

Deaf Web Culture: Hearing-Impaired Teenagers of Echague, Isabela Philippines' use of the Internet

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to explore how hearing-impaired teenagers in Echague, Isabela Philippines use the Internet. 25 teenagers aged 13-21 participated in this study. It aimed to better understand how these teenagers adapt to the fast-paced technology. It aimed to discover about the aspects of the internet that gives appeal to them. It also aimed to know how this technology helped them in communicating themselves.

In the process of gathering data, the respondents were convened in one place for a face-to-face interview and interviewed inside their houses. A sign-language interpreter from the Echague Municipality Social Welfare and Development mediated during the face-to-face interview.

The result of the study revealed that the internet has played a big role on their lives. Their activities on the internet are chatting, researching, online gaming, reading and watching videos with subtitles. All of them felt the positive aspects of the internet towards them.

To provide contrast, this study determined the difficulties of the respondents in using the internet. These added more in fostering the awareness of people, hearing or non-hearing, about the Web culture of the hearing-impaired individuals

Keywords: Deaf web culture, teenager, Internet, hearing-impaired.

INTRODUCTION:

The Problem and its Background:

New digital technologies hold promises for equalizing access to information and communication for both hearing and hearing-impaired individuals. Thus, the birth of Internet has become an ordinary and widely accepted alternative social environment—known as cyberspace—in which many people take part in numerous activities.

Internet has been part of the culture in today's time. People use the Internet at home for personal or for their professional works and some people use the internet to get information for various topics.

Some are interested in chatting, as they are members of the society it is a need for them to communicate with others. On the other hand, access on the internet is easier than usual. People are allowed creating their own homepage or webpage; tell other users about what they want, their goals and their outlooks in life.

Meanwhile, Javier, (2013) mentioned that internet studies are rising in number. Most studies are concerned with people who do not have any form of disabilities while few studies are done with people who have disabilities.

Bowker, N. I., & Tuffin, K. (2007) said that Internet has created special opportunity for people with disabilities because of its special communication-related characteristics. Especially associated with invisibility, online communication is also characterized by textuality, availability, and multimodality. These features enable disabled people—in various disability forms to take advantage of the medium without being identified as handicapped, thus avoiding stigmatic perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors. This unique experience, enabled only in cyberspace, has created new psychological experiences and opportunities for exceptional people. Through online communication, persons with disabilities—quickly feel similar to what

normal people feel. That is, their disability ceases to be a factor, or becomes less of one, in their social experiencing. They, therefore, may undergo a process of personal empowerment in gaining confidence and assurance and in lowering depression, anxiety, and feelings of loneliness— in other words; they may enhance their general well-being.

The reason of this study is that, people with disabilities should not be neglected in the issue on how they adapt to fast-paced society and communicate with others.

One of the most common disabilities is hearing loss, and objectively measured, hearing loss often occurs prior to subjective hearing difficulties. People with hearing loss describe difficulties when interacting with friends in daily communication situations.

From the recent census of the Isabela Provincial Association of the Deaf, there are 164 lists of Deaf in Echague, Isabela Philippines. Mr. Noly Furuc, Persons with Disability (PWD) President of Municipality of Echague, Isabela Philippines, describes deaf individuals or hearing-impaired as, people who lacks self-esteem and most unsociable compared to the different PWDs (Javier, B., 2013).

Deaf as the main subject of this research, articulating themselves is never easy but because of the applications for communication available on the internet, they could participate in group conversations.

According to (Bowe, F. 2002), hearing loss is an invisible disability. It is not easily seen, but it is easily forgotten. There are no simple answers for communicating with others, and though we tend to take it for granted, communication is vital for human beings. It gives us the ability to learn, laugh and love each other. It allows us to express our feelings in our everyday life. The power of these connections is what makes life so amazing, but in order to connect you need to understand and be understood.

Hence, this study focused on how these hearing-impaired individuals, particularly the teenagers, despite their physical and social situations, adapt on the new environment where everything is digitalized.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

This study aimed to assess the internet use of deaf teenagers and to look into the latter's employed activities while using the internet. It explored the motivations and gratifications of their internet use, as well as its effect on their well-being.

Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - a. gender;
 - b. age; and
 - c. highest educational attainment?
2. How often do deaf teenagers in Echague, Isabela, Philippines access the internet?
3. What are the internet activities that the respondents perform?
4. What are the aspects of the internet that give appeal to the respondents?
5. How does the internet help the respondents to communicate themselves?
6. What are the difficulties that the respondents encounter in using the internet?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

For the purpose of the study, the researcher utilized the Uses and Gratifications Theory to understand the Web Culture of deaf teenagers in Echague, Isabela Philippines.

This study aimed to:

1. Identify the profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - a. gender;
 - b. age; and
 - c. highest educational attainment.
2. Determine how often deaf teenagers in Echague Isabela Philippines access the internet.
3. Determine the internet activities that the respondents perform.
4. Determine the aspects of the internet that give appeal to the respondents.
5. Determine how the internet helps the respondents to communicate themselves.
6. Determine the difficulties that the respondents encountered in using the internet.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES:

This chapter presents the relevant related literature and studies which the researcher considered important for the study.

Javier, B. (2013) mentioned that young generations are mainly attracted to the entertainment value that the internet provides. Teenagers are among the most prolific users of Social Network Sites (SNS). Emerging studies find that youth spend a considerable portion of their daily life interacting through social media. Research clearly shows that the technical features and infrastructure of a particular SNS community affects user's behavior. For example, supportive wall posts from peers may lead to higher social capital or psychological well-being. Information sharing and instances of academic support may be related to higher school achievement. Thus, he suggests that, further studies be done about how people with hearing disabilities adapt to a new medium and how it shapes or changes their lives. However, this study also delved about the challenges faced by Internet users who are deaf that would be contributing a lot in the accessibility of information on the World Wide Web.

June Ahn (2011) further said that it is the social informatics of SNS—the interaction of technology, culture, and communication—that ultimately may explain the social effects of these online communities.

On the other hand, (Coyle, C. and Vaughn, H. 2008) said that the Internet greatly helps in doing research and school-related works as well as finding any information as almost all information from various fields are just a click away in the internet.

According to (Young, K. S., & de Abreu, C. N. 2010), there are countless number of social networking sites, gaming sites, photo sharing sites, etc., that can be found in the internet.

Fox, S., & Madden, M. (2005) concur that teenagers search intensively for online information for learning and personal purposes, form interpersonal relationships through IM software, forums, and chat rooms, publish personal stories in blogs and social networks, and frequently respond to those of others, play in solitary and group online games, and participate widely in other online activities.

Thus the internet has really become advantageous to humankind especially the young generation as it provide easy access of information as well as communication and entertainment.

Subrahmanyam, K. & Greenfield, P. (2008) said that the key questions for the field of youth and Internet focus on what the emotional, social, and cognitive effects of using the technology are for adolescents.

Deaf Teenagers and the Internet:

With the researchers endeavor in dealing with the Internet usage of person with disability, this study focused on deaf teenagers. As teenagers are said to be the most highly engaged in internet activities.

According to (Javier, B. 2013), in this growing society, deaf teenagers may be considered as minority. Deaf culture is recognized under Article 30, Paragraph 4 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which states that "Persons with disabilities shall be entitled, on an equal basis with others, to recognition and support of their specific cultural and linguistic identity, including sign languages and deaf culture."

Moreover, by the advent of new technologies, it holds the promise to provide equal grounds for the deaf teenagers.

As cited from the (American Encyclopedia 2006, vol.15p.315), Internet could lead to increase community involvement and improve self-esteem. Fox, S., & Madden, M. (2005) also reveals that people use the internet to be engaged in social activities and to be entertained. Furthermore, the internet serves as a valuable medium for both hearing and non-hearing individuals.

The internet as a medium allows people with disabilities, specifically people who are hearing-impaired, to socialize and freely communicate with people without revealing their condition. The study of (Barak, A., Sadosky, Y. 2008) states that this situation enhances the communication ability of hearing-impaired as well as relieves their uneasiness of being shunned and stress often associated by fear towards stereotypic responses of the majority.

People sometimes use the media as a means of escapism, (Allan, P. 2015) defines escapism, as intentional detachment and distraction from the real world.

People who normally escape from the real world are people who have little friends offline and their whole life revolves around the Internet and their computer. They can be found in chat rooms, games, forums, instant messengers, etc. Some people who are in this group however are online because the Internet is the only place they can find that they can fit in or be what they wish they could be in their offline world.

Accordingly, this paper investigated sources of information about communication technology that is suitable for deaf people and whether it is available to them in ways that they can readily access.

