

**READING INSTRUCTION IN LOWER PRIMARY CLASSES: A CASE
STUDY OF TWO GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN
KAMPALA DISTRICT - UGANDA**

BY

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH
AND GRADUATE TRAINING IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF A MASTER OF
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MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

DECEMBER, 2025

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I, Namuddu Phoebe do declare that this dissertation titled: "Reading Instruction in Lower Primary Classes: A Case Study of Two Government Primary Schools in Kampala District", is my original work and it has never been presented anywhere for academic purposes.

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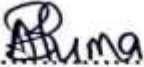
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DEDICATION

To my loving family and friends.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
BCE	Before Common Era
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
FFT	Framework for Teaching
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NAPE	National Assessment of Progress in Education
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
NPSTC	National Primary School Thematic Curriculum
P.1	Primary One
P.2	Primary Two
P.3	Primary Three
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDG 4.1.1	Sustainable Development Goal Indicator on Minimum Proficiency in Reading and Mathematics
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UN	United Nations
Uwezo	Uwezo East Africa Learning Assessment Initiative

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore reading instruction in lower primary classes for better reading outcomes in selected government primary schools in Kampala district. The study was guided by Danielson's Framework for Teaching (1996). The study was guided by the three objectives namely; to explore the reading instruction approaches teachers use to develop reading skills in lower primary, to assess the reading instruction resources teachers use to develop reading skills for learners in lower primary, to examine reading assessment methods used by teachers to develop reading skills for learners in lower primary. The study took a qualitative approach, using an exploratory case study design. Purposive sampling was employed in selecting the 4 participants involved in this study and these were 4 literacy teachers. Data was collected through, face to face interviews, lesson observations and documentary analysis. The findings revealed that teachers use phonics approach, whole word approach and syllabic approach to develop pupils reading skills and these were similar with those that are recommended in the thematic curriculum for primary one and two. However, teachers lacked pedagogical skills in the application of the syllabic approach, content was not well aligned which affected literacy development, reading instruction materials were not effectively utilized and the continuous assessment was highly used. It was thus recommended that the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) should work closely with National Curriculum Development Centre, (NCDC) to train and re-tool teachers through continuous professional development (CPD) on reading instruction approaches and how they are applied during the literacy hour lesson.

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

Proficient reading skills enable learners to comprehend and engage in reading activities such as texts, which forms the foundation for learning and success in other school subjects. Not only that, teaching pupils to read is one of the most fundamental goals of early years in primary education worldwide, reading is vital for pupil's cognitive development if they are to progress successfully throughout education Economist Intelligence Unit (2021). Ritchie (2021) also argues that, reading helps in the development of essential cognitive skills, including language acquisition, vocabulary expansion and critical thinking, he continues and emphasizes that, through reading, learners are exposed to diverse ideas, perspectives and information which stimulates their thinking abilities and enhances their intellectual growth. According to UNESCO (2020), ensuring quality early childhood education is essential for building strong literacy foundations and improving education outcomes. In addition, the Journal for Educators, Teachers and Trainers argues that one of the most important aspect of education is reading, which is essential to progress in a literate society. The authors emphasize that reading is a prime skill in learning a language that gives access to bright employment opportunities by understanding education materials that are available across the world.

The importance of reading in the early years extends beyond basic literacy skills. Research studies such as the Early Grade Reading Barometer (2023), have shown that strong early grade reading abilities lead to better educational outcomes, higher school completion rates, and improved future employment opportunities for pupils in Uganda. Reading proficiency in the early years is a strong predictor of academic success Azevedo-et-al (2021). Reading is basic and fundamental to acquisition of language and learning which leads to high academic performance. Reading has been identified as one of the most reliable indicators of whether a learner will attain the competence needed to achieve academic success, and to contribute

actively to society. It is therefore a vital skill as access to most information is through reading. This makes it necessary for the teachers in early childhood classes to use methods, techniques and materials that will help develop proficiency in reading Cummins and Swain (1986).

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Historical Background

Reading has been an integral part of human civilization for thousands of years. The origins of written language can be traced back to ancient civilizations in Mesopotamia, Egypt, China and the Indus Valley, where systems of writing emerged as early as 3200BCE Harris (1998). These early writing systems paved the way for the development of literacy and dissemination of knowledge through reading. In America, literacy education was motivated by the belief that salvation required the ability to read the Bible. Pupils were taught to read at an early age sounding out syllables before learning the meaning of the word but most weren't taught to write until around the age of seven. In these early years, literacy education was taught by mechanical repetition and harsh discipline, without much emphasis to give students' capacity of understanding. It wasn't until the 1970s that the educators began to decipher how the mind receives, processes, stores and retrieves information. Since that time, passionate debates have been continuously held regarding the most effective methods for teaching reading and writing The University of Texas (2024).

In Africa, the history of reading on the continent is different. Oral traditions and storytelling were dominant forms of communication and knowledge transmission in many African societies Afolayan (2010). However, Africa also had a rich tradition of written language and literacy before the coming of European colonialism. Ancient African civilizations such as the Kingdom of Axum in present day Ethiopia and the empires of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai in

West Africa, had their own written scripts Bulhan (2018). These scripts were used for administrative purposes, recordkeeping and religious texts.

In East Africa there is a rich history of written history and oral traditions, however, the arrival of European colonial powers in the late 19th century brought significant changes to the reading landscape in East Africa. Missionaries introduced formal education and established schools that taught European languages, including English. These schools played a vital role in shaping literacy rates and the adoption of reading practices in the region McCabe (2017).

Uganda like any other African countries, experienced the impact of colonialism on reading and education. During the colonial period, the British established the formal education systems that introduced English as the medium of instruction. This had a great influence on reading and reading outcomes, as literacy became associated with access to education, employment opportunities and social mobility Ssewankambo (2013). And in recent years, Uganda has made efforts to improve literacy rates and reading outcomes. The government has implemented initiatives such as Uganda National Literacy Program and the National Book Policy to promote literacy and increase access to books and reading materials Ministry of Education and Sports (2019) however, reading skills for learners are relatively low.

1.1.2 Theoretical Background

The study was supported by Danielson's (1996) framework for effective teaching model. This model provided the criteria for exploring reading instruction in lower primary. Danielson (1996)'s framework for effective teaching is a four-domain model which include planning and preparation, classroom environment, instruction and professional responsibilities. Danielson's model is used in the current study to provide answers to the reading instruction approaches, reading instruction resources and reading instruction assessment methods for teaching reading using the instruction domains of effective teaching.

The theory helps to provide answers to the questions of what reading instruction approaches, reading instruction resources and reading instruction assessment methods teachers use to develop pupils reading skills. The current study therefore combined data collected using multiple data collection sources across instruction domain to arrive at a holistic representation of the reading instruction focusing on approaches, resources and assessment methods since the components in Domain 3 are what constitute the core of teaching and the engagement of students in learning contest. These include communicating clearly and accurately, using questioning and discussion techniques, engaging students in learning, providing feedback to students and demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness.

1.1.3 Conceptual Background

Reading instruction approaches are systematic and evidence-based frameworks designed to teach children foundational reading skills such as phonological awareness, decoding, and comprehension by aligning instruction with how the brain learns to read Moats (2020).

Furthermore, reading instruction approaches are defined as the teaching methods that are designed to build students' literacy inside the classroom National Reading Panel (2002). Forexample, whole word approach, syllabic approach and phonics instruction which encourages a teaching strategy that deliberately provides reading tasks that teach learners to read words the way they are spelt. Phonics is the connection between graphemes (lettersymbols) and sounds. At the very core of phonics lies the alphabet. In order to master phonics, a person must master the alphabet. Letters then need to be connected to their corresponding sounds.

According to Owoko (2010), the term resources refers not only to teaching methods and materials but also the time available for instruction, the knowledge and skills of teachers acquired through training and experience. Mubichakani & Koros (2014) assert that instructional resources are the teaching and learning aids used in the learning process to

make the content of what is presented more vivid, interesting and easy to learners. Instructional resources include textbooks, charts, maps, audiovisual and electronic instructional materials such as radio, tape recorder, television and video tape recorder. Other category of material resources consists of paper supplies and writing materials such as pens, eraser, exercise books, crayon, chalk, drawing books, notebooks, pencil, ruler, slate, workbooks and so on Atkinson (2000).

According to Broadly, assessment is an ongoing process through which teachers and students interact to promote greater learning, it is also emphasized that the assessment process involves using a range of strategies to make decisions regarding instruction and gathering information about student performance or behavior in order to diagnose students' problems, monitor their progress, and give feedback for improvement. However, Kelter, Savenye (2014: 260) defines assessment as the process of measuring, documenting and interpreting behaviors related to learning in order to improve instruction. Operationally, assessment was defined as all activities that teachers and students undertake to get information that can be used to alter teaching and learning, this included teacher observation and analysis of student work, assessing pupils read aloud, giving feedback on the sounds and words written, listening and giving feedback on the sentences read and written by learners following up all practical procedures and classroom activities in order to understand what a pupil may or may not know for better improvement.

Literacy was also defined as the knowledge and skills students need to access, understand, analyse, and evaluate information, meaning, express thoughts and emotions, present ideas and opinions, interact with others and participate in activities at school and in their lives beyond school ACARA.n.d. (2023). In the modern sense, according to Long and Magerko (2020) literacy implies the ability of using a language for developing reading, writing, listening skills. Similarly, Anggeraini et al. (2019) noted that Literacy refers to different kind

of skills such as reading, writing, processing the information, ideas and opinions, decision-making and problem-solving that a child attains from literacy lessons.

The following were the operational definitions of this study;

In this study, reading instruction approaches referred to the teaching methods teachers use while teaching reading in class during the literacy hour to develop pupils' reading skills.

Reading instruction resources referred to the physical materials or digital tools and texts used by teachers to support the teaching of reading skills including textbooks, workbooks, reading books, charts, flashcards and other designed material used to develop reading skill.

Reading instruction assessment was defined as all activities that teachers and students undertake to get information that can be used to alter teaching and learning, this included teacher observation and analysis of student work, assessing pupils read aloud, giving feedback on the sounds and words written, listening and giving feedback on the sentences read and written by learners following up all practical procedures and classroom activities in order to understand what a pupil may or may not know for better improvement. Literacy was defined as different kind of skills such as reading, writing, processing the information, ideas and opinions, decision-making and problem-solving that a child attains from literacy lessons.

1.1.4 Contextual Background

This study was conducted in two government primary schools in Kampala district since pupils in government aided schools have more difficulties in reading compared to the counterparts in private schools, a Uganda National Examination Board report shows that only 44.2 per cent of primary three learners in Kampala government primary schools were reported proficient in literacy in English and the situation is not any different in upper primary NAPE (2024). The Monitoring Learning Achievement of Primary Two in Literacy

report indicated that almost six in every ten primary school going pupils assessed were unable to read and this was not any different from UNESCO's report on SDG4.1.1 where it was revealed that the percentage of pupils meeting a minimum proficient level in reading in primary two was low because of the poor teaching process and COVID 19 pandemic UNESCO (2022).

1.2 Problem Statement

In Uganda, pupils from Primary One to Primary Three (ages 6–8) are expected to acquire fluent reading skills during the literacy hour and by the end of Primary Three, they should be able to read proficiently (NCDC, 2007:31). However, this expectation is far from being met. A significant proportion of Ugandan pupils are not achieving foundational reading skills. According to the World Bank (2021), approximately 53% of learners nearing the end of primary school cannot read and understand a short, age-appropriate text. Similarly, the Uwezo (2021) assessment of learning in East Africa revealed a widespread reading crisis, one in three pupils lacks basic literacy skills and two in ten learners in Primary Seven still do not possess competencies expected at Primary Two level.

This alarming situation was partly attributed to inadequacies in teacher preparation and practice Nanyonjo (2022). Many teachers, especially in government-aided schools, are either untrained or insufficiently trained, which hinders their ability to deliver effective reading instruction Uwezo (2024). Furthermore, teacher training institutions have not sufficiently equipped teachers with the necessary pedagogical skills to support early reading development, including knowledge of reading instruction methods, use of materials and assessment strategies Nanyonjo (2022).

If this issue remains unaddressed, the country may continue to face low literacy rates, which contribute to poor academic achievement and ultimately affect Uganda's social and economic progress. While several studies have examined reading in general, few have

focused specifically on the instructional approaches, materials and assessment methods used in lower primary classes. Existing research tends to emphasize quantitative outcomes while neglecting the practical strategies teachers employ to support reading development. Therefore, there was an urgent need for this study to inform reading instruction practices in lower primary classes to foster foundational literacy among young pupils.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore reading instruction in lower primary classes in selected government primary schools in Kampala district.

1.4 Research Objective

The primary objectives of this study were:

- i. To explore the reading instruction approaches teachers use to develop reading skills in lower primary.
- ii. To assess the reading instruction resources teachers use to develop reading skills for learners in lower primary.
- iii. To examine reading assessment methods used by teachers to develop reading skills for learners in lower primary.

