Developing the competency of teaching children's literature for primary education students at some pedagogical universities in the Mekong delta region, Vietnam

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Abstract: The ability to teach children's literature is a vital component of the professional competencies required of primary school teachers. It plays a crucial role in fostering students' language development, imagination, and moral values. Therefore, cultivating and enhancing this competency in students majoring in Primary Education is an essential and indispensable task in teacher training programs. This article, based on the application of modern scientific research methods—including literature review, field surveys, interviews, questionnaires, experimental research, and data analysis—proposes practical measures to develop teaching competencies for these students. The suggested measures target various stages of teacher education, such as designing evaluation criteria, organizing university-level instruction, implementing teaching practicum, engaging in internships, and conducting educational research. When applied consistently and flexibly, in alignment with real-world teaching and learning contexts, these solutions are expected to significantly improve the quality of children's literature instruction. Ultimately, they contribute to achieving the broader educational goals of primary schools in today's evolving educational landscape.

1. Introduction

Children's literature plays a crucial role in language development and the comprehensive formation of human personality from early childhood. Literature not only nurtures the soul, enhances the ability to appreciate beauty, and gradually imparts essential life knowledge, but it also stimulates intellectual development, broadens understanding, and fosters well-rounded personality growth. Teaching children's literature is one of the four core activities in the Vietnamese language subject (listening – speaking – reading – writing). Among the different types of reading texts, children's literature constitutes a significant portion. Through the teaching of children's literature, students develop key personal qualities, including a love for nature, family, and homeland; an awareness of their roots; an appreciation for beauty and kindness; and positive emotions. It also fosters enthusiasm for learning and working, honesty and integrity in studies and daily life, as well as a sense of responsibility towards themselves, their families, society, and the environment [1, 2].

Additionally, teaching children's literature serves as a foundation for developing general competencies and language skills across reading, writing, speaking, and listening at a basic level. These

include reading fluently and expressively, understanding the main content and key information of texts, and making connections and comparisons beyond the text [2].

Developing the competency to teach children's literature among Primary Education students is essential to meeting the requirements of the reformed general education curriculum and the learning outcomes expected of graduates in this field. According to the 2018 Vietnamese Language Curriculum for General Education, the teaching of children's literature should achieve key personal qualities and general competencies, aligning with the subject-specific and grade-level requirements outlined in the overall program [2, 3]. It should also fulfill specific language and literary competencies, such as language competency (Reading fluently and expressively, understanding the main and explicit content of texts, and beginning to grasp implicit meanings such as themes and lessons) and literary competency (Distinguishing between prose and poetry, recognizing the content and the writer's emotions, and understanding basic literary elements like language, characters, plot, rhyme, comparison, and personification. It also involves fostering imagination and literary expression in speaking and writing).

To effectively teach children's literature and meet the curriculum's objectives, teachers must possess the necessary teaching competencies in this field. Therefore, universities must recognize these requirements and incorporate them into the goals and expected learning outcomes of Primary Education programs, with a focus on professional competency development. The formation and enhancement of children's literature teaching competencies in university students will positively influence the quality of primary education reforms in the future.

With this significance in mind, this paper analyzes the current state of children's literature teaching competency development and proposes measures to enhance this competency among Primary Education students at some pedagogical universities in the Mekong Delta region.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Research on Teaching Competency and The Development of Teaching Competency

Studies on teaching competency closely relate it to other competencies, such as pedagogical competency and professional competency. Researchers have offered various definitions of teaching competency from different perspectives. Most scholars consider teaching competency a professional competency. The teaching profession has distinct characteristics compared to other professions: *"The labor of teachers (pedagogical labor) differs from other types of labor in that its subject is human (students), its means of labor is human personality (the teacher's personality), and its product is also human (the development of students' personalities)"* [4]. Regarding pedagogical competency, some researchers emphasize fundamental characteristics, such as: *"Pedagogical competency is a psychological combination of personality traits that meet the requirements of pedagogical activities and determine their success"* [5]. Others state that *"Teachers, based on clear goals and frameworks, continuously develop their teaching and professional growth to best support and facilitate student learning. This competency also reflects a teacher's ability to collaborate, have a comprehensive perspective, and contribute to pedagogical development in higher education"* [6].

