

Learners' Reflection on the Limited Face-to-Face Class: Basis for Remedial Activities in Numeracy and Literacy

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Abstract

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This paper aimed to assess the learners' reflection during the conduct of the limited face-to-face class as part of the transitioning into the new normal. The thirty (30) Grade 7 learners of Dr. Juan A. Pastor Integrated National High School, Ibaan, Batangas who are among the participants during the limited face-to-face class are the main respondents of this study and are believed to be the most reliable respondents in this action research. After gathering sufficient data, the researchers conducted formal and informal interviews using semi-structured questionnaires. They also conducted small group discussions to confirm the material gathered, which were presented in themes using an online application. It was revealed that were excited and at the same time nervous during their first week of class. The learners felt happy and enjoyed going to school although having difficulties in math and reading. Furthermore, the learners preferred to have a face-to-face class instead of modular distance learning since they learn a lot. It was also suggested by the learners to have additional activities in reading and mathematics for them to acquire the necessary skills. The proposed plan of action is a great way to make it easier for learners to acquire the additional needed learning competencies and skills.

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INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has removed the essential and non-essential things in the lives of so many people (Muhammad et al., 2021). Modular (Prasasti, 2021) is utilized today to gain and acquire information and knowledge. However, implementing this learning modality brought issues for the teacher and students. Some problems encountered by the teachers are that not all students are committed to doing their modules as they still have difficulty adapting to the changes brought by the pandemic (Galgo & Curaza, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2022). In addition, some students are working, so they find it challenging to balance their work and studies (Goodall, 2018).

DepEd Memorandum No. 071, series of 2021 also known as “Preparations for the Pilot Face-to-Face, Expansion and Transitioning to New Normal” states that all public schools nationwide shall conduct a self-assessment using the School Safety Assessment Tool (SSAT) in preparation for the expansion phase and onward transitioning to new normal face-to-face (Cobb, 2021; Pincus et al., 2020). Furthermore, the Schools Division Superintendent shall facilitate the administration of the School Safety Assessment Tool in all schools in their respective area of jurisdiction and determine the level of readiness based on the result of SSAT (Galgo & Curaza, 2022). For schools with substantial gaps based on the result, the SDO shall provide assistance to address the gaps and improve readiness. It is in this light that Dr. Juan A. Pastor Memorial National High School adhered to the guidelines set in the SSAT and was lucky enough to pass the assessment and was granted permission to hold limited face-to-face classes specifically for Grade 7 learners who are deemed important to take part in this transition phase.

During the course of the implementation of the limited face-to-face classes, learners were guided according to the set standards by the Health Department, wherein the school provided the necessary equipment for health protocols to be followed (Aranda-Balboa et al., 2020; Azzahra, 2020). Everything went well according to the plan of the school management on how to have a smooth flow of the coming in and out of the school premises of the learners without violating the Inter-Agency Task Force on Covid-19 guidelines (Chang, 2020; Embodo et al., 2023).

Noticeably the learners were engaged in the actual day-to-day teaching-learning process while teachers prepared all the necessary materials based on

the learning most essential learning competencies provided by the Department of Education. It was observed by the teachers that most of the learners are still in the stage of coping with the set-up inside the classrooms. Furthermore, learners are adamant in answering questions raised by teachers as part of the lesson being taught. Although learners are listening, they are having hard time or have difficulty understanding what is being discussed or what is being read. It is stated in the work of Zita (2019) that it is obvious that English reading comprehension level of students is deteriorating (Zita, 2019).

Additionally, it suggests that learners struggle to read selections and occasionally find it challenging to speak or read the words correctly. To improve learners' comprehension of what they read, critical thinking skills need to be cultivated (Cáceres-Reche et al., 2021). Students' reading comprehension can be improved by employing metacognitive tactics, which highlight how reading comprehension is heritable with just a small amount of shared environmental impacts, as is shown by the use of the mother tongue at home for communication (Besnoy et al., 2012; Dişlen Dağgöl, 2020).

