

Critical Analysis on the Lesson Plan of the Pre-service Teachers Specializing in Filipino

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***Abstract.** The mastery of writing a lesson plan is a skill that every pre-service teacher must acquire. The lack of a model guide for developing this skill necessitates the creation of a new model anchored in the socio-cultural theory and the CODE-Plan model, which can address the challenges of pre-service teachers in writing lesson plans. Using both quantitative and qualitative approaches in analyzing the quality of lesson plans and teaching strategies, it was discovered that the quality of lesson plans written by pre-service teachers in Filipino was unsatisfactory. They encountered difficulty in aligning objectives with learning activities, which resulted in poorly designed instructional plans. However, this study also confirmed that the teacher educators themselves demonstrated excellent teaching practices. They possessed broad content knowledge and provided ample opportunities for learners to engage with concepts, enabling them to learn lesson planning skills. The study further revealed a significant relationship between teaching methods and the quality of pre-service teachers' lesson plans. Effective instruction in lesson plan writing also led to better-quality lesson plans. In conclusion, the lesson plans produced by pre-service teachers exhibited weaknesses and required enhancement of their knowledge on the subject matter, activities, and teaching strategies. Thus, there is a need for a guiding framework that can significantly support the improvement and enrichment of lesson plan development in teaching Filipino.*

***Keywords:** lesson plan, teacher educators, pre-service teachers, mixed-method*

INTRODUCTION

Lesson plan is an essential component of teaching and learning. Along with the emergence of teaching and learning theories came the development of lesson plans. Teachers design lesson plans to prepare meaningful learning activities that will provide students with long-term learning experiences. For many years, the lesson plan has served as the heart of every teacher's preparation for instructional tasks.

Despite its long history as part of every teacher's professional practice, lesson planning continues to be a challenge for novice teachers. For pre-service teachers, it is even more daunting because the task is new to them. Practice teaching, which usually takes place in their final year in college, is their first opportunity to apply all the theories they have studied. As such, lesson planning remains challenging and difficult. From the perspective of teacher educators, it is noticeable that pre-service teachers in Filipino often struggle in crafting meaningful lesson plans. This situation calls for immediate attention so that pre-service teachers may be trained in designing effective instructional plans, thereby equipping them to help address the challenges in the quality of education in the country.

In the Philippines, the *Philippine Development Plan 2023–2028* (NEDA, n.d.) underscores the urgency of reforming and improving education to address the problem of poor quality. In fact, the results of the

Programme for International Student Assessment (Chi, 2023) show that the Philippines ranked 77th out of 81 participating countries, which highlights the need to strengthen the quality of education in the country. In response, the Vice President and Secretary of Education, Sara Duterte, launched the *MATATAG* curriculum, which aims to ensure that teaching is meaningful, responsive to the needs of learners and teachers, and attuned to the demands of the present time.

Meanwhile, the Asian Development Bank (2021) reported that even before the pandemic, Asian countries were already facing critical challenges in the quality of education. At present, the search for solutions to this problem continues, prompting countries in Asia to adopt a three-phase framework: Response, Recovery, and Rejuvenation.

These reports suggest that the challenge of providing quality education is a global concern, and addressing it requires effective teacher preparation and instructional planning.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to examine the following: 1. The quality of lesson plans according to: A. Content: 1.1 Content transformation 1.2 Task Creation; B. Social Dimension: 1.3 Adaptation to learning dispositions 1.4 Clarity of learning objectives; C. Time: 1.5 Unit Contextualization 1.6 Phrasing; 2. The teaching methods of teacher educators; 3. The relationship between the quality of lesson plans and the teaching methods.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-method research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. An explanatory sequential design was used, starting with the collection of quantitative data, followed by qualitative data to support and explain the quantitative findings (Clark & Tuffley, 2019). The quantitative phase involved the evaluation of the quality of lesson plans and the teaching methods of the teacher educators. The qualitative phase involved gathered narratives from teacher educators who taught lesson plan writing and from pre-service teachers who experienced writing lesson plans. A multiple-case study design was employed for the qualitative phase, which allowed the exploration of similarities and differences across cases (Gustafsson, 2017). The cases examined in this study focused on the teaching methods of teacher educators and the experiences of pre-service teachers in lesson plan writing.

The research was conducted in Cebu City, in three universities offering the Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Filipino program. At the time of the study, these universities had fourth-year pre-service teachers currently enrolled in teaching internship. The participants included thirty pre-service teachers and five teacher educators from two public universities and one private university.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 presents the quality of the lesson plans prepared by pre-service teachers in Filipino during the first semester of the academic year 2023–2024. It includes several dimensions, each of which has two indicators of an effective lesson plan, based on the CODE-Plan model used as the framework for this study.

