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Fostering Learner Autonomy and Global Competence through Creative Nonfiction: A 21st-Century Approach to Meaningful Learning

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***Abstract*—** The main purpose of this project is to develop instructional materials aligned with the Department of Education learning competencies on Creative Nonfiction integrated with global skills suitable for Grade 12 students. A mixed (quantitative-qualitative) method using experimental design was employed in this project. The participants of the project were the three (3) Philippine teacher partners and thirty-six (36) Grade 12 students of Pavia National High School for school year 2020-2021 using purposive sampling techniques. The data in this project were collected through the Philippine teacher partners' in-depth interviews, student participants' written output,s and observation during the implementation of the instructional design. The gathered data was processed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) frequency and mean, and Clark and Braun (2006) thematic analysis. Findings revealed that the instructional design effectively promoted meaningful learning, learner autonomy, and student engagement, even in distance learning settings. Despite technological challenges, students produced quality work using new tools. Peer and teacher feedback boosted motivation and performance, while focusing on content over grammar reduced anxiety and encouraged creativity. Scaffolded activities and reflective writing fostered critical thinking and self-expression. Recommendations emphasize integrating global skills, adopting innovative technologies, strengthening student-teacher collaboration, and creating feedback-rich, supportive environments to enhance 21st-century competencies in both physical and virtual classrooms.

***Keywords*—** instructional materials, Creative Nonfiction, meaningful learning, learner autonomy, student engagement, distance learning, scaffolding, critical thinking, global skills, innovative technology, 21st century skills, motivation.

I. INTRODUCTION

The worldwide pandemic brought about by the spread of the COVID 19 has created abrupt changes that placed our country under a state of national emergency. Several measures were implemented, such as banning of mass gatherings, social distancing, and preventive practices in order to stop the further spread of infection among the populace. This situation has greatly affected the educational system in the country where the prohibition of a face- to face classes was strictly imposed. To continuously provide quality education to the Filipino learners, the Department of Education mandated the distance learning modalities to be adopted by each school in the entire country. One of the modalities is the Modular–Based instruction, where learners are provided with self-learning printed modules (DepEd Order No. 18, s. 2020). Given this situation, the learners will probably find it even more difficult to learn and to understand the competencies as well as to perform the skills that they need to maste,r since they are not properly guided as they acquire knowledge and skills all by themselves. Furthermore, it limits the students' learning, especially on global skills because the DepEd mandated to use the Self-Learning Modules (SLM) modular-based instruction. Self–learning modules alone is insufficient for the students' learning development. Thus, Global learning and use of different educational platforms are necessary as a supplementary tool to improve student's conceptual understanding specifically on creative non-fiction.

The Philippine education system, overseen by the Department of Education (DepEd), follows the K-12 Basic Education Curriculum and is composed of public and private institutions. Education is compulsory for thirteen years, from kindergarten to grade 12, and divided into elementary, junior high, and senior high school. During the COVID-19 pandemic, schools shifted to distance learning using various modalities like modular, online, and blended instruction, with platforms such as Google Classroom, Edmodo, Zoom, and DepEd Commons. A particular instructional design project targeted Grade 12 HUMSS students in a modular distance setup, revealing that internet access and digital skills are limited among learners. English, the country's second language, is used as the medium of instruction, though students have varying levels of proficiency. Writing instruction benefits from step-by-step

templates, peer feedback, and interactive pre-writing tasks, especially for students in technical-vocational strands who often struggle with academic writing. Lessons are guided by DepEd's curriculum, and teacher support remains crucial in helping students overcome writing challenges, especially during the pandemic.

What is Global learning? Global learning is the process of collaborating with those of differing backgrounds and norms and coming together to develop knowledge. It is an approach to learning about international development through recognising the importance of linking people's lives throughout the world [37]. Global learning has a huge advantage when teachers incorporate global elements into teaching across the curriculum. Like a.) develop a richer, more interesting curriculum, b.) use real-world contexts to enthuse, inspire and engage pupils, c.) support raising standards d.) help students make sense of the world in which they live and to understand their role within a global society, and e.) develop an ethos encouraging empathy, fairness and respect. Furthermore, Global learning supports the long-term development and success of students, It also develop their global skills such as, critical thinking skills, communicate effectively in diverse settings, use technology tools and applications to support environmental impacts on their ideal structure, knowledge of global cultural awareness, and; understanding of global conditions, multiple perspectives, cultural awareness, and empathy.