On the other hand, learners are also having some issues in understanding mathematical lessons and are having a hard time in simple numeracy activities. According to Layug et al. (2021), instead of assuming mastery of many disciplines of mathematics or intricate mathematical formulas, mathematics literacy is a broad range of knowledge, comprehension, and appreciation of what mathematics can do (Layug et al., 2021). Mathematics literacy, according to the Journal of Physics: Conference of Series, entails understanding and combining mathematical core concepts, terminologies, facts, and skills in response to the external situation's requirement of the real-world. Furthermore, Philippines-born students are not excluded from this subpar level of numerical proficiency. In reality, out of 79 participating countries globally in 2018, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) showed that the Philippines had the second-lowest overall ranking. This only suggests that the math skills of Filipino students are incredibly subpar (Lusardi, 2015; OECD's Programme, 2021).

Students' ongoing underperformance in mathematics may also be explained by their attitude toward the subject, bad study habits, or overuse of technology. In contrast, the Philippine Department of Education has been implementing many interventions to raise the mathematical literacy of Filipino

students who are unable to understand mathematical ideas in order to stop the ongoing poor performance.

With all of these factors at hand, it is deemed to conduct and pursue this paper in order to address the foregoing issues. The authors also believe that the present paper will help students improve their numeracy and literacy skills as well as to be more engaged in tohor learning areas. This will be demonstrated by the suggested plan of action, which will be modified and put into practice in order to address the problems and learning gaps.

This document will benefit the school administration, the school leaders, the teachers, and most especially the students by developing/crafting proposed remedial activities in numeracy and literacy that will give possible solutions to the problems encountered during the conduct of limited face-to-face classes..

This study aimed to reveal and discuss the learners' reflection during the limited face-to-face class which will be the basis for remedial activities in numeracy and literacy.

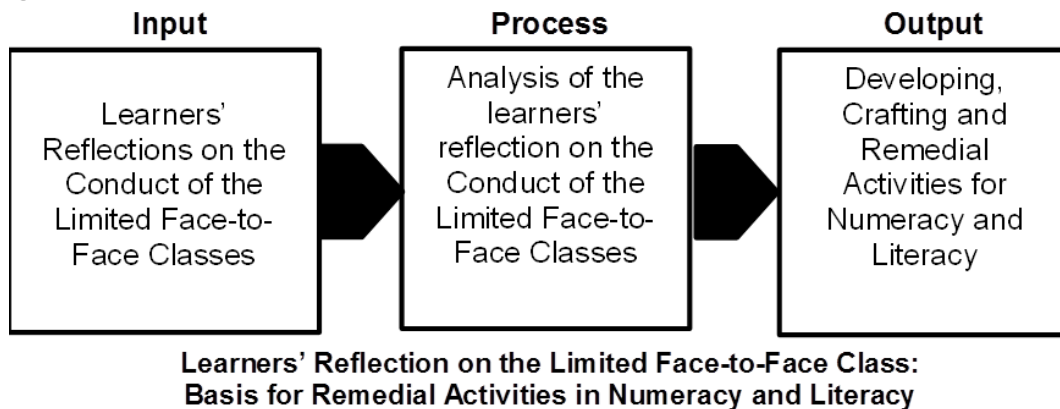
Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What was the first thought of the learners on their first day in the limited face-to-face class?
2. What are the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of the learners after a few weeks of limited face-to-face?
3. If you had to choose between Face-to-face class or Modular Distance Learning, what would you choose and why?
4. What are the suggestions of the learners that can be shared for further improvement in the implementation of the face-to-face class?
5. What proposed remedial activities in numeracy and literacy can be developed to address the issues?

METHODS

This present study used the qualitative-descriptive method of research. The conceptual framework of the study is hereunder specified:

Design



The thirty (30) Grade 7 Learners of Dr. Juan A. Pastor Integrated National High School, Ibaan District, Batangas who were enrolled for the School Year 2021-2022 and were among the learners who participated during the limited face-to-face class are the main respondents of this study and believed to be the most reliable respondents in this action research.

