

# Case Study of Reading Comprehension of a Deaf High School Learner in Special Needs Education (SNED) in Bacolod City, Philippines

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the reading comprehension experiences of a Deaf high school student enrolled in a Special Needs Education (SNED) program in Bacolod City, Philippines. Based on the necessity to enhance the understanding of literacy development among Deaf students in multilingual environments, the study sought to investigate the linguistic, instructional, and contextual factors influencing comprehension. Employing a qualitative case study methodology, data were gathered via semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and researcher reflexive journaling, facilitating triangulated interpretive analysis. Findings indicated that comprehension challenges were primarily linked to syntactic complexity, referred to as “deep English,” cross-linguistic interference resulting from the use of Filipino Sign Language (FSL), English, and Filipino, and restricted access to consistent sign-supported instruction. Simultaneously, the learner exhibited dependence on multimodal scaffolding – especially visual aids, written text, and sign language – alongside coping mechanisms such as digital tools and familial support. The study emphasizes that reading comprehension for Deaf learners is not merely cognitive but significantly affected by language access and modality. It emphasizes the necessity for visually grounded, bilingual-focused instruction and more strategic language utilization in multilingual classrooms to facilitate equitable literacy development for Deaf students.

**Keywords:** Deaf education, reading comprehension, multimodal scaffolding, cross-linguistic interference, Filipino Sign Language, case study, Philippines.

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## Introduction

Reading comprehension is universally acknowledged as a fundamental skill for academic achievement, continuous education, and social engagement. For Deaf learners, the advancement of reading comprehension is influenced by intricate interactions among language accessibility, pedagogical methods, and sociocultural environments (Potier & Givens, 2023; Beal et al., 2024). Studies from different countries show that Deaf students often read written texts in different ways, such as sign language, spoken language, and bilingual methods (Ormel et al., 2022; Hussein & Al-Bayati, 2022; Mayer & Trezek, 2023;

Daza Gonzalez et al., 2023). These global discussions are increasingly focusing on how Deaf students actually experience literacy learning in formal education systems, rather than just looking at their deficits.

In Asia, educational systems show a lot of differences in policies, resources, and cultural attitudes toward deafness and special needs education. Many Asian countries still have problems with not enough trained teachers, not enough sign language teaching materials, and not enough consistent use of inclusive education policies (Kalyanpur, 2020; Arias et al., 2023). Studies in Asia emphasize the significance of culturally responsive teaching practices

and the influence of family, community, visual aids, and linguistic factors on Deaf learners' reading comprehension experiences (Deng et al., 2021; Fauzan et al., 2022; Yasin & Mohamad, 2024; Zhang & Miao, 2025). These results indicate that the literacy development of Deaf learners in Asia must be contextualized within particular educational and sociocultural frameworks.

In the Philippines, special needs education has changed as the country has worked to improve access to high-quality education for all students. Public schools that offer Special Needs Education (SNED) programs teach Deaf students in different ways, depending on available resources and teachers' preparation. Although quantitative studies (Lustica et al., 2025; Balinas, 2025) have investigated technology use in SNED, and academic performance and literacy levels among Deaf students, there is a scarcity of research focusing on their personal experiences in learning to understand written texts. To improve teaching methods and support systems in Philippine SNED programs, it is important to understand how Deaf high school students perceive and experience reading instruction.

One public high school in Bacolod City offers educational services to Deaf students through its SNED program. In this environment, teachers notice that deaf students have different levels of reading comprehension, as well as problems with teaching materials, ways of communicating, and keeping students interested. These classroom realities, along with a lack of research done in the area, led the researchers to look into how Deaf high school students understand what they read in this particular school setting. Listening to their voices gives us useful information about how people learn and what problems they face in a public school setting.

There is still a dearth of qualitative, case-based studies that highlight the lived experiences of Deaf high school students in Philippine public schools, despite the expanding corpus of national and international research on Deaf education. Learners' perspectives are underrepresented in existing studies, which frequently concentrate on assessment results or instructional efficacy. By offering a thorough qualitative investigation of reading comprehension experiences from the perspective of Deaf students themselves within a localized educational setting, this study closes this gap.

