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# Experiences, Challenges and Intervention Schemes of Teachers in Reading Amidst Pandemic

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**Abstract** — Reading is one of the most important skill need to be acquired by the pupils. This skill is necessary for school activities as well as in dealing with everyday activities in real life situation. However, teaching pupils how to read is no joke. It requires time, effort and patience of the teachers particularly in coping to the different problems that the teachers may encounter in teaching. This study focused on finding out the challenges and issues in teaching reading among Grade 2 pupils in Leyte 1 District amid pandemic during the school year 2021-2022.

This investigation employed phenomenological approach focusing on the lived experiences of the Grade 2 teachers in teaching reading during pandemic. A focused group discussion was undertaken to gather necessary information.

The major findings of the study were the following: the experience of the Grade 2 teachers in teaching reading during pandemic was considered as a challenging one, with regards to the issues/challenges encountered of the Grade 2 teachers in teaching reading during pandemic, several themes have been formulated based on the answers of the research participants but only three (3) of these, dominantly emerged and they were the following: Parents' Incapability to Teach Their Children Due to Educational Background, Teachers' Time Constraints in Facilitating, Assessing and Monitoring Pupils Learning, and Low Learning Motivation Among Pupils. On the intervention schemes implemented by the Grade 2 teachers in teaching reading during pandemic, there were three (3) emergent themes formulated. The theme that dominated the most was "Providing Pupils with Varied Reading Materials". Then the second theme was "Intensified Monitoring of Pupils Learning". And the last dominant theme was "Home Visitation". Among these three (3) themes formulated, the most dominating was "Providing Pupils with Varied Reading Materials".

**Keywords** — *Challenges in Teaching Reading; Teaching Reading During Pandemic; Intervention Schemes*

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## I. Introduction

Reading is essential in order to gain knowledge and enhance learnings. It is a tool used to learn all subject areas such as English, Mathematics, Arts, Music, Science, Physical Education, and Character Education. Learning other subjects areas require reading skills for learning to occur. Thus, reading is one of the most important literacy skills need to be developed among pupils. The ability to read competently is arguably the most important tool in pupils' educational skill set. For this reason, the importance of reading in teaching and learning process can never be denied. The importance of reading is equal to the effort done by the teachers in teaching pupils how to read. Hence, the difficulty in teaching and developing reading skill among pupils is undisputable.

The challenge in teaching reading among pupils had become more difficult this time of pandemic. Teachers do not have full access to pupils because face-to-face classes are not yet allowed. Teaching pupils remotely could pose real challenges. This is because learning to read is an inherently social activity. Which means, Teaching and learning should be a matter of sharing and allowing pupils to co-construct their knowledge which usually happens in the classroom while during learning activities together with peers and teachers. Also, when children attend school physically, most reading instruction happens between teachers and other pupils. The mode of learning which is distance learning is indeed a burden for teachers, pupils as well as parents. As stated by Gorey (2020), schools all over the world made the difficult decision to shut their doors—forcing an abrupt and nearly universal shift to distance learning that proved disruptive for teachers, students, and parents alike.

The cited situation also happens in Palarao Elementary School, Leyte 1 District where the researcher is teaching Grade 2 pupils. The researcher also experience difficulties in teaching pupils how to read this time of pandemic because teaching is done remotely.

Several studies have been conducted about challenges met by teachers in teaching reading and factors caused poor reading performance of pupils (Ali, 2018; Fletcher, 2018; Hidayati, 2018; Cain and Oakhill, 2007; Fletcher et al., 2013; Hollenbeck, 2011; and Kim et al., 2012). However, these studies were conducted during the time that face-to-face classes were still allowed. The present study was novel because the focused of the study was to find out challenges and issues in teaching reading among Grade 2 pupils during pandemic. The researcher believed that this topic was timely and need to have an in-depth investigation. The findings of the study would be the basis in developing reading intervention program that would address the issues/challenges met by teachers in teaching reading during pandemic.

This study aimed to find out the challenges and issues in teaching reading among Grade 2 pupils in Leyte 1 District amid pandemic during the school year 2021-2022.

Specifically, this study intended to answer the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of Grade 2 teachers in teaching reading during pandemic?
2. What are the issues/challenges encountered of the Grade 2 teachers in teaching reading during pandemic?
3. What are the intervention schemes implemented by the Grade 2 teachers in teaching reading during pandemic?
4. What strategic plan in reading maybe developed based on the findings of the study?

## II. Methodology

**Design.** This investigation employed phenomenological approach which is a form of qualitative research design that focused on the study of an individual's lived experiences. The present study focused on investigating lived experiences of Grade 2 teachers regarding teaching reading during pandemic, the issues/challenges they encountered, and the intervention schemes they implemented. The researcher believed that phenomenological approach was the appropriate design utilized in order to attain the objectives of this study. A focus group discussion was conducted by the researcher to the fifteen (15) Grade 2 teachers in Leyte 1 District.