The role of technology in education is powerful for transforming learning. Technology as a tool for learning helps motivate, differentiate, and allow students to achieve and excel in ways that they have never been able to before. Proper utilization of technology can help both educators and learners improve the teaching and learning process [17]. In this new normal education where face–to–face classes are strictly not allowed, making use of technology through the use of different educational platforms will be of great help as they learn and understand the concepts and with the assistance of their teacher. By this, learners will be more motivated, creative, and reflective, especially in problem-solving and critical thinking. This will also ensure that learners can grasp and apply the concepts acquired in a more complex situation and successfully solve the problem [23].

The collaboration between West Visayas State University, of the Philippines and University of West Georgia of USA, studying Doctor of Philosophy major in Curriculum Development, who were the developers of the project, believed that the development of Global Learning Project 2020 focusing on Global learning and use of different educational platforms that are integrated to the DepED's learning competencies specifically on Creative Nonfiction is effective use to enhance the conceptual understanding and global skills of students. Hence, this project is implemented.

II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The main purpose of this project is to determine the effectiveness of the instructional materials focusing on the Department of Education learning competencies, integrated with global skills suitable for Grade 12 students. Specifically, it solved the following questions:

1. What is the educational system of the Philippines in terms of cultural background, total population, curriculum, extracurricular activities, sports, learning delivery modalities, and the common way or how students access technology during this pandemic?
2. What is the level of quality of the instructional materials in terms of content, instructional quality (presentation and organization), format, and accuracy?
3. What is the level of effectiveness of the instructional materials that focus on the Department of Education learning competencies (Creative Nonfiction), integrated with global skills of students in terms of:
    a. critical thinking skill,s performing research
    b. communicate effectively in diverse settings
    c. environmental impacts on their ideal structure with the use of technology
    d. knowledge of global cultural awareness, and;
    e. understanding of global conditions, multiple perspectives, cultural awareness, and empathy?
4. What observations have both students and teachers experienced during and after the implementation of the project?

III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the integration of the Global Learning Concept [5], Constructivist Learning Theory [7], and Technology Integration in Education [17] ,emphasizing that learners actively construct knowledge through experience, interaction, and reflection in

diverse, real-world contexts. The instructional materials developed are grounded in the Department of Education competencies for Creative Nonfiction, while integrating 21st-century global skills to address the demands of distance learning and global citizenship.

The framework posits that the instructional materials (Input), developed with global themes and digital tools, influence learning processes (Throughput), such as critical thinking, communication, cultural awareness, and self-directed learning. These processes are shaped by contextual factors like technological access and student-teacher interaction. The outcomes (Output) include improved conceptual understanding, enhanced global competence, meaningful engagement, and learner autonomy, even within the constraints of distance learning.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The participants of the project were the three (3) Philippine teacher partners and thirty-six (36) Grade 12 students of Pavia National High School, this school year 2020-2021.

Purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants of the study. The Philippine teacher partners were purposely chosen by the University of West Georgia Professor, Dr. Danilo F. Baylen. The student participants were purposely chosen by Philippine teacher partners. Both American developers and Philippine teacher partners used this sampling technique because it is useful for the situation of the project.

Likewise, the Philippine teacher partners have a list of qualifications that serves as a guide to know the best-fit student participants needed in the project. The list of qualifications were the following: 1.)participants must be taking Creative Nonfiction class under Ms. Jessica Ribeiro's teaching load in the 1st semester for the school year 2020-2021; 2.) participants must have a gadget: cellphone, tablet, desktop computer or laptop; 3.) have internet connection; and 4.) consent signed by them and their parents to join the project.

A mixed (quantitative-qualitative) method using experimental design was employed in this project. The data that was collected in this project were the Philippine teacher partners' in-depth interview, Instructional Materials Evaluation Rating Sheet (IMERS), student participants' written outputs, and observation during the implementation of the instructional material.

The American developer administered an interview to the Philippine teacher partners through Google Docs, facilitated by Dr. Danilo F. Baylen. They prepared a list of questions that focuses on cultural background, total population, curriculum, extracurricular activities, sports, learning delivery modalities, and the common way or how students access technology during the pandemic.

The data that was also gathered was the Philippine teacher partners' assessment of the instructional Materials. The teacher-made instructional material evaluation rating sheet (IMERS) was a combination of DepEd's LRMDS Evaluation Rating for Non-Printed materials and the Philippine teachers' partners' standard of quality and consistency of instructional materials. The IMERS determines the quality of instructional materials in terms of content, instructional quality (presentation and organization), format and accuracy, and up-to-datedness of Information. The Philippines teacher partners believed that this assessment tool is appropriate for the assessment of the instructional materials because, in developing instructional materials suitable for the Philippine educational system and level of students, the developer should follow the DepEd's standard of requirements and should meet the criteria suitable/appropriate to the readability level of students.

