



# The Experiences of Filipino Teachers in Teaching Reading in the New Normal

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## **Authors' contributions**

*This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

This qualitative study aims to examine the experiences of Filipino language teachers in teaching reading in the context of the New Normal. The necessity for this research arises from the significant shifts in educational paradigms due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which have forced educators to adapt rapidly to new normal learning environments. Understanding these adaptations is crucial for developing effective teaching strategies that meet current and future educational demands. Based on empirical studies published from 2020 to 2023, the review aims to showcase successful strategies for phenomenological research. Interviews were used to describe themes and identify teachers' experiences, challenges, perceptions, and strategies in teaching reading. The results of the study reveal three themes. The first theme is the Teachers' Experiences in Teaching Reading in the New Normal, which encompasses opportunities and satisfaction, complications and challenges, confusion and problems, adjustments and lack of motivation, difficulties in reading and writing, divided attention, and academic transitions. Meanwhile, the second theme is the Mechanisms Employed by Teachers in Teaching Reading in the New Normal, which includes seeking inspiration, facing challenges, using eclecticism, performing duties, demonstrating altruism, and implementing collaboration. The final theme is the Perspectives Shared by Teachers in Teaching Reading in the

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New Normal, which includes themes such as professionalism, performance in the new context, students' needs, work-life balance, innovative language teaching methods, and broad perspectives. The study highlights the importance of educational programs in Filipino that are based on the local context of the New Normal and provides suggestions for improving reading instruction methods in Filipino schools.

*Keywords: New normal; teaching reading; teaching strategies; teacher in Filipino; qualitative study; phenomenal design; Philippines.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The pandemic has brought significant changes to many aspects of life, including the education system. In these circumstances, the challenges for educators are even greater, particularly due to the adoption of new teaching methods, such as technology, often without adequate training. Consequently, teachers are experiencing mental and emotional stress as they think about and plan effective strategies (Aringay 1). At present, there are numerous changes that teachers need to implement and embrace, which are often different from the familiar teaching environment due to the new normal. As a result, their workload has doubled. Teachers continue to seek new teaching methods to maintain their students' interest in lessons, such as reading (Gloria 2 and 12; Javier 7).

Despite the numerous reading activities conducted by schools, the results of the Phil-IRI continue to show a high percentage of struggling readers and a low percentage of independent readers (Division Memorandum No. 356 series of 2019 1). According to Setyowati et al. [1] due to the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers worldwide were forced to adapt to the situation. Teaching reading skills presents challenges for teachers in terms of how to deliver materials as effectively and efficiently as possible. [2,3]. With the outbreak of COVID-19 globally, teachers often ponder whether they will teach in the same way again or adopt a new teaching style [4,5]. Currently, reading difficulties persist worldwide. According to the results shared by the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2018, fifteen-year-old students in the Philippines scored low in reading. This issue was exacerbated by the emergence of COVID-19. The pandemic led to a significant shift in the education system, particularly in reading, which is a crucial factor influencing students' success in other subjects and enabling them to participate in society throughout their lives (Ludwig et al. 2; Tomas et al. 2).

Therefore, this research in the modern era provides clarity and evidence of the experiences currently faced by teachers in teaching reading. Reading relies on an individual's ability to fully and accurately comprehend texts (Ameyaw and Anto 1). Despite the rapid improvement of the school curriculum, children struggling with reading remain a significant problem in education. Thus, teachers are employing various methods to continually address the learning needs of students in reading. Most of the focus has been on students, often overlooking the teachers. This study aims to serve as a significant aid in understanding the conditions of teachers in teaching reading.

This study is anchored in Lev Vygotsky's Social Development Theory (1), which emphasizes the importance of scaffolding lessons in reading. Teachers are considered more knowledgeable in the proximal development of reading. Lev Vygotsky developed this theory based on the belief that children learn more effectively when taught by someone with more experience. Scaffolding is justified as a method to encourage students to read and for teachers to teach reading based on their existing methods and practices.

Additionally, this study is also anchored in Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory (1). According to this theory, the environment significantly influences human development. Therefore, teachers and schools have a substantial impact on how a student learns.

One of the theoretical foundations of this study is Jean Piaget's Cognitive Constructivist Theory (2). This theory focuses on a child's development from birth to adolescence, emphasizing language ability, memory, and moral development. It posits that children learn to read and write depending on their level of development. This theory believes that individuals construct their own knowledge and understanding from the information provided to them.

It's common for current studies to focus on students' experiences in learning to read. However, behind these students are teachers striving to teach reading. The researcher aims to highlight the experiences of teachers in teaching reading, especially with the emergence of new teaching methods that add to the challenges of teachers in achieving students' learning goals. Moreover, this study will serve as a guide to help people understand teachers and their work better. It will also serve as a basis for obtaining strategies that can be implemented to improve reading instruction in the New Normal.

The literature reviewed in this study includes the experiences of teachers, reading, and the new normal. Teachers' experiences are one of the topics discussed in this study. One of the most challenging tasks for teachers is training students in reading (Ortlieb 21). Teachers' experiences in teaching will serve as a guide to understanding their situation. According to the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST), reading is a strand of literacy. Literacy plays a crucial role in shaping an intelligent population. Fosudo (3) asserts that having reading skills has a beneficial effect on all school subjects, including social studies, science, mathematics, and others. In the Philippines, the Department of Education has implemented distance learning modalities to ensure the continuity of education in the new normal, including modular and online learning. In this way, students can continue their studies in remote setups through online/offline platforms, TV and radio, and printed modules.

The continuous proliferation of modern technology means that it's easy for students to adapt to these changes. This is because, as per Gloria's study (16), students of this generation are considered 21st-century learners due to their adaptability. This means that their learning methods are anchored in technology. Teachers are known for being creative and always having a vivid imagination, which helps to foster students' interest and keep them engaged in discussions (3).

The objective of this qualitative study is to understand the experiences of Filipino teachers in teaching reading in the new normal. The research aims to address the following questions: First, what are the experiences encountered by teachers in teaching reading during the new normal? Second, what coping mechanisms did teachers employ to overcome the challenges encountered in teaching reading

during the new normal? Third, what are the implications for teaching reading in the new normal?

The results of this research will provide insights and perspectives to the following groups or individuals who can benefit from this study. This research is important for the following: For the Department of Education, it is hoped that through this study, those in positions of authority will gain knowledge on what they can do to help teachers improve their teaching and reduce the negative experiences they face. For the teachers, this research will raise awareness and provide new knowledge on how to develop their skills. For future researchers, this will serve as a basis for their studies, providing them with additional information and knowledge.

This study is limited to the experiences of Filipino teachers in teaching reading in the New Normal in selected public schools in the City of Davao. It seeks to understand the benefits, limitations, and recommendations encountered while teaching reading. This qualitative study involves describing the experiences of teachers in reading instruction, aiming for a deep understanding, and focusing on the "why" rather than the "what" of social phenomena, relying on direct responses from individuals to understand things from their perspective (Cresswell 27). All standards are set to meet the requirements of this qualitative study. The research design follows Colaizzi's Method of Data Analysis, wherein data is gathered through interviews. The limitation of this study lies in the participation of only seven respondents, which is deemed sufficient to obtain the necessary data.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Study Participants**

This research employs a phenomenological approach to explore the experiences of public-school teachers teaching reading in Filipino. Phenomenology, as defined by Alase [6] is a qualitative research methodology that seeks to understand and describe the lived experiences of individuals regarding a particular phenomenon. This study aligns with Alase's guidelines, which recommend a heterogeneous group of no fewer than five and no more than ten participants. Accordingly, seven teachers from public schools were selected to participate in this study. The participants were chosen using purposive sampling, a common technique in qualitative research that involves selecting individuals who

are most likely to provide rich, relevant, and diverse data related to the research question. This method ensures that the selected participants have significant and pertinent experiences that can shed light on the phenomenon under investigation [7]. The chosen participants were identified based on the researcher's references, ensuring they represent a qualified population capable of providing sufficient and insightful data.

The study was conducted in Public Schools in the City of Davao. The respondents are teachers in the Filipino subject teaching reading and actively participating in Reading Programs; other teachers teaching reading but in different subjects are not included in the study. The selected ten respondents in this study are male or female teachers with at least three years of service in public schools and aged 23 and above. Furthermore, participants must understand and speak English, Tagalog, and Bisaya. Those who do not meet these criteria cannot participate in data collection. These participants were chosen because it would be easier for the researcher to conduct the study in the selected schools and with the selected participants due to their proximity to the researcher's affiliated schools and their ability to provide sufficient and accurate data for the study. On the other hand, participants who do not understand English, Tagalog, and Bisaya languages, as well as teachers in private schools, cannot be included in data collection. Additionally, teachers who have recently entered service in public schools cannot participate. A participant may revoke consent at any time during the interview process, whether verbally or in writing, or by not attending the interview. Furthermore, a participant may withdraw from the study if they believe it is in their best interest or for any reason. If a participant withdraws from the study, whether verbally or in writing, their information will no longer be included in the study.

## **2.2 Materials and Instruments**

The instrument used in the study is an interview guide. The researcher utilized instruments containing various questions that served as measures of the overall results. These instruments were personally created by the researcher. The questionnaire is divided into two parts: the first part includes personal information of the respondents, while the second part contains questions regarding the experiences of Filipino teachers in teaching reading in the new

normal. This interview consists of three open-ended questions, each comprising 6 main questions, with accompanying sub-questions from the interview guide to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' perspectives and to ensure their consent to share their experiences.

