

## A NARRATOLOGY OF PARENTS SCAFFOLDING CHILDREN IN THE NEW NORMAL

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### ABSTRACT

*This qualitative study employing a narrative research approach aimed to explore the experiences of five (5) parents from Kapalong West District of Kapalong, Davao del Norte, as they navigated the challenges of assisting their elementary school children in the new normal setting. Using a narratological approach, the study delved into the narratives of the participants to identify the causes of their difficulties and the lessons and reflections gained from their experiences. The findings revealed that the parents were involved in children's learning prior to the pandemic and had additional responsibility to teach and assist children during the new normal. Participants described their journey in teaching their elementary children as difficult due to insufficient time and children being distracted. Notwithstanding these difficulties, parents gleaned valuable lessons in cultivating positive connections with their children and enhancing their patience. They also developed a newfound appreciation for the noble and satisfying aspects of teaching. This study emphasizes the crucial need to support parents in their evolving roles as educators, underscoring the significance of comprehending their narratives and perspectives. Such understanding is vital for enhancing educational outcomes during challenging times and can serve as a foundation for future initiatives aimed at addressing the concerns of parents navigating the multifaceted role of a teacher.*

*Keywords: elementary students, narratology approach, parents, qualitative research, scaffolding*

### INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced many parents to assume the role of educators for their children, as schools and educational institutions have had to shift to remote learning. This sudden and unexpected change has presented a range of challenges for parents, who may have limited teaching experience and struggle to balance their own work and responsibilities with the demands

of being a teacher to their children. Research has shown that parents' ability to provide effective instruction to their children is associated with children's academic performance, motivation, and engagement in learning. At the same time, the pandemic has also brought attention to the crucial part that parents can play in promoting their children's learning and development (Hong & Hong, 2020; Desimone et al., 2021; Pong & Yee, 2021; Li et al., 2021).

In Indonesia, parents are facing challenges in assuming responsibility as teachers for their children in the comfort of their homes. These difficulties were primarily caused by increasing family expenses, parental stress brought on by the pressure to manage restrictions, and employment. It supported the SMRC research which found that 67% of the family members surveyed agreed that distance learning is quite expensive (Lase et al., 2021).

In the Philippines, specifically in Cagayan De Oro, a number of sentiments are heard with regard to the paradigm shift of the educational setting. The use of the mother tongue as the main language in the texts of some of the modules may cause parents problems, as many people can already attest. They also struggle to balance work, childcare, housework, and making time for their child's education. In addition, they even face difficulties in sharing the lessons with their children or teaching them subjects that they are unfamiliar with nor good at and subjects that the children are not interested in. (Luczon, 2020).

The sudden and widespread disruptions to daily life caused by the pandemic have presented a range of challenges for parents, including balancing work and managing children's emotional and educational needs. Additionally, the shift towards remote learning has resulted in a greater dependence on parents as primary educators, and this sudden change has brought new stressors and responsibilities for parents. By that this prompted me to conduct a narratological study to narrate, address, and understand the different narratives of elementary pupils' parents in the new normal, to understand the ways in which parents are supporting their children's learning and development under these difficult circumstances, as this can have a significant impact on children's well-being and academic outcomes. Furthermore, this could be a voice to speak out their plights, and ideas may be given to them. In addition, this study may also serve as a basis for the concerned educational sectors to establish programs that would be helpful to lessen the heavy load of these parents.

In connection with this, research related to the current situation was conducted. I have found studies with regards to the stories of experiences of parents during the pandemic, like the study of Hamaidi et al., (2021) entitled "Parents' Perceptions of Their Children's Experiences with Distance Learning during the COVID-19 Pandemic", "COVID-19 and Remote Learning: Experiences of Parents with Children during the Pandemic" of Garbe et al., (2020), and Samoy et al., (2021) study, which is "From Ladle to Chalk and Pencil: Parents in the New Normal of Philippine Education System". However, none focused on the narratives of elementary pupils' parents since elementary and high school students have different levels of capabilities and need guidance.