Nevertheless, deaf people might encounter special difficulties in using the Internet as recently shown by (Smith, C. E. 2006) and particular training may perhaps be needed for this unusual population. Also, Internet technology is constantly changing, as speed of communication has significantly been growing,

bandwidth has been improving, and application software has much been upgraded, use of voice and video channels have become more common. This development might interfere and somewhat undermine the ability of deaf people to use the Internet in an egalitarian way and feel equal.

YouTube has provided an option to upload captions for videos. Captions enable the user to read the conversations in videos as well as audio events such as laughter, sounds of nature, and explosions. This information fueled the researcher to know more about the challenges or difficulties of a deaf upon using the internet.

METHODOLOGY:

This chapter contains the research design that was used for the research, the respondents who participated in this study, data gathering procedure and data analysis.

Research Design:

The researcher used qualitative method. The design enabled the researcher to delve deeper into the factors or reasons of internet usage of the deaf teenagers.

The qualitative inquiry is exploratory in nature as it deals with exploring the structure and the essence of the internet usage of deaf teenagers. The study also aimed to develop a deeper understanding about the internet usage for a medium to be more user-friendly for the deaf. The primary method of inquiry for this study is face-to-face interview.

Locale of the study:

The study was conducted at Echague, Isabela Philippines where the respondents reside.

Echague is a first-class municipality in the province of Isabela, Philippines. It is 344 kilometers (214 mi) north of Metro Manila. According to the 2010 census, it has a population of 74,680 people. It lies in Isabela, Region 2, Philippines and its geographical coordinates are 16° 42' 9" North, 121° 38' 54" East. Echague is basically a terraineous locality with 32,680.3047 hectares of its total land area falling under the 15.1-above slope category.

Respondents of the Study:

The respondents were selected from Echague, Isabela Philippines. They are registered and recognized deaf by the Municipality. They are deaf teenagers who belong to the age bracket of 13-21 and are users of the internet.

Sampling Procedure:

The researcher did not use any sampling technique considering that this is an exploratory research. The respondents were selected through their willingness to partake in the study and trusted the researcher in keeping the information that they disclosed in the process confidential.

According to (Moustakas, 1994) the preferable number of participants in an exploratory research is from 5-25 individuals (cited in Creswell, 2007). The researcher believes that these participants would be sufficient for the study.

Research Instruments:

Questionnaire was utilized to enter into the perspective of Deaf teenagers. It is an important aspect to provide much more detailed and richer information. The questionnaire contains two parts: the first part contains questions that provided the respondents' background information and the frequency of their usage; and the second part contains the Interview questions pertaining to the activities of the respondents in using the internet, the aspects of the internet that give appeal to them, how the internet helps the respondents to communicate themselves and the difficulties they encounter in using the medium.

Data Gathering Procedure:

For the data gathering procedure, the researcher prepared and sent the letter to the Municipal Mayor and Head Officer of the Municipality Social and Welfare Development for permission to conduct the face-to-face interview and to administer her questionnaire to the respondents. The researcher also requested for the Sign-language interpreter of the Municipality to help the researcher in administering her questionnaire and to communicate with the respondents. The researcher formally distributed the questionnaire to the respondents where they were instructed on how to accomplish the form.

The respondents were gathered in one place for the face-to-face interview wherein a sign-language interpreter and the parents of the respondents mediated. The researcher also did interview at the house of the respondents for those who did not attend the Group Interview.

Treatment of Data:

From the data gathered, tabulation and frequency count were done. Since this study focuses on determining the internet usage of deaf teenagers, the said treatments were the only way to treat the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Internet overrides differences and barriers amongst people, may it be their race, situation and status in the society. The internet shapes equality for people in terms of catering its features without choosing their customers or audiences. Among those people are the Hearing-impaired teenagers who are like those hearing peers when it comes to using the internet.

This study dealt with the internet usage of the hearing-impaired teenagers in Echague, Isabela Philippines. It also aimed to explore the difficulties that the respondents have experienced in using the internet.

Table 1 shows that majority of the respondents were male with 52%, aged 13-15 with 40%, and their highest educational attainment is Elementary with 80%.

With regard to the internet usage duration of the respondents, as shown in Table 2, majority of them used it 6-7 times a week with 40% and 5 hours a day with 28%.

The activities of the respondents in using the internet are shown in Table 3. This includes: gaming, chatting, watching videos online, reading, researching information and visiting social networking sites/posting.