In the research process, the questions used for data collection, created by the researcher, underwent evaluation by both external and internal validators. Based on the validators' assessments, the questions received a rating of 9-10 on a scale, indicating excellence. However, there were comments suggesting modifications to the instrument before implementation. After the evaluation, the validators provided suggestions for the questions to be used. The researcher then incorporated and developed all the comments and suggestions, which were used in the interview process.

## **2.3 Design and Procedure**

This research focuses on the experiences of Filipino teachers in teaching reading in the new normal, which serves as an example of a real-life experience. The primary design of the research is a qualitative study. According to Creswell (27), qualitative research involves data collection, analysis, and report writing, which differs from quantitative research. The process, on the other hand, includes Colaizzi's (23) method of data analysis. The qualitative approach used by the researcher involves interviewing individuals who have similar experiences on a particular topic. This is a principle of qualitative research known as phenomenological study. Another principle of qualitative research is understanding the experiences and conditions of the whole person. This design was also used to explore how individuals' awareness differs in their unique experiences (Silverman, 31). Data will be collected through interviews where the researcher will ensure accurate notetaking to avoid misinterpretation of the data. Through these interviews, each teacher's opinions will be thoroughly examined for the research. The researcher believes that this design is suitable for this topic because it facilitates the collection of data from many respondents.

This study is phenomenological research, which examines the real experiences and truths of individuals. It involves an in-depth analysis in the form of interviews based on the points expressed in the research, supported by various types of

data from observations and document analysis (Balıkcı, 470). This approach is effective in detailing specific needs and providing a space where opinions are more heard (Greening, 89).

The researcher followed specific steps to facilitate data collection. The first step was obtaining permission to conduct the research. The researcher wrote a letter of permission to all principals of public schools in Cluster 3 to allow the respondents to participate in the study. Secondly, administering and conducting the interviews. Once the permission letters were approved, interviews with the respondents were conducted. Thirdly, transcribing the collected data from the interviews. After conducting the interviews, the researcher immediately began transcribing the results. All these tasks were personally carried out by the researcher. Additionally, the researcher went through multiple processes in performing the duties related to the topic. The researcher aimed to understand the thoughts and feelings of the study participants. This was not an easy task, as it involved asking people to discuss topics that might be personal to them. However, the researcher ensured that all information obtained would be kept confidential for the participants' benefit.

Additionally, a descriptive method was used in this study. The descriptive method illustrates the meaning of something according to its definition (Bianca 44). The researcher aims to inform readers about the experiences of Filipino teachers in teaching reading in the new normal. Using this method in research makes the results clearer and more straightforward, as one of its objectives is to provide information to the readers.

The researcher ensured that participants were aware of their voluntary participation in this study. They had the right to choose to stop or withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. Before agreeing to participate in the research, they were given a complete explanation of all aspects of the study, as well as the potential risks involved. The consent form, which included the date and a detailed explanation of the research's purpose in terms they could understand, was signed by the participants.

The researcher carefully maintained the privacy and confidentiality of the participants' information. This included protecting them from

any potential harm, such as psychological harm, social harm, and criminal or civil liability. The consent form also ensured that participants were not coerced into participating in the research and had ample time to make their decision. The ethical conduct of each researcher was monitored at all stages of the research to prevent any misinformation or fraud.

All questions in the study must be answered, and any form of misleading information must be avoided. All communication related to the research should be honest and unbiased. The Focus Group Discussion will remain confidential, and the information must be accurate to avoid misrepresentation or misuse of the study's purpose. After identifying the participants, the researcher must submit a consent form to the school principal to request official permission to conduct the appropriate interviews with the participants.

Moreover, the value of ethics was considered in conducting this study. Before using the interview questions, all work related to the study from the beginning up to the second chapter was submitted to the Ethics Review of the University of Mindanao (UMERC) to ensure proper adherence to ethical aspects and to guarantee that the study was conducted correctly. It also followed all the policies and comments from the said committee. As proof of agreement, a certificate with protocol number UMERC-2023-152 was issued to the researcher.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **3.1 Experiences of Teachers in Teaching Reading in the New Normal**

With the emergence of the new generation, teachers have gained various experiences in teaching reading, as stated by the participants in the interview. These issues can be categorized based on the following themes: complications in the teaching process, confusion and difficulties on duty, deficiencies and illiteracy of learners, and divided attention in school. In Table 1, the concerns and experiences of teachers regarding their teaching of reading in the new generation can be found.

#### **3.2 Complications in the Teaching Process**

The teaching profession is not easy, especially when teachers face numerous complications in

the teaching process. One of these challenges is the emergence of the new generation, which contributes to the difficulties and hardships experienced by teachers. It is evident that teachers struggle because of this, as expressed by the participants in the interview:

*“Dagdag na load siya para sa akua kanang sa kadaghan pa natug I prepare, daghag himuon tas 1-hour biya na siya na remediation. Pero trabaho natu ni maong sa atua maam maka ingun jud tag “sige undangon sa nako ning trabaho, dali dong” (FGD4, Pahina 9)*

(It's an additional workload for me, plus the remediation will take 1 hour. But it's our job so we tend to say “sige undangon sa nako ning trabaho, dali dong”)

*“Nahihirapan po kami sa pagtuturo sa studyante naming lalo na't hindi sila madali maka intindi sayong leksyon, sayong sinasabi, makakabasa man sila hindi naman nila naiintindihan, walang comprehension kaya panay tanong ng tanong, minsan eh*

*nakakainis na pabalik-balik, tapos nadedelay ka sa klase mo, yung target mo nawawala kasi yun nan ga kailangan mo pa silang balikan at magpaliwanang ka pa ulit. Mahirap turuan, minsan nga sabi ko yung lebel ng inyong utak pang elementary kasi ano ba parang mapuno ka na ano kasi yong pinapagawa mo hindi nila maintindihan. So mahirap kung icompare natin yung noon at ngayon na new normal. (FGD7, Pahina 2)*

(We have a hard time teaching our students, especially since they can't easily understand your lesson, what you say, even if they can read, they don't understand, they don't understand, so they keep asking questions, sometimes it's annoying going back and forth, then you get delayed in your class, your target is missing because that's why you have to go back to them and clarify again. It's hard to teach, I once said that your brain level is still elementary because you seem to be full because what you're asking them to do, they don't understand. So, it's difficult if we compare what was then and what is now the new normal.)

**Table 1. Experiences of teachers in teaching reading in the new normal**

Themes	Core Ideas
Complications in the Teaching Process	<p><i>...lalong-lalo na ngayon na kailangan mabigay agad yong report sa cluster. (IDI1, Pahina 6)</i></p> <p><i>...mas bumabagal at tumatagal ang bilang ng oras o araw ng aking mga aralin. (IDI3, Pahina 5)</i></p> <p><i>...nadedelay ka sa klase mo, yung target mo nawawala kasi yun nan ga kailangan mo pa silang balikan at magpaliwanang ka pa ulit... (FGD7, Pahina 2)</i></p> <p><i>...pinakamalaking hamon sa akin ngayon ay ang kakulangan sa bakanteng oras... (IDI3, Pahina 2-3)</i></p> <p><i>...minsan nga mas magaling pa sila humawak sayo sa technology. (FGD4, Pahina 9)</i></p> <p><i>...mahirap kasi nga yung mga adjustment, grabi ang adjustments . . . (IDI6, Pahina 17)</i></p> <p><i>...pagiging bukas sa mga bagong teknolohiya, pagiging bukas sa mga bagong paraan, pagiging bukas sa mga bagong dulog na kung saan ay may kinalaman sa pagbabasa... (IDI7, Pahina 18)</i></p>
Confusions and Difficulties on Duty	<p><i>Akua maam is katung language barrier namo, maglibog kog sabut... (FGD1, Pahina 4)</i></p> <p><i>...minsan eh nakakainis na pabalik-balik... (FGD7, Pahina 2)</i></p> <p><i>...nakakapagod. Nakakapagod talaga siya noh? So, kung dito, yong tanong na magpatuloy sa pagtuturo (IDI1, Pahina 18)</i></p>