The data that was also collected was the student participants' written outputs based on the instructional materials made by the American developer. The instructional material project focused on the level of global skill, and it was divided into 5 tasks. Task I of the IM is to determine the level of critical thinking skills performing research, Task 2 of the IM is to determine the level of communication effectively in diverse settings, Task 3 of the IM is to determine the level of supporting environmental impacts on their ideal structure, Task 4 of the IM is to determine the level of knowledge of global cultural awareness, and and Task 5 of the IM is to determine the level of understanding of global conditions, multiple perspectives, cultural awareness, and empathy.

Lastly, the Philippine teacher partners and student participants' observations and reflections were also gathered during and after the implementation of the said instructional materials.

Before the actual conduct of the project, a permit from the School Principal of Pavia National High School was requested. Upon approval, the Philippine teacher participants started to implement the project. Each task

was given to the student participants every three (3) days to avoid conflict with other subjects' Self Learning Modules (SLMs).

V. DATA ANALYSIS

The Philippine teacher participants used the mixed (quantitative-qualitative) method in analyzing the gathered data. Data analysis was carried out by analyzing all the data emerging from the Philippine teacher participants' in-depth interview, IMERS assessment tool, student participants' written outputs, and both Philippine teacher and student participants' observations during and after the implementation of the instructional materials. Then the analysis will be taken to match ideas with each other to consider indicators to assemble later categories and organize data according to their commonalities and triangulation pattern from the data, which becomes the core categories and results.

The gathered data was processed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) and Braun and Clark's [8] thematic analysis. The student participants' written outputs were analyzed and interpreted using statistical tools such as frequency and mean scores. Mean was used to determine the level of quality of instructional materials in terms of content, instructional quality (presentation and organization), format, and accuracy, and the level of effectiveness of the instructional materials that focuses on the Department of Education learning competencies (Creative Nonfiction) integrated with global skills of students in terms of critical thinking skills performing research, communicate effectively in diverse settings, environmental impacts on their ideal structure, knowledge of global cultural awareness, and understanding of global conditions, multiple perspectives, cultural awareness, and empathy. Braun and Clark's [8] thematic analysis was used to interpret the teacher partners' in-depth interviews and both teacher and student participants' observations. Below are the steps:

1. Familiarizing oneself with the data.
2. Generating initial codes
3. Searching for themes
4. Reviewing the themes
5. Defining and naming themes
6. Producing a research report

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analyses of data obtained from the study revealed the following findings:

Table 1 presents the Level of Quality of Instructional Materials posted on the website used in the instructional design project in terms of content, format, presentation and organization, and accuracy and up-to-dateness of information. The overall mean is 2.74 with a verbal equivalent of "average quality". Data revealed that in terms of content (M=3.30), instructional materials are considered to have excellent quality. The instructional materials attained an average verbal equivalent in terms of Instructional Quality (Presentation and Organization) (M=2.56) and Format (2.90). Additionally, when it comes to the Accuracy and up-to-dateness of information, the instructional material was considered to have low quality. Overall, this implies that the instructional materials designed by the US partners are acceptable for the learners in the Philippine context, but are subject to amendments, especially in terms of accuracy and up-to-dateness of information.

Table 1. *Level of Quality of Instructional Materials in terms of content, format, presentation and organization, and accuracy and up-to-dateness of information.*

Quality	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Content	3.30	Excellent Quality
Instructional Quality (Presentation and Organization)	2.56	Average Quality
Format	2.90	Average Quality
Accuracy and Up-to-Dateness of Information	2.20	Low Quality
Grand Mean	2.74	Average Quality

Table 2 shows the mean performance of grade 12 HUMSS students on each part of the five (5) tasks of the instructional design project. The overall mean is 196.03, verbally interpreted as "highly effective". As shown, it revealed that when the global learning skills was categorized as the task 1: Critical Thinking Skills Performing Research, task 2: Communicate Effectively in Diverse Settings, task 3: Environmental Impacts on their Ideal Structure using technology, task 4: Knowledge of Global Cultural Awareness, and task 5: Understanding of Global Conditions, Multiple Perspectives, Cultural Awareness, and Empathy, task 1 and 3, the students exceeded expectations in terms of critical thinking skills in performing research (M=26.44)

and environmental Impacts on their Ideal Structure using technology (M=34.67). Furthermore, students demonstrated an outstanding performance in tasks 2, 4, and 5 in terms of communicating effectively in diverse settings (M=36.69), knowledge of Global Cultural Awareness (M=25.06), and understanding of Global Conditions, Multiple Perspectives, Cultural Awareness, and Empathy (M=58.42).

