Strengths and Weaknesses in Lesson Plan Designing: A Case Study on EFL Preservice Teachers' Practicum

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ABSTRACT

Lesson planning is an integral aspect in the knowledge and training of EFL teachers, providing a framework for effective classroom instruction. Consequently, this research aimed to describe EFL preservice teachers' knowledge on lesson plan designing during their practicum, identifying strengths and weaknesses. For this purpose, the qualitative method and a case study approach were employed, analyzing lesson plans, field notes, and reflective journals of four preservice teachers doing their practicum in the teacher education program at *Universidad Nacional de Loja*. Content analysis was used to evaluate the components of 16 lesson plans through a rubric and field notes. Findings revealed that lesson objectives were clear and aligned with Bloom's Taxonomy, although the ABCD format was not consistently implemented. Practice activities aimed to strengthen language skills but sometimes lacked diversity. Instructional materials were created to encourage participation. Assessment tasks showed high alignment with lesson objectives, and summative assessment was the type mostly used by preservice teachers. Various feedback types, including informal, positive and self-generated were identified. These insights offer valuable implications for refining preservice teacher training and enriching classroom experiences, suggesting the need for targeted workshops on implementing the ABCD format, diversifying practice activities, and integrating varied assessment types to enhance instructional effectiveness.

Keywords: EFL Preservice Teachers, lesson planning, practicum, strengths and weaknesses.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

Lesson planning as a fundamental aspect in English as a foreign language (EFL) preservice teachers' knowledge and training which can be implemented during their practicum with the aim to boost their future teaching career. While it is true, teachers are involved in a series of formal instructions that they will carry out in a classroom such as lesson planning. Wahyuni and Utami (2022) stated that lesson plans provide an overview of the objectives and knowledge acquired during the curriculum. Simultaneously, it is crucial to acknowledge that a

great lesson contains objectives, abilities, and a variety of exercises, resources, and interests. In this sense, lesson plans serve as a tool to help teachers organize and guide the teaching and learning process.

However, for preservice English teachers who are still in training PSETs (Pre-Service EFL Teachers), the task of designing a lesson plan can be particularly challenging. In this regard, preservice teachers face challenges in designing assessments due to their inexperience, unfamiliarity with assessment methods, and difficulty aligning assessments with learning objectives. Furthermore, the main reason behind their limited proficiency in developing comprehensive lesson plans is the absence of guidelines available to assist them. Consequently, not all preservice teachers can develop proper lesson plans (Achmad et al., 2023; Nurkhamidah 2023, and Oktafiyani et al., 2021). Likewise, the researcher, as a preservice teacher, has witnessed during her practicum various challenges and opportunities related to lesson planning in the EFL context.

The practicum is mandatory for preservice teachers who are in their final year of their major program called Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages from a public university in the southern part of Ecuador (Teacher Education Curriculum, 2019). Preservice teachers have to do their practicum in primary or secondary schools. For this purpose, they have to design their lesson plans which contain lesson objectives, practice activities, instructional materials, and assessment. Being this the case, the knowledge base they need to develop are teaching skills, communicative skills and language proficiency, pedagogical reasoning and decision making, and contextual knowledge.

A large body of literature has corroborated that lesson planning is relevant for the teaching process. It has been widely recognized that lesson planning is the core of preservice internship because it builds up preservice knowledge for their future teaching career (Achmad et al. 2023; Megawati & Astutik 2018; Nurkhamidah 2023; Oktafiyani et al., 2021; Prasansaph, 2018; Wahyuni & Utami 2022). Thus, this investigation is an important contribution for the professional community since it sheds light on the knowledge base that EFL teachers need to have in order to design their lesson plans properly.

Despite previous research emphasize the significance of lesson planning in the EFL preservice teacher's practicum, there is still room for further research. The ideal is to evaluate the components of lesson plans designed by the preservice teachers using different instruments not only because what is written on the paper means that the lesson plan is already well done and that it will be fulfilled. Preliminary studies (Oktafiyani et al., 2021; Wahyuni & Utami, 2022) suggested to explore preservice teacher performance in lesson planning using other research instruments such as observation and document review. In this regard, the execution of

this research fills this gap, by examining 16 lesson plans which were evaluated through a rubric and by evaluating the assessment component through classroom observations and field notes.

The purpose of this research is to describe preservice teachers' knowledge on lesson plan designing during their practicum. To reach this goal the following two specific objectives are stated 1) To identify preservice teachers' strengths on designing their lesson plans and 2) To explore preservice teachers' weaknesses on designing their lesson plans.

1.2. Research questions

The main research question of this study is what is preservice teachers' knowledge on lesson plan designing during their practicum? Based on the proposed main research question, the sub-questions that emerged from this were: What are preservice teachers' strengths on designing their lesson plans? and what the preservice teachers' weaknesses are in designing their lesson plans.

1.3. Significance of the study

This study provides contextualized findings that bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and practical application of lesson planning, addressing the challenges faced by EFL preservice teachers identified in the introduction. By examining the difficulties preservice teachers encounter such as designing effective assessments, aligning objectives, and creating diverse learning activities this research highlights lesson planning as a critical component for improving the teaching and learning experience during the practicum. The study also responds to analysis, classroom observations, and field notes, ensuring a more comprehensive assessment of the preservice teachers' performance. These findings aim to support preservice and in-service teachers, academies, and researchers with actionable insights and practical tools to enhance lesson planning practices and, ultimately, the quality of teacher training programs.

