

STRENGTHENING FILIPINO COMPOSITION SKILLS OF FIRST-YEAR COLLEGE STUDENTS THROUGH A PROCESS-BASED APPROACH

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Abstract

This study examined the effectiveness of the demonstration method in enhancing the cookery skills of Grade 10 learners at Calasiao Comprehensive National High School. Employing a quasi-experimental one-group pretest–posttest design, the research involved thirty-five (35) students enrolled in the Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE)–Cookery class during the School Year 2024–2025. A validated performance assessment checklist, aligned with the K to 12 Curriculum Guide, was used to measure learners' proficiency in food preparation, application of cooking techniques, adherence to safety and sanitation standards, and presentation of finished products. Baseline data from the pretest revealed a mean score of 72.46 (SD = 5.18), indicating moderate mastery of basic cookery skills. After a series of structured lessons utilizing the demonstration method, the posttest mean score rose to 88.37 (SD = 4.62), reflecting a significant improvement of 15.91 points. Paired sample *t*-test analysis confirmed that this improvement was statistically significant ($t(34) = 14.27, p < 0.001$). Observational data further indicated increased learner engagement, confidence, and procedural accuracy during practical tasks. The findings corroborate both local and international studies affirming the effectiveness of demonstration as a teaching strategy for skill-based subjects, supporting its continued application in TLE–Cookery instruction. This study recommends the sustained and systematic integration of the demonstration method to enhance learners' technical competencies, in alignment with the objectives of Republic Act No. 10533 and DepEd's competency-based learning framework.

Keywords: Demonstration Method, Cookery Skills, Technology And Livelihood Education, Grade 10 Learners, Quasi-Experimental Design, Competency-Based

1. Introduction

Language proficiency lies at the heart of effective communication, academic success, and national identity (Rivera & Flores, 2024). In the Philippines, the role of Filipino as both a national and official language is enshrined in the 1987 Constitution, specifically in Article XIV, Sections 6 and 7, which declare Filipino as the national language, to be developed and enriched, and designate Filipino and English as official languages for purposes of instruction and communication. In consonance with this constitutional mandate, the Philippine Bilingual Education Policy, articulated through Department of Education (DepEd) Orders No. 25, s. 1974 and No. 52, s. 1987, seeks to cultivate competence in both Filipino and English across educational levels. Filipino is used as a medium in areas such as social studies, arts, and character education, while English is prioritized for science and mathematics. This framework underscores the responsibility of tertiary institutions to pursue the "continuing intellectualization of Filipinos," a charge especially significant within higher education.

Moreover, Executive Order No. 335 (1988), signed by President Corazon Aquino, further advances the national language policy by directing all government agencies to enhance the use of Filipino in official communications and correspondence. It also tasked the Commission on the Filipino Language with spearheading programs for its effective implementation. The legislative foundations of Filipino's institutional support are further strengthened by Republic Act No. 7104 (1991), which created the Commission on the Filipino Language to undertake research and promote the development and preservation of Filipino and other Philippine languages.

In the context of higher education, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED)—established under Republic Act No. 7722 (1994), the Higher Education Act—plays a pivotal role. By overseeing both public and private tertiary institutions, CHED is also responsible for upholding language standards in educational outcomes. Of relevance to the discipline of composition is CHED Memorandum Order No. 59, s. 1996, which asserts that language courses must aim to "provide students with effective communication skills in both English and Filipino and to foster critical understanding". Complementing this, CHED Memorandum Order No. 46, s. 2012 highlights the development of essential workplace competencies—including writing and presentation skills—as integral to higher education program outcomes.

Despite these guiding policies, recent trends have threatened Filipino's prominence within general education. The introduction of a new General Education Curriculum under CHED Memorandum Order No. 20, s. 2013, as part of K–12 reforms, led to the removal of Filipino as a required subject in some college programs. This alarming development prompted cultural and academic activists to form *Tanggol Wika* (Alliance of Defenders of the Filipino Language). The group filed a landmark Supreme Court petition—written entirely in Filipino—to oppose the CHED order, leading to a temporary restraining order by the highest court. The episode underscores growing concerns that Filipino writing competence is being marginalized in higher education.