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	<p>...mahirap silang I communicate... (FGD2, Pahina 1)</p> <p>Nakakalito kasi hindi natin alam kung ano nga ba, kung nasa bahay sila nagbabasa ba sila . . (FGD6, Pahina 2)</p> <p>Dahil sa kanila maam parang na test ang akong pagka maestra kung baga kung kaya ba gyud nako na sila tudluan o dili. (IDI4, Pahina 15)</p> <p>beginning, even us. (FGD3, Pahina 1)</p> <p>...kinakahiya niya yong kalagayan... (FGD2, Pahina 4)</p> <p>...ang bagong kadawyan ay nagdulot ng malaking pinsala sa pag-aaral o pagbabasa ng mga kabataan. (IDI3, Pahina 20)</p> <p>Isa sa mga hamon na sa pagtuturo ng pagbasa sa bagong normal ay meron tayong mga pighati at pagtatagumpay... (IDI7, Pahina 3)</p> <p>...the next day makakalimutan hindi maretain sa kanilang utak yong binasa mo, so kailangan patience... (IDI5, Pahina 17)</p>
Deficiencies and Illiteracy of Learners	<p>Wala silang gabay sa pag-aaral sa nakalipas na dalawang taon. (IDI 3, Pahina 15)</p> <p>...marunong bumasa pero poor sila sa comprehension... (IDI4, Pahina 6)</p> <p>...yung kahirapan nila sa pag-unawa sa mga salita na nababasa nila sa mga iba't ibang panitikan... (IDI6, Pahina 3)</p> <p>Ang lebel kasi ng kanilang pagbabasa ay maitutumbas na nasa elementary. (IDI3, Pahina 1)</p> <p>kabalo mubasa kay tungod kay spoiled... (FGD4, Pahina 1)</p> <p>...masaklap isipin na sa edad nila ay hindi pa sila masyadong bihasa magbasa (FGD4, Pahina 1-2)</p> <p>...hindi nakikinig kasi hindi maiintindihan yong binabasa nila... (IDI4, Pahina 3)</p> <p>...katamaran magbasa hindi napapalawak yong kaalaman natin sa bokabolaryo... (IDI5 Pahina 6)</p> <p>...marami pala sa kanila ang hindi pa masyadong marunong o iba naman sa kanila ay marunong magbasa pero hindi nila naiintindihan yong binabasa nila. (IDI3, Pahina 15)</p> <p>...ang kanilang lebel ng pagbabasa ay hindi akma sa kanilang intelektwal... (IDI3, Pahina 4)</p> <p>...abalikan yung pinaka basic at yun yong mga ponema or yong sounds... (IDI3, Pahina 4)</p> <p>...yong bata ngayon nahihirapan, specially nahirapan sila pailalimin yong ano sa pagbasa, I mean sa pagsulat ng pangungusap, so paggawa palang ng pangungusap nahirapan na yong bata, kaya kung nahirapan sila sa pagbasa medjo nahirapan din sila sa paggawa ng pangungusap. (IDI4, Pahina 2)</p> <p>...mayroon palang studyante na pa utal-utal na siya at hindi deretso magbasa. (FGD3, Pahina 5)</p>
Divided Attention in School	<p>...syempre ang bata dili na maminaw sa</p>

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teachers... (IDI4, Pahina 14)  
Lalo na ngayon parang wala talaga silang interest. (FGD3, Pahina 1)  
...marami talagang bata ang naapektuhan sa naganap na or lumipas na pandemia... (IDI3, Pahina 20)  
...may iilan sa kanila na hindi pupunta sa ibinigay na schedule... (IDI1, Pahina 2)  
...batay sa obserbasyon ko yung mga bata ngayon is masyado ng tamad puro gadgets lang sila.... (IDI5, Pahina 6)  
Yung isip nila ay nasa laro. (FGD4, Pahina 4)  
...kakulangan sa interaction sa klase. (IDI2, Pahina 13-14)  
...kulang yong time nila sa pagbabasa kasi nga sa maraming kadahilanan. (IDI2, Pahina 18-19)  
...may makikita ka na hindi nakikinig kasi hindi maiintindihan yong binabasa nila... (IDI4, Pahina 3)  
...paggawa palang ng pangungusap nahirapan na yong bata, kaya kung nahirapan sila sa pagbasa medjo nahirapan din sila sa paggawa ng pangungusap. (IDI4, Pahina 2)  
...dili sila all the time nga naa diria sa school... (IDI4, Pahina 17)  
Mismo sa bahay nila is marami din silang ginagawa... (IDI2, Pahina 18)

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Adding to these challenges is the ongoing emergence of modern teaching methods such as technology, which most teachers are compelled to keep up with. This was evidenced by one participant, who stated:

*"...pagiging bukas sa mga bagong teknolohiya, pagiging bukas sa mga bagong paraan, pagiging bukas sa mga bagong dulong na kung saan ay may kinalaman sa pagbabasa..." (IDI7, Pahina 18)*

(...openness to new technologies, openness to new methods, openness to new approaches related to reading.)

*"...minsan nga mas magaling pa sila humawak sayo sa technology." (FGD4, Pahina 9)*

(...sometimes they are even better than you at handling technology.)

As a result, teachers face numerous changes that continue to pose challenges for them. Some statements from participants include:

*"...mahirap kasi nga yung mga adjustment, grabi ang adjustments . . ." (IDI6, Pahina 17)*  
(...it's difficult because of all the adjustments, the adjustments are intense....)

*"...batay saking karanasan ang pinakamahirap is yong pagbalanse talaga sa oras." (IDI2, Pahina 4)*

(...based on my experience, the hardest part is really balancing the time.)

*"...magulo kasi nga babalik tayo sa simula kung paano tayo dapat magturo sa elementary or kinder kailangan natin magsimula ulit..." (FGD6, Pahina 2)*

(...it's confusing because we must go back to the beginning, to how we should teach in elementary or kindergarten, we need to start over again...)

*"...mas bumabagal at tumatagal ang bilang ng oras o araw ng aking mga aralin." (IDI3, Pahina 5)*

(...my lessons are taking more time and lasting more days.)

Teachers face various complications in the new generation, such as planning schedules for reading and dealing with additional tasks, including remediation. Adjusting to changes and embracing new technologies were also



mentioned as challenging tasks. According to the study, teachers and students have no choice but to acquire Information and Communication Technology (ICT) skills to survive in the "growing digital societies" [8]. The lack of free time to fully meet the needs of students, especially with significant changes in teaching methods, has presented a major challenge. Teachers found it difficult to maintain the flow of lessons and reported delays in achieving their teaching goals. Therefore, to improve the situation of students struggling with reading, teachers need to help them see reading to learn more about things that matter to them.

### 3.3 Confusions and Difficulties on Duty

This is the second theme that emerged from the responses of the participants regarding the confusion and difficulties experienced by teachers. Based on the answers of the interviewees, teachers have encountered various confusions and difficulties in teaching reading, as they become aware of different reasons why some students struggle with reading. According to the interview participants:

*Mahirap, nakakalungkot, nakakalito at magulo. Kasi nga akala natin na highschool na sila marunong na sila magbasa, ngunit pagpabasahin mo hindi pala, kahit sound, kahit mag identify ng letra hindi nila alam. (FGD 6, Pahina 2)*

(It's hard, sad, confusing, and messy. Because we thought they were in high school and knew how to read, but when you ask them to read, they don't know, even sounds, identifying letters.)

*...mahirap silang I communicate... (FGD2, Pahina 1)*

(...they are difficult to communicate with.)  
*Nakakalito kasi hindi natin alam kung ano nga ba, kung nasa bahay sila nagbabasa ba sila... (FGD6, Pahina 2)*

(It's confusing because we don't know if they are reading when they're at home...)

*...kinakahiya niya yong kalagayan... (FGD2, Pahina 4)*

(...she is ashamed of her situation...)

*...ang bagong kadawyan ay nagdulot ng malaking pinsala sa pag-aaral o pagbabasa ng mga kabataan. (IDI3, Pahina 20)*

(...the new normal has caused significant damage to the education or reading habits of the youth...)

In addition to this, teachers often find themselves repeating lessons, as mentioned by the participants:

*...minsan eh nakakainis na pabalik-balik... (FGD7, Pahina 2)*

(...sometimes it gets frustrating going back and forth...)

*Then, magulo kasi nga babalik tayo sa simula kung paano tayo dapat magturo sa elementary or kinder kailangan natin magsimula ulit. Nakakalito kasi hindi natin alam kung ano nga ba, kung nasa bahay sila nagbabasa ba sila... (FGD 6, Pahina 2)*

(Then, it's complicated because we're going back to the beginning of how we should teach in elementary or kinder, we must start over. It's confusing because we don't know what exactly, if they're at home, are they reading...)

*...the next day makakalimutan hindi mareretain sa kanilang utak yong binasa mo, so kailangan patience... (IDI5, Pahina 17)*

(... the next day they forget, what you read to them doesn't get retained in their minds, so you need patience...)

This leads teachers to doubt their abilities in teaching. The following were mentioned by the participants in the interview:

*Dahil sa kanila maam parang na test ang akong pagka maestra kung baga kung kaya ba gyud nako na sila tudluan o dili. (IDI4, Pahina 15)*

(Because of them, ma'am, it feels like my ability as a teacher is being tested, whether I can really teach them or not.)

*...nakakapagod. Nakakapagod talaga siya noh? So, kung dito, yong tanong na magpatuloy sa pagtuturo (IDI1, Pahina 18)*

(...it's exhausting. It really is exhausting, isn't it? So, if here, the question is whether to continue teaching...)

Teaching was described as difficult, sad, confusing, and chaotic, with moments of sadness and triumph. Teachers expressed confusion

about what exactly students read at home, as well as challenges related to language barriers and communication issues. They emphasized the need to focus on reading to deepen the students' personality and knowledge. An effective teacher must be focused not only on their students but also on the teaching profession.

Teachers also experienced disruptions due to the lack of visual aids and perceived lack of interest in teaching reading. It is expected that teachers use various strategies in teaching reading, such as employing different teaching methods, media, and games to stimulate the students' interest [9].

### 3.4 Deficiencies and Illiteracy of Learners

Understanding what is read and proficiency in writing are crucial for students' learning. It is a foundation for learning and an important skill that students should focus on. However, according to a study, it emerged that many students struggle with reading and writing because of the pandemic. A participant in the conducted interview shared that:

*“Sa panahon ng new normal, masaklap isipin na sa edad nila ay hindi pa sila masyadong bihasa magbasa, supposed to be sa ganoong edad ay matatas na magbasa ang isang bata, pero sa panahon ngayon, nagsisimula silang magbasa ng abakada na siyang nagdudulot ng pagbaba ng grado at hindi nakakahabol sa mga aralin sa klase... (FGD4, Pahina 1-2)*

(In the time of the new normal, it is sad to think that at their age they are not very skilled at reading, supposed to be at that age a child can read fluently, but in today's time, they start reading abaca which causes a decrease in grade and can't keep up with the class lessons...)