2. METHOD

2.1. Research Design

A case study was employed to describe preservice teachers' knowledge of lesson plan design during their practicum. The case in the present study focuses on lesson planning designing during the practicum of four preservice teachers in their final year of the undergraduate program of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages of "Universidad Nacional de Loja" located in the city of Loja, Ecuador during October 2023 to April 2024 semester. According to Cohen et al. (2007), a case study is a suitable approach to gain insight into a specific situation by obtaining a detailed understanding of participants' experiences, thoughts, ideas, and feelings. In this research work, the specific situation corresponds to the lesson planning designing during the practicum of 4 preservice teachers, from November 27th to December 22nd, where the base knowledge they possess when designing lesson plans was explored.

2.2. Participants

The research participants in the following research work were 4 research preservice teachers who were in their final semester carrying out their practicum in the Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages degree at the "Universidad Nacional de Loja" located in the city of Loja, Ecuador. To select the participants of this study a purposive sampling technique was employed. Obilor (2023) states that this type of sampling technique involves the selection of subjects based on the researchers' own judgments and understanding of the context. In simple words, this technique was used because the participants met the criteria that the researcher needed for the investigation. In addition, participants demostrated easy accessibility and availability, and eagerness to share their experiences during lesson planning for their practicum.

2.3. Instruments

The main data of this research were the lesson plans designed and implemented by 4 preservice teachers who were carrying out their practicum during 4 weeks. Moreover, an analytic rubric helped to evaluate the lesson plans, and the field notes during classroom observations assisted the researcher to capture how the assessment component of the lesson was done.

2.4. Data analysis

The qualitative data was analyzed through content analysis, which involves the analytical process of organizing qualitative text data into groups of similar elements or conceptual categories, to discern recurring patterns and correlations among variables or themes (McKechnie, 2008). In simple words, this approach involves spotting and measuring patterns, themes, or categories in the data, using frequencies and percentages to extract valuable insights.

The data analysis process involved several stages to ensure clarity and reliability. Four main categories were analyzed: lesson objectives, practice activities, instructional materials, and assessment. Field notes from classroom observations were categorized into informal feedback, self-generated feedback, positive feedback, and summative assessment. An analytical rubric was used to evaluate lesson plans on a four-level scale: unacceptable, developing, proficient, and exemplary. This rubric assessed the clarity and alignment of lesson objectives with Bloom's taxonomy and the ABCD format, as well as the relevance and engagement of practice activities, instructional materials, and assessments. A reflective journal was employed to capture preservice teachers' experiences and reflections during their practicum, helping identify challenges and areas for improvement. Ethical principles, including informed consent and confidentiality, were upheld, with pseudonyms used for the four participants, selected through purposive sampling. Data collection spanned four weeks and included observations, lesson plans, reflective journals, and student samples. Using content

analysis, the collected data were systematically organized into four categories, enabling the researcher to contextualize findings with examples and ensure reliable results.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Findings

The researcher analyzed 16 lesson plans from 4 preservice teachers that were used as a source during the 4-week period. Additionally, 16 field notes that were obtained through observations.

Table 1. Lesson Objectives on Preservice Teachers' Lesson Plans

Criteria	Scale	Lesson objectives	
		f	%
Clarity and Conciseness	Unacceptable	0	0%
	Developing	2	12%
	Proficient	14	88%
	Exemplary	0	0%
Total		16	100%
Alignment with Bloom's Taxonomy	Unacceptable	2	13%
	Developing	1	6%
	Proficient	0	0%
	Exemplary	13	81%
Total		16	100%
Use of ABCD Format	Unacceptable	0	0%
	Developing	16	100%
	Proficient	0	0%
	Exemplary	0	0%
Total		16	100%

Table 1 shows the lesson objectives with their respective indicators: Clarity and Conciseness, Alignment with Bloom's Taxonomy and Use of ABCD Format. It is crucial to contemplate, these results were derived from 16 lesson plans that were collected over 4 weeks. As seen, through the table, the recurrence of the lesson objectives indicators is seen in terms of frequency and percentages

In general, it can be evidenced that in the indicators: Clarity and Conciseness, and Alignment with Bloom's Taxonomy, preservice teachers were close to the "exemplary level".

However, in the indicator Use of ABCD Format, this is not the case, since they were placed at the "developing level".

In terms of Clarity and Conciseness, 88% reached the "proficient level", which means that the preservice teachers designed lesson objectives that were somewhat clear and concise, but may need further simplification. However, 12% were positioned at the "developing level", indicating that the lesson objectives were not clear and the language used was complex and difficult for students to understand.

As illustrated below:

(LLO1 - LP1)

To solve a boardgame about adverbs of frequency and its use in context in order to develop the meaning of English vocabulary.

The lesson objective presented lacks clarity and employs language that may be overly complex for student comprehension. According to Khan et al. (2014), effective learning objectives should be clearly articulated in a language that students can understand, avoiding subjective interpretation. Furthermore, lesson objectives should primarily focus on the resulting learning outcomes rather than detailing specific activities or lessons. The current objective appears to lean more towards describing a class activity rather than a clear lesson objective. To enhance clarity, it is crucial to rephrase the objective in a manner that prioritizes language comprehension, emphasizes the intended learning outcomes, and avoids ambiguity or unnecessary complexity in the language used.