This qualitative case study aims to investigate and articulate the lived experiences of a Deaf high school student regarding reading comprehension within a Special Needs Education program at a public high school in Bacolod City, Philippines. By recording student's points of view, instructional experiences, and perceived difficulties and supports, the study seeks to enhance comprehension of

literacy acquisition among Deaf students. The findings are anticipated to guide educators, school administrators, and policymakers in enhancing instructional methodologies, fortifying Special Needs Education (SNE) programs, and fostering more adaptive and inclusive literacy education for Deaf students.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study utilized a qualitative research design, specifically an instrumental single case study method. Qualitative research is suitable for examining meanings, perceptions, and lived experiences, especially when the phenomenon being studied is intricate and context-dependent (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This study aims to comprehend the reading comprehension experiences of a Deaf high school student within a Special Needs Education (SNED) context. An instrumental case study was chosen because the case itself is not the main focus; instead, it is a way to learn more about the bigger problem of reading comprehension among Deaf students (Hancock et al., 2021). The singular case, one Deaf high school student participating in a public Special Needs Education (SNED) program, was meticulously analyzed to elucidate and contextualize the learner's experiences, perceptions, and interactions with reading instruction. This design enables a comprehensive, contextualized comprehension of the phenomenon while preserving analytical precision. The methodology is warranted as it allows researchers to elucidate instructional realities and learner experiences that might not be adequately represented through quantitative or multi-case frameworks.

### **Participants**

The study included one deaf high school student participating in the Special Needs Education program at a public high school in Bacolod City, Philippines. The participant was chosen via purposive sampling according to defined inclusion criteria. The criteria were: (1) being clinically diagnosed as Deaf or having severe to profound hearing loss; (2) enrolled in a public SNED program at the high school level for academic year 2025-2026; (3) having received formal reading instruction in English; and (4) possessing the ability to communicate through sign language, written language, or both, to a degree sufficient for meaningful participation in an interview. The choice of a single participant aligns with the instrumental single case study design, which emphasizes depth rather than breadth (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This method enables a thorough examination of the participant's lived experiences within a distinctly defined educational framework.

## **Instruments**

This study employed various qualitative instruments to obtain comprehensive instructional insights and to bolster the credibility of the findings via data triangulation. The principal instrument was a semi-structured interview guide formulated by the researchers. Semi-structured interviews are suitable for qualitative case studies as they provide a balance between structure and flexibility, enabling participants to express their lived experiences in their own terms while maintaining coherence with the research objectives (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

The interview guide had open-ended questions that were meant to get the participant to give detailed accounts of their experiences with reading comprehension. Some of the questions were: What was it like for you to read English texts in school? What makes it easier for you to understand what you read, and what makes it harder? How do your teachers help you learn to read and understand what you read? How do you feel when someone asks you to read something and answer questions about it? To make answers clearer and to look more closely at new themes, probing and follow-up questions were used.

Along with interviews, classroom observations were done to record how teachers taught, how students were involved, how they communicated, and how they interacted with reading in the natural classroom setting. An observation guide was employed to document field notes concentrating on pedagogical strategies, utilization of instructional resources, and student reactions during reading activities. These observations yielded contextual and instructional data that enhanced the interview results. The researchers also kept a reflexive journal during the data collection and analysis phases. Reflexive journaling was employed to record methodological choices, evolving interpretations, and the researchers' contemplations, thereby fostering self-awareness and reducing potential researcher bias during the interpretative process.

To bolster credibility, peer validation was utilized by consulting colleagues proficient in qualitative research and special needs education. Peer reviewers looked at some transcripts, codes, and new themes to see if they were coherent and consistent. They gave feedback that made the study's analysis more rigorous. Experts in special education and qualitative research looked over all the instruments to make sure they were clear, relevant, and valid in terms of content. Using interviews, observations, reflexive journaling, and peer validation together made it possible to use methodological triangulation, which made the study's findings more reliable and complete.

## **Data Collection Procedure**

Data collection occurred in three phases: prior to, during, and subsequent to the interview. Before gathering data, the school granted permission, and the participant and the parent or legal guardian gave their informed consent. The interview schedule was worked out with the school so that it would not conflict too much with schoolwork. We also held an orientation to explain the study's purpose, the interview process, and the rights of the participant. The semi-structured interview took place in a quiet and comfortable area of the school while data was being collected. We made it easier for the participant to communicate by using her preferred method, like sign language interpretation and written prompts when needed. We recorded the interview and took notes in the field to capture non-verbal cues and other important details. After the data was collected, the interview recording was transcribed word for word. The transcripts were checked for accuracy and sent back to the participant for verification to make sure that the recorded answers accurately reflected what she meant.