Therefore, while teaching is being conducted, the difficulty experienced by some students, as shared by the participants in the interview, is quite noticeable. According to them:

*...marunong bumasa pero poor sila sa comprehension... (ID14, Pahina 6)*

(They can read, but they are poor in comprehension.)

*...masaklap isipin na sa edad nila ay hindi pa sila masyadong bihasa magbasa (FGD4, Pahina 1-2)*

(It's saddening to think that at their age, they're not yet very proficient in reading.)

*...marami pala sa kanila ang hindi pa masyadong marunong o iba naman sa kanila ay marunong magbasa pero hindi nila naiintindihan yong binabasa nila. (ID13, Pahina 15)*

(...many of them are not yet very skilled, or some of them know how to read but they don't understand what they're reading.)

*“Siguro isa sa mga hamon is yung kahirapan nila sa pag-unawa sa mga salita na nababasa nila sa mga iba't ibang panitikan, so tulad na lamang ng maikling kuwento dahil minsan sa maikling kuwento is nakikita o nababasa nila sa mga termino na hindi sila masyadong pamilyar. (ID16, Pahina 3)*

(Maybe one of the challenges is their difficulty in understanding the words they read in different literature, so it is just like a short story because sometimes in a short story, they see or read in terms that they are not familiar with.)

Finding ways to make learning to read easier for students has become an additional challenge for teachers. Another participant responded:

*“Ahhh, para sakin ang pinakamahirap ay yong pagpapabasa sa kanila kasi ang kanilang lebel ng pagbabasa ay hindi akma sa kanilang intelektwal. Nahihirapan kasi kami kasi hindi naming alam kung saan kami magsisimula. Ano yong ipapabasa sa kanila, syempre yong materyales dapat akma para sa kanila, at ummmmm yong kung babalikan ba talaga namin yong pinaka basic at yun yong mga ponema or yong sounds, hindi ba? (ID13, Pahina 4)*

(Ahhh, for me the hardest part is getting them to read because their reading level does not match their intellectual level. We are struggling because we don't know where to start. What are you going to read to them, of course, the material should be suitable for them, and ummmmm, are we really going to go back to the most basic and those phonemes or those sounds, right?)

Teachers should remember that not all students are proficient in reading despite their age. Problems related to understanding, word

comprehension in various literatures, and vocabulary expansion are observed. Yanti et al. [9] mentioned in the study the problems students face in the teaching and learning process of reading comprehension. Classroom situations vary as students come from different social groups and levels, also affected by their environment. The issues in teaching comprehension are diverse. Generally, there is a lack of students' ability to understand the text; there is also a deficiency in their ability to understand the meaning of words, which is quite common, and they often face challenges in understanding difficult words. Additionally, teachers mentioned that some students are spoiled and lack skills in reading, memorization, or comprehension. The reading levels of some students do not match their knowledge levels. Furthermore, issues such as stuttering and bullying were identified as factors affecting students' reading abilities. Students are often challenged not only by the lack of understanding the meaning of words but also by the lack.

### 3.5 Divided Attention in School

Students nowadays are divided in their attention and lose focus on studying, which also makes it difficult for them to be interested in learning. Consequently, teachers find it challenging to teach students. It was mentioned in the interview that:

*"Ako naman maam yung sa bata mismo, yung focus niya. Minsan kasi yung nasa edad nayan like sa mga nasa grade 7 pa. Yung isip nila ay nasa laro. So kailangan pa talagang ulit-ulitin "magbasa ta" "basa gyud, bantay jud ka!" ana. (FGD4, Pahina 4)*

(As for me, the child himself, his focus. Sometimes those at that age are like those in grade 7. Their minds are on the game. So, it's really necessary to repeat " magbasa ta " " basa gyud, bantay jud ka!" there.)

In addition, gadgets also contribute to students' neglect. A participant in the interview expressed that:

*"Siguro yong kakulangan sa ensayo sa pagbabasa kasi may iilang, pati rin sakin kasi ahb batay din sa karanasan ko nung college tamad akong magbasa, so yun dahil sa katamaran magbasa hindi napapalawak yong kaalaman natin sa bokabolaryo at yun din sa kasalukuyan batay sa obserbasyon ko*

*yung mga bata ngayon is masyado ng tamad puro gadgets lang sila at ahb iba nababaling yong atensyon nila sa teknolohiya kung ahb ikukumpara natin noon at ngayon. (IDI5, Pahina 6)*

(Maybe it's the lack of practice in reading because there are a few, as well as me. After all, ahb also based on my experience in college I was lazy to read, so it's because of laziness to read that we don't expand our knowledge of vocabulary and that's also currently based on my observation that kids today are too lazy, they are just gadgets, and their attention is diverted to technology if we compare then and now.)

On the other hand, some students have divided attention due to understandable reasons. A participant shared that:

*"Okay, naapektuhan talaga ako kasi nga the more na magpabasa ka sa mga bata na yong na assign sayo is maging close sila sayo, so malalaman mo na mayroon din sila, mag share na sila sa kanilang experience na ganito pala sila kung bakit hindi sila ahb marunong magbasa or bakit kulang yong time nila sa pagbabasa kasi nga sa maraming kadahilanan. Mismo sa bahay nila is marami din silang ginagawa or marami pang iba. (IDI2, Pahina 18-19)*

(Okay, it affects me because the more that you make the children who are assigned to you read, the more they will become close to you, so you will know that they also have something, they will share their experience that this is how they are, why aren't they ahb know how to read or why they don't have enough time to read because of many reasons. Right in their house they do a lot or many other things.)

Teachers face challenges related to students' lack of attention, especially with the prevalence of gadgets and technology. Therefore, Yanti et al. [9] mentioned that in teaching reading comprehension, students often encounter many difficulties and lose concentration to focus on the reading text. Thus, teachers should have appropriate strategies to address this problem. The lack of access to materials and limited reading practice, as well as reduced classroom interaction, were mentioned. Teachers expressed the need for students' full attention during reading activities. It was also noted that

students do not have enough time for reading due to various reasons, along with incidents of distraction.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, teaching reading skills became a challenge for teachers worldwide. Therefore, according to the study by Setyowati et al. [1] teachers need to adapt and explore new methods to be effective in delivering their lessons. The arrival of COVID-19 brought about many uncertainties for teachers regarding whether they should continue their previous teaching methods or if they need to change their approaches.

In summary, teaching reading amidst the new circumstances has provided both opportunities and challenges for teachers. Teachers discovered joy in exploring enhancements for their students, adapting to new technology, and deepening their own knowledge and teaching experiences.

Nevertheless, there are challenges such as scheduling, communication barriers, and a lack

of appropriate materials. Teachers also attempted to address changes, encourage students, and tackle issues like lack of interest in reading, lack of focus, and transitioning to the new normal in education. Despite the challenges, some students showed positive reactions to reading, self-directed learning, and support from their parents. The lessons and experiences from teaching reading amidst the pandemic may serve as a foundation for future strategies and interventions to strengthen literacy education.

### 3.6 Coping Mechanism of Teachers in Teaching Reading in the New Normal

Teachers remained steadfast despite the various challenges they encountered in teaching reading to the new generation. Hence, in Table 2, the themes they developed can be seen as mechanisms to help them overcome all the challenges they experienced as teachers: seeking inspirational support, overcoming intellectual challenges, performing school tasks, and engaging in educational collaboration.

**Table 2. Coping mechanism of teachers in teaching reading in the new normal**

Themes	Core Ideas
<b>Pursuing Inspirational Support</b>	<p>...pag may vacant time siya pinapaturuan ko siya sa mga classmates niya. (FGD3, Pahina 6)</p> <p>Isa sa mga motibasyon ko siguro is ang mag-aaral mismo, dahil nga sa... (IDI6, Pahina 9)</p> <p>...tinatawagan ko talaga yung guardian niya para maturuan siya. (FGD3, Pahina 6)</p> <p>...imbes na ito ay isang karagdagang trabaho o burden pero ito ay nagiging isang inspirasyon sa akin...(IDI3, Pahina 19)</p> <p>Kinuha ko ito sa aking mga mahal sa buhay, saking mga anak at saking mga studyante araw-araw kong kinakaharap at sa mga gurong willing din naman magbigay ng kanilang supporta at ano kalinga sa pagbasa sa mga bata. (IDI2, Pahina 11)</p> <p>...huwag tayo matakot na harapin ang mga bagong bagay... (IDI7, Pahina 21)</p> <p>Akin naman yong motibasyon ko yung mismong story ng reader ko, kasi makilala mo yung bata kapag nagkakasama kayo sa tutorial and nalalaman mo yung story niya kasi siya din mismo pinapakilala niya yung sarili niya. (FGD4, Pahina 6)</p> <p>...you need to make friend with the non-reader para atleast easily mo nalang siya na magawa yung task mo ba. (FGD3, Pahina 7)</p>

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Paglalaanan mo ng mahabang oras at saka pasensya na matutunan niya yung aralin Ninyo. (FGD4, Pahina 3)

