

# An Exploration in the Reading Comprehension Strategies Among Elementary Teachers in Davao Del Norte: A Mixed-Method Study

Loremie L. Abiera<sup>1</sup>, Mary Ann Ronith P. Libago, PhD<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Student, Institute of Teacher Education, Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology, Kapalong, Davao del Norte, Philippines

<sup>2</sup>Program Coordinator, Institute of Teacher Education, Kapalong College of Agriculture, Sciences and Technology, Kapalong, Davao del Norte, Philippines

Corresponding Author's Email: [loremie.abiera@kcast.edu.ph](mailto:loremie.abiera@kcast.edu.ph)



## ABSTRACT

The study aimed to investigate the reading comprehension strategies employed by elementary teachers in Davao del Norte and to explore their lived experiences in implementing these strategies to enhance students' reading skills. A mixed-method design with a parallel convergent approach was utilized. A total of 123 teachers were randomly selected for the quantitative phase, while 10 were purposively chosen for in-depth qualitative interviews. Quantitative results indicated a very high level of use across all reading comprehension strategies, with an overall mean of 4.61, while qualitative findings revealed teachers' strong commitment, creativity, and adaptability in applying strategies such as guided reading, questioning techniques, and scaffolding to support struggling readers. The study highlighted teachers' positive perceptions, active engagement, and collaborative efforts in refining instruction. By integrating quantitative and qualitative data, the research provided comprehensive insights into instructional practices, challenges, and recommendations, offering practical guidance for improving literacy instruction and contributing to broader discussions on effective reading pedagogy.

**Keywords:** Reading Comprehension, Elementary Teachers, Mixed Methods, Philippines

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## INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is a foundational skill in language development and academic achievement, enabling learners to construct meaning, interpret ideas, and apply information across subject areas. In elementary education, comprehension functions as a gateway to learning; however, its development is often constrained by contextual and instructional factors. In Philippine public schools—particularly in provincial settings such as Davao del Norte—teachers navigate persistent challenges including limited instructional resources, heterogeneous reading abilities, and the use of English as a second language (ESL).

In Davao del Norte, elementary classrooms commonly consist of learners with varying levels of vocabulary knowledge, decoding skills, and language exposure. These conditions contribute to ongoing difficulties in reading comprehension and require teachers to make instructional decisions that are responsive to learners' needs. Prior studies emphasize that effective comprehension instruction depends largely on teachers' strategic practices, including scaffolding, explicit instruction, and meaningful engagement with texts (Afflerbach, Pearson, & Paris, 2008).

To address these realities, teachers employ strategies such as guided reading, vocabulary development, peer-assisted learning, and differentiated instruction. These practices are consistent with constructivist and sociocultural perspectives, which view learning as an active process shaped by interaction, scaffolding, and contextual experience (Vygotsky, 1978; Tomlinson, 2014). Within resource-limited environments, teachers' adaptive practices and professional judgment become central to effective reading instruction.

Research further suggests that comprehension instruction is most effective when it is student-centered and motivating. Learner engagement and social interaction significantly influence reading success (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2011). In settings where instructional materials and institutional support are constrained, teachers rely on formative assessment, creativity, and reflective practice to sustain reading development (Roskos & Neuman, 2012).

Despite national literacy initiatives, the enactment of reading comprehension strategies varies considerably across local contexts. While existing studies have examined reading instruction at the national level (De Guzman, 2020; Gonzales, 2021), there remains limited understanding of how teachers experience and interpret the implementation of these strategies in provincial classrooms. Grounded in a phenomenological qualitative approach, this study seeks to explore the lived experiences of elementary teachers in Davao del Norte as they implement reading comprehension strategies. By foregrounding teachers' voices, this research aims to provide context-specific insights that may inform policy development, instructional leadership, and teacher education programs focused on strengthening literacy instruction at the grassroots level.

## METHODS

This study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design (Creswell, 2018) enabling the concurrent collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, with both components afforded equal emphasis.

The research targeted public elementary school teachers in Davao del Norte, with a total population of 133 teachers. A representative sample of 123 respondents was selected through stratified random sampling for the quantitative survey. For the qualitative component, 10 public elementary school



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teachers who had experience implementing these strategies with their students and had at least seven years of teaching service were purposively selected to provide in-depth insights through semi-structured interviews.

Data were collected using two primary instruments: a structured survey questionnaire assessing perceived challenges in budgeting, accounting, procurement, and asset management using a four-point Likert scale, and an interview guide designed to explore administrators' experiences, perceptions, and practices related to fiscal management. The survey was administered electronically via Microsoft Forms, while interviews were conducted either in person or online, contingent upon participant preference and consent.

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in SPSS, whereas qualitative data were examined through thematic analysis in NVivo 10, following the procedures outlined by Braun and Clarke.

All research procedures were conducted in adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act 10173), ensuring voluntary participation and strict confidentiality. Research validity and reliability were reinforced through method triangulation, detailed audit trail.

### **Research Questions:**

1. What is the level of elementary teachers in implementing reading comprehension strategies in their classrooms in Davao del Norte?
2. What are the lived experiences and insights of elementary teachers in Davao del Norte regarding the implementation, effectiveness, and challenges of reading comprehension strategies in their classrooms?
3. Do the qualitative findings corroborate the quantitative results?