The proponents gathered data from current studies and web searches, including manuals, in order to construct the background material for this study and to be able to acquire essential facts and information to support the various assertions regarding the action research (Chih-Pei & Chang, 2017). Once they had a significant amount of information, the researchers conducted formal and informal interviews utilizing semi-structured questionnaires with the aid of the class advisors. Small-group conversations were also used to verify the information obtained from the instructors who led the sparse face-to-face classes. Using an online application the responses of the learners were summarized and compressed into themes for better presentation of the gathered data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The actual study data, as compiled from the formal and unstructured interviews, are presented in this part. This examines the data and interprets the research's conclusions.

1. Thoughts of the Learners on their First Day in the Limited F2F

- 1.1. My first thought on the first day of f2f was that I was happy because there was a lot to learn because there were teachers to teach our lessons.
- 1.2. I'm nervous because I'm going to school for the first time.
- 1.3. I was nervous because I didn't know what I was going to do in f2f.
- 1.4. When I first entered the school I was shy because it was my first time here.
- 1.5. I'm still shy because I don't know the teachers and classmates yet.
- 1.6. The first attitude on the first day of f2f is to be calm and make friends.
- 1.7. Fun because there is a lot to learn.

As the participants manifested in their responses, they were nervous yet excited to attend the face-to-face classes, because of certain learning and environmental concerns. In the works of Mather & Sarkans (2018), they emphasized the class manageability in the classroom interaction of the learners, specifically the learning tasks, as well as, the completion of the academic performance, resulting to the academic completions.

2. Feelings, Thoughts, and Experiences of the Learners after a Few Weeks of Limited F2F

- 2.1. I felt how to be a student and my attitude was a happy one and experience face-to-face.
- 2.2. It's a lot of fun because you see what's right or wrong in your classmates or friends at school and it's even fun in the module because it's the first and last.
- 2.3. We are having trouble understanding Math lessons.
- 2.4. I was happy because I also learned something in school and made a friend in this F2F class and the most useful experience was being able to be with my teachers and classmates.
- 2.5. Having confidence and not being shy and doing well to answer the teacher's questions and being friendly with classmates so that you can be close.
- 2.6. What I can say about the last few weeks of f2f class is that the environment is good, the school System, the happy teaching of the teachers and so on.
- 2.7. Sometimes we don't understand what we read.

The responses of the participants showed the willingness and preparedness in attending face to face learning classes. It is clearly manifested that these students are generally enthusiastic about face to face in terms of their physical, emotional and financial (Potane, et al., 2023).

3. Choice and Reasons of Learners Between F2F and MDL

- 3.1. Do F2F because we learn more.
- 3.2. F2F so I can better understand the lessons because there is a teacher explaining and I can also see my friends.
- 3.3. I would prefer to do F2F, because F2F is easier than modular because I can learn a lot in f2f class and you won't have any difficulty because going to school is also more fun.
- 3.4. Face-to-face, because when it's MDL, my parents or sister can't teach me because they're always busy when it's F2F someone is teaching me, so I want to do F2F so I can learn more.
- 3.5. I will choose F2F because I know that I will learn more in my lessons, I will understand my Tasks better and my teacher will teach me better.

From the responses of the participants, they became academically interested and motivated to engage in face to face class. As the findings of Helms (2014) revealed, students in the face to face class session have significantly more learning opportunities and be able to pass the subjects, because of the learning exposure and learning environment.

Interpretive Reflection

Based on the data information, the following reflection is derived from the summary of findings, and a recommendation based on the findings and conclusions reached during the study.

It can be concluded that on the first day of face-to-face classes, the learners were excited about the learning opportunities and meeting their teachers. Although they were nervous about their first day and still shy due to unfamiliarity with teachers and classmates still their first attitude was to be calm and make friends, as there was much to learn, which only proves that they are longing to be back in school.