Moreover, this study is anchored in the Role Theory of Ralph Linton (1936), the Functionalism Theory of William James (1890), and the Scaffolding Theory of Jerome Bruner (1966). These theoretical supports claim the critical role of parents in shaping their children's learning and development and the importance of fostering strong and supportive relationships between parents and children through assisting.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study looked into the narratives of elementary pupil parents in the new normal. Specifically, it sought to give answers to the following objectives: (1) To describe the journey of parents in teaching their elementary children during the pandemic, and (2) To gather the lessons and reflections of the parents in teaching their elementary children during the pandemic.

## METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative research design that employed a narratological approach to empower parents to share their experiences as teachers in the "new normal" educational system. The goal was to gain an in-depth understanding of the problem, which can only be discovered by speaking with people and letting them tell their own stories without being influenced by what people anticipate finding or what they have read



in the literature (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Moreover, the narratological approach focuses on understanding the issue through the narratives of a specific group, in this case, parents. The researchers played the role of the narrator in a narrative inquiry, and the method was suitable for eliciting the untold stories of parents. The narratological approach was practical for this study because it required a low participant requirement and allowed for an exploration of subjective experiences (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

First, the researchers made sure that the manuscript was examined by the technical review panel and the research adviser before the study was carried out. Then, the researchers secured a validation of the interview guide to conduct the study.

Second, through the use of purposeful sampling, individuals were identified in this study. The researchers explained the investigation to them and were asked to digitally sign the informed consent form to show they were aware of all the study's requirements and participating voluntarily. The major players used their separate electronic signatures to sign or complete the form.

Third, a video chat was used to inform the five participants about the study's purpose, protocol design, and rights and privileges as key participants, including the right to confidentiality and the freedom to withdraw from the investigation. In order to gather data, they were also requested to take part in an in-depth interview in which each person was questioned separately.

Fourth, the researchers assembled the resources required for the in-depth interview (IDI). The researchers developed the interview guide questions approved by the technical panels. The IDI sessions were carried out online. Google Meet and Messenger were the online services used.

Additionally, a laptop, a steady Wi-Fi connection, an audio recorder, and the interview guide questions were the tools used in this investigation. To ensure that only the researchers and the key participants could hear their chat on an internet platform, they used earbuds, headphones, or headsets. They were assured that the researchers were alone during the

interview as well. She unlocked her camera to prove that she was by herself for the entire interview to support her claim.

Fifth, a digital copy of the interviews was preserved in my personal Google Drive after all the data had been acquired. This information was then verbatim recorded in textual form. These were then converted to Standard English. Additionally, the researchers arranged the written transcripts according to the study's research topics. All significant data, whether in paper form or a digital format, were safely stored to establish the traceability of the results throughout a three-year period. Paper copies of the transcripts were kept in a safe cabinet, while digital copies were encrypted and maintained in Google Drive. When the time restriction had passed, digital copies would be deleted from the internet and trash cans, whereas physical copies would be burned to the point where it would be impossible to recover the data.

Lastly, the investigation data were subjected to a thematic analysis. The researchers may now begin gathering the stories of the important research participants. The researchers paid close attention to the recurring narrative elements that emerged from the wide range of participant accounts.

In addition, the collected and acquired data in this study were presented and analyzed through coding and thematic analysis. Coding is the technique that evaluates qualitative text data by disassembling it to see what it produces before reassembling it considerably (Creswell, 2015). In this narratology investigation, coding was used to arrange and categorize the key meanings found in the data. Moreover, thematic analysis was used by the researchers in this study as a method of data analysis and interpretation. According to Caulfield (2019), thematic analysis is the best method for assessing qualitative data. This usually applies to a collection of texts, such as interview transcripts. Major themes have also been developed in accordance with the accepted research questions. This matched the two (2) approved research topics. This was done to provide readers with more information about the participants' notable narratives.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Journey of Parents in Teaching their Elementary Children During the Pandemic

