

---

## NARRATIVE INQUIRY ON STUDENTS' LANGUAGE LEARNING EXPERIENCES THROUGH RADIO-BASED INSTRUCTION

**EDGAR O. FERNANDEZ**

Teacher, Department of Education, Division of Sarangani, Philippines  
[edgar.fernandez005@deped.gov.ph](mailto:edgar.fernandez005@deped.gov.ph)

---

### Abstract

This study aimed to narrate the language learning experiences of learners in the utilization of Radio-Based Instruction as a Learning Delivery Modality. It employed qualitative narrative inquiry as its research design. The participants of the study were the ten (10) purposefully selected learners who are using radios while learning. Data were gathered through in-depth interview with the learners. Prior to the conduct of the study, essential permits were secured by the researchers. The results suggested that the learners have different language learning experiences before, during and after utilizing radio-based instructions. It was revealed that the learners viewed learning as interactive and easy during the face-to-face classes. They also believed that learning is sacrificial and difficult during the utilization of radio-based instructions. Also, they perceived that learning is fun and exciting after the utilization of radio-based instructions. With the results of the study, teachers are encouraged to sustain eagerness and excitement of the students while learning through radio-based instructions and the parents should also be encouraged to extend support to their learners. On the other hand, it also suggested that the school should provide mechanisms to help learners who struggle in learning.

**Keywords:** *Radio-Based Instructions; Narrative Inquiry; Language Learning*

---

### Introduction

As a response to the increasing number of Covid-19 cases in the country, the government has mandated lockdowns in the different parts of the country. In response to the pronouncement of the president to cancel the opening of classes, the Department of Education has provided Learning Continuity Plan so that education of the learners will not stop. The Department made use of non-face-to-face learning modalities such as online learning, modular distance learning and even blended learning with the use of Television or even Radio-based instruction.

Radio is a communication technique that sends signals from one area to another using electromagnetic waves and radio equipment that can play radio programs. These waves may travel through air as well as the vacuum of space without the use of a medium. Because it can reach a vast number of people in a short amount of time, radio is categorized as a mass medium. There are various definitions of radio, each depending on the technological infrastructure or medium qualities of the medium. The medium qualities of radio, on the other hand, are more relevant in social and communication studies. With this in mind, radio can be defined as a medium that transmits audible messages to its potential listeners. With voices, music, and effects, the makers create audible messages. There must be a definitional section in educational radio broadcasts that explains educational-based presentations or programs (Valdez et al., 2018).

In the Philippines, due to the increasing number of Covid-19 positive cases, face to face classes has not been possible, so different learning modalities has been explored. In the Municipality of Malungon, radio-based instruction has been used to respond to the current situation. This is the gap that this study wants to

explore. This study aims to narrate the experiences of learners in learning language through radio-based instruction, their coping mechanism when they experienced different challenges and provide solutions to the existing problems related thereto.

### **Background of the Study**

Distance education encompasses both teaching and learning in the form of mediated subject matter presentation (one-way traffic) and mediated student-tutor interaction (two-way traffic). This connection means that the student and his or her tutor have a one-to-one relationship. Learning is intended to result from the instruction supplied by these mediated one-way and two-way traffic applications. Distance education may also entail contact between individual students, in groups, and individually - and with the introduction of computer technology, it almost always does (Sumner, 2016).

Distance education has generally been thought of as a different educational venture from the traditional classroom-based, classical teaching approach, with different theoretical frameworks and research investigations. Theorists such as Holmberg, Keegan, and Rumble investigated the fundamental assumptions of what distinguishes distant education from regular education, partly to justify and partly to explain the phenomenon. These pioneers in distance education described the distance learner as someone who is geographically removed from the teacher, has a planned and supervised learning experience, and participates in a two-way structured type of remote education that is distinct from typical classroom instruction. Early theoretical approaches aimed to describe the crucial and distinctive characteristics of remote education in order to justify the importance of this atypical type of education (Keegan, 2015).

In the past, remote education was a solitary endeavor marked by intermittent mail correspondence between student and teacher. Rapid innovations and the rise of three new generations marked the last half of the twentieth century, one backed by mass media such as television and radio, another by synchronous technologies such as video and audio teleconferencing, and a third based on computer conferencing (Anderson, 2014).

### **Statement of the Problem**

This qualitative-narrative study sought answers to the research questions:

1. How do the learners describe their journey towards language learning using radio-based instruction during Covid-19 pandemic?
2. How do the learners cope with the challenges they have encountered while learning a language through radio-based instruction?

### **Scope and Delimitation**

This study was only limited to narrating learners' journey towards language learning in the new learning modality that is the Radio-Based Instruction. This was conducted in Consolacion Integrated School, East Malungon District focusing on ten (10) learners as the participants of this study. The researcher used semi-structured questionnaires during the in-depth interview. Before administering the questionnaires, different permissions have been prepared. Also, the interview guide was subjected to validation processes of the experts.

