

ENGLISH TEACHERS' UTILIZATION OF MOST ESSENTIAL LEARNING COMPETENCY SKILLS-BASED INSTRUCTIONAL MODULE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

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Abstract

COVID-19 in the Philippines led to several changes in the educational landscape. One of these is the way that the Department of Education has implemented the modes of instruction. Due to the current COVID-19 crisis, most educational systems have been pushed to develop alternatives to face-to-face teaching and learning. Yet, it is increasingly challenging for teachers to deliver a fundamental, high-quality education as a result of the transition to modular distance learning.

This qualitative phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of English teachers in their teaching using the Most Essential Learning Competency-Based instructional modules. Ten (10) English teachers were interviewed to gather the data. Interviews that were recorded were transcribed and analyzed. Thematic analysis was employed as the data processing method in the study. During the conduct of the study, ethical considerations were taken into account. Results revealed teachers believed that MELCs-Based instructional modules had dramatically altered their methods of instruction, given them a better knowledge of their students and their learning, and allowed them to utilize class time more effectively. However, some competencies are unclear, repetitious, and inappropriate for the material or subject matter. Teachers found it difficult to define several goals that were still doable throughout the implementation of the MELCs module. Nonetheless, teachers are making use of a range of activities, whatever modality used, to deliver lessons more effectively. Moreover, teachers were able to adapt and pick up new ideas and approaches for solving the challenges.

Keywords: Lived Experience, English Teachers, MELCs, Modules.

Introduction

Teachers are urged to cultivate a reflective mind to have a better understanding of what is going on in the classroom and identify what works and what does not work. According to Ebrahimi (2022), English is the language that some students find the most difficult, confusing, and boring. Many educators regard the process of teaching and learning English at the high school level to be one of the most difficult problems they have faced over the years (Wulyani et al., 2022). Sakamoto (2022) affirms that this is due to the complexity of the learning process, which necessitates a significant amount of work from them, particularly intellectually.

The English module was designed in the light and paradigm of the Most Essential Learning Competency skills provided by the Department of Education or DepEd as the primary reference for all Schools, Schools Division Offices (SDOs) and Regional Offices (ROs) in determining and implementing learning delivery approaches that are suited to the local context and diversity of learners while adapting to the challenges posed by COVID-19. Schools are hereby instructed to refer to the MELCs in creating learning activity sheets, self-learning modules, and other instructional materials. Moreover, schools are enjoined to adhere to the content of the MELCs and refrain from creating a new list of learning competencies for different learning areas. The very objective of using the Most Essential Learning Competency skills-based instructional module is to determine how effective the implementation of the learning delivery approaches is suited to the local context and diversity of learners while adapting to the challenges posed by COVID-19.

Consequently, many teachers, especially those teaching English in affected areas worldwide, suddenly faced the task of getting their instructional materials ready to facilitate modular learning as a strategy for the sustained delivery of education to their learners either online or distance learning or through instructional modules approach.

Previous studies have found that the Instructional Module has a considerable impact on students'

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learning and academic achievement, as seen by pretest and posttest results according to Ambayon (2020). Although according to Malik and Rizvi (2018), unsuitable teaching-learning environments, among other things, are the primary reason for students' failures and low performance in English. Thus, students need a lot of motivation to cope with the subject. The findings of Haque and Sharmin (2022) show that despite the fact that multiple teaching methodologies have been developed by professionals, students' English proficiency is still poor.

In the Philippines, maintaining the welfare of the more than 27 million students enrolled in basic education alone calls for unwavering dedication despite the crisis. But UNESCO reiterates its position, saying that "education cannot wait. In this pandemic, it is crucial to address the needs of the most vulnerable communities (UNESCO, 2017) as cited by (Llego, 2022).

Thus, there are few studies that have explored the aspects of the use of the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs). They have often looked at the impact of these factors in relation to sustaining the delivery of quality education in the Philippines, but they have not always sufficiently explored the cause of these factors, particularly the experiences of the teachers in using the MELCs.

Therefore, the Department of Education encourages all teachers to create learning tools that may be used

in the classroom. Better academic achievement is the outcome of a learner's involvement with a learning resource. The creation of learning tools also aids in supplementing the DepEd central office's textbook shortfall. Thus, this study was conducted to examine the lived experiences of English teachers in their teaching using the Most Essential Learning Competency-Based instructional modules in Makati City. With the use of MELCs-Based instructional modules, teachers can have greater flexibility to adapt their teaching to the learning needs of individual students. This trend reflects a shift towards individual learning to accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities. Hence, the study could offer valuable insights into how these factors interact with competency-based approaches within the context of English teaching.

