procedures were utilized by the researcher. Weighted mean was the statistical tool that was used to evaluate the learning activity sheets utilized by the Junior High School students in the new normal, in terms of alignment with learning objectives/Melcs, support to the types of learning desired, balance of content, assessment of activity and the student learning and support the needs for diverse learning styles.

The Likert scale was used as a reference taken from Bounthavong, M. (2019).

Range	Verbal Description
4.50 – 5.00	Highly Aligned
3.50 – 4.49	Fairly Aligned
2.50 – 3.49	Moderately Aligned
i.50 – 2.49	Poorly Aligned
i.00 – i.49	Not Aligned

IV. RESULTS

Table 1 shows that learning objectives are fairly aligned to the MELCS. This implies that the whole content of the LAS geared toward the attainment of the targeted MELCS for the intended quarter must go through proper and purposeful development of the material to make it fully aligned. On the other hand, Muller-Karger and Steiner (2020), mentioned the importance of revisiting and improving the course learning objectives, it will help them gain a clear understanding of the students' learning outcomes.

TABLE 1. Characteristics of Learning Activity Sheets in English along alignment with the Learning Objectives/MELCS

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. The LAS covered the targeted Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCS) intended for the quarter.	4.50	Highly aligned
2. The LAS sufficiently developed the targeted Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCS) intended for the quarter.	4.38	Fairly aligned
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.44**	**Fairly aligned**

Table 2 presents the LAS support to the learning desired. Hence, four indicators 2, 5, 6 and 8 got the lowest weighted mean. It implies that teachers had applied the "One size fits all" style in learning. Wasserman et.al (n.d) highlight that learning

activity and learning objectives must be anchored to achieve the desired learning and produce good outcomes. Including a variety of activities will promote learning.

TABLE 2. Characteristics of Learning Activity Sheets in English along support to the types of learning desired

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. LAS has learning objectives that are anchored on the MELCS	4.38	Fairly aligned
2. LAS uses a variety (at least 3) of self-directed techniques, learning tasks, and formative assessment	3.75	Fairly aligned
3. LAS has content that is logically developed and organized, i.e., lessons/activities are arranged from simple to complex, from observable to abstract.	4.25	Fairly aligned
4. LAS contains essential instructional design elements that contribute to the achievement of learning objectives.	4.25	Fairly aligned
5. LAS allows for review, comparison, and integration with previous lessons (if applicable).	3.88	Fairly aligned
6. LAS uses various motivational strategies (i.e., advance organizers, puzzles, games) to hook the target user's interest and engagement	3.63	Fairly aligned
7. LAS uses process questions and activities which require different levels of a cognitive domain to achieve desired learning outcomes.	4.00	Fairly aligned
8. LAS has written and performance tasks that are differentiated based on the target user's multiple intelligences, learning styles, and readiness levels	3.88	Fairly aligned
9. LAS develops 21ist century skills and higher-order cognition (i.e., critical thinking, creativity, learning by doing, problem-solving).	4.13	Fairly aligned
10. LAS integrates desirable values and traits	4.13	Fairly aligned
Overall Weighted Mean	4.03	Fairly aligned

Table 3 provides a clear computation of the characteristics of LAS along with the balance of content. It reflects that the whole content of LAS although accurate was insufficient and partly modified to reach the level of students' understanding Similarly, Davenport (2020) suggests to review some criteria or standards in creating learning material. Its content must be properly revisited and examined. This way would help them analyze what type of content is included that is beneficial for students.

TABLE 3. Characteristics of Learning Activity Sheets in English along the balance of content

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. All contents in the LAS are accurate.	3.75	Fairly aligned
2. LAS is free from any social content violations.	4.25	Fairly aligned
3. LAS has free from factual errors.	4.25	Fairly aligned
4. LAS is free from computational errors (if applicable)	4.38	Fairly aligned
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.13**	**Fairly aligned**

Table 4 displays the assessment of activity and the student learning. The result shows that the LAS had to be carefully

designed in such a way that the instructions, discussions, questions, and activities are anchored for the students to form a clear concept about the topic. Moreover, Svinicki (2004) underscores the need for continuity of the lessons or activities per session to ensure mastery of learning. Students learned best when there is a consistency of the lesson.

TABLE 4. Characteristics of Learning Activity Sheets in English along with assessment of activity and the student learning

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. Vocabulary used in the LAS is appropriate to the target user's level of comprehension and experience	4.25	Fairly aligned
2. Length and structures of sentences in the LAS are suited to the comprehension level of the target users.	4.38	Fairly aligned
3. Paragraph structures in the LAS facilitate a smooth flow of ideas and concepts.	4.25	Fairly aligned
4. Topics and ideas presented from one lesson to the next are coherent and integrated.	4.00	Fairly aligned
5. Instructions, discussion points, questions, and activities are clear to the target.	4.00	Fairly aligned
Overall Weighted Mean	4.18	Fairly aligned

Table 5 exhibits LAS support to the needs for diverse learning styles. The result shows that assessments do not support the diverse learning styles because of the poor result in students' participation. Both Malvik (2020) and Rahman (2022) disclose in their study, that educators need to consider learners multiple intelligences when crafting learning materials. Understanding the different learning styles will affect the way teachers in preparing and deliver a certain topic that will benefit diverse learners.