As presented in Table 1, regarding the second indicator Alignment with Bloom's Taxonomy, the preservice teachers were located at the "exemplary level" by reaching 81%, indicating that the lesson objectives were clearly and explicitly aligned with the HOTs or LOTs.

However, 13% of preservice teachers were at the "unacceptable level", meaning that the lesson objectives did not align with Bloom's Taxonomy.

As seen below:

(JLO2 - LP2)

To talk about states or situations in the past through past simple.

Briefly, in the lesson objective presented, the verb "talk" was not aligned with HOTs or LOTs and, therefore, did not comply with Bloom's taxonomy, because the taxonomy focuses primarily on cognitive processes and levels of thinking, and "talk" does not directly align with these specific cognitive levels (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). Furthermore, the verb "talk" is considered vague because it doesn't specify the depth or complexity of thought involved. It can encompass a wide range of cognitive activities, from simple recollection of information to more complex processes like analysis or synthesis.

Finally, only 6% were placed at the "developing level" indicating that preservice teachers designed lesson objectives that somewhat align either with HOTs or LOTs.

As seen below:

(LULO2 – LP2)

● To talk about the birth of people.

● To construct affirmative, negative, and interrogative sentences using the past tense forms was/were born.

As illustrated, in the lesson plan, two lesson objectives were designed. Only the second lesson objective concerning the verb "construct," somewhat aligns with lower-order thinking skills (LOTs) since the verb "construct" corresponds to the "creating level". However, the verb "talk" does not align with Bloom's Taxonomy. In the presented objectives, "talk" lacks specificity in cognitive processes and may not effectively guide learners to higher-order thinking (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Khan et al., 2014).

Relating to the last indicator presented in Table 1, the Use of ABCD Format, exclusively 100% fell into the "developing level", indicating that preservice teachers designed lesson objectives that somewhat followed ABCD format, but did not effectively incorporate it.

Consider this example:

(JULO4 – LP4)

To describe qualities, characteristics, or attributes of a person using descriptive adjectives.

Audience: ■ Behavior: ■ Condition: ■ Degree: ■

The ABCD format, as proposed by Khan et al. (2014), includes Audience, Behavior, Condition, and Degree. However, as illustrated, the lesson objective presented above somewhat followed the ABCD format, but did not effectively incorporate it. The target audience is not explicitly stated in the lesson objective. The lesson objective should specify who the learners are, such as students, individuals, or a particular age group. As illustrated in the case presented above, the desired behavior is somewhat implicit in the objective. It includes the action of describing qualities, characteristics, or attributes of a person using descriptive adjectives. In addition, the condition under which learning takes place is not explicitly stated. Finally, the level of proficiency or the extent to which the desired behavior should be accomplished is not defined.

In short, the identified elements are: Behavior (B) as it mentions the action to be performed, and to some extent, Condition (C) is implied but not explicitly stated. Nevertheless, Audience (A) and Degree (D) are not explicitly addressed in the lesson objective. Enhancing the lesson objective by specifying the target audience, providing more clarity on the expected

behaviors, considering the conditions, and defining the degree of proficiency desired can make it more comprehensive and aligned with the ABCD format.

Table 2. Practice Activities on Preservice Teachers' Lesson Plans

Criteria	Scale	Practice Activities	
		f	%
Alignment with Lesson Objective	Unacceptable	0	0%
	Developing	1	6%
	Proficient	4	25%
	Exemplary	11	69%
Total		16	100%
Variety of Practice Types	Unacceptable	6	37,5%
	Developing	4	25%
	Proficient	6	37,5%
	Exemplary	0	0%
Total		16	100%

Table 2 presents the practice activities with their respective indicators: Alignment with Lesson Objective and Variety of Practice Types. These insights are drawn from the analysis of 16 lesson plans collected over a 4-week period. The table distinctly highlights the recurrence of practice activity indicators, offering a perspective on their frequency and percentages.

Overall, it can be evidenced that in the indicator: Alignment with Lesson Objective, preservice teachers are close to the "exemplary level". In addition, the indicator of Variety of types of practices, fell at the "unacceptable level" and "proficient level".

Concerning Alignment with Lesson Objectives, 69% achieved the "exemplary level", indicating that the preservice teachers designed practice activities that were highly aligned with the stated lesson objectives, reinforcing language skills effectively. Nevertheless, 25% were located at the "proficient level", which shows that the practice activities were somewhat aligned with the lesson objectives but may require minor adjustments.

As the following example presents:

(LPA1 – LP1)

Lesson Objective: To solve a boardgame about adverbs of frequency and its use in context in order to develop the meaning of English vocabulary.

Practice Activities:

- Some students take turns to repeat the use of the adverbs of frequency and the meaning of new words.
- The students say aloud some sentences using the adverbs of frequency and the new vocabulary.

These activities adhere to the theory that practice activities provide learners with opportunities to enhance language skills, including new vocabulary and functional expressions. By engaging students in speaking tasks, these activities contribute to the consolidation and application of the lesson's key concepts, fostering a more comprehensive understanding of adverbs of frequency and English vocabulary within a communicative context (Spratt et al., 2011; Millin, 2022). However, to improve alignment, the lesson objective may need minor adjustments, as the current focus on the mechanics of the game may limit the scope of language practice.