Content

The first dimension is the content of the lesson plan, are measured using two indicators: content transformation and clarity of learning objectives. In terms of content transformation, the pre-service

teachers demonstrated fair competence. This indicates that they acquired basic knowledge in identifying the specific topic and its related concepts, which are essential for ensuring smooth and clear student understanding. They showed a fair ability to analyze the topic and determine how to expand it in order to provide new knowledge to students. However, the results also reveal that they had limited ability in deepening content knowledge and in creatively adapting the lesson to suit the learners they were teaching.

Table 1

LESSON PLAN QUALITY

Cognitive Demand	A	B	C	Mean	SD	Description
A. Content Dimension						
Content Transformation	3.73	3.36	3.54	3.48	1.67	Fair
Task Creation	3.70	2.53	2.84	3.01	1.14	Needs Improvement
B. Social Dimension						
Adaptation to Learning Disposition	3.67	2.30	2.78	2.90	1.49	Needs Improvement
Clarity of Learning Objectives	3.73	3.40	3.88	2.48	1.77	Needs Improvement
C. Time Dimension						
Unit Contextualization	3.67	2.33	2.98	3.24	1.63	Fair
Phasing	3.63	2.60	3.22	3.10	1.98	Fair
Mean	3.69	2.76	3.13	3.19	0.26	
Description	Good	Needs Improvement	Fair	Fair		Fair

Scale: 4.46-5.00 Excellent;
 3.96-4.45 Very Good;
 3.46-3.95 Good;
 2.96-3.45 Fair;
 0.00-2.95 Needs Improvement

The second indicator of lesson plan content is the creation of learning activities. The study found that the pre-service teachers performed poorly in this aspect. This means they did not meet the expected competency in designing learning activities across different cognitive levels. The tasks they created were mostly simple, did not align with the stated learning objectives, and failed to challenge students' abilities. This result implies that pre-service teachers still need further knowledge and experience to develop their skills in creating meaningful learning activities. Teacher educators also play a crucial role

in this area. Their feedback, effective modeling of strategies, and guidance on aligning learning activities with objectives can significantly help pre-service teachers strengthen their competence and achieve the expected skill level.

On the other hand, this result supports the findings of Koni and Krull (2018), who highlighted the difference in planning perspectives between novice and experienced teachers. This suggests that pre-service teachers require essential components for designing rich and meaningful lessons so that they may fully understand the nature of creating learning tasks that foster long-term student learning.

Social Dimension

The second dimension is the social aspect, measured using two indicators: the learning context of students and the clarity of learning objectives. The study revealed that pre-service teachers need improvement in considering the learning context of students. This suggests that they require meaningful experiences that can help develop this skill in order to acquire the essential knowledge they must possess. The lesson plans they produced showed little evidence of describing the cognitive level of the class in relation to the learning activities. Consequently, the activities were not sequenced in a guided manner that could effectively lead students toward learning.

This result indicates the need for pre-service teachers to learn data-based lesson planning. This involves interpreting student grades, monitoring learning progress, and considering learning styles to ensure that students are provided with appropriate learning experiences. Consistent with the findings of Layden (2015), which showed that taking students' thinking into account during lesson planning fosters greater student participation. Pre-service teachers specializing in Filipino should be guided on how to effectively incorporate learners' thinking processes into their planning so they may become more successful and achieve proficient level on this dimension.

The second indicator under the social dimension is the clarity of learning objectives, where pre-service teachers in Filipino also showed the need for further development. This means that they must acquire meaningful knowledge and experiences in formulating clear learning objectives so that they can demonstrate this competence effectively in their lesson plans. In their outputs, they were unable to clearly present learning objectives that were aligned with the topic, methodology, and learning activities.

This finding is consistent with Enama (2021), who noted that pre-service teachers encounter difficulties in writing objectives. Based on the results of this study, the pre-service teachers demonstrated a need for improvement level of ability. This suggests that they should be provided with more opportunities to practice developing clear learning objectives and aligning these with the entire lesson plan, so they can eventually achieve proficiency. They must also gain a deeper understanding of the importance of objectives in lesson planning, which can be strengthened through the feedback of teacher educators and through opportunities to reflect on their own lesson plans.