1.5 Research Question

The research questions for this study were;

- i. How do reading instruction approaches used by teachers develop learners' reading skills in lower primary classes?
- ii. How do reading instruction resources used by teachers develop learners' reading skills in lower primary classes?
- iii. How do reading instruction assessment methods used by teachers develop learners' reading skills in lower primary?

1.6 Significance of the study

This study may contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the teaching of reading and the development of reading skills among learners in lower primary classes. The study findings may provide insights into challenges teachers face and methods they can employ to overcome them. This data may inform and guide policymakers, educators and school administrators to seek and adopt better reading instruction approaches, assessment methods and reading instruction resources.

1.7 Scope of the Study

1.7.1 Geographical Scope

The study was conducted in two government primary school in Kampala district- Kawempe division. The origins of Kampala go back to 1891 when Kabaka of Buganda had his court on Rubaga and Mengo hills. The town that grew from colonial and royal resting place achieved municipal status in 1950 and became a city in 1962. Kampala is located on the East African Plateau between the two arms of the East African Rift and on the Northern limits of Tanzania Craton. Kawempe Division is one of the five divisions that comprise the city of Kampala. Kawempe is located on the Northern edge of Kampala, it is bordered by Nabweru to the North, Kisaasi to the East, Bwaise to the South, Kazo to the Southwest and Nansana to the West in Wakiso district. The coordinates of Kawempe division are 00 23N, 32, 33E (Latitude: 0.3792; Longitude: 32.5574). The study focused on two government primary schools in lower primary classes, primary one and primary two in Kawempe Division which is one of the divisions in Kampala district.

1.7.2 Content Scope

The study focused on the reading instruction approaches, reading instruction assessment methods and reading instruction resources that teachers use in lower primary classes.

1.7.3 Time Scope

The study was seeking for data that ranges between the year 25th March to 25th April 2025 because, it was the recent information that the study needed and field data was collected within one month.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the literature from other scholars, researchers and authors who did similar studies in other contexts. The review was presented according to the specific objectives of the study.

2.1 Theoretical Review

Danielson's Framework for Teaching (FFT) remains a widely accepted model for evaluating and improving instructional practice, including foundational literacy instruction in the early years. The framework, originally developed by Charlotte Danielson (1996), is organized into four interrelated domains: Planning and Preparation, The Classroom Environment, Instruction and Professional Responsibilities. Applying this framework to reading instruction helps structure teacher practice in ways that improve early literacy outcomes, especially in lower primary settings Taylor (2022).

Furthermore, domain 1 of Danielson's framework emphasizes the teacher's content knowledge, understanding of learners and alignment with instructional goals. Recent research by Nabirye & Okello (2022) highlights that early grade teachers who plan lessons incorporating systematic phonics, oral reading and vocabulary strategies see improved pupil engagement and decoding skills. In contexts such as Uganda, where resources may be limited, the selection and adaptation of instructional materials such as flashcards, charts, and phonics kits, require careful planning to ensure they are usable and relevant Tumwine (2023).

Danielson's emphasis on differentiation also aligns with findings from Karamagi et al. (2021), who argue that diverse reading abilities in lower primary require flexible planning that supports both struggling and emerging readers. Thus, the framework supports teacher decision making about which materials and methods to use and how to pace instruction.

The second domain is, the Classroom Environment, this focuses on creating a culture for learning, organizing physical space and managing student behavior. This domain is particularly relevant to early reading instruction, where a safe, print-rich and interactive environment enhances literacy development.

According to Okoth & Ssenyonga (2021), when teachers use classroom displays such as word walls, sentence strips and learner-written texts, pupils become more engaged with written language. Similarly, Danielson's (2022) updated commentary on the framework underscores the importance of emotional safety in literacy classrooms where pupils are encouraged to try sounding out words, read aloud without fear of ridicule and express opinions about texts. In Ugandan schools where classrooms are often overcrowded, the teacher's ability to establish reading routines and manage reading groups effectively determines how much reading practice learners actually get Wanyana (2023). Thus, the framework's emphasis on the learning environment is directly applicable to literacy instruction in such contexts.

Domain 3, Instruction is the most critical in relation to reading instruction. It addresses how teachers engage students, use questioning and feedback, assess understanding and respond to learning needs, these practices are core to effective literacy teaching. Muhangi & Ayesiga (2024) found that teachers who use interactive strategies like shared reading, phonics games and guided reading increase learners' ability to decode and comprehend texts. Danielson's component on assessment for learning supports the use of continuous formative checks, such as oral reading tasks or spelling assessments, which allow teachers to identify and address specific reading gaps.

Furthermore, in a study by Lwanga & Kintu (2023), teachers who adapted instruction based on ongoing assessment such as switching from group to individual phonics support

demonstrated higher pupil reading gains. This directly reflects Danielson's notion of being responsive and flexible in instruction.

The fourth domain, Professional Responsibilities includes teacher reflection, record-keeping, communication with families and participation in professional learning. These practices are vital for sustainable reading improvement. Katongole & Musoke (2022) emphasize that continuous professional development (CPD) focused on reading instruction helps teachers refine their skills and stay updated with literacy pedagogy. Likewise, NAPE (2023) recommends that teachers maintain reading progress records to inform remediation and enrichment activities.

Therefore, domain 3 of the FFT, which focuses on instructional delivery, provides clear descriptors of effective teaching behaviors such as engaging students in learning, using questioning techniques and monitoring understanding core aspects of early literacy development. By applying this domain, the study was able to explore reading instruction in lower primary classes focusing on reading instruction approaches, reading instruction resources and reading instruction assessments methods teachers use to develop pupils reading skills.

While other theories like Vygotsky's Sociocultural theory and Brunner's (1966) constructivism theory offer valuable insights for teaching and learning where by a learner constructs own knowledge and understanding depending on one's experience and interaction with the world and they believe that there are many ways of structuring the world, its entities and meaning is imposed by the individual rather than existing in the world independently, they also believe that learning is an active process of constructing and acquiring knowledge and instruction is a process of supporting knowledge construction rather than communicating knowledge. They continue and assert that learning activities should be authentic, centered on the problem as perceived by the learner with all this, they do not talk about the practical

application of the instruction by the teacher in normal classroom setting however, Danielson's Framework for Teaching (FFT) specifies the practical comprehensiveness, applicability to classroom teaching practices and alignment with teacher behavior and performance in real time instructional settings which aligns very well with the objectives of this study and that is why it was chosen to guide this study.

2.2 Reading instruction approaches in the development of reading skills in lower primary classes

2.2.1 Phonics approach

Phonics is made up of many different components. According to Piasta and Hudson (2022), phonics instruction emphasizes the connection between spelling/print and sound(speech). When students first enter school, they are introduced to letters and the corresponding sounds that letters make. Later, they learn how to blend sounds together, spelling patterns, and how to decode unknown words. According to Brown (2014), the phonics approach involves developing phonemic awareness and phonic. Phonemic awareness is where learners make sounds in the spoken words while phonics is the relationship between the written symbols and the sounds. The phonics method involves teaching letter sounds first, which they blend to form syllables, words and sentences. For example, /t/-/a/ will form /ta/ which when two are joined can form the word "tata" will be formed hence teaching reading effectively. The words can later be joined to form meaningful sentences and the teacher is responsible for planning and directing sequential instruction with observable measures to follow.

The use of phonics is therefore aimed at reducing confusion and memory load on pupils by elimination options of guessing hence creating confident readers. A good phonic program builds a strong foundation for most pupils. It is important to note that there are approximately 44 speech sounds in English and that pupils learn to pronounce these sounds as they learn to

talk and they learn to associate the sounds with letters as they learn to read and write. Sounds (phonemes) are represented in print with diagonal lines to differentiate them from letters or letter combination Adams (2020). In Indonesia, a study involving first-grade students found that phonics instruction significantly improved their reading skills, particularly in recognizing letter sound relationships and reading fluency Fazrin et al (2024)

2.2.2 Whole language approach

Whole language instruction focuses on the meaning of the words as students are taught to combine various skills including context clues to guess words they do not recognize. Whole language instruction does not necessarily exclude phonics but incorporates it unsystematically, on as a needed basis Bowers (2020). This approach believes that learners develop an unconscious knowledge of language through speaking, writing and reading. Meaning is made of written symbols by keeping words and sentences intact Synder (2017). The whole language is drawn from the social constructivism theory Robinson (2018), where each individual draw knowledge and meaning from their own experiences and teachers act as guides using indirect, contextual and holistic instruction Robinson (2018), Maddox (2013).

Whole language on the other hand is an approach that teaches reading as a holistic activity. An emphasis is placed on meaning and reading is not broken into separate skills. Whole texts are used as well as songs, poems, signs and labels. This pupil-centered, holistic approach places teachers on the sidelines, guiding and helping only when needed. In addition, teachers ask learners to read the words and sentences holistically by sight rather than learning individual letter sounds that are formed by the words Marima (2017). It is believed that during instruction of reading, learners understand the meaning after associating with the whole word as it has been presented to them.

Additionally, the whole-word approach sometimes referred to as sight word instruction is used in the early grades to help pupils instantly recognize words without sounding them out.

Scholars such as Ehri (2022) emphasize that long term sight word learning does not come from memorizing visual word shapes alone but from orthographic mapping, where pupils connect letters, sounds and meanings to store words in memory. This makes the approach particularly useful for teaching a limited number of high frequency or irregular words that cannot easily be decoded. Studies further show that when sight word instruction is integrated with phonics and practiced through decodable texts, pupils develop greater fluency and confidence in reading Wiley et al (2024). In addition to that, recent intervention studies with primary learners with specific learning disabilities show that structured sight word instruction over several weeks increased the number of correct words read and improved reading speed Sharma & Singh (2023). These examples illustrate that across diverse contexts, the whole word approach, when systematically applied, can strengthen pupils' reading fluency, accuracy and confidence, particularly when used as a complementary method along-side phonics-based instruction.

2.2.3 Syllabic approach

The syllable method is a method for learning to read at the beginning by presenting syllables Agusalam et al (2022). The syllabic method applies letter recognition to students, namely stringing letters into syllables and finally into words. This means to reveal that reading is a unity of activities such as recognizing letters and words, connecting them with their sounds and meanings and drawing conclusions about the meaning of answers. In line with that, Indriyani (2021) argues that the syllabic method is a method that begins with the recognition of syllables, such as ma, me, mi, mo, mu, these syllables are then arranged into meaningful words, for example, ma-ma and highlights the effectiveness and growing application of the syllabic method in improving early reading skills across diverse educational contexts. In Morocco, Binaoui, Moubtassime, and Belfakir (2023) found that the syllable-based approach enhanced pupils' decoding skills in Arabic, though teachers cited planning challenges. Similarly, in Ghana, a study in the Bolgatanga Municipality showed that the method

significantly improved reading achievement among upper primary learners, with teachers recommending further training (International Journal of Innovative Research and Development (2021). Majorano et al. (2022) in Italy used a computer-based syllabic program with preschoolers and reported significant gains in syllable segmentation and reading fluency, especially among children with lower initial language abilities. In Zambia, a 2024 study revealed that teachers often blended syllabic and phonics methods to support learners transitioning from local languages to English, reporting that syllable breakdown improved fluency and comprehension Chilala (2024). Collectively, these studies demonstrate that the syllabic method is a valuable instructional approach across multiple linguistic and educational settings, especially when integrated with appropriate teacher training and support.

2.3 Reading instruction resources and the development of reading skills among learners in lower primary

Acquisition of proper reading skills depends on the correct utilization of instructional methods and reading resources by the teacher because they both facilitate understanding of difficult concepts Hanson & Padua (2014). If the resources are well utilized, they make it easier for learners to follow, understand and retain content for the lesson Mubichakani & Koros (2014). Mubichakani & Koros (2014) continue and assert that instructional resources are the teaching and learning aids used in the learning process to make the content of what is presented more vivid, interesting and easy to learners.

A study that was conducted in Nigeria by Namdi (2005) indicated that, instructional resources vary from simple to complex ones. The simple ones include; chalkboard, pictures, textbooks, flash cards, story books among others and the complex ones include audio visual aids and digital resources. These resources are vital ingredients in learning because they make the learning process very easy Snow & Hulme (2011). In simple ways, lack of proper, plenty and clear instructional resources in a classroom could result into serious reading problems Connor & Morrison (2019). Also, a study that was conducted by Taylor, (2019) in

South Africa found that the average grade 3 learners scored 20% in English reading test due to ineffective utilization of reading resources. Similarly, a report by Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Education SACMEQ (2007) indicated that reading achievements across Africa is very low, for instance, Connor and Geiger (2009) ascertain that most of the schools in developing countries do not use efficient instructional resources needed for reading.

Furthermore, a study that was conducted in Kenya on the role of instructional resources on reading skills, revealed improved reading skills among primary school learners with effective availability and utilization of instructional resources Ngure, Mwoma & Buna (2019). This implies that effective use of instructional resources is an important educational component which need to be considered in reading instruction in Uganda as well. However, all the studies focus on reading in primary classes and English as a subject and in this study, the main focus will be reading instruction in lower primary classes specifically primary one and two as it is in the thematic curriculum during the literacy hour lesson.