## **Data Analysis Framework**

The research employed Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as the analytical framework for data examination. IPA is a complex qualitative methodology that examines how individuals interpret their lived experiences (Smith & Fieldsend, 2021). This framework is particularly suitable for this study, as it aligns with the objective of understanding the subjective experiences of a Deaf learner in reading comprehension. The analysis of the data followed a set of steps: (1) reading the transcript over and over again to get into it; (2) making notes to find descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual comments; (3) finding new themes; and (4) putting those themes into larger groups. During the process, the researchers practiced interpretative reflection, recognizing their part in understanding how the participant made sense of things. IPA was appropriate for this study because it facilitates a nuanced examination of personal experiences within a particular educational context, providing depth and interpretive insight that go beyond superficial descriptions.

## **Data Trustworthiness**

The study followed the standards of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability to make sure the results were reliable (Kocaman, 2025). Credibility was established via extensive data engagement, member validation, and the incorporation of verbatim interview excerpts. Dependability was ensured by keeping a clear audit trail that recorded research choices, methods, and analytical steps. Reflexive journaling helped make confirmability better by putting researchers' assumptions

and biases in brackets. Thick, detailed descriptions of the context and participant helped with transferability by letting readers decide if the results could be used in similar situations.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The study strictly followed ethical guidelines. The participant gave her informed consent and assent before taking part, and she was told that she could leave at any time without any consequences. Using anonymous identity and leaving out any identifying information in all reports and publications made sure that privacy was protected. The researchers were the only ones who could access and store all of the data. The study was carried out with consideration for the dignity, autonomy, and welfare of the Deaf participant, adhering to ethical standards for research involving human subjects.

### **Results**

The results of a qualitative case study of a Deaf high school student participating in Bacolod City's Special Needs Education (SNED) Program are presented in this section. The results were produced through an interpretive analysis of semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and researcher reflexive journaling, enabling triangulation of data sources under the guidance of the data analysis framework. The analysis revealed recurrent themes that shed light on the participant's actual experiences with reading comprehension, especially with regard to language barriers, cross-linguistic demands, instructional supports, and coping strategies. To guarantee analytical depth and credibility, each theme is backed up by participant statements (I=interview), observational data (O=observation), and journal entries (J=journal).

#### **Linguistic Barriers: The Struggle with "Deep English" and Syntactic Complexity**

Across the data sources, the participant consistently described difficulty comprehending what she referred to as "deep" or "advanced" English. This term was used by the participant to denote unfamiliar vocabulary, longer sentences, and syntactically complex structures that exceed basic subject-verb-object patterns. She expressed that such structures disrupted meaning-making, particularly when English deviated from visually concrete or direct expressions.

The participant explained the challenge of encountering unfamiliar vocabulary: *"I need that only meaning, but I can't understand new words like advance"* (I). She contrasted simple and complex sentence forms to illustrate the loss of meaning: *"I can't understand because it's like deep sentences and some words like an advance English."*

*Basic is 'How are you?' but advance is 'How are you doing?'"* (I).

Classroom observations reinforced this pattern. During a reading activity, she was observed pausing, rereading, or disengaging when sentences exceeded one clause or contained idiomatic expressions (O). In the reflexive journal, the researcher noted: *"When sentences became longer, the learner shifted attention away from the text and relied more heavily on the teacher's signing or board work, suggesting a breakdown at the syntactic level rather than at word recognition alone"* (J).

These findings reflect a "syntax wall," where meaning collapses as linguistic complexity increases, shaping learners' lived experience of reading as cognitively exhausting and fragmented.

#### **Cross-Linguistic Interference and the Trilingual Burden**

A salient theme emerging from the analysis was the trilingual demand placed on Deaf learners in the Philippine context, requiring navigation among Filipino Sign Language (FSL), English, and Filipino (Tagalog) or local languages like Hiligaynon or Cebuano. The participant reported that this constant language shifting often intensified confusion rather than supporting comprehension.

She clearly expressed difficulty with Filipino as a medium of explanation: *"I understand English, but not Filipino. I really need this in English, but I can't understand it in Tagalog"* (I). She emphasized that Tagalog explanations did not always clarify English concepts: *"Yes, when teachers explain a word in Tagalog that I don't understand, it's not about English anymore"* (I).

Classroom observations revealed moments when teachers alternated between Filipino and English while signing, during which learners showed visible confusion or delayed responses (O). The researcher reflected: *"The intention to scaffold through Tagalog sometimes created an additional layer of translation, increasing the cognitive load for the learner instead of reducing it"* (J).