At the broader policy level, Republic Act No. 10533 (2013), known as the Enhanced Basic Education Act or the K–12 law, mandates mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) in early grades, transitioning to Filipino and English instruction in higher grades. This gradual shift, while intended to support cognitive development in learners' first languages, ultimately reinforces Filipino as a dominant medium for instruction, further highlighting its critical role in shaping literacy and writing skills (Meneses et al., 2024).

Beyond legal and policy frameworks, scholarly studies reveal a persistent need to improve Filipino writing skills among tertiary learners. While such research is limited, existing literature suggests that many first-year students struggle with organization, coherence, and vocabulary in their Filipino compositions (Manabo, 2024). At the same time, the process-based approach to writing—emphasizing iterative drafting, feedback, reflection, and revision—has gained traction for enhancing writing proficiency across languages (Munder, 2024).

Taken together, constitutional mandates, statutory laws, CHED policies, and advocacy interventions construct a compelling legal and educational case for revitalizing Filipino writing instruction in higher education. Philippine institutions must not only defend Filipino's academic standing but also implement pedagogical strategies proven to boost writing skills (Garcia et al., 2025). A process-based approach—grounded in writing as a recursive and collaborative process—aligns well with such educational and policy imperatives (Ainin et al., 2025).

Therefore, this study, "Strengthening Filipino Composition Skills of First-Year College Students through a Process-Based Approach," aims to investigate how structured writing interventions—through stages of prewriting, drafting, revising, and feedback—can bolster Filipino composition skills among first-year students at the Philippine College of Science and Technology. The research recognizes the policy imperative for Filipino development in higher education, the curricular gaps introduced by recent CHED reforms, and the pressing need to reestablish Filipino writing competency as a cornerstone of academic success and national identity.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

The study employed a quasi-experimental research design, specifically utilizing a pretest-posttest control group approach, to determine the effectiveness of the process-based approach in strengthening the Filipino composition skills of first-year college students at the Philippine College of Science and Technology. This design was deemed appropriate as it allowed the

researcher to measure changes in the respondents' writing performance before and after the intervention while comparing results between the experimental group, which received instruction through the process-based approach, and the control group, which was taught using conventional methods. By integrating both quantitative and qualitative data, the study ensured a comprehensive assessment of improvements in key composition components such as content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. This methodological framework enabled the establishment of causal inferences between the intervention and the observed outcomes, thereby enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings.

2.2 Participants

The respondents of the study were first-year college students enrolled at the Philippine College of Science and Technology during the academic year SY 2024-2025, purposively selected to participate based on their enrollment in Filipino language courses where composition writing formed a significant component of the curriculum. This group was chosen as they represent a critical stage in academic development wherein foundational language competencies are being solidified and advanced for higher-level academic tasks. The respondents were divided into two groups: the experimental group, which was exposed to the process-based approach, and the control group, which received instruction through traditional methods. The selection ensured representation across different academic programs to capture a diverse range of linguistic backgrounds and writing proficiencies, thereby enhancing the generalizability of the findings within the institutional context.

2.3 Instrumentation

The primary research instrument utilized in the study was a researcher-developed Filipino composition test, designed to measure the respondents' writing proficiency across key components, namely content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. The test, which served as both the pretest and posttest, was validated by a panel of language experts to ensure its content validity, cultural relevance, and alignment with the learning competencies prescribed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) for Filipino language courses. A detailed scoring rubric, adapted from established writing assessment frameworks, was employed to provide objective and consistent evaluation of the students' written outputs. In addition, observational checklists and reflective journals were used during the intervention to gather qualitative insights into the learners' writing processes, enabling the triangulation of data and the enrichment of the quantitative findings.

2.4 Data Analysis

The data gathered from the pretest and posttest scores of both the experimental and control groups were statistically analyzed using descriptive and inferential methods to determine the effectiveness of the process-based approach in enhancing Filipino composition skills. Descriptive statistics, including the mean and standard deviation, were employed to summarize the respondents' performance levels across the five composition components: content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics. To establish significant differences between the pretest and posttest results within and between groups, paired sample t-tests and independent sample t-tests were conducted at a 0.05 level of significance. The integration of both statistical measures allowed for a comprehensive interpretation of the data, facilitating the identification of meaningful improvements attributable to the intervention and ensuring that the conclusions drawn were both valid and reliable.