This indicates that students' sequential exposure to the five activities of the instructional design has effectively achieved the five target global competencies as well as the target competency for creative nonfiction. Thus, the implementation of the instructional design was successful.

Table 2. *Level of Effectiveness of the Instructional Materials on Creative Nonfiction and Global Skills*

Global Skills	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
Task 1. Critical Thinking Skills: Performing Research	26.44	Exceeded Expectations
Task 2. Communicate Effectively in Diverse Settings	51.44	Outstanding
Task 3. Environmental Impacts on their Ideal Structure using technology	34.67	Exceeded Expectations
Task 4. Knowledge of Global Cultural Awareness	25.06	Outstanding
Task 5. Understanding of Global Conditions, Multiple Perspectives, Cultural Awareness, and Empathy	58.42	Outstanding
Grand Mean	196.03	Highly Effective

The effectiveness of creating instructional material that not only targets the competency for a certain grade level but also integrates global skills to learners is necessary, especially in the present world where global competence matters. On their research in 2014 on Global Learning for Global Colleges, Bental et al. [2] defined global learning as not just a focus on developing skills for responding to an increasingly globalized world, but an approach to learning based on a concern for social justice, developing learners who see the relevance of their learning about global issues for their everyday and future lives. In broad terms, global education reflects these two strands of progressive education. The first is focused on the development of the individual and the student's experiences [11]. The other is concerned with creating a more just and equitable society [13].

Likewise, the Asia Society Center for Global Education [1] notes six reasons why global competence matters: a. Global competence is the toolkit that a productive, involved citizenry uses to meet the problems and opportunities of the world; b. A new generation of students requires different skills from the generations that came before; c. More than ever before, individual actions reach around the globe; d. Global competence integrates knowledge of the world and the skill of application with the disposition to think and behave productively; Success in career and life will depend on global competence, because career and life will play out on the global stage; and Working with and building relationships with people who have different backgrounds adds meaning, depth and joy to your life.

Accordingly, with all these goals to produce globally competitive lifelong learners, we should be engaging young people now in learning experiences that focus on developing these skills, attitudes, and dispositions.

Teacher Implementer's Observations

After a thorough process of needs assessment by the US counterparts, orientations regarding the instructional design project by Dr. Baylen and Dr. Dequilla, and finalization of the instructional materials, the teacher implementer started to implement the instructional design project to the target students. Knowing about the tasks at hand, the teacher implementer had doubts with regards to the success of the implementation. Considering the capacity of the target learners (which happened to be the advisory class of the teacher implementer), the limitations of technology, and the challenges of distance learning, the implementation was expected to go through various challenges in the process.

The school where the instructional design was implemented purely utilizes the modular distance learning modality. Accordingly, Facebook Messenger is the only means of communication between the teacher implementer and the student participants. Although the duration of the exchange of ideas for the improvement of the instructional design lasted for almost three weeks, there are still parts that need to be improved. However, due to time constraints, the implementation was pushed through.

There were five (5) activities in the instructional design. Each activity was given to the students after two to three days to provide them ample time and consideration, since they have loads of modules to attend to. The first activity required them to create an infographic on the reliable and unreliable websites on the internet using Piktochart. Since most if not all students use mobile phones, the teacher implementer suggested they use Canva in creating an infographic as it is more accessible to students' mobile devices.

Implementing the first activity had its struggles, and it is perhaps the most challenging one. The teacher-implementer relayed the activity to students by simply typing in the instructions on the Messenger group chat. Several concerns emerged during the first activity. First, students were skeptical if they could perform the task since they did not know how to lay out. Then, they kept on asking questions regarding what to write, even though they were already given specific instructions. Moreover, there were parts of the activity that students found unclear. These were addressed by giving students positive verbal encouragement that creating an infographic is not as hard as they think. All they need to do is download the app, choose a design, and encode the information. On the other hand, those who have limited to no access to the internet or gadgets were allowed to submit hand-drawn infographics.

Upon completion of their outputs, some students were surprised by what they created. They realized that it was not that hard, indeed. Questions regarding what to write in each part of the infographic were answered by providing a sample template of an infographic. Moreover, it was at this moment that the teacher implementer discovered the wonders of Messenger as a tool for immediate feedback. This is done through scribbling the corrections on students' sent outputs through the pen tool or text tool in Messenger and sending them back to students. This strategy has been found effective, especially for giving specific feedback to students' work right at the moment using a very accessible tool.

