



BEHIND CHALKBOARDS: TEACHERS' NARRATIVE ON INSTRUCTIONAL CHALLENGES IN LANGUAGE AND READING

Mark Loyd G. Roxas

ABSTRACT

This phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of Grade 1 teachers in teaching language and reading literacy in Buhangin West District, Division of Davao City. Specifically, it focused on the instructional challenges encountered by teachers, the coping strategies they employed, and the insights derived to improve literacy instruction. A qualitative phenomenological research design was utilized involving purposively selected Grade 1 teachers with direct experience in language and reading literacy instruction. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed that teachers experienced challenges related to limited instructional resources, diverse learner needs, curriculum demands, and insufficient parental involvement. To cope with these challenges, teachers utilized instructional adaptation strategies, professional development and peer collaboration, and organizational coping mechanisms. The study further revealed that improving literacy instruction requires sustained and context-responsive training, curriculum and resource enhancement, and stronger administrative and community engagement. Despite the challenges encountered, teachers demonstrated adaptability, resilience, and commitment in supporting learners' literacy development. Based on the findings, the study recommends strengthening teacher professional development programs, enhancing curriculum and instructional resources, and promoting collaborative support among schools, parents, and community stakeholders to improve language and reading literacy instruction.

KEYWORDS: Sustainable Household Practices, Environmental Awareness, Resource Conservation, Sustainability Education, Senior High School Learners

I. INTRODUCTION

The Problem and its Setting

Language and reading literacy are fundamental components of early childhood education, as they serve as the foundation for learners' academic achievement and lifelong learning. The development of literacy skills during the primary years is essential in helping children acquire the ability to communicate effectively, comprehend information, and participate actively in classroom learning. In the K to 12 curriculum, Grade 1 serves as a crucial stage where learners begin to develop foundational reading competencies such as phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, comprehension, and reading fluency. Teachers therefore play a significant role in ensuring that learners receive effective literacy instruction that supports their cognitive, linguistic, and academic growth.

Early literacy instruction has increasingly become a major concern in many educational systems due to the instructional challenges experienced by teachers in handling diverse learners and delivering effective reading instruction. The growing demands of literacy education require teachers to address varying learner abilities, limited instructional resources, insufficient parental support, overcrowded classrooms, and curriculum expectations. These challenges often hinder teachers' capacity to provide quality language and reading literacy instruction, particularly at the foundational level where learners require intensive guidance and intervention. As literacy serves as the basis for future academic success, addressing these instructional difficulties has become a priority among educators, school leaders, and policymakers.

This study explores the instructional challenges encountered by Grade 1 public school teachers in language and reading literacy instruction within Buhangin West District, Division of Davao City. It seeks to examine how teachers experience and manage the realities of early literacy instruction amid diverse learner needs, limited teaching resources, and institutional demands. The study also aims to identify the barriers that affect the delivery of effective reading instruction and determine the strategies teachers utilize to support learners' literacy development. By documenting the lived experiences of Grade 1 teachers, this study intends to provide a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding literacy instruction at the foundational level. Understanding these instructional challenges may help educators, administrators, and policymakers formulate responsive interventions, strengthen literacy programs, and improve instructional practices that promote better learning outcomes among learners.

In many countries, teachers continue to experience challenges in delivering effective literacy instruction due to inadequate resources, poor learning environments, and increasing instructional demands. In Nigeria, teachers encounter difficulties such as poor classroom conditions, severe shortages of textbooks, learners' inadequate language competence, misconceptions about the value of reading, excessive workloads, and limited parental support. Among these challenges, the lack of textbooks remains one of the most significant barriers affecting the quality of reading instruction (Ugwu, 2022). In Nepal, teachers struggle with implementing student-centered learning approaches, navigating curriculum demands, overcoming limited teaching resources, and handling overcrowded



classrooms. To address these concerns, educators utilize vocabulary development activities, alternative teaching methods, interactive instructional approaches, and learner motivation strategies to improve English language instruction (Singh, 2024).

Globally, teachers are also burdened with numerous administrative responsibilities in addition to classroom instruction. These responsibilities consume a considerable amount of time and contribute to increased stress and workload among teachers. Aside from classroom management and assessment preparation, teachers are expected to design engaging lesson plans aligned with curriculum standards and implement innovative teaching strategies that improve student achievement. Consequently, many teachers experience pressure in balancing instructional responsibilities with administrative demands (Hegwood, 2023).

In Pretoria, South Africa, low reading achievement among learners is strongly associated with limited access to suitable reading materials and the absence of a strong reading culture. Learners struggle to engage in reading activities when reading is not prioritized and when educational resources are insufficient. In addition, ineffective implementation of reading programs and inadequate learner support significantly affect language and reading literacy instruction. Without well-structured reading programs and proper guidance, learners often lose interest in reading, negatively affecting their literacy development and overall academic growth (Thage et al., 2021).