Research on teaching competency has also analyzed its structural components. Gonobolin [7] identified key elements of pedagogical competency, including *"the ability to understand students, master subject knowledge, convey material, attract students, persuade others, organize, orient, be creative, demonstrate pedagogical behavior, and anticipate outcomes"* Gonobolin [7]. Tigelaar [8] categorized essential pedagogical competencies into *"subject knowledge competency, didactic competency (pedagogical methods, presentation skills, guidance and counseling skills, curriculum and course material design), organizational*

competency, and scientific competency (lifelong learning and reflection)" Tigelaar [8]. Koh [9] classified teacher pedagogical competencies into three major groups: *Teaching Practice, Leadership and Management, and Personal Performance* [9]. In Vietnam, the "Ministry of Education and Training [10] identified three essential components of pedagogical competency: Professional competency (knowledge of subject content and curriculum, theories of teaching methods, curriculum development, and the teaching-learning process); Teaching and educational organization competency (lesson planning, lesson execution, classroom environment management); Personal and professional development competency (continuous professional growth, communication skills, ethical and political qualities, and community engagement for teaching and education) [10]. Despite variations in approaches, research generally agrees that the core structure of pedagogical competency consists of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and psychological qualities that enable teachers to achieve professional goals in teaching.

The development of teaching competency among both in-service teachers and university students in teacher training programs is a key focus of this study. Regarding teacher competency development, Hương [11] defines it as *"a systematic and continuous process designed to enhance teachers' knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes, which in turn improves student learning outcomes"* [12]. Researchers such as Hall and Soskice [13] emphasize sustainable long-term professional development, highlighting the importance of both formal training and self-development.

Some studies focus on specific elements within teaching competency. Looney [14] asserts that *"Competent teachers must integrate multiple factors, including extensive knowledge, strong interpersonal skills, classroom management, assessment capabilities, communication skills, and the ability to collaborate in teaching"* Liakopoulou [15]. [15] identifies four key elements for student-teachers: *"good character, strong teaching skills, extensive subject knowledge, and effective teaching attitudes and behaviors"* [15].

Research on developing teaching competencies in teacher education programs dates back to the 1960s in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. These studies emphasize the necessity of transitioning from knowledge-heavy training to a competency-based approach, where students develop skills for practical application. One of the most critical competencies for student-teachers is teaching competency, which includes: *"The ability to organize teaching based on learner-centered approaches; Competency in designing and implementing interdisciplinary lessons; Competency in creating effective learning environments; Counseling and guiding students; Specialized teaching competency at the upper secondary level; Competency in assessing student learning based on competency-based education; The ability to provide feedback and adjust teaching methods accordingly"* [16]. Vietnamese researchers such as Nguyễn [17] focus on developing student-teachers' teaching competencies through pedagogical practice and skill development programs.

Other studies, such as those by Phan [18] propose task-based training, using theoretical exercises and applied situational tasks to enhance teaching skills. Additionally, several studies have examined standards for assessing teaching competency in student-teachers after graduation. Vietnam's Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) provides a competency assessment framework for graduates in teacher education programs. The assessment criteria include *"Interdisciplinary knowledge and supporting science; Subject-specific knowledge and skills; Curriculum development competency; Application of teaching methods, tools, and instructional design; Competency in differentiated instruction; Competency in integrated teaching; Lesson planning and implementation competency; Competency in student assessment; Competency in maintaining and managing teaching records"* [19]. Recent studies by Bui, et al. [20] emphasize the importance of assessing student-teachers' learning outcomes based on competency standards, particularly in: Subject expertise; Lesson planning and educational programming; Instructional design

and classroom activity organization; Utilization of teaching methods and tools; Student assessment and evaluation; Counseling and student support services. These findings provide a foundation for further exploration into the development of children's literature teaching competency among Primary Education students, aligning with modern educational demands.

2.2. Research on Children's Literature and Teaching Activities in Children's Literature
2.2.1. Studies on Children's Literature

Based on different research approaches, scholars have used various terms to refer to children's literature. Margaret R. Marshall and Jan Susina, from the perspective of reception theory, argue that the term "children's literature" is named based on its target audience—young readers. From the perspective of content representation, scholars such as Norton, Norton, and McClure emphasize the special role of children's literature content in influencing children's emotional and intellectual development. From the perspective of narrative point of view, scholars like Charlotte Huck, Maria Nikolajeva, Philippe Lejeune, Charlotte S. Huck, Susan Hepler, Janet Hickman, and Barbara Z. Kiefer converge on the idea that children's literature is defined by its narrative perspective, which is presented through a child's lens. Vietnamese scholars such as Lê Bá Hán, Trần Đình Sử, and Nguyễn Khắc Phi define children's literature based on two main characteristics: first, it is directed toward young readers; second, it possesses both aesthetic and educational values for children.

