

Lived Experiences and Readiness of English Teachers in Implementing Reading Remediation Programs in a Selected Public Secondary School

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Abstract— This descriptive phenomenological research is grounded in Edmund Husserl's phenomenological approach, which emphasizes the description of participants' lived experiences and readiness of English teachers for implementing reading remediation programs at a selected public secondary school. A qualitative phenomenological approach was employed to gather data from six English teachers through semi-structured interview questions designed to elicit their experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms. Thematic analysis based on Colaizzi's framework identified three significant themes: (1) the difficulty of implementation due to lack of time, scarce resources, and low learner motivation; (2) the teachers' readiness impacted by absence of training and institutional support; and (3) the positive professional development through empathy, patience, and being fulfilled in helping struggling readers. The findings suggest that providing training, learning materials, and administrative support will not only enhance teachers' readiness but also promote the sustainability of the program.

Keywords— English Teachers, Lived Experiences, Phenomenology, Reading Remediation, Teacher Readiness.

I. INTRODUCTION

Reading remediation is an essential intervention for addressing literacy issues among learners in grades 7-12 who struggle with text comprehension, reading fluency, and word decoding. According to Snow, Burns, and Griffin (1998) as well as the National Reading Panel (2000), effective instruction and intervention in reading are foundational for literacy, which is crucial for lifelong learning. However, in the Philippines, reading problems have been a persistent concern. The findings from the PISA tests conducted in 2018 and 2022 revealed that Filipino students are not meeting expected standards in reading comprehension (DepEd, 2023). In response, the Department of Education launched programs like Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP) aimed at improving learners' literacy skills. Nevertheless, secondary learners continue to experience learning gaps due to factors such as resource shortages, inadequate teacher preparedness, and insufficient support from schools (Villanueva & Santiago, 2022; Ocampo, 2021).

Teachers play a significant role in the success of these remediation measures. The effectiveness of program implementation largely depends on their preparedness, enthusiasm, and professional skills. In their study, Gecana and Caparas (2025) investigated the experiences of English teachers working with high school learners who are struggling readers. They found that teachers were motivated by their learners' progress, even while

facing challenges like inadequate resources, large class sizes, and insufficient training. Additionally, the research by Suarez et al. (2024) concluded that English teachers encountering junior high school learners with poor reading fluency and comprehension require more support in areas such as scaffolding, guided reading, and ongoing professional development.

Rillo (2025) mentioned that many secondary grade learners participating in reading programs lack basic literacy skills. However, through diagnostic reading tasks tailored to various learners' needs, teachers were able to address these challenges even within resource-limited environments.

Terencio et al. (2023) revealed that some effective strategies employed by teachers included involving parents and utilizing digital resources to motivate and engage learners. Furthermore, teacher readiness, as highlighted in their study, encompasses not only teachers' knowledge but also their ability to creatively respond to local challenges.

Conversely, Taguba (2020) noted that low teacher preparedness, unplanned activities, and lack of materials frequently hinder the effectiveness of reading remediation programs. He emphasized that institutional support and teacher training are critical for success.

These research findings suggest that the primary factors influencing the success of reading remediation initiatives are teacher preparedness, professional development, and institutional support. However, existing studies show a scarcity of research on the lived experiences and preparedness of English teachers in local public schools in Iloilo. There is a notable lack of in-depth exploration of these aspects, as most previous works focus on general reading problems and overlook the phenomenological accounts of teachers regarding coping, adaptation, and growth. Therefore, this paper aimed to bridge this gap by describing the lived experiences and readiness of English teachers as they implement reading remediation programs in a public secondary school context, employing Edmund Husserl's (1931) phenomenological perspective to uncover the fundamental core of their professional lives.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized descriptive phenomenological research, rooted in the philosophy of Edmund Husserl (1931). This approach emphasizes the importance of describing lived experiences in their pure form, free from manipulation or alteration. The research was conducted at Hibao-an Integrated School in Iloilo City,

Philippines, which was deemed an appropriate setting due to the school's active implementation of the Department of Education's Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP). Six English teachers were purposefully selected as participants based on their experience in teaching, reading, and remediation, as well as their willingness to take part in the study.

Six English teachers were the primary focus of the study. These individuals were chosen for their seniority in English teaching, their management of reading classes, and their participation in remediation programs. The participants had differing years of experience, different grade levels they taught, and different degrees of involvement in reading interventions. Such a difference gave the researchers a deep understanding of the teachers' preparedness, problems, and professional development in the context of the execution of the reading remediation programs.

The participants also differed in the number of years they had taught and in their level of involvement in the reading remediation program. Table 1 shows the demographic profile and background information of the teachers who participated in the study.