## **METHODS**

### **Research Design**

This study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, which is non-experimental in nature and integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches within a single phase of inquiry (Creswell, 2003). In this design, quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed concurrently, allowing equal priority to both strands. The convergence of these methods enabled a more comprehensive understanding of teachers' use of reading comprehension strategies than either approach alone.

The quantitative component utilized a descriptive research design to examine the status of reading comprehension strategies in terms of teachers perceived improvement of students' reading skills, level of satisfaction in strategy implementation, challenges encountered in teaching reading, and attitudes toward reading instruction. Descriptive research is appropriate for systematically describing characteristics, behaviors, and perceptions of a population without manipulating variables. Data were summarized using categorical and numerical descriptions to capture patterns and trends among participants.

The qualitative component focused on exploring the lived experiences and insights of elementary teachers regarding the implementation of reading comprehension strategies. Open-ended responses



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and narrative data provided in-depth explanations of teachers' practices, challenges, and reflections that could not be fully captured through quantitative measures alone.

### **Data Integration**

Integration of quantitative and qualitative data occurred at the interpretation stage of the study. Following separate analyses, findings from both strands were compared and merged through a side-by-side comparison, also referred to as a joint display approach. Quantitative results were aligned with corresponding qualitative themes to determine areas of convergence, complementarity, or divergence. This integration process strengthened the validity of the findings by allowing qualitative insights to explain, elaborate, and contextualize quantitative results, thereby addressing potential weaknesses inherent in a single-method approach. Through this convergent parallel design, the study capitalized on the strengths of both quantitative breadth and qualitative depth, resulting in a richer and more credible understanding of reading comprehension strategy implementation among elementary teachers in Davao del Norte.

### **Research Respondents**

#### *Quantitative Phase*

The participants in the quantitative phase of this study were 123 elementary teachers from public elementary schools in Davao del Norte, specifically within the Asuncion District. These teachers served as the primary sources of data in examining the status of reading comprehension strategies in terms of perceived improvement in students' reading skills, teacher satisfaction in strategy implementation, challenges encountered in reading instruction, and attitudes toward reading.

To be included in the study, participants were required to meet the following criteria: (1) currently teaching in a public elementary school within Davao del Norte; (2) actively teaching during the current and immediately preceding academic year (2024–2025); (3) holding regular, full-time teaching positions; and (4) of any gender and age. The total sample size was determined in consultation with a statistician to ensure adequate representation across schools within the district.

The distribution of participants across schools was as follows: Cambanogoy Central Elementary School (29), Magatos Integrated School (29), Katipunan Elementary School (13), Cabaywa Elementary School (8), New Talisay Elementary School (5), Magbaad Elementary School (8), San Vicente Elementary School (6), Pamacaun Integrated School (12), New Loon Elementary School (5), and Napunggas Elementary School (8). This distribution ensured representation from multiple school contexts within the district.

#### *Qualitative Phase*

The qualitative phase involved ten (10) elementary teachers selected through purposive sampling to participate in in-depth interviews. Purposive sampling was employed to identify participants who could provide rich, information-dense accounts of their experiences in implementing reading comprehension strategies, consistent with phenomenological inquiry (Sergent, 2012).

Selection of qualitative participants was guided by the following criteria: (1) a minimum of five years of teaching experience in elementary education; (2) direct involvement in teaching reading or language-related subjects; (3) experience implementing multiple reading comprehension strategies (e.g., guided reading, differentiated instruction, vocabulary scaffolding); and (4) exposure to instructional challenges such as limited resources, diverse learner reading levels, or ESL classroom contexts. These criteria ensured that participants possessed sustained and meaningful engagement with the phenomenon under investigation.



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The number of qualitative participants followed established recommendations for qualitative research, wherein sample sizes typically range from 10 to 50 participants, depending on the nature of the inquiry and the depth of analysis required (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The selected participants met the same general inclusion criteria as those in the quantitative phase, including current employment in public elementary schools in Davao del Norte, full-time teaching status, and no restrictions on gender or age.

## **Research Instrument**

### **Quantitative Instruments**

Three researcher-developed survey questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from the respondents. The instruments measured the status of reading comprehension strategies in terms of (a) improvement in reading-related skills, (b) satisfaction in strategy implementation, (c) difficulties encountered during reading instruction, and (d) attitude toward reading. The questionnaires were adapted from established measures related to reading comprehension and strategy use (Auzmendi, 1992) and consisted of statements reflecting multiple strategy domains, including behavioral, cognitive, affective, metacognitive, compensatory strategies, and coping mechanisms (cognitive and emotional coping). Responses were rated using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 indicated Never and 5 indicated Always. Mean scores were interpreted using predefined ranges to describe the overall status of reading comprehension strategy use.

### **Validity and Reliability**

To establish content validity, the survey instruments were reviewed and evaluated by a panel of experts in reading education, educational research, and measurement. Their feedback led to revisions in item clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study objectives.

A pilot test was conducted among elementary teachers who were not included in the final sample to assess the clarity and reliability of the instruments. Reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha indicated acceptable to high internal consistency across the subscales, with coefficients ranging from  $\alpha = .82$  to  $.91$ , exceeding the minimum acceptable threshold of  $.70$  for educational research. These results confirmed the instruments' suitability for large-scale data collection.