#### Narrative of Amie

Amie, a 31-year-old mother of two elementary school children, faced a challenging journey during the pandemic when she taught her children. Before the pandemic, she rarely got involved in their learning, relying on teachers and her own busy work schedule. However, when the pandemic hit and her children's progress slowed due to remote learning, she felt compelled to take responsibility for their education. Despite her limited interaction with their teachers, she adapted to teaching her children, using creative methods like posting letters and syllables on the wall for them to read and memorize. She tailored her approach to each child's needs and actively sought to understand unfamiliar topics. However, her efforts were hindered by time constraints and her children's occasional laziness. Additionally, financial constraints made it challenging to provide materials for certain school projects, putting a strain on their resources.

#### Narrative of Joana

Parent Joana, a college student, had limited involvement in her daughter's academics before the pandemic. However, when the pandemic led to distance learning, Joana took on the additional responsibility of teaching and assisting her daughter. She adopted various strategies, such as checking her daughter's work, answering activities, and seeking help from the teacher when she encountered difficulties. Managing her time became a challenge due to her studies and household chores, limiting her ability to teach her child regularly. Joana faced the added challenge of keeping her daughter focused, as she often got distracted by technology and the desire to play. This tested Joana's patience, and she resorted to a reward

and punishment system to maintain discipline and motivation in her child's learning process.

#### Narrative of Rizze

Before the pandemic, Rizze, a mother of two, had limited involvement in her children's education due to her work as a laborer. When the pandemic shifted classes to distance learning, she took on the role of her children's primary educator despite her household and farm work. Rizze adapted her teaching methods to her children's capabilities, used resourcefulness in her lessons, and sought assistance from her children's teacher when necessary. However, her time was limited due to her work, and her children's distractions, such as technology and the desire to play, challenged her teaching efforts.

#### Narrative of Lynne

Lynne, a mother of two elementary children, has been actively involved in her children's education, offering assistance with their studies, even before the pandemic. When the shift to distance learning occurred due to the pandemic, she took on the additional responsibility of teaching her children more regularly. She adopted different teaching approaches for each child, monitoring one's progress and providing one-on-one tutoring for the other, recognizing their individual needs and attention spans. Lynne encountered challenges related to time management and struggled with patience but used various methods, including incorporating games into lessons and seeking assistance from teachers and family members, to ensure her children's education. Financial constraints also posed challenges for certain activities that required materials.

#### Narrative of Aly

Aly, a mother of two school-aged children, has long been involved in her children's learning journey, checking their assignments and progress



each day after school. However, when the pandemic shifted education to distance learning, she took on the additional responsibility of being their primary teacher. She assists her children by monitoring their work and providing guidance when needed, but she sometimes struggles with the complexity of certain lessons. Aly seeks help from her children's teachers and understands the importance of tapping into their expertise. Despite her dedication, she faces challenges due to limited time, children's moods, distractions (particularly technology), and financial constraints.

## 2. Lessons And Reflections of Parents in Teaching Their Elementary Children During the Pandemic

### Narrative of Amie

During the pandemic, Amie took on the role of teaching her two sons, and she celebrated her achievements in teaching them to read in both Filipino and English. Through this journey, she learned valuable lessons about parental responsibility, time management, patience, and the importance of building a connection with her children. She acknowledged the challenges of teaching, especially when she encountered content that was difficult to understand, emphasizing the importance of accurate teaching. Amie also noted differences between children taught by teachers and those taught by parents, pointing out that teachers provide more concrete knowledge and interactive experiences. Despite the challenges, she gained a deep appreciation for the teaching profession and found great satisfaction in seeing her children's improvements and positive feedback.