In the Philippines, numerous factors contribute to the instructional challenges encountered in teaching reading at the elementary level. These include insufficient reading elements, inclusion of learners-at-risk, low learner interest in reading, teacher incompetence, shortage of reading materials and facilities, limited parental involvement, and learners' health-related concerns (Librea et al., 2023). These factors continue to affect the quality of literacy instruction and contribute to learners' poor reading performance in public elementary schools.

In Cavite Province, teachers experience challenges related to gaps in language learning standards, inadequate instructional support, varying learner literacy readiness, and deficiencies in teachers' instructional competence and strategies (Bastida et al., 2022). Similarly, in Aurora Province, the implementation of Department of Education reading programs is often neglected because some teachers resort to shortcuts in program execution. As a result, learners encounter inequalities in literacy skills caused by unstructured and uninteresting reading environments, making it difficult for them to cope with the reading demands in school (Tomas et al., 2021).

In Davao City, teachers face numerous challenges in teaching reading, including inadequate training, large class sizes, insufficient reading resources, limited parental involvement, and gaps in teacher expertise. Teachers also identified learners' poor phonemic awareness, pronunciation difficulties, the need for continuous professional development, and challenges in applying scaffolding strategies effectively. Although teachers attempt to create and adapt instructional materials, these resources often remain insufficient to support effective reading instruction. Consequently, teachers maximize the use of locally available materials to supplement literacy instruction (Jumawid, 2024).

The ability to deliver effective language and reading literacy instruction is essential in ensuring learners' academic success and long-term educational development. As the Department of Education continues to strengthen literacy programs and implement the K to 12 curriculum, teachers are expected to address the diverse literacy needs of learners while maintaining effective instructional delivery. However, there remains a need to examine how Grade 1 teachers manage instructional difficulties in actual classroom settings, particularly in public schools where literacy challenges are more evident. Understanding these realities is necessary in identifying interventions that can support teachers and improve foundational literacy instruction.

In Buhangin West District, Division of Davao City, Grade 1 public school teachers continue to experience instructional challenges in teaching language and reading literacy. Despite the implementation of national literacy programs and curriculum reforms, teachers encounter difficulties associated with large class sizes, diverse learner backgrounds, varying learner readiness, insufficient instructional materials, and limited parental involvement. Since the district serves as an important foundation for early childhood education, the instructional challenges experienced by teachers may significantly affect learners' reading proficiency and overall academic performance.

Despite the growing body of literature on literacy instruction, there remains limited localized and teacher-centered research focusing specifically on the lived experiences of Grade 1 teachers in Buhangin West District. Many instructional barriers encountered by teachers remain underreported and insufficiently addressed. This lack of localized studies limits the capacity of educators, school administrators, and policymakers to develop context-responsive interventions that address the actual needs of teachers and learners in the district. Therefore, there is a need to conduct an in-depth investigation into the instructional challenges experienced by Grade 1 teachers in language and reading literacy instruction within Buhangin West District, Division of Davao City.

The findings of this study may contribute to improving literacy instruction by providing empirical data regarding the instructional challenges encountered by Grade 1 teachers. The study may serve as a valuable reference for educators, school leaders, curriculum developers, and policymakers in designing responsive literacy interventions, enhancing teacher support systems, and strengthening reading programs at the foundational level. Furthermore, the study may contribute to the development of effective literacy practices that promote learners' reading proficiency, academic success, and overall educational development.

Statement of the Problem

Specifically, this study answered the following questions:



1. How do Grade 1 teachers experience instructional challenges in teaching language and reading literacy?
2. How do Grade 1 teachers cope with the challenges encountered in language and reading literacy instruction?
3. What insights can be derived from the lived experiences of Grade 1 teachers to improve language and reading literacy instruction?

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to explore the instructional challenges experienced by Grade 1 teachers in teaching language and reading literacy in Buhangin West District, Division of Davao City. Specifically, it sought to:

1. Determine how Grade 1 teachers experience instructional challenges in teaching language and reading literacy;
2. Examine how Grade 1 teachers cope with the challenges encountered in language and reading literacy instruction; and
3. Identify the insights derived from the lived experiences of Grade 1 teachers that may help improve language and reading literacy instruction.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically grounded in a phenomenological approach. Qualitative research is a method that explores and provides deeper insights into real-world phenomena, capturing experiences that are often complex and context-dependent (Tenny, et al., 2022). The primary objective of this design was to explore and describe the lived experiences of Grade 1 teachers as they navigated instructional challenges in language and reading literacy. Through this approach, the study aimed to uncover how teachers perceived, responded to, and made sense of the difficulties, resource limitations, and curricular demands they encountered in teaching early literacy.

The use of phenomenology allowed the researcher to gain in-depth insights into teachers' personal and contextual interpretations of their instructional experiences, particularly as influenced by class size, learner diversity, available teaching resources, professional development opportunities, and administrative and community support. By focusing on teachers' narratives, this approach helped illuminate not only the challenges and coping strategies they employed, but also the practical and emotional aspects of delivering effective language and reading literacy instruction.