### **Qualitative Instrument**

For the qualitative phase, an In-Depth Interview (IDI) protocol was developed to explore participants lived experiences in implementing reading comprehension strategies. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions focusing on teachers' experiences related to skill improvement, instructional satisfaction, challenges encountered in reading instruction, and attitudes toward reading.

The interview protocol was validated by an expert panel to ensure content relevance, clarity, and alignment with the phenomenological orientation of the study. Revisions were made based on expert feedback prior to data collection.

### **Mitigation of Interviewer Bias**

To minimize interviewer bias, several strategies were employed. First, the interviewer adhered strictly to the validated interview guide to maintain consistency across interviews. Second, neutral and non-leading questions were used, and follow-up probes were limited to clarification and elaboration. Third, the researcher engaged in reflexive journaling to acknowledge and bracket personal assumptions throughout the interview and analysis processes. Finally, selected interview transcripts were reviewed by participants through member checking to ensure accuracy and credibility of the recorded responses.



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## Data Analysis

### Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, particularly the mean, were computed to determine the average responses of the participants across the indicators of reading comprehension strategies. After the retrieval of the survey questionnaires, responses were carefully checked, tallied, encoded, and processed to ensure accuracy and completeness prior to analysis. The resulting statistical outputs were used to determine the overall status of reading comprehension strategy implementation among elementary teachers in Davao del Norte.

As presented in Table 1, the indicators yielded Very High mean ratings across all dimensions. While these results may reflect teachers' strong engagement with and positive perceptions of reading comprehension strategies, they may also indicate the presence of response bias, particularly social desirability bias, given the self-reported nature of the instrument and the professional context of the respondents. Teachers may have been inclined to provide favorable responses that align with expected instructional practices. To address this limitation, the quantitative findings were interpreted with caution and were triangulated with qualitative data to verify whether the high ratings were consistent with teachers' actual experiences and classroom practices.

### Qualitative Data Analysis

Qualitative data were analyzed using coding and thematic analysis, consistent with phenomenological inquiry. Transcripts from one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions were examined systematically to identify recurring patterns, significant statements, and emerging themes related to teachers' lived experiences in implementing reading comprehension strategies. The analysis followed an iterative process of initial coding, theme development, and refinement through constant comparison. This process allowed for a deeper exploration of teachers' instructional practices, challenges, and reflections, thereby providing contextual explanations for the quantitative results.

### Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings enabled the study to identify areas of convergence and complementarity between numerical trends and narrative accounts. Qualitative themes were used to explain, validate, and contextualize the quantitative results, particularly the consistently high ratings observed across indicators. This mixed-methods integration strengthened the credibility of the findings and mitigated limitations associated with reliance on self-reported survey data.

## RESULTS

### Statues of Reading Comprehension Strategies



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Table 1 presents the status of reading comprehension strategies of elementary teachers in Davao del Norte in terms of their improvement in abilities, performance satisfaction of students, difficulties faced while reading, attitude to reading, and English learning.

**Table 1. Status of Reading Comprehension Strategies**

Based on the findings from the responses of elementary teachers in Davao del Norte, the level of critical reading strategies and related English teaching practices was consistently rated as *Very High* across all indicators. The indicator Improvement in Abilities obtained the highest mean score of 4.68, indicating that teachers always engage students in reading activities, assess their fluency and comprehension, and encourage active participation in English classes. This was followed by Performance Satisfaction of Students with an overall mean of 4.63, which shows that teachers consistently observe growth in students' confidence and proficiency, and effectively connect English learning to other subjects. The third highest was Difficulties Faced While Reading, which received a mean of 4.57, yet still described as *Very High*. This suggests that teachers are highly proactive in addressing vocabulary gaps, supporting articulation of thoughts, and increasing student motivation. Similarly, Attitude to Reading and English Learning also scored a *Very High* mean of 4.57, reflecting a strong belief among teachers in the value of English reading for global connection, communication, and student pride in learning.

These findings suggest that elementary teachers in Davao del Norte are highly effective in promoting critical reading and English language development. The consistent "Very High" ratings across all areas support the idea that teachers are not only applying higher-order thinking strategies like evaluation and comprehension but are also nurturing a positive attitude and motivation among students. This aligns with the findings of Mirasol (2024), who emphasized that critical reading strategies strengthen student engagement and analytical skills, and echoes the conclusion of Pretorius (2024), who noted that consistent practice and reflection improve academic performance in language learning.