2.4 Reading instruction assessment methods and the development of reading skills among learners in lower primary

According to Anderson, (2016), teachers continuously monitor their students' progress in developing foundational reading skills in order to develop reading skills. Anderson also continue and argue that, assessment by classroom teacher provides information about each students' knowledge and skills relative to grade level expectations and provide baseline against which progress can be measured. Similarly, Brady (2020) emphasized that, educators can use a variety of assessment methods and tools to gain information about specific foundational reading skills for example, phonological awareness. Through on-going reading assessments, teachers may recognize students who require additional support and use an alternative approach to teaching reading to help the pupil develop the skills required.

Formative assessment is one of the reading instruction assessment methods that is conducted with the goal of informing our instruction and improving students learning. At the heart of effective reading instruction, is the classroom teacher's detailed knowledge of each student Afflerbach (2007). The knowledge is constructed through formative assessment conducted across the lesson and the teacher adapts asking questions during instruction in order to know how well the students are getting what is being taught and questions focus on the methods and skills of reading Afflerbach, Kim, & Clark (2010).

In Kenya, a study by Piper et al (2020) highlighted the successful implementation of the Tusome Early Grade Reading Program, which used formative assessments to provide teachers with continuous feedback on students' reading abilities. The program applied across over 20,000 schools, involved regular monitoring of students' reading fluency and comprehension, resulting in significant improvements in literacy levels. In South Africa, Formative assessment was conducted where by paired reading assessment was practiced to develop learners' reading skills, in this component, it was argued that learners and the teachers read together the book that is matched to the learners' level as the teacher evaluates their reading proficiency Begeny (2012). According to Weissenberg et al, (2014), this technique improves the learners' knowledge of basic rules of the language and sentence construction for example word spacing and punctuation marks; comprehension skills, letter - sound knowledge and reading fluency and expression.

2.5 Literature Gaps

2.5.1 Contextual gaps

While various studies explore reading instruction approaches (phonics, whole language, syllabic methods), most do not focus on Primary One and Two, especially within government aided schools in Uganda. These early years are foundational and neglecting them leaves a critical void in understanding how early reading is introduced and nurtured under real

classroom conditions in public settings for example a study which was conducted in Ghana in the Bolgatanga Municipality showed that the method significantly improved reading achievement among upper primary learners, with teachers recommending further training International Journal of Innovative Research and Development (2021) this study focused on upper primary learners which shows a contextual gap.

Secondary, most reviewed studies reference general classroom instruction but do not examine how specific reading approaches are implemented during the "literacy hour" as prescribed in Uganda's thematic curriculum. This structured time for reading development is under-researched, particularly in the Ugandan context, leaving uncertainty about whether teachers adhere to its intended goals, the statement which was made by Robinson that teachers act as guides using indirect, contextual and holistic instruction Robinson (2018) do not specify how the teacher should implement the approaches during the lesson as it meant to be in the thematic curriculum during the literacy hour.

2.5.2 Theoretical gap

Furthermore, Danielson's framework provides a comprehensive structure for evaluating teaching practices (planning, instruction, classroom environment, and professionalism), however, few if any studies apply this framework to analyze early grade reading instruction. This limits the understanding of teacher effectiveness from a professional standards-based lens in early literacy classrooms for example whole language is drawn from the social constructivism theory where each individual draw knowledge and meaning from their own experiences and teachers act as guides using indirect, contextual and holistic instruction Robinson (2018). This theory does not show the effectiveness of the teacher when it comes to real reading instruction as it is with Danielson's Framework for teaching.

2.5.3 Geographical gaps

Not only that, studies that were reviewed like a study that was conducted in Kenya on the role of instructional resources on reading skills, revealed improved reading skills among primary school learners with effective availability and utilization of instructional resources Njure, Mwoma & Buna (2019) but they rarely explored how teachers actually use these resources in practice, especially in under-resourced government-aided schools. Therefore, there was a need for qualitative evidence to understand not just availability, but actual usability and instructional integration.

Last but not least, while formative assessment is recognized as essential, most studies focus on higher primary classes or international programs by Tusome in Kenya, there is little documentation of how teachers in P.1 and P.2 classrooms in Uganda assess reading progress, adapt instruction or respond to learners' individual reading needs, especially using informal or classroom-based methods.

In summary, current literature tends to treat reading instruction approaches, materials, and assessment as separate issues yet classroom practice requires an integrated understanding of how teachers combine methods, use materials and assess learning during instruction a perspective that is missing in the existing research and which this study aimed to fill.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology that was used to undertake the study. It focused on the research design, area of study, sampling methods, research procedure, data collection methods and techniques that were adopted during research.

3.1 Research Approach

The study adopted a qualitative approach because it required the researcher to get an in-depth understanding of reading instruction in lower primary classes. This enabled an in-depth understanding of a contemporary issue or phenomenon in a bounded system. Understanding reading instruction requires an in-depth investigation into the reading instruction approaches, practices, assessment methods and reading instruction resources and how they contributed to reading outcomes Coombs (2022).

3.2 Research Design

According to Creswell (2014), a research design is the overall plan for connecting the conceptual research problem to the pertinent and achievable empirical research, it is an inquiry which provides specific direction for procedures in a research. This is a step by step procedure which is adopted by a researcher before data collection and analysis process commences so as to achieve the research objectives in a valid way.

An exploratory case study design was undertaken in this study in order to explore, comprehend and focus on specific incidents about reading instruction in lower primary classes in government aided schools in Kampala district, the researcher also wanted to get deep understanding of the reading instruction approaches, reading instruction resources and reading instruction assessment methods and how teachers use them to develop pupils reading skills in primary one and two rather than creating a generalization.

3.3 Study Participants

Population refers to the set or group of all the units on which the findings of the research are to be applied Shukla & Satishpakash (2020). The participants were selected from two government aided primary schools from Kampala district in Kawempe division including school Q and R (pseudonyms) and these were four teachers of literacy from primary one and primary two who were in charge of teaching reading in lower primary classes. The literacy hour lessons were the main focus of the observation in the two selected schools to gain rich insights of the study.

3.4 Sample Selection

The study comprised of four teachers of reading from lower primary classes because qualitative research prioritizes depth and richness of data rather than large sample sizes. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), sample adequacy in qualitative inquiry is determined by the relevance and sufficiency of information obtained from purposively selected, information-rich participants. The four teachers were chosen because they were directly responsible for teaching reading in Primary One and Primary Two and therefore possessed in-depth and first-hand experience of reading instruction practices. Furthermore, the use of multiple data collection methods, including interviews, classroom observations and document analysis, enabled data triangulation and led to information redundancy, indicating that the sample size was sufficient to address the study objectives within the bounded case study context.

3.3.1 Sampling Method

Purposive sampling was used to select the participants in the study. In this type of sampling, subjects were chosen to be part of the study with a specific purpose in mind Campbell (2020). Primary one and two literacy teachers were the key informants of the study because of their level of expertise in reading instruction in lower primary classes, they made a

substantial contribution to providing information about reading instruction in lower primary classes in selected government aided primary schools in Kampala district.

3.4 Data Collection Methods.

3.4.1 In-Depth Interviews

An interview is an important qualitative research method in which the researcher collects data directly from the participants. Interviews are significant in unfolding opinions, experiences, values and other aspects of the population of study and they are always goal oriented Crossman (2017). Therefore, the researcher used in-depth interviews in order to obtain detailed information for the study by interviewing the four teachers of reading in lower primary classes in the two government primary schools in Kampala district. The researcher also asked the participants to allow her record the interview so that she can refer to them as she was analyzing data. The in-depth interview method was believed by the researcher to be reliable in obtaining verbal and non-verbal information from the respondents. The study involved the use of closed and open-ended questions which were arranged systematically according to research objectives that allowed the logical flow of the conversation between the researcher and the interviewee. She planned to spend more than 30 minutes per participant to gather qualitative data on their opinions, interests, beliefs, experiences and knowledge. However, one of the participants spent less than 30 minutes and the three participants spent between 30 and 40 minutes.

3.4.2 Documentary Analysis

To get further understanding of the reading instruction approaches that teachers use to develop reading skills in lower primary classes, the researcher analyzed the syllabus, scheme of work, lesson plan for literacy one for primary one and two for term one and teacher's guides of the National Primary School Thematic Curriculum (NPSTC) for Uganda primary 1 and 2 to identify the reading instruction approaches, reading instruction resources and

reading instruction assessments which include activities, types of reading texts and resources respectively that are used in developing the reading skills of learners in lower primary classes during the literacy hour lesson.

Casey and Wong (2020), emphasized that documents provide information about what happens where, when and how in a naturalistic way and therefore, the document analysis guide was used by the researcher to generate information from the curriculum and the syllabus of primary one and two about the methods and the teaching activities given to pupils of reading which the researcher will align with the research questions. This enabled the researcher to analyze the recommended reading instruction methods, activities, assessment and reading resources how they match with the actual implementation in the classroom by teachers.

3.4.3 Observation Method

According to Creswell (2014), observation method is to make a critical appreciation of the process, opportunities and challenges encountered. The study employed non-participant classroom observation, where the researcher observed teachers as they conducted literacy lessons without taking part in the teaching process. This approach allowed the researcher to capture authentic reading instruction practices, including the approaches teachers used, the instructional resources employed and the assessment methods applied, in their natural classroom setting. Non-participant observation is commonly used in qualitative research to gain an in-depth understanding of phenomena as they occur naturally, without researcher interference Manion & Morrison (2018). Each class observation period was to last for 40 minutes focusing on literacy one during the literacy hour. However, some teachers taught it for less than 40 minutes, while others taught for more than an hour.

3.5 Data collection instruments

The researcher employed a variety of data gathering instruments for the study, these included, an interview guide, an observation guide and a documentary analysis guide. The researcher used more than one data collection instruments to enhance the validity, reliability, transferability and credibility of finding through triangulation.

3.5.1 Interview guide

An interview guide instrument was used to gather information from key informants, these were primary one and two literacy teachers of the selected schools about reading instruction in lower primary classes specifically primary one and two in their schools.

3.5.2 Observation guide

The researcher also used a lesson observation guide to observe the literacy teachers' reading instruction behaviors during the literacy hour lesson delivery.

3.5.3 Documentary analysis guide

The researcher used the documentary analysis guide after obtaining consent from the literacy teachers then the researcher went through the documentation items and these included lesson plans, schemes of work, primary one and two teacher's guide and the syllabi.

3.6 Data Quality Control

The researcher used procedures and measures to ensure the reliability, validity, credibility and transferability of the data acquired.

3.6.1 Credibility

The researcher compared information from classroom observation notes, interviews and documents following the study objectives. The researcher also organized all the notes properly and read through to see whether they are all in agreement depending on the three data collection instruments.

3.6.2 Reliability

To ensure reliability, the researcher has to first establish the collegial relationship with the participants for stability of responses to multiple coders of data collection University of Miami (2020). Lastly, this helps in triangulation of data sources of the research findings that can be applicable in other social context via the clear interpretation of participants' responses.

3.6.3 Validity

The researcher gave clear examples from interviews, observations and documents by providing primary data as evidence to make sure that study findings and conclusions logically flow through linking them very well whereby the researcher ensured that the responses are real information of the participants Abib & Hoppen (2019).

3.6.4 Transferability

The researcher gave a clear background about the schools that she used in the study, she described more about the classroom setting specifically primary one and two, the researcher also gave a detailed information on how teachers conducted reading instruction in these specific classes.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher began data collection by first visiting School Q, followed by School R. At each school, the researcher met the headteacher, introduced herself as a student from Makerere University and presented an official letter of introduction requesting permission to conduct research. The headteachers granted permission and also provided information regarding the total pupil enrollment in their schools.

On the same day, the researcher was introduced to the literacy teachers by the headteachers. The researcher explained the purpose of her study and sought permission to attend literacy hour lessons. The teachers were assured that the observations were not for supervision or inspection purposes, but rather for academic research. The researcher encouraged them to

feel free, teach in their normal way and ask questions if necessary. Afterwards, the researcher conducted a brief survey of the school environment before leaving.

Data collection commenced with classroom observations in Primary Two, where literacy lessons were conducted at 8:00 a.m. The researcher and her assistant ensured punctual arrival to prepare adequately. During observations, the researcher was in class the teachers were teaching literacy and she actively observed the teaching approaches, the resources and the assessment methods that the teacher used while teaching reading. At first the researcher had a note book and the research assistant was taking pictures of what was taking place in class, the researcher ticked of the approaches that were used by the researcher as the lesson was ongoing, the ones that were not used by the teacher were not ticked off and a brief note was written about what was used. The researcher took detailed field notes while the research assistant captured photographs. Similar procedures were later carried out in Primary One classes. The researcher was also granted access to schemes of work, lesson plans, teachers' guides and syllabi for both Primary One and Two. These documents were cross-checked against classroom practices to identify alignment between instructional plans and actual teaching and these documents included the scheme of work, lesson plans and the teacher's guides.

