



TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES IN THE CONDUCT OF PHILIPPINE INFORMAL READING INVENTORY (PHIL-IRI) TO KEY STAGE TWO LEARNERS: BASES FOR IN-SERVICE TRAINING (INSET) PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative-phenomenological study, using in-depth interviews, explored the experiences of teachers in the conduct of Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) to key stage two learners as bases for In-Service Training (INSET) program in the District of San Miguel for the School Year 2025–2026. The results of the in-depth interviews revealed that teachers' experiences in the conduct of Phil-IRI to stage two learners included conducting orientation before the actual assessment, conducting group screening, assessing learners individually, with the realization that learners can already read words and sentences, have difficulty reading fluently, and have limited comprehension of what they read. The challenges encountered by teachers in the conduct of Phil-IRI to key stage two learners included time constraints, learners whose reading level below their grade level, and lack of resources and materials. The findings of the study served as a basis to strengthen in-service training program to ensure meaningful literacy development.

Keywords: *In-Service Training, Philippine Informal Reading Inventory, Key Stage 2 Learners*

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INTRODUCTION

Reading is a foundational skill essential for learning, particularly among learners, as it enables them to access knowledge and develop critical thinking skills to function effectively in society.

Reading is the key to skillful learning and better living. Learners who read well develop deeper understanding and are better able to adjust effectively to various life situations, as reading comprehension supports meaning-making, critical thinking, and knowledge construction (Medranda-Morales et al., 2023). When learners understand what they read, they can identify, classify, organize, synthesize, and apply information, which are essential higher-order cognitive processes for learning and decision-making (Medranda-Morales et al., 2023; Roca-Campos, 2024). Moreover, reading comprehension contributes not only to academic success but also to the development of life skills, enabling learners to use information purposefully and make sound decisions in real-world contexts (Baki, 2024).

In the Philippines, the Philippine Informal Reading Inventory (Phil-IRI) serves as a classroom-based assessment tool designed to help teachers measure and describe learners' reading performance by evaluating oral reading, silent reading, and listening comprehension, and determining independent, instructional, and frustration levels to guide instruction and interventions aligned with the Department of Education's *Every Child a Reader Program (ECARP)* (DepEd Philippines, 2024).

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Teachers' perceptions and experiences play a critical role in the successful application of the Phil-IRI program, as these influence their ability to administer, interpret, and use the results to inform instruction. While Phil-IRI is valued for its detailed approach to reading assessment, some educators feel unprepared to analyze its data due to inconsistent training. This gap can lead to discrepancies in how reading challenges are addressed across different regions, impacting the uniformity of literacy outcomes nationwide. These studies collectively illustrate the strengths of Phil-IRI in enhancing reading instruction and addressing literacy gaps, while also highlighting the persistent challenges in its implementation, especially in under-resourced settings. The recommendations from these studies suggest a need for continuous investment in teacher training, resources, and systemic support to maximize the impact of Phil-IRI in improving literacy outcomes across the Philippines (Pelagio, 2025).

Teachers' experiences and beliefs about reading assessment influence how they interpret assessment results and make instructional decisions, which affects the identification of learners' reading needs and subsequent intervention planning (Shafii, 2025).

Teachers often encounter difficulties such as large class sizes, limited instructional resources, time constraints, and gaps in assessment literacy (Baldevarona, 2020; Misanes & Pascual, 2023).

Understanding how teachers navigate the process of conducting the Phil-IRI and using these results to fit instruction can help identify problems and differences to support the proper administration of the assessment tool. These insights and experiences are crucial factors in

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designing an in-service training program that aligns with classroom needs and the professional growth of teachers. It also improves assessment accuracy, teachers' ability to interpret and apply Phil-IRI data and enhances the reading outcomes for learners.

Recognizing the significance of diagnostic reading assessments and the pivotal role teachers play in their administration, this study seeks to identify teachers' experiences and challenges in administering the Phil-IRI and aims to propose an in-service training program that meets their professional development needs.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research method, research design, participants of the study, data-gathering procedures, research instrument, and data analysis to be used in this study. The purpose of this study was to explore the teachers' experiences in the conduct of Phil-IRI to stage two learners as bases for in-service training in the District of San Miguel during the school year 2025-2026.