Conceptual Framework

In the light of the paradigm of the study, as presented in the diagram below illustrates the factors on English teachers who use the Most Essential Learning Competency-Based Instructional module. In the illustration, the given components show the relationship between the five factors in the lived experiences of English teachers in using the MELC Based Instructional modules. The circle of the experiences of English Teachers in the diagram is surrounded by boxes which are the aspects of the use of the Most Essential Learning Competency-Based Instructional module.

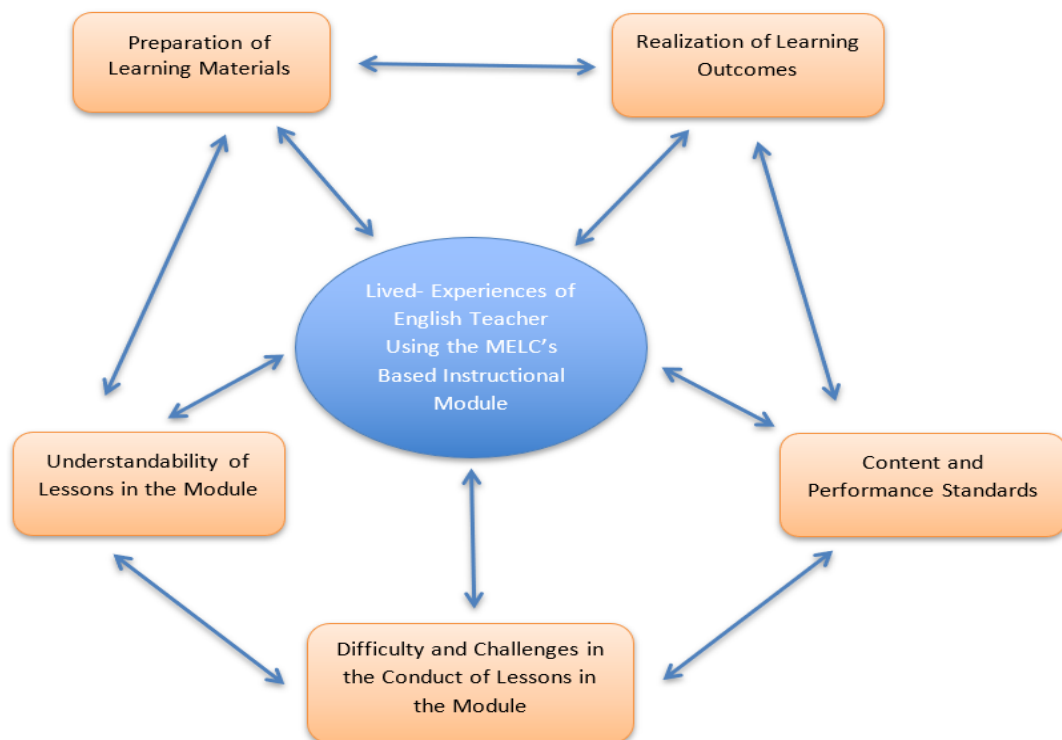


Figure 1

The research paradigm shows the relationship Between the variables of the study by Figure 1. It shows the conceptual framework of the study, illustrating the relationship where each item is linked to a central concept or core element, which is the lived experiences of English teachers in using the MELC Based Instructional modules.

This model is advantageous for examining the phenomenon considering the study's significant level of practical use since it can be used with qualitative data and provides an in-depth understanding of the issue. The core element of the diagram shows the variable of the lived experiences of English teachers in using the MELC Based Instructional modules.

In the illustration, the given factors show the relationship between the five factors that affect the lived experiences of English teachers in using the MELC's Based Instructional modules. These interrelated variables are composed of the preparation of learning materials, a realization of learning outcomes, the understandability of lessons in the module, content and performance standards, and the difficulty and challenges in the conduct of lessons in the module.

Statement of the Problem

The research aims to determine the lived experiences of English teachers in using the Most Essential Learning Competency-Based Instructional module. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What are the teachers' perceptions/views on the use of Most Essential Learning Competency-Based instructional modules?
2. What are the experiences/ challenges encountered by the English teachers in utilizing the Most Essential Learning Competency Skills-Based Instructional Module?
3. What are the pedagogical practices employed by the English teachers in using the Most Essential Learning Competency Skills-Based Instructional Module?
4. What plan of action can be designed to improve the utilization of the MELCS instructional modules?