...gina tap naming yong mga matatalino tapos para turuan yong mga bata na hindi marunong bumasa. (IDI4, Pahina 6)

...maaari nilang manahin o makuha ang ating mga katangian sa pagtuturo. (IDI7, Pahina 16)

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### **Overcoming Intellectual Hitches**

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...may commitment talaga sa pagtuturo sa pagbabasa... (IDI2, Pahina 12)

...ang interes nila sa pagbabasa kaysa sa ahhh paggugol ng oras nila sa mga ibat-ibang social media... (IDI6, Pahina 11)

Siguro sa pag-iisip ng ibat-ibang estratehiya kung paano natin sila matutulungan sa paraan nila ng pagbabasa o sa pag-unawa nila sa pagbabasa at ang pag-iisip ng positibong pananaw na kung saan ahhhh. . . (IDI6, Pahina 6)

...mabibigyan ko sila ng malinaw na pagpapakahulugan sa kung ano yung ideya... (IDI6, Pahina 7)

...hinahayaan nalang natin sila magbasa ng kanilang sarili... (IDI7, Pahina 9)

...mga reading materials na ibinibigay sa atin ng kagawaran. (IDI7, Pahina 7)

...nanaman yong lesson hanggang makaabut kami ng isang buong lingo. (IDI4, Pahina 5)

Isa dito ay dapat mag research. (FGD1, Pahina 5)

...ikaw din as a teacher naga reward din so palitan ug Jollibee inig makabasa. (FGD2, Pahina 6)

...to show video sa mga bata na makatulong jud sa ilaha and mas interesting para sa ilaha. (FGD2, Pahina 5)

...nag conduct ug reading remediation. (FGD2, Pahina 5)

...pagiging bukas sa mga bagong dulog... (IDI7, Pahina 18)

...pag-iisip ng positibong pananaw... (IDI6, Pahina 11)

...magkaroon tayo ng karanasan o mga ideya sa mga dulog na ano bang gagamitin

nating dulog upang mapaunlad natin ang mga pagbasa o pagtuturo ng pagbasa sa bagong normal. (IDI7, Pahina 7)

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### **Performing School Responsibilities**

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...maibibilang ko na isa sa mga steppingstones ko upang maabut ko ang aking pagtatagumpay... (IDI7, Pahina 19)

...ipagpatuloy lamang yong pagtuturo natin sa mga bata sa pagbabasa... (IDI2, Pahina 20)

...paggamit ng ibat-ibang teknolohiya para mas umunlad pa ang kaalaman ko... (IDI6, Pahina 13)

...so dapat gawin mo dahil ibinigay sayo... (IDI1, Pahina 12)

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...pagiging kusa o pagkakaroon ng willingness na turuan ang mga bata... (IDI3, Pahina 10)  
...ipagpatuloy lamang ang buhay. (IDI2, Pahina 20)  
...pinaka goal mo lang talaga is from non-reader to independent in the future. (IDI5, Pahina 16)  
...bigyan naming ng atensyon yong mga mahihina at hindi talaga marunong magbasa na nasa mataas na na antas na pag-aaral... (FGD4, Pahina 1)  
... patuloy na pag gabay sa kanila para mas lumalim pa ang kanilang kaalaman sa pagbabasa... (IDI6, Pahina 14)  
...pagiging determinado kahit gaano kahirap ang karanasan... (IDI6, Pahina 18)  
Natutunan ko na mahal in talaga yon gating trabaho at kung ano yong inaat sa atin. (IDI2, Pahina 16)

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### Exercising Educational Collaboration

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coordinator, at saka sa reading coordinator din maam. So, sa guide po nila nakaya namin, ah kakayanin! (IDI4, Pahina 7)  
...pamamagitan ng guidance ng punong-guro, guidance ng curriculum head, subject  
Naging katuwang upang mapagtagumpayan ang pagsubok sa patuturo ng pagbasa. Siguro yong suporta, yong suporta talaga na ibibigay sayo ng kapwa mo guro, ng principal... (IDI1, Pahina 12)  
...full force po dito yong mga teachers sa pag impose ng reading. (IDI4, Pahina 12)  
...sila yong gumagabay sa amin at ummm nagbibigay sa amin ng mga direksyon paano turuan ng maayos ang mga batang ito. (IDI3, Pahina 12)  
...sa tulong ng mga kapwa ko ring guro sa filipino. Ah, grabi yong suporta nila nu sa akin... (IDI1, Pahina 6)  
Sa pamamagitan ng guidance ng punong-guro . . . (IDI4, Pahina 7)  
...prinsipyo na kung ano yong ibinigay sayo dapat tinatapos. (IDI1, Pahina 16)  
Opo, nagtutulungtulungan kami. Mula sa mga activity sheet sa iba pang gamit. (FGD2, Pahina 3)

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### 3.7 Pursuing Inspirational Support

Despite the events and challenges that teachers have faced, they continue to educate their students. They strengthen themselves amid the new education system. One participating teacher shared that the stories and backgrounds of their students serve as their inspiration to continue in their chosen profession. Here are the stories shared by the participants:

*“Akin naman yong motibasyon ko yung mismong story ng reader ko, kasi makilala*

*mo yung bata kapag nagkakasama kayo sa tutorial and nalalaman mo yung story niya kasi siya din mismo pinapakilala niya yung sarili niya. Aside sa iyahang story makita nmu ba na pursigido ang bata, like gusto jud siya magbasa kaso maglisod jud siya so ikaw pud na naga teach sa iyaha ma inspire ka kay dili man masayang ang imuhang time and effort na imung gilaan para sa iyaha. (FGD4, Pahina 6)*

(My motivation is the story of my reader because you get to know the child when you

are together in the tutorial, you know his story because he is sharing his story. Aside from his story, you can see that the child is persistent like he wants to read even if he finds it difficult, so as the teacher it inspires you because the time and effort you put in for him will not be wasted.)

*“Isa sa mga motibasyon ko siguro is ang mag-aaral mismo, dahil nga sa... batay rin sa karanasan ko ngayon ahh na nagtuturo ako sa deped is makikita ko talaga na may iilang mga bata na nahihirapang magbasa lalong-lalo na ngayon na nag grade 10 na lan. Ilan sa inspirasyon ko naman syempre yung pamilya ko na nasa malayo, so sila talaga (IDI6, Pahina 9)*

(One of my motivations is probably the student himself, because of ... also based on my experience now that I'm teaching in DepEd, I can see that some children have difficulty reading especially now that they're already in grade 10. Some of my inspirations are of course my family who are far away, so they are.)

Nevertheless, they did nothing but accept and uphold their duty. One participant stated:

*“Naaapektuhan ako sa paraang ito ay nagbigay inspirasyon sa akin, imbes na ito ay isang karagdagang trabaho o burden pero ito ay nagiging isang inspirasyon sa akin upang mas maging mabuti pang guro sa pagtuturo ng mga bata lalo na sa pagbabasa... (IDI3, Pahina 19)*

(It affects me in a way that it inspires me, instead of it being an additional job or burden but it becomes an inspiration to me to be a better teacher in teaching children, especially in reading...

Teachers discovered various sources of inspiration to strengthen themselves and their students. They enlisted the help of students to teach their classmates, spoke with parents or guardians to assist in teaching, and identified areas of weakness to focus on. The educational background of parents also affects a child's school attendance. Factors such as the lack of proper reading instruction at home, the family's economic situation, early childhood education experiences, and language learning at home can contribute to low reading levels [10]. Additionally, teachers drew inspiration from distant family

members, finding motivation in the burden of teaching. They befriended those who could not read, making their duties easier. Furthermore, teachers spent extra time ensuring that students understood the lessons, drawing inspiration from their loved ones, children, and students. They also utilized proficient readers to help teach those who were struggling.

### 3.8 Overcoming Intellectual Hitches

As they say, a teacher can do everything, especially for their students. Therefore, despite the challenges faced in the new generation, teachers manage to come up with various strategies to successfully teach reading. One participant in the interview shared that:

*“Siguro sa pag-iisip ng ibat-ibang estratehiya kung paano natin sila matutulungan sa paraan nila ng pagbabasa o sa pag-unawa nila sa pagbabasa at ang pag-iisip ng positibong pananaw na kung saan ahhhh. . . Siguro sa pag-iisip pa ng mga ibat-ibang estratehiya na mababaling ang kanilang atensyon sa pagsusumikap sa pagbabasa na mas ahhh mabaling ang interes nila sa pagbabasa kaysa sa ahhh paggugol ng oras nila sa mga ibat-ibang social media o mga nababasa nila sa internet. (IDI6, Pahina 6)*

(Maybe by thinking of different strategies on how we can help them in their way of reading or in their understanding of reading and thinking of a positive perspective which ahhhh. . . Maybe by thinking of different strategies that will divert their attention to the effort of reading so that their interest in reading is more ahhh diverted than ah spending their time on various social media or what they read on the internet.)

Furthermore, teachers are also known to be positive individuals regardless of the problems they carry, as proven by one participant. Their account is as follows:

*“Sa pagiging positibo ng guro, lahat ng paghihirap sa pagbasa ng mag-aaral ay kaya kong maaring matulungan sila sa kahirapan nila sa pagbabasa na sa pamamagitan ng . . . (IDI6, Pahina 7)*

(With the teacher's positivity, all the students' reading difficulties I can help them with their reading difficulties through . . .)