Time Dimension

The third dimension is time, measured using two indicators: unit contextualization and phasing. Each

lesson that pre-service teachers deliver forms part of the broader concept of a unit. However, their competence in considering the contextualization of the entire unit was found to be unsatisfactory, thus, needs improvement. This means that they did not achieve the expected level of skill in this area. Their lesson plans often showed little connection to the overall unit and rarely highlighted the significance of the lesson within the broader unit. This suggests that pre-service teachers' knowledge and skills in integrating lessons into the context of the entire unit must be further strengthened.

It is crucial for knowledge and skills taught in lessons to be interrelated and sequential so that learners are adequately prepared for subsequent lessons. Thus, this finding suggests the need to help pre-service teachers understand that every lesson they teach is linked to other lessons within the unit. They must recognize that their lesson is part of the students' successful attainment of knowledge and skills across the entire unit. They should be trained in planning that begins with the general objectives or themes of the unit before developing their own lesson plans.

The second indicator under this dimension is sequencing of lesson phasing. The study revealed that pre-service teachers in Filipino performed poorly in this aspect as well. This indicates that they did not meet the expected competency in structuring the sequence of tasks within a lesson. Their lesson plans often showed a lack of organization in the division of phases, with unclear objectives, poorly arranged activities, and weak connections between parts of the lesson.

This result aligns with the findings of Sahin-Taskin (2017), who noted that pre-service teachers generally struggle with planning. The findings of this study affirm that lesson planning is not easy for pre-service teachers, as they are not yet proficient in structuring lesson components and organizing plans effectively. Based on this, pre-service teachers should be provided with extensive guided practice in dividing lesson plans into appropriate phases, coupled with objective feedback from teacher educators. Additionally, collaborative group analysis and peer feedback on their structuring of lesson phases should be implemented to help them develop competence in this area.

Teaching Methods

Table 2 presents the teaching methods of the four teacher educators who taught lesson plan writing to pre-service teachers in Filipino. Their teaching practices were assessed using an adapted rubric originally developed by a public university. The competencies and scoring criteria were based on this standardized rubric. The evaluation of the teacher educators' teaching methods was conducted through both self-assessment and classroom observation by the researcher.

Table 2
Teaching Methods

Competency	A	B	Mean	SD	Description
Content Mastery	4.5	4.5	4.5	0.49	Excellent
Lesson Clarity	4.5	4.5	4.5	0.49	Excellent
Student Engagement	3.75	4.25	4.00	0.53	Very Good
Art of questioning	4.25	4.25	4.25	0.70	Very Good

Management of Learning	4.75	3.75	4.25	0.83	Very Good
Assessment	4.00	4.25	4.13	0.35	Very Good
Feedback	4.00	3.5	3.75	0.70	Good
Mean Description	4.25	4.14	4.20	0.05	Very good

Scale: 4.46-5.00 Excellent;
 3.96-4.45 Very Good;
 3.46-3.95 Good;
 2.96-3.45 Fair;
 0.00-2.95 Needs Improvement

Content Mastery

Table 2 shows the quality of teaching demonstrated by the teacher educators. The table reveals that they performed excellently in terms of content mastery. This means that they possessed knowledge that went beyond the expected level in relation to the subject matter they were teaching. In their instruction, they demonstrated extensive knowledge by clearly explaining the lesson and its related concepts. They were able to break down topics into smaller, interconnected concepts, provide meaningful examples, and guide pre-service teachers toward achieving learning outcomes.

This indicates that they had sufficient mastery of the lessons essential for preparing students to write lesson plans. Because of their strong foundation of knowledge in their respective subject matter, they were also able to deliver lessons that were well-discussed to the learners. These findings affirm that teacher educators who teach lesson plan writing to pre-service teachers in Filipino possess the appropriate competence to develop the abilities of future Filipino teachers. Their deep content knowledge serves as a pathway for creating rich and meaningful learning experiences for pre-service teachers.

Lesson Clarity

The teachers demonstrated excellent ability in conducting clear discussions. Their teaching was characterized by highly coherent presentations, well-chosen examples, and fluency in the Filipino language, which enabled clear communication in class. Because of the clarity of the lessons delivered, pre-service teachers were observed to actively participate and freely exchange ideas in response to the thought-provoking questions posed by the instructors.

This indicates that teachers handling the preparatory subjects for lesson planning for the Filipino major pre-service teachers possess excellent competence in ensuring that their students gain a deep understanding of lesson content. The clear flow of the class facilitated students' comprehension, made instructions easy to follow, and encouraged active participation during discussions.