The procedure of the study involved identifying public elementary schools in Buhangin West District, Division of Davao City, where Grade 1 teachers provided foundational reading and language instruction. After obtaining formal permissions from the Division of City Schools and school administrators, the researcher coordinated with school principals to identify participants who met the study criteria, including teachers with at least one year of Grade 1 literacy teaching experience.

One-on-one, semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect qualitative data. Each interview was scheduled at a time convenient for the participants and took place in a quiet and private setting within the school to ensure comfort and openness. With participants' consent, interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim for thematic analysis. Throughout the process, the researcher maintained a reflexive journal to track insights, reflections, biases, and emerging patterns, ensuring that data interpretation remained faithful to the participants' lived experiences.

Participants

This study involved a total of ten (10) Grade 1 public school teachers from selected elementary schools in Buhangin West District, Division of Davao City, Region XI. The participants were purposely selected because they were currently teaching Grade 1 language and reading literacy and were therefore well-positioned to provide authentic insights into the instructional challenges they faced in delivering foundational reading and language lessons.

According to Creswell (2018), qualitative studies, particularly those using phenomenological designs, typically involve a small number of participants, often between 5 to 25, to allow for in-depth exploration of lived experiences. Selecting ten (10) participants allowed me to balance depth and manageability, providing sufficient diversity in experiences while ensuring that each participant's narrative could be thoroughly analyzed. Their lived experiences provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of current teaching strategies, the relevance of available resources, and the applicability of coping mechanisms in promoting language and reading literacy among Grade 1 learners.

The inclusion criteria ensured that each participant (1) currently taught Grade 1 in one of the identified schools, (2) had at least three years of experience in early literacy instruction, and (3) expressed willingness to participate in the study. By focusing on these participants, the study captured both the depth and richness of teachers' professional experiences, allowing for a thorough exploration of instructional challenges, coping strategies, and contextual factors influencing early literacy teaching in the district. This approach ensured that the data were grounded in authentic classroom realities and aligned with the study's goal of providing actionable insights for improving language and reading literacy instruction.

Data Gathering Procedure



Data collection in this study followed a structured process to ensure systematic and ethical gathering of information. I began by requesting formal permission from the Dean of the Graduate School to conduct the study. Upon receiving approval, I sought endorsement from the Schools Division Superintendent of Davao City to request authorization to conduct the study in selected elementary schools within Buhangin West District. Once approval was granted by the division office, I coordinated with school principals to identify and schedule interviews with Grade 1 teachers during their free periods or designated times to avoid disrupting classroom activities.

Following the approval of the interview protocol, I selected participants through purposive sampling, which allowed me to deliberately include teachers who met the study's inclusion criteria, including currently teaching Grade 1, having at least three years of experience in early literacy instruction, and expressing willingness to participate. Prior to the interviews, I conducted an orientation session with the selected participants to explain the study's objectives, their role as participants, the voluntary nature of their participation, and the measures I took to ensure confidentiality and ethical protection. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before the interviews proceeded.

Data collection primarily involved semi-structured, one-on-one interviews guided by the validated interview protocol. Each interview lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes and took place in a quiet, safe, and private space within the school to ensure comfort and openness. Where necessary, virtual interviews were offered through secure online platforms. With participants' consent, the interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy and completeness. I also took field notes during each session to capture non verbal cues and contextual observations. After completing the interviews, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim and prepared for thematic analysis. This process allowed me to identify recurring themes, gain deeper insight into teachers' lived experiences, and draw meaningful conclusions about the instructional challenges and strategies employed in early literacy teaching.

Data Analysis

The data gathered from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, a widely utilized method for examining qualitative data that provides a structured yet flexible framework for identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (Ahmed et al., 2025). After the interviews were transcribed verbatim, I read and re-read the transcripts to become fully immersed in the content. This phase helped me develop familiarity with the participants' responses and gain a preliminary understanding of recurring ideas, language, and experiences related to instructional challenges in Grade 1 language and reading literacy.

Following this familiarization stage, I generated initial codes by systematically highlighting significant statements relevant to the research questions. These codes represented recurring patterns such as instructional difficulties, classroom management strategies, resource constraints, or reflections on teaching practices. Once coded, I organized the codes into broader themes reflecting the core elements of the participants' lived experiences. These themes included challenges in implementing reading strategies, coping mechanisms for diverse learner needs, and the impact of resource availability on instructional effectiveness.

The emerging themes were continuously reviewed and refined to ensure clarity, coherence, and direct support from the data. I ensured each theme was distinctive, non-overlapping, and meaningfully addressed the research objectives. Representative quotes from participants were selected to illustrate and support the findings.