Reflecting on the dilemmas faced in the said activity, the American partners said that they ran into a very similar problem when they implemented the same activity in their class of the same age group. He thinks it is funny that students of the same age but in different countries have very similar issues when completing such tasks.

Instructional materials hold the power to either engage or demotivate students. Noting the challenges encountered in the first activity, the teacher implementer decided to take a step to minimize students' questions. Since communication is limited to Messenger chat, the instructional materials needed to be simplistic, clearly presented, and visually appealing to the target students. Therefore, instructional materials must be carefully planned, selected, organized, refined, and used in a course for the maximum effect. The planning and selection of instructional materials should take into consideration both the breadth and depth of content so that student learning is optimized. With this, the teacher implementer modified the instructional materials created by the US counterparts on their website. The modified activity sheets resemble an infographic or a poster with complete instructions and a visually appealing layout. These activity sheets were converted into a JPG file or an image file to be easily sent to the students through Messenger.

To condition students for the second activity, the teacher implemented a mental health check first through heart colors, symbolizing how they feel at the moment. Almost all of them mentioned their struggles with their modules. Scores from the previous activity and some words of motivation were sent to them to at least create momentum before giving out one 'heavy' task. The previous rubric was revised to suit the level of the learners and fit the category of descriptive essay that they will be writing. A guide was provided for them to know what to write in each paragraph. They were also given lists of transitional devices and descriptive words they can use in writing their descriptive essay.

There was a huge difference in students' responses during the process of implementing the first activity compared to the second activity. With the utilization of the modified activity sheets in the second activity, students' questions were close to zero. Moreover, their outputs, descriptive essays, were surprisingly excellent. The second activity required students to write a descriptive essay about their ideal homes. Knowing the capacity of the learners, the teacher implementer was skeptical about the second activity. It was observed that students relate more and perform better if the topic that they are writing about relates to their personal experiences or reflects their dreams and aspirations In recent research (e.g., [24]; [6];[33], reflection is often a part of curricula directed at promoting self-regulated learning strategies to enhance writing performance. Some students mentioned that they want a big house,

and there are more of those who said they just want to live in a simple house, close to nature (beach or farm), and with their family. Tight family bonds as part of Philippine culture can be manifested in students' written outputs. The American counterparts said that they loved reading students' papers on their ideal homes and that they did a great job. Due consideration is given to students for each part of the ID. As much as possible, they are not pressured.

To track students' passing of outputs, the teacher implemented a Messenger poll in the class's group chat. Through this, students were able to monitor how many and who among their classmates had submitted, making them more alert in passing the outputs. Throughout the ID implementation, students' outputs are observed to have improved. The introduction of Padlet, where they should post their fourth task, seemed difficult for some. But once they had grasped and explored the actions in the said online tool, everything went on smoothly. Likewise, in the last activity, students were able to synthesize their overall understanding of an ideal home. They have posted outputs that are more impressive than the previous ones. Moreover, what is more surprising are the comments they made on the posts of their other classmates. It is impressive how they gave serious and constructive feedback to their peers. Thus, the teacher implementer deemed it essential to conduct the same mode of feedback from students on the other lessons.

More generally, it can be said that feedback is most effective when it is given in the context of a supportive, non-threatening learning environment. Teachers have to balance different linguistic and interpersonal objectives when deciding what kind of feedback to give, how to give it, and who to give it to [16], so they invariably adopt some sort of stance towards their students. The giving of feedback can be a sensitive moment. Knowing that students will respond to it in different ways (and some will feel threatened), many teachers seek to soften feedback by focusing, in part, on the positive [34].

Perhaps the easiest part of the ID implementation was the checking of the final outputs. The teacher implementer did not have difficulty checking since the outputs were well done. Aside from grammatical errors, students' content and organization of ideas were satisfactory. On the other hand, the most difficult part of the ID implementation was the formulation of the activity sheets in a way that would be appealing and compatible with students and effective despite the challenges of distance learning. Moreover, the misalignment of rubrics provided by the US partners posed a challenge for the teacher implementer. Because of time constraints and focus on content, the rubrics may have been overlooked during the planning stage. Part of this difficulty was the inefficiency of communication means to the US partners. Asking for clarifications, additional resources, and corrections has honestly been disappointing. As a solution, the teacher implementer managed to initiate the decision-making processes involved in the implementation. Overall, employing the newly-modified activity sheets to students was considered a success.

