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CAPABILITY OF PARENTS TO TEACH ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN THE MODULAR DISTANCE LEARNING: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL EXPLORATION

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated parents' capacity to teach English as a second language in a Modular Distance Learning (MDL) setting during the COVID-19 pandemic. Using a mixed-methods approach with an explanatory sequential design, the study involved parent-respondents from selected elementary schools in the Calauag West District. Quantitative data were gathered through a structured questionnaire measuring parents' capability in five domains: teaching vocabulary, art of questioning, phonological awareness, utilization of instructional materials, and addressing mistakes, while qualitative data were obtained through interviews to identify challenges encountered by parents. Findings revealed that parents were generally "Much Capable" in teaching English as a second language, indicating a moderate level of competence across all domains. However, results of the t-test showed that significant differences exist when parents are grouped according to sex, educational attainment, and employment status, while age and socio-economic status showed no significant difference. Furthermore, correlation analysis indicated that selected demographic variables, particularly educational attainment and socio-economic status, are significantly related to parents'

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teaching capability. Qualitative findings highlighted several challenges, including limited vocabulary knowledge, difficulty in applying questioning strategies, lack of phonics knowledge, insufficient instructional materials, and low confidence in correcting learners' mistakes. The study concludes that while parents play a vital role as facilitators of learning in the MDL setting, their capability is influenced by both personal and contextual factors. Thus, the study recommends the implementation of training programs, provision of instructional support, and development of parent-friendly learning resources to enhance parents' effectiveness in teaching English at home.

Keywords: *Modular Distance Learning, English as a Second Language, parental capability, phonological awareness, instructional strategies*

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic transformed the delivery of education and required schools and families to adjust to distance-learning arrangements. In the Philippines, the Department of Education implemented Modular Distance Learning (MDL) to sustain instruction while protecting learners' health and safety. Under this arrangement, parents and other family members assumed an important role as facilitators of learning, helping children understand modules, complete activities, and develop the competencies prescribed by the curriculum.

Parents' involvement became particularly important in English language learning. Children learning English as a second language need support in vocabulary development,

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questioning and comprehension, phonological awareness, use of learning materials, and correction of errors. However, parents may not have formal training in teaching, adequate English proficiency, sufficient time, or access to appropriate instructional resources. These conditions may affect the quality and consistency of home-based instruction.

The study was anchored in Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, particularly the Zone of Proximal Development and the role of the More Knowledgeable Other. In MDL, parents may serve as learning guides who provide explanations, models, prompts, and scaffolding as children work through English learning activities. The study also considered the role of language acquisition in children's development, including the importance of exposure to language and opportunities to practice.

Although parents were expected to support learning at home, their actual capability and the challenges they experienced needed to be examined. This study therefore assessed parents' capability to teach English as a second language in selected elementary schools in the Calauag West District. It also examined whether capability differed according to demographic characteristics, explored relationships between demographic profile and capability, and identified the challenges parents encountered. The findings served as the basis for a district-level training-workshop proposal.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study assessed the capability of parents to teach English as a second language in the Modular Distance Learning setting.

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Specifically, it sought to determine:

(1) the demographic profile of the parent-respondents in terms of age, sex, educational attainment, socio-economic status, and employment status;

(2) their level of capability in teaching vocabulary, art of questioning, phonological awareness, utilization of instructional materials, and addressing mistakes;

(3) whether significant differences existed in their capability when grouped according to demographic profile;

(4) whether significant relationships existed between demographic profile and capability;

(5) the challenges encountered by parents in teaching English as a second language in MDL; and

(6) the output that could be proposed based on the findings.

METHODOLOGY

The study used a mixed-methods approach, with quantitative data used to assess parental capability and qualitative data used to describe the challenges encountered during home-based English instruction. The quantitative component employed a structured questionnaire covering five capability domains. The qualitative component gathered parent-participants' experiences through interview responses, which were organized and interpreted through thematic analysis.

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The quantitative respondents consisted of 229 parents from selected elementary schools in the Calauag West District, specifically Tinambulan Elementary School and Sabang Elementary School. The study used purposive sampling in selecting the research population and applied Slovin's formula in determining the number of respondents. The qualitative tables in the manuscript identify six parent-participants (PO1–PO6) whose responses illustrated the challenges and coping strategies.