Throughout data analysis, I practiced reflexivity, reflecting on personal assumptions and potential biases to ensure an objective interpretation of teachers' voices. The final analysis presented a detailed narrative of participants' experiences, challenges, and perspectives, offering valuable insights into how Grade 1 teachers navigate instructional difficulties and implement strategies to support language and reading literacy.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Lived Experiences of Grade 1 Teachers in Teaching Language and Reading Literacy

The findings of the study revealed that the lived experiences of Grade 1 teachers in teaching language and reading literacy were characterized by four major themes: (1) training on contents, (2) curriculum support, (3) administrative support, and (4) community support. These themes demonstrate that effective literacy instruction extends beyond classroom teaching and involves continuous professional development, curricular guidance, institutional leadership, and collaborative partnerships with families and communities. The findings further suggest that teachers' ability to facilitate language acquisition and reading development is influenced by the availability of support systems that strengthen instructional competence, professional confidence, and responsiveness to learners' diverse educational needs.

First, the study highlighted the importance of training on contents in shaping teachers' experiences in teaching language and reading literacy. Participants emphasized that professional development opportunities enhanced their knowledge of phonics, reading strategies, storytelling, and literacy instruction, enabling them to address learners' needs more effectively. Through training programs and instructional workshops, teachers gained greater confidence in implementing literacy activities and making informed instructional decisions in the classroom. The findings also revealed that teachers value continuous and practice-oriented learning opportunities that



allow them to strengthen their pedagogical skills and apply effective literacy strategies in real classroom situations. Participants expressed the need for more hands-on workshops and sustained professional development initiatives to deepen their understanding of literacy instruction and improve classroom practices. These experiences indicate that training serves as an essential foundation for enhancing teachers' instructional competence, professional growth, and effectiveness in supporting learners' language and reading development.

Second, the findings revealed the significant role of curriculum support in guiding literacy instruction and classroom implementation. Teachers described the curriculum as an important framework that provides direction for lesson organization, learning progression, and instructional planning. Curriculum guidance enabled participants to structure literacy lessons more effectively and monitor learners' progress in language and reading development. However, the findings also demonstrated that teachers frequently adapt curricular expectations to address classroom realities, learner diversity, and resource limitations. Participants acknowledged that effective curriculum implementation requires flexibility and professional judgment to ensure that lessons remain relevant and responsive to learners' needs. Furthermore, access to curriculum-aligned instructional materials was identified as a critical factor in improving teaching effectiveness and learner engagement. These findings suggest that curriculum support contributes to the successful delivery of literacy instruction by providing teachers with structure, guidance, and resources while allowing them to adapt instruction according to contextual demands.

Third, the study highlighted the influence of administrative support on teachers' professional experiences and literacy instruction practices. Participants emphasized that supportive school leadership helped them manage workloads, focus on instructional responsibilities, and maintain motivation in their teaching roles. School administrators were perceived as important sources of guidance, encouragement, and professional support that contributed to a more positive and productive teaching environment. The findings also revealed that recognition of teachers' efforts and accomplishments strengthened their commitment to improving literacy instruction and addressing learners' educational needs. In addition, participants noted that administrative encouragement of collaboration and professional sharing fostered stronger relationships among teachers and created opportunities for collective learning and instructional improvement. These experiences demonstrate that supportive leadership plays a vital role in promoting teacher well-being, professional growth, and instructional effectiveness within literacy education.

Furthermore, the findings emphasized the importance of community support in strengthening language and reading literacy instruction. Participants described parental involvement, community collaboration, and external resource support as essential factors that contribute to learners' literacy development and classroom success. Teachers noted that supportive parents help reinforce reading habits at home, making it easier to monitor learners' progress and encourage consistent literacy practices. Community-based initiatives such as book drives and literacy programs were also recognized for providing valuable instructional resources and addressing limitations in classroom materials. Moreover, collaboration among schools, families, and local organizations increased teachers' motivation and enhanced the overall effectiveness of literacy programs. These findings illustrate that literacy development is a shared responsibility that extends beyond the classroom and is strengthened when schools and communities work together to support learners' educational growth.

In summary, the findings confirmed that the lived experiences of Grade 1 teachers in teaching language and reading literacy involve continuous adaptation, professional commitment, and collaboration with multiple support systems. The participants highlighted the importance of professional training, curriculum guidance, administrative leadership, and community involvement in strengthening literacy instruction and addressing the diverse needs of learners. The study further revealed that effective literacy education is shaped not only by instructional strategies but also by the availability of institutional and external support that enhances teacher preparedness, instructional quality, and learner outcomes. Consequently, successful language and reading literacy instruction requires a collaborative and supportive educational environment that empowers teachers to foster meaningful literacy development among young learners.