Scope and Delimitations

The study is focused on the lived experiences of English teacher-participants on the most essential learning competency skills-based instructional module in Makati City.

The study is centered on the English teacher respondents' experiences on the component of the most essential learning competency skills-based instructional module in English along the following indicators: Preparation of Learning Materials, Realization of Learning Outcomes,

Understandability of Lessons in the Module, Content and Performance Standards, and Difficulty and Challenges in the Conduct of Lessons in the Module.

The study involves ten (10) English teacher-respondents in one of the high schools in Makati City through purposive sampling. The study was conducted from August to January 2023 during the First Semester of School Year 2022-2023.

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed phenomenological research using a qualitative approach since it aims to describe a phenomenon's important principles, specifically the lived experiences of English teachers in using the Most Essential Learning Competency-Based Instructional module. The phenomenological study examines human experience in daily life while putting aside the researcher's prior notions about the phenomena. It investigates lived experiences to gain deeper insights into how people understand those experiences (Qutoshi, 2018). Therefore, it is in this context that the study determined what the English teachers have really experienced when utilizing the Most Essential Learning Competency-Based Instructional module.

Thematic analysis was used by the researcher as a method of data processing for the study. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying and examining recurring themes in a set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic coding calls for an in-depth analysis of the data. Thus, the researcher took note of the informants' responses during the interview, watched and listened to the recorded interview again, and transcribed the responses from start to finish in order to gain insight into the background and experiences of the teachers and identify their significant statements with regard to the focus of analysis. In order to compare how the viewpoints, experiences, and practices of the English teachers using the MELCs-based instructional modules were presented, interpretative meanings of statements from the excerpts were constructed and then grouped into clusters. The researcher then went on to explain and interpret the themes.

Participants/Respondents of the Study

The study on the experiences of the informants on the most essential learning competency skills-based instructional module in English was conducted among the English teacher-informants in Makati City. The study involves ten (10) English teacher-informants in one of the high schools in Makati City who were selected through purposive sampling. According to (Marshall et al., 2013), a sample size of six to ten would be sufficient for phenomenological research. Because qualitative research does not aim to be generalizable, it is not

required for the sample to be representative of all types of people who have experienced the phenomenon of interest. The following criteria were used to select the informants: 1) teachers who had firsthand experiences in the new normal (Covid-19 pandemic) in Philippine public education; 2) teachers who have used the Most Essential Learning Competency-Based Instructional module; and 3) teachers who gave their full consent to participate in the study. The researcher satisfied every requirement prior to conducting the interviews.

Instrument/s of the Study

The researcher used a semi-structured interview guide that was researcher-made to elicit responses from the informants. During the interview, open-ended questions enable elaboration and follow-up inquiries. The opening question, core questions, and exit questions were all included in the interview guide that the research committee approved.

The present study, therefore, explored the four themes of English teachers' actual experiences while utilizing the Most Essential Learning Competency-Based Instructional module. The questions for each theme are listed below. These four main themes described the experiences of the teachers on the most essential learning competency skills-based instructional module, namely: (1) teachers' perceptions/views, (2) experiences/ challenges encountered, (3) pedagogical practices, and (4) action plans.

- 1) Teachers' lived experience as regards their views and perception on MELCs instructional modules utilization
 - What do you like most about MELCS-based instructional modules in teaching?
 - What do you dislike most about MELCS-based instructional modules in teaching?
 - How satisfied are you with the current learning module used at your school?
 - How confident are you that you can provide effective instruction in the current learning material?
 - How engaged have students been in your classes using the most essential learning competency skills-based instructional module?
- 2) Teachers' lived experiences in relation to the challenges met by the English teachers along the MELCS instructional module utilization
 - What are the challenges that you encountered in utilizing the MELCs instructional module in the preparation of the instructional resources and materials?
 - What are the challenges that you met in utilizing the MELCs instructional module along with the attainment of learning objectives?
 - What are the challenges that you encountered in utilizing the MELCs

instructional module in the development of teaching-learning activities?

- What are the challenges that you encountered in utilizing the MELCs instructional module in engaging your students?
 - What are the challenges that you met in utilizing the MELCs instructional module along with students' assessment and evaluation?
- 3) Pedagogical practices
 - Mention at least (3) three effective teaching strategies or pedagogical practices which you employed in using the MELCS instructional module and give reasons why you use such teaching strategies.
 - 4) Action Plan
 - What plan of action can be designed to improve the utilization of the MELCS instructional modules?