Several studies on the genre characteristics of children's literature—conducted by scholars like Nguyễn Thị Thanh Hương, Vân Thanh, Lã Thị Bắc Lý, Bùi Thanh Truyền, Lê Nhật Ký, and Đào Thị My—compare it with adult literature and agree on key features of children's literature:

1. The primary goal of children's literature is education.
2. The main subjects of children's literature, both in terms of representation and reception, are children, who have distinct personalities, emotions, and perspectives different from adults. The relationship between authors and readers in children's literature is inherently "asymmetrical."
3. Most authors are adults who cannot fully perceive life as children do. Meanwhile, young readers, despite once being children, cannot revisit that exact childhood mindset.
4. Children's literature remains an integral part of the literary landscape, despite emerging later in the history of human literature.

Regardless of their different research objectives and perspectives, scholars have reached common ground in studying the major characteristics of children's literature, including its intended audience, plot structure, characters, tone, and language.

From the perspective of child characters in children's literature, Raymond Jones, in *Characters in Children's Literature*, introduces 1,700 characters from 230 children's stories, primarily from the U.S., U.K., Australia, and Canada. Margery Hourihan, in *Deconstructing the Hero: Literary Theory and Children's Literature*, provides insights into the structure of adventure stories and their role in shaping children's education and values. More notably, Maria Nikolajeva, in *The Rhetoric of Character in Children's Literature*, clarifies key issues such as: The relationship between character and plot; The storyteller's discourse: Description and narration; The storyteller's discourse: Action and events; Character discourse: Speech acts; Character discourse: Internal language; The concept of the implicit character.

In Vietnam, research on child characters in children's literature has attracted scholars like Vũ Ngọc Bình, Bùi Thanh Truyền, Nguyễn Thanh Tâm, Nguyễn Thị Thanh Hương, Trần Đức Ngôn, and Dương Thu Hương. Their works explore the classification and characteristics of child characters in children's literature. Notably, Bùi, et al. [21] in their article *Child Characters in Children's Short Stories in*

the Renewal Era, identify four main types of child characters: Characters with fragmented personalities; Characters with fresh emotions; Characters undergoing experiences; Tragic characters.

2.2.2. Studies on Teaching Children's Literature

Teaching children's literature has been a subject of interest for various scholars, including Hunt [22]; Lerer [23]; Barone and Mallette [24] and Thwaite [25]. Lerer [23] provides a comprehensive overview of the history and development of children's literature. Barone and Mallette [24] explore the significance of children's literature in education, emphasizing:

- The crucial role of children's literature in promoting reading habits and developing children's reading skills.
- Creating a positive learning environment for reading: The authors provide guidance on fostering an engaging and stimulating learning space to encourage a love for books.
- Selecting age-appropriate literature: The book offers recommendations for teachers on choosing children's literature suitable for students' age and reading level.
- Encouraging critical thinking and reflection on literary works to help students develop analytical and evaluative skills.

Thwaite [25] focuses on teaching children's literature in a modern context, highlighting:

- The importance of children's literature in developing children's reading skills, thinking abilities, and creativity.
- Specific teaching methods, suggested activities, and instructional techniques to enhance students' comprehension and appreciation of children's literature.
- The use of contemporary technology and digital media—such as smartphones, tablets, apps, and websites—to make learning more engaging and effective.

In Vietnam, several scholars have contributed to the development of children's literature teaching curricula for university students, including Tran and Duong [26]. Tran and Duong [26] meticulously systematized both content and teaching methods in their curriculum. Each section presents essential knowledge, followed by self-study guidance for students, key reference materials, and summaries of fundamental concepts with specific instructional notes. Hoàng [27], in *Teaching Literary Works for Children (For Preschool and Primary School Teachers)*, provides an overview of the concept of children's literature, its historical development in Vietnam, and its genre characteristics. The study highlights the unique nature of children's literature in education, stating that "a literary work itself is an artistic creation, a complete system, part of a broader framework that includes life, the writer, the work, and the reader" [27].