## **Overview of the Methodology**

### **Research Design**

In this study, the method of narrative inquiry was used. It is qualitative in nature and well-suited to this investigation, in which the researcher must make sense of the key informants' narratives and stories about their personal experiences in order to grasp the significant events in the Blaan learners' learning journey through Radio-Based Instruction (DeVault, 2016; Creswell, 2009).

Qualitative studies begin with a set of assumptions, and then look into the viewpoints of people who have successfully gone through the experience to find the answers the study is looking for. Stories are, after all, how people make meaning of their lives. This strategy can help the researcher obtain a far better knowledge of the subject (Creswell, 2009).

A research design is the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of research data, thus in this study the stories and accounts of the key informant were utilized as the main source of data. To do this, a guided interview questionnaire was used by the researcher in the conduct of the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion with the key informants. Through the in-depth interview, the key informants were encouraged to share their daily life experiences in learning through Radio-Based Instruction as well as their coping mechanism to the challenges they have encountered. The interview was non-directive although follow up questions would be utilized in order to clarify undertones and confirm answers. Hence data basically depends on teachers' perceptions. The items on the guided questionnaire was based on the contents of the problem statement of the study. The texts of the responses were further analyzed using thematic analysis, a commonly used qualitative analytic method in the social sciences. Thematic analysis is a way of analyzing qualitative data that is both accessible and conceptually flexible (Braun & Clarke, 2016).

### **Research Locale**

The study was conducted in Consolacion Integrated School. The school is located at Consolacion, Banahaw, Malungon, Sarangani Province. The school is categorized as medium school since it has a total students' population of 435.

### **Research Participants/Informants**

In a narrative inquiry design, the participants must have extensive experience that makes them a rich source of information. In this inquiry, learners who served as key informants must meet certain criteria relevant to the research problems. In this study, the participants were ten Junior High School: ten (10) learners. They were regular students of the school and have used Radio-Based Instruction and Learning Activity Sheets or Self-Learning Modules in their homes.

### **Instruments of the Study**

The instrument used in this study was a semi-structured interview guide that contained questions pertaining to the learning experiences of the learners before, during and after the utilization of Radio-Based Instruction in teaching and the coping mechanism of the learners in the challenges they have encountered. The questionnaire underwent validation of the experts to ensure that the questions are valid and assure that they would help answer the problem focus of the study.

### **Data Collection**

When approval was given and the interview guide has been closely checked to ensure the appropriateness and validity of the said research instrument, the following techniques or undertakings were properly applied and observed.

First, the required materials or specifications that include the location and the audio/voice recorder used during the interview with the participants had been prepared. The location and time of the first visit to the participants was decided and a purposeful observation was made to obtain first-hand knowledge about the people and the locations at the research site.

Second, a copy of the consent document was given to the participants before the interview was performed. After which, without any queries or clarifications, the consent form was retrieved. The Participant Agreement Form followed. This suggested that the agreement is not only about doing research, but about being a collaborator working with the participant as a co-investigator.

During the interview process, the participants and the researcher observed minimum health protocols such as wearing of face masks, face shields and sanitizing of hands from time to time. Third, at the conclusion of the interview process, the audio recordings were transcribed as soon as possible. The member verification system as a confirmation tool was utilized to allow the participants to read and validate the contents of the interview transcript by affixing their signature to it. This signifies accurateness of the data gathered and the transcriptions.

### Data Analysis

In this research study, data analysis entailed summarizing the information gathered and presenting the findings in a way that communicates the most important aspects. The study used thematic analysis to analyse the responses of the participants or informants in the interview conducted.

### Results and Discussions

Table 1 presents the learning experiences of the learners before the implementation of Radio-Based Instruction. They viewed that learning during those times was interactive and easy.

After the in-depth interview was conducted, the results were categorized into different major themes of their core ideas.

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Learning is Interactive	<i>Loved learning through a teacher.</i>
	<i>Missed learning with classmates.</i>
	<i>Shared ideas with the teachers and classmates.</i>
Learning is Easy	<i>Learned in an easier way in face-to-face.</i>
	<i>Asked classmates and teachers when tasks are difficult.</i>

Table 1. Learners' Language Learning Experiences Before Radio-Based Instruction

### Learning is Interactive

The first theme that emerged was the view of learners that language learning before the utilization of Radio-Based Instruction was interactive. They made mention that they loved learning through the guidance of their teachers and with their classmates and they even noted that they also missed sharing ideas with their classmates.

