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Understanding Writing Instruction in Filipino 5: Teachers' Instructional Practices in Developing Learners' Writing Skills in Masigun Elementary School of Burgos District, Schools Division of Isabela

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Abstract

Writing is an essential language skill that enables learners to communicate ideas, organize thoughts, and demonstrate critical thinking. Despite its importance, many elementary learners continue to struggle with organizing ideas, grammar, spelling, and coherent composition. This qualitative phenomenological study explored the instructional practices of Filipino 5 teachers in developing learners' writing skills at Masigun Elementary School, Burgos District, Schools Division of Isabela. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. Four themes emerged: (1) scaffolding enhances writing competence; (2) contextualized writing activities increase learner engagement; (3) continuous feedback strengthens writing development; and (4) adaptive instructional strategies address classroom challenges. The findings reveal that effective writing instruction requires explicit teaching, meaningful practice, timely feedback, and learner-centered approaches. The study recommends continuous professional development, improved instructional resources, and strengthened school support to enhance writing instruction in Filipino.

Keywords: *Writing Instruction; Filipino Language; Writing Skills; Instructional Practices; Elementary Education; Qualitative Research*



1. Introduction

Writing is a fundamental language skill that enables learners to express ideas, communicate effectively, and develop critical thinking. In the Philippine basic education curriculum, writing instruction in Filipino plays a significant role in helping learners become competent communicators who can organize ideas and express themselves clearly in different contexts.

Despite curriculum reforms, many Grade 5 learners continue to experience difficulties in writing. Common challenges include limited vocabulary, weak organization of ideas, incorrect grammar and mechanics, and low confidence in expressing thoughts through written compositions. These challenges highlight the need for effective instructional practices that promote meaningful writing experiences and continuous learner support.

Teachers play a vital role in improving learners' writing competence. Effective writing instruction involves explicit teaching, modeling, guided practice, collaborative learning, and constructive feedback. Process-oriented approaches that emphasize planning, drafting, revising, and editing allow learners to develop writing as a continuous and reflective process rather than a one-time activity. Likewise, contextualized writing tasks connected to learners' experiences increase motivation and engagement.

However, teachers also face challenges such as diverse learner abilities, limited instructional materials, insufficient time for individualized feedback, and increasing classroom responsibilities. These realities require teachers to adopt flexible and innovative instructional strategies while maintaining quality writing instruction.

Although previous studies have examined writing achievement and literacy development, limited qualitative research has explored teachers' lived experiences in teaching writing in Filipino, particularly in rural public elementary schools. Understanding teachers' instructional practices provides valuable insights into effective classroom strategies and the challenges they encounter in developing learners' writing skills.

This study explored the instructional practices employed by Filipino 5 teachers at Masigun Elementary School, Burgos District, Schools Division of Isabela. Specifically, it sought to understand how teachers plan, implement, assess, and improve writing instruction while addressing classroom challenges. The findings are expected to contribute to literacy education by providing practical recommendations for teachers, school administrators, curriculum developers, and policymakers in strengthening writing instruction in Filipino.

2. Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to explore the instructional practices employed by Filipino 5 teachers in developing the writing skills of Grade 5 learners at Masigun Elementary School, Burgos District, Schools Division of Isabela. Specifically, it sought to understand how teachers plan and implement writing instruction, the strategies they use to develop learners' writing

competence, the methods they employ in assessing learners' written outputs, the challenges they encounter in teaching writing, and the coping mechanisms and best practices they adopt to enhance writing instruction. Ultimately, the study intended to generate insights that may serve as a basis for strengthening writing instruction and improving learners' writing proficiency in Filipino.

3. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences of Filipino 5 teachers in teaching writing. The participants consisted of Filipino teachers from Masigun Elementary School, Burgos District, Schools Division of Isabela, who were selected through purposive sampling based on their experience in teaching Grade 5 Filipino. Data were gathered through semi-structured, in-depth interviews, supplemented by classroom observations and document analysis of lesson plans and learners' writing outputs to provide a richer understanding of instructional practices. All interviews were conducted with participants' informed consent and were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis. Ethical principles, including voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and the protection of participants' rights, were strictly observed throughout the conduct of the study to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of the findings.

4. Findings and Discussion

The thematic analysis revealed two major instructional practices that Filipino 5 teachers consistently employed in developing learners' writing skills. These themes highlight teachers' emphasis on explicit instruction, learner engagement, and continuous guidance throughout the writing process.