Lived Experiences of Grade 1 Teachers in Teaching Language and Reading Literacy	Training on Contents	Professional development in phonics and reading strategies	Confidence-building through instructional training	Continuous and hands-on learning opportunities
	Curriculum Support	Curriculum guidance and lesson organization	Adaptation of curriculum to classroom realities	Access to instructional materials and standards alignment
	Administrative Support	Financial Literacy and Resource Utilization	Leadership and Decision-Making	Community-Based Economic Participation
	Community Support	Parent involvement and home literacy practices	Community collaboration and literacy programs	Resource support from local organizations

Figure 1. Lived Experiences of Grade 1 Teachers in Teaching Language and Reading Literacy



Coping Strategies of Grade 1 Teachers in Managing Challenges

The findings of the study revealed that the coping strategies employed by Grade 1 teachers in managing challenges in language and reading literacy instruction were characterized by three major themes: (1) instructional adaptation strategies, (2) professional development and peer collaboration, and (3) organizational coping mechanisms. These themes demonstrate that effective literacy instruction requires not only pedagogical expertise but also adaptability, continuous learning, collaborative engagement, and institutional support. The findings further suggest that teachers' ability to address instructional demands and classroom challenges is strengthened through learner-centered practices, professional growth opportunities, and supportive organizational environments that promote resilience, confidence, and instructional effectiveness.

First, the study highlighted the importance of instructional adaptation strategies as a primary coping mechanism among Grade 1 teachers. Participants emphasized that literacy instruction requires continuous adjustment to accommodate learners' diverse abilities, learning needs, and classroom realities. Teachers described the use of differentiated and individualized instruction to ensure that both struggling and advanced learners remain actively engaged in literacy activities. They also emphasized the importance of scaffolding and contextualization techniques in helping learners understand concepts by connecting lessons to their experiences and backgrounds. Furthermore, participants demonstrated resourcefulness by improvising instructional materials, creating homemade worksheets, and utilizing visual aids when classroom resources were limited. These adaptive practices enabled teachers to maintain inclusive, engaging, and learner-centered literacy environments despite challenges such as large class sizes and insufficient instructional materials. The findings indicate that flexibility, creativity, and responsiveness to learner needs are essential strategies for sustaining effective language and reading literacy instruction.

Second, the findings revealed that professional development and peer collaboration serve as important coping strategies in addressing literacy instruction challenges. Teachers emphasized that continuous professional learning opportunities, including in-service trainings, workshops, and professional development programs, enhanced their instructional competence and improved their ability to implement effective literacy strategies. Through ongoing training, participants gained updated knowledge and strengthened their confidence in delivering reading and language instruction. The findings also highlighted the value of peer collaboration and reflective practice in supporting instructional improvement. Teachers described Learning Action Cell sessions and collaborative discussions as opportunities to exchange teaching strategies, receive constructive feedback, and reflect on classroom experiences. In addition, collegial support provided access to new ideas and innovative approaches for engaging learners in reading activities. These experiences demonstrate that collaborative professional environments foster continuous growth, strengthen instructional practices, and enhance teachers' capacity to manage classroom challenges effectively.

Furthermore, the study emphasized the significance of organizational coping mechanisms in supporting teachers' well-being and instructional performance. Participants described wellness programs, stress management initiatives, mentoring systems, and collegial relationships as valuable sources of emotional and professional support. These organizational structures helped teachers manage workload pressures, reduce stress, and maintain motivation despite the demands of literacy instruction. The findings also revealed that supportive colleagues provided practical advice, encouragement, and assistance in addressing instructional concerns, thereby strengthening teachers' resilience and problem-solving abilities. Moreover, a positive and supportive school climate increased teachers' confidence in implementing innovative teaching strategies and adapting to instructional changes. These experiences indicate that organizational support systems play a critical role in promoting emotional well-being, professional stability, and instructional effectiveness among teachers.

In summary, the findings confirmed that Grade 1 teachers employ a variety of coping strategies to manage the challenges associated with language and reading literacy instruction. The participants emphasized the importance of instructional adaptation, continuous professional development, peer collaboration, and organizational support in sustaining effective literacy teaching practices. The study further revealed that teachers continuously adjust their instructional approaches through differentiated instruction, contextualized learning, scaffolding techniques, and resource improvisation to ensure meaningful learning experiences for diverse learners. At the same time, professional learning communities, collegial collaboration, wellness initiatives, and supportive school environments contribute significantly to teachers' resilience, confidence, and professional commitment. Consequently, the findings demonstrate that effective literacy instruction is strengthened through the combined influence of adaptive teaching practices, collaborative professional engagement, and responsive organizational support systems that promote sustainable and high-quality literacy education among young learners.