On the other hand, only 6% were positioned at the "developing level", indicating that the practice activities had limited alignment with the lesson objectives and needed significant revisions.

As presented in the following case:

(LPA2 – LP2)

Lesson Objective: To create a presentation about what they are wearing by using the present simple and the present continuous.

Practice Activity: The students write down 1 sentence using the present simple and 1 sentence using the present continuous.

As can be seen, this practice activity lacks the necessary complexity to adequately prepare students for the presentation of the fashion show in which they describe the clothes that they wearing. To address this misalignment, it is crucial to incorporate more comprehensive practice activities that engage various language skills, such as speaking and describing detailed scenarios related to clothing (Millin, 2022).

As seen in Table 2, in relation to the second indicator Variety of Practice Activities, the preservice teachers fell at the "unacceptable level" with 37,5%, which means that lesson plans included one or two practice activities and lacked variety by focusing on only one type.

As illustrated below:

(JUPA4 – LP4)

Lesson Objective: To describe qualities, characteristics, or attributes of a person using descriptive adjectives.

Practice Activities:
- Students practice the pronunciation of some descriptive adjectives.

- Students write two sentences using the descriptive adjectives such as: beautiful, tall, energetic, cozy, delicious.

The practice activities above presented, lack variety because they focus mainly on "controlled activities". The practice activities described enter into the category of controlled activities, which Spratt et al. (2011) established are designed to provide repeated practice to improve the precision and mastery of language forms, minimizing errors. In this manner, the practice of pronunciation and writing sentences with specific adjectives enter into the category of controlled activities because they guide students to use the destination language structure with precision. The pronunciation practice focuses on precise pronunciation, and writing two sentences using specific adjectives is an exercise focused on the manner concentrated in the correct use of language forms. While controlled activities are valuable to perfect linguistic skills and guarantee precision, focusing exclusively on this type can limit the diversity of language practice.

In the same way, 37,5% were situated at the "proficient level" indicating that preservice teachers designed practice activities that included some variety of practice activities: two or more practice types. In addition, 25% were positioned at the "developing level" indicating that the lesson included more than two practice activities but focused predominantly on one type.

As presented in the following case:

(LUPA1 – LP1)

Lesson Objective: To use the past of the verb to be to refer to a concrete state or situation.

Practice Activities:

- Students make annotations in their notebooks about the structure of the past simple of "to be".

- Students work in their student's book (activity 8, p. 67): Copy and complete with the past simple of to be.

- Students read the examples aloud and practice pronouncing "was born" and "were born" together as a class.

The presented practice activities are categorized as controlled activities. In relation to the activities in which students make annotations in their notebooks about the topic presented and work in the workbook where they copy and complete sentences, providing them with repeated exposure to the target language structure, which is the past simple of "to be." The last activity focuses on pronunciation accuracy with specific phrases. Controlled activities, as established by Spratt et al., (2011), guide learners in using specific language elements with

precision, allowing the teacher to minimize errors and provide immediate feedback. These activities concentrate on grammar and pronunciation.

Table 3. Instructional Materials on Preservice Teachers' Lesson Plans

Criteria	Scale	Instructional Materials	
		f	%
Alignment with Lesson Objective	Unacceptable	0	0%
	Developing	1	6%
	Proficient	0	0%
	Exemplary	15	94%
Total		16	100%
Engagement and Interactivity	Unacceptable	0	0%
	Developing	0	0%
	Proficient	0	0%
	Exemplary	16	100%
Total		16	100%

Table 3 provides the results obtained from the preliminary analysis of the instructional materials with their respective indicators: Alignment with Lesson Objective and Engagement and Interactivity. These results were derived from 16 lesson plans that were collected over 4 weeks. Furthermore, the table distinctly highlights the recurrence of instructional materials indicators in terms of frequency and percentages.

As a whole, it can be evidenced that in the indicator: Alignment with Lesson Objective, preservice teachers are close to the "exemplary level". In addition, regarding Engagement and Interactivity the preservice teachers were located exclusively at the "exemplary level".

About Alignment with Lesson Objectives, 94% achieved the "exemplary level", indicating that the preservice teachers used instructional materials (Visual, Audio, or Audio-visual) that were highly aligned with the stated lesson objectives and facilitated the achievement of competencies effectively. However, only 6% were at the "developing level", which means the instructional materials had limited alignment with the lesson objectives and needed significant revisions.

As shown below:

(LIM2 – LP2)

Lesson Objective: To create a presentation about what they are wearing by using the present simple and the present continuous.

Instructional Material: Grammar Puzzle

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As highlighted by Sale (2016), it is crucial for instructional materials to effectively contribute to creating a positive learning environment and motivating students while aligning with the stated learning objectives. However, in the production stage activities from the book are carried out, which is not mentioned in the lesson plan. For this reason, it would be advisable in this case to include the materials that are going to be used to carry out the objective lesson. To enhance alignment, it is suggested that materials directly related to the presentation (fashion show), such as those facilitating the description of clothing, be included. For instance, if the grammar puzzle were employed to introduce vocabulary related to clothing, it could better serve the lesson's purpose and contribute more effectively to the attainment of competencies by aligning with the practical application of describing clothing in a fashion show context.

As presented in Table 3, about the second indicator Engagement and Interactivity, the preservice teachers demonstrated an "exemplary level" with 100%, showing that they employed instructional materials effectively that engaged students and promoted interactivity during the lesson.