After each observation, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with the literacy teachers. Prior to the interviews, teachers were given consent forms, which they signed to permit both note-taking and audio recording. While the researcher conducted the interviews, the assistant simultaneously took notes and recorded the sessions. The interviewees were first greeted and appreciated for participating in the study, and later, the researcher asked them question in order, the questions that were not well understood by the interviewee were broken down and interpreted in the easiest way to make it easy for the interviewee to respond appropriately, the researcher also probed for more during the interview in order to get more

detailed data. The researcher also made sure that the environment was quiet to capture the audios very well without any destruction and after the interviews, the researcher thanked the interview for their time.

Finally, the researcher conducted daily document analysis to supplement classroom observations and interviews and lesson plans, schemes of work and teacher's guides were analyzed thematically. On the last day of data collection, she formally expressed her appreciation to the headteachers and teachers for their cooperation and support throughout the study.

3.8 Data Analysis

The study employed a thematic analysis process to analyze the data. Interview data was analyzed manually by playing the audio interview recordings and verbatim transcription followed. Preliminary themes were found by categorizing and cleaning the data, transcribing the data and using the study participants' responses. The researcher scanned the dataset for themes or patterns while they were being investigated. The sub-themes that fell under a theme were examined. Statements, quotes and snippets from participant interviews were used to convey the data and conclusions were drawn in light of prior work as well as the aims and goals of the study. The patterns were later summarized into key themes based on the objectives of the study.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are values and principles that address whether human research is good or bad, (Ingham-Broomfield, (2014). The researcher got a letter of introduction from Makerere University which allowed her to carry out research from schools, she first of all met the heads of the two schools differently and asked for permission to interact with the teachers of primary one and two and they honestly allowed, she gave the participants the

consent forms to accept that they are ready to share information, and used pseudonyms to ensure participants confidentiality. The researcher ensured that others work was rightly acknowledged and cited to avoid plagiarism. Furthermore, the researcher valued the time of the respondents by avoiding inconveniencing them but more so keeping and maintaining ethical values needed in the area of social research towards general public and respondents and in case of any confidential information and situations where respondents do not want to disclose their names, they were respected with considerable integrity, (Suri, (2020).

3.10 Positionality

I am a secondary school trained teacher approaching reading instruction approach in lower primary schools with a deep respect for the knowledge and experiences for teaching reading in lower primary especially in government aided schools, I was deeply committed to exploring reading instruction in lower primary classes. I recognized that early reading skills form the cornerstone of children's success across all areas of learning, my research interest lies in exploring practical reading instruction approaches, instructional materials and assessment methods that teachers use to develop reading skills in young pupils. Through qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews, observations and documentary analysis, I may inform educators to bridge the gap between theory and real classroom context and my ultimate goal was to contribute to the field of early literacy in government aided schools.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of the participants' demographic information, presentation of the research findings in line with the research questions and conclusion. The study answered the following research questions;

- i. How do reading instruction approaches used by teachers develop learners' reading skills in lower primary classes?
- ii. How do reading instruction resources used by teachers develop learners' reading skills in lower primary classes?
- iii. How do reading instruction assessment methods used by teachers develop learners' reading skills in lower primary?

4.1 Cases

4.1.1 Schools' case description

This study was conducted in two government-aided primary schools located in Kawempe North, Kampala District. Both schools are situated in urban areas and mainly serve pupils from low-income families. For confidentiality, pseudonyms were used: School Q and School R.

School Q had an enrolment of 1,042 pupils from Primary One to Primary Seven. In Primary One, there were 92 pupils taught by two teachers, one responsible for Literacy I and II and the other for Numeracy. Primary Two had 108 pupils, also taught by two teachers handling the same subjects respectively. The Primary One classroom was arranged in three columns, with five pupils per desk. The room displayed several literacy charts and had a well-maintained chalkboard. Primary Two was organized into 11 groups of pupils seated on facing desks, with group sizes ranging from 8 to 10 learners. The classroom was decorated with

various reading charts, and the alphabet was displayed along the upper border of the chalkboard.

School R had a total of 1,012 pupils across Primary One to Primary Seven. Primary One had 144 pupils with two teachers, one teaching Literacy I and II, and the other Numeracy. The classroom was well decorated, with a clear chalkboard, colorful age-appropriate wall pictures, and the alphabet pinned above the chalkboard near the ventilators. Each desk accommodated six pupils, some seated very close to the chalkboard, leaving narrow walkways for teachers. Primary Two had 136 pupils, again taught by two teachers for literacy and numeracy. This classroom also had well decorated walls with literacy materials, five pupils per desk, and a secure cabinet for pupils' books. Teachers in school R noted that plans were underway to split this class into two.

In both schools, each lower primary class was managed by two teachers. However, the classrooms were overcrowded, with limited space compared to the large number of pupils. Notably, both schools were led by female head teachers.

4.1.2 Participants' demographic information

Four participants were interviewed, two teachers of literacy from primary one and two from each school making a total of four, the participants were all female teachers three of them with a teaching experience of more than 5 years teaching literacy 1 and one with three years' experience of teaching literacy 1 in lower primary. Below is a detailed description of the participants;

The first participant was a female teacher from primary two, aged 40 years, with 16 years teaching experience, she was a class teacher primary two. The participants pseudo name in this study was RT1. RT1 had a Grade III Certificate and a Diploma in Education Primary which she obtained from Kyambogo University in 2009. She started as a PTA teacher in the same school and later she enrolled as a government primary teacher in primary two class, she

was in charge of teaching literacy and English in primary two class, she has enough teaching experience in lower primary.

The second participant was 29 years old, with 8 years teaching experience, she started teaching from primary three where she was teaching numeracy (mathematics) in the same school, later in 2022 she was taken to primary two to teach literacy one and two after the teacher who was in charge had retired, she had an experience of three years teaching reading in primary two. In this study, her pseudo name is QT2, the level of education for QT2 is Grade III Teachers Certificate in Primary Teacher Education which she obtained from Bushenyi P.T.C IN 2016, she is currently doing an in-service Diploma in Primary Education External (DEPE) at Kyambogo university. QT2 is passionate about teaching literacy 1 in primary two class.

Another participant to be interviewed face-to-face was a female teacher, with 38 years teaching experience, she has been in this school as a head of reading in lower section, before she was transferred to this school she was teaching primary four. She has spent 18 years in this school teaching literacy 1 in primary one. In this study her pseudo name is QT3, the level of education is Grade III Teachers Certificate in Primary Teacher Education which she obtained from Kabulasoke Core P.T.C in 1986 which is located in Gomba district. QT3 has enough teaching experience of reading in lower primary especially primary one where she has spent more than 10 years.

The fourth participant was a female teacher of primary one from another school, she was 56 years old with 33 years teaching experience, she was a class teacher primary one class and in charge of teaching literacy. The pseudo name for the participant in this study is RT4, RT4 has a Grade III Teachers Certificate in Primary Teacher Education which she obtained from Jinja Primary Teachers' College, Wanyange in 1992, she has been teaching in lower primary for the last 33 years and she had enough experience of teaching reading.

Table 4.1: Showing a summary of participants' demographic information.

Code	Gender	Qualification	Position	Experience
RT1	Female	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Diploma in Education Primary• Grade III Certificate	Teacher	16 years
QT2	Female	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grade III Teachers Certificate	Teacher	8 years
QT3	Female	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grade III Teachers Certificate	Head of reading lower primary section	38 years
RT4	Female	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grade III Teachers Certificate	Teacher	33 years

4.2 Reading instruction approaches teachers use to develop learners' reading skills in lower primary classes

Introduction

Findings in this section were responses to the first research question; How does reading instruction approaches used by teachers develop learners' reading skills in lower primary classes? This research question aimed at exploring what teachers understand about reading instruction, how they apply that knowledge in real classroom situation to help learners develop reading skills and the effectiveness of the reading instruction approaches in developing pupils' reading skills. Data collection on this objective was through face-to-face interview with the teachers of reading in primary one and two classes, classroom observation during the literacy lesson in primary one and two specifically focusing on reading session and documentary analysis focused on documents used by teachers while teaching reading which were syllabus, teacher's guide for primary one and two, scheme of work and lesson plan looking at teaching approaches and the alignment of content. The following subthemes emerged regarding this objective.

- Teachers' understanding of reading instruction approaches.
- Teachers' application of reading instruction approaches.
- Effectiveness of reading instruction approaches.

4.2.1 Teachers' understanding of reading instruction approaches

The study found out that teachers were aware of different reading instruction approaches and these included phonics, whole word and syllabic approach.

To begin with phonics, the study found out that there was a common understanding among the teachers that phonics involves teaching reading through the use of sounds of letters rather than their alphabetical names, though there were some variation in clarity and depth of conceptual understanding depending on the following responses from teachers.

RT1 said;

“Phonics according to me is using sounds for example, /a/ instead of ‘e’ as it is on the alphabet chart, letters of alphabet call them sounds, that is why we find them as ‘a,b,c,d’ when we go to phonics we call them sound which go like /a/,/b/,/c/,/d/, they differ in sound for example ‘e’ is the name of the alphabetical letter ‘a’ but it sounds ‘/a/’ when we are using phonics” (interview RT1)

Similarly, QT2 had a basic understanding of phonics, recognizing that it focuses on teaching sounds rather than letter names, and that it involves blending sounds to form words. She also explained that actions are used to help pupils remember the sound, she talked about breaking words into individual sounds and teaching them to pupils through actions. This shows awareness of sound-letter correspondence and multisensory techniques like actions (gestures). This is what she said;

“Phonics according to me means teaching pupils using sounds instead of letter names to come up with words like the word ‘cup’ and you teach pupils sound /c/, sound /u/, and sound /p/ to make the word cup. Here, each sound has an action to make it easy for pupils to remember and for them to know the actions, if you were in P2 or P1, ‘naawe waalibitegedde’ meaning I would have understood them if I was in primary two or one” (interview QT2)

Additionally, RT4 said;

“I think phonics is the use of sounds while teaching alphabetical letters, and also training pupils how to say each sound properly like the word ‘cat’ then you teach them each sound well, and then they can read the word at the end” (interview RT4)

The above responses imply that although RT1, QT2 and RT4 attempted to explain phonics as the use of sounds rather than letter names, they lacked clarity and confidence, which indicates a shallow understanding of the approach. Their explanation suggests that they may not have received adequate training in phonics instruction. This limited understanding can negatively impact how effectively they teach reading, as it may lead to confusion among learners and hinder the proper development of foundational reading skills.

QT3 was not any different from the other respondents, like RT1, QT2 and RT4, she explained that the phonics method involves recognizing letters as sounds rather than by their names. According to her, this helps learners to say the correct sound instead of just reciting the alphabet letter names, she also mentioned that in English, this process seems simpler to her. She had this to say;

“Phonic method involves knowing the letters as sounds when we say them with the sounds they represent, and pupils can say the sound which is not the letter of the alphabet and in English it is very easy that is what I understand” (interview QT3)

This was very clear that QT3’s understanding of phonics may be limited, as her explanation lacks clarity, her comment that “in English it is very easy” may reflect an underestimation of the challenges involved in teaching reading, especially for early learners.

This implied that, QT3 has a common understanding like other teachers that phonics involves teaching reading through the sound of letter rather than their alphabetical names. However, there was some variation in clarity and depth of conceptual understanding.

Secondly, the study also found out that teachers know that whole word approach is about teaching words as a whole without breaking them into phonemes, they all emphasized that

whole word is the look and say method where by children are exposed to a number of words to read several times until they memorize them. This is how they responded when they were asked how they understand whole word approach;

RT1 responded by saying,

“In whole word approach, a word is taught as a whole, even for sentences I write whole sentences and ask the pupils to read, the words that I bring to children I make sure that they are the common ones that we use in our daily life and it becomes easy for them to memorize” (interview RT1)

QT4 similarly said that,

“Whole word is about giving children words as a whole like the way you hear the word whole, you do not need to say any sound or syllable in it as you are teaching, you expose the children to the words more than once, for the first time you can read the word as a whole like the word girl, you write it and tell them to draw a girl, in the process they are learning the word and how it is written, then you continue and bring the sentence with the same word and ask them to read that is what we call whole word, they look and say the word”(interview RT4)

The above responses implied that teachers understand whole word approach as a reading instruction approach they use to develop pupils reading skill in primary one and two.

And lastly, primary one and two teachers gave a clear understanding of syllabic approach and they explained that children are taught sounds by constructing syllables instead of single phonemes where by a syllable has a vowel and a sound joined together. This is what QT2 said,

“Syllabic method is where we combine a consonant and a vowel and then we get the syllables that form a word” (interview QT2)

In summary, the study found out that teachers of literacy one in primary one and two have the basic knowledge and understanding of the reading instruction approaches that are used to develop pupils reading skills in lower primary classes, especially primary one and two during literacy hour whereby they emphasized that phonics involves teaching sounds of letters rather than names of the alphabet, whole word requires teaching a word as a whole without breaking it into phonemes and also that syllabic approach is where the consonant is combined with the vowel to come up with syllables which are joined to get a word, however the teachers lacked deep understanding of the approach which may deteriorate pupils' acquisition of the reading skills

4.2.2 Teachers' application of reading instruction approaches

In making sure that pupils in primary one and two develop reading skills, teachers use various reading instruction approaches. However, how these approaches were applied in real classroom setting was very important.