Coping Strategies of Grade 1 Teachers in Managing Challenges

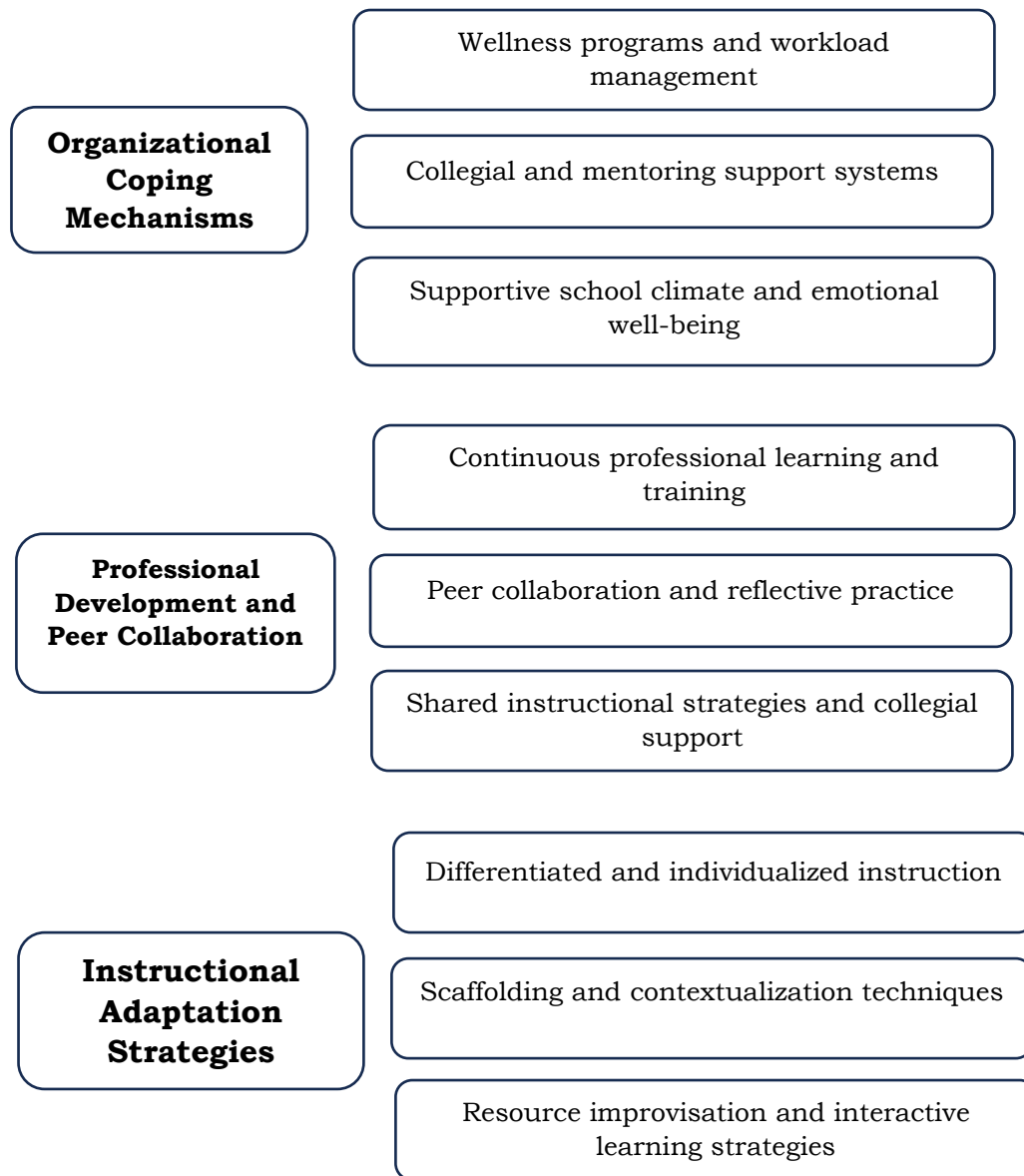


Figure 2. Coping Strategies of Grade 1 Teachers in Managing Challenges



Insights Shared by Grade 1 Teachers to Improve Language and Reading Literacy Instruction

The study revealed that the insights of Grade 1 teachers in improving language and reading literacy instruction were shaped by three major themes: (1) need for sustained and context-responsive training, (2) curriculum and resource enhancement, and (3) strengthening administrative and community engagement. These themes demonstrate that effective literacy instruction requires not only teachers' instructional competence but also continuous professional support, adequate learning resources, and strong collaboration among schools, families, and communities. The findings suggest that improving literacy outcomes among young learners depends on a comprehensive support system that addresses both instructional and environmental factors influencing literacy development.

First, the participants emphasized the need for sustained and context-responsive training. Teachers highlighted that professional development should not be limited to one-time seminars but should involve continuous learning opportunities that directly address classroom realities and instructional challenges. They expressed that ongoing training enables them to strengthen their literacy teaching skills, apply effective instructional strategies, and respond more confidently to the diverse needs of learners. Moreover, participants underscored the importance of coaching, mentoring, and follow-up support after training sessions, as these mechanisms help reinforce learning and improve classroom implementation. The findings indicate that teachers value professional development experiences that are practical, relevant, and responsive to the actual conditions of literacy instruction.