From reviewing related research on developing children's literature teaching competencies for students majoring in Primary Education, we draw the following conclusions:

1. Developing teaching competencies in children's literature for Primary Education students is essential. Numerous studies have examined issues such as teaching competencies, competency development for students in Primary Education, primary school teachers, children's literature, and competency-oriented approaches to teaching children's literature. Each study explores different aspects of competency development for future teachers.

2. Current research on children's literature is diverse and multifaceted. Studies focus on various aspects, including the concept and role of children's literature, its history, genre characteristics, and child character representation. Teaching children's literature for Primary Education students has been researched extensively, covering its emergence, characteristics, and instructional methods. Different research approaches include: Content-based teaching; Principles and methods of teaching children's literature; Poetic approaches to teaching children's literature; Teaching children's literature from an aesthetic and moral education

perspective; Expressive reading, storytelling, and performance in children's literature instruction.

Each study addresses a specific aspect of teaching children's literature for students in Early Childhood and Primary Education programs.

3. Research Methods

3.1. Document Analysis Method

This method is used to analyze and synthesize theoretical issues related to teaching competency, children's literature, and the competency to teach children's literature. Through these analyses, the study systematically organizes and formulates key scientific arguments to provide an overview of the research topic.

3.2. Interview Method

This method is applied to interview participants, including lecturers and students from the Faculty of Primary Education at universities in the Mekong Delta region, as well as primary school teachers currently teaching in this area.

3.3. Survey Method

The survey method is conducted by distributing questionnaires to lecturers, students, and primary school teachers. The goal is to assess their perceptions of developing students' competencies in teaching children's literature and to evaluate the teaching competencies of Primary Education students in this field.

3.4. Experimental Method

This method is employed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data on the development of literary competencies among Primary Education students through teaching activities related to children's literature. The experimental results contribute to confirming the feasibility of the proposed measures in the study.

4. Research Results and Discussion

4.1. Current Status of Developing Children's Literature Teaching Competency for Primary Education Students at Universities in the Mekong Delta Region

- Survey Objective: The survey aims to examine the current status of developing children's literature teaching competency among Primary Education students.
- Survey Participants: 50 lecturers and 900 students from the Faculty of Primary Education at selected universities, as well as 500 in-service primary school teachers in the Mekong Delta region.
- Survey Content: The survey investigates the perceptions of university lecturers and students, as well as primary school teachers, regarding the development of children's literature teaching competency for students in general and Primary Education students in particular.
- Survey Methods: Data collection methods include questionnaires, document analysis, product analysis, observations, and interviews. The survey results are processed and statistically analyzed using software such as SPSS and Microsoft Excel.

4.1.1. Practical awareness of lecturers, teachers, and primary education students on the development of children's literature teaching competency

The practical awareness of university lecturers, students, and in-service primary school teachers regarding the importance of developing children's literature teaching competency is summarized in the following table:

The results indicate that there were no votes for the evaluation categories "Not Important" and "Less Important." In the "Neutral" category, only two students rated this level, accounting for 0.2%. Among lecturers, 12% rated it as "Important," while 88% considered it "Very Important." Similarly, students and teachers also showed the highest percentage of evaluations in the "Very Important" category. These findings confirm that developing children's literature teaching competency for Primary Education students is highly important and necessary in the process of educational innovation. It aligns with the current requirements of competency-based and character-focused teaching in primary schools.

The practical awareness of university lecturers, students, and in-service primary school teachers regarding various aspects of children's literature teaching competency is summarized in the following table:

Content:

1. Competence and competence development;
2. Teaching competence and the development of teaching competence;
3. Children's literature;
4. Reception of children's literature.

The results presented in the data table show that the awareness levels of different groups, ranked from highest to lowest, are as follows: first, lecturers; second, teachers currently teaching in primary schools; and third, students.

- Lecturers' awareness of children's competence has no evaluations at the levels of "Not knowing," "Basic," or "Normal"; the levels of "Knowing" and "Knowing well" account for a high percentage. For example, in the content "Competence and competence development," the "Knowing" level accounts for 52%, while the "Knowing well" level accounts for 46%. In the content "Reception of children's literature," the "Knowing" level accounts for 50%, and the "Knowing well" level also accounts for 50%.
- Primary school teachers' awareness in the content areas "Competence and competence development" and "Teaching competence and the development of teaching competence" shows a 0% evaluation at the "Not knowing" level; the "Knowing" level has the highest percentage— ranging from 60% to 90%. In the content areas of "Children's literature" and "Reception of children's literature," the levels of "Not knowing" and "Basic" are at 0%. The highest percentage belongs to the "Knowing" level, followed by the "Knowing well" and "Normal" levels.
- Students' awareness of certain issues related to children's literature differs from the other two groups. The levels of "Not knowing," "Basic," and "Knowing well" receive no evaluations; the "Normal" level has the highest percentage, approximately 75% to 80%. The levels of "Knowing" and "Knowing well" have a lower and inconsistent percentage across different content areas.