Table 1. Profile of the Participants

Participants	Gender	Years of Teaching Experience	Experience in Implementing Reading Remediation Program	Remarks/Highlights
Participant 1	Female	2 years	1 year	Reported challenges due to lack of orientation and monitoring; emphasized need or training and administrative support
Participant 2	Female	1 year	Less than 1 year	Described remediation as fulfilling but difficult; stressed learner motivation and preparation of suitable materials.
Participant 3	Female	3 years	2 years	Encountered lack of materials and classroom space; attended training on handling non-readers
Participant 4	Female	3 years	1 year	Noted learner motivation issues but found experience rewarding and insightful.
Participant 5	Female	4 years	2 years	Viewed remediation as both challenging and enriching; emphasized empathy and patience.
Participant 6	Female	2 years	1 year	Found program demanding yet fulfilling; valued workshops and collaboration with peers.

Note: Data were gathered from Six (6) English teachers through semi-structured interviews conducted at a selected public secondary school in Iloilo City.

To gather data on the teachers' experiences, challenges, and coping strategies, semi-structured in-depth interviews were performed. Each session lasted between

30 and 45 minutes. The interviews were recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed following Colaizzi's (1978) seven steps: familiarizing oneself with the data,

identifying significant statements, formulating meanings, organizing those meanings into themes, writing an exhaustive description, deriving the fundamental structure, and confirming the findings through member checking.

A notable characteristic of the study was its strict adherence to ethical protocols, which included obtaining informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, and ensuring voluntary participation. The trustworthiness of the study was bolstered by the criteria established by Lincoln and Guba (1985), specifically credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. This comprehensive approach allowed the researchers to thoroughly explore the teachers' readiness and the experiences they encountered while implementing reading remediation programs.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the research show that the use of reading remediation programs by English teachers at a public secondary school is influenced by external factors and internal strengths of the staff. The participants' lived experiences reveal the mutual support of institutional conditions, personal readiness, learner engagement, and professional growth. The investigation of interview data, based on Colaizzi's (1978) phenomenological framework, identified five significant dimensions that, in aggregate, trace teachers' perceptual and interpretative involvement in the implementation of reading remediation.

A good number of participants stated that institutional barriers, along with inadequate logistics, made implementing reading remediation a problematic. Insufficient learning spaces, limited materials, and poor administrative coordination were pinpointed as the primary challenges. One of the teachers remarked that "the school's lack of designated reading corners or materials really limits what I can do. I often have to print or improvise using my own resources." Another explained, "Administrative support is minimal. We were only told to do reading remediation, but no clear guidelines or monitoring system were given." These narratives reveal that the lack of systematic planning and institutional support diminishes teachers' sense of control over the program, consistent with Bandura's (1986) principle that environmental factors can weaken self-efficacy. A few participants also commented on the lack of reliable supervision and feedback from

administrators, which, in turn, hampers program monitoring and sustainability.

Several educators shared their experiences regarding reading remediation programs, highlighting that the challenges faced by an institution often depend on the local context and the leadership style of the administrator. One participant noted, "Our school head is very supportive, actually. We have the flexibility to schedule remedial sessions." Another remarked, "The program at our school is very well-monitored; we submit our progress reports monthly, which helps in tracking students' improvements." These contrasting opinions suggest that schools with proactive leaders and efficient monitoring systems are more likely to maintain successful reading remediation programs and motivate teachers.

In addition to institutional challenges, teachers frequently cited a lack of time and resources as significant obstacles. Many respondents reported difficulty balancing their regular academic responsibilities with the additional demands of the intervention. One teacher expressed, "It is very tiring to juggle regular classes, paperwork, and reading remediation. There are times when I have to work beyond my hours without getting paid." Another emphasized, "The time set aside for remediation is too brief for us to make a tangible difference, especially for those who cannot read at all." These statements echo Ocampo's (2021) observation that excessive workloads and limited preparation time negatively impact literacy instruction quality. Additionally, school events and irregular scheduling were mentioned as reasons for interruptions in remediation sessions.

Despite these challenges, some teachers viewed time management as a personal discipline and professional commitment, rather than an institutional failure. One respondent stated, "If teachers plan effectively, they can manage time constraints. I organize remediation during my free period or advisory." Another participant remarked, "Extra work does not weigh me down; I see it as part of my obligation to help students learn." Such comments demonstrate that, despite systemic limitations, teachers' intrinsic motivation and self-regulation play a crucial role in fulfilling their professional responsibilities.

Teacher readiness emerged as another critical factor influencing the success of reading remediation

programs. The majority of respondents acknowledged feeling unprepared initially due to a lack of formal training and unstructured guidance. One teacher recalled, "No formal training on reading remediation was given to us, so I relied on my college education and self-study." Another shared, "Without school training, I went through trial and error, choosing strategies based on the students' reactions." These experiences suggest that, in the absence of professional development, teachers often look to themselves and their peers for support. This aligns with Bandura's (1986) theory of social learning, which posits that learning and confidence can be enhanced through observation and interaction with others.

Conversely, a few teachers felt adequately prepared, attributing their competence to their teaching experience and prior training. One stated, "I believe I am well-prepared because I have attended literacy workshops in the past." Another commented, "My years of teaching English have given me the confidence to do the job even without specific training." These varying responses indicate that a teacher's readiness is a personal matter shaped by individual circumstances, experience, available resources, and self-confidence.