This was evident in the comment of one learner that:

*"For me sir, I find learning before as better because we are interacting with our teachers and we are helping with my classmates to learn."* P1, S1

This was supported by the proposition that Learning interactivity can be defined as the ability to interact and learn through conversation, dialogue, or action. "Interactive" pertains to the method in which the learner is considered as a participant who is expected to undertake particular behaviors. He isn't just a listener or a spectator; he actively participates in what's going on and, as a result, appears to actually be a driving force behind it all happening (Suvorova, 2001).

### Learning is Easy

The second theme that emerged was the learners' belief that language learning is easy before using Radio-Based Instruction and they noted that they learned in the easier way in face to face and they also have chances to ask their teachers and classmates when they encounter difficult tasks.

It was evident in the lines that:

*"I learn best and I find it more easy learning during the face-to-face classes because when I encounter difficult lessons, I can ask my teachers and my classmates."* P2,S2

The result was in consonance with the notion that face-to-face learning have students engage in active interaction in class, implying that by offering a personal contribution to the common cause in class each participant will have the chance to gain some new knowledge through organizing collective activity, starting at the level of 2–3 individuals interacting and progressing to wider interaction among many (Kashlev, 2011).

Table 2 presents the language learning experiences of the learners during the time that Radio-Based Instruction is conducted. The learners have shared that learning during this time is challenging. They have also pointed out that learning during this time is sacrificial because they spent more time listening to the radio.

Major Themes	Core Ideas
Learning is Challenging	<i>Find it difficult to learn.</i>
	<i>Could not understand the lessons well.</i>
	<i>Could not understand straight English.</i>
Learning is Sacrificial	<i>Spent more time listening to the radio.</i>
	<i>Sacrificed social life during classes time.</i>
	<i>Classes consumed most of our time.</i>

**Table 2. Learners' Learning Experiences During Radio-Based Instruction**

### Learning is Challenging

The first theme that emerged was the idea of the learners that language learning during Radio-Based Instruction is challenging. They even made mention that they find it difficult to learn in this modality. They could not understand the lessons well and they cannot understand straight English which were revealed in the lines:

*"I cannot understand sir, when they use English in teaching especially when the teachers use straight English."* P5, S5

The finding was supported by the previous research when listening to a language, learners encounter a slew of issues. If teachers are expected to help students improve their listening comprehension, they must first recognize the challenges they are having understanding spoken passages and then teach them effective listening comprehension skills to help them address their problems (Hamouda, 2013).

### Learning is Sacrificial

Another theme that emerged was the view of the learners that language learning during Radio-Based Instruction was sacrificial that they spent most of their time in listening to the radios and spend less time on their social life. They also added that listening to the radio consumed most of their time. This can be manifested in the responses of the participants that:

*“Because of radio-based learning, we are no longer playing with my friends and I have no more time socializing with other people.” P4,S4*

Clearly, it was stated in the lines that the learners were sacrificing their time for social aspects considering that they have to focus when they are listening to their teachers discussing the content of their modules in the radio. Because of this, learners do not have more time to play with their friends during leisure time.

Table 3 presents the language learning experiences of the learners after the radio-based instruction. They have shared that after each session, learning has become fun and exciting.

Major Theme	Core Ideas
Learning is Fun and Exciting	<i>After adjusting to the situation, I already loved learning.</i>
	<i>I now have fun while learning.</i>
	<i>No pressure in learning.</i>
	<i>Excited every airing session.</i>
	<i>Eager to learn every day.</i>

Table 3. Learning Experiences After Radio-Based Instruction

### Learning is Fun and Exciting

The first theme that emerged was the learners’ opinion that after the radio-based instruction, language learning is already fun. The learners stated that after adjusting to the situation, they started having fun while learning. They no longer feel pressured in learning. This was evident in the lines:

*“After several sessions using Radio-based learning, I have already adjusted to the situation. I now began to love learning and have fun while learning at the same time.” P1,S1*

Truly, the learners have begun to love learning after they have adjusted to the situation and after they have realized that there are no pressures in learning.

Another learner shared that:

*“I am now starting to become excited every airing session. I always turn on the radio so that I can check if the radio-teacher is already there.” P2,S2*

The participants clearly mentioned that they are excited and eager to learn every day and became more motivated to learn.

The findings were in line with the finding that today's classrooms are packed with "stale, uninteresting, and practically exclusive things from the past" pedagogy. Today's pupils, on the other hand, are tech-savvy and demand to be engaged. These are incongruent circumstances. As a result, it is a problem. Students from varied ethnicities, IQ levels, family histories, and personalities make up a class. As a result, capturing and maintaining the attention of all children is always a problem for a teacher. Only when they have

successfully captured their pupils' attention will they be able to pique their interest in the subject (Lister, 2015).