Second, the findings revealed the importance of curriculum and resource enhancement in improving literacy instruction. Participants emphasized that a clear, coherent, and well-structured curriculum provides guidance in organizing lessons and monitoring learners' reading development. They also highlighted the need for diverse instructional materials, such as leveled readers and varied reading resources, to support differentiated instruction and address the varying literacy levels of learners. Furthermore, teachers recognized the value of culturally responsive learning materials that allow learners to connect classroom lessons with their own experiences and backgrounds. These findings suggest that effective literacy instruction is strengthened when teachers are provided with accessible, relevant, and developmentally appropriate instructional resources that support meaningful learning experiences.

Another significant insight that emerged from the study is the need to strengthen administrative and community engagement. Participants emphasized that supportive school leadership plays an important role in enhancing their confidence, motivation, and effectiveness in delivering literacy instruction. They noted that clear guidance, encouragement, and instructional support from school administrators contribute to improved teaching practices and professional growth. In addition, teachers highlighted the importance of parental involvement in reinforcing literacy learning at home. Active participation of parents in reading activities and home-based literacy routines was perceived as essential in strengthening learners' reading skills and literacy habits. Participants likewise underscored the value of school-community partnerships in providing additional literacy opportunities, instructional resources, and support programs that extend learning beyond the classroom. These findings demonstrate that literacy development becomes more effective when schools, families, and communities work collaboratively toward shared educational goals.

Overall, the findings reveal that Grade 1 teachers view literacy improvement as a shared responsibility that requires continuous professional learning, strengthened curriculum support, and active stakeholder involvement. The participants recognized that sustained and context-responsive training enhances instructional competence, while improved curriculum structures and instructional resources support effective literacy teaching. At the same time, supportive school leadership, parental engagement, and community participation contribute significantly to creating a learning environment that promotes literacy development. Collectively, these insights highlight the importance of a holistic and collaborative approach to improving language and reading literacy instruction among Grade 1 learners.