The research instrument was reviewed by a panel of experts composed of the Head of Research and Development, a Master Teacher, and a School Principal. The questionnaire covered the respondents' profile and indicators of parental capability in teaching vocabulary, questioning, phonological awareness, instructional materials, and addressing mistakes. Interview responses were used to identify challenges in the MDL setting.

Data were gathered after the necessary permissions were secured. The questionnaires were distributed to the selected parent-respondents, retrieved, checked, consolidated, and encoded. Frequency and percentage described the demographic profile. Weighted means summarized the level of capability. The manuscript reported tests of difference and chi-square tests of relationship at the 0.05 level of significance. Qualitative responses were examined through thematic analysis, involving familiarization, coding, grouping of related meanings, theme development, and interpretation.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are presented according to the research questions. The tables below retain the central descriptive findings from the thesis while condensing the detailed item-level results for the article format.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Parent-Respondents

Profile	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18–22	18	8%
	23–27	36	16%
	28–32	54	24%
	33–37	58	25%
	38–42	25	11%
	43–47	16	6%
	48–52	11	5%
	53 and above	11	5%
Sex	Male	28	12%
	Female	201	88%
Educational attainment	Elementary undergraduate	17	7%
	Elementary graduate	33	15%
	High school undergraduate	45	20%
	High school graduate	91	40%

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	Technical-vocational graduate	6	3%
	College undergraduate	21	9%
	College graduate	14	6%
Socio-economic status	No income class	12	5%
	Low income class	89	40%
	Middle income class	117	51%
	High income class	11	4%
Employment status	Unemployed	72	31%
	Employed	54	24%
	Part-time	103	45%

A total of 229 parents participated in the quantitative component. The largest age group was 33–37 years (25%), followed by 28–32 years (24%). Most respondents were female (88%). High school graduates formed the largest educational group (40%). More than half belonged to the middle-income class (51%), while 45% reported part-time employment. These characteristics provide context for understanding the resources, educational experiences, and time available to parents as they supported their children's English learning.

Table 2: Level of Parents' Capability in Teaching English

Capability Domain	Overall Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Teaching vocabulary	2.76	Much Capable

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Art of questioning	3.07	Much Capable
Phonological awareness	3.11	Much Capable
Utilization of instructional materials	2.86	Much Capable
Addressing mistakes	2.92	Much Capable

Parents were rated "Much Capable" in all five domains. Phonological awareness obtained the highest overall weighted mean (3.11), suggesting that parents were relatively more capable in helping learners recognize letter sounds, rhyming words, and sound patterns. Art of questioning followed with a mean of 3.07, reflecting parents' ability to use basic questions, simplify wording, and support comprehension.

Addressing mistakes obtained a mean of 2.92, while utilization of instructional materials registered 2.86. Teaching vocabulary received the lowest mean (2.76). Although all domains were interpreted as "Much Capable," the comparatively lower ratings for vocabulary and instructional-material use point to areas where parents may benefit from practical strategies, accessible resources, and guided support. The overall results indicate a general level of capability rather than specialized instructional competence in every aspect of English teaching.

DIFFERENCES IN CAPABILITY ACCORDING TO DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The thesis reported domain-specific tests of difference. For teaching vocabulary, significant differences were found according to sex ($p = .003$), educational attainment ($p <$

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.001), and employment status (p < .001), while age and socio-economic status were not significant. For the art of questioning, educational attainment (p < .001) and employment status (p = .0013) were significant; age, sex, and socio-economic status were not significant.

For phonological awareness, significant differences were reported by educational attainment (p = .0005) and employment status (p = .0027), while age, sex, and socio-economic status were not significant. For utilization of instructional materials, educational attainment (p < .001) and employment status (p = .0002) were significant; the other profile variables were not significant. For addressing mistakes, educational attainment (p = .0007) and employment status (p = .0012) were significant, while age, sex, and socio-economic status were not significant. These results suggest that educational background and employment circumstances were recurring factors associated with differences in capability across the assessed domains.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE AND CAPABILITY

The chi-square results in the thesis showed that relationships varied across the five capability domains. For teaching vocabulary, all five demographic variables—age, sex, educational attainment, socio-economic status, and employment status—were reported as significantly related. For art of questioning, significant relationships were reported for age, socio-economic status, and employment status. For phonological awareness, age and socio-economic status were significant. For utilization of instructional materials, age and

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employment status were significant. For addressing mistakes, age, educational attainment, socio-economic status, and employment status were significant, while sex was not.