Students' Reflections and Observations

The implementation of the instructional design has elicited various feedback from student participants. Based on students' reflections, psychological concerns emerged most common during the ID implementation. Most students admitted that they felt anxious, worried, or nervous about passing their outputs because their answers might be wrong. Moreover, some students were hesitant to ask questions because they were worried about how the teacher would respond to their queries. The lack of self-confidence when it comes to their writing ability is the major challenge faced by student participants. The concerns of students during the face-to-face classes do not go far from their dilemmas during distance learning. According to the students, the lack of self-confidence and motivation stems from their inability to construct grammatically correct sentences or the level of difficulty of the subject matter.

Considering the struggles public schools undergo in terms of technology and internet connectivity, there were surprisingly few who mentioned internet connection as a hindrance to performing each activity. One concern, however, during the implementation is the load of work that they need to finish, since modules from other subject areas are also being continuously supplied. Nevertheless, students appreciated the time extensions and considerations on deadlines given to them during the activities.

Aside from the challenges encountered by learners, positive responses were observed. Undergoing the process of the five activities, learners remarked that they enjoyed reading their classmates' posts on Facebook and in Padlet. This is consistent with teachers' observations regarding the meaningful comments students made on their classmates' posts. Along with peer feedback, the home is also seen as an important source of aid for the students. It was observed that students asked for help

from their family members in order to understand how the activity should be done. Although they were aided by family members, learners claimed that they are proud that they did the activities all by themselves.

Reading the reflections of the students regarding the activities, sentences often start with "At first…" and are followed by "But then…". It is noticeable that this perception resembles the teachers' implementers' attitude towards implementing the instructional design. At first, learners thought it would be very hard, given the newly introduced applications and the length of text they needed to construct. But then, during the process, learners realized that it is not that difficult and that they can produce meaningful outputs. Thus, instead of technology being a hindrance in learning during distance learning, it became a useful aid in the creation of an amazing output.

In the face of the doubts and lack of confidence in accomplishing the tasks, it appeared that learners still practiced perseverance and determination. Several student remarked that they were proud of themselves for not copying from their classmates. Learners felt accomplished even though they only used simple words and structures in their writings. Seeing their scores improve one activity after another, learners considered that their efforts paid off. It was emphasized that although the challenging activities and the scores they gained (whether low or high) in each activity have become motivating instead of discouraging. Similarly, in a study conducted by Finlayson in 2014, it was indicated that facing math anxiety has empowered the participants to devise strategies that have enabled them to overcome math anxiety.

Finally, in connection with the content, learners found the activities useful for their future. The activities enabled them to activate their imagination and creativity in thinking of ideas for building their ideal home. One student wrote that in constructing a home, comfort and desire should not be the sole considerations. Environmental impact and cultural considerations must also be given value. Overall, the activity was considered uplifting by the students, for it gave them big hopes for the future.

Insights and Realizations on the Results

After a series of thorough planning, implementation, and data gathering, the following insights and realizations were uncovered:

1. A well-designed instructional design leads to meaningful learning outcomes.

More recent research studies such as Work by Pellegrino, Chudowsky, and Glaser (2001) [31] make recommendations in constructing instructional materials such as the following: a) Instruction should be organized around meaningful problems and goals; b)Instruction must provide scaffolds for solving meaningful problems and supporting learning for understanding; c) Instruction must provide opportunities for practice with feedback, revision, and reflection; and d) The social arrangements of instruction must promote collaboration and distributed expertise as well as independent learning. The instructional materials were made from the instructional design provided a simple, easy-to-navigate layout that encourages independent learning among students. Thus, questions and clarifications were limited, learners enjoyed the activities, and outputs were meaningful.

2. Limitation in technology is not a hindrance to learning in distance education

Although internet availability was the primary concern of the implementers before the start of the instructional design implementation, this has not been seen as a major hindrance to students' performance. Introducing new online tools to students may have seemed trivial at first, but they were quick to embrace them once they started to realize how helpful they were. Palloff and Pratt (2000) [30] remind us that " technology does not teach students; effective teachers do"(pg. 4). They make the point that the issue is not technology itself, but how it is used in the design and delivery of courses. This affects the quality of the instruction. Research suggests that the effectiveness of distance learning is based on preparation, the instructor's understanding of the needs of the students, and an understanding of the target population [28]. Therefore, the use of technology must be embedded with good preparation, effective motivation, and the establishment of good rapport with students to be effective.