Research Method

The research method utilized in this study was descriptive method under qualitative research using in-depth interview.

The descriptive research method focuses on systematically describing a phenomenon as it exists in its natural setting, without manipulating variables. According to Elliott (2025), it aims to provide an accurate portrayal of current conditions, practices, or relationships within

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educational settings, enabling researchers to understand trends, patterns, and implications for practice. This approach is particularly useful in educational studies that seek to document and analyze real-world events, behaviors, or perceptions without altering the environment in which they occur (Elliott, 2025).

The interviewer with the interviewee during the interview were allowed to sit together in a distance and to think about the series of questions about a certain issue. The aim was to get the main or the necessary views of the participants in a certain issue in a social context through the responses of the participants to the questions.

Research Design

The study used phenomenological research design. Phenomenology can be considered a philosophical approach to undertaking qualitative research. The goal of phenomenology is to understand how others view the world, and how this view may vary from commonly held views by focusing on a person's subjective interpretations of what she experiences. Phenomenology is done by interviewing subjects to learn their impressions, and is frequently used in such fields as psychology, sociology, and social work.

Phenomenology focuses on the study of structures of consciousness as experienced from a first-person perspective. The central aim of phenomenology is to investigate and describe phenomena as they are consciously experienced, without resorting to theories about their causal explanations or being influenced by unexamined preconceptions (Biemel and Spiegelberg, 2024).

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Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were eight (8) teachers purposely identified who were handling stage two learners (Grade 4 – 6) conducted Phil-IRI assessment in their respective schools.

To have representative for each grade level, three teachers were taken from Grade 4, two teachers from Grade 5, and three teachers from Grade 6.

These teachers must be regular permanent teachers, have been teachers of the Grade level of at least two years, and have been teachers at the school for at least one year.

All of these eight teachers have been using Phil-IRI for at least three years.

Sampling Design

Purposive sampling design was used in the study. Purposive sampling according to Nikolopoulou (2023) refers to a group of non-probability sampling techniques in which units are selected because they have characteristics that you need in your sample. In other words, units are selected “on purpose” in purposive sampling. This is also called judgmental sampling, this sampling method relies on the researcher’s judgment when identifying and selecting the individuals, cases, or events that can provide the best information to achieve the study’s objectives.

Research Instrument

The research instrument utilized in the study was a researcher-made interview schedule.

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An interview schedule in research methodology is a written list of pre-planned questions (either structured, semi-structured, or open-ended) prepared to guide an interviewer in collecting information consistently from participants. It functions as a standardized tool for data collection, ensuring that the same topics and questions are addressed across interviews to support systematic comparison and analysis. The interviewer follows the schedule during face-to-face, telephone, or electronic interviews, asking each participants the predetermined items and recording their responses (Socio.health, 2024).

The interview schedule had four (4) major questions focusing on teachers' experiences in the conduct of Phil-IRI to stage two learners, the challenges teachers encounter in the conduct of Phil-IRI to Key stage two learners, and coping strategies teachers use to challenges encountered in the conduct of Phil-IRI.

Voice and video recorder was also used for data gathering and documentation depending upon the permission of the participants.

Validity of the Research Instrument

Prior to the determination of the validity of the interview schedule made by the researcher, the adviser, Dean of the Graduate School then a panel of jurors who were considered for their expertise in the field of research, testing and assessment, and English, were requested to validate each question for review and modification.

Validity refers to the extent to which the findings, interpretations, and conclusions derived from a study are accurate, meaningful, and appropriate in representing the concept being examined. It ensures that the research instrument truly measures what it is intended

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to measure and that the results are credible reflections of reality. In establishing content validity, the questions and format of the instrument must align with the study's defined variables and objectives to guarantee that each item accurately reflects the construction under investigation. This process often involves expert review to determine whether the items are relevant, clear, and representative of the concepts being studied. By ensuring that the content and structure of the instrument are consistent with the study's framework, researchers enhance the accuracy and usefulness of the data collected in relation to the research objective (Creswell & Creswell, 2022).