Indicators	Mean	Description
<b>A. Improvement in abilities</b>		
1. Engaging students in English reading activities a part of their daily routine.	4.68	Very High
2. Assessing students English reading fluency.	4.57	Very High
3. Evaluating student's comprehension of the English materials.	4.66	Very High
4. Encouraging the students to be active in participating in English during class lectures.	4.78	Very High



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5. Helping the students to notice their improvement in English comprehension.	4.70	Very High
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<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.68</b>	<b>Very High</b>
<b>B. Performance satisfaction of students</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1. Helping students link new English language concepts to their existing knowledge.	4.54	Very High
2. Developing English speaking, listening and writing abilities.	4.57	Very High
3. Increasing student's confidence in English language skills	4.58	Very High
4. Enhancing students understanding of other subjects.	4.75	Very High
5. Integrating English language support into subject-specific instruction.	4.71	Very High

<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.63</b>	<b>Very High</b>
<b>C. Difficulties faced while reading</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>
1. Assessing and addressing student's vocabulary gaps.	4.58	Very High
2. Encouraging students to effectively record and review new vocabulary.	4.48	Very High
3. Supporting students in effectively discussing and articulating their thoughts about text.	4.58	Very High
4. Scaffolding summary skills for struggling students.	4.52	Very High
5. Increasing student's engagement and motivation during English language activities and lessons in the classroom.	4.69	Very High

<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.57</b>	<b>Very High</b>
<b>D. Attitude to reading and English learning</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Description</b>



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1. Reading English connects you globally.	4.57	Very High
2. Helping students find joy in reading in English can make them proud of their language learning.	4.68	Very High
3. Exploring text from different fields, understanding how English is used to communicate ideas and solve problem.	4.50	Very High
4. Fostering English fluency beyond academic assessments.	4.50	Very High
5. Developing English language proficiency through engagement and motivation.	4.57	Very High

<b>Category Mean</b>	<b>4.57</b>	<b>Very High</b>
<b>Overall Mean</b>	<b>4.61</b>	<b>Very High</b>

### The Lived Experiences of Elementary Teachers in Davao del Norte Regarding Their Reading Comprehension Strategies in Teaching Lessons

Five essential themes are created based on the in-depth interviews and focus group discussion of the participants on the first research question. It deals with the lived experiences of the elementary teachers in Davao del Norte regarding their reading comprehension strategies in teaching lessons. The essential themes that emerged from the transcriptions of the participants' responses for research question number one consisted of overarching themes which are summarized in the said table.

**Table 3.1.** The Lived Experiences of Elementary Teachers in Davao del Norte Regarding Their Reading Comprehension Strategies in Teaching Lessons

ISSUE PROBED	CORE IDEAS	CODE/ CATEGORIES	ESSENTIAL THEMES	THEORETICAL SUPPORT



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Challenges of Teachers in Implementing Reading Comprehension Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Struggling to produce letter sounds. <b>(IDI-01)</b></li> <li>• Struggling with decoding difficulties. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>• Difficulty recognizing letter sounds and blending words. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>• Struggling with students' difficulty in associating sounds with letters. <b>(IDI-10)</b></li> </ul>	Foundational Reading Challenges	Cognitive Challenges	Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory (1980)		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Struggling with reading and comprehension difficulties. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Struggling to understand passage meaning. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> <li>• Representing text meaning effectively. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> </ul>	Reading Comprehension Challenges				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching students with learning difficulties (e.g., learning deficiencies, dyslexia). <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> <li>• Struggling students with kindergarten-level reading skills. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> <li>• Having students reach higher grade levels with poor reading skills. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> </ul>	Developmental and Learning Disabilities				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applying a single strategy for all learners. <b>(IDI-08)</b></li> <li>• Accommodating both advanced and struggling readers. <b>(IDI-09)</b></li> <li>• Teaching students with learning difficulties (e.g., dyslexia, other deficiencies). <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> <li>• Generalizing reading activities due to ability differences. <b>(IDI-09)</b></li> </ul>	Managing Diverse Reading Levels in the Classroom			Instructional and Classroom Management Barriers	Tomlison's Differentiated Instruction Theory (1990)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitating reading instruction for students with varying abilities. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> </ul>	Instructional and Assessment Challenges				



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representing text meaning effectively to enhance comprehension. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of parental involvement leading to poor reading practice at home. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>• Insufficient reading materials and resources to support diverse learning needs. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> </ul>	External Constraints Affecting Instruction		
Successes in Applying Strategies to improve Student Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observing significant improvements in slow readers. <b>(IDI-01)</b></li> <li>• Observing reading comprehension progress and overall reading skills. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> <li>• Improving students' ability to decode and understand text. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> </ul>	Progress in Reading Fluency and Comprehension	Student Progress and Skill Development	Clay's Emergent Literacy Theory (19600)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieving readiness for reading. <b>(IDI-01)</b></li> <li>• Seeing Grade 1 students recognize words and associate letter sounds correctly. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> </ul>	Readiness and Foundational Literacy Skills		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Noticing progress from the first quarter to the third quarter. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> <li>• Observing students becoming readers in both English and Filipino. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> <li>• Reducing non-readers from 10 to 2. <b>(IDI-09)</b></li> </ul>	Longitudinal Growth and Milestone Achievements		
Adjustment Made to Enhance Reading Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheduling reading sessions after class hours. <b>(IDI-01)</b></li> <li>• Conducting a reading program for slow readers. <b>(IDI-01)</b></li> <li>• Allocating extra time for struggling readers. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> </ul>	Structured Interventions	Adaptive Reading Instruction	Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Learning (1920)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tailoring reading activities based on students' skill levels. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>• Separating advanced readers from non-</li> </ul>	Differentiated Instruction		