Data Collection and Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed as the data processing method in the study. One way to analyze qualitative data is through thematic analysis. Usually, it refers to a collection of texts, such as an interview or a transcript. The researcher carefully analyses the data to find recurrent themes—topics, notions, and patterns of meaning (Caulfield, 2022). The study followed a six-step process of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, as cited in Caulfield, 2022):

1. Familiarization
2. Coding
3. Generating themes
4. Reviewing themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Writing up

It is a technique for summarizing data, but when choosing codes and creating themes, it also includes interpretation. The versatility of thematic analysis, which may be utilized within a wide range of theoretical and epistemological frameworks and applied to a wide range of research topics, designs, and sample sizes, is one of its distinctive characteristics.

Furthermore, to establish the trustworthiness of the data analysis, documents and transcripts from one-on-one interviews made up the study's qualitative data. Themes were created based on the informants' responses. Various literatures were used to confirm the analysis and findings. This was done in support of the implications based on the responses of the informants.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher followed the ethical guidelines set out in the Helsinki Declaration (2001). All informants were advised of the goals and

importance of the study by the researcher. Informants gave their free, prior, and informed agreement to take part in the study and to have their remarks recorded during interviews. The teacher informants were given the assurance that their identities would never be mentioned by the researcher since he adhered to the idea of information confidentiality. There was no indication of the problems that led to the identification of interview subjects. The researcher maintained each informant's paper in its own folder in a secure file. Anytime, the informants had the option to withdraw. The researcher moved the interview to the following turn when one teacher got fatigued or refused to go on. They were always respected. They were also given the assurance that nothing they said would affect their health and that everything they said would be kept completely confidential. The researcher claims to have no affiliations to or participation in any organization or entity with a financial interest (such as honoraria, educational grants, speaking engagements, memberships, employment, consultancies, as well as other equity interests) or non-financial interest (such as ties to the field, knowledge of the subject matter, or beliefs) in the topics or materials covered in this study.

Results and Discussions

This presents the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered from the one-on-one interview following the key informant's description of the experiences of English teachers who used the Most Essential Learning Competency-Based instructional module.

The teachers shared how they had employed the instructional module based on MELCs to implement teaching and learning. After the interview process, the themes were apparent. These are listed below:

Theme 1. Teachers' perceptions/views on MELCs instructional modules utilization

By providing sufficient classroom space, the MELCS aims to enable the schools to make the most of the school days as they employ a range of delivery methods. When teachers were asked about their views and perception in utilizing the MELCs-Based instructional module, three sub-themes were derived from the validated transcribed interviews, and this is evident in the teacher participants' responses.

These sub-themes include (1) teachers' likes about MELCs instructional modules; (2) teachers' dislikes about MELCs-Based instructional modules; and (3) teachers' satisfaction with the utilization of MELCs instructional modules.

1.1 Teachers' likes about MELCs instructional modules

In the first question, "What do you like most about MELCs-based instructional modules in teaching?", the teachers show positive responses in using the MELCs-Based instructional module.

Teachers said that the usage of MELCs-Based instructional modules had significantly changed their methods of teaching, giving them a greater understanding of their students and their learning and allowing them to make better use of their class time which is evident from their responses.

Table 1: Responses of the English Teachers on what they like about MELCs Instructional Modules

Code	Response
I-2	<i>"What I like most about MELCs-based instructional modules is it serves as a good guide in teaching up to assessing the learning competencies. The activities from the motivation or pre-assessment up to independent and summative assessment are provided, although there are times when I modify them or change them."</i>
I-7	<i>"I like that the learning competencies to be covered for each quarter are just enough for the whole school year. This ensures that the topics/objectives included in the curriculum are relevant, and it allows the students to develop expertise over competency in a specified time."</i>
I-8	<i>"MELC is useful to teachers as a guide that causes to lighten the burden of learners in acquiring knowledge, understanding, skills, and attitudes that they need to demonstrate in every lesson."</i>
I-9	<i>"A ready-made lesson that equips students with diverse learning, most especially during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic"</i>
I-10	<i>"It has ready-made lessons and activities that focus on the most essential and indispensable competencies that our learners must acquire. "</i>

As mentioned in the study conducted by Guido (2014), the teaching module confirms that its realization of appropriateness, development, and comprehension of competency are effectively identified as it assisted students in developing their cognitive skills and conceptual understanding. As it improves students' knowledge and analytical understanding, this demonstrates that the MELC

instructional module is successful in stimulating critical thinking in a meaningful academic goal.