Teachers implementing reading remediation were very concerned about their students' motivation and engagement. Several teachers mentioned that many students rarely show interest in the activities, viewing the remediation sessions as an obligation. One teacher noted, "Many of my students show little interest in reading; they see it as punishment rather than help." Another added, "Lack of parental involvement results in a decrease in motivation, as parents rarely practice reading with their children at home."

To address this issue, teachers often employed creative, interactive methods—such as storytelling, games, and visual aids—to regain and maintain learners' attention. The fact that teachers put in such efforts shows how important they consider it to provide literacy instruction that is both engaging and conducive to continuous improvement.

Despite these challenges, some teachers remained optimistic about the situation. They believed that students became more responsive and motivated when the activities were meaningful and engaging. One teacher remarked, "My students really like the remediation sessions; they feel special getting extra

help," while another shared, "Seeing the kids so engaged in the story-based games and group reading helped a lot with motivation." These observations confirm that effective engagement strategies can transform the remedial experience into something positive and empowering for both students and teachers.

Moreover, the teachers reflected that working on reading remediation was not only challenging but also contributed to their emotional and professional growth. One teacher expressed, "Although it is exhausting, it is very rewarding when you see a student reading a paragraph independently for the first time." Many teachers noted that remediation helped them develop greater empathy and patience. One commented, "Remediation made me more empathetic; I learned to celebrate even the smallest victories." These reflections resonate with Husserl's (1931) phenomenology, which emphasizes lived experience as the foundation for creating meaning, and with Bandura's (1986) assertion that positive emotional feedback is a key factor in motivation and self-efficacy.

However, fulfillment was not universally experienced among educators. Some voiced frustrations and weariness stemming from slow student progress and the additional workload. One teacher confided, "Progress is so slow most of the time that I get really frustrated in my attempts to help." Another added, "When I'm emotionally drained from working hard yet still seeing little results, it's a tough situation." These contradictory feelings highlight the dual nature of teaching struggling readers: it can be both rewarding and exhausting. Despite these emotional challenges, teachers found ways to be resilient and adaptable, maintaining their commitment to a path filled with purpose and meaning.

The participants' lived experiences reveal the complex nature of reading remediation's success, which relies significantly on institutional support and staff training but also depends on teachers being intrinsically motivated, engaging in reflective practices, and possessing emotional resilience. Their stories illustrate how teachers overcome various obstacles—such as time shortages, lack of resources, and differing levels of student motivation—that have been recurring challenges in their narratives. They continue to persevere, discovering new ways to support their students. The results indicate that long-term professional development is a cornerstone of teacher readiness, alongside supportive leadership and environments that foster

collaborative learning, which are necessary for effective reading remediation programs to thrive.

VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This research shows that implementing reading remediation programs in English classrooms is a complex process affected by various internal and external factors. Key limitations, such as inadequate support from school administration, insufficient resources, and poor monitoring systems, hinder program success. Conversely, the effectiveness of these initiatives largely depends on teacher training, motivation, and confidence.

Teachers remain committed to addressing illiteracy and often find resourceful ways to carry out their responsibilities. However, their ability to create meaningful change is limited by insufficient institutional support. Challenges like limited time, heavy workloads, and a lack of professional development opportunities inhibit the adoption of differentiated instruction and personalized reading strategies. Despite these obstacles, teachers demonstrate strong dedication and innovative problem-solving skills.

Besides that, teacher emotional and professional development is one more important result of the reading intervention process. Becoming more empathetic, patient, and reflective-oriented, teachers' effectiveness in teaching gets improved, and their contribution to the classroom becoming a supportive environment gets increased. The study findings also reveal that besides instruction, teachers attain deeper professional satisfaction through the life-changing aspect of literacy.

In order to raise teacher readiness and provide for reading remediation program continuity, the school, and the Department of Education (DepEd) may provide relevant and continuous professional development that would be practical-intervention and classroom-management-focused. There is also a need to allocate enough resources for the production of the custom reading materials. Providing teachers with awards and incentives, thus acknowledging their efforts, can go a long way in motivating them further and strengthening their commitment to their tasks.

The work also outlines additional measures: (a) in terms of implementing a curriculum plan, schools are encouraged to include stakeholders (Biñas et al., 2023), particularly the teachers who will directly implement the

reading remediation program; (b) in the new era of giving feedback, teachers may be trained to use written corrections on printed outputs and digital annotations or marginalia for learners (Paulino et al., 2022) undergoing reading remediation; and (c) teachers may use web-based tools as forms of alternative delivery modes (Malayas et al., 2022) to sustain the reading remediation program. These activities may facilitate collaboration, provide effective feedback, and assure program continuity through innovative instructional approaches.

Collaboration, ultimately, is still very much needed. One way of teachers learning from each other is through professional learning communities (PLCs) that allow them to exchange strategies, resources, and emotional support thus enhancing their teaching skills. By using learner-centered techniques such as scaffolding and cooperation teachers' awareness and literacy goals achieved by learners can reach a higher level. The authors of the paper also suggest that the next research work should apply mixed methods to examine the relationships between teacher readiness, instructional quality, and learner performance thus providing valuable insights for the evidence-based policy-making in the Philippine education system.

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