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	<p>readers for targeted instruction. <b>(IDI-09)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assigning different activities based on reading proficiency. <b>(IDI-09)</b></li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using headings and subheadings to organize content. <b>(IDI-02)</b></li> <li>• Reading aloud to improve comprehension. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>• Asking questions to encourage engagement. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> </ul>	Strategic Approaches		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing Mother Tongue-Based Instruction (Bisaya) for better understanding. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Gradually transitioning students from Bisaya to Filipino to English. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Allowing students to express thoughts in their vernacular before translating. <b>(IDI-08)</b></li> </ul>	Language Scaffolding		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressing letter sound recognition and blending. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> <li>• Providing targeted instruction to improve decoding and comprehension. <b>(IDI-01)</b></li> <li>• Using level-appropriate reading materials. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> </ul>	Targeted Skill Support		
Reading Comprehension Strategies used Most often by Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using KWL Strategy (Know, Want to Know, Learn). <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>• Linking text to personal experiences, other books, or real-life situations. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Reviewing previously read passages to reinforce comprehension. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> </ul>	Activating Prior Knowledge	Scaffolded Reading Approaches	Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Learning (1920)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applying questioning before, during, and after reading. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> </ul>	Questioning Techniques		



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow-up questions to assess comprehension. <b>(IDI-08)</b></li> <li>• Encouraging students to explain key ideas. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing Small-Group Reading Sessions. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Providing slow readers with appropriate reading resources. <b>(IDI-02)</b></li> <li>• Using one-on-one reading strategies. <b>(IDI-09)</b></li> <li>• Adjusting strategies based on students' need. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> </ul>	Differentiated Instruction		
Specific Methods or Techniques used to address Challenges in Teaching Reading Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching alphabet recognition and word formation. <b>(IDI-01)</b></li> <li>• Using read-aloud sessions to model fluency and expression. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> </ul>	Foundational Skill Building	Multi-Tiered Approach to Reading Development	Clay's Emergent Literacy Theory (1960)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing Differentiated Instruction through Small-Group Reading Sessions. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Using guided reading and scaffolding strategies. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Pairing proficient readers with struggling students. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Modeling thinking aloud to demonstrate text analysis and interpretation. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Engaging students with interactive questioning techniques. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> </ul>	Targeted Support		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing one-on-one instruction for students with significant reading struggles. <b>(IDI-10)</b></li> <li>• Implementing a folder system to track progress. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> </ul>	Intensive Interventions		



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offering structured phonics and foundational reading skill instruction. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> <li>• Recommending assessments with extreme difficulty in comprehension. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducting initial assessments to classify students. <b>(IDI-09)</b></li> <li>• Identifying the root causes of comprehension challenges. <b>(IDI-02)</b></li> <li>• Adjusting teaching strategies based on needs. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>• Providing progress reports through videos and group chat updates. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>• Planning school-wide assessments to create intervention programs. <b>(IDI-10)</b></li> </ul>	Assessment and Monitoring		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging peer mentoring and group activities to foster collaborative learning. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> <li>• Using pair work to support struggling students and enhance comprehension. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Developing teamwork and communication skills through shared reading experiences. <b>(IDI-08)</b></li> </ul>	Collaborative Learning		

The results of the study indicate that elementary teachers in Davao del Norte often face significant challenges in implementing reading comprehension strategies due to diverse student needs and varying reading proficiency levels. These challenges are evident in both rural and urban settings, where limited access to teaching resources and support materials often hinders effective instruction. This finding supports the assertion that effective reading instruction depends heavily on the availability of accessible and quality resources (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2011).

Teachers consistently reported that the lack of adequate textbooks, teaching aids, and trained support staff contributes to the difficulty of providing targeted reading comprehension support to all learners. This is consistent with the view that resource limitations directly impact the implementation of reading strategies in classrooms, especially in underfunded schools (Afflerbach, Pearson, & Paris, 2008).



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Moreover, the findings of the study emphasize the importance of teacher adaptability and resourcefulness. Many participants shared that they frequently rely on their creativity to compensate for the lack of instructional materials by developing their own teaching aids and resources. This reflects how teachers in low-resource environments often become curriculum developers out of necessity (Roskos & Neuman, 2012). The situation underscores the pressing need for systemic support and the provision of appropriate teaching materials. Large class sizes and limited opportunities for professional development also emerged as significant barriers, limiting teachers' ability to implement evidence-based and individualized reading strategies (Snow, Griffin, & Burns, 2005).

Additionally, the study reveals the role of external factors, such as parental involvement and community support, in enhancing or impeding students' reading development. Teachers expressed concern that inconsistent support from families often affects students' motivation and engagement with reading tasks. This finding supports the view that family and community partnerships are vital for student academic success, particularly in literacy (Epstein, 2001).

Furthermore, despite these obstacles, the study highlights the resilience and dedication of teachers in Davao del Norte. Many reported positive outcomes resulting from strategies such as guided reading, scaffolding, differentiated instruction, peer-assisted learning, and the regular assessment of student progress. These approaches help address the needs of both struggling and advanced readers and align with research emphasizing the importance of scaffolding and the Zone of Proximal Development in reading instruction (Vygotsky, 1978). Similarly, differentiated instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners is advocated by Tomlinson (2014).