1.2 Teachers' dislikes about MELCs-Based instructional modules

However, there are certain flaws in the module itself. They vary from school to school, and the teachers who created them determine what they contain. Due

to a well-explained module, some students would not have any trouble comprehending their lessons, while others could not be that good. The degree of learning differs since common books aren't used.

The second question asks, "What do you dislike most about MELCs-based instructional modules in teaching?". Moreover, some of the narratives of the teachers are:

Table 2: Responses of the English Teachers on what they dislike about MELCs Instructional Modules

Code	Response
I-1	<i>"There are some activities and lessons that students are having a hard time understanding."</i>
I-3	<i>"The one that I dislike about the MELCs-based instructional modules in teaching is that some of the lessons are difficult to understand for the students even though the instructions or the thought are clear."</i>
I-8	<i>"As a public teacher and user of the module, I found out how complicated the context for each lesson does MELC have where it is so difficult to prescribe specific competencies or where new skills and new knowledge need to be rapidly accommodated by the students."</i>
I-10	<i>"There are some lessons, especially in grammar, that have redundant activities."</i>

This affirms in the study conducted by Ambayon (2020). Results from the pretest and posttest have shown that the instructional module significantly affects students' learning and academic progress. However, Malik and Rizvi (2018) contend that, among other factors, inappropriate teaching-learning conditions are the main cause of students' failures and poor English performance. Students must be very motivated to succeed in the subject. The results of Haque and Sharmin (2022) demonstrate that students' English ability is still poor despite the fact that several teaching approaches have been established by experts.

This suggests that most teachers care about their students' learning in terms of how the module's

material is delivered. These problems and difficulties were overcome by teachers once they were able to adapt and acquire innovative perspectives and strategies. According to Rasmitadila et al. (2020), the largest barrier to the efficient use of distance learning is a technical one, which involves teachers' ability to use the method for both teaching and learning.

1.3 Teachers' satisfaction with the utilization of MELCs instructional modules

The teachers claim that the new normal offers possibilities as well. It demonstrates how happy they are with the MELCs-based instructional module. From their answers, this is inferred.

Table 3: Responses Showing the English Teachers' Satisfaction with the Utilization of MELCs Modules

Code	Response
I-1	<i>"I can say that I am satisfied with the module we use at our level because the lessons are very timely, and it is just the essential learning needed by the students. There are also instructions on the tasks given."</i>
I-5	<i>"I am satisfied with the current learning modules used here in our school in a way that my students were able to apply the learning competencies through individual outputs and group activities."</i>
I-8	<i>"When it comes to the activities suggested for the lessons, I must say that the tasks on MELC are quite interesting and creative. Since day one of my teaching in public school, I was doing all the given tasks and seemed effective to the learning of my students."</i>
I-9	<i>"I am satisfied due to the readings are already well-provided and unified lessons for each level."</i>
I-10	<i>"I'm satisfied in the sense that it sufficed the need of each student, but at some point, there are parts to be reviewed still."</i>

This demonstrates that while they also concur with its application in terms of content and assessment, respondents are happy with the usage of MELC's Instructional module in terms of pedagogical techniques and instructional materials. Although the MELCs module has room for improvement, the results from their responses confirm Estrada's (2020) assertion that teachers must adequately assess the activities in the module in order to provide students with effective learning outcomes.

Theme 2. Experiences/ Challenges Encountered by the English Teachers in Utilizing the MELCS-Based Instructional Module

Numerous changes occurred in the educational environment as a result of COVID-19's emergence in the Philippines. The Department of Education's implementation of the manner of instruction is one of these. Most educational systems have been forced to create solutions to face-to-face teaching and learning because of the present COVID-19 crisis.

However, the transition of teaching and learning in schools to modular distance learning makes it more difficult for teachers to provide a fundamental, high-quality education. Three sub-themes were developed from the validated transcribed interviews when teachers were questioned about the challenges,

they encountered using the MELCs-Based instructional module, and this is reflected in the teacher participants' answers.

These sub-themes include (1) preparation of the instructional resources and materials; (2) attainment of learning objectives; and (3) engaging the students.