Despite everything, students still greatly help their teachers. They serve as one of the inspirations for teachers to remain in the teaching profession. One participant even shared that:

*... yung reader mismo, malaking achievement din sa amin ba na nag impart ka sa kaniya ng learning, tas yung output niya sayo maganda. So parang ikaw din as a teacher naga reward din so palitan ug Jollibee inig makabasa. (FGD2, Pahina 6)*

(The readers, it is a big achievement for us that you imparted learning to them. So, it seems that you, as a teacher, are also rewarded, so, I will reward him with Jollibee when he can read.)

The teachers implemented strategies to overcome obstacles in teaching reading. The teacher may use an engaging reading text as a learning strategy to capture the students' attention in the process of reading comprehension [11]. They diverted the students' attention from social media and internet distractions, provided clear interpretation of ideas, allowed independent reading with proper time preparation, and strengthened essay writing about their experiences during the pandemic.

On the other hand, the teachers also provided additional reading materials, repeated the lessons throughout the week, assigned students to return to school with a letter, set research tasks for the students, rewarded readers with incentives, showed engaging videos, and used activities and other materials to enhance reading comprehension. McBride et al. [12] mentioned in their study that inspiring students to engage in analyzing their responses to reading, particularly their emotional reactions, can help them see themselves as active participants and begin to develop their identities as readers in ways that may lead to greater engagement.

### 3.9 Performing School Responsibilities

One of the oaths of teachers is to teach students no matter what their problems may be. Therefore, the interview participants were willing to do everything for their duty, using various motivations until the goal was achieved. The following are the responses shared by the interview participants:

*...Pagpatuloy ko yong pagtuturo sa pagbabasa sa mga bata isa na doon ay yong*

*. . . ah . . . yong mga mag-aaral ofcourse na handa pa rin naman sila makinig at matuto sa kanilang pagbabasa ...So para sa akin kung tuturuan ko sila or pagpatuloy ko yong ginagawa ko, so gagawin ko nalang kasi nga para sa bata, para sa bayan. (IDI2, Pahina 20)*

(For me, I have been a lot of motivation. I will continue to teach reading to children, one of whom is. . . oh .because the ones I have now know how to read but they just lack comprehension. So, for me, if I teach them or if I continue what I'm doing, I'll just do it because it's for the children, for the people.)

*“Sa tingin ko, time management lamang at saka yong ummm pagiging kusa o pagkakaroon ng willingness na turuan ang mga bata, para naman hindi mabigat para sayo at para mas maging madali yong pagtuturo mo ng pagbabasa sa kanila. (IDI3, Pahina 10)*

(I think it is just time management and then ummm being willing or having a willingness to teach the children, so that it is not a burden for you and so that it is easier for you to teach them to read.)

*“Sa lahat ng nabanggit ang realisasyon ko sa karanasan na aking nabanggit ay ipagpatuloy lamang ang buhay. Bilang isang guro ipagpatuloy lamang yong pagtuturo natin sa mga bata sa pagbabasa din di naman yan nawawala taon-taon. Ahh may mga bata talaga na nangangailangan ng ating gabay at kalinga sa pagtuturo ng pagbasa. So huwag lanng tayong huminto. Gawin lang natin yong trabaho natin na may pagmamahal. Hindi lang yong ginagawa natin yong trabaho dahil inuutusan tayo ng ating principal, kung di kung may maitutulong tayo bilang isang guro gawin natin ito ng may buong puso. (IDI2, Pahina 20)*

(From all the above realizations, my realization from the experience I mentioned is to just get on with life. As a teacher, let's just continue to teach the children to read, that doesn't disappear every year. Ahh, some children need our guidance and protection in teaching reading. So, let's not stop. Let's just do our work with love. We don't just do the work because our principal orders us, otherwise if we can help something as a teacher, let's do it with all our heart.)



The teachers reminded themselves of their strong commitment to their duties despite the challenges they faced. They remained open to new directions related to reading, viewed obstacles as steps toward success, and continued to teach children how to read. They embraced various technologies to enhance their knowledge and wholeheartedly accepted the responsibility of teaching. Teachers who use technology in their teaching improve their students' success, making them critical thinkers and motivated learners [8] Teachers approached their work with dedication, considering the primary goal to transform non-readers into independent and skilled readers in the future. As noted by Jamon et al. [8] in their study, without reading skills, it is difficult to imagine how they could survive in these unfavorable situations. They emphasized patience as an essential quality learned through teaching reading and understood the importance of maintaining a positive outlook.

### 3.10 Exercising Educational Collaboration

Even though every teacher says they draw strength from within themselves, the saying "the more, the merrier" still holds true. Success cannot be achieved alone without someone to rely on or help. For the participating teachers, their colleagues at school, their department heads, and especially their principal served as their support and advisors. For two of the participants, if they encountered difficulties in teaching during the new normal, they would:

*"Naging katuwang upang mapagtagumpayan ang pagsubok sa patuturo ng pagbasa. Siguro yong suporta, yong suporta talaga na ibinigay sayo ng kapwa mo guro, ng principal, na ikaw binigay sayo na ancillary as reading coor so dapat gawin mo dahil ibinigay sayo... (IDI1, Pahina 12)*

(Helped to overcome the test of teaching reading. Maybe the support, the real support that will be given to you by your fellow teachers, by the principal, that you are given the ancillary as reading coordinator, so you should do it because it was given to you...)

*"Sa pamamagitan ng guidance ng punong-guro, guidance ng curriculum head, subject coordinator, at saka sa reading coordinator din maam. So, sa guide po nila nakaya namin, ahh kakayanin! Nakaya rin naming*

*silang dahil sa mga pagsubok nayan napagtagumpayan din namin yong balakid, unti-unti din naming natagumpayan and na catch yong target... (IDI4, Pahina 7)*

(Through the guidance of the principal, guidance of the curriculum head, the subject coordinator, and the reading coordinator, ma'am. So, with their guide we were able to do it, ahh we can do it! We were able to cope with them because of those trials, we also overcame the obstacle, we also gradually succeeded and caught the target...)

Additionally, the teachers work together on tasks, which speeds up their work. It was mentioned in the interview that:

*"...full force po dito yong mga teachers sa pag impose ng reading." (IDI4, Pahina 12)*  
(...the teachers here are in full force in imposing reading.)

*"Opo, nagtutulungtulungan kami. Mula sa mga activity sheet sa iba pang gamit." (FGD2, Pahina 3)*

(Yes, we help each other. From activity sheets to other materials.)

The collaboration of teachers with their colleagues and principals, along with their collective efforts, demonstrates the value of unity and cooperation in addressing challenges. Teachers become good examples for their students and the community through their altruism and teamwork. Based on previous studies, progress in teaching and learning is driven by their collective efforts [8].

Overall, these response mechanisms demonstrate the teachers' ability to face and assess the challenges of the new teaching experience. By addressing these challenges, the teachers show their dedication to valuing education and their students. These findings and response methods are valuable insights for teachers and education advocates who strive to support teachers in delivering effective reading instruction in similar educational contexts.

### 3.11 Insights Shared of Teachers in Teaching Reading in the New Normal

No challenge is insurmountable with the right response. The teachers who participated in these trials overcame the challenges through their

diligence, faith, unity, and cooperation. As a result, they gained clarity from the lessons learned from these events. In this section, the effects of teaching reading during the pandemic

will be discussed, summarized into six themes mentioned in Table 3: practicing professionalism, adapting to the new normal, meticulous teaching, and progressive academic transition.

**Table 3. Insights shared of teachers in teaching reading in the new normal**

Themes	Core Ideas
<b>Exercising Professionalism</b>	<p>...kailangan natin tanggapin dahil ito ang ating propesyon. (FGD5, Pahina 11)</p> <p>Pero syempre tanggapin natin, acceptance sa new normal. (FGD4, Pahina 7)</p> <p>Gawin lang natin yong trabaho natin na may pagmamahal. Hindi lang yong ginagawa natin yong trabaho dahil inuutusan tayo ng ating principal, kung di kung may maitutulong tayo bilang isang guro gawin natin ito ng may buong puso. (IDI2, Pahina 20)</p> <p>...kailangan mo din mahalin kung ano ang differences ng iyong students. (FGD4, Pahina 10)</p> <p>...makapagbigay ka ng malaking impact sa mga mag-aaral. (IDI6, Pahina 21)</p> <p>...napagtatagumpayan ko ang mga pagsubok na kung saan nagbibigay sa akin ng kalabisan na nagpupuno sa aking mga pagkukulang at nag-aalis sa aking kalabisan na minsan ay nagbibigay din sa akin ng lakas ng loob na magturo... (IDI7, Pahina 13)</p> <p>...ang pagiging guro para sa akin ay isa sa mga paaran nagbibigay sa akin lakas ng loob upang magturo sa panahon na katulad nito. (IDI7, Pahina 9)</p> <p>Ahhh siguro isa sa mga pangunahing paraan nang guro ay ang pagiging matiyaga sa paghahanap ng reading materials na kung saan ay kinakailangan talaga ito upang magkaroon tayo ng karanasan o mga ideya sa mga dulong na ano bang gagamitin nating dulong upang mapaunlad natin ang mga pagbasa o pagtuturo ng pagbasa sa bagong normal. (IDI7, Pahina 14) Gawin kung ano yung nararapat sa mga bata. (FGD5, Pahina 10)</p>
<b>Adapting the New Normal</b>	<p>...dapat maging bukas tayo sa pagbabago... (IDI7, Pahina 21)</p> <p>Siguro yong mga bagay na naging katuwang ko ay hindi talaga mawawala yong teknolohiya. Na kung saan ay ito yong mga bagay na kabiyak ko o katabi ko sa lahat ng aking pagtuturo sa panahon ng pandemya, sa panahon ng bagong normal. (FGD7, Pahina 13)</p> <p>Sa pagtuturo ng pagbabasa you should be resilient kasi gusto mo na mayroong outcome you should do your best... (FGD2, Pahina 10)</p> <p>...mas tumindi pa ang aking paglilingkod sa mga mag-aaral sa panahon ng pandemya lalong-lalo na sa pagbasa. (IDI7, Pahina 9)</p>