Table 4 presents the coping mechanisms of the learners while encountering different problems and challenges during the time that Radio-based instruction was implemented. They have shared that they were connecting with other people such as their classmates, parents and teachers. They were also doing further research whenever they encounter difficult lessons and they were being motivated despite the challenges posed by the new learning modality.

Major Themes	Core ideas
Connecting with the Others	<i>Seek help from the classmates.</i>
	<i>Ask clarifications from the teachers.</i>
	<i>Ask ideas from the parents.</i>
Doing Further Research	<i>Search on google difficult lessons.</i>
	<i>Watch videos on youtube about the topics discussed.</i>
Being Motivated	<i>Willing to learn despite the challenges.</i>

Table 4. Learners' Coping Mechanisms

### Connecting with the Others

The first major theme that came out from the interview with the learners on how they cope with the challenges that they have encountered while learning a language using Radio-Based Instruction was connecting with the others. The learners mentioned that they were asking their classmates some ideas about the lessons if they encounter difficult lessons. They have also asked for clarifications from the parents and their teachers.

*"...sometimes, if I do not understand the lesson, I ask my mother to teach me about my modules." P6, S6*

*"...because Radio-based instruction is paired with Learning activity sheets, if there are lessons that are difficult, I ask my teacher to further explain it." P10, S10*

The extracts above signified that indeed, the learners were connecting to their teachers, parents and classmates especially when they have clarifications regarding the lesson.

### Doing Further Research

Another coping strategy that the learners do while learning through Radio-Based Instruction is doing further research. Learners have shared that when they were having difficulties understanding the lessons in their modules and learning activity sheets, they would search from Google and watch videos in youtube to clarify points and ideas.

*"...sometimes, if I cannot contact my teachers, I just search difficult lessons through google so that I can read more explanations about the topic. P7, S7*

*"...watching educational videos on youtube also helped a lot." P8, S8*

It could be concluded from the extracts on the participants' responses during the interview that they were also trying to initiate actions which will help them cope with the challenges they are encountering in learning during Radio-Based Instruction.

## Being Motivated

Another coping mechanism used by the learners when they encounter difficult situations in learning through Radio-based instruction is being motivated. Learners were feeling motivated to learn despite the fact that the learning modality is new to them.

*"...despite the fact that we are not used to learning through radio-based instruction, I am still motivated to learn. I am also doing my best to learn in this new learning modality. P9,S9*

## Conclusion

After consolidating the results of this qualitative-narrative analysis, it could be concluded that: The learners were having different experiences in learning before, during and after the utilization of Radio-Based Instruction as a learning modality. They believed that learning is interactive and easy during the face-to-face interaction and viewed that learning is difficult and sacrificial during the utilization of Radio-Based instruction. However, it could be noted that the learners made mention that after the utilization of the Radio-based instruction, they already began to believe that learning is fun and exciting.

## Recommendations

After thoroughly discussing the results of this research, the researcher came up with the following recommendations:

- Teachers must always guide learners to sustain their interests and eagerness to learn using radio-based instructions.
- Parents must also provide necessary support to help learners in learning at home.
- The school must provide initiatives to help learners who found learning to be difficult despite using radio-based instruction for several times already.

## References

- Anderson, T. (2014). *"Towards a theory of online learning."* Theory and practice of online learning 2109-119.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2016). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Creswell, J. W. (2009). Mapping the field of mixed methods research. *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, 3(2), 95-108. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1558689808330883>
- DeVault, G. (2019, August 20). Establishing trustworthiness in qualitative research. *The Balance Small Business*. <https://www.thebalancesmb.com/establishing-trustworthiness-in-qualitative-research-2297042>
- Hamouda, A. (2013). An investigation of listening comprehension problems encountered by Saudi students in the EL listening classroom. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 2(2), 113-15.

- Kashlev, S. S. (2011). *Interaktivnye metody obucheniya [Interactive methods of learning]*. Minsk, Belarus: TetraSystems, p. 224.
- Keegan, D. (2015). Concepts: Problems in defining the field of distance education. *American Journal of Distance Education*, 2(2), 4-11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08923648809526619>
- Lister, M. (2015) Gamification: The effect on student motivation and performance at the post-secondary level. *Issues and Trends in Educational Technology*, 3(2), 1-16. <https://www.learntechlib.org/p/171075/>
- Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2015). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Sumner, J. (2016). Serving the system: A critical history of distance education. *Open Learning: The Journal of Open, Distance and e-Learning*, 15(3), 267-285. <https://doi.org/10.1080/713688409>
- Suvorova, N. (2001). Interaktivnoe obuchenie: Novye podkhody [Interactive learning: New approaches]. *Innovations in Education*, 5, 106–107.
- Valdez, M. G., Paulican, J. B., & Adriatico, J. J. (2018). Exploring the alternative learning system radio-based instruction. *Asia Pacific Journal of Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 15, 79-92.