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Structured Reading Interventions in Key Stage 1: Teachers' Experiences in Fostering Reading Fluency and Comprehension in Kasibu East District, Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya

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Abstract

Reading fluency and comprehension are fundamental literacy skills that serve as the foundation for learners' academic success and lifelong learning. In Key Stage 1, structured reading interventions provide systematic and targeted instructional support that enables beginning readers to develop decoding skills, reading accuracy, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Teachers play a vital role in implementing these interventions by designing responsive instructional activities that address the diverse literacy needs of young learners. This study explored the experiences of Key Stage 1 teachers in implementing structured reading interventions to foster reading fluency and comprehension in Kasibu East District, Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya. A qualitative phenomenological research design was employed involving ten Key Stage 1 teachers selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis and were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis. The findings revealed that teachers utilized differentiated reading instruction, repeated reading, phonics-based activities, guided reading, and continuous learner assessment to strengthen literacy development. Despite challenges related to learner diversity, limited instructional resources, parental support, and instructional time, teachers demonstrated creativity, resilience, and reflective practice in implementing reading interventions. The study highlights the importance of teacher expertise, family engagement, contextualized reading materials, and continuous professional development in strengthening early literacy instruction. The findings provide valuable insights for teachers, school leaders, curriculum developers, and policymakers in improving reading intervention programs for beginning readers.

Keywords: *structured reading interventions, reading fluency, reading comprehension, Key Stage 1, teachers' experiences, early literacy, phenomenology, qualitative research*



1. Introduction

Reading is one of the most essential literacy skills developed during the early years of schooling. It serves as the foundation for learning across all subject areas and enables learners to access knowledge, communicate effectively, and participate meaningfully in academic and social contexts. In Key Stage 1, learners are expected to develop foundational reading skills, including phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, reading fluency, and comprehension. Mastery of these skills allows young learners to transition from learning to read toward reading to learn, making early literacy instruction a critical component of elementary education.

To support beginning readers, schools implement structured reading interventions that provide systematic, explicit, and responsive instruction tailored to learners' reading needs. These interventions commonly include guided reading, repeated reading, phonics instruction, vocabulary development, oral reading activities, and comprehension strategies designed to improve learners' reading accuracy, fluency, and understanding of texts. Structured interventions provide additional opportunities for struggling readers to strengthen foundational literacy skills through continuous practice, feedback, and individualized support.

Teachers play a central role in the successful implementation of structured reading interventions. They assess learners' reading abilities, identify specific literacy needs, select appropriate instructional strategies, monitor learner progress, and provide targeted interventions that respond to varying levels of reading proficiency. Effective teachers also create supportive learning environments where learners develop confidence, motivation, and positive attitudes toward reading through engaging and meaningful literacy experiences.

Despite the importance of structured reading interventions, teachers continue to encounter several challenges in their implementation. Learners often demonstrate varying reading abilities, limited vocabulary, low reading motivation, inconsistent parental support, inadequate instructional materials, and insufficient time for individualized intervention. These realities require teachers to become innovative, resourceful, and reflective practitioners who continuously adapt their instructional approaches to meet the diverse needs of beginning readers while ensuring meaningful literacy development.

Although numerous studies have examined the effectiveness of structured reading interventions using quantitative approaches, relatively few qualitative investigations have explored teachers' lived experiences in implementing these interventions within Philippine public elementary schools. Understanding teachers' experiences provides valuable insights into effective instructional practices, implementation challenges, professional decision-

making, and contextual factors that influence reading instruction in authentic classroom settings.

Therefore, this study explored the experiences of Key Stage 1 teachers in implementing structured reading interventions to foster reading fluency and comprehension in Kasibu East District, Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya. The findings are expected to contribute to strengthening early literacy instruction, enhancing teacher professional development, informing reading intervention programs, and supporting educational policies that promote equitable literacy opportunities for all beginning readers.

4. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on **Scarborough's Reading Rope Theory** (2001), **The Simple View of Reading** by Gough and Tunmer (1986), **Social Constructivism** by Lev Vygotsky, and **Constructivist Learning Theory** by Jean Piaget. These theories provide the conceptual foundation for understanding teachers' experiences in implementing structured reading interventions to foster reading fluency and comprehension among Key Stage 1 learners.

Scarborough's Reading Rope Theory (2001) explains that skilled reading develops through the integration of two interconnected domains: **word recognition** (phonological awareness, decoding, and sight recognition) and **language comprehension** (background knowledge, vocabulary, language structures, verbal reasoning, and literacy knowledge). As these strands become increasingly interconnected through effective instruction and repeated practice, learners develop fluent reading and deeper comprehension. This framework highlights the importance of structured reading interventions that systematically strengthen both decoding skills and comprehension abilities.

The Simple View of Reading (Gough & Tunmer, 1986) posits that reading comprehension results from the interaction between **decoding** and **language comprehension**. Learners must accurately decode printed words while simultaneously understanding the meaning of language to become proficient readers. In structured reading interventions, teachers therefore provide explicit instruction in phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension strategies to address both dimensions of reading development. The theory underscores the need for balanced literacy instruction that supports learners with varying reading abilities.

Social Constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978) emphasizes that learning occurs through meaningful social interaction, guided participation, and collaborative learning. Within structured reading interventions, teachers scaffold learners' reading development through guided reading sessions, oral reading, questioning, peer-assisted learning, and immediate feedback. These interactions enable learners to gradually develop reading fluency,

comprehension, confidence, and independent reading skills while benefiting from teacher guidance and peer support.

Constructivist Learning Theory (Piaget, 1972) explains that learners actively construct knowledge by connecting new learning experiences with prior knowledge. Reading instruction becomes meaningful when learners engage with texts that relate to their experiences, interests, and cultural contexts. Teachers facilitate this process by selecting developmentally appropriate reading materials, encouraging active participation, and designing literacy activities that promote critical thinking, reflection, and comprehension.

Collectively, these theories explain how structured reading interventions support the development of reading fluency and comprehension through systematic instruction, guided practice, meaningful interaction, and learner-centered literacy experiences. They provide the theoretical basis for examining teachers' instructional practices, experiences, challenges, and strategies in implementing reading interventions among Key Stage 1 learners.

5. Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the experiences of Key Stage 1 teachers in implementing structured reading interventions to foster reading fluency and comprehension among learners in Kasibu East District, Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya. The phenomenological approach was selected because it seeks to understand the participants' lived experiences, perceptions, and meanings regarding the implementation of structured reading interventions within authentic classroom settings.

The study was conducted in selected public elementary schools in Kasibu East District, Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya. The participants consisted of ten (10) Key Stage 1 teachers handling Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2, and Grade 3 classes who had direct experience in implementing structured reading interventions. Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their teaching assignments, years of experience, and active involvement in literacy intervention programs.

Data were gathered using a researcher-developed semi-structured interview guide, complemented by classroom observations and document analysis. Reading intervention plans, lesson plans, learners' reading progress records, Phil-IRI results, reading assessment forms, and instructional materials were examined to triangulate the interview data. Prior to data collection, approval to conduct the study was secured from the Schools Division Office and the respective school heads. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants before individual interviews were conducted. Interviews were audio-recorded

with participants' permission, transcribed verbatim, and verified through member checking to ensure the credibility of the collected information.

The collected data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis, which involved familiarization with the data, coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. This systematic process enabled the identification of recurring themes that reflected teachers' instructional practices, classroom experiences, implementation challenges, and strategies in fostering reading fluency and comprehension.

To establish the trustworthiness of the findings, the researcher adopted the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Credibility was strengthened through member checking, prolonged engagement, and triangulation of interview, observation, and document analysis data. Dependability and confirmability were enhanced through peer debriefing and maintaining an audit trail, while transferability was supported through detailed descriptions of the participants, instructional context, and research setting.

Ethical principles were strictly observed throughout the conduct of the study. Permission to conduct the research was obtained from the appropriate educational authorities before data collection. Participation was voluntary, and all participants signed informed consent forms after being informed of the study's objectives, procedures, potential benefits, and possible risks. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained through the use of pseudonyms, and all collected information was securely stored and used solely for academic and research purposes.