This theme highlights how cross-linguistic interference shapes learners' reading comprehension experiences, positioning language switching as a barrier rather than a bridge.

#### **Reliance on Multimodal Scaffolding and Visual Anchors**

The participant consistently emphasized the importance of multimodal scaffolding, particularly the combined use of sign language, written text, and visual images. She described this visual triad as essential for making sense of

written English. She explained: *“I can understand more easily because it has picture and video with example”* (I). She further shared how written text on the board served as a stabilizing reference when sign language explanations felt insufficient: *“It’s hard for me, confused sometimes because the teacher lacks sign language, but when the teacher writes on the blackboard with example, I can understand”* (I).

Observational data supported this finding. The participant frequently shifted gaze between the teacher, the board, and visual materials, using the written examples as anchors during reading tasks (O). The researchers noted: *“The board functioned as a cognitive pause button, the participant returned to it repeatedly to reconstruct meaning after rapid signing”* (J).

These findings underscore that reading comprehension for Deaf learners is inherently visual and spatial, relying heavily on static and concrete representations of language.

### **Coping Mechanisms and the Home-School Support Link**

When comprehension broke down, the participant employed various coping strategies that extended beyond classroom instruction. She described using digital tools and seeking assistance from family members, highlighting that reading comprehension is negotiated across home and school contexts. She shared: *“I use Google sometimes”* (I). She also emphasized parental support, particularly from her mother, who acted as secondary instructor: *“I’m confused about advanced words, but I ask my parents and teachers help me to understand”* (I).

Observations revealed that the participant often deferred unresolved questions until after class rather than seeking immediate clarification (O). The researchers reflected: *“The reliance on parents suggests resilience, but it also signals gaps in in-class accessibility that are being compensated for outside school”* (J).

This theme illustrates how learners actively construct support systems to survive comprehension challenges, revealing both agency and systemic limitations.

### **Instructional Needs: From “Advance” to “Basic” Translation**

The participant articulated a clear instructional need for reading materials that translate complex or “advanced” English into basic, visually supported forms aligned with her linguistic experiences. Learners valued materials only when teachers explicitly bridged written English to FSL. She suggested: *“Book has a story with pictures and explains what things, but it’s like a direction, I mean, like advanced translate to basic”* (I).

Classroom observations indicated that comprehension improved noticeably when teachers paraphrased texts into simpler structures and paired them with visual explanations (O). The researchers noted: *“Instruction became effective not when texts were simplified alone, but when simplification was paired with intentional visual and sign-based mediation”* (J).

This theme highlights the participant’s desire for instruction that moves deliberately from complex to accessible language, affirming the importance of translation, not reduction, in Deaf literacy education.

## **Discussion**

This case study offers a nuanced perspective on the reading comprehension experiences of a Deaf high school student within a Special Needs Education (SNED) framework in Bacolod City, characterized as a linguistically mediated, visually negotiated, and socially supported process. The results, which are grouped by linguistic barriers, cross-linguistic interference, multimodal scaffolding, coping strategies, and instructional needs, show that reading is not just a cognitive skill but also a complicated interaction between language access, modality, and pedagogy. When analyzed through the lens of established theories and contemporary research on Deaf education, the findings enhance ongoing scholarly discussions regarding equitable literacy development for Deaf students.

### **Linguistic Barriers and the “Syntax Wall”**

The participant’s struggle with “deep English” and syntactic complexity corresponds with extensive research demonstrating that Deaf learners frequently encounter difficulties with morphosyntax in written languages that are not entirely accessible through auditory channels (Hasko, 2022; Vizzi et al., 2023; Cheng et al., 2024). The identified “syntax wall,” characterized by a decline in comprehension as sentence complexity escalates, can be elucidated through the Simple View of Reading (Apel, 2022), which asserts that reading comprehension results from the interplay of decoding and linguistic understanding. In this instance, although fundamental decoding remains intact, linguistic comprehension is hindered by restricted access to the grammatical structures of English.

This finding is corroborated by research indicating that Deaf learners often exhibit asynchronous language profiles, wherein vocabulary knowledge may not align with syntactic proficiency (Gehret & Elliot, 2025). The participant’s difficulty with multi-clause sentences and idiomatic expressions illustrates this deficiency. Furthermore, the cognitive fatigue and disengagement noted during intricate reading tasks align with Cognitive Load Theory (Sweller, 2011), which posits that excessive linguistic complexity

can inundate working memory, especially when learners are required to concurrently process unfamiliar vocabulary and structure.

