

Distance Learning SHS Students' Experiences, Challenges, and Coping Mechanisms in Academic Writing Classes During Pandemic: A Narrative Research

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Abstract

Writing is one of the complex macro skills of English. More so, academic writing is one task students find to be difficult. Studies show that ESL learners are challenged in this form of writing. This challenge seemed to have worsened by COVID-19 which consequently caused face-to-face learning to transition to the new normal. Hence, this narrative research unearthed the experiences of first-year college students during their previous two-school years of the pandemic in SHS. The participants were selected through convenience sampling as they were coming from different academic strands – STEM, ABM, and HUMSS. The participants were also in different modalities – online and modular. A semi-structured online interview was conducted. After which, the recorded interview was transcribed and coded. They were then categorized until themes emerged them. The results revealed that the participants, generally, did not have good experience in distance learning. With regard to challenges encountered in academic writing tasks, four themes emerged namely: (1) aspects and technicalities in writing, (2) unclear instructions from modules and from the teacher, (3) uncooperative group members during group works, and (4) minimal feedback from the teacher to improve outputs. On the other hand, this study also revealed that students' coping mechanism to address their challenges in learning is to either use the internet or seek assistance from their family and peers. It is suggested to future researchers to increase the number of participants, interview teachers, and make a comparative analysis of the experiences of those in online vs modular modality.

Keywords: academic writing, challenges, coping mechanism, narrative research, experiences, pandemic, SHS