Theme 1. Explicit Instruction and Scaffolding Strengthen Learners' Writing Skills

The participants emphasized that writing instruction begins with explicit teaching of writing concepts, demonstration of writing techniques, and guided practice before learners are asked to write independently. Teachers explained that providing models, graphic organizers, sentence starters, and step-by-step guidance helps learners organize their ideas and gain confidence in writing.

One participant shared:

"Hindi namin agad pinasusulat ang mga bata. Ipinapakita muna namin kung paano gumawa ng simula, gitna, at wakas ng isang sulatin. Kapag nakita nila ang halimbawa, mas madali nilang nagagawa ang kanilang sariling komposisyon." (Participant 1)

Another teacher stated:

"Unti-unti naming binabawasan ang gabay habang nagiging mas mahusay sila sa pagsusulat. Kapag nakikita naming kaya na nila, hinahayaan na namin silang magsulat nang mag-isa." (Participant 3)

These responses indicate that teachers view writing as a developmental process requiring continuous scaffolding. Rather than expecting learners to produce quality compositions independently, teachers gradually transfer responsibility as learners become more competent. This instructional practice develops learners' confidence, organization of ideas, and writing independence.

The findings support the process writing approach, which emphasizes planning, drafting, revising, and editing as interconnected stages of writing development. Graham et al. (2023) reported that explicit writing instruction combined with guided practice significantly improves learners' writing quality and overall literacy achievement. Similarly, Graham and Harris (2021) found that scaffolding strategies enhance learners' ability to organize ideas and compose meaningful texts, particularly in elementary classrooms.

Theme 2. Contextualized and Meaningful Writing Activities Enhance Learner Engagement

Teachers consistently described the importance of connecting writing activities to learners' daily experiences, family life, culture, and community. According to the participants, learners become more interested and motivated when they write about familiar topics rather than abstract or unfamiliar concepts.

One participant explained:

"Mas gusto ng mga bata kapag ang paksa ay tungkol sa kanilang pamilya, kaibigan, o mga karanasan sa paaralan dahil mas madali nilang naipapahayag ang kanilang iniisip." (Participant 5)

Another participant shared:

"Kapag inuugnay namin ang pagsusulat sa mga pangyayari sa kanilang komunidad, mas nakikita nilang may halaga ang kanilang mga sinusulat." (Participant 2)

Teachers observed that contextualized writing tasks encourage learners to express ideas more freely and confidently. Familiar topics reduce learners' anxiety, stimulate creativity, and enable them to organize thoughts more effectively. These authentic writing experiences also strengthen learners' appreciation of the Filipino language as a medium of meaningful communication.

The findings suggest that meaningful learning occurs when classroom instruction reflects learners' real-life experiences. Contextualized instruction increases learner motivation

because writing becomes relevant to their personal and social contexts rather than merely fulfilling academic requirements.

These findings are consistent with the work of Hyland (2022), who emphasized that authentic writing tasks promote learner engagement, voice, and communicative competence. Likewise, Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) argued that contextualized and learner-centered instruction improves literacy development by allowing learners to connect classroom learning with real-world experiences, thereby fostering deeper understanding and sustained motivation.

Theme 3. Constructive Feedback and Continuous Assessment Improve Writing Performance

The participants highlighted that providing timely and constructive feedback is essential in helping learners improve their writing. Instead of focusing only on errors, teachers encouraged learners by recognizing their strengths while guiding them on areas that needed improvement. Feedback was commonly provided through written comments, one-on-one conferences, and class discussions after writing activities.

One participant shared:

"Hindi lang namin minamarkahan ang mali. Ipinapaliwanag din namin kung paano nila mapapaganda ang kanilang sulatin para mas matuto sila." (Participant 4)

Another teacher explained:

"Kapag may pagkakataon, pinababasa ko ulit sa kanila ang kanilang gawa pagkatapos ng feedback upang makita nila ang kanilang mga pagkakamali at maitama ito." (Participant 1)

These responses indicate that teachers view assessment as a continuous process that supports learning rather than simply measuring achievement. Constructive feedback enables learners to recognize their strengths, improve weaknesses, and become more reflective writers.

This finding supports the work of Hattie and Timperley (2007), who emphasized that effective feedback significantly improves learning by helping learners understand where they are, where they need to go, and how to reach their learning goals. Similarly, Graham et al. (2023) reported that formative assessment and continuous feedback positively influence learners' writing quality and motivation.