The importance of ongoing professional development and collaboration among teachers was also frequently mentioned as key to refining instructional practices and sustaining improvements in student comprehension. This supports the assertion that continuous teacher learning and collaboration are essential for educational improvement and student achievement (Fullan, 2007).

**Table 3.2** Insights of Elementary Teachers in Davao Del Norte in the Implementation of Reading Comprehension Strategies

ISSUE PROBED	CORE IDEAS	CODE/ CATEGORIES	ESSENTIAL THEMES	THEORETICAL SUPPORT
Qualities Or Skills Essential for Effective Reading Comprehension Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrating dedication and commitment in conducting remedial reading. <b>(IDI-01)</b></li> <li>• Showing dedication and willingness to guide students. <b>(IDI-01)</b></li> <li>• Demonstrating patience to support struggling readers. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> <li>• Demonstrating passion for teaching. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> </ul>	Teacher Commitment and Dedication	Integrated Reading Teaching Practices	Piaget's Constructivist Theory (1930)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging students in activities and exercises to develop reading skills. <b>(IDI-01)</b></li> </ul>	Student Engagement and Motivation		



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motivating learners to develop a love for reading. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Encouraging student comfort and motivation to enhance comprehension. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> <li>• Building strong connections with students for engagement. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicating effectively to explain reading concepts and model think-aloud strategies. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Applying phonics to help beginning readers connect sounds. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>• Developing decoding skills for accurate and fluent reading. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>• Making connections between the text and prior knowledge. <b>(IDI-02)</b></li> <li>• Repeating reading exercises to reinforce word recognition. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> </ul>	Instructional Strategies and Techniques		
Most Effective Strategies or Practices in Preparing Students for Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing CVC words to recognize simple word patterns. <b>(IDI-1)</b></li> <li>• Unlocking difficulties by introducing and explaining unfamiliar words before reading. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> <li>• Providing context for new words to read and understand the text better. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> </ul>	Supporting Word Recognition and Understanding	Building Vocabulary and Word Recognition	Gough & Tunmer's Theory for The Simple View of Reading (1986)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building a strong vocabulary foundation to support reading comprehension. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> <li>• Using a dictionary to find word meanings. <b>(IDI-08)</b></li> <li>• Applying words in sentences to understand context. <b>(IDI-08)</b></li> <li>• Creating original sentences to reinforce learning. <b>(IDI-08)</b></li> </ul>	Building Vocabulary		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking questions throughout reading to engage students. <b>(IDI-02)</b></li> </ul>	Monitoring and Assessing Comprehension	Interactive Instructional Practices	Piaget's Constructivist Theory (1930)



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring comprehension through guided questioning. <b>(IDI-02)</b></li> <li>Asking questions after every paragraph to check understanding. <b>(IDI-10)</b></li> <li>Setting reading goals to track student progress and provide targeted support. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>Assessing ongoing development to adjust teaching approaches as needed. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing engaging activities to reinforce reading skills. <b>(IDI-01)</b></li> <li>Enhancing engagement by making reading relevant to students' experiences. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>Providing strong motivation through engaging introductions or stories. <b>(IDI-10)</b></li> <li>Promoting everyday reading practice through signs, labels, and other text. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> <li>Encouraging reading beyond school to reinforce skills. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> </ul>	Engaging and Motivating Students		
Ways of evaluating Students Reading Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pausing during the reading to ask questions, developing critical thinking and reinforcing memory. <b>(IDI-09)</b></li> <li>Ensuring questions are appropriate to the students' comprehension level. <b>(IDI-09)</b></li> </ul>	Engaging Students During Reading	Ongoing Monitoring of Comprehension	Flavell's Metacognitive Theory (1976)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asking follow-up questions at the end of the session. <b>(IDI-09)</b></li> <li>Using comprehension questions and summaries. <b>(IDI-02)</b></li> <li>Assessing understanding by asking questions in different way. <b>(IDI-10)</b></li> <li>Evaluating comprehension based on correct answers</li> </ul>	Evaluating and Assessing Comprehension		



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>derived from the text. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> <li>Asking questions after reading to assess understanding. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identifying students' strengths and weaknesses to tailor instruction effectively. <b>(IDI-08)</b></li> <li>Providing one-on-one reading guidance during free time to improve skills. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>Using oral reading sessions to assess reading speed and comprehension. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>Recording students' reading performance to track improvements. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>Checking answers immediately to identify students who need additional support. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> </ul>	Providing Individualized Support and Tracking Progress		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Using a mix of formative and summative assessments to gauge comprehension. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>Evaluating comprehension based on correct answers derived from the text. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> <li>Conducting pre-tests and post-tests to measure students' reading progress. <b>(IDI-09)</b></li> <li>Using oral assessments by asking questions after reading a story. <b>(IDI-08)</b></li> </ul>	Varied Comprehension Assessment Methods	End-of-Reading Evaluation	Bloom's Taxonomy (1956)
Support or Resources from School Administration to fulfill Teachers' Reading Comprehension Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing access to reading specialists. <b>(IDI-02)</b></li> <li>Providing internet access. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>Facilitating access to online resources and interactive reading materials. <b>(IDI-03)</b></li> <li>Providing a sufficient supply of bond paper, printer, and ink to print</li> </ul>	Resources Provision for Instruction	Comprehensive Reading Program Support	Piaget's Constructivist Theory (1930)