Thus, the survey results indicate that students' awareness of issues related to teaching children's literature is still low and lacks depth. This is the aspect we aim to focus on, influencing awareness and structuring teaching competence in children's literature as part of this research.

4.1.2. Teaching Competence in Children's Literature among Primary Education Students

Table 1.
The Importance of Developing Children's Literature Teaching Competency.

Participants	Total	Assessment									Percentage
		Not Important		Less Important		Neutral		Important	Very Important		
		Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	
Lecturer	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	12.0	44	78.0
Student	900	0	0	0	0	2	0,2	103	11.4	795	88.4
Teacher	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	121	24.2	379	75.8

Table 2.
Awareness of Children's Literature Teaching Competency.

Participants	Total	Content	Assessment									
			Not knowing		Normal		Basic		Knowing		Knowing well	
			Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage
Lecturer	50	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	54	23	46
		2	0	0	0	0	0	0	24	48	26	52
		3	0	0	0	0	0	0	28	56	22	44
		4	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	50	25	50
Student	900	1	0	0	79	8.8	720	80	101	11.2	0	0
		2	0	0	106	11.8	702	78	92	10.2	0	0
		3	0	0	104	11.6	707	78.5	89	9.9	0	0
		4	0	0	132	14.7	709	78.8	59	6.5	0	0
Teacher	500	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	399	79.8	101	20.2
		2	0	0	0	0	0	0	302	60.4	198	39.6
		3	0	0	0	0	86	17.2	318	63.6	96	19.2
		4	0	0	0	0	123	24.6	286	57.2	91	18.2

Table 3.
Awareness of Teaching Competence in Children's Literature Among Primary Education Students.

Component	Behavioral indicator	Levels of manifestation							
		Level 1		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4	
		Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage	Quantity	Percentage
A	A1	0	0	320	64	148	29.6	32	6.4
	A2	0	0	311	62.2	152	30.4	37	7.4
	A3	0	0	310	62	166	33.3	24	4.8
	A4	0	0	339	67.8	120	24	41	8.2
	A5	0	0	321	64.2	160	32	19	3.8
	A6	0	0	317	63.4	151	30.2	32	6.4
	A7	0	0	331	66.2	141	28.2	28	5.6
B	B1	0	0	321	64.2	139	27.8	40	8
	B2	0	0	323	64.6	122	24.4	55	11
	B3	0	0	312	62.4	138	27.6	50	10
	B4	0	0	321	64.2	127	25.4	52	10.4
	B5	0	0	316	63.2	134	26.8	50	10
	B6	0	0	342	68.4	118	23.6	40	8
	B7	0	0	327	65.4	142	28.4	31	6.2
C	C1	0	0	314	62.8	153	30.6	33	6.6
	C2	0	0	323	64.6	124	24.8	53	10.6
	C3	0	0	342	68.4	116	23.2	42	8.4
	C4	0	0	331	66.2	123	24.6	46	9.2
D	D1	0	0	322	64.4	128	25.6	50	10
	D2	0	0	316	63.2	131	26.2	53	10.6
	D3	0	0	314	62.8	134	26.8	52	10.4
E	E1	0	0	317	63.4	130	26	53	10.6
	E2	0	0	322	64.4	123	24.6	55	11
	E3	0	0	316	63.2	133	26.6	51	10.2
G	G1	0	0	318	63.6	132	26.4	50	10
	G2	0	0	320	64	131	26.2	49	9.8
	G3	0	0	327	65.4	122	24.4	51	10.2

The results from the data table indicate that the percentage distribution of the levels, ranked from highest to lowest, is as follows: Level 2, Level 3, Level 4, and Level 1. Notably, Level 1 shows 0% across all behavioral indicators. Level 2 has the highest proportion, ranging from 60% to 70%. Level 3 fluctuates between 22% and 35%, while Level 4 accounts for approximately 5% to 10% of behavioral indicators.