When it comes to the aspects of the internet that gave appeal to the respondents, data shows in Table 4 that the internet gives fun and entertainment among the respondents through online games.

Results also show that the internet helped the respondents to communicate better and it shows in Table 5 that respondents are more confident in saying things using internet.

Finally, when asked on the difficulties encountered while using the internet, respondents said that they have limited knowledge about the internet as shown in Table 6.

CONCLUSION:

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

Profile of the Respondents:

52% of the respondents were male and 48% of them were female; they belong to the age bracket of 13-21 years old; and most of the respondents' educational attainment was Elementary level.

Respondents' use of Internet:

Deaf teenagers in Echague Isabela Philippines access the internet for 6-7 times a week. They use it for 5-10 hours per day.

Activities of the Respondents while using the Internet:

The activities of the respondents while using the internet were:

- a. online gaming;
- b. watching videos online;
- c. reading news and other related materials;
- d. researching relevant facts; and
- e. visiting and posting on various social networking sites.

Aspects of internet that gave appeal to the Respondents:

The aspects of the internet that gave appeal to the respondents were:

- a. Entertainment;
- b. Socializing with peers and other communication-related activities;
- c. News and information; and
- d. Education.

Internet helped the respondents to communicate themselves:

The internet contributed great help to the respondents especially on the following grounds:

- a. internet boosts self-confidence thru the different social networking sites;
- b. internet usage makes face-to-face conversation easier; and
- c. internet serves as an avenue of the respondents in disclosing personal information.

Difficulties encountered while using the Internet:

The difficulties encountered by the respondents while using the internet were:

- a. Limited knowledge about the internet;
- b. Poor internet connection;
- c. Incapable of reading; and
- d. Limited English vocabulary especially on watching videos with subtitles.

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FIGURES:



Figure 1: Front view of Echague Municipal Office (left) and the Location Map of Echague, Isabela (right)

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Hearing-impaired Teenagers at Echague, Isabela

Characteristics	Frequency n = (25)	Percentage (100%)
Gender		
Male	13	52
Female	12	48
Age		
19-21	8	32
16-18	7	28
13-15	10	40
Educational Attainment		
Kindergarten	2	8
Elementary	20	80
High School	1	4
Vocational	2	8
Total	25	100

Table 2: Internet usage duration of the deaf teenagers in Echague Isabela

Characteristics	Frequency n = 25	Percentage (100%)
Duration: Week		
Once a week	4	16
2-3 times a week	8	32
4-5 times a week	3	12
6-7 times a week	10	40
Duration: Hour/day		
3 hours/day	3	12
4 hours/ day	5	20
5 hours/ day	7	28
8 hours/ day	4	16
10 hours/ day	6	24
Total	25	100

Table 3: The internet activities that the respondents perform

Characteristics	Frequency n=25	Percentage (100%)
Online Gaming	19	76
Visiting social networking sites/posting	12	48
Watching Online	12	48
Chatting	11	44
Researching	8	32
Reading Online	5	20

Table 4: The aspects of the internet that give appeal to the respondents

Characteristics	Frequency n=25	Percentage (100%)
Different online games gives them fun and entertainment	19	76
Chat or communicate with other people regardless of their hearing disability through Facebook	11	44
Easy access to information	8	32
Internet helps in building their self-confidence to let others know about them and they can act themselves very well	8	32
Internet also allows every consumer to watch their favorite TV shows, movies, and more.	7	28
Enjoy looking at different pictures online	7	28
Provides instant connection to people and reconnect with their old friends	6	24
Internet makes them feel like hearing	6	24
More convenient to watch online because of the English subtitles that are available on online sites	5	20
Gives update on recent trends	4	16
Internet serves as a virtual library for them	1	4
Internet provides them many life-changing stories where they can look into	1	4

Table 5: How the Internet helped the respondents in communicating themselves

Characteristics	Frequency n=25	Percentage (100%)
They are more confident in saying things they want through the use of Internet	13	52
Internet usage is easier than face-to-face interaction because not everybody knows the sign-language	12	48
They could express their characteristics by means of uploading their photos and status online.	5	20
Their fear to communicate with others was removed.	2	8

Table 6: Difficulties that the respondents encounter in using the internet

Characteristics	Frequency n=25	Percentage (100%)
Limited knowledge about the Internet	13	52
Slow Wi-Fi or Internet connection	7	28
They are not comfortable talking through internet, they communicate by texting	7	28
Incapable of reading	5	20

Characteristics	Frequency n=25	Percentage (100%)
Addiction/Frustration	5	20
Limited English vocabulary especially on watching videos with subtitles	4	16
Internet cafés are far from their houses	2	8

TRANSCRIPTION OF THE FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW:

The respondents were interviewed face-to-face with the guidance of the sign-language interpreter and the parents of the respondents. There were 25 respondents of the study and since the researcher cannot write down the names of the respondents, name codes were used for the confidentiality purposes.