As illustrated below:

(JIM4 – LP4)

Lesson Objective: To describe quantities through quantifiers in spoken and written c ommunication

Instructional Materials: Google Slides Projector – Workbook- Wordcards.

Following the guidelines outlined by Sale (2016), these materials contribute to creating a positive learning environment, motivating students, and clearly stating the learning objectives and specific competencies to be achieved. The use of Google Slides and a projector allows for visually dynamic presentations, aligning with Azikwe's (2007) concept of visual instructional materials. The workbook provides a tangible resource for students to practice and apply their understanding. Additionally, word cards can be utilized as visual aids to stimulate both sight and touch senses. By incorporating a variety of instructional materials, the lesson becomes multi-sensory, enhancing the overall learning experience and facilitating the attainment of the stated objectives.

Table 4. Assessment on Preservice Teachers' Lesson Plans

Criteria	Scale	Assessment	
		f	%
Alignment with Lesson Objective	Unacceptable	0	0%
	Developing	0	0%

	Proficient	2	12%
	Exemplary	14	88%
Total		**16**	**100%**

Table 4 presents the assessment with its unique indicator: Alignment with Lesson Objective. It is important to consider, these results were derived from 16 lesson plans that were collected over 4 weeks. Furthermore, the table distinctly features the recurrence of assessment indicator in terms of frequency and percentages.

Overall, relating to the indicator Alignment with Lesson Objective, teachers are close to the "exemplary level". In simple terms, this is due to the fact that the majority percentage is located at this level.

Regarding alignment with Lesson Objective, 88% were placed at the "exemplary level" demonstrating that the assessment tasks were highly aligned with the lesson objectives. Likewise, 12% were located at the "proficient level", which indicates that the assessment tasks were partially aligned with the objectives of the lesson.

As shown below:

(JA1 – LP1)

Lesson Objective: To use the modal verb "must" to communicate obligations and restrictions pertaining to academic subjects or school rules.

Assessment: Teacher provides a series of sentences, then students must correct the mistakes.

In the case presented above it is evident that the assessment task was partially aligned to the objective of the lesson. Assessment, as a means of judging learners' performance, is crucial for modifying teaching and learning approaches (Spratt et al., 2011). However, to enhance alignment, it would be beneficial to design assessment tasks that specifically target the application of the modal verb "must" in academic subjects or school rules. This could involve crafting scenarios or sentences that mirror situations where students need to express obligations or restrictions using "must." By tailoring the assessment more closely to the lesson objective, it ensures a more accurate evaluation of students' mastery of the targeted language skill.

In examining the results derived from the analysis of 16 lesson plans over a 4-week period, several noteworthy findings emerged. The preservice teachers demonstrated commendable performance in two key indicators, Clarity and Conciseness, and Alignment with Bloom's Taxonomy, achieving close to an "exemplary level." However, a distinct area requiring improvement was identified in the Use of ABCD Format, where all preservice teachers were placed at the "developing level." Notably, lesson objectives lacked explicit

details regarding the target audience, desired behaviors, conditions, and degrees. Furthermore, the study revealed varying levels of alignment with Bloom's Taxonomy, as some lesson objectives were inadequately aligned, emphasizing the need for precision in cognitive processes. Moving to instructional materials, while 94% attained an "exemplary level" in alignment with lesson objectives, 6% lagged at the "developing level," suggesting a need for more targeted materials related to lesson objectives. The preservice teachers excelled in Engagement and Interactivity, with 100% reaching an "exemplary level," showcasing effective use of materials to engage students. In the realm of assessment, 88% achieved an "exemplary level" in alignment with lesson objectives, while 12% were at a "proficient level." Notably, improvements could enhance the alignment of assessment tasks with specific lesson objectives, ensuring a more accurate evaluation of language skill mastery. These findings, unlike previous studies, underscore areas of strength and improvement, contributing valuable insights to the ongoing enhancement of EFL Preservice Teachers' Practicum programs.

Table 5. Categories of Assessment based on the field notes

Categories	Code	f	%
Informal Feedback	Moved around the classroom	12	33%
	Provided feedback on students' work directly at their desks	12	33%
	Clarified the students' doubts	12	33%
	Total	36	100%
	Very good, but you could improve…	4	27%
	Good job, but you can practice…	3	20%
Positive Feedback	Excellent presentation, the only thing that you need to improve is…	2	13%
	Good job, keep up the good work!	6	40%
	Total	15	100%
Self Generated Feedback	Students identified their mistakes themselves	2	50%
	Students committed to improving their mistakes	2	50%
	Total	4	100%
	Assigned a grade to the handwork	1	33%

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Summative Assessment	Assigned a grade to the oral presentation	2	67%
	Total	3	100%

Since formative assessment is too subjective to evaluate by analyzing a lesson plan, the researcher carried out observations and used the field notes in order to facilitate the analysis of this component. In this regard, the recurrence to observe the assessment component was to contrast what is written in the assessment document with the performance of the preservice teachers when teaching the class and above all to show if the preservice teacher complied with the assessment task designed in their lesson plan. Therefore, as presented in Table 7 the following categories of analysis were found: Informal Feedback, Positive Feedback, Self Generated Feedback, and Summative Assessment.