These results suggest that the teaching competence in children's literature among Primary Education students is mainly at an average or fairly good level, with some achieving an excellent level, though the proportion remains low. This serves as a practical basis for proposing measures to enhance the components of teaching children's literature, contributing to improving the quality of education and professional competence development for students in general and specifically for Primary Education students in teaching children's literature.

4.2. Measures to Develop Teaching Competence in Children's Literature for Primary Education Students

The proposed measures for developing teaching competence in children's literature for Primary Education students must meet fundamental requirements, including:

- Aligning with the objectives of the undergraduate Primary Education training program.
- Ensuring a close connection between theory and practice.
- Establishing a reciprocal and interactive relationship between the "deep" and "surface" aspects in the iceberg model of teaching competence development in children's literature.
- Promoting active cognitive engagement, learning, and training among Primary Education students.
- Adhering to the characteristics of different literary genres in teaching children's literature.
- Ensuring a harmonious balance between students, teaching content, and practical teaching conditions.

Based on theoretical and practical foundations, we propose the following measures to develop teaching competence in children's literature:

4.2.1. Establishing competency standards for teaching children's literature in primary education students

Competency standards for teaching children's literature are criteria that describe the required levels (expected achievements) of Primary Education students regarding their ability to teach children's literature along a developmental trajectory. The process of establishing these competency standards involves defining the concept of teaching competence in children's literature, structuring teaching competence, and describing the characteristics of its specific components. This ultimately leads to determining the developmental pathway of teaching competence in children's literature.

Developing competency standards is crucial as it provides a benchmark for assessing students' progress in teaching children's literature. To construct these standards, we applied the latent variable measurement method and expert adjustment methodology. These standards are essential for evaluating students' competence in teaching children's literature within specific subjects, such as Children's Literature and Vietnamese Language Teaching Methods, in Primary Education programs at teacher training universities [28].

Steps in Developing Competency Standards for Teaching Children's Literature

Step 1: Defining the Concept of Teaching Competence in Children's Literature In this study, we adopt the concept established in the previous research section.

Step 2: Determining the Structure of Teaching Competence in Children's Literature Our research defines the structure of teaching competence in children's literature based on the iceberg model, comprising both deep and surface levels. However, we focus on the surface structure, as it is observable, measurable, and assessable. The surface structure consists of six components: Developing lesson plans for teaching children's literature; Organizing children's literature lessons in practical classroom settings; Assessing primary students' reception of children's literature; Creating and utilizing teaching portfolios for children's literature; Self-assessing one's teaching competence in children's literature; Conducting research on teaching children's literature.

Step 3: Describing the Specific Characteristics of Each Component in the Teaching Competence Structure

The characteristics and behavioral indicators of these competence components are presented in the following table:

Table 4.
Behavioral Indicators of Teaching Competence Components in Children's Literature for Primary Education Students.

Ordinal Number	Component:	Behavioral Indicator
1	A. Developing a teaching plan for children's literature	A1. Identifying the objectives of teaching children's literature.
		A2. Developing the content structure for teaching children's literature.
		A3. Determining methods, measures, and techniques for teaching children's literature.
		A4. Identifying and preparing materials and teaching aids for children's literature.
		A5. Designing activities for teaching children's literature.
		A6. Anticipating and handling pedagogical situations in teaching children's literature.
		A7. Applying information technology in designing children's literature teaching plans.
2	B. Implementing the children's literature teaching plan in practice	B1. Applying teaching methods, measures, and techniques to children's literature instruction.
		B2. Effectively utilizing teaching materials and aids in children's literature instruction.
		B3. Encouraging students' activeness, autonomy, and creativity in the process of teaching children's literature.
		B4. Communicating effectively with students and managing the classroom during children's literature lessons.
		B5. Teaching according to the planned instructional sequence in the children's literature teaching plan.
		B6. Handling emerging pedagogical situations during children's literature lessons.
		B7. Effectively applying information technology in children's literature instruction.
3	C. Assessing the level of children's literature reception among primary school students	C1. Identifying the objectives of assessing the reception of children's literature by primary school students.
		C2. Selecting and designing assessment tools for evaluating the reception of children's literature by primary school students.
		C3. Conducting assessments of primary school students' reception of children's literature.
		C4. Processing assessment results on primary school students' reception of children's literature