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>necessary reading materials. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Providing complete textbooks and workbooks to avoid the burden on teachers. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> <li>• Providing printed reading materials in the reading center and classrooms. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring access to classroom technology, such as a television, for storytelling and video presentations. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> <li>• Ensuring proper instructional materials, such as functional technology (TV or projector). <b>(IDI-08)</b></li> </ul>	Utilization of Technology and Interactive Materials		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing activities such as Reading Month, to showcase and strengthen reading skills. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> <li>• Allocating dedicated time for students to use reading materials to practice and improve. <b>(IDI-10)</b></li> </ul>	Support for Reading Programs and Activities		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having support to produce printed materials for instruction for a structured and cohesive lessons. <b>(IDI-08)</b></li> <li>• Ensuring that teachers give proper attention and guided practice to maximize the effectiveness of available resources. <b>(IDI-10)</b></li> </ul>	Proper Instruction and Teacher Support		
Advice or Recommendation to New Teachers to improve Students' Reading Comprehension Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being patient and committed. <b>(IDI-01)</b></li> <li>• Having patience, especially with Grade 1 learners and lower grades. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> <li>• Extending patience with every student. <b>(IDI-10)</b></li> <li>• Providing necessary interventions to help improve. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Establishing a strong foundation in reading strategies. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> </ul>	Patience in Teaching	Foundational Support in Reading Instruction	Clay's Emergent Literacy Theory
		Effective Reading Strategies and Interventions		



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using engaging and interactive methods, like games. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Creating a positive learning atmosphere. <b>(IDI-04)</b></li> <li>• Encouraging students to associate sounds with letters. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> <li>• Helping students recognize and blend sounds to form words. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> </ul>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring children learn the correct sounds of letters. <b>(IDI-05)</b></li> <li>• Ensuring students master letter sounds. <b>(IDI-07)</b></li> </ul>	Phonetic and Sound Mastery		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having a broad understanding and ability to explain words clearly. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> <li>• Relating words to real-life experiences. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> <li>• Using real-life examples to help students understand what they read. <b>(IDI-06)</b></li> </ul>	Real-Life Connection and Understanding		

This study highlights several challenges in information delivery, particularly through the insights shared by elementary teachers in Davao del Norte, which reflect a deep understanding of the realities, challenges, and adaptive practices involved in implementing reading comprehension strategies. A prominent insight is the recognition of student diversity in reading abilities, requiring teachers to tailor their strategies to meet individual learner needs. Many teachers noted that a one-size-fits-all approach is ineffective and that differentiated instruction and scaffolding are necessary to ensure all students can comprehend and engage with texts, consistent with the theories of sociocultural development and differentiated instruction (Vygotsky, 1978; Tomlinson, 2014).

Another key insight is the importance of creativity and innovation, especially in resource-limited settings. Teachers often expressed that limited access to instructional materials, such as leveled books or digital tools, compels them to create their own resources to maintain student interest and ensure comprehension. This observation aligns with the emphasis on teacher innovation as a critical factor in overcoming material scarcity (Roskos & Neuman, 2012).

Teachers also highlighted the value of guided reading, peer collaboration, and interactive activities as effective tools for promoting reading comprehension. These approaches are not only engaging but also foster social learning, enabling students to learn from each other through shared reading experiences. This insight supports the view that student engagement is a critical factor in comprehension success (Gambrell, Morrow, & Pressley, 2011).

Moreover, there is a shared understanding among educators that professional development and peer collaboration are crucial for enhancing reading instruction. Many participants expressed a desire for



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more training and workshops to stay updated with effective strategies and to share best practices. This echoes the assertion that continuous learning and collaboration among teachers are vital to educational progress (Fullan, 2007).

Lastly, the teachers recognize that parental involvement and community support significantly influence reading outcomes. Inconsistent support at home often results in low motivation and difficulty retaining skills learned in school. This reflects the importance of school-home partnerships in literacy development (Epstein, 2001).

**Table 4.** Joint Display of Salient Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

ASPECT OR FOCAL POINT	QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS	QUALITATIVE FINDINGS	NATURE OF DATA INTEGRATION	AXIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS
Reading Comprehension	On Table 1 under the indicator <i>Improvement in abilities</i> with an overall mean of 4.68 specifically in item number 2, <i>assessing students English reading fluency.</i> (4.57; very high).	On Table 2, under the theme <i>Cognitive Challenges</i> , and the category, <i>Foundational Reading Challenges</i> and the core idea 3, <i>Struggling with decoding difficulties (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency).</i>	merging – converging	The very high rating for assessing students' English reading fluency is directly linked to decoding difficulties. Students who struggle with phonemic awareness and phonics often find it difficult to read fluently. By evaluating their fluency, you can identify students with decoding challenges and provide targeted interventions to improve their reading skills.
	On the table 2 under the indicators <i>Performance satisfaction of students</i> with an overall mean of 4.63 specifically in item number 1, <i>helping students link new English language concepts to their existing knowledge.</i> (4.54; Very High)	On the table 2, under the theme <i>scaffolding reading approach</i> and the category <i>active prior knowledge</i> and the core idea 2, <i>Linking text to personal experiences, other books, or real-life situations.</i>	merging – converging	The very high rating for Helping students link new English language concepts to their existing knowledge. These two are connected because when students relate new English concepts to their prior knowledge or real-life experiences, it enhances their comprehension and retention. By linking text to familiar situations, they can better understand and apply new vocabulary and grammar rules in context.