The student experienced a happy attitude and positive experience in face-to-face classes. They learned from their classmates and made friends, and the most useful experience was being with teachers and classmates. They learned about confidence, answering teacher questions, and being friendly. The environment was good, and the school system was happy. However, they sometimes struggled with understanding the material.

Face-to-Face is preferred for better learning and understanding of lessons due to the teacher's explanation and the opportunity to see friends. It is easier than modular learning and more enjoyable. F2F allows students to learn more, understand tasks better, and receive better instruction from their teachers.

To improve face-to-face communication, it is crucial to arrive at the right time, avoid noise, and show respect to teachers and students. Despite COVID-19, face-to-face interactions can be improved by knowing learners' needs and following proper health protocols. Increased participation in face-to-face activities is essential for those who struggle with learning and passing modules. Additionally, additional studies in mathematics and reading are recommended.

Hence, In order to address the foregoing results of this research work, the proponents recommend the following to address the statements of the problem on learners' reflection on the limited face-to-face classes:

First, it is recommended to have preliminary activities to make the students feel comfortable and feel a sense of belongingness as part of the class and as a family, to make each lesson fun, enjoyable, and memorable for each of them.

Second, based on the responses of the learners, it is noticeable that their overall experience is good and they really crave the face-to-face classes, which were hampered by the pandemic. However, since the issue of literacy was raised, it is deemed necessary to make reinforcement or remedial classes in reading since most of the learners were really affected by the pandemic and their reading skills were hampered.

Third, all of the learners who took part in the limited face-to-face recommended or chose to have the face-to-face classes to be continued. With this, it is foreseen that full implementation of the face-to-face classes must be planned by the higher officials for the continuous learning and development of the learners' skills, talents, and knowledge to be able to cope with the losses brought by the pandemic.

Finally, close monitoring and implementation of health protocols must be observed to avoid being infected by the Corona Virus. Likewise, emphasis on good attitude and good manners must be adhered to for the learners to be well-rounded individuals. Finally, intervention or remediation programs and activities must be provided to uplift the skills of the learners in numeracy and literacy, which are very relevant and important skills for the learners to develop and acquire.

Action Plan: Proposed Matrix Of Classroom-Based Counseling Intervention Guidelines

The Table-1 below presents the proposed matrix of literacy & numeracy remedial program:

Objective	Strategy	Concerned Individuals	Time Frame	Expected Outcome
<p>NUMERACY Improve the numeracy skill of the students and strengthen the development and implementation of numeracy in mathematics through Project MATH: Numeracy Tools and e-Games</p>	<p>Conduct the numeracy tool and e-games.</p>	<p>Students Head Teacher, Key Teachers, Project Proponents, Math Teachers, G7 – G10 students</p>	<p>November 2022 – June 2023</p>	<p>Reports of the assessment and analysis of numeracy level of learners both written and oral evaluation/test showing 80% increase in the learners’ understanding.</p>
<p>LITERACY Enhance the reading comprehension skills of the learners through varied learning activities and reinforcement of Project READ.</p>	<p>Remedial activities in reading through group or individual mentoring.</p>	<p>Subject Teachers Master Teachers School Head Other Stakeholders</p>	<p>Year Round</p>	<p>80% of the learners classified as struggling readers were able to improve and were classified to the next higher level of reading classifications.</p>

Figure-1: Action Plan for Literacy and Numeracy Remedial Classes

The learners experienced a mix of excitement and nervousness during their first week of class. Despite facing challenges in subjects like math and reading, they expressed happiness and enjoyment in attending school. Furthermore, the learners expressed a preference for face-to-face classes over modular distance learning due to the perceived benefits of enhanced learning. They also suggested the inclusion of additional activities in reading and mathematics to further develop their skills. The proposed action plan is deemed essential in facilitating the acquisition of supplementary learning competencies and skills, providing learners with a more accessible pathway to success.