2.1. Preparation of the instructional resources and materials

According to Cabardo et al. (2022), while the majority of teachers acknowledged that modular instruction requires a lot of time in preparing teaching and learning materials, they also thought

that by efficiently managing their time, they could overcome the issue. They contended that printing and reproducing the modules, then sorting them, would free up teachers' time and prevent cramming during module distribution. In addition, it would assist them in finishing other jobs like reviewing learning modules and keeping scores. The workload of teachers may be excessive, especially with this distance learning mode, but if they are able to manage their time well, they will be able to overcome this challenge and still find time for their own personal and professional growth as well as other activities. Below are some of the experiences that teachers personally shared:

Table 4: Responses Showing the English Teachers' Experiences in Preparation of the Instructional Resources and Materials

Code	Response
I-2	<i>"There are not many challenges since I am able to easily use the content in my presentations. However, I had to use other references and materials for modules lacking in content."</i>
I-4	<i>"Some students tend to take their answers from others without reading the module. Modules are for formality causes and are not internalized by the students. Some learning modules are simplified, and not all information that needs to be discussed is not discussed at all. Some pre-requisite topics are no longer discussed before another topic is discussed."</i>
I-7	<i>"Some module contents are very limited and compressed, so I sought other learning materials from other learning portals and/or books. Also, the presentation of the topics is too plain and simple for me, which I think the students get bored with, so I decided to prepare a more interesting presentation and/or layout whenever I share and discuss it with the class."</i>
I-10	<i>"Sometimes you have to make sure the accuracy and visual appeal of materials are clear enough for the students to read and analyze. Choosing the right material to be delivered must be considered too."</i>

This implies that teachers really need time to prepare their teaching materials and resources despite the provisions of activities in the module. According to Yarovaya et al. (2020), teachers must spend the majority of their time developing instructional resources and learning activities that will allow students to work autonomously while using a distant learning modality. Along with preparation, teachers using distance learning must also carefully check the students' completed work to see whether they are the ones responding to it, are cheating, or are using other resources to complete their assignments.

Additionally, (Wahyuningsih et al., 2021) stated that the resources needed for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students must master in order to satisfy the set competency criteria are referred to as teaching materials or instructional materials. They said that learning materials are crucial in helping those with learning difficulties. In

order to make the process of creating and using learning materials easier, teachers must be able to identify the types of content that are relevant to the area of study they are working on. The capacity to identify this kind of material is a component of a teacher's professional competence, which also includes the ability to classify the substance of the material.

2.2. Attainment of learning objectives

During the implementation of the MELCS-based instructional module, knowing how to set multiple yet attainable targets was a challenge for educators. Applying best instructional practices to attain the learning objectives is a step in the right direction. The following teachers' responses illustrate how these challenges are encountered with innovative practices that reflect the need for the use of MELCs-based instructional modules.

Table 5: Responses Showing The Challenges of English Teachers in Terms of Attainment of Learning Objectives

Code	Response
I-2	<i>"If I am honest about it, the content and activities do not always go with the learning objectives. Some modules have very limited content that would lead to the attainment of the learning objectives."</i>

I-5	<i>"Some of the competencies that are not logically arranged according to the taxonomy of learning was the challenge I met in utilizing the MELCs instructional module along with the attainment of learning objectives."</i>
I-6	<i>"The objectives of the grammar lessons in Grade 7 first quarter are not attainable since these lessons are a bit hard for the learners to comprehend."</i>
I-7	<i>"The challenge I encountered in terms of the attainment of the learning objective is the students' different learning paces. Some students find it difficult to acquire along with most of the class, so sometimes a learning objective or lesson may be prolonged."</i>
I-10	<i>"Challenges like coverage of learning outcomes to attain and the level of proficiency to be achieved by the learners."</i>

Based on the answers of the English teachers who used the MELCs-based instructional module, it is challenging for them to develop appropriate growth targets for classrooms that include students who are starting at different achievement levels.

In the study conducted by Sewagegn (2020), he stated that learning objectives and assessment are the core elements of any instructional activity. Writing clear and meaningful learning objectives is a necessary skill that teachers need to have in the academic environment. Any instructional activity begins with introducing the lesson topic and learning objectives to the students. To have meaningful student learning, assessment and learning objectives should be linked. The proper linkage of learning objectives and assessment will play a vital role in the success of student learning.

Thus, he explained that the main components of every instructional process are learning objectives and assessment. In the academic setting, teachers must possess the ability to create concise and

insightful learning objectives. Any educational activity starts with explaining to the students the lesson's content and learning goals. Assessment and learning objectives should be connected for there to be meaningful student learning. The success of student learning will be greatly influenced by the effective communication of learning objectives and evaluation.