In terms of Informal Feedback, according to the field notes 33% of the preservice teachers moved around the classroom, indicating that they were supervising and monitoring the students' work, ensuring that everyone was working and addressing any questions or concerns they may have had. In the same way, they provided feedback on students' work directly at their desks. This means that while moving around the classroom, the teacher went to the students' desks to monitor their activities and provide them with recommendations to improve their work. Moreover, if a student had any questions, they would respectfully call out to the teacher, who would then come to their desk and assist them to the best of their ability. Also, they were able to clarify their students' doubts. This indicates that when the preservice teachers approached the students' desks, the students trusted them enough to ask them any questions they had. As a result, they were able to answer their concerns, enabling the students to continue working successfully on their assigned tasks.

Concerning Positive Feedback, the researcher registered on her field notes, that 40% of the preservice teachers motivated their students to continue working actively and participate in activities with the comment "Good job, keep up the good work!". In addition, 27% of preservice teachers corrected their students' mistakes positively by congratulating them for their effort in the work while also motivating them to improve on the areas they failed to do so. They used the comment "Very good, but you could improve..." to provide constructive feedback to the students. In the same manner, 20% acknowledged the students' work in a positive manner and turn encouraged them to continue practicing in certain aspects to improve with the positive comment: "Good job, but you can practice...". During oral presentations made by students, 13% of preservice teachers used the comment "Excellent presentation, the only thing that you need to improve is...". This means that although they congratulated the students on their excellent

presentation, they also pointed out an error or area of improvement in order to motivate them to improve.

About Self Generated Feedback, as evidenced in the field notes, half of the preservice teachers gave feedback that allowed students to identify their own mistakes without any recommendation from them. Similarly, the same percentage of teachers were able to encourage students to commit to improving their identified mistakes on their own. For example, the students undertook to practice the pronunciation of the words in which they had pronunciation problems at home, that is, in their free time, without the teacher assigning them any homework. This means that the students themselves were interested in identifying their mistakes and working to improve them.

In relation to Summative Assessment, considering the field notes, 67% of the preservice teachers complied with this type of assessment by assigning a grade to the different oral presentations that the students have made in the different assessment tasks. Likewise, 13% of the preservice teachers assigned a grade to the handwork indicating that assigning a grade to any written or oral work counts as summative feedback.

3.2. Discussion

1. Preservice Teachers' Knowledge on Lesson Plan Designing

The results demonstrated that the knowledge that preservice teachers possessed on lesson plan designing was: teaching skills, pedagogical reasoning, and language proficiency. The main expertise of a teacher lies in his/her teaching skills, to which Ponce (2024) mentioned that one of them is to possess the knowledge of lesson planning. It is evident from the results shown above that most preservice teachers can design lesson objectives, practice activities, instructional materials, and assessments to be close to the "exemplary" level. Furthermore, another skill was the ability to adapt teaching skills and approaches to different scenarios. This was related to the fact that some preservice teachers had to improvise the class because the cooperating teacher would not let them teach the planned class (Ponce, 2024).

Another skill that preservice teachers possessed was pedagogical reasoning, which Richards (2010) established as the specific type of thinking that teachers possess and use when designing and implementing their lessons. In this sense, when analyzing the lesson plans, it was observed that preservice teachers correctly prepared the material corresponding to each lesson plan using materials from textbooks, Google Slides, Worksheets, and Digital Tools in a way that allowed preservice teachers to analyze how to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge to their students with the implementation of the materials selected to develop the planned activities (Ponce, 2024). Likewise, due to the observations and field notes it was possible to corroborate that preservice teachers anticipated possible challenges or difficulties that may

arise during the lesson and devised strategies to overcome them, this was demonstrated when the preservice teachers taught other topics and contents other than those they had planned (Richards, 2010).

In relation to language proficiency, the preservice teachers possessed this ability since when analyzing the lesson plans, they were written entirely in English with correctly structured sentences and appropriately selected resources in the target language. Also, they provided correct feedback on the student's language, which could be corroborated by observation and field notes when preservice teachers provided positive feedback in their classes (Richards, 2010). Finally, it can be argued that another reason for the preservice teachers to have such knowledge could be that due to the experiences throughout the practicum, as for each class they had to design so many lesson plans which allowed them to develop the aforementioned skills as well as to improve certain weaknesses they had in the design of lesson plans, resulting in more strengths than weaknesses.

2. Preservice Teachers' Strengths on Designing their Lesson Plans

The results revealed that even though the majority of preservice teachers were able to design a lesson plan with somewhat clear and concise objectives, they seemed to need further simplification. Likewise, most of the preservice teachers aligned the lesson objectives with Bloom's Taxonomy, which represented clear evidence of their strong knowledge about understanding of HOTs or LOTs. The findings of the current study are consistent with those of Achmad et al. (2023), who showed that lesson objectives composed by the preservice teachers were proper and contained measurable operational verbs. Furthermore, the results are related to what MINEDUC (2016), Wengroff (2019), and Khan et al., (2014) established, showing that the lesson objectives designed by the preservice teachers were expressed clearly and concisely, focusing on learning outcomes and fostering critical thinking skills emphasizing a variety of Bloom's levels, particularly the highest levels, to improve the effectiveness of instruction.