### **Cross-Linguistic Interference and the Trilingual Burden**

A significant contribution of this study is its emphasis on the trilingual challenges faced by Deaf learners in the Philippine context. The participant uses Filipino Sign Language (FSL), English, and Filipino (Tagalog) or regional languages, which adds layers of translation that can make understanding harder instead of easier. This discovery complicates conventional perspectives on bilingualism in Deaf education, indicating that multilingual Deaf students may encounter an additive cognitive load instead of an additive linguistic advantage when instructional languages are not strategically coordinated.

This is in line with Cummins' Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) model (Fegher, 2023), which says that skills can move from one language to another, but only if you are good enough at both. In this instance, the participant's inadequate proficiency in Filipino hinders this transfer, leading to a phenomenon known as cross-linguistic interference. Recent research on Deaf multilinguals (e.g., Alfano et al., 2022; Cannon & Guardino, 2022; Andersson & Schwarz, 2026; Kilmartin et al., 2026) similarly underscores the necessity of establishing sign language proficiency as a robust foundation; otherwise, supplementary spoken or written languages may induce confusion rather than facilitate literacy.

The results align with the notion of translanguaging, wherein learners seamlessly employ multiple languages to derive meaning (Conteh, 2018; Wei, 2018; Wei, 2022). However, in contrast to empowering models of translanguaging, the participant's experience illustrates unstructured language switching, which is devoid of intentional pedagogical design and consequently heightens cognitive strain. This implies that translanguaging practices in Deaf education necessitate meticulous scaffolding, especially in multilingual environments such as the Philippines.

### **Multimodal Scaffolding and Visual Learning**

The participant's reliance on sign language, written text, and visual images highlights the inherently visual characteristics of Deaf cognition and literacy. This is in line with Dual Coding Theory (Paivio & Clark, 2006), which says that processing information through both verbal and visual channels makes it easier to understand. For Deaf learners, the "verbal" channel is frequently conveyed through sign language, thereby necessitating the integration of visual and spatial representations.

The results also back up Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (Alkhudiry, 2022), especially the idea of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which says that learning happens with help from others. In this instance, multimodal scaffolding – particularly the utilization of the board as a "cognitive pause button" – serves as a mediational instrument that enables the learner to reconstruct meaning at her own pace. This aligns with recent research (Yasin & Mohamad, 2024; Beal et al., 2024; Holcomb, 2025) underscoring that Deaf learners gain advantages from explicit visual scaffolds that reinforce and enhance signed explanations.

The participant's struggle when teachers' signing was inadequate underscores the essential importance of sign language proficiency among educators. Research indicates that inadequate teacher proficiency in sign language can markedly impede comprehension and engagement (Kashif & Parveen, 2025). So, multimodal scaffolding is not just about adding pictures; it's also about making sure that all the different modes work together in a way that makes sense, with sign language as the main focus.

### **Coping Strategies and Distributed Support Systems**

The participant's utilization of digital tools and familial support exemplifies a manifestation of self-regulated learning and adaptive resilience. From a sociocultural standpoint, this broadens the learning environment beyond the classroom, demonstrating that literacy development for Deaf learners occurs across various social contexts (Adekeye & Kite, 2026). The connection between home and school, especially the role of parents as co-educators, is similar to what research on Deaf education has found about how important it is for families to be involved in language development (Gusmawanti & Kurniati, 2025).

These coping mechanisms show that people have control over their lives, but they also show that there are problems with how easy it is for everyone to get to class. The participant's inclination to postpone inquiries until post-class indicates that immediate comprehension assistance may not be consistently accessible. This corresponds with criticisms in inclusive education literature that caution against excessive dependence on learner resilience to offset instructional deficiencies (Walton, 2025). In this regard, coping strategies ought not to be regarded merely as strengths, but also as manifestations of unfulfilled educational requirements.

### **Instructional Implications: Translation, Not Reduction**

One of the most important things to learn from this study is that the participant asked for lessons that turned "advanced" English into "basic" forms without losing meaning. This

corresponds with modern views on Deaf literacy that support conceptual mediation instead of simplification (Bruwer & van Staden, 2026). Simply making texts easier to read may make them less difficult to understand, but it doesn't always make them easier to understand. Instead, good teaching means connecting different languages and ways of learning, making clear links between English text and FSL.