TABLE 5. Characteristics of Learning Activity Sheets in English along with support to the needs for diverse learning styles

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Description
1. LAS provides sufficient assessment activities that will help the learner track his/her progress and mastery of the target competencies.	4.13	Fairly aligned
2. There should be 3 assessment activities in a learning activity sheet. Lesson/topic	4.25	Fairly aligned
3. LAS provides a variety of assessment types.	4.38	Fairly aligned
4. LAS contains clear assessments that ha have clear demonstrations/examples, instructions, and/or rubrics to serve as a guide on how these will be used.	4.13	Fairly aligned
5. LAS has assessment activities that ensure the active engagement of the learners.	4.13	Fairly aligned
6. LAS has answer keys that provide exact answers for objective types assessments and discussion points for non-objective types.	3.88	Fairly aligned
7. LAS has pre –and post-assessment items that are constructed differently.	4.13	Fairly aligned
Overall Weighted Mean	**4.14**	**Fairly aligned**

The result shows the innovations utilized by the language teachers in crafting LAS, the use of youtube, radio, television and newspaper become their means to help learners better understand the lesson since students nowadays are equipped in using technology. This agrees with the findings of Yesilyurt et al. (2014) the access to a home computer and internet connection contributes to students' academic performance as well as self-learning skills.

Nevertheless, students have found it difficult to learn all the subjects in MDLM and preferred to have a teacher in front of them who will guide them throughout the lesson. Hope, Prasa, & Barker, (2005) points out the importance of teachers in learning. Mentors can also maximize students learning experience by providing quality learning materials which is coherent to the whole content of the material.

Results of the study shows that The Learning Activity Sheets distributed to students in distance education is not sufficient to meet the student's need to discover and develop their respective learning abilities. Most of the activities presented lack the capacity for the student to fully learn or understand the topic discussed. There are not enough learning activities provided to meet their educational needs.

V. Discussions

Modular Distance Learning Modality challenged the Department of Education. Teachers tried their best to craft a Learning Activity Sheets that will cater all the types of learners. Students did their best to continue teaching-learning process despite the hardships they encountered.

Bransford, Brown, and Cocking, (2000) explain that Learning happens when students perform it in actual. Acquiring is a result of a well-constructed activity and unparalleled objectives. When designing an activity, giving importance to how students acquire knowledge or skill must be prioritized.

In LAS making, every teacher needs to revisit and reconsider the Learning Objectives and the activities included thereto so that both are inclined with each other. This is supported by Wasserman et.al, (n.d). According to them learning activity and learning objectives must be anchored to achieve the desired learning and produce good outcomes. This also will help learners achieve the learning desired

Teachers become more innovative in preparing the LAS. However, the short period of time and limited resources hinder them to evenly craft a quality and well-designed LAS. Among the innovations done by teachers in English are application of technology. Among these are youtube and real life scenarios, social media platform, radio, newspaper and television utilization.

Yebowaah (2018), Siraj et al., (2015), Yesilyurt et al., 2014) agree that using of technology and internet access helps to improve academic performance and is considered better and more convenient to use. The results also conform the study of Shi & Morrow (2006) and Pena (2012), internet and social media platforms assist learners in gaining knowledge and understanding of the lessons presented in a learning activity.

Almost the student-respondents agree that MDLM is a bit harder. They found it difficult to finish all the tasks provided. Their levels of learning vary, so there are times when lessons

need to be lowered to the student's level. Mentors can also maximize students learning experience by providing quality learning materials which is coherent with the whole content of the material.

Hope, Prasa, & Barker (2005). suggest choosing a topic that must require critical thinking and engagement. Mentors must monitor and encourage learners to ensure participation. As mentioned by the student-informant everything in the module is not easy. They have different styles in learning. Time varies and it depends on their preferences.

Effective time management as claimed by Cyril (2015) in his study, improves the quality of life, as a whole. This is supported by Ahmad, Batool, and Hussain (2019), mismanagement disturbs the academic achievements of learners. Hence, it is worth sharing that during the MDLM, one of the greatest roles of parents and teachers is let the learners perform on their own. Part of the teachers and the parents is to guide and monitor them during this kind of modality.

VI. LIMITATION

Eight students from different grade levels participated in the interview. Also, 8 English teachers with at least two years of teaching experience willingly agreed to be interviewed and 8 Language teachers from Gallanosa National High School assessed the Learning Activity Sheets.

VII. CONCLUSION

The study showed that Learning Activity are not sufficient to meet the student's need to discover and develop their respective learning abilities. Students have found it difficult and preferred to have a teacher in front of them who will guide them throughout the lesson. Teachers are challenged on how to teach a variety of topics in MDLM where they know that students have their own level of understanding. Having a brief preparation in doing LAS and the fact that they have no training in doing Learning Activity Sheets is another test on them how to be creative in doing it.

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