1. What activities do you perform in using the internet? and; 2. What is your favorite online activity? Why is it your favorite?

D1 "Facebook.com to read updated events and chat."

D2 "I often visit e-books and Google. I read there to learn some things, learn the style of life and Trade of the country. I also play online."

D3 "I use Google to learn about the things I want to do like cooking and baking. I watch videos to do it. I also use Facebook chat."

D3 "Since I was a kid, my parents used to let me watch to learn things from nursery rhymes online."

D4 "I often visit online or I mean Website of Cosmopolitan, Times (Magazine), TrendingNewsPortal.com and other same websites. I surf it because they have interesting articles uploaded there."

D5 "[I often visit] Facebook and Google, it gives me many knowledge about the world [and] it helps me in doing my assignments by the guidance of my mother."

D6 "[I often visit] Google, because I can search all I want and it is fun using it."

D7 "I visit Facebook, chats with my friends and family who are away from me and online games."

D8 "Surfing Facebook onle [only]."

D9 "Playing league of legends, fb [Facebook], [and] chatting."

D10 "I often surf the internet for chatting friends internationally. I also read different articles on different websites. I like watching TV series on Youtube."

D11 "using Facebook, online games like DOTA and Clash of Clans. I love watching and looking at the images."

D12 "watching video online and surfing Facebook."

D13 "watching and online gaming."

D14 "online games [online gaming]."

D15 "I visit Facebook and play games online."

D16 "Online gaming and Facebook."

D17 "chatting with friends and relatives, watching YouTube."

D18 "I am always watching YouTube but my favorite is that I am opening Facebook and chatting with my friends."

D19 "My favorite activity is reading watt pad and playing clash of clans, it is my favorite because I learn."

D20 "My activities are online gaming and youtube, dahil yun ang gusto ko at lagi kong nakikita." [My activities are online gaming and youtube watching because this is what I like and I always want to see.]

D21 "I love posting and updating status on Facebook. I also chat with my friends."

D22 "watching Korean drama and animes."

D23 "chat using group chat box in online sites."

D24 "I love watching movies with subtitles."

D25 "I love watching movie trailers, I play League of legends, Facebook browsing and chatting."

2. What influenced you to start using the internet and to continue using the internet?

D1 "I start using and continue using the internet because I can search all that I want to know."

D2 "My cousin taught [taught] me [how] to use the internet and it taught to speak in English"

D3 "I use the internet because I can search the things I want to know."

D4 "My family [influenced me] to be able to communicate easily."

D5 "My brother taught me how to play Online Games specifically DOTA and it entertains me."

D6 "My parents wants me to learn alphabets and the like but I don't want to go to school because of my condition, so as an alternative I use internet to watch educational Videos."

D7 "Internet provides me many life-changing stories where I can look into. By learning, I can apply it to myself."

D8 "I continue using the internet because of the easy access to information."

D9 "Through the Internet it is more convenient to watch my favorite series because of its subtitles."

D10 "I enjoy viewing the photos of my family uploaded on Facebook."

D11 "I use the internet because through Facebook browsing I can easily access beautiful sceneries and I usually visit the page of most wonderful places."

D12 "I like using the internet because of the easy access to information"

D17 "I usually visit online shops to look on different pictures of dresses and gadgets because I feel like I am always updated on the fashion trends."

D18 "I can google what I want to know and I like it because it gives me information very quickly."

D19 "Clash of clans is entertaining."

D20 "I use the internet because of the Videos with uploaded subtitles, it doesn't require hearing to understand the messages and the story."

D21 "Watching online is far way more convenient than television because of the English subtitles that are inserted."

D22 "I use the internet to gain a lot of information."

3. What role does the internet play in your daily life?

D1 "Through Facebook because I can view the pictures of my friends and read the updated events."