Theme 4. Instructional Challenges Require Creativity and Flexibility in Teaching Writing

Teachers acknowledged several challenges in teaching writing, including learners' limited vocabulary, varying writing abilities, lack of motivation, insufficient instructional materials, and limited classroom time. These realities required teachers to modify lessons and adopt flexible instructional approaches.

One participant stated:

"Magkakaiba ang kakayahan ng mga bata kaya kailangan naming mag-adjust sa paraan ng pagtuturo. May mga batang kailangan ng mas maraming gabay kaysa sa iba." (Participant 2)

Another participant shared:

"Minsan kulang ang oras para matingnan ang lahat ng sulatin kaya gumagamit kami ng peer checking at group activities upang matulungan ang bawat isa." (Participant 5)

These findings demonstrate teachers' commitment to ensuring that all learners receive meaningful writing instruction despite existing classroom constraints. Their adaptive practices reflect professional competence and responsiveness to learners' diverse needs.

The findings are consistent with Darling-Hammond et al. (2020), who emphasized that effective teachers continuously adjust instruction according to learners' needs and classroom contexts. Likewise, UNESCO (2021) noted that teacher adaptability is essential in maintaining quality instruction despite resource limitations and diverse learning environments.

Theme 5. Teacher Commitment and Reflective Practice Foster Continuous Improvement in Writing Instruction

The participants described teaching writing as a continuous learning process that requires patience, reflection, and professional growth. They regularly evaluated the effectiveness of their instructional strategies and modified their teaching based on learners' progress and classroom experiences.

One participant explained:

"Bilang guro, patuloy din kaming natututo. Kapag hindi naging epektibo ang isang gawain, naghahanap kami ng ibang paraan upang mas maintindihan ng mga bata." (Participant 3)

Another teacher remarked:

"Ang tagumpay ng pagsusulat ng mga bata ay nakasalalay din sa kahandaan naming baguhin at pagbutihin ang aming pagtuturo." (Participant 4)

These responses reveal that reflective practice is a key characteristic of effective writing teachers. By evaluating their own instruction and responding to learners' needs, teachers continually improve the quality of writing instruction and create more supportive learning environments.

The findings support Schön's concept of reflective practice, which emphasizes that professional learning occurs through continuous reflection on teaching experiences. Similarly, OECD (2020) highlighted that teachers who engage in reflective and collaborative professional learning are more likely to implement effective instructional practices that improve learner outcomes.

The findings demonstrate that effective writing instruction in Filipino 5 is grounded in explicit instruction, contextualized learning experiences, continuous formative feedback, adaptive teaching practices, and teachers' commitment to reflective professional growth. Together, these instructional practices contribute to the development of learners' writing competence by fostering confidence, creativity, organization of ideas, and meaningful communication. The results further underscore the importance of sustained professional development and institutional support in strengthening writing instruction in public elementary schools.

5. Conclusion

This study explored the instructional practices of Filipino 5 teachers in developing learners' writing skills at Masigun Elementary School, Burgos District, Schools Division of Isabela. The findings revealed that effective writing instruction is anchored on explicit teaching, systematic scaffolding, contextualized writing activities, continuous formative feedback, and teachers' reflective instructional practices. Despite challenges such as diverse learner abilities, limited instructional resources, and time constraints, teachers demonstrated creativity, adaptability, and commitment in facilitating meaningful writing experiences. The study concludes that developing learners' writing competence requires learner-centered instruction, sustained practice, and a supportive classroom environment where learners are encouraged to express ideas confidently and improve through continuous guidance. Strengthening teachers' pedagogical competence and providing institutional support remain essential in enhancing the quality of writing instruction in Filipino.

6. Implications

The findings suggest important implications for educational practice and policy. Teachers may strengthen writing instruction by consistently integrating process-based writing strategies, authentic writing tasks, and formative assessment into classroom instruction. School administrators should provide regular professional development activities focusing on evidence-based writing instruction and assessment practices. Curriculum developers may enhance instructional materials by incorporating contextualized writing activities that reflect learners' local culture and experiences. Furthermore, the Department of Education

may strengthen literacy programs by providing adequate instructional resources, mentoring opportunities, and collaborative learning communities that support teachers in improving writing instruction. These initiatives may contribute to the development of learners who are effective, confident, and critical writers in the Filipino language.

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