**Research Environment.** The present study was conducted in Leyte 1 District, Area 3 of Leyte Division for the school year 2021-2022. Leyte 1 District is one of the districts in Area 3, Division of Leyte. The district office is at Leyte Central School, and is located at the Poblacion Leyte, Leyte.

**Research Respondents.** The participants of the study were the Grade 2 teachers in Leyte 1 District. In choosing the participants of the study, complete enumeration was employed, wherein all the Grade 2 teachers in Leyte 1 District were taken as respondents. All the Grade 2 teachers in Leyte were included because their population is not too big.

**Research Instruments.** Through a semi-structured interview, the researcher was able to obtain the needed information through focused group discussion. An interview guide was used as a research instrument which was made by the researcher. The interview guide served as a document that enables the researcher to structure the way she conducted the focused group discussion to the fifteen (15) participants of this study. It helped the researcher know what to ask about and in what order and to ensure that all questions posed in the study were answered. The questions focused on finding out the experiences, issues/challenges encountered by Grade 2 teachers in teaching reading during pandemic and the intervention schemes implemented.

**Research Procedure.** The researcher submitted a permit to conduct the study to the office of the Schools Division Superintendent of Leyte Division. Upon approval of the request, the researcher sent consent letters to the participants of the study. The consent letter contains statement requesting the participants to voluntarily join the research study. In the consent letter, the schedule and venue of the interview was stated. The participants of the study affixed their signature in the consent letter, informing the researcher that they are willing to participate in the research endeavor.

In the data collection of data, focused group discussion was conducted. A venue and the time of the said activity was agreed both by the researcher and the participants of the study. The participants of the study were given a chance to choose the venue and schedule of the focused group discussion according to the convenience of the research participants. In the conduct of focused group discussion, the researcher sought permit from the local Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF). During the focused group discussion, proper health protocol will be observed such as wearing of face mask, wearing of face shield, and observing physical distancing.

In the conduct of the focused group discussion, the researcher was able to get deep insights from research participants regarding their experiences, challenges and issues in teaching reading and the intervention scheme they implement. The focused group discussion was designed to create a comfortable environment where respondents feel free to share their opinions, beliefs, perceptions, and attitudes.

During the focused group discussion, the researcher did the following in order to get appropriate information from the participants of the study. First, the focused group discussion started with some small talk in order to feel comfortable with each other. Then, the researcher established rapport with the participants of the study. After which, the researcher discussed to the participants the purpose of the study. Then, the researcher asked questions to the participants, using the interview guide.

The researcher took down notes of the answers of the participants during the focused group discussion. The researcher recorded the answers of the research participants through an audio-recorder.

**Treatment of the Data.** The process of data analysis started at the outset of field work, focusing on transcribed interviews, field notes were made during and after interviews. The steps in analyzing data as proposed by Lichtman (2009) was observed by the researcher.

The data gathered were transcribed, themes were formulated, categorized and analyzed. In analyzing the data, the following steps were followed by the researcher. First was the preparation and organizing of the gathered data. Transcriptions of the interview were printed. The field notes were used. The researcher marked the source, any demographics that have collected, or any other information that helped in analyzing the data. Next step was to review and explore the data. This required the researcher to read the data several times, to get a sense of what it contains. The third step was creating initial codes. The researcher used highlighters that helped to connect with the data gathered. Next step was reviewing those codes and revise or combine into themes. Identified recurring themes, language, opinions, and beliefs. Lastly, presented themes in a cohesive manner. The researcher considered the readers of the study and participants of the study, the purpose of the study, and what content should be included to best tell the story of the data.

### III. Results and Discussion

#### The Experiences of Grade 2 Teachers in Teaching Reading During Pandemic

Table 1  
 The Experiences of Grade 2 Teachers in Teaching Reading During Pandemic

Significant Statements	Emergent Theme
...most tough and formidable task...	Challenging Experience
...most tough and formidable task...	
...great challenge to us teachers..	
It's really hard;	
more challenging...	
it is really hard..	
Teaching reading during pandemic is not easy....	
Teaching reading in this time of pandemic was challenging.	
Being a teacher is not an easy task..	
trying time we are facing at the moment...	
having most difficult times...	
New normal in education has been very challenging...	
Imparting knowledge to young learners made it challenging...	
..frustrating and stressful teaching reading during pandemic...	
...quite challenging for me as a public school teacher...	
Teaching reading during pandemic requires more effort...	
..teaching reading during this pandemic is more difficult...	
...it difficult in coming up with the desired number of learning facilitators....	
Teaching reading during this time of pandemic is not easy...	
Teachers need to exert more effort in teaching..	
...it is difficult especially that there are a lot of protocols to be followed...	
...great challenged for us teachers; great challenged for us teachers...	