D2 "Internet also allows me to watch my favorite shows, movies, and more."

D3 "The internet is gives you faster information."

D4 "Internet games are enjoyable."

D5 "Different online games entertains me."

D6 "I usually play games online with my brother as a form of enjoyment when we feel bored."

D7 "I can communicate easily with my loved ones."

D8 "Internet gets me updated on the recent trends"

D8 "It opens [spoils] my curiosity about the thing I want to know."

D9 "It is easier for me to study using internet."

D10 "Internet helps me for communication and other information."

D11 "I feel like I'm not deaf and mute."

D12 "Internet provides me an instant connection to my friends/family that is miles away from me."

D13 "It [Internet] has lesser effort. You can connect with your relatives at home even if they are from you."

D14 "I can say anything that I want even if I'm away from my love ones."

D15 "Facebook allows me to form relationships with so many people and reconnect with my old friends."

D16 "I can communicate easily with my love ones through messages or chat."

D17 "playing online games like DOTA 2 entertains me."

D18 "[By] watching movies with subtitles, I can relate to the real world and how people interact. Through movies, I can see real actions unlike in story book where I only imagine things. Through the subtitles I feel like I can hear people talking."

D19 "I like visiting YouTube because I had fun watching action movies and trough videos I can understand the story."

D19 "Clash of Clans [is] addictive...It entertains me every day."

D19 "When I look at some pictures of art activities in Facebook I always wanted to do it and I can see how creative I am."

D20 "I enjoy in different memes [sarcastic and funny pictures] and it makes me laugh all the time."

D20 "LOL [League of Legends]. I am happy playing it. [Thus,] Internet gives me entertainment."

D21 "Me and my best friend enjoys playing in virtual world rather than recreational activities, physical activities."

D21 "I love viewing photos of beautiful places all over the world in Facebook."

D22 "Internet serves as a virtual library for me, where I can explore the world in just by sitting."

D23 "[Because of the internet] it feels like I'm not deaf."

D24 "[By using the Internet], I feel like I am capable of hearing, because I can read what they say."

D25 "Internet makes me feel that I am like those people who can hear."

4. What role does the internet play in building your self-confidence?

D1 *"Internet helps my self-confidence grow."*

D2 *"Internet makes my self-confidence to grow or develop because there are lot of advices online that I can rely on. Using virtual communication can gain more self-confidence than face-to-face interaction especially to the kind of people like me who is introvert."*

D3 *"In using Facebook, I can express my feeling[s] and idea[s] without being anxious."*

D4 *"Internet provides me an instant connection to my friends from different places."*

D5 *"[Internet plays a role in building my self-confidence that] I am a smart person. And I can boost my confidence in posting my pictures."*

D6 *"I am more confident talking in faceboook thru messenger. I can easily express myself and emotions thru facebook status."*

D7 *"They (People) won't judge you because you are deaf. It [Using the Internet] gives me more self-esteem."*

D8 *"By using the Internet (Group chat), there is no discrimination and I am able to express myself, give comments and share ideas too."*

5. In what ways does the internet change the way you look at yourself?

D1 *"I am so comfortable using the internet that I can manage myself very well. I feel like I am normal in a way that I can act my real self."*

D2 *"I can be myself with [in] using the internet while in face-to-face interaction sometimes I am mentally blocked."*

D3 *"Because of the internet, I can transact with people independently."*

D4 *"Because using the internet I feel like I am capable of hearing."*

D5 *"By the means of Internet and reading online makes me hear the ideas of people."*

D6 *"The internet plays a role in many ways for me, the way I look myself now is that, I feel like I am like those hearing individuals."*

6. How does the internet help you in communicating with others?

D1 *"By using the internet through Facebook chat, there is no discrimination and I can be able to communicate, express and share my ideas too."*

D2 *"I like communicating through Facebook messenger."*

D3 *"I use messenger to chat with my friends and family and those who are far away from us."*

D4 *"I find it easier typing what you want to tell to people."*

D5 *"It helps me communicate by using apps like Facebook messenger."*

D6 *"By means of Facebook I can express my ideas in posting and I can introduce myself through uploading photos."*

D7 *"Mas madali para sakin sabihin ang aking mga sasabihin sa pamamagitan ng messenger sa Facebook."*

D8 *"Through groupchat and messenger."*

D9 *"Mas madaling makipag-usap [It is easier to communicate] through internet kahit normal puwedeng kausapin [You could talk or chat with person who doesn't have any disability]. I use Facebook to [communicate with my] friends."*