6. Findings and Discussion

Theme 1: Delivering Differentiated and Structured Reading Instruction to Address Diverse Literacy Needs

The findings revealed that Key Stage 1 teachers implemented structured reading interventions by providing differentiated instruction that responded to learners' varying levels of reading proficiency. Participants explained that they grouped learners according to reading ability and utilized guided reading, phonics instruction, repeated reading, vocabulary enrichment, and individualized coaching to strengthen reading fluency and comprehension. Teachers emphasized that structured interventions allowed them to provide focused support while enabling learners to progress at their own pace.

Participant 2 shared:

"Not all learners read at the same level, so I group them according to their reading ability. This allows me to provide activities that match their needs and help them improve gradually."

Participant 7 stated:

"I combine phonics, guided reading, and repeated reading during intervention sessions. Through continuous practice, learners become more fluent and understand what they are reading better."

These responses demonstrate that differentiated and structured instruction enables teachers to address individual reading needs while promoting steady literacy development. Through systematic intervention, learners develop decoding skills, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension in a supportive learning environment. The findings support Scarborough's Reading Rope Theory, which emphasizes that skilled reading develops through the integration of word recognition and language comprehension. Likewise, the findings align with the Simple View of Reading, highlighting that reading comprehension improves when decoding skills and language understanding are developed simultaneously.

Theme 2: Building Learners' Confidence and Reading Motivation through Supportive Classroom Practices

The participants emphasized that creating a positive and encouraging classroom environment was essential in fostering learners' confidence and motivation to read. Teachers consistently provided encouragement, positive reinforcement, individualized feedback, and opportunities for successful reading experiences to reduce learners' anxiety and build self-confidence. They believed that emotionally supportive classrooms encouraged reluctant readers to participate actively in reading activities and gradually develop positive attitudes toward literacy.

Participant 4 explained:

"Many struggling readers are afraid of making mistakes. I always encourage them and praise every improvement because confidence helps them become more willing to read."

Participant 9 remarked:

"I celebrate even small reading achievements. When learners feel appreciated, they become excited to participate in reading activities and continue practicing."

These findings indicate that supportive teacher-learner relationships and positive reinforcement play a significant role in improving learners' reading engagement and persistence. By creating emotionally safe learning environments, teachers encourage learners to take risks, practice reading more frequently, and develop greater confidence in their literacy abilities. The findings support Vygotsky's Social Constructivism, which emphasizes that learning occurs through supportive social interaction and teacher guidance. They also reinforce Constructivist Learning Theory, which recognizes that meaningful

learning develops when learners actively engage in positive and authentic learning experiences that build confidence and understanding.

Theme 3: Addressing Reading Difficulties through Continuous Assessment and Responsive Instruction

The findings revealed that teachers viewed continuous assessment as an essential component of structured reading interventions. Participants regularly monitored learners' reading progress through oral reading assessments, observation, running records, comprehension questions, and reading progress checklists. Information gathered from these assessments guided teachers in modifying instructional strategies, regrouping learners, and providing individualized interventions based on learners' specific reading needs.

Participant 3 shared:

"I regularly assess my learners' reading performance because their progress tells me what skills still need improvement. Assessment helps me adjust my teaching immediately."

Participant 8 stated:

"Every learner progresses differently. I monitor their fluency and comprehension every week so I can prepare activities that match their current reading level."

These responses demonstrate that continuous assessment enables teachers to make informed instructional decisions that respond to learners' changing literacy needs. Ongoing monitoring allows teachers to identify reading difficulties early and provide timely interventions that strengthen reading fluency and comprehension. The findings support the **Simple View of Reading**, which emphasizes the need to continuously develop both decoding and language comprehension to achieve proficient reading.