The study found out that literacy teachers of primary one and two have various ways of teaching reading using phonics, syllabic and whole word approaches to develop pupils' reading skills, handling of the class sessions and also the practices are valiant altogether as per their responses.

4.2.2.1 Teachers' application of phonic approach

RT1 responded by saying;

“I use phonic method to help our pupils understand and get the reading skills, by doing this, I use letter cards to write on the sounds of the letters and I sound them to give the pupils the key. I also print some letters on the papers and give them because letter cards alone cannot be enough here we have many pupils, sounds sometimes are hard if you are not good at them and some pupils mix them with letters but I teach one sound to make sure they understand, I am also learning some sounds that have

actions because my pupils now need to know everything and for every sound I teach an action”(interview RT1)

In addition, from classroom observation, RT1 was observed teaching without introducing any sound to be learned during the literacy hour lesson but she kept on teaching different sounds at the same time depending on different words she was teaching and the sounds were not rhyming at any point. The following were the observations;

RT1 started by listing the words which include; matooke, onions, tomatoes, cassava, rice, beans, cabbage.

RT1: Can you repeat after me? Matooke, onions, tomatoes, cassava, rice, beans, cabbage.

Pupils: Matooke, onions, tomatoes, cassava, rice, beans, cabbage.

RT1: Can you say sound /m/, sound /c/, sound /r/

Pupils: /m/, /c/, /r/

From her lesson plan, she had not planned to teach any sound although the teacher’s guide for primary two that she had in class had clear procedures of teaching using phonic method although her lesson delivery was not aligning with it.

The findings implied that RT1 had the sense of handling the phonics instruction but with less content and basic procedures of teaching reading using phonics as an approach to reading instruction in primary one and primary two.

The study findings revealed that the teacher’s inability to teach phonics appropriately hinder pupils’ development of the reading skills since the teacher cannot apply the right procedures of teaching phonics during literacy one lesson.

Similarly, QT2 said,

“I use the letter cards which have different letters, I sounds them to give pupils the key, then later I ask the pupils to read them as sounds, then I also display them again and randomly pick the pupil to read a sound to see whether they have understood.

This helps them to know the sound of each letter and also reading words becomes easy for them since they can read each sound in the word and it makes it easy for them to read any word that we write during other lessons” (interview QT2)

From classroom observation, it was observed by the researcher that QT2 used phonic method whereby she introduced the sounds by writing them on the chalkboard, she asked the pupils to read after her, she then asked the pupils to give their own words that had the sounds they studied and later, they also formed sentences which had words with the same sounds and the teacher wrote them on the chalkboard. From the documentary analysis, the lesson plan and scheme of work had no sounds that the teacher was teaching but her lesson presentation was in line with the guidelines from the teacher’s guide.



Figure 4.1: Showing sound /a/, words and sentences of the same sound.

Furthermore, QT3 had this to say,

“I introduce sounds to my pupils and I display them well, I then ask them to say the sounds, then after teaching the sound like sound /a/ then I proceed and give them a word which has that sound like the word /apple/ which helps the pupil to read the

word without any challenges since they have mastered the sound already, I introduce one sound each lesson and then bring in some of the words that have some sounds that we have been studying before but if you start with the word without teaching them the sound, they will be like ‘Eh!’ Where is this sound coming from? Which will make it hard to get the skills of reading since these are just young pupils” (interview QT3)

From classroom observation, QT3 was observed introducing sound /ai/ first, she later wrote the sound on the chalkboard, she wrote different words with sound /ai/, she continued and wrote a short story with sound /ai/ and there after she asked the pupils to look and say the words with sound /ai/.



Figure 4.2: Showing a teacher teaching sound /ai/

Furthermore, QT3 also had a box of sounds and she used it to remind pupils of different sounds and how they are pronounced, this moved desk to desk and whoever would get the box, had to pick a flashcard or paper and say a sound written on it. This is how it moved; 41

QT3 and pupils: box of sound is moving around, is moving around, is moving around, box of sound is moving around, which sound is this?

Pupil 1: Sound /p/

QT3 and pupils: Box of sound is moving around, is moving around, is moving around, box of sound is moving around, which sound is this?

Pupil 2: Sound /s/

QT3 and pupils: Box of sound is moving around, is moving around, is moving around, box of sound is moving around, which sound is this?

Pupil 3: Sound /i/

However, from documentary analysis, it was observed that the QT3 had no current documents at all, what she had was a scheme of work for 2023 and she did not use it at all. She used her personal experience without referring to any documents for in both lessons that were observed.

This implied that pupils benefit from the teacher's practical application of the phonics approach although the absence of updated documents may affect consistency and alignment of content which is key in reading instruction.

The study findings from the above responses revealed that the teachers can effectively apply phonic approach while teaching reading in lower primary classes and this helped pupils of primary one and two to develop the reading skills.

Generally, the responses implied that teachers of primary one and two have the practice and knowledge on how to teach reading following the proper instructions which suggests that phonics approach has potential to develop pupils' reading skills in primary one and two, but its effectiveness depends on teachers' pedagogical competence, proper preparation and use of current instructional resources.

4.2.2.2 Teachers' application of syllabic approach

The study found out that literacy teachers have less knowledge about teaching using syllabic method although they use it as the reading instruction approach to develop pupils' reading skills in primary one and primary two. The following statements revealed how they apply it in class during the reading lesson. RT1 responded by saying;

“When I am using the syllabic to teach, I look at breaking words into syllables making sure that my pupils get the idea ‘bulungi’ and they can join the syllables to make a word or they break the word into syllables and pronounce them well at the end, all the words I teach, I make sure we break them into syllables. I use syllables in which ever sound that I teach to enhance reading skills and I get flash cards with different syllables that make a word that I want these pupils to learn to read without difficulty, then I choose one to read to class the formed syllables and then the word at the end, sometimes I ask the pupils to break the word themselves and we say the syllables that make up that word, in my class they find it hard to differentiate between syllables and sounds, but it helps me to see where to come in. Syllabic method help me to teach long words like magazine they syllabize it ‘ma-ga-zi-ne’ it becomes easy for them to read and that is how they learn to read.” (interview RT1)

On the same note QT2 responded that,

“I use syllabic method more especially when I am teaching words, during the lesson, I combine a consonant and a vowel and then I get the syllables I want, I also ask pupils to make their own syllables and we see whether we can get the word for example when I am teaching about food, then I have the word banana , then I can syllabize the word like ba-na-na, then I ask the pupils to combine the syllables to get the word banana this can help the pupils to always first break the word into syllables in order to read it well, which helps them to get reading skills.”(interview QT2)

From classroom observation and documentary analysis, RT1 and QT2 did not use syllabic method while teaching. However much they talked about how it is applied. In both lessons that were observed and also from the documents they had, none of them planned to use the syllabic method depending on their lesson plans and schemes of work. However, the teacher's guide that each one had in class had detailed information about how syllabic method is applied during the literacy class.

This implied that RT1 and QT2 cannot apply syllabic approach while teaching literacy 1 in class however much they know the theoretical part of its application.

The study findings revealed that these teachers lack practical skills of teaching reading using syllabic method and so pupils were not able to acquire the reading skills since the teachers did not use the syllabic approach during the literacy lesson.

Not only that, also QT3 said,

“In the syllabic approach, I always want my learners to first learn to hear and count the syllables in the word before reading it, that is why for me I start by asking them a question ‘how many syllables do you hear in this word?’ then they respond and I tell them to mention them and after we count and confirm then we write the word formed. Sometimes I use the syllabic method, but still I teach them to read the broken word using sounds like for the word ‘cat’, I write as c-a-t in the first place, and then I ask them to first say it in that format, and finally I tell them to say the word as one which is cat, and this also helps them to get the reading skills that I really need from them, and also knowing that in case I come across any word to read, I have to first break the word first into syllables which I read as sounds and finally combine them to read the whole word” (interview QT3)

From classroom observation, QT3 did not teach using syllabic method, but rather she gave an exercise which was about syllables.

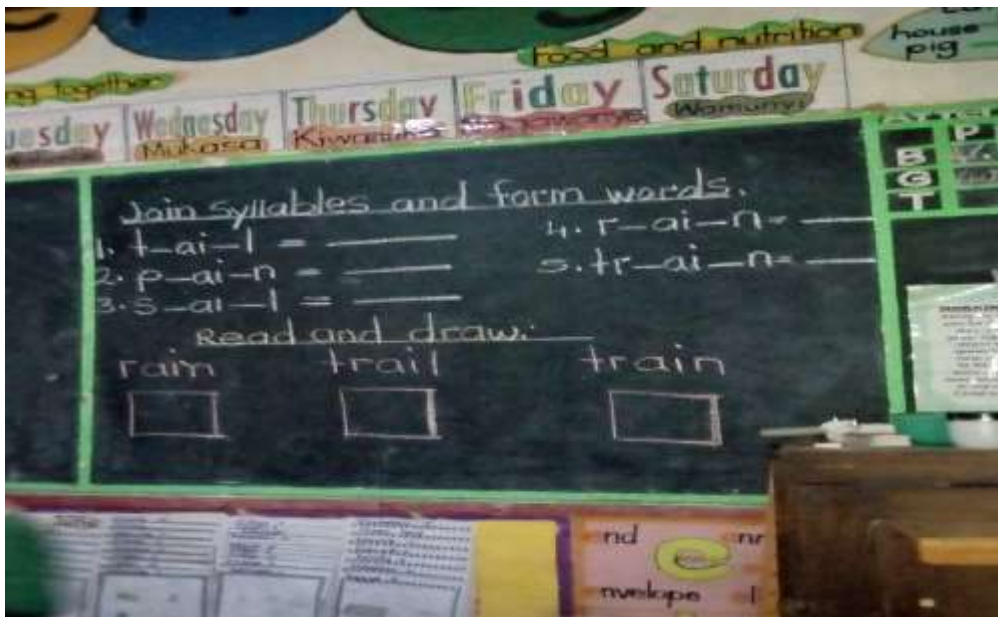


Figure 4.3: A non-aligning exercise given to pupils

The picture above shows an exercise given to students about syllables, yet all the words given cannot be syllabized, which implies that the teacher may not be sure of the syllabic method practically though she can talk about it theoretically.

The study revealed that, QT3 lacks content knowledge on how to teach using syllabic method practically during lesson delivery which may hinder pupils from getting foundational reading skills since the teacher is not well conversant with the approach practically.

Furthermore, RT4 had a different opinion to capture below;

“I always start with writing all the vowels that we have to study on that day, then I ask the pupils to get the consonants and we join them with a vowel, from that I teach them the words and we break them very well, sometimes I tell them to write their surnames and we start to break them into syllables. I have flashcards with different syllables, I put up one and ask them to tell the syllable they are seeing, then I give them many words to see that they understand.” (interview RT4)

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Additionally, from classroom observation, RT4 was observed teaching using syllabic method, and she taught consonant formation of syllables 'i' and the pupils were observed following very well, although from her lesson plan she had not planned to teach syllables although her lesson delivery was really good and productive to pupils.



Figure 4.4: Teacher teaching using syllabic approach.

Feld findings revealed that, using syllabic method while teaching reading in lower primary classes specifically primary one and primary two helps learners to develop more reading skills depending on the teacher's verbatims and observations above.

4.2.3.3 Teachers' application of whole word approach.

Teachers also emphasized different ways on how they apply whole word approach during literacy one lesson to develop pupils reading skills during the literacy hour depending on the following.

The RT1 said,

“I use whole words when I am teaching sentences, I first list down all the words that we are going to find in the story and first go through them as a whole with pupils, I get the words on the chart and ask pupils to read the word, then I help them to say the words well. I also ask them to read from the charts we have, then they learn to read the whole word without fear.” (interview RT1)

T1 added that,

“I use the whole word by writing a single word on the chalkboard and I ask the pupils to read, when they fail then I come in and help them then I also ask them to use the word I have taught in a sentence to see whether they have really mastered the word, when we get a difficult word, I read for them but I always first see whether they can read the word as a whole because it is always easy for them and they get the skill very first.” (interview RT1)

In addition from classroom observation, RT1 was observed writing words about energy giving foods, and asked the pupils to read them, she also wrote sentences on the chalkboard and pupils were asked to look and read the sentences, from this lesson it was observed that many of the pupils used guess work while reading and when the same words were used in the sentence, the pupils could not read them correctly and the teacher ended up reading almost every word to the pupils, the same teacher was also observed asking pupils to write the words they have studied on the chalkboard. However, none showed interest in writing the one who raised up to say the words only said wrong ones and the lesson was continued.



Figure 4.5: One of the pupils trying to guess the words.

This implied that the teacher was aware of the whole word approach, but could not apply it well in a classroom for pupils to get required foundational reading skills. Therefore, the teacher needs to change her style of delivery to meet the pupils' needs.

The study finding revealed that RT1 lacks pedagogical skills of teaching reading using whole word approach and this affected pupil's development of reading skills which leads to a big gap in literacy development at the earliest age.