D10 *"By using the internet I can communicate to my friends by chatting without a translation [sign-language] in face-to-face. It helps me easily communicate with others by using apps like [Facebook] messenger."*

D11 *"Almost everyone can read but only a few knows about sign-languages. It is easier for me to communicate/ interact with my online friends through/because of chat. Through group chat [Facebook Messenger], I was able to befriend 10 other people."*

D12 *"Using internet is easier to [for] me because I can no longer [I do not need to] act what am I telling about than face-to-face basis [interaction]."*

D13 *"I can communicate easily with my love ones through messages or chat."*

D14 *"It [Facebook] is easier and faster to say what I want. They [people] will understand me faster and I can understand them, what they say."*

D16 *"It [Internet] is for communication and other information. It is easily [easier] to read messages in Facebook than face-to-face interaction."*

D17 *"I can communicate with other person without using sign-language."*

D18 *"Facebook makes it easier for me to express my opinions."*

D19 *"Facebook is an easy way to communicate."*

D20 *"The internet has removed my fear to communicate with new people."*

D21 *"The internet helps me become confident talking and sharing ideas with different people."*

D22 *"It is easier to communicate thru chat because it doesn't require sign-language."*

D23 *"I know how to read so it is better for me to express and communicate myself online by means of uploading my photos and posting my status."*

D24 *"Through Facebook messenger I don't need to use sign-language and it is easy to communicate with other people"*

7. What are the difficulties you have encountered in using the medium?

D1 *"Mas gusto kong maglaro online, kasi po nahihiya akong makipag-usap sa ibang tao." [It's better for me to play online games rather than communicating with other people because I'm too shy]"*

D2 *"Limitado ang aking kaalaman dahil hindi ako marunong magbasa." [I only have limited knowledge because I can't read.*

D3 *"[It is] difficult to read."*

D3 *"My knowledge about using the internet is not enough yet."*

D4 *"[The difficulty I encountered while using the medium is] reading. I need to learn more about different words to understand."*

D4 *"There are sites I cannot visit because it wasn't introduced to me yet"*

D5 *"I don't know how to read."*

D5 *"I want to be independent in using it [Internet] but I cannot use it without the assistance of someone who knows about it."*

D6 *"There are sites I cannot visit because I lack knowledge about the Internet. My sister who taught me is busy so she can't introduce me the another [the] sites I want to visit."*

D7 *"I can't use internet if no [without] companion."*

D8 *"Not [I do not have] enough knowledge about the internet."*

D9 *"I can't enjoy it [Internet] without a company."*

D10 *"When watching Youtube I only depend in what I see but I can't understand other English [terms]."*

D10 *"Lack of knowledge in using it."*

D11 *"I don't know how to read."*

D11 *"Kapag nanonood siya ng Videos [in Youtube] na English ang subtitle [with English subtitle]" [It's hard for her to watch movies with English Subtitle.]*

D12 *"I have [There are] sites that I cannot visit just like Skype, I see the person but I cannot hear them."*

D13 *"I only know the games; I am not still talking to other people very comfortable through internet I communicate by texting [SMS]."*

D14 *"Sometimes when I get too attached with the story and characters, I feel like I wanted to listen to their voice too. I wonder how music sounds like and it makes me sad sometimes."*

D15 *"The only thing I am not comfortable using the internet is that, it makes me lazy sometimes."*

D16 *"There are times I am out of sleep because of being addictive. I can't control it sometimes."*

D17 *"I don't have internet access at home so I go to the internet shop only at day I can't do activity during the night."*

D18 *"Slow Internet near our house [I can't visit] different website[s], but [most] especially FB when uploading pictures."*

D19 *"Mabagal ang internet signal" [The internet connection is very poor.]*

D19 *"Hindi pa po ako gaanong marunong sa paggamit ng Internet." [I am not yet good in using the internet.]*

D20 *"Mabagal ang signal" [The internet connection is very poor.]*

D21 *"Here in the Philippines, the Internet here is slow than other countries."*

D23 *"I don't use the internet for communication, because I am shy chatting with people."*

D23 *"I could not understand some of the options in messenger because of vocabulary deficiency."*

D24 *"I use text messaging not chat because of the internet signal."*

D25 *"I am having a hard time browsing the internet because I am not yet expert in using it."*