2.3. Engaging the students

It has been demonstrated that when students are interested, engaged, or inspired, their learning increases, and when they are bored, disinterested, disenchanted, or uninspired, their learning decreases. The effectiveness of teaching and learning is impacted by engaged students. Students will be able to think critically, grasp, evaluate, and perceive the world better. Student engagement is seen to be one of the biggest issues encountered by practically all teachers today, especially in this time of pandemic. In light of this, the following are the experiences personally shared by some teachers.

Table 6: Responses Showing The Challenges Encountered by The English Teachers in Terms of Engaging The Students

Code	Response
I-1	<i>"The challenge that I encountered in utilizing the MELCs instructional module in engaging my students is that they take all the words and sentences literally, like giving the meaning of the idiom "spill the milk," for them, you "pour the milk." They are not thinking deeply about the tasks."</i>
I-5	<i>"If not guided properly, the students were left confused with some of the MELCs instructional module group activity procedures and directions."</i>
I-6	<i>"Learners are not capable of learning independently from the modules."</i>
I-7	<i>"During the online classes, it was really challenging to engage with the students. Only a few students could actively participate in the discussion due to a lot of distractions. In the face-to-face classes, students can actively participate, though there are still some who are hard to encourage."</i>
I-9	<i>"Usually, students who were modular couldn't answer the activities."</i>

This sub-theme is consistent with the observations that students have trouble answering the modules.

Students are disengaged as a result. As stated in the research by Cabardo et al. (2022), while the modules

were not the key factor in determining a learner's grade, the activities and exercises within the modules served as their practice for a better understanding of the skills. Given that the exercises and activities provided as the formative evaluations for modular instruction, returning incomplete and unaddressed modules may impede learners' overall comprehension and growth in a particular skill. Since understanding is developed through a sequence of teaching experiences, formative evaluations were essential to the development of students' knowledge and final comprehension.

Theme 3) Pedagogical Practices

An effective teacher can use a variety of methods, skills, and practices. An environment that encourages students to learn in the classroom to the

best of their ability is essential for effective teaching. Being passionate about the subject being taught, having a positive attitude toward the subject matter, and incorporating various learning styles into classes are just a few examples of practices and concepts that can lead to effective teaching. Each of these approaches can increase a teacher's efficiency in the classroom. It's true that good instruction helps students comprehend challenging material and new concepts. There are a variety of approaches that can help teachers increase their abilities to help students learn when it comes to successful teaching. Teachers mentioned their applied strategies in teaching when it comes to using the MELCs-based instructional module. Here are some of the strategies shared by teachers during the interview:

Table 7: Teaching Pedagogies of English Teachers Using the MELCS-Based Instructional Module

Code	Pedagogical Approaches	Response
I-2	Technology Integration	<i>"I used attractive presentations with appropriate animations, which my students find interesting and at the same time help them to visualize the lessons better. I also design interactive presentations where my students highlight, underline, encircle, draw, or even type answers which enables them to interact with both content and material."</i>
I-3	I Can Statements	<i>"Instead of telling the learning objectives or goals to my students, I give them I Can Statements. I read these statements and challenged them to be able to confidently say the statements at the end of the lesson. I like this because students are able to own up to their learning. Some students even read the statements with more confidence than others."</i>
I-4	Mind mapping	<i>"The mind mapping process helps students see and understand complex concepts."</i>
I-7	Collaborative Activities	<i>"I like that the students are working together on activities or learning tasks in a group small enough to ensure that everyone participates."</i>
I-8	Visualization	<i>"It can greatly aid students in narrowing their attention to the issue or subject matter at hand."</i>
I-9	Review Past Lessons	<i>"For the retention of previous learning."</i>
I-10	Differentiated Instruction	<i>"Delivering lessons at different levels of difficulty based on the ability of each student."</i>

Jamon et al. (2021) cited in their study that policymakers, educators, and students are all facing a significant problem as a result of the quick transition from traditional face-to-face instruction to new learning modes. Uncertainty and worry about how to teach students in the new normal were brought on by the new educational tendencies (Yorgancioglu, 2020). He further said that the current environment calls for new approaches to teaching and learning as well as new tools, techniques, and experiences. He does, however, promote "technology-driven" new pedagogies.