3. A positive feedback mechanism is essential

Praise is one way in which teachers attempt to build a supportive learning environment and to mitigate the dangers of critical comments, but it needs to be approached with caution. Most, but certainly not all, learners like to be praised, publicly or privately [14], but praise may be discounted as 'mere dressing' [16]. General praise (such as 'Good work!') may lead to short-term bursts of motivation, but is more effective in the long-term when it focuses on the process of a

learner's work (for example, their use of strategies or improvement in a specific area) rather than on the end product [25]. Overtly praising students' outputs through a personal message and through the group chat, where their classmates could see it, resulted in better outputs for the succeeding activities. Moreover, posting class scores is an effective form of feedback and encourages students to do more and work harder.

4. Peer feedback cultivates improvements

In the ID implementation, peer feedback and their exposure to their classmates' outputs have been regarded as a reinforcer that provided them with a reference, thus improving their work. A growing body of research has recommended the use of peer feedback because of its social, cognitive, and affective benefits ([15] [22]; [27]; [32]; and, [35] because good feedback helps students understand their subject area and gives them clear guidance on how to improve their learning [29]. Students' exposure to various works widens their ideas and possibilities. Peer outputs were considered as information that learners can use to validate or change a previous response.

5. A well-made instructional design fosters learner autonomy

The dynamic interplay between personal goals, social contexts, and the experience of interest collectively influences students' persistence and engagement in learning activities. [36]. In distance learning, the absence of the teacher is a hindering factor in students' learning. Not everyone can maintain the right pace of learning without a teacher. Thus, in the current situation that we are facing, where distance learning is the only alternative to pursue our educational goals, it is necessary to produce well-made instructional design. During the implementation of the ID, it was observed that student participants were able to accomplish each activity after the other with less assistance from the teacher. The autonomous learner takes a (pro-) active role in the learning process, generating ideas and availing himself of learning opportunities, rather than simply reacting to various stimuli of the teacher [4],[19]. Providing students with effective and meaningful learning opportunities despite the challenges of distance learning can be an avenue to teach them to be self-sufficient, resourceful, self-directed, and independent learners.

6. Focusing less on grammatical accuracy promotes creative confidence in writing

Psychologically speaking, the major concern that students were anxious about during the implementation of the ID was how the teacher would respond to their queries. Having to communicate with the teacher that one has not met, entirely through Messenger, was awkward if not scary for the students. Most of the students mentioned that they were scared to submit because they were not confident in their grammar. There is evidence that many teachers tend to focus on grammatical issues when giving feedback on their students' performance [21], but grammar is not the only aspect of a learner's language production. By focusing on other aspects of writing, such as the content, organization, and language use, and constantly reminding the students that grammar is a minor percentage of the target skill and that it will develop throughout the writing journey, students may lessen their anxiety during the process of writing. It is generally agreed that feedback on content is at least as important as feedback on form or accuracy. One meta-analysis [3] found that there were greater gains in grammatical accuracy when feedback focused on both content and accuracy than when it focused on accuracy alone. Teachers who focus predominantly on grammatical accuracy in their feedback are well advised to reconsider [18]. Moreover, teachers need to be considerate, compassionate, and patient in dealing with students having difficulties in writing.

7. The utilization of level-appropriate, step-by-step activity sheets in writing is necessary , especially in distance learning

Aside from effective and innovative instructional design, the use of activity sheets in writing is very useful. One principle for teaching writing effectively is to give good bait to help and to give meaningful aids in learning for the students [27]. Teachers may modify or create their own modules or activity sheets that would facilitate and suit the level of their students in writing. The dependence on modules made by the Division is not enough to supply and sustain students' learning. Teachers must not always rely on the activities provided in the modules, for they are not always at par with same level as the students. To facilitate this problem, at the same time address the needs of the learners, teachers opt to make their activity sheets which would bring ease to the step-by-step process of writing for students, at the same time, spare the teacher from giving repeated instructions to students. Activity sheets in this study were proven to be very efficient and effective.

8. Reflective writing integration is a good equalizer

Most of us go through life viewing our experiences as isolated, unrelated events. We also view these happenings simply as the experiences they are, not as opportunities for learning [9]. Psychologists refer to this type of life view as an "episodic grasp of reality" [12], and it is not a habit we want to pass along to children. A defining condition of being human, according to the American sociologist John Mezirow, is that we have to understand the meaning of our experience. Writing is dreaded by some, if not most, students, especially in the new normal.

Thinking that they have to force themselves to write about a certain topic with their limited writing ability heightens the affective filter in language learning. Thus, getting into the habit of linking and constructing meaning from their experiences, such as writing about their ideal home, greatly helps. Students write more and write better if the topic is all about their inner desires, dreams, and aspirations. Having them write their ideal home instilled in them a sense of ownership of their learning.