Comments, corrections, and suggestions of the panel of validators regarding the interview schedule were considered using the appropriate form of Good and Scates (1972) as cited by Soqueña (2021).

Data Gathering Procedures

Permits from the adviser, Dean of the Graduate School, Office of the Schools Division Superintendent, Office of the District Supervisors, School Heads, and individual participants were obtained to allow the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher personally went to the schools/community/place convenient on the part of the participants to conduct the interview.

The researcher encouraged the participants to sign a waiver or permission relative to the conduct of the study.

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Using in-depth interviews, a voice and video recorder was also provided to completely capture the interviewee's words. The researcher consolidated all collected data after series of interviews.

Data Analysis

The data were collected through the interview schedule that were analyzed using thematic analysis, a qualitative method designed to identify, interpret, and report recurring patterns or themes within narrative data. This approach enables the researcher to uncover meaningful.

insights into the responses of the participants on their experiences in the conduct of Phil-IRI to stage two learners, the challenges they encounter in the conduct of Phil-IRI to Key stage two learners, and coping strategies used to challenges encountered in the conduct of Phil-IRI.

According to Braun and Clarke (2023), thematic analysis provides a flexible yet rigorous framework for analyzing qualitative data, allowing researchers to identify both explicit and implicit meanings across participants' narratives. It is particularly suitable for educational research that seeks to understand complex social and organizational dynamics. Nowell et al. (2021) further emphasize that thematic analysis enhances transparency and credibility in qualitative studies by ensuring systematic coding and interpretation of data.

The transcribed data from the interviews were analyzed using Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2023), which is well-suited for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data.

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The analysis followed the standard six-phase process:

Familiarization with Data: Reading and re-reading the transcripts (in local language and English translation).

Generating Initial Codes: Assigning short phrases or labels to meaningful segments of data (e.g., "shared phone," "fear of judgment," "poor signal").

Searching for Themes: Grouping the initial codes into potential overarching themes and sub-themes that captured significant patterns (e.g., Codes like "no insult," "private correction" will be grouped under a theme).

Reviewing Themes: Refining and checking the themes against the entire dataset to ensure they accurately reflected the participants' meanings and the study's focus.

Defining and Naming Themes: Developing clear, concise, and academically sound names for the final emergent themes (will be presented in Chapter 4).

Producing the Report: Weaving the themes, supported by direct quotes, into the narrative structure of the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data (Chapter 4), and linking them to the theoretical framework.

Summary, Insights, and Recommendations

This study aimed to explore teachers' experiences in conducting Phil-IRI with Stage Two learners in the District of San Miguel during the 2025–2026 school year, to inform the design of an in-service training program. Using a qualitative phenomenological design, data were collected through in-depth interviews with eight purposely selected teachers handling

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Grades 4 to 6 who conducted Phil-IRI assessments. A researcher-made interview schedule, validated by a panel of experts using the criteria of Good and Scates (1972) as cited by Soqueña (2021), served as the primary instrument. Data collection involved voice and video recordings, with participant consent. Necessary permits from academic and school authorities were secured prior to conducting interviews. The researcher personally visited schools or convenient locations to gather data. Collected information was consolidated and analyzed using a thematic approach to identify key insights and experiences of the participants.

The following are the findings of the study:

Based on the results of the in-depth interview with the participants, the teachers' experiences in the conduct of Phil-IRI to stage two learners by conducting orientation before the actual assessment, conducting group screening, assessing learners individually, including the realization that learners could already read words and sentences, learners show difficulty in reading fluently, and they lack of comprehension to what they read.

It was found out that the challenges encountered by teachers in the conduct of Phil-IRI to Key stage two learners include time constraints, learners whose reading level below their grade level, and lack of resources and materials.

It was also found out that the coping strategies used by teachers to the challenges encountered in the conduct of Phil-IRI to Key stage two learners include the preparation and use of appropriate reading materials, provision of sufficient time, giving more remedial sessions, and being flexible and patient.