Similarly, QT2 had this to say,

“Sometimes I come up with whole words which have the sound that I already taught in the first place like the word carpenter, cartoon, carrot, and then I ask the pupils to make a sentence using any of those words to see whether they have really learnt, I also ask some to mention words that start with sound that I have taught like sound ‘c’ then they formulate their own words as I help them slowly, and this gives them more confidence in reading as they develop the reading skills” (interview QT2)

Similarly, QT2 was observed writing words on the chalkboard, she asked pupils to read 48 sentences and they read them well, she also asked pupils to spell the words and they did, also

in her next lesson, she wrote sentences on the chalkboard and the pupils were able to read most of them without difficulty.

This implied the teacher was more knowledgeable on how to use the whole word approach to develop pupils reading skills. Therefore, whole word approach may be used to develop pupils reading skill in lower primary classes.

The study findings revealed that whole word approach was effectively applied the teacher whereby she engaged pupils during the teaching and learning process, and they were able to demonstrate the acquired reading skills by writing and reading words correctly which showed development of reading skills through teacher's effective use of the whole word approach.

QT3 said that,

“I use whole word by outlining all the key words, most times if I use the ones I want them to learn during that lesson, I then pick the key highlights and emphasize the pronunciation and spelling of the word and this helps the pupils to understand and get more exposure of every word because some words are new every time, then after I write a story with those words and ask them to read, then where they find a challenge I help them by saying the word correctly, that is how they learn to read”(interview QT3)

Also, RT4 said,

“I present with words written on the flashcards and I ask the pupils to read them, I make sure the entire class has the flash card before I start teaching. We use those words to make sentences using those words we have learned at that time, after reading what they have, I ask them to exchange the flash cards with friends to see that they get a chance to see and read many words. I also give them stories to read then they get a chance to read many new words as a whole” (interview RT4)

From classroom observation of QT3 and RT4, none of them used whole word approach as much as they talked about how it is meant to be applied during the interviews. Not only that, none of them had a lesson plan with clear details about how it was going to be applied during their lesson presentation.

This implied that QT3 and RT4 were aware of the approach and its benefits but they could not apply it practically during the literacy lesson.

The study revealed that these teachers lack training on how to use whole word approach while teaching literacy¹ and pupils are most likely to get difficulty in developing reading skills such as fluency and overall performance.

4.2.2.4 Effectiveness of reading instruction approaches

The study found out that phonics method was more effective for learners to develop foundational reading skills, QT2 and QT3 emphasized that it helps the pupils to decode words if taught properly, they get good decoding skills that can help them read all words that they come across which is not with other reading approaches. It was also observed that pupils were actively engaged in the lesson when teachers used phonic approach where different learning materials called for active participation for both pupils and teachers, where songs and actions for different sounds were continuously used by pupils. This is what they said;

QT2 said that;

“I use sounds because they help my pupils to learn by sounding out words, it helps them to know the relationship between alphabetical letters and the sounds which is simple for them to read any new word when they know the sound, even when it is a new story, you find them trying the new words which is not easy while using other methods.” (interview QT2)

Similarly, QT3 said that;

“Phonics is good remember when I am teaching my pupils, I sound out one single sound which they learn to sound well, and I start with simple sounds then after I move to hard ones as they continue learning. This helps them to learn to decode very well and to read fluently with confidence, it is even enjoyable because we use games for sounds and they love it so much, but for other approaches, they just cram how the word looks like which is not good.” (interview QT3)

The above responses were not any different from RT4 who asserted that;

“I always use two methods when I am teaching and they help the pupils very well, the phonetic methods help pupils understand the letters of the alphabet and their sounds and so they can read any word, then the syllabic method help them to join words properly more so the long words which have many sounds and then they try to read slowly, but for the whole word, the pupils here fail a lot remember they come when some of them have just started school from primary one and you have to start teaching them the alphabet then to sounds, if you start with words then they cannot understand anything.”(interview RT4)

RT1 also had this to say;

“I use syllables but they confuse the pupils, when you always use it they forget the sounds taught, but I remind them when they are reading each sound they do not remember, when I am teaching in Luganda, I use only syllables and they understand now when I start teaching them literacy, they confuse everything and I also find it hard to teach them remember I am the same teacher and I look like confusing them, very few get what I want them to understand, but I do not stop teaching I just help them understand you know sometimes I also get the challenge but for me I know what to do. Some lessons need both methods and you know in these government school pupils are many and do not pay attention then I end up with many who do not get what I try to mean, and a few but slowly they will get there.” (interview RT1)

The above responses implied that literacy teachers recognize phonics as an effective method for helping learners decode new words and build confidence in reading. Their responses show that they value the use of sounds in reading instruction and are aware that phonics promotes learner engagement, especially when supported with activities like games.

In summary, from the in-depth interviews, classroom observations and documentary review, literacy teachers from primary one and two indicated that reading instruction approaches are prioritized during reading instruction to develop pupils' reading skills. The approaches include, phonics, whole word and syllabic, these should be used by the teachers to ensure pupils' development of foundational reading skills at the earliest age. However, some teachers lacked knowledge on how to apply different reading instruction approaches like syllabic approach and whole word approach which limits pupils from developing the required reading skills at the earliest stage of learning.

4.3 Reading instruction resources teachers use while teaching reading in lower primary classes in order to develop learners' reading skills.

Introduction

Findings in this section are responses to the second research question that asked- How does reading instruction assessment methods used by teachers develop learners' reading skills in lower primary? This research question aimed at assessing the availability of reading instruction materials, usability of the available reading instruction materials, and relevance and appropriateness of the reading instruction materials that teachers utilize to develop learners' reading skills in classroom. Data collected for this objective was through face-to-face interviews, classroom observation focusing on literacy one during the literacy hour, and documentary analysis from primary one and primary two teachers. From the data analysis the following themes emerged;

- Availability of reading instruction materials.
- Usability of the available reading materials.

4.3.1 Availability of reading instruction materials.

Findings from this subsection showed that teachers from different classes had teaching materials in class and they go ahead and make their own materials depending on what they want the pupils to learn. During the interviews, they explained the importance of different materials in the development of pupils reading skills. Although the teachers claimed to use a wide range of materials such as letter cards, real objects, worker cards, newspapers, magazines and storybooks during face-to-face interviews, the classroom observation and document analysis revealed that these materials were either absent or not used as planned by some teachers. During classroom observation, the following materials were available in different classrooms; flashcards, chalkboard, alphabetical letters, anchor charts, picture cards with words, handmade balls, real objects like different types of food, exercise books and plain papers. The following were the responses and observations of the study;

During face-to-face interview RT1 said,

“In my class I have flashcard with sounds written on them. I use flashcards when I am teaching single words and then I ask them to read the word written on the flashcard, also I have picture cards, for the real objects I tell them to write the name of the objects which help me to see whether they can write the clear spelling without seeing it anywhere. We also have a chalkboard to write the stories and ask each learner to read for the class. Every day I select the one who did not read yesterday to see that they all understand, I also have magazines when it comes to reading sentences and also the newspapers, we have story books ‘Iwakuba’ now they got lost, but I also use them to make sure that at least these learners get the reading skills.” (Interview RT1)

In addition, from literacy one classroom observation, the researcher observed real objects like a ball made out banana fibers, real objects like energy giving foods, a very clear chalkboard, charts which had both sounds and letters of the alphabet. However, no magazines and story books were observed by the researcher yet they were mentioned by RT1 during the interview.

Furthermore, during the documentary analysis, it was realized that RT1 had no current documents to use in the first lesson and there was no record of for materials to be used, in the next lesson she provided a lesson plan which had only real objects and charts as suggested materials to be used during the lesson. It was noticed by the researcher that the lesson plan presented was in a book which was dated 11/10 without specific year and she was too hesitant on showing the cover of the book where the lesson plan was written, she had no scheme of work and when she was asked by the researcher why she missed the documents, she said “those things only waste our time to make no one asks for them at school.”



Figure 4.6: Some of the real materials about food and nutrition

This implies that the teacher was making good effort to create a rich and interactive learning environment by providing multiple teaching resources such as real objects, picture cards, and the chalkboard, all aimed at enhancing learners’ reading and spelling abilities through practical learning. However, the absence of some materials during observation like storybooks and magazines along with the lack of updated and clearly documented lesson plans, implies that pupils miss out on accessing some materials.

Similarly, QT2 had this to say;

“I have letter cards that I made for my class, they help them to know the letter, to know the sound and its formation, carry real objects and real objects when I want them to understand more like a cup, I also have worker cards and they help learners to fully participate when I am teaching sentences and they capture their attention, they also aid memory, some of them lead to incidental learning I also have story books for reading.” (interview QT2)

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In addition to classroom observation, the researcher observed that the class had no letter cards, no worker cards and neither did the researcher see any story books in the classroom. The researcher observed the wall charts which were clear with all the required information about teaching reading in primary two which included letters of the alphabet different sounds and the words they make, common words and sentences, the chalkboard was as well clear.

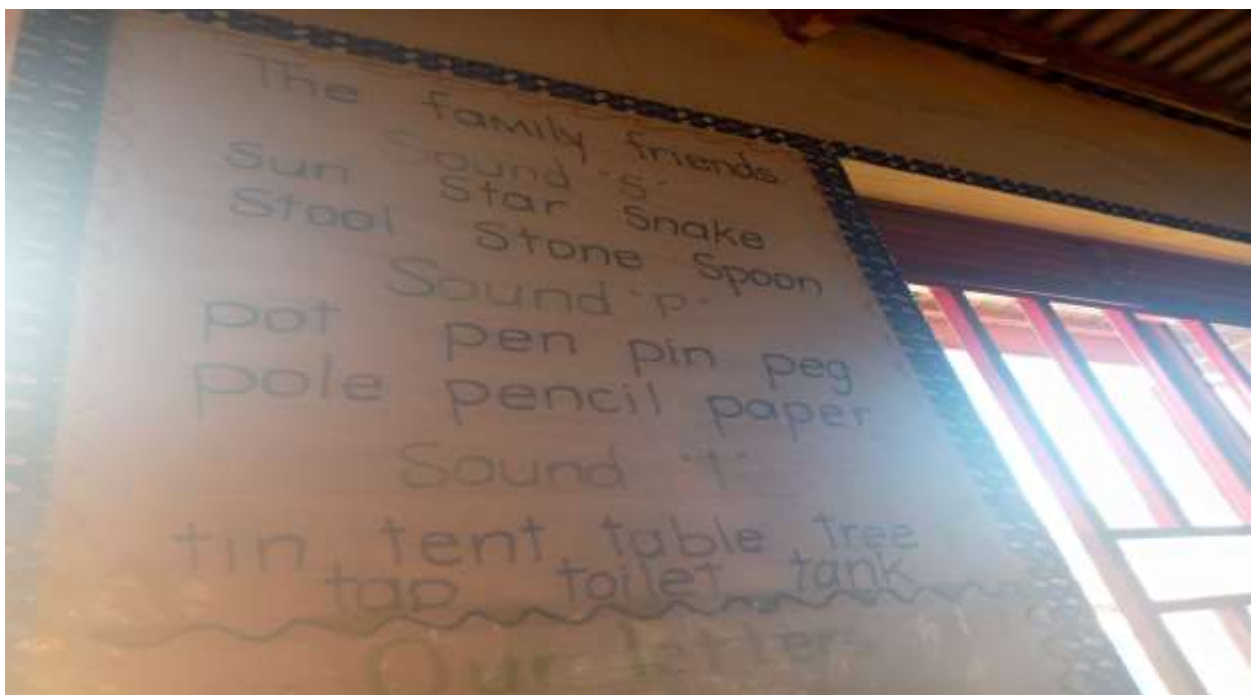


Figure 4.7: A chart with different sounds and words they made.

Not only that, but also during the documentary analysis, it was clearly noted that QT2 only planned to use the real objects which were not seen anywhere in the classroom, yet in the scheme of work and the photocopies of teacher's guide that she had, a number of materials were suggested.

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This implies that QT2 over idealized the availability of the instructional materials during the interview, but in reality, instructional materials were limited and pupils may not receive the required support for developing reading skills.

The study revealed that the teacher does not spare time to create more materials that need 56 be used in class to support her during the teaching and learning process and pupils cannot develop the reading skills.

Furthermore, QT3 said,

“I have flashcards which I use while I am teaching sounds and group of letters that is like when I am teaching two letters that make one sound like /ai/, /au/, I make sure that they are written on different flash cards, I also have a box of sounds and I make it moving for example when we are singing box of sounds is moving around is moving around is moving around is moving around, box of sounds is moving around what sound is it? So, when I stop they pick a certain sound on a certain card so after picking, a pupil can be able to sound that sound, then we continue, we continue whenever it stops what sound is it? Somebody picks and says the sound it is fun and interesting at the same time pupils grasp the sounds, we also have the chalkboard and we use it most of the time, I also have charts, manmade materials like pots, balls, I have the chalkboard and also the pupils’ books for exercises.” (interview QT3)

RT4 also said,

“For me I make small books with pictures because these ones they learn by seeing, I make sure that in each story there is a sound that I want these pupils to learn and I start asking them to tell me the sound they see in the story, I also ask them to start writing the sounds in air and on papers that I give to them yes, that is what I use to teach them sounds and develop their reading skills, I also use the chalkboard to write and this help them to learn to read well because they get used to different sounds and the words they make.” (interview RT4)

According to classroom observation, it was observed that QT3's classroom had a number of materials. Foreexample, real objects like pots, balls, dolls, flashcards, the class had charts with different sounds and the words they make, they had plain papers for learners to write before transferring to the book, a box of sounds was also available with different sounds inside, the class had a reading corner with simple common sentences and words and a clear chalkboard.