3. Results

The analysis of the pretest results revealed that both the experimental and control groups demonstrated comparable baseline proficiency in Filipino composition, with mean scores of 72.15 and 71.84, respectively, indicating no statistically significant difference at the 0.05 level. Across the five assessed components—content, organization, grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics—both groups exhibited moderate performance, with the lowest mean scores observed in grammar (experimental: 68.42; control: 67.95) and vocabulary (experimental: 69.21; control: 68.73). These findings confirmed the initial homogeneity of the groups, ensuring the validity of subsequent comparisons after the intervention. Such baseline data underscored the necessity for targeted instructional strategies to address specific deficiencies in linguistic accuracy and lexical variety.

Following the implementation of the process-based approach in the experimental group, posttest results indicated a marked improvement in overall writing performance. The experimental group achieved a mean score of 85.36, reflecting a 13.21-point increase from the pretest, whereas the control group attained a mean score of 76.42, with only a 4.58-point gain. The most significant improvement in the experimental group was observed in organization (from 73.18 to 87.54) and content development (from 74.26 to 88.12), suggesting that the iterative stages of planning, drafting, revising, and peer feedback inherent in the process-based approach fostered more coherent, well-structured, and idea-rich compositions. Statistical analysis using the independent sample t-test confirmed a significant difference in posttest scores between the two groups ($t = 4.872$, $p < 0.05$), affirming the positive effect of the intervention.

In terms of individual composition components, the process-based approach yielded notable gains across all areas for the experimental group: grammar improved from 68.42 to 82.67, vocabulary from 69.21 to 83.45, and mechanics from 73.10 to 85.02. These enhancements suggest that the emphasis on multiple drafts and feedback cycles not only strengthened content and organization but also allowed students to refine linguistic accuracy and word choice through iterative revisions. In contrast, the control group exhibited only marginal improvements, with posttest scores in grammar (71.34) and vocabulary (72.18) remaining significantly lower than those of the experimental group. These results collectively validate the pedagogical effectiveness of the process-based approach in strengthening Filipino composition skills, particularly in areas requiring higher-order cognitive engagement and sustained practice.

4 Discussion

The findings of this study align with the work of Dizon and Villanueva (2022), who emphasized that the process-based approach in writing instruction encourages learners to view writing as a recursive and interactive process rather than a linear, product-oriented task. Like the improvements observed in the experimental group of the present research, Seow reported that students exposed to the stages of prewriting, drafting, revising, and editing demonstrated significant gains in content development and organizational coherence. This pedagogical model fosters critical thinking and self-reflection, enabling learners to refine their ideas and textual structures more effectively. The parallel between the two studies suggests that structured writing processes, supported by feedback and multiple revisions, are instrumental in enhancing writing proficiency across different languages, including Filipino.

Moreover, the results resonate with the study of Alolaywi and Alkhalaf (2024), which proposed an integration of process and genre approaches in writing instruction. Their research found that students' writing improved substantially when they engaged in iterative drafting while simultaneously considering the purpose, audience, and conventions of specific genres. In the current study, the process-based approach similarly empowered students to craft more coherent and genre-appropriate compositions, particularly in academic writing contexts. This correlation underscores the adaptability of the process approach in aligning with broader educational objectives and curricular demands, such as those stipulated by the Commission on Higher

Education (CHED) for language courses that aim to develop both communicative competence and critical thinking skills.

In the Philippine context, the findings are further supported by Bautista and Aranas (2023), who investigated the application of the process-based approach in teaching Filipino writing to senior high school students. Bautista and Aranas reported significant improvements in grammar, vocabulary, and mechanics, echoing the component-specific gains identified in the present study. The consistent outcomes across these studies affirm that the process-based approach is effective not only in global and ESL/EFL settings but also within the national framework of Filipino language instruction. Consequently, this research strengthens the argument for institutionalizing process-oriented pedagogies in tertiary education to address persistent gaps in students' composition skills, uphold the mandates of the 1987 Constitution for the intellectualization of Filipinos, and meet CHED's competency-based learning outcomes.

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