This method aligns with bilingual-bicultural (Bi-Bi) frameworks in Deaf education, which designate sign language as the primary language and written/spoken language as the secondary language (Harvey, 2022; Adebisi & Patrick, 2026). In this context, translation is not a straightforward process; rather, it is an active negotiation of meaning that necessitates teachers to map structures between languages. The participant's inclination towards visually supported, paraphrased texts indicates that instructional design should emphasize accessibility via layered representation, rather than simplistic linguistic reduction.

Recent studies (e.g., Slagle, 2023; Stratton, 2023) provide additional support for explicit metalinguistic instruction, which teaches students how languages differ and how to deal with those differences. In the context of this study, such instruction could alleviate the "syntax wall" and diminish confusion stemming from cross-linguistic interference.

### Synthesis

This study integrates the reading comprehension experience of a Deaf learner as a multifaceted interaction of linguistic constraints, multilingual requirements, visual facilitation, and socially distributed assistance, positioning literacy as an entity transcending mere cognitive processes. The results show that the "syntax wall" is a barrier to English morphosyntax, which is in line with the Simple View of Reading and Cognitive Load Theory. In the Philippines, being trilingual can also cause cross-linguistic interference that makes it harder to make sense of things when languages aren't strategically aligned, which goes against the idea of additive bilingualism. Simultaneously, the learner's reliance on multimodal scaffolding corroborates theories such as Dual Coding and Vygotsky's sociocultural framework, highlighting that comprehension is enhanced through visually anchored, sign-supported instruction and a high level of teacher proficiency in sign language. Even though the student shows resilience through self-regulated strategies and support from home, these coping mechanisms also show that the classroom is not always easy to get to. Ultimately, the study underscores that effective Deaf literacy instruction should prioritize translation rather than simplification, aligning with bilingual-

bicultural approaches and advocating for intentional, visually supported, and linguistically coherent pedagogy that bridges English and sign language while addressing the cognitive and linguistic realities of Deaf learners in multilingual contexts.

### Conclusion

This case study finds that a Deaf high school student's reading comprehension in a SNED setting is affected by the interplay of limited access to complex English structures, the cognitive challenges of managing multiple languages, and the essential function of visually grounded, sign-supported teaching. The learner's challenges with syntactic complexity and "deep English" indicate that comprehension obstacles transcend vocabulary, encompassing structural language access. Furthermore, the trilingual context (FSL, English, and Filipino) adds extra cognitive load when not aligned with pedagogical goals. At the same time, understanding gets better when instruction includes multimodal scaffolding, especially clear sign language, visual aids, and written supports. This shows that Deaf learners' literacy is naturally visual and mediated. The learner demonstrates resilience through self-initiated strategies and familial support; however, these factors also indicate deficiencies in classroom accessibility. The study confirms that fair literacy development for Deaf students necessitates deliberate, bilingual-focused, and visually accessible teaching methods that connect languages and diminish superfluous linguistic obstacles.

This case study illustrates several significant lessons for educators and researchers in Deaf education. First, just making texts easier to read is not enough; good teaching must focus on meaningful translation between languages and modes, especially between English and sign language. Second, switching languages without a plan in multilingual classrooms can make understanding harder instead of easier. This shows how important it is to use language carefully and on purpose. Third, multimodal scaffolding, which includes sign language, pictures, and written text, is not an option; it is necessary for helping people understand. Fourth, teachers' ability to use sign language is very important for students' understanding and interest. Lastly, students may learn how to deal with problems and get help from home, but these should not take the place of classroom practices that are easy to understand and open to everyone. These lessons together show that to help Deaf students read better, schools need to pay more attention to language alignment, instructional design, and teacher training in schools that are open to all students and speak more than one language.

## Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study is constrained by its single-case design, concentrating on one Deaf learner within a particular SNED context in Bacolod City, thus limiting the generalizability of the results to wider Deaf populations. The dependence on qualitative data, though profound, may indicate subjective interpretations influenced by the researchers' positionality. Furthermore, the study fails to thoroughly investigate teacher perspectives, instructional materials, or longitudinal variations in reading development, which might offer a more holistic understanding of the learning environment. Subsequent research ought to encompass numerous participants from various educational contexts to facilitate comparative analysis and enhance generalizability. It is also suggested that longitudinal studies be conducted to monitor the progression of reading comprehension over time. Furthermore, additional research into efficacious translanguaging strategies, teacher proficiency in sign language, and the development of multimodal instructional materials would enhance evidence-based practices in Deaf education, especially in multilingual environments such as the Philippines.

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