Figure 4.8: Some of the reading instruction materials that the teacher made.

Furthermore, during the documentary analysis, the researcher realized that the QT3 used an old lesson plan for previous lesson taught in 2023, and the scheme of work was as well for 2023, the dates were scribbled and the lesson showed that they were literary observed and stamped with clear comments, apart from that, the teacher had materials to be used clearly recorded and RT4 had no document to use even the teacher's guide was just in the teacher's cabinet which she gave to the researcher after the lesson because she claimed it not being resourceful to her.

The implication depending on the above responses is that teachers are actively playing a central role in promoting foundational reading skills by creatively using a wide range of instructional materials that cater for learners' diverse needs and learning styles like the use of the "box of sounds" game reflects a hands-on, learner-centered approach that makes reading lessons engaging, practical, and meaningful which enhance learners' phonemic awareness and reading fluency although the absence of proper planning documents limits consistency, reduces teaching quality, and may hinder pupils from getting the required skills.

The study findings revealed that instructional materials play a central role in developing pupils reading skills that is why teachers try what they can to make more reading instruction materials.

4.3.2 Usability of the available reading materials

Regarding data analysis of this subsection, findings show that teachers used various materials such as flashcards, picture cards, charts, chalkboards, pupils' exercise books, and real objects. However, despite teachers claiming to use a wide range of resources during the interviews, classroom observations revealed that the actual usability of these materials was often low. Materials were not always used which made reading activities un easy, inaccessible, and not engaging for pupils. During face-to-face interview, this is what RT1 had to say;

“When I use flashcards while teaching like for single words, I ask them to read the word written on the flash card, also I do the same with picture cards, for the real objects. I tell them to write the name of the objects they are seeing which help me to see whether they can write the clear spelling without seeing it anywhere and when I use the chalkboard to write the stories, I ask each learner to read for the class the words and sentences on the chalkboard; every day I select the one who did not read yesterday to see that they all understand, I also ask them to write a sentence on the chalkboard using the words that we have studied, someone times I tell them to read

from the story books since now they got lost like I told you, I now write on the chalkboard the story and they read.” (interview RT1)

Furthermore, she said;

“I also use magazines when it comes to reading sentences and also the newspapers, here the headteacher buys every day, then I ask them to read to class the story in the newspapers as I listen, it is easier to teach using these materials and it makes learning so easy. The pupils easily develop the reading skills and also confidence in using the materials like newspapers even at home, the materials aid memory. The learning materials like picture books always make the learners love to read words as a whole which improves their reading skills and encourage incidental learning. I always give them to touch the materials and also I ask them to write sentences about the materials they have touched using their own words which is also helpful.” (interview RT1)

However, from the classroom observation, it was observed by the researcher that the teacher had no flashcards, picture cards, magazines and newspapers, the class had charts which were pinned all over the walls surprisingly, they were not used by the teacher and pupils during the lesson, the teacher used the chalkboard without referring to the charts which were in class, the alphabetical letters were pinned high close to the ceiling making it hard for both the teacher and the pupils to use during the literacy 1 lesson, this made them appear like class decoration instead of reading instruction materials, the teacher also had different types of energy giving food but she did not allow pupils to use them during instruction but instead they were placed on the table behind class.



Figure 4.9: The reading instruction materials station on the teacher's table without being used.

The findings from the above responses and observations suggest that the usability of reading instruction materials in the classroom was hindered by a gap between teachers' stated practices and their actual classroom implementation.

This implied that, while the teacher may recognize the pedagogical value of reading materials, their practical use remains limited, which may restrict pupils' opportunities to engage meaningfully during the lesson to attain the foundational reading skills.

The study findings revealed that the teacher did not know how to use the available learning materials while teaching to develop pupils reading skills which limits pupils from active engagement during the literacy lesson which they were not able to develop the reading skills.

QT2 responded by saying,

“I use pictures for single words and pupils say the words written on the pictures displayed. When I am teaching sentences still I can make small books but with pictures still because these ones they learn by seeing for the extended texts I put them

in groups, after putting them in groups, I make sure in those groups there are some who will be lead and who can read better then I use the man made books of course with pictures with short sentences which suit theses young stories about four to three sentences yeah. So, they read in groups and reading materials these pupils develop four skills they are following, we have the reading, the writing, the listening and the speaking. So, they help us to develop those four skills using reading materials with whole words that fit their age.” (interview QT2)

She added and said,

“I use the chalkboard to draw a tree of syllables that I need my children to use, then I ask them to write the words from the syllables that they are seeing, the tree I mean writing a syllable like -ba- then after you write down other syllables like -ck, -ll, -d, -g, and you tell them to come up with words then from that they make words like back, ball, bad, bag, like that and this helps them to read very well. I even ask them to write the words on the chalkboard following the tree and if the word is correct then the whole class clap and we continue like that.” (interview QT2)

It was observed by the researcher that the teacher used the chalkboard very well, she allowed the pupils to write the sounds, read sentences and words that they learnt. The researcher observed the teacher distributing flashcards with the help of class monitors to the pupils in class. However, the flashcards were not used by the teacher and the pupils until the lesson ended and she asked the monitors to collect the flashcards from class, no book was given to pupils to read and neither did they use the materials pinned in class to support reading.

This implies that while some instructional materials like the chalkboard were effectively used to engage pupils in active learning, the overall usability of other available reading materials such as flashcards, books, and wall displays were low due to poor integration into the lesson. This suggests that the teacher may need more support or training on how to incorporate available materials consistently and purposefully to support pupils' reading development.

QT3 was also quoted saying;

“I write random words on the flashcards for the pupils to read, I make sure that every pupil in my class owns one, I ask them to read as some try to write then I remove the flashcards and I start asking them to spell the words to see ‘oba babitegedde’, here I just choose who I want to read and sometimes I make a sentence using those flashcards to make sure these pupils read only words they are used to, sometimes sentences ‘ffe tukola’ charts, era you tell them to read those sentences on charts to see whether a pupil can read ‘nga omanya nti kati ono alina’ skill ‘asobola okusoma naye bwomugamba’ read this sentence ‘oba’ number five ‘oba’ sentence ‘yonna kale noolaba nti tasobodde’ then you help, and these charts have many words that we use every day that is why I use them when teaching reading.” (interview QT3)

In addition to that, when the researcher probed for more about how QT3 engage pupils with materials while teaching syllables this is what she said;

“When I am teaching syllables, I write on the chalkboard the word and then start breaking it into syllables, some words are easy but others hard to syllabize, you can find a word with just one syllable like the word eye then when you ask the child to tell the syllables they say three and it’s hard to explain, for me what I do is writing for them syllables, then I ask them to write a word that it forms here on the chalkboard. I sometimes write the syllables on pieces of papers first and then I tell them to join and make the word which makes it easy for them to read and it aids memory.” (interview QT3)

Furthermore, during the lesson observation, the researcher observed that the QT3 over relied on chalkboard while teaching reading where pupils were observed writing words on the chalkboard, and other pupils were given a chance to write the sentences on the chalkboard, she also engaged pupils with the real materials that she had made and these included balls

and flashcards although some were not used during the lesson like letters of the alphabet, sounds, yet they were of great importance in literacy development.

From the documents that QT3 presented, it was realized that there was no clear alignment with what QT3 was teaching, on page 20 of the teacher's guide that she gave to the researcher, the procedures for teaching syllables using different instructional materials in a way that engage pupils directly was very clear but what she was doing was literary different, she had no lesson plan and the scheme of work she had only had wall chats as the instructional material which were not used at any point.

RT4 had this to say;

“I write on the chalkboard and also ask pupils to write what I have been teaching in their exercise books, when I am teaching words and sounds, I write the sound on the chalkboard then I ask children to tell the sound that I have written, sometimes the pupils also write on the chalkboard the words formed from the sounds and that is how they learn.” (interview RT4)

In addition, from lesson observation, RT4 was observed asking the children to say the sound she had written on the chalkboard and they did it as a whole class, some pupils were seen writing in their exercise books what the teacher had taught. No other materials were used by the teacher, the class had different reading materials including sounds pinned in class, but none of them were used by the teacher to engage pupils and her class had no engaging materials to support active learning and this was observed in all her lessons.

This implied that the teacher lacks knowledge on how to engage pupils with the available instructional materials like the charts, sounds and letters of the alphabet that were available in class in order to develop pupils' reading skills through active participation.

4.4 Reading instruction assessment methods teachers use to assess learners' reading skills in lower primary

Introduction

Findings in this section are responses to the third research question - How do teachers assess learners' reading skills in lower primary using different assessment methods? The research question aimed at examining the reading assessment methods teachers use to develop learners' reading skills in lower primary during the literacy hour. The emphasis was put on continuous assessments which included reading aloud, formative assessment (questioning and oral testing) and also marking and giving feedback to pupils. Data was collected through face-to-face interviews, classroom observation and documentary analysis.

4.4.1 Continuous assessment method

In developing pupils reading skills, the findings from this subsection show that literacy one teachers use continuous assessments to develop pupils reading skills, this was done through reading aloud which was done in the "I do, we do, you do" style. The second was formative assessment where teachers asked questions during the teaching and learning process to check pupils understanding and success of the lesson, the last one was on marking and giving feedback in poorly performed areas during instruction. Primary one and two literacy 1 teachers emphasized that this helps the pupils to develop reading skills like comprehension, word recognition and fluency.

4.4.1.1 Reading aloud to assess and develop pupils' reading skills.

Findings under this subsection indicate that teachers use read aloud to develop pupils reading skills, they emphasized that it helps pupils to be fluent, articulate words clearly, it gives pupils confidence, they learn how to pronounce the words properly and they understand the art of reading new words. The following were their responses when they were asked why they read aloud.

RT1 was quoted saying

“I first read aloud to give pupils clear pronunciation and it aids memory, reading aloud help me to emphasizes on what I am reading because I want everyone to understand what I am reading and it corrects mistakes on the spot when pupils make them while repeating to read after me and then it helps learners to be fluent when they are able to read alone while others are hearing.” (interview RT1)

QT2 also added that,

“It helps to build confidence in the learners, when you read aloud to the children it helps them in proper articulation of words, it corrects remedies like poor pronunciation to correct pronunciation, reading aloud builds confidence in the learners because when you read together with others by the time they come to you alone at least you have woken up and mastered how they pronounce words correctly, they learn from each other words that they may not be aware of through reading aloud together.” (interview QT2)

On the same note, QT3 responded that,

“Reading aloud helps pupils to understand how the word is read, you can start with the sounds that make up the word and then later you read the entire word that helps pupils to know what to do first as we are reading words like c- a -t = cat, then they will also repeat the same process like me and at the end they are getting the reading skills. Reading aloud helps pupils to read as a group since some pupils cannot read alone but when you tell them to read together, they follow others and learn from them how to pronounce the words and they gain more confidence in reading.” (interview QT3)

RT4 was not any different from other teachers and this is what she said,

“When I read aloud, they grasp my pronunciation, it helps me track their attention span when I am reading aloud I get their attention because they all be attentive then at

the end of it they grasp what I am teaching, when they read in person, I can be able to get their pronunciations, and I am able to follow the fluency together with pronunciation. They also learn from one another because from there, somebody can discover that this one has read wrongly, teacher you did not hear this one has pronounced badly, so they are able to correct themselves and they learn better. It is important first of all they gain the self-expression skill, there is self-confidence and I am sure that they have grasped how to read.” (interview RT4)

From classroom observation, the researcher observed that all teachers first read aloud to pupils, then later they read together with the teacher, and after that the teachers asks them to read without them, it was also observed that QT2 and QT3 went ahead and asked individual pupils to standup and read sounds to the entire class, one asked the pupil to read the entire sentence to class and it was done clearly, this was observed;

QT2: We are going to read sound /c/, which sound?

Entire class: sound /c/

QT2: All of you keep quiet, Seki (pseudonym) can you stand and say the sound the sound you are seeing?

Seki: Sound /c/

QT2: Can you all say the sound?

Entire class: Sound /c/

QT2: Wrote on the chalkboard ‘she has a car’ and then she asked sentences.

Entire class: She has a car.

QT2: Which word has sound /c/ girls?

Girls: Car

This implied that reading aloud is very important assessment measure that teachers employ to develop pupils reading skills since it involves active participation of the teacher and pupils. It

also gives the teacher a chance to do immediate assessment of pupils' articulation of words and progress.