This study sheds light on the reflections of learners during the limited face-to-face classes conducted as part of the transition to the new normal. The insights gained from the respondents highlight their initial emotions, satisfaction with attending school, and preferences regarding instructional methods. The findings underscore the importance of incorporating additional activities in key subjects to support learners' skill development. The proposed action plan holds significant potential in facilitating the acquisition of essential competencies and skills, ultimately contributing to the learners' overall educational growth and success.

During the first week of class, learners experienced a mix of excitement and nervousness. Despite encountering challenges in subjects such as math and reading, they expressed happiness and satisfaction in attending school. Additionally, learners showed a preference for face-to-face classes over modular distance learning due to the perceived advantages of enhanced learning. They also suggested incorporating extra activities in reading and mathematics to further enhance their skills. The proposed action plan is considered crucial in facilitating the acquisition of supplementary learning competencies and skills, providing learners with a more accessible path to success.

This study provides insights into the reflections of learners during the limited face-to-face classes implemented as part of the transition to the new normal. The information gathered from the respondents highlights their initial emotions, satisfaction with attending school, and preferences for instructional methods. The findings emphasize the importance of including additional activities in key subjects to support learners' skill development. The proposed action plan has significant potential in facilitating the acquisition of essential

competencies and skills, ultimately contributing to the overall educational growth and success of the learners.

During the first week of class, learners experienced a combination of excitement and nervousness. Despite facing challenges in subjects like math and reading, they expressed happiness and enjoyment in attending school. Moreover, the learners indicated a preference for face-to-face classes over modular distance learning due to the perceived benefits of enhanced learning. They also suggested the inclusion of additional activities in reading and mathematics to further develop their skills. The proposed action plan is considered essential in facilitating the acquisition of supplementary learning competencies and skills, providing learners with a more accessible pathway to success.

The students had positive experiences in the face-to-face classes. They learned from their classmates and formed friendships, and the most beneficial experience was interacting with their teachers and classmates. They learned about confidence, answering teacher's questions, and being friendly. A conducive school environment also played a role in their happiness. However, they sometimes faced difficulties in understanding the lessons.

In terms of learning and comprehension, face-to-face classes were preferred over modular learning. Direct explanations from teachers and the opportunity to interact with classmates made learning easier and more enjoyable. In face-to-face classes, students could learn more, understand assignments better, and receive clearer instructions from teachers.

To enhance communication in face-to-face classes, it is important to arrive on time, avoid noise disruptions, and show respect to teachers and fellow students. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face interactions can be improved by understanding the learners' needs and implementing appropriate health protocols. Active participation in face-to-face activities is crucial for those who struggle with learning and completing modules. Additionally, further research in mathematics and reading is recommended.

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can be proposed to address the challenges of learner engagement in limited face-to-face classes. First, it is necessary to conduct initial activities to create a comfortable and sense of ownership in the classroom. Second, reinforcement or remedial classes in reading should be conducted, considering the literacy issues identified. Third, it is advised that face-to-face classes be continued based on

the learners' desires and recommendations. Lastly, it is important to monitor and implement health protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Emphasizing good behavior and manners towards the learners is also crucial. Intervention or remediation programs should also be provided to enhance the numeracy and literacy skills of the learners.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study, learners displayed enthusiasm and a desire to reconnect with teachers and classmates on the first day of face-to-face classes. They experienced positive interactions, forming friendships and benefiting from direct teacher guidance. Face-to-face classes were preferred over modular learning due to the ease of comprehension and increased engagement. To improve communication, punctuality, respect, and adherence to health protocols were highlighted. However, challenges in understanding certain subjects were identified. Recommendations included creating a comfortable classroom environment, providing remedial support in reading, continuing face-to-face classes based on learner preferences, and implementing intervention programs to enhance numeracy and literacy skills. Overall, the study emphasized the importance of positive classroom experiences and effective teaching strategies in promoting student engagement and learning outcomes.

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