Based on the interview conducted, it was revealed that the experience of the Grade 2 teachers in teaching reading during pandemic was considered as a challenging one. This findings is supported by the statement of Freitag (2021), who reiterated that the pandemic will worsen reading problem.

Here are the significant statement of research participants regarding their challenging experience: most tough and formidable task; great challenge to us teachers; It's really hard; more challenging; it is really hard; Teaching reading during pandemic is not easy; Teaching reading in

this time of pandemic was challenging; Being a teacher is not an easy task; trying time we are facing at the moment; having most difficult times; New normal in education has been very challenging; Imparting knowledge to young learners made it challenging; frustrating and stressful teaching reading during pandemic; quite challenging for me as a public school teacher; Teaching reading during pandemic requires more effort; teaching reading during this pandemic is more difficult; it difficult in coming up with the desired number of learning facilitators; Teaching reading during this time of pandemic is not easy ; Teachers need to exert more effort in teaching; it is difficult especially that there are a lot of protocols to be followed; great challenged for us teachers; great challenged for us teachers.

### Issues/Challenges Encountered of the Grade 2 Teachers in Teaching Reading During Pandemic

Table 2  
 Issues/Challenges Encountered of the Grade 2 Teachers in Teaching Reading During Pandemic

Significant Statements	Emergent Theme
..parents but cannot facilitate them in reading for the reason of being uneducated...	Parents' Incapability to Teach Their Children Due to Educational Background
..some parents does not have teaching- reading skills...	
..lack of knowledge to academically guide their child...	
...some parents are lack of knowledge to guide their child..	
..having illiterate parents who cannot support them..	
...some parents are illiterate and some knows only basic information..	
..they cannot really teach their child very well...	
...can't teach their child; parents cannot perform their duties in teaching their children. It could be that they are busy with their livelihood or some really don't know how to read as well..	
...and difficult to act as learning facilitator with their children...	
...pupils are less motivated to learn...	Low Learning Motivation Among Pupils
..lack of interest to learn..	
..struggling in reading has lesser interest in reading..	
...pupil, seemed poor motivation..	
..are lack of focus, motivation and attention span...	
Pupils are less interested in reading at home...	
...and most of the learners have lost their interest in reading...	Teachers' Time Constraints in Facilitating, Assessing and Monitoring Pupils Learning
.. teachers couldn't find more time to guide every learners in their reading endeavors..	
...teacher-related problem is time...	
...limit teaching them face to face and in fact there is no time...	
.. lack of time to monitor all the struggling readers...	
.. lack of time to monitor struggling learners due to conflict with school works and school reports needs to be finish..	
...and the limited time the teacher give during and conducting home visitation...	



Several themes have been formulated based on the answers of the research participants regarding issues/challenges encountered of the Grade 2 teachers in teaching reading during pandemic. However, only three (3) of these dominantly emerged and they were the following: Parents' Incapability to Teach Their Children Due to Educational Background, Teachers' Time Constraints in Facilitating, Assessing and Monitoring Pupils Learning, and Low Learning Motivation Among Pupils.

The significant statement of the Grade 2 pupils for the formulated theme on "Parents' Incapability to Teach Their Children Due to Educational Background" are the following: parents but cannot facilitate them in reading for the reason of being uneducated; some parents does not have teaching- reading skills; lack of knowledge to academically guide their child; some parents are lack of knowledge to guide their child; having illiterate parents who cannot support them; some parents are illiterate and some knows only basic information; they cannot really teach their child very well; can't teach their child; parents cannot perform their duties in teaching their children. It could be that they are busy with their livelihood or some really don't know how to read as well; and difficult to act as learning facilitator with their children.

Another emergent theme was "Low Learning Motivation Among Pupils" and the significant statement of the research participants were the following: pupils are less motivated to learn; lack of interest to learn; lack of interest to learn; Pupils struggling in reading has lesser interest in reading; pupil, seemed poor motivation; are lack of focus, motivation and attention span; Pupils are less interested in reading at home; and most of the learners have lost their interest in reading. This findings is supported by Labastida (2021) who stated that with these school closures, learners are experiencing what UNICEF terms "learning loss." Learning motivation is consistently deteriorating wherein the reading abilities of the learners are at risk of continuous decline.

The third emergent theme was "Teachers' Time Constraints in Facilitating, Assessing and Monitoring Pupils Learning". The findings of the present study is parallel with the findings of the study of Lizana and Vega-Fernandez (2021), which revealed that total of 78.7% of teachers reported having increased their work hours during the COVID-19 pandemic due to teleworking. The significant statements for this theme were: teachers couldn't find more time to guide every learners in their reading endeavors; teacher-related problem is time; limit teaching them face to face and in fact there is no time; lack of time to monitor all the struggling readers; lack of time to monitor struggling learners due to conflict with school works and school reports needs to be finish; and the limited time the teacher give during and conducting home visitation.