4	D. Developing and utilizing children's literature teaching records	D1. Developing children's literature teaching records.
		D2. Utilizing children's literature teaching records.
		D3. Effectively applying information technology in developing and utilizing children's literature teaching records.
5	E. Self-assessing the competency in teaching children's literature	E1. Self-assessing one's competency in teaching children's literature based on competency assessment standards.
		E2. Using self-assessment results to develop and adjust a personal competency development plan for teaching children's literature.
		E3. Adjusting study plans and learning methods based on the competency development plan for teaching children's literature.
6	G. Conducting scientific research on children's literature teaching topics	G1. Formulating ideas and identifying research topics related to teaching children's literature.
		G2. Planning and conducting scientific research on teaching children's literature.
		G3. Reflecting on and adjusting the research plan for teaching children's literature.

Step 4: Identifying the Development Path of Children's Literature Teaching Competency

The quality criteria for each behavioral indicator of each component in children's literature teaching competency are described as the basis for determining the development levels of this competency among Primary Education students. The criteria are arranged in ascending order.

- Developing a children's literature teaching plan
- Implementing Children's Literature Teaching Plans in Practice
- Assessing Primary School Students' Reception of Children's Literature
- Developing and Utilizing Children's Literature Teaching Portfolios
- Self-Assessment of Children's Literature Teaching Competence
- Conducting Scientific Research on Children's Literature Teaching

4.2.2. Applying Active Teaching Methods to Equip Elementary Education Students With Foundational Knowledge For Teaching Children's Literature

The foundational knowledge required to develop the competency to teach children's literature is acquired, cultivated, and refined throughout the learning process. From the moment students are introduced to fundamental knowledge about child psychology, teaching methods, and interdisciplinary and specialized foundational knowledge, they begin to build their competency. Some essential areas of foundational knowledge for developing the ability to teach children's literature include: knowledge of children's literature, the reception of children's literature, the psychological characteristics of elementary school students, and general teaching methods, particularly methods for teaching children's literature.

Equipping Elementary Education students with foundational knowledge is a long-term process that requires both instructors and students to make continuous efforts in learning and research. Instructors can diversify their teaching approaches by employing active teaching methods that enhance students' initiative and creativity, thereby meeting learning objectives. In this study, we focus on equipping students with foundational knowledge for developing their competency to teach children's literature through two core subjects in the Bachelor of Elementary Education program: Children's Literature and Methods of Teaching Vietnamese Language. Some effective active teaching methods that can be applied include:

4.2.3. Applying the Flipped Classroom Model in Teaching Children's Literature

The application of the flipped classroom model in the Children's Literature course aims to increase student engagement, emphasize interaction with the learning environment, and enhance knowledge acquisition through discussions, exchanges, and self-study. By utilizing the flipped classroom model, students have more opportunities to learn from instructors through guided instruction, from peers through discussions, and at any time and place through video-based learning.

4.2.4. Applying the Reading Journal Model

The reading journal is an activity introduced in the Book Club Program by researchers Taffy E. Raphael and Elfrieda H. Hiebert to enhance reading comprehension. This model is applied in teaching to stimulate students' thinking, initiative, and active participation.

In the Children's Literature course, the reading journal model is used to improve the effectiveness of reading and researching children's literature through writing activities. Essentially, note-taking during research helps students document their thoughts, emotions, and judgments about what they read and study. This method integrates speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills while emphasizing cognitive processes and social interaction.

By using the reading journal model in the Children's Literature course, students can express their ideas, analyze literary texts, and develop literary appreciation skills. They will cultivate the habit of reading and note-taking, encouraging them to become active, creative learners who engage with literature naturally and independently. The process of writing reading journals helps students reconstruct prior knowledge while forming new understandings gained through reading.

Implementation of the Reading Journal Model: To effectively integrate reading journals into teaching, instructors must ensure that students understand the purpose, format, and content of different types of journals. Instructors should introduce and guide students in writing structured, clear, and aesthetically appealing journals to inspire learning and document knowledge gained from study and research. Instructors should also provide continuous guidance, support, and encouragement to help students develop a habit of maintaining reading journals effectively. The reading journal method can be applied within individual subjects as well as across disciplines, helping students develop problem-solving skills applicable to real-life situations.