Theme 4: Strengthening Reading Development through Family Engagement and Community Support

The participants emphasized that parental involvement and community collaboration significantly contributed to the success of structured reading interventions. Teachers regularly communicated with parents regarding learners' reading progress, provided home reading activities, and encouraged family members to participate in reading practice at home. They also collaborated with school reading coordinators, volunteers, and community stakeholders to expand learners' opportunities for meaningful literacy experiences.

Participant 1 explained:

"When parents regularly read with their children at home, learners become more confident and improve faster. Reading should continue beyond the classroom."

Participant 6 remarked:

"We constantly communicate with parents and encourage them to spend time reading with their children. Their support makes a big difference in learners' reading development."

These findings indicate that literacy development is strengthened when schools and families work collaboratively. Consistent reading experiences at home reinforce classroom instruction, improve learners' reading habits, and increase opportunities for practicing reading skills. The findings support **Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory**, which recognizes the interconnected influence of home, school, and community on children's learning and development. Collaborative partnerships create a more supportive literacy environment that promotes sustained reading growth.

Theme 5: Demonstrating Reflective Practice and Professional Commitment in Reading Intervention

The findings revealed that teachers continuously reflected on their instructional practices to improve the effectiveness of structured reading interventions. Participants regularly evaluated learners' progress, modified intervention strategies, shared successful practices with colleagues, and participated in Learning Action Cells (LACs), reading trainings, and professional development programs. They viewed continuous learning as essential in responding to the evolving literacy needs of beginning readers.

Participant 5 shared:

"After every intervention cycle, I evaluate which strategies helped my learners most. Reflection allows me to improve my reading instruction and better support struggling readers."

Participant 10 stated:

"Attending reading seminars and collaborating with fellow teachers gives me new ideas that I can immediately apply in my classroom. Continuous learning helps me become a better reading teacher."

These responses suggest that reflective teaching and continuous professional development strengthen teachers' competence in implementing structured reading interventions. Through self-evaluation, collaboration, and lifelong learning, teachers become more responsive to learners' literacy needs while continuously improving instructional quality. The findings highlight that reflective practice is a key component of effective reading instruction, enabling teachers to sustain meaningful literacy interventions that foster reading fluency, comprehension, and positive reading habits among Key Stage 1 learners.

7. Conclusion

This study explored the experiences of Key Stage 1 teachers in implementing structured reading interventions to foster reading fluency and comprehension among learners in Kasibu East District, Schools Division of Nueva Vizcaya. The findings revealed that teachers employed differentiated and structured reading instruction, continuous assessment, guided reading, repeated reading, phonics-based activities, and individualized support to address the diverse literacy needs of beginning readers. Teachers also created supportive classroom environments that strengthened learners' confidence, motivation, and positive attitudes toward reading. Although participants encountered challenges such as varying learner abilities, limited instructional resources, inadequate intervention time, and inconsistent parental involvement, they demonstrated creativity, resilience, and professional commitment by adapting instructional strategies, utilizing contextualized reading materials, and collaborating with families and colleagues. The study concludes that the effectiveness of structured reading interventions is largely influenced by teachers' pedagogical expertise, reflective practice, family engagement, and continuous monitoring of learners' reading progress. These factors collectively contribute to the development of reading fluency, comprehension, and lifelong literacy among Key Stage 1 learners.

8. Implications

The findings of this study have significant implications for literacy instruction, educational leadership, and teacher professional development. Schools should strengthen structured reading intervention programs by providing developmentally appropriate and contextualized reading materials, adequate assessment tools, and sufficient instructional time for targeted literacy support. School administrators should institutionalize continuous professional development through Learning Action Cells (LACs), coaching, mentoring, and specialized training on evidence-based reading instruction, differentiated teaching, and early literacy assessment. Strong partnerships between schools, parents, and community stakeholders should be fostered to encourage consistent reading practice at home and reinforce learners' literacy development beyond the classroom. Curriculum developers may use the findings to enrich reading intervention frameworks by integrating culturally responsive and learner-centered instructional strategies that address the diverse needs of beginning readers. Future researchers may replicate this study in other districts or employ mixed-methods and comparative research designs to further examine teachers' experiences in implementing structured reading interventions and their influence on learners' literacy development across different educational contexts.

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