Exposing them to the work of their classmates through posting a Padlet and on Facebook inspired students more, knowing that they share the same big dreams. Reflection engages individuals in exploring their experiences to lead to new understandings and appreciations [4]. It requires learners to explicitly attend to actions and performances and carefully process them, which could contribute to higher transfer performance [39].

VII. CONCLUSION

Throughout the collaboration process for this global learning project, the following points were highlighted:

1. The education system in the Philippines can be categorized into basic education (elementary, secondary) and higher education (undergraduate, postgraduate), which is offered in the different public and private schools, colleges, universities, and technical and vocational institutions in the country. Basic education is provided for free by the Philippine government through its implementing arm, the Department of Education (DepEd), which has an average enrolment of about 23 million in 2019, and utilizes the K-12 basic education curriculum delivered in either synchronous or asynchronous modes. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, instruction in basic education is in a distance learning modality that can be online, modular, blended, TV-based, and Radio-based. Other educational platforms or LMS are also used to augment the distance learning modality, including Edmodo, Google Classroom, Moodle, Zoom, Google Meet, YouTube, and Kahoot. Quizizz, Padlet, Prezi, Filmogro, and DepEd Commons.
2. The instructional material developed and posted on the website has an average level of quality in terms of content, format, presentation and organization, and accuracy and up-to-dateness of information.
3. When taken as whole, the instructional material that focuses on the Department of Education learning competencies (Creative NOnfiction) integrated with global skills of critical thinking skills, performing research, communicate effectively in diverse settings, environmental impacts on their ideal structure with the use to technology, knowledge of global cultural awareness, understanding of global conditions, multiple perspectives, cultural awareness, and empathy is highly effective.
4. During the implementation of the instructional design, students experienced both positive and negative psychological responses. Negative emotions or responses include being anxious, worried, or nervous about passing their outputs, being hesitant to ask questions to their teachers, and they lack of self-confidence, especially in constructing grammatically correct sentences in English. Likewise, the majority of them mentioned internet connection as a hindrance to performing each activity, but appreciated their teacher for giving them enough time and consideration on deadlines. On the other hand, positive responses include being happy and proud as they complete each task. Consequently, the teacher implementer observed that peer feedback through posting meaningful comments on Facebook and Padlet helped in boosting students' confidence in completing a task, as well as family/ or home support. In general, learners found the activities in the ID useful for their future.
5. After the implementation of the project, students reported they felt proud and fulfilled by their output and realized that the whole experience was fun and easy. Students appreciated the use of varied technology tools and apps in creating excellent and creative outputs. While, teacher implementers observes that Messenger is an effective tool for feed backing, students of the same age in different

countries have very similar issues when completing a particular tasks, instructional materials needed to be simple, clear and visually, students relate more and perform better if the topic that they are writing about relates to their personal experiences or reflects their dreams and aspirations. Hence, the ID must be appealing and compatible with students and effective despite distance learning challenges.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the aforementioned findings and conclusions, the following are recommended:

1. Because of the changing conditions in the education system in the Philippines, the use of innovative technology tools and applications such as Edmodo, Google Classroom, Moodle, Zoom, Google Meet, YouTube, and Kahoot. Quizizz, Padlet, Prezi, Filmogro and DepEd Commons, Messenger, and Facebook may be utilized as effective educational platforms or LMS to facilitate teaching-learning activities as long as there is available stable internet connection.
2. Instructional material designers and developers must create effective, relevant, engaging, and easy-to-understand instructional materials that suit the culture, values, nature, needs, and level of the learners and teachers to facilitate effective instruction.
3. For Filipino learners to become globally competitive, Department of Education (DepEd) must consider integrating in the K-12 curriculum learning competencies on global skills such as critical thinking skills, performing research, communicate effectively in diverse settings, environmental impacts on their ideal structure with the use to technology, knowledge of global cultural awareness, understanding of global conditions, multiple perspectives, cultural awareness, and empathy.to facilitate substantive learning despite the limited interactions and constraints.
4. Both learners and teachers must collaboratively work together to achieve learning objectives while keeping each other from extra workload and stress. Teachers must encourage learners to develop self-regulated learning attitudes and actions.
5. Teachers at this time of pandemic must be more compassionate, flexible, creative, and humane as they deliver instructions and interact with their learners to avoid negative psychological responses among students. Teachers must make ways to create a supportive, amiable, and pleasurable learning environment while discouraging hostile behaviours and attitudes.

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