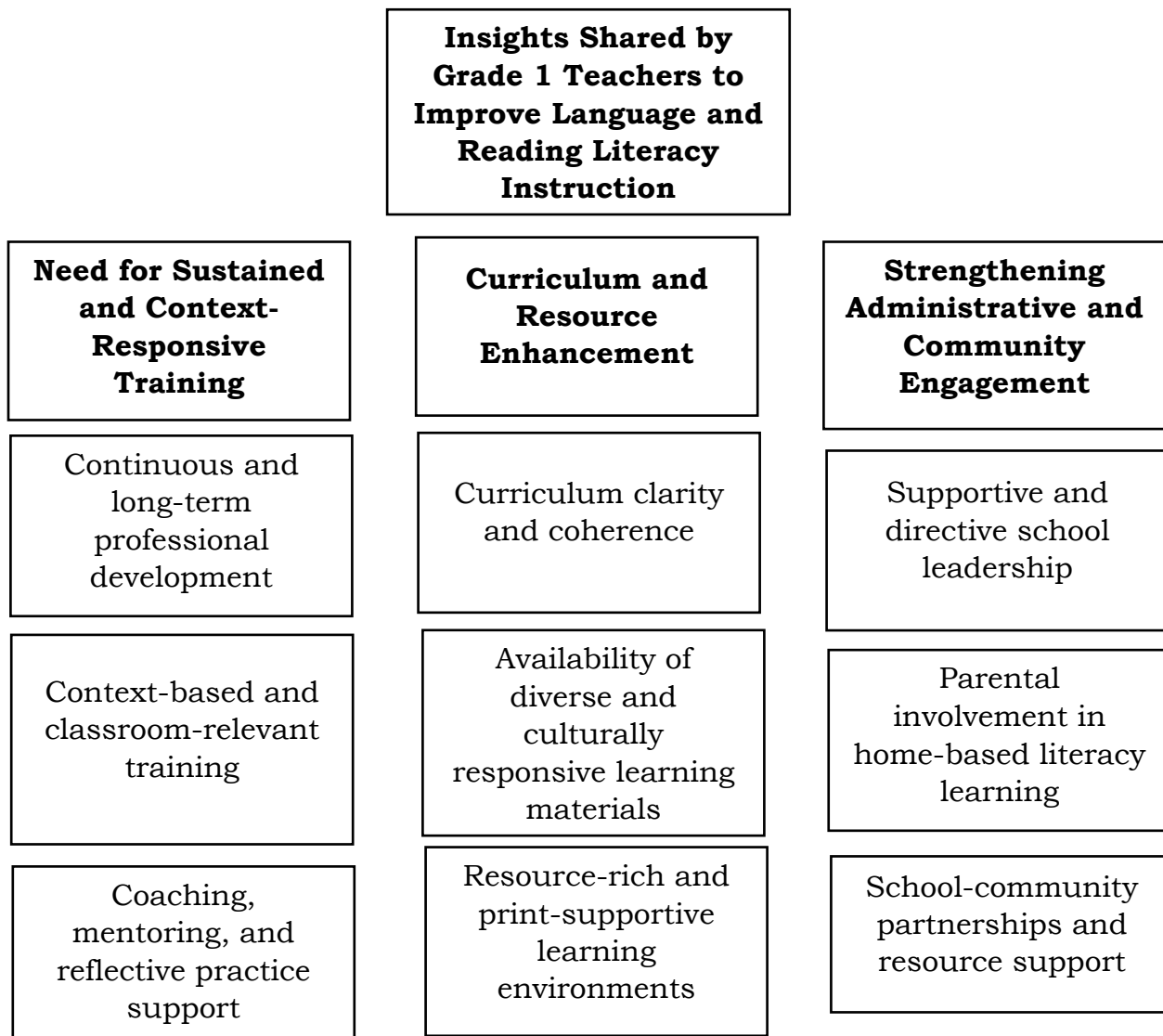


Figure 3. Insights Shared by Grade 1 Teachers to Improve Language and Reading Literacy Instruction.

IV. IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Implications

The findings of the study indicate that improving language and reading literacy instruction among Grade 1 teachers requires a holistic and systemic approach. Literacy instruction is not solely dependent on teacher effort but is significantly influenced by continuous professional development, curriculum quality, availability of instructional resources, administrative leadership, and community support.

1. Grade 1 teachers experience instructional challenges through limitations in professional preparation, curriculum implementation, availability of instructional resources, and varying learner needs. They encounter difficulties in addressing diverse literacy levels among learners, delivering effective reading instruction, and adapting teaching strategies when learning materials and support systems are insufficient. These challenges are further influenced by contextual factors such as administrative support and community involvement, which affect the overall effectiveness of literacy instruction.

2. Grade 1 teachers cope with these challenges by engaging in continuous professional development, adapting instructional strategies to meet learners' needs, and maximizing available resources. They participate in trainings and learning opportunities that enhance their instructional competence and confidence. Teachers also utilize contextualized and differentiated teaching approaches, collaborate with school administrators and colleagues, and seek support from parents and community stakeholders to strengthen literacy learning among their learners.



3. The lived experiences of Grade 1 teachers highlight that effective language and reading literacy instruction requires a comprehensive and collaborative approach. Key insights include the importance of sustained and context-responsive professional development, the provision of clear curricula and culturally relevant instructional materials, and the establishment of strong administrative and community support systems. The findings further reveal that literacy development is a shared responsibility among teachers, school leaders, parents, and the wider community. Improving literacy instruction therefore depends on empowering teachers, ensuring adequate instructional resources, and fostering meaningful partnerships that support learners' literacy development both inside and outside the classroom.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. Educational institutions should prioritize the implementation of sustained, context-responsive, and practice-based professional development programs for Grade 1 teachers. Training initiatives should move beyond one-time seminars and include coaching, mentoring, peer observations, and classroom-based follow-up activities that allow teachers to apply and refine literacy instruction strategies. Such programs should address current challenges in language and reading literacy instruction and provide teachers with opportunities to share best practices, reflect on their experiences, and continuously improve their instructional competence.

2. School administrators, curriculum planners, and education authorities should ensure that curriculum guides are clear, coherent, and developmentally appropriate for beginning readers. Curriculum materials should provide explicit guidance on literacy instruction, assessment practices, and the progression of reading skills. A well-aligned curriculum can help teachers deliver systematic and effective instruction while ensuring that learning objectives are attainable and responsive to learners' developmental needs.

3. Schools should invest in the provision of diverse, leveled, and culturally responsive reading materials that cater to different learner abilities and interests. Efforts should also be made to create print-rich classroom environments that encourage reading engagement and literacy development. Access to appropriate instructional resources, including storybooks, visual aids, literacy games, and digital learning materials, can significantly enhance teachers' ability to provide meaningful and differentiated literacy instruction.

4. School leaders should provide strong instructional leadership by offering teachers clear direction, continuous encouragement, and opportunities for professional collaboration. Administrative support may include manageable teaching workloads, access to teaching resources, recognition of teachers' efforts, and regular monitoring and feedback mechanisms. Creating a supportive school culture enables teachers to focus more effectively on improving literacy outcomes and addressing learners' diverse needs.

5. Parents and community stakeholders should be actively involved in supporting children's language and reading literacy development. Schools may organize literacy-related activities such as reading campaigns, storytelling sessions, parent orientation programs, and community-based reading initiatives that encourage literacy learning beyond the classroom. Strengthening partnerships among teachers, families, and community members can help create a consistent and supportive literacy environment that reinforces learners' reading habits and language development.

6. Future researchers are encouraged to conduct similar studies in different educational settings, grade levels, and subject areas to broaden the understanding of literacy instruction challenges and effective teaching practices. Further investigations may also explore the impact of emerging technologies, parental involvement, teacher preparation programs, and contextual factors on literacy development. Such studies can contribute to the development of evidence-based interventions and policies that support early language and reading literacy among learners.

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