This finding also supports the study of Koni and Krull (2018), which highlighted the differences in planning approaches between novice and experienced teachers. The results clearly show that experienced teachers' well-prepared plans enabled them to deliver effective and meaningful lessons.

Student Engagement

Based on the analysis in this study, the teacher educators achieved the expected level of competence in ensuring the active participation of their pre-service teachers in class. They were rated as proficient in this aspect. In their classes, they demonstrated the ability to pose questions that challenged students' critical thinking. In addition, they incorporated learning activities such as pair work and group tasks that effectively engaged every student, encouraging them to participate and share their own ideas. In these classes, the teacher was not the sole source of knowledge; rather, the entire class collaborated in discovering the broad concepts embedded in the lesson.

This indicates that the teacher educators possessed sufficient ability to employ various strategies and teaching methods that captured the attention and sustained the interest of their pre-service teachers. Their classrooms fostered a positive learning culture where students felt that their opinions were valued and that their contributions enriched the learning experience.

Art of Questioning

The teacher educators demonstrated proficiency in the practice of artful questioning. They showed the expected competence in this area by posing metacognitive questions to their classes, such as: "*How the knowledge on the folktales contribute to the development of our community?*"; "*Why is the teaching of the Filipino language important for the youth?*"; and "*If you were the teacher of the Generation Alpha, how would you ensure that your students understand the relationship between culture and the progress of our way of life?*" These questions challenged the students' critical thinking and encouraged active participation and collaboration among the pre-service teachers.

This result indicates that teacher educators facilitated the development of deep understanding and critical thinking skills among pre-service teachers. Through higher-order cognitive questions, they cultivated critical thinking while also creating opportunities for active and open participation in class discussions. Such questioning provided all pre-service teachers with equitable opportunities to engage, share their insights, and contribute meaningfully to the learning process.

Management of Learning

The teachers demonstrated competence in fostering a positive culture of learning in their classes. They exhibited the expected skills in this area by welcoming diverse opinions from pre-service teachers, respecting the individuality of their learners, and addressing questions with clarity. This indicates that teacher educators were effective in creating a positive learning community characterized by respect, trust, and collaboration. They nurtured the intellectual growth of students by valuing their efforts and encouraging persistence in overcoming the challenges of the learning process.

This suggests that by fostering a strong culture of learning, teacher educators strengthened the participation and motivation of pre-service teachers. Moreover, they supported the social and emotional development of pre-service teachers by boosting self-confidence and resilience, motivating them to continue until they successfully acquire the necessary knowledge and skills.

These findings are consistent with literature (Lee & Hung, 2016; Lee, 2020), which emphasize that cultivating a learning community helps teachers adapt to curricular changes. Since pre-service teaching is a period of constant exposure to new experiences, the ability of teacher educators to establish a positive culture of learning demonstrates their commitment to nurturing both the knowledge and skills of future teachers.

Assessment

The teachers demonstrated strong competence in assessment. They possessed sufficient skills to monitor the progress of students by employing a variety of assessment methods. In their classes, they showcased different forms of assessment such as demonstration teaching, debates, creation of analogies and symbols, explanations, reflections, and the development of instructional plans. It was evident that these assessments were designed to measure the knowledge and skills expected of students, requiring them to produce or present concrete evidence of learning.

Effective assessment signified meaningful student learning. Through these practices, students were able to identify their strengths and weaknesses in relation to the lesson, while being encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning and to strive toward achieving the desired knowledge and skills.

The teacher educators' strong assessment practices also prepared pre-service teachers to acquire important knowledge about formative assessment and differentiation, as suggested by Hessong (2014). Exposure to these concepts provided pre-service teachers with an initial understanding of how these practices are carried out and why they are essential for student learning.

Feedback

The teachers demonstrated only a moderate level of competence in providing feedback. This means that while they had the ability to give feedback, there were aspects in which they did not perform well. In their classes, they provided feedback on student outputs but often did so in general terms. Their feedback lacked specificity in identifying strengths, weaknesses, areas for improvement, and suggestions on how to perform better in future tasks. Although they referred to the competencies outlined in the rubric used for evaluation, their comments tended to focus on criticism such as "*you did not explain this well*", which risked creating negative emotions rather than encouraging students to improve.

The moderate competence of the teachers in giving feedback indicates the need for universities to strengthen their standards in this area. Clear, timely, and constructive feedback can guide and motivate learners to further enhance their skills. Establishing stronger feedback standards would therefore help pre-service teachers develop the ability to provide feedback that not only corrects errors but also inspires improvement.