The pattern indicates that demographic characteristics did not relate to every capability domain in the same way. The findings should therefore be interpreted by domain rather than as a single uniform relationship between demographic profile and parental capability.

Table 3: Challenges Encountered by Parents

Area	Challenges identified in the parent accounts
Teaching vocabulary	Limited English vocabulary and low confidence in explaining unfamiliar words; reliance on dictionaries, Google searches, older siblings, or repeated reading; in some cases, modules were left unanswered when parents could not resolve the content.
Art of questioning	Difficulty formulating or rephrasing questions; learner silence, withdrawal, irritation, or resistance; parents used repetition, self-study, digital tools, and assistance from older children.
Phonological awareness	Learner inattentiveness, playfulness, low motivation, slow learning pace, and parents' concerns about pronunciation differences associated with dialect.

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Instructional materials	Dependence on available printed and digital resources, including modules, books, posters, phones, television, and pocket Wi-Fi; limited load, poor connectivity, power interruptions, and lack of suitable references restricted use.
Addressing mistakes	Correction sometimes involved sternness and emotional pressure, which could lead to crying, silence, or temporary task avoidance; other parents used guided questioning, patient prompting, repetition, and opportunities for self-correction.

Across the qualitative accounts, parents' difficulties reflected both instructional and contextual constraints. Some parents lacked confidence in their English knowledge and struggled to explain unfamiliar lessons. Others encountered learner-related challenges, including distraction, low motivation, and difficulty understanding symbols, sounds, or questions. Resource limitations were compounded by unreliable electricity and internet access, financial constraints, and parents' work schedules.

The accounts on addressing mistakes showed the importance of the emotional climate during instruction. Stern or punitive correction could result in learner distress or withdrawal, whereas patient prompting, explanatory feedback, repeated practice, and guided questions gave learners opportunities to recognize and correct errors. These findings point to the need

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for parent training that addresses not only English teaching strategies but also supportive feedback and positive home-learning interactions.

Based on the findings, the thesis proposed a District Training-Workshop on Enhancing the Capability of Parents in Teaching English Language in the New Normal. The proposed activity is intended for 100 parents of primary pupils and is scheduled for June 25, 2027, at Sabang Dos Elementary School. The proposed funding sources are the Local Government Unit (LGU) and Gender and Development (GAD) funds.

Table 4: Proposed Output: District Training-Workshop

Program Component	Description
Target participants	100 parents of primary pupils
Proposed date and venue	June 25, 2027; Sabang Dos Elementary School
Funding source	LGU and GAD
Core learning areas	Teaching vocabulary; art of questioning; phonological awareness; utilization of instructional materials; addressing mistakes
Training approaches	Lectures, plenary sessions, guided practice, preparation of instructional materials, and output presentation
Expected outputs	Improved understanding of parent engagement and home-based English teaching; increased awareness of teaching

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The session guide in the thesis recommends short, structured learning sessions for Kindergarten to Grade 3 learners. The proposed sequence includes preparation and activation of prior knowledge, explicit instruction and practice using "I do, We do, You do," and a closing review and reflection. The program's stated expenditure estimate is PHP 48,140, covering meals, resource-speaker honoraria, training supplies and materials, and miscellaneous expenses.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study found that parents in the MDL setting were generally "Much Capable" of teaching English as a second language across the five assessed domains. Their highest capability rating was in phonological awareness, while teaching vocabulary received the lowest rating. The results indicate that parents had a functional foundation for supporting English learning at home, but their capability remained in need of further development.

Differences in capability were repeatedly associated with educational attainment and employment status, although the pattern varied by domain. The relationship tests likewise showed that demographic characteristics were not uniformly related to all capability areas. Qualitative findings demonstrated that parents faced challenges involving limited vocabulary

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knowledge, questioning strategies, phonological instruction, instructional resources, infrastructure, and emotionally supportive error correction.

The study recommends that parents continue developing their English proficiency and instructional strategies through self-learning and training. Teachers should provide clear, simplified guidance and maintain regular communication with families. Schools should conduct parent workshops focused on vocabulary, phonics, questioning, instructional materials, and constructive error correction. DepEd may provide parent-friendly guides and supplementary resources that can be used in home-based learning. Future researchers may examine additional factors such as parental motivation, the home learning environment, and access to technology, and may replicate the study in other settings.

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