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Insights

Based on the findings, the following insights were drawn:

The teachers' experiences suggest that engaging with learners during literacy assessments provides a nuanced understanding of their reading abilities. Through the process, educators gain firsthand insight into both the strengths and challenges of each learner, observing how foundational skills manifest in practice. These interactions also highlight the variability in learners' progress, emphasizing the importance of personalized approaches and careful observation to identify where targeted support is needed. Moreover, teachers appear to recognize the value of combining structured assessment with empathetic attention, allowing them to not only measure reading skills but also better understand learners' confidence, motivation, and readiness for instruction. This reflective engagement can inform instructional strategies and help bridge gaps between assessment outcomes and effective teaching interventions.

The experiences of teachers reveal that implementing reading assessments requires balancing multiple demands within the classroom environment. Educators must navigate varying learner needs while striving to maintain the quality and effectiveness of the assessment process. These circumstances underscore the importance of adaptability, creative problem-solving, and strategic planning, as teachers work to ensure that each learner receives appropriate attention despite external limitations. The situation also points to the broader need for systemic support, including sufficient preparation and access to tools that can enhance both assessment and instruction. Ultimately, these experiences reflect the resilience

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and commitment of teachers in fostering literacy development under challenging conditions.

The teachers' approaches indicate a proactive and reflective mindset in addressing obstacles during reading assessments. Their actions demonstrate an understanding that effective literacy support extends beyond formal procedures, requiring thoughtful adaptation to learners' unique needs. By anticipating difficulties and adjusting their methods, teachers create a more supportive and responsive learning environment. This perspective highlights the role of teacher agency and resourcefulness in bridging gaps between learners' abilities and instructional expectations, ultimately fostering a more meaningful and individualized path to reading development.

Recommendations

In the light of the findings and insights arrived in this study, the following recommendations are highlighted:

It is recommended that teachers should receive ongoing professional support and training to strengthen their ability to tailor reading instruction to diverse learner needs. Providing access to adaptable assessment tools and strategies can help educators efficiently identify and address specific skill gaps, ensuring that instruction is both responsive and effective.

It is also recommended that schools should provide additional resources, time, and administrative support to help teachers manage classroom demands during reading assessments. Equipping educators with practical tools and structured guidance can enhance

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efficiency and ensure that all learners receive the attention needed for effective literacy development.

It is further recommended that professional development programs should focus on enhancing teachers' skills in adaptive instruction and innovative problem-solving. Providing guidance on flexible strategies and personalized support can further empower educators to effectively meet the diverse needs of learners in reading assessments.

It is recommended that this in-service training be regularly implemented and supported with adequate resources, allowing teachers to apply learned strategies consistently in their classrooms. Ongoing follow-up, mentoring, and access to instructional materials will help sustain the program's impact on improving learners' reading skills.

To validate the results of the present investigation, parallel studies must be conducted in a wider scope and consider other variables not mentioned in this study.

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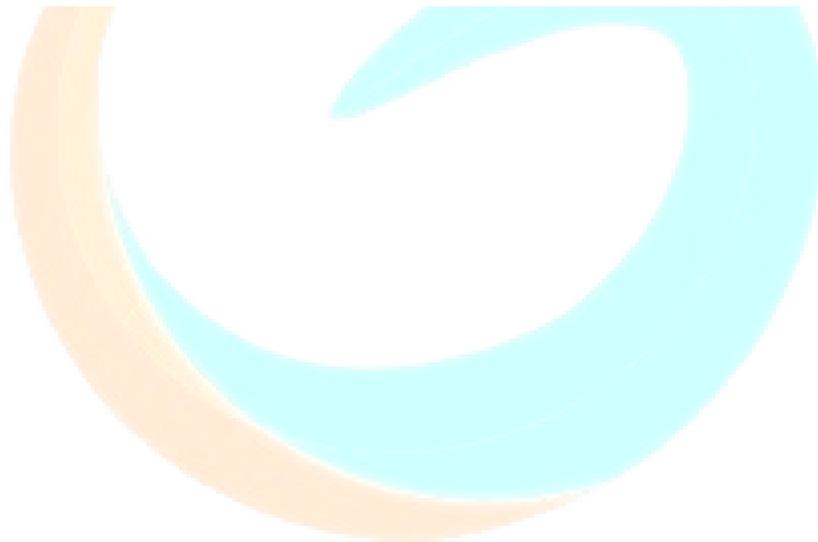
Volume VII, Issue III

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