The teachers' answers imply that teachers are utilizing a variety of activities with the new standard teaching pedagogies, whether it be online or remote

teaching, to better deliver lessons effectively. It means that careful preparation, persistence, and effort are required. Nevertheless, no matter how much effort is required, employing these important strategies is essential to effectively achieving academic goals.

Theme 4) Action Plan in Improving the Utilization of the MELCS Instructional Modules

In the study of Caratiquit & Caratiquit (2022), they mentioned that today's world is experiencing tremendous change and growth, which poses new difficulties and raises the standard for our educational system. However, teachers were able to adapt and acquire fresh viewpoints and strategies for

overcoming such difficulties. This is assumed from their responses.

Table 8: Specific Action Plans Suggested by English Teachers

Code	Action Plan	Responses
I-1	Update some activities	<i>"The plan of action that can be designed to improve the utilization of the MELCS instructional modules is to modify some activities which are appropriate now in the current situation, which is the classroom settings and activities that students can engage themselves with because students can also learn through peers and group activities."</i>
I-4	Conduct Training and Workshops	<i>"Training and workshops should be provided more for the writers and creators of the learning modules. This will provide a wider view for the teacher-writers to create more effective learning modules to be used inside the classroom. Successful creation of learning modules is dependent on an effective teaching-learning environment."</i>
I-5	Design lessons that are localized, collaborative, and holistic	<i>"The MELCs represent the lifelong skills expected for every Filipino learner to master and become a way of life. As such, teachers and other program-related school officials must understand that these competencies are the very core in designing lessons which should have localized contents, collaborative activities, and holistic assessments."</i>
I-7	Cross-check the module content and activities/ Reproduction of Modules	<i>"The people involved in the preparation of MELCS modules should cross-check the module content and activities of each year level in English. The assessment part of the modules must be improved. The Division or schools must provide or support the reproduction of modules for each student, so teachers will not furnish the students a copy from their own pocket."</i>
I-8	Adapt and implement learning programs	<i>"Adapted and implemented learning programs that ensure relevance and responsiveness to the needs of all learners."</i>
I-10	Train teachers and involve parents	<i>"The national government has to spend more resources on teacher training. Re-examine the goals and objectives outlined in the MELC's teaching modules. Early parental participation can assist teachers in keeping track of their student's academic progress."</i>

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. Since it improves students' knowledge and analytical comprehension, the MELC instructional module is good at developing critical thinking in relation to a pertinent academic goal. The exercises and evaluation that provide a complete road map for both the teacher's and students' desired skills are particularly liked by English teachers. However, the teachers detest several of the competencies in the module. This demonstrates that certain competencies may be too vague, repetitive, or unsuitable for the topic at hand.
2. When Most Essential Learning Competency-based instructional modules were used in a classroom setting, the teachers experienced a number of issues. Teachers now acknowledge that engaging their students is one of their major concerns, especially during this pandemic. Some students struggle to complete the tasks. Students are disengaged as a result. Even though there are times when teaching might be tough, this is especially true these days. With a positive attitude against challenges, everything is achievable, as the teachers proved. By

creating coping strategies, teachers were able to overcome these difficulties. The good news is that they continued looking for possible initiatives to deal with the issues they faced as teachers despite their difficulties.

3. Whatever the modality, teachers are using a variety of activities with the new common teaching strategies to deliver lessons more successfully.
4. The suggested action plan aims to improve the utilization of MELCs-based instructional modules.

Recommendations

Based on the given conclusions, the following recommendations are hereby given:

1. Teachers should periodically review their students' progress to identify if learning competencies are met when using MELCs-based instructional modules.
2. Regular communication and feedback on students' progress should be given by teachers and school to parents and students.
3. The instructional module should be further evaluated and validated in terms of learning contents and learning activities.

4. Teachers should focus on developing the students' 21st-century skills through the use of skills-based learning materials as an add-on that will increase their academic performance and get them ready for challenges in the real environment. Additionally, this will assist students in achieving the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELC).
5. The structure of skills-based learning must be strengthened by the school leaders, instructional supervisors, and curriculum specialists, taking into account the difficulties the students will confront and the requirement for independent learning. They will take this into account while designing the curriculum. Education will be more adaptable, suitable, and relevant to the current and future context as a result.
6. Future researchers can use the findings of this study as a guide for their future studies.
7. Similar studies should be conducted to confirm the findings of this study, broaden the scope of the skills-based learning material to include the entirety of the modules from the first to the fourth quarter, and examine its efficacy. Create learning materials with a skills-based approach that provides additional English competencies for all grade levels.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest in the conduct of this research.

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