Additionally, in practice activities, concerning Alignment with Lesson Objectives, the majority of preservice teachers designed practice activities highly aligned with the stated lesson objectives. Furthermore, regarding the Variety of Practice Types, a third part of the preservice teachers designed practice activities that included some variety of practice activities: two or more practice types. This means that the activities designed by the preservice teachers were controlled, free, and freer which demonstrated that preservice teachers had knowledge of the importance of adding a variety of activities in order to practice and use the English language skills dynamically and integrate new vocabulary with activities that put students' existing knowledge into practice (Spratt et.al 2011).

Furthermore, about instructional materials, to the indicator Alignment with Lesson Objectives, preservice teachers used instructional materials that were highly aligned with the stated lesson objectives and facilitated the achievement of competencies effectively. A possible explanation for these results is that preservice teachers in preparing instructional materials considered the specific competencies to be achieved by students when using the designed materials in order to achieve effective instructional delivery and with the stated lesson objectives (Sale, 2016). Likewise, the results are related to the findings of Achmad et al. (2023), indicating that the materials designed by the student teachers were in line with the competencies to be achieved and they developed learning materials from the lesson objectives.

In addition, regarding Engagement and Interactivity, the preservice teachers employed instructional materials (Visual, Audio, and Audio-Visual) effectively that engaged students and promoted interactivity during the lesson. This indicates that the preservice teachers, by choosing a different variety of instructional materials, had the purpose of creating a positive learning environment so that students were motivated to participate in all the activities planned in the lesson plan (Sale, 2016). This is in line with the findings of Nurkhamidah (2023), who found that 17 preservice teachers when putting materials in the lesson plan were very varied such as texts, images, audio, and video. Likewise, the preservice teachers included digital material in their planning, which is beneficial because using digital material promotes motivation and the learning outcomes for language students are positive.

Finally, with the assessment component, regarding Alignment with the Lesson Objective, the majority of preservice teachers were placed at the "exemplary level" demonstrating that the assessment tasks were highly aligned with the lesson objectives. The results were related to what Harmer (2015) established, assessment as the collection of data on students' performance, progress, or attitudes to evaluate their learning. In this sense, a possible explanation for this result is that the preservice teachers when evaluating the planned class topic, took into account the lesson objectives that were proposed at the beginning of the class to design the assessment tasks in order to evaluate the progress of students and whether the desired expectations were achieved at the end of the lesson.

On the other hand, the results showed that the assessment most used by preservice teachers was: Summative Assessment because most of the preservice teachers assigned a grade to the oral presentation by students, and a third part assigned a grade to the students' handwork. These findings were also validated during the researcher's observation and register of the field notes to support the idea of Amua-Sekyi (2016), who stated that a summative assessment involves the grading that holds significant social value to make a conclusive judgment regarding a learner's achievement during the lesson and their potential for future success.

Additionally, various feedback types, including Informal, Positive, and Self Generated were identified during the researcher's observations and field notes. First, concerning informal feedback, a third part of the preservice teachers moved around the classroom, provided feedback on students' work directly at their desks, and clarified the students' doubts. These findings supported the theory of Binu (2020), that teachers have the flexibility to move around the classroom and provide feedback on students' work directly at their desks. This indicates that preservice teachers know that offering instant suggestions for improvement and addressing students' concerns helps evaluate students' task development throughout the lesson and thus improves their academic progress.

In relation to positive feedback almost half of the preservice teachers motivated their students to continue working actively and participate in activities with the comment "Good job, keep up the good work!". Likewise, nearly a quarter of preservice teachers corrected the students' mistakes positively by congratulating them for their effort in the work while also motivating them to improve on the areas they failed to do so using the comment "Very good, but you could improve...". In the same manner, a fifth of the preservice teachers acknowledged the students' work positively and in turn encouraged them to continue practicing in certain aspects to improve with the positive comment: "Good job, but you can practice...". During students' oral presentations, some preservice teachers used the comment "Excellent presentation, the only thing you need to improve is...".

These findings are aligned with the perspective of Binu (2020), who established that positive feedback motivates students through constructive comments to help them believe in their ability to improve so that each student can achieve achievements that exceed their previous performance. Likewise, these results indicated that preservice teachers were aware that giving positive feedback allows students to develop self confidence, self awareness, and enthusiasm for learning. Letting their students know about their mistakes in a positive way allowed them to focus on working on areas for improvement.

About Self Generated Feedback, half of the preservice teachers gave feedback that allowed students to identify their own mistakes without any recommendation from them. Similarly, the same percentage were able to encourage students to commit to improving their identified mistakes on their own. These findings are corroborated by the observations and field notes, when the students undertook to practice the pronunciation of the words in which they had pronunciation problems at home, that is, in their free time, without the teacher assigning them any homework, indicating that the students themselves were interested in identifying their mistakes and working to improve them. These findings showed that preservice teachers succeeded in making students aware of their own mistakes by correctly giving the respective

feedback in order to improve students' ability to evaluate their performance and promote a deeper level of participation and engagement in learning (Binu, 2020).

3. Preservice Teachers' Weaknesses on Designing their Lesson Plans

According to the analysis of the lesson plan using the rubric, concerning the lesson objective component, about Clarity and Conciseness, a minor part of preservice teachers designed lesson objectives that were not clear and the language used was complex and difficult for students to understand. Furthermore, in the indicator Alignment with Bloom's Taxonomy, some preservice teachers formulated lesson objectives that did not align with Bloom's Taxonomy.