## The Intervention Schemes Implemented by the Grade 2 Teachers in Teaching Reading During Pandemic

Table 3  
 The Intervention Schemes Implemented by the Grade 2 Teachers  
 in Teaching Reading During Pandemic

Significant Statements	Emergent Theme
...loaded with various learning and reading resources/ materials...	Providing Pupils with Varied Reading Materials
Provide reading resources on various reading level..	
Use of interactive reading resource..	
Provide all of them some reading materials...	
..by giving them reading materials suited to their reading skill...	
..provided them with reading materials that they can use in reading at home...	
Innovative learning materials there are learning materials that are more flexible..	
A lot of reading materials to be printed and distribute it to each pupils...	
I give them reading materials..	
...innovative reading material..	
.. and give various reading materials to independent...	
...teachers give reading materials aside from self- learning modules...	
..given reading materials that are suited to their reading level..	
... giving the reading materials...	
..giving reading materials suited to pupil's reading level...	
...provided reading materials suited to their needs...	
Intensifying the monitoring of learners using the individual monitoring tool..	Intensified Monitoring of Pupils Learning
Reading Monitoring ( Home Visitation)...	
.. constant monitoring to the struggling readers....	
... monitor our struggling and to always stay connected...	Home Visitation
.... I go to the pupils' house. Before it is easy to monitor the pupils' needs and progress cause I can monitor them every time when they go to school but when the pandemic hits it's hard to monitor their progress.	
... conduct home visitation, monitoring...	
.... the pupil to be in school one at a time just to monitor...	
.. came up with scheduled home visitation program where we visit and monitor our learners at their homes..	



Based on the obtained information from the interview conducted, there were three (3) emergent themes formulated. The theme that dominated the most was “Providing Pupils with Varied Reading Materials”. Then the second theme was “Intensified Monitoring of Pupils Learning”. And the last dominant theme was “Home Visitation”. Among these three (3) themes formulated, the most dominating was “Providing Pupils with Varied Reading Materials”. This means that teachers are very much innovative and determined in seeking solutions to the challenges they experienced in teaching the pupils how to read.

The following were the significant statements of the Grade 2 teachers about “Providing Pupils with Varied Reading Materials”: loaded with various learning and reading resources/materials; Provide reading resources on various reading level; Use of interactive reading resource; Provide all of them some reading materials; by giving them reading materials suited to their reading skill; provided them with reading materials that they can use in reading at home; Innovative learning materials there are learning materials that are more flexible; A lot of reading materials to be printed and distribute it to each pupils; I give them reading materials; innovative reading material; and give various reading materials to independent; teachers give reading materials aside from self-learning modules; given reading materials that are suited to their reading level; giving the reading materials; giving reading materials suited to pupil’s reading level. provided reading materials suited to their needs.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

Based on the result of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The Grade 2 teachers experienced challenges in teaching reading during pandemic.
2. The most common challenges encountered by the Grade 2 teachers in teaching reading were on the parents’ incapability to teach their children due to educational background, teachers’ time constraints in facilitating, assessing and monitoring pupils learning, and low learning motivation among pupils.
3. To overcome challenges in teaching reading among Grade 2 pupils, the teachers employed interventions schemes.
4. The most common intervention scheme utilized by the Grade 2 teachers was providing Pupils with varied reading material.

#### **V. Recommendation**

Based on the findings and conclusion being formulated, the following are recommended:

1. Pupils may be exposed to varied instructional reading materials.
2. Teachers may use varied instructional reading materials to develop and improve the reading skills of pupils and provided with varied instructional reading materials that can be brought at home so that they can have the chance to practice reading at home.

3. Teachers may have a quarterly monitoring and evaluation of the reading level of pupils.
4. School heads may allocate appropriate fund through MOOE to the different programs and activities to address the challenges encountered by the Grade 2 teachers in teaching reading during pandemic.
5. Conduct an orientation to all Grade 2 teachers on the different reading strategies applicable during pandemic.
6. Further studies on other districts is hereby encourage and recommended to support a refute the result of the study.

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She graduated her Baccalaureate Degree in Visayas State University- Villaba Campus with the Degree Bachelor in Elementary Education. And proceed with her Masteral Program at Western Leyte College of Ormoc City with the Degree of Master of Arts in Education, major in Filipino.

Her passion towards teaching pushed her to be one of the best Grade 2 teachers in the District of Leyte 1. Currently, she was awarded as “Outstanding Teacher” during PASIDUNGOG in the Municipality of Leyte.