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...ang mga bagong problema ay nasosolusyunan ng mga bagong paraan. (IDI7, Pahina 11)  
...sa bagong normal nabibigyan ng mga bagong dulog... (IDI7, Pahina 14)

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### **Conscientious Teaching Practice**

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...dapat silang guidan they should be guided kung ano man yong binabasa nila meron kang dapat matutukan para hindi sila mawala. (IDI5, Pahina 14)

Gawin lang natin yong trabaho natin na may pagmamahal. (IDI2, Pahina 20)

Huwag taasan ang standard. (FGD3, Pahina 9)

...matapos din siya on time... (IDI1, Pahina 8)

kinakailangan talaga na magkaroon tayo ng panahon dito kasi yong bata din yong

...nangangailangan ng tulong. Isa din ay ano yong estratehiya na dapat gamitin sa bata, for example non-reader, ano ba yong pwede kong gawin para magkaintindihan kami para ma gets niya kung ano din yung pinapabasa ko sa kaniya. (FGD7, Pahina 3)

Ang pagtuturo ay isang bokasyon. (FGD2, Pahina 10)

...wala ta nagtrabaho lang para sa kwarta, bokasyon natu na makatabang ta sa mga bata. (FGD6, Pahina 6)

...mga gurong willing din naman magbigay ng kanilang supporta at ano kalinga sa pagbasa sa mga bata. (IDI2, Pahina 11)

Hindi lang yong ginagawa natin yong trabaho dahil inuutusan tayo ng ating principal, kung di kung may maitutulong tayo bilang isang guro gawin natin ito ng may buong puso. (IDI2, Pahina 20)

...atleast naka contribute ka ba sa iyahang life. (FGD5, Pahina 6)

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### **Progressive Academic Transition**

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...pag balance sa time o time management talaga ang kailangan dito. (IDI1, Pahina 15)

tayong mga pighati at pagtatagumpay....naiiba ang pagkakaroon ng pagbigkas, pagdulog, naiiba yung dulog ng mga salita na kung saan ay nagkakaroon ng malaking epekto sa karanasan ng mga guro sa pagtuturo ng pagbasa. (IDI7, Pahina 3)

Para naman sa akin yung paggamit ng technology kasi di ka na mahirapan sa pagtuturo sa kanila, wala nay mga pa visual aid kay automatic nandun na, minsan nga mas magaling pa sila humawak sayo. (FGD4, Pahina 9)

Natuklasan ko is marami ka dapat ummm strategies na ibibigay, yong mga mechanics na gagawin mo para hinay-hinay lang na gagawin mo yun, step-by-step, so yong mga strategies nakakatulong din yun para sa pagpapaunlad sa kanilang pag-uunawa sa kanilang pagbabasa (IDI5, Pahina 16)

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### 3.12 Exercising Professionalism

In this theme, the dedication of teachers to teaching is demonstrated. Based on the response of one participant, it can be shown how much students need the help of teachers in learning. This was shared by one of the participants in their response, stating:

*“Sa lahat ng nabanggit ang realisasyon ko sa karanasan na aking nabanggit ay ipagpatuloy lamang ang buhay. Bilang isang guro ipagpatuloy lamang yong pagtuturo natin sa mga bata sa pagbabasa din di naman yan nawawala taon-taon. Ahh may mga bata talaga na nangangailangan ng ating gabay at kalinga sa pagtuturo ng pagbasa. So huwag lanng tayong huminto. Gawin lang natin yong trabaho natin na may pagmamahal. Hindi lang yong ginagawa natin yong trabaho dahil inutusan tayo ng ating principal, kung di kung may maitutulong tayo bilang isang guro gawin natin ito ng may buong puso. (IDI2, Pahina 20)*

(From all the above realizations, my realization from the experience I mentioned is to just get on with life. As a teacher, let's just continue to teach the children to read, that doesn't disappear every year. Ahh, some children need our guidance and protection in teaching reading. So, let's not stop. Let's just do our work with love. We don't just do the work because our principal orders us, otherwise if we can help something as a teacher, let's do it with all our heart.)

Furthermore, despite the difficulties teachers face in teaching, they still need to do their job and have patience because this is the profession they chose. The participant's response serves as proof:

*“So lahat ng ating naranasan, yung mga balakid kailangan natin tanggapin dahil ito ang ating propesyon. (FGD5, Pahina 11)*

(So, everything we have experienced, even the obstacles, we must accept because this is our profession.)

*“...isa sa mga pangunahing paraan nang guro ay ang pagiging matiyaga sa paghahanap ng reading materials na kung saan ay kinakailangan talaga ito upang magkaroon tayo ng karanasan o mga ideya*

*sa mga dulog na ano bang gagamitin nating dulog upang mapaunlad natin ang mga pagbasa o pagtuturo ng pagbasa sa bagong normal.” (IDI7, Pahina 7)*

(... one of the main methods as a teacher is to be patient in finding reading materials which is necessary so that we can have experience or ideas on the approaches that we will use to improve the readings or teaching. of reading the new normal.)

Despite all that teachers do; it is the students who benefit from it. This is where all the hard work truly pays off. As expressed by one participant in the interview:

*“... makapagbigay ka ng malaking impact sa mga mag-aaral.” (IDI6, Pahina 21)*  
(You can make a significant impact on the students.)

Teachers convey a strong commitment to their profession, recognizing that being a teacher requires courage and dedication. They emphasize the importance of continually expanding their knowledge and skills, especially in dealing with difficult words and overcoming obstacles. They underscore the need to view teaching as more than just following orders but as a profession that demands patience and growth. Duty involves not just choosing tasks that are beneficial or enjoyable for them but selecting activities that will benefit and strengthen students' motivation to read [13].

### 3.13 Adapting to the New Normal

Change is truly inevitable as it is the only constant in the world. One of these changes is the transformation that occurred in the education system. For one participant, this is seen as an opportunity because he sees it as new knowledge, as mentioned in his interview. He said:

*“Siguro ang mga implikasyon sa aking pagtuturo ay nabibigyan ako ng isa pang pagkakataon na magturo sa bagong normal. Kasi ng sa bagong normal nabibigyan ng mga bagong dulog na kung saan ay niyayakap ko ito upang mas lalo pang lumalim ang aking karanasan at kaalaman sa pagtuturo. (IDI7, Pahina 14)*

(Maybe the implications for my teaching are that I get another chance to teach in the new

normal. Because the new normal gives me new directions which I embrace so that my teaching experience and knowledge can deepen even more.)

Instead, most teachers use the new normal as motivation. As one participant put it:

*“Isa siguro sa mga motibasyon ko sa pagtuturo ng pagbasa sa panahon ng bagong normal ay ang pagiging guro, dahil ang pagiging guro para sa akin ay isa sa mga paaran nagbibigay sa akin lakas ng loob upang magturo sa panahon na katulad nito...” (ID17, Pahina 9)*

(Maybe one of my motivations for teaching reading during the new normal is being a teacher because being a teacher for me is one of the ways that gives me the courage to teach in a time like this.)

*“...mas tumindi pa ang aking paglilingkod sa mga mag-aaral sa panahon ng pandemya lalong-lalo na sa pagbasa.” (ID17, Pahina 9)*

(...my dedication to serving the students, especially in reading, has intensified during the pandemic.)

*“...sa bagong normal nabibigyan ng mga bagong dulog...” (ID17, Pahina 14)*

(...in the new normal, new approaches are being provided.)

However, it cannot be avoided that for some, this change is difficult, and many adjustments need to be made. Based on the response of one participant:

*“...dapat maging bukas tayo sa pagbabago...” (ID17, Pahina 21)*  
(...we should be open to change.)

*“Siguro yong mga bagay na naging katuwang ko ay hindi talaga mawawala yong teknolohiya. Na kung saan ay ito yong mga bagay na kabiyak ko o katabi ko sa lahat ng aking pagtuturo sa panahon ng pandemya, sa panahon ng bagong normal... ..kasi nga bagong normal ito’y akin ng nayayakap ang mga bagong teknolohiya. Mas napapadali na sa atin na magturo ng pagbabasa.” (FGD7, Pahina 13)*

(Maybe the things I've been working with are of course the technology. Which these are the things that are my partner or next to me

in all my teaching during the pandemic, during the new normal... ..because it is the new normal for me to embrace new technologies. It is now easier for us to teach reading.)

Teachers recognize the challenges brought about by the new normal and acknowledge the need to deepen their understanding and openness to change. According to Jamon et al., the current situation requires new approaches, tools, methods, and teaching experiences. However, they recommend that new teaching methods should be "technology-centered" (777). They emphasize the importance of resilience and the ability to find new ways to solve problems. Despite the difficulties, teachers express their determination to continue serving their students and keeping pace with the new directions and realities of teaching in the new normal.