One possible explanation for these results might be that the preservice teachers had trouble setting lesson objectives because they lacked clarity in the terminology they needed to use to accurately define these objectives. In addition, unfamiliarity with the proper use of verbs derived from Bloom's taxonomy, both higher-level (HOTs) and lower-level (LOTs), contributed to these difficulties. These results aligned with the work of Wahyuni & Utami (2022), which showed that the student teachers had difficulty determining the lesson objectives that their students should achieve as they were confused about choosing keywords to make the objective clear. Another problem was that there were still student teachers who did not understand how to use the operative verbs derived from Bloom's taxonomy.

The indicator Use of ABCD Format indicated that all preservice teachers designed lesson objectives that somewhat followed ABCD format, but did not effectively incorporate it. A possible explanation for this result might be that the preservice teachers lack an in-depth understanding of each of the components of the ABCD format. According to the theory of Khant et al. (2014), to create clear and effective objectives, it is necessary to include all the elements of the ABCD format: Audience, Behavior, Condition, and Degree. However, preservice teachers might have had difficulty understanding the importance of each element and how to integrate them coherently. Another possible cause is that the preservice teachers could have focused more on creating a lesson objective that directly mentions what is expected to be acquired at the end of the class without including all the elements that make the objectives meaningful and measurable.

In the practice activities, concerning Alignment with Lesson Objectives, a small percentage of preservice teachers designed practice activities that had limited alignment with the lesson objectives and needed significant revisions. With the second indicator Variety of Practice Activities, a third part of the preservice teachers included one or two practice activities and lacked variety by focusing on only one type. A possible explanation for these findings might be that preservice teachers designed the practice activities as simple reinforcement

exercises, rather than tools to achieve specific objectives. The lack of variety in activities could be due to preservice teachers crafted activities that students were most comfortable with or that seemed easier to develop, rather than creating a variety of activities that addressed different learning styles and maintained student interest. Similar findings were revealed by Wahyuni & Utami (2022) who showed that almost all preservice English teachers had difficulty selecting activities that would help students achieve their learning objectives. Also, some of the preservice English teachers were challenged to design different types of learning activities.

In relation to instructional materials, to Alignment with Lesson Objective, a small part of the preservice teachers developed instructional materials that had limited alignment with the lesson objectives and needed significant revisions. These findings are similar to the ones of Achmad et al. (2023) showing that some participants did not pay attention to choosing the instructional materials concerning the competencies that had to be achieved, instead looking at the method they would use. One possible explanation for this result is that preservice teachers may have selected or created materials that appear relevant but, in reality, did not directly contribute to meeting the lesson objectives. This can happen when popular resources are prioritized without taking advantage of their use to facilitate the fulfillment of the activities planned to carry out the lesson.

On the other hand, based on field notes and reflective journals about the assessment component, preservice teachers did not comply in some cases with the assessment component because they did not manage time correctly so they could not carry out the assessment tasks. Likewise, these instruments corroborated that they did not fully comply with the lesson plan planned for that class since the cooperating teacher did not allow it and when teaching the class, a topic was assigned in which the preservice teacher had to improvise. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive understanding of time management issues and the importance of following lessons as planned., which ultimately emphasizes proposing future researchers to address this.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1. Conclusion

The results revealed that preservice teachers possessed a basic knowledge for designing lesson plans, evidenced by their teaching skills to establish clear lesson objectives, relevant practice activities, appropriate instructional materials and assessment tasks. Their ability to adapt to different classroom situations demonstrated their pedagogical reasoning and their language proficiency was demonstrated in their written plans and by providing positive feedback about students' language. These skills were cultivated through practicum experiences, in which preservice teachers repeatedly designed lesson plans, allowing them to refine their teaching approach while also addressing potential challenges.

Based on the findings, preservice teachers demonstrated significant strengths in designing their lesson plans, crafting clear lesson objectives in line with Bloom's Taxonomy. Their practice activities were highly aligned with lesson objectives and included a balanced variety. They chose instructional materials that were in line with objectives and encouraged interactivity. The most used assessment was: summative assessment, grading handwork, and oral presentations. Finally, they effectively implemented informal, positive, and self generated feedback, providing constructive corrections and motivation to their students.

To conclude, preservice teachers faced several weaknesses when designing their lesson plans. Some of them drafted lesson objectives that were very unclear and lacked conciseness. They struggled with alignment to Bloom's Taxonomy due to improper verb selection and in the incorporation of all the elements of the ABCD Format. Practice activities often lacked variety and, as in the teaching materials, did not always align with the lesson objectives. Finally, the performance of assessment tasks and planned lessons due to poor time management and unexpected deviations, reflected the need for greater flexibility and adaptability.

4.2. Suggestions

For future research, the researcher suggests exploring the preservice teachers' opinions and experiences about the lesson plan designing. To accomplish this, it is suggested to gather a larger sample of preservice teachers to form focus groups. By doing so, these groups will serve as small professional communities in which members collaborate, share experiences, and support each other in their professional growth. This approach not only will foster collective learning but also will contribute to the generalization of research findings by capturing a broader range of perceptions and perspectives.

Finally, future studies should adopt a mixed-method approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data. In this regard, a post questionnaire should be considered after carrying out the observations to evaluate the knowledge base of the preservice teachers on the components of the lesson plan. This strategy will help to corroborate, construct or improve the research results more easily leading to more comprehensive conclusions and potentially guiding improvements in teacher training programs.

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