4.2.5. Applying the Student Club Model for Children's Literature

Literary clubs provide diverse and engaging activities that cater to students' interests, allowing those with literary and artistic talents to express and develop their abilities. A reading and creative writing club offers students opportunities for intellectual interaction, cultural engagement, and recreational activities while supporting them in overcoming academic challenges related to the Children's Literature course.

Through club activities, students engage in discussions and express opinions about children's literary works while being inspired to create their own literary pieces. This environment fosters creativity and enhances students' ability to teach literature effectively. In these clubs, teachers play a guiding and facilitative role, overseeing activities while providing students with a platform to appreciate and create children's literature. By actively participating, students develop an awareness of the significance of reading, appreciating, and writing children's literature. They take the initiative in finding and preparing literary materials for club activities, strengthening their understanding of both literary analysis and creative writing.

4.2.6. Developing an Exercise System to Enhance the Competency to Teach Children's Literature for Elementary Education Students

Exercises are an indispensable tool in teaching, learning, and assessment. To develop students' competency in teaching children's literature, exercises should be designed to align with real-world teaching contexts and course content, allowing students to produce high-quality learning outcome**s** applicable in practical teaching situations. Exercises should require students to integrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes while applying their individual attributes to meet teaching objectives. They must also be differentiated, ensuring that they are appropriately challenging and achievable.

Based on the competency structure for teaching children's literature, we categorize exercises into the following groups:

- Lesson Planning Exercises for teaching children's literature
- Instructional Exercises for organizing children's literature lessons
- Assessment Exercises for evaluating students' reception of children's literature
- Portfolio Development Exercises for compiling teaching materials on children's literature
- Self-Assessment Exercises for evaluating students' competency in teaching children's literature
- Scientific Research Exercises for conducting research on children's literature instruction

Steps in Developing an Exercise System: Identifying key competency components for teaching children's literature; Selecting appropriate exercise formats and developing content; Creating answer keys, grading rubrics, and assessment criteria; Reviewing exercises, answer keys**,** and rubrics and determining how to incorporate them into lessons

4.2.7. Organizing Teaching Practicums on Children's Literature for Elementary Education Students

A teaching practicum allows students to reinforce, expand, and apply their theoretical knowledge and skills in a real-world teaching environment. It plays a crucial role in developing all aspects of the competency structure for teaching children's literature.

To ensure effective practicum experiences, students must possess a strong foundational knowledge of children's literature, its teaching methodology, and relevant interdisciplinary knowledge. They must also develop practical skills such as lesson planning, instructional organization, student assessment, and portfolio management. Additionally, an open-minded, proactive, and collaborative attitude is essential for success.

Receiving schools should provide mentor teachers who are willing to support, guide, and assist student teachers throughout their practicum.

4.3. Stages of the Teaching Practicum

1. Preparation for Practicum
   - Define practicum objectives
   - Conduct preliminary observations to understand students' characteristics
   - Develop a lesson plan, seek mentor feedback, and finalize it
2. Conducting the Practicum
   - Observe mentor teachers and reflect on teaching practices
   - Teach children's literature lessons based on the prepared plan
   - Assess student learning outcomes
3. Evaluation and Feedback
   - Mentor teachers provide feedback on strengths and areas for improvement

- Student teachers reflect, revise their approaches, and apply lessons learned
- The feedback process ensures continuous improvement in teaching quality

5. Conclusion

The competency to teach children's literature refers to the ability to apply knowledge and skills in teaching children's literature while integrating personal psychological attributes within a given context to design lesson plans and effectively implement children's literature instruction. This competency aims to achieve teaching objectives that foster students' skills and character development.

To enhance the competency to teach children's literature among Elementary Education students, they must continuously accumulate and refine their knowledge throughout the learning process. At the same time, instructors need to strategically and actively influence the components that form this competency.

Based on theoretical and practical foundations, this paper proposes four measures to develop the competency to teach children's literature among Elementary Education students: Establishing competency-based assessment standards for teaching children's literature in Elementary Education programs; Applying active teaching methods to equip students with foundational knowledge for teaching children's literature; Developing an exercise system tailored to enhance students' competency in teaching children's literature; Organizing teaching practicums in elementary schools to provide hands-on experience in children's literature instruction. These measures are practical and feasible solutions that contribute to improving the competency to teach children's literature for Elementary Education students.

Transparency:
The authors confirm that the manuscript is an honest, accurate, and transparent account of the study; that no vital features of the study have been omitted; and that any discrepancies from the study as planned have been explained. This study followed all ethical practices during writing.

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