### 3.14 Conscientious Teaching Practice

Keeping up with modern teaching methods is necessary to make students more interested in learning. Based on the following response from a participant, various approaches they implemented can be seen:

*“Ah inspisasyon marahil dito nu yung iba ding ano ah paaralan (nagtawanan\*) lalo na kung nakapasa na sila ng report, so ikaw . . . syempre yong communal tapos na sila so dapat ah matapos din siya on time kasi ayaw ko din na masira yong paaralan. (ID11, Pahina 8)*

(Ah inspection, maybe here is the other school (laughs\*) especially if they have already passed the report, so you . . . Of course, the communal has already submitted the report, so I should finish on time and also send the needed report because I also don't want to ruin the image of our school.)

*“...kinakailangan talaga na magkaroon tayo ng panahon dito kasi yong bata din yong nangangailangan ng tulong. Isa din ay ano yong estratehiya na dapat gamitin sa bata, for example non-reader, ano ba yong pwede kong gawin para magkaintindihan kami para ma gets niya kung ano din yung pinapabasa ko sa kaniya.” (FGD7, Pahina 3)*

(...we must have time here because the child also needs help. Another is what strategy should be used with the child, for example,

non-reader, what can I do to make us understand each other so that he gets what I am reading to him.)

The teachers emphasized the need for thorough and innovative teaching methods in language instruction, highlighting the importance of performance tasks, passion for teaching, proper completion of tasks, and maintaining the school's reputation. They recognize that teaching is a vocation that requires dedication and the submission of quality work results. Teachers expressed hope in the potential of youth to shape the future. According to Marpa and Trinidad [14] an excellent teacher should be more than credentials, experience, and intelligence. This statement clearly shows that teaching as a profession is not just about credentials, knowledge, and intelligence. It is more than anything; it is a complete package of credentials, knowledge, intelligence, and love for teaching.

### 3.15 Progressive Academic Transition

It is true that one of the biggest challenges in teaching in the new normal is maintaining teachers' interest in continuing to teach and learn. The unexpected academic transition brought about significant changes. As the participants in the interview mentioned:

*"Isa sa mga hamon na sa pagtuturo ng pagbasa sa bagong normal ay meron tayong mga pighati at pagtatagumpay. Isa sa mga pighati ko na nakita sa pagtuturo ng pagbasa ay naiiba ang pagkakaroon ng pagbigkas, pagdulog, naiiba yung dulog ng mga salita na kung saan ay nagkakaroon ng malaking epekto sa karanasan ng mga guro sa pagtuturo ng pagbasa. At isa sa mga tagumpay naman nito ay nagkakaroon ng self-peace reading ang mga bata na kung saan ay nabibigyan sila ng pagkakataon na mabasa ang kanilang mga gustong basahing aklat..." (IDI7, Pahina 3)*

(One of the challenges in teaching reading in the new normal is that we have sorrows and triumphs. One of the sorrows I have seen in the teaching of reading is that there is a difference in the pronunciation, approach, and approach of the words which has a great impact on the experience of the teachers in teaching reading. And one of its successes is that the children have a self-peace reading where they are allowed to read the books...)

*"...marami ka dapat ummm strategies na ibibigay, yong mga mechanics na gagawin mo para hinay-hinay lang na gagawin mo yun, step-by-step, so yong mga strategies nakakatulong din yun para sa pagpapaunlad sa kanilang pag-uunawa sa kanilang pagbabasa dahil may mga, hindi mo kasi masasabi na pare-parehas sila ng level..." (IDI5, Pahina 16)*

(...you should give a lot of ummm strategies, the mechanics that you will do so that you will do it slowly, step-by-step, so those strategies are also helpful for the development of their understanding of their reading because there are some, you can't say that they are at the same level...)

On the other hand, the rise of technology has been a great help in the transition that took place. It made the work of teachers easier. Students are also more engaged because this aligns with the interests of many of them, and they are also proficient with it. One participant in the interview shared:

*"Para naman sa akin yung paggamit ng technology kasi di ka na mahirapan sa pagtuturo sa kanila, wala nay mga pa visual aid kay automatic nandun na, minsan nga mas magaling pa sila humawak sayo. (FGD4, Pahina 9)*

(For me, the use of technology, because you don't have a hard time teaching them, there are no more visual aids because there are automatic ones, sometimes they are even better at using technologies.)

Teachers emphasized the importance of children's reading ability and expressed that teaching should not be motivated solely by money but by a genuine desire to help children. They recognized the value of strategies that promote comprehension development and acknowledged that teachers cannot always guide students as they grow. Yanti et al. [9] stated in their study that when teaching reading comprehension, students often face many difficulties and lose their concentration on the reading text. Therefore, teachers need to have appropriate strategies to solve this problem. Teachers stressed the importance of continuous learning and understood the significance of time as both a challenge and a companion in their teaching journey [15-20].

The current pandemic has brought about widespread changes in the education system, particularly in the field of reading, which is one of the key factors in students' success across various subjects and opens doors for their lifelong participation in society (Ludwig et al., 2; Tomas et al., 2). Teaching is no longer limited to traditional methods but includes new approaches to maintain students' interest. According to the research of Gloria (2, 12) and Javier [21] it is important to note that teachers are not only delivering lessons but also continually striving to develop new teaching methods to capture their students' attention, especially in reading instruction. The ability to read depends on each person's capability to fully and accurately understand texts (Ameyaw & Anto 1). Despite the rapid development of school curricula, young people facing reading challenges remain a primary issue in the field of education. Consequently, teachers employ various methods to continuously meet the students' needs in reading comprehension [22-27].

Despite the difficulties, several positive experiences were highlighted. It is suggested that teachers use reading comprehension teaching strategies tailored to the skill levels and characteristics of the students [11]. Teachers observed students persistently striving in their reading, demonstrating self-paced learning. It is essential to continue granting students more autonomy in reading. To address students' concerns about feelings of loss and lack of control, providing more choices in text selections can help them reconnect with their identity as readers [12].

The ongoing proliferation of modern technology indicates that students can more easily adjust to these changes. According to Gloria's analysis (16), the current generation of students is considered 21st-century learners due to their ability to adapt and transform. Positive responses were reported from children and parents. Some students dedicated their time to reading and received help in understanding texts. Teachers recognized that children were involved in various home activities and demonstrated proficiency in using technology. Students shared their experiences, contributing to their overall academic development [28-30].

These studies showcase the continuous progress and advancement in the field of education, emphasizing the importance of teaching reading in the context of the new

normal, and demonstrating the determination of teachers to face the challenges of their profession [31,32].

## **4. CONCLUSION**

### **4.1 Implication for Practice**

Based on the study's results, it would be beneficial to provide teachers with opportunities to participate in training on various methods of teaching reading in the new normal. Learning should not only focus on students but also on teachers who hold the responsibility of instruction. Expanding teachers' knowledge is crucial for them to face the opportunities and challenges presented by the new education system. This can be achieved through seminars and workshops focused on current teaching methods and strategies that help develop students' reading skills. Through continuous learning, teachers will become more effective and better prepared to teach reading to Filipino students.

Research highlights the importance of using technology in teaching reading. Teachers can conduct lessons using online platforms to develop students' reading skills in Filipino, especially since today's students are more adept and interested in technology. Integrating technology into daily teaching can provide a more engaging learning experience and greater access to creative and innovative reading materials.

Furthermore, strengthening collaboration with the community and fellow teachers is also crucial to improving reading instruction. Schools can coordinate with local youth council officials to develop projects aimed at enhancing students' reading skills.

Ultimately, to ensure effective strategies and methods in teaching reading, it is important for teachers to regularly evaluate their approaches and outcomes. Feedback from students and fellow teachers can be valuable in identifying areas for improvement and determining which methods have the potential to help students further develop their reading knowledge and skills.

### **4.2 Implication for Future Research**

This study aims to enhance students' reading skills, especially in the new normal. Integrating

modern technology into teaching plays a significant role in this. Teachers can undergo training or workshops to master these technologies. Additionally, developing the materials used in teaching reading is also crucial.

Furthermore, it is important to examine effective strategies in teaching reading that are suitable for the new normal.

Above all, it would be beneficial to include the experiences of teachers teaching reading in the new normal from other institutions such as State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) and private schools. Finally, teachers are encouraged to continue their studies to promote learning in this research.

In general, future studies can provide deeper insights and specific recommendations for teachers and institutions in the field of education in the Philippines.

### **4.3 Concluding Remark**

Researching the experiences of Filipino teachers in teaching reading in the new normal underscores the importance of continually developing teachers' skills and knowledge to meet the needs of students in today's modern era. By understanding their experiences and teaching methods, we can highlight the crucial aspects of education in our country. The results of this study can serve as a basis for steps to further enhance the education system in the Philippines.

It is also important to prioritize the health and well-being of teachers. They need mechanisms for both physical and mental health, as well as support for personal growth and emotional security. By providing comprehensive support to teachers, they will become more effective and happier in their roles as educators. Ultimately, valuing teachers should not only be the responsibility of the government but also of society as a whole. It should be integrated into the culture of education and society in general.

### **DISCLAIMER (ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE)**

Author(s) hereby declares that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc) and text-to-image generators have been used during writing or editing of manuscripts.

### **CONSENT AND ETHICAL APPROVAL**

The study obtained to the Ethics Review of the University of Mindanao (UMERC) and all participants gave written consent to take part.

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## COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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