### Narrative of Joana

After a year or two of teaching her child during the pandemic, Joana celebrated the progress she saw in her daughter's reading skills and English vocabulary, attributing it to her teaching and discipline. She highlighted the importance of being a responsible parent,

effective time manager, patient, and knowledgeable. Joana emphasized that children look up to their parents as role models, so it's crucial to portray positive attitudes. She recognized her need to improve her time management skills and urged others to prioritize tasks. Additionally, Joana stressed the value of patience in motivating children and emphasized the responsibility of parents to provide accurate information when teaching their children. She gained a deeper appreciation for the teaching profession, realizing teachers' challenges in handling multiple students. Despite the difficulties, Joana found her journey as a parent-teacher rewarding and filled with valuable lessons and reflections.

### Narrative of Rizze

After teaching and guiding her children for some time, the parent feels a sense of accomplishment and pride in their progress, particularly in reading and math. She views these achievements as the result of her efforts over the past year and two. Alongside these achievements, she has also gained valuable lessons from her teaching experience, emphasizing the importance of responsibility, effective time management, patience, and emotional connection with children for elementary parents. She recognizes the challenges and adjustments teachers face and has a newfound appreciation for the teaching profession, even though she acknowledges her own shortcomings in terms of patience and temperament during the teaching journey.

### Narrative of Lynne

While navigating the challenges of teaching her children during the pandemic, Lynne learned valuable lessons about her attitude and parenting approach. She emphasized the importance of emotionally understanding and connecting with children, as it builds trust, attention, and motivation. Lynne also highlighted the significance of starting the day positively by

expressing affection and compliments rather than scolding early in the morning. Quality time spent with children, even in simple ways, was another key aspect she valued. Additionally, Lynne gained a deep appreciation for the teaching profession, understanding the teachers' commitment to prioritizing the welfare of their students, and she found satisfaction in the experience of teaching her own children, viewing it as an opportunity for personal growth and understanding her children better.

### Narrative of Aly

Aly, a parent who assumed the role of teaching her children during the pandemic, achieved significant progress in her children's learning. Her children excelled in reading and math despite various challenges. Aly emphasized the importance of being well-prepared, patient, emotionally connected with children, and efficient in time management for parents taking on teaching responsibilities. She also gained a newfound respect for the teaching profession after experiencing its challenges. Despite the difficulties, Aly found satisfaction in her teaching role as she witnessed her children's growth and development.

### CONCLUSIONS

This study narrated the journey of parents teaching their children in the new normal setting. However, the result of this qualitative study is limited to the narratives of those chosen female parents aged 30-40 from Kapalong West District. The narratives gathered through interviews with informants in this study provided insight into the experiences and perspectives of parents as teachers of their own children in the current education landscape, referred to as the "new normal." These understandings can inform future efforts to address and improve upon the concerns of parents as they navigate the role of teacher. This section organizes discussions according to the different groups or individuals who may find this study valuable.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

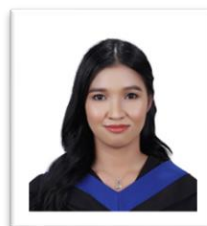
This study provides key insights for education authorities, highlighting parents' challenges in the current educational landscape. Recommendations include supporting parents through online training, workshops, and tailored learning plans. The study emphasizes the importance of strengthened connections between administrators, teachers, and parents for a more supportive learning environment. By understanding parents' needs, it suggests that teachers can offer targeted support for effective child education. The research serves as a foundation for future studies, encouraging the exploration of parents' experiences and further investigations into teaching methods and collaborative approaches in the new normal.

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## AUTHORS' PROFILE



### Jocel D. Divinagracia

achieved the milestone of graduating with a degree in Bachelor of Elementary Education-Generalist from Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences, and Technology (KCAST). Her remarkable academic journey is molded with her invaluable and meaningful engagement in various research undertakings. Foremost, she finished her undergraduate research individually during her junior years, and she presented such in various local, national, and international research conventions. Her commitment and dedication in these scholarly activities have definitely helped her to become academically well-rounded,

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**Mary Ann Ronith P. Libago, LPT, MAEd.**, finished her Bachelor of Secondary Education Major in English in Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology

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