This finding is consistent with literature asserting that a teacher's knowledge, methods, and interactions have a positive effect on student learning (Baber, 2020; Hagenauer & Volet, 2014). Teachers' broad knowledge and effective teaching strategies yield favorable outcomes in student learning.

Relationship between Lesson Plan Quality and Teaching Competence of the Mentors

Table 3 presents the relationship between the quality of lesson plans and teaching competence of the mentors. Using the Pearson r correlation coefficient, the study examined whether there was a significant relationship between the two variables.

The study revealed a significant correlation between lesson plan quality and teaching competence of the mentors. This indicates that effective competent teachers have a meaningful impact on student learning. In the context of this study, thorough preparation by teacher educators in guiding pre-service teachers on lesson plan writing resulted in the production of higher-quality lesson plans by the pre-service teachers.

This result underscores the importance of strengthening the professional development of teachers. Since teaching competence positively affect students' learning, it is essential for college instructors to continually engage in professional growth to further refine their skills. Moreover, the finding suggests that universities should enhance their evaluation systems by assessing teacher competence based on student learning outcomes. In addition, greater institutional support should be provided for the continuous professional development of teachers.

Table 3
Relationship Between Lesson Plan Quality and Teaching Methods

Variables	Mean	SD	Computed r	P. value	Decision	Description
Teaching Competence	29.38	2.53				
Lesson Plan Quality	19.16	3.97	.453	.048	Reject Ho	Significant

Significant at .05 level; n=20

Based on the results of this study, teachers were effective in teaching; however, the lesson plans produced by pre-service teachers were of poor quality. This finding supports the study of Nortvig et al. (2018), which emphasizes that teaching and learning are complex processes shaped not only by teaching methods but also by multiple factors related to the students' context. This implies that learning does not rely solely on the teacher's efforts and competence but also involves various student-related factors.

This result also challenges the findings of Baber (2020), which highlighted that one of the key factors in student learning is the teacher's knowledge and instructional methods. The combination of effective teaching but poor-quality lesson plans calls for further studies that examine other factors influencing the development of pre-service teachers' skills in lesson plan writing.

Consistent with prior research indicating that pre-service teachers struggle with lesson planning (Yurtserven, 2021; Sahin-Taskin, 2017; Enama, 2021), this study suggests the need for more targeted research that addresses specific problems and provides interventions that can help overcome these challenges.

The competence of teacher educators demonstrates that they possess sufficient knowledge and expertise in teaching. Therefore, students must also acquire the necessary knowledge to enable them to produce high-quality lesson plans. This includes linking relevant theories and principles to lesson preparation, as well as demonstrating deep understanding and mastery of the subject matter to be taught.

As revealed through the experiences of teacher educators in this study, one of the main obstacles for pre-service teachers in producing quality lesson plans is their lack of subject matter knowledge. In lesson planning, it is essential for teachers to have mastery of the content in order to design meaningful

activities for their learners. A lack of subject matter knowledge limits pre-service teachers' ability to create appropriate and relevant tasks that both engage students and challenge them to think critically.

FINDINGS

From the quantitative data gathered in this study, it was found that the quality of lesson plans produced by pre-service teachers in Filipino was unsatisfactory. They struggled to align learning objectives with instructional activities, which resulted in poorly developed lesson plans.

However, the study also confirmed that the teachers demonstrated strong teaching competence. They possessed extensive subject matter knowledge and provided students with ample opportunities to experience and apply concepts, thereby helping them learn how to plan lessons effectively.

The study further revealed a significant relationship between teaching competence of the teachers handling the preparatory subjects of lesson planning and the quality of lesson plans produced by pre-service teachers. Effective instruction in lesson plan writing led to the creation of higher-quality lesson plans by pre-service teachers.

CONCLUSION

The lesson plans produced by the pre-service teachers showed notable deficiencies and require further strengthening and improvement in terms of subject matter knowledge, learning activities, and teaching methods. Thus, continuous guidance and support are necessary to significantly enhance their skills and enrich their ability to develop effective lesson plans for teaching Filipino.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended to implement the following: Conduct seminar-workshops that will guide and support the development of the cognitive demands namely, content, social, and time dimensions in creating high-quality lesson plans, develop varied teaching methods that will enhance instructional competence, gather feedback from both pre-service teachers and teacher educators to serve as a basis for improving lesson plan preparation, and, create tools and strategies that can be utilized to strengthen the skills necessary for effective lesson plan development.

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