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	<p>On Table 3 under the indicator <i>Difficulties faced while reading</i> with an overall mean of 4.57, specifically in item number 1, <i>assessing and addressing student's vocabulary gaps</i>. (4.58; very high).</p>	<p>On Table 3. under the theme <i>Building vocabulary and word recognition</i>, and the category, <i>Building vocabulary</i>, and the core idea 1, <i>Building a strong vocabulary foundation to support reading comprehension</i>.</p>	<p>merging – converging</p>	<p>The high recognition of assessing and addressing students to effectively address students' vocabulary gaps, it is essential to build a strong vocabulary foundation. A well-developed vocabulary enhances reading comprehension by enabling students to recognize words, understand their meanings, and apply them in context. By assessing vocabulary gaps, teachers can provide targeted interventions that help students develop the necessary language skills to improve their overall reading comprehension.</p>
	<p>On Table 4 under the indicator <i>Attitude to reading and English learning</i> with an overall mean of 4.57, specifically in item number 2, <i>helping students find joy in reading in English can make them proud of their language learning</i> (4.68; very high).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On Table 3, under the theme <i>Integrated reading teaching practices</i> and the category of <i>Students engagement and motivation</i>, and the core idea 3, <i>Motivating learners to develop a love for reading by making it engaging</i>.</li> </ul>	<p>merging – converging</p>	<p>The high recognition of helping students find joy in reading in English can make them proud of their language learning. These are connected because when students enjoy reading, they feel more confident and take pride in their language learning journey. Making reading engaging fosters motivation, helping students develop a lifelong appreciation for reading in English.</p>

The reading comprehension strategies employed by elementary teachers in Davao del Norte reveal varying levels of effectiveness, influenced by factors such as vocabulary familiarity, sentence complexity, cognitive effort, and learner engagement—all essential for promoting deep understanding of texts (Abdelaal & Sase, 2020). Reading comprehension is thus recognized as a fundamental



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instructional focus that enables students to analyze, interpret, and engage meaningfully with texts. Effective teaching not only involves understanding the text but also encourages the integration of context clues, prior knowledge, and critical thinking—highlighting the importance of well-planned strategies that support both analytical and reflective reading practices (McLaughlin & DeVoogd, 2020). A strong link exists between vocabulary development, sentence processing, and student success in comprehension, underscoring the need for language-rich classrooms that nurture these skills (Rahim, 2021).

Moreover, findings from studies among teachers in the region indicate that although many report success in teaching basic comprehension skills, they face challenges when addressing texts that are abstract, complex, or unfamiliar to students (Capanang, 2019). This highlights the importance of equipping learners with skills such as decoding and inference-making to support comprehension of challenging texts (Kim & Lim, 2022). Therefore, by modeling and reinforcing effective reading processes—such as rereading, annotating, and integrating visual or digital aids—teachers help students develop stronger reading habits and better manage academic demands. These insights emphasize the value of embedding metacognitive reading strategies in classroom instruction to enhance overall literacy development among elementary learners in Davao del Norte (Santos, 2023).

## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn: First, the status of elementary teachers' reading comprehension strategies in Davao del Norte is highly effective in terms of identifying main ideas, using context clues, summarizing texts, making inferences, fostering critical thinking, and engaging in collaborative reading activities. Hence, this indicates that these reading comprehension strategies are consistently applied by elementary teachers to enhance students' understanding of texts. Second, the thematic analysis of the qualitative data was conducted based on the responses gathered through in-depth interviews (IDI). The results provided deeper insights into the experiences of elementary teachers in Davao del Norte regarding their use of reading comprehension strategies. Qualitatively, teachers have encountered various challenges and successes that influence how they apply these strategies in their classrooms. The following themes emerged: Implementing Effective Strategies for Reading Comprehension, Fostering Collaborative Reading Engagement, Enhancing Learning through Structured Reading Approaches, and Challenges in Developing Reading Comprehension Skills.

Third, based on the participants' responses, additional themes emerged that highlight the coping mechanisms employed by elementary teachers in Davao del Norte in implementing reading comprehension strategies in their classrooms. The following themes were identified: Continuous Development of Reading Comprehension Strategies, Sustained Application of Effective Reading Techniques, Mastering Strategies for Enhancing Reading Comprehension, and Utilizing Various Instructional Approaches to Improve Students' Understanding of Texts.

Lastly, to better understand the impact of teachers' experiences in implementing reading comprehension strategies, the responses were analyzed thematically to confirm the quantitative results of the study. Both findings from the two phases were integrated based on the study's framework. The status of reading comprehension strategies, as shown in the quantitative results, aligned with the data gained from the qualitative phase. Both quantitative and qualitative results confirm that while



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challenges exist in applying reading comprehension strategies, the positive effects and benefits of utilizing these strategies to enhance students' understanding of texts are far more significant.

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