4.4.1.2 Formative assessment

The study found out that teachers use formative assessment to develop pupils reading skills through asking questions during teaching and learning process to check for understanding, to know whether the lesson was successful or not, to assess their ability to recognize and read words fluently, the teachers also task pupils to say sounds of different letters of the alphabet and their actions in order to assess their phonemic awareness, and this is what they assess;

RT1 said that;

“I always pause questions before going to the next step of the lesson to see whether these pupils are understanding what I am teaching, I can ask them to read the sentences on the chalkboard, sometimes I pick randomly without asking them to put up hand but I be like, you, read for me that word, then I see how they read, somedays I ask oral questions like who can spell the word posho or cassava? Then they spell it and it helps them to remember those spellings.” (interview RT1)

QT2 said,

“Whenever I am teaching sounds I ask my children to tell the sounds, then I ask them to show the actions for each sound, I choose a group and ask them which sound is this? Then they respond and I ask the other group to show us the action, it helps them pay attention, it also aids memory and I also understand that they are now learning, sometimes I ask girls alone and then boys alone, I also ask them to write words like words of sound /a/, then they come and write. If I see only one child coming all the time then I choose for myself, because some know answers but they fear to put up hands, by writing, they learn the spelling. If there is time then I choose one or two pupils to read the written sentence to see whether they can read well.” (interview QT2)

In addition, from classroom observation, the researcher observed that RT1 and QT2 use oral questions to assess pupils' reading skills. RT1 asked the boys to read the sentences about energy giving foods, she also asked girls to read the words she had written on the chalkboard. QT2 was also observed asking pupils to mention words of sound /a/ and the pupils were able to mention them as the teacher was writing, she also asked pupils to read the words that were written on the chalkboard, the pupils were also observed by the researcher making actions of different sounds, the pupils were also asked to read the sentences that the teacher had written as a whole class as the teacher was listening.



Figure 4.10: A child reading words with sound /a/

The above findings implied that RT1 and QT2 use formative assessment to develop pupils' 69 reading skills which implies that formative assessment is crucial in developing pupils' reading skills in lower primary classes since it involves active participation of pupils. The teachers are able to assess pupils' word recognition and fluency as they ask them to read sentences which they also use it to assess the pupils' phonemic awareness by asking them to say sounds

and show actions of different letters of the alphabet, which is key in developing foundational reading skills.

The study finding revealed that, formative assessment is key in developing pupils reading skills.

4.4.1.3 Marking and giving feedback to pupils

This style of assessment was to be recognized through observing pupils read individually with the teacher commenting, correcting or assessing pupils' activities.

According to the researcher's study findings, literacy teachers were not able to follow up on pupils reading skills individually, the exercises which were given were not marked and immediate constructive feedback was not given to pupils during instruction. The study findings revealed that primary one and two literacy teachers do not record the pupils reading progress and none of the teachers had records about their pupils' progress even for the previous lessons, following the documentary analysis, none of the teachers' documents showed area for marking or giving feedback. During classroom observation, it was observed by the researcher that none of the teachers marked any of the pupils' books during the literacy lesson or even gave correction to pupils on misspelled words and poor articulation of words although some gave exercises. And when the researcher asked the teachers at what point they mark and give feedback to pupils, this is what they said,

RT1 was quoted saying

“I try to mark sometimes but these children are very many, some lose their books and they write everything in that one book, when you tell them to collect the books for marking, they do not hand in because they have to use them for other subjects, even some days I can be with very many lessons like English so marking becomes hard”
(interview RT1)

When the researcher continued and asked how she understands that the pupils have understood what she has taught, she responded by saying, “I always ask them whether they have understood and they say yes, some I see their book as I am teaching and I can easily see whether they are writing wrong things or not, sometimes I ask those who know the answers to put up their hand and a big number put up hands.”

However, it was also observed by the researcher that RT1 did not give any exercise to pupils during her lesson delivery, neither did she make corrections to the mistakes that pupils made while reading aloud but rather, she asked group questions and chorus answers over dominated her lesson presentation.

The above responses and observations implied that RT1 does not assess pupils individual progress since she does not give exercises, she does not follow up on pupils to see whether they get the reading skills which may affect pupils’ attainment of the skills at the earliest age.

On the same note, QT2 said

“I give just one question and they answer it in class as I am going through I see their answers, I do not mark books for sure.”

When the researcher asked her why she gives one question she said that, “marking many books is hard and I teach alone because my friend is sick, I help her with her lessons, even marking takes a lot of my time” and the researcher continued and asked her how she gets to know that the pupils have mastered the reading skills she added and said that, “we give them midterm exams and from those exams I can tell who understands and who does not, even during class you can easily see those who understand by the way they give answers.”(interview QT2)

In addition, from classroom observation, QT2 did not give any exercise to pupils in all the lessons that were observed, she did not appraise those that gave correct answers, also during her lesson none of the children was corrected for the mistakes made in reading, it was

observed that pupils were not given a chance to correct their mistakes even when their fellows raised their hands to give write the correct words, she declined by asking them to write a new word different from that which was wrongly written.

QT3 was slightly different from the RT1 and QT2 this was her response;

“I mark all the books on Friday and Saturday, marking during class is so hard these children disturb and they take long to finish the exercise yet we have just one hour to finish everything, but I tell them to finish the work then I take the books at home on Friday and mark, on Monday I bring back the book when they are all marked, sometimes give them homework on what we have studied and they do it well.”(interview QT3)

When QT3 was asked on how she gives feedback to pupils after marking this was her response,

“I make sure that I put for them do correction for those who failed, then I see whether I repeat to teach that sound if I see many pupils have failed, on some days, I call those pupils separately and teach them after lunch when others are playing for others I ask their parents to put them on coaching because ‘abamu babisi nnyo’ meaning some are lagging behind and I have to give them extra time.”(Interview QT3)

From classroom observation, the researcher observed that QT3 gave the pupils exercises in all her lessons, however she did not mark any of them and what was more surprising is that she asked the pupils to write on papers, and she collected none for marking.

Additionally, from classroom observation, the teacher asked the pupils to clap for those that said correct answers about the oral questions that she gave about sounds however, for those that failed, she did not take an initiative to correct their mistakes.

From classroom observation and documentary analysis, it was observed that RT4 did not give any exercise to pupils, neither did she follow up on what they were writing during lesson presentation, it was also evident that she had planned to teach for only thirty minutes according to her lesson plan.

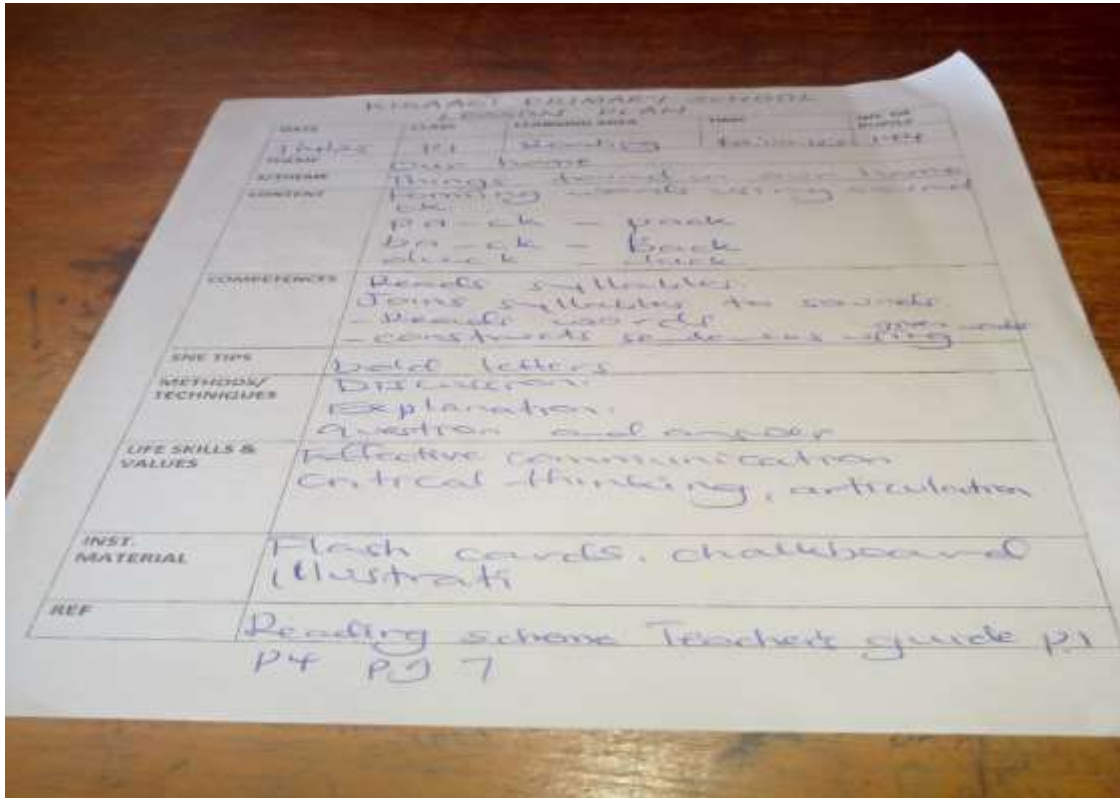


Figure 4:12: The teacher’s lesson plan with no option for marking and giving feedback.

The fact that RT4 did not plan to give any exercise to pupils, and her reading lessons were strictly thirty minutes, it implied that RT4 need more guidance on how to make a clear lesson plan that caters for all aspects of instruction including assessment, it also implied that most of the pupils if not all may not get the required reading skills since the teacher doesn’t have clear assessment plan for achieved competences.

Furthermore, the findings on the reading assessment methods revealed that, there was little evidence of continuous assessment of all the lessons observed more especially at a point of marking and giving feedback to pupils. Although teachers were observed listening to pupils

as they were reading, the nature of feedback was restricted and no teacher was observed recording the individual pupil's progress.

Generally, during classroom observations, it was observed by the researcher that feedback was limited. Most corrections amounted to yes or no, wrong or right and in the case of a correct reading, the learners could not be rewarded appropriately by the teachers. There was an over-reliance on teacher's directives for example telling learners not to correct words said by written by friends, when learners got stuck on a word when reading and teachers could not offer any self-correction strategies a few students were allowed to make sentences and no clear feedback was given on wrong pronunciations and spelling, reading as the whole group or class dominated the lessons, with little opportunity for learners to read individually or on their own and no reading book was given to pupils to read independently or in pairs.

In summary, continuous assessment was the only assessment method prioritized by literacy one teachers during reading instruction. Assessment is part and parcel of the teaching and learning process in the thematic curriculum. It is essential that all competences, whether oral, written or practical, are assessed. Assessment is intended to find out whether the child is genuinely learning and what action is needed to support the child. It is does not make sense to give an assessment, and then you do not give learners support needed in areas that are performed poorly. And this should be done continuously which means that it can be given at the beginning of the lesson, during and after the lesson. Feedback should be given to the pupils with required support for improvement of pupils' performance in order to develop the foundational reading skills.

4.5 Conclusion

Findings in this study reveal a number of issues which show that primary one and two literacy teachers are doing their best to ensure that pupils develop reading skills. This was evident in most of the lessons observed, there was more reading aloud, an effort for using reading instruction materials during teaching and learning of literacy.

Despite of all these, the findings on the reading instruction approaches used to develop pupils reading skill, it was indicated that the most commonly used approach was phonics.

However much most of the teachers used the chalkboard and flashcards as reading instruction materials, other materials such as, charts, storybooks, songs, sound games that encourage collaborative learning, motivation and play based learning could have been used for developing reading skills among learners.

On the other hand, the findings on the reading instruction assessment methods revealed that, there was little evidence of continuous assessment of all the lessons observed. Although teachers were observed using read aloud for assessment, the nature of feedback was restricted and no teacher was observed recording the individual pupil's reading progress.

Generally, reading instruction tended to follow traditional ways of reading syllables, words, sentences as a process of teaching and learning. Reading as the whole group or class dominated the lessons, with little opportunity for pupils to read individually or on their own. Therefore, the reading skills depending on teachers' instruction, which meant that pupils were learning to remember how to reading rather than learning how to read on their own.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter is composed of the discussions of the results of the study, conclusions drawn from the study and recommendations suggested according to the findings of the study on reading instruction in lower primary classes in government primary schools in Kampala district.

5.1 Discussion

This section presents a detailed discussion of the key findings and were tailored to the three research objectives, relevant literature and Danielson's Framework for Teaching (1996). The three research objectives are: To explore the reading instruction approaches and practices teachers use to develop reading skills in lower primary. To assess the reading instruction resources teachers, use to develop reading skills for learners in lower primary. To examine reading assessment methods used by teachers to develop reading skills for learners in lower primary. The theory and relevant literature were used to discuss the findings of the study.

5.1.1 Reading instruction approaches and practices teachers use to develop reading skills in lower primary

The study found out that the teachers effectively use phonics approach while teaching reading to develop pupils' reading skills. The teachers were able to teach pupils sounds and their corresponding actions which helped pupils to decode words very well, they learnt how to articulate different words which is key in developing reading skills. This agreed with Piasta and Hudson (2022), who asserted that phonics instruction emphasizes the connection between spelling(print) and sound (speech) where by students are introduced to letters and the corresponding sounds that letters make and later, they learn how to blend sounds together, spelling patterns and how to decode unknown words. However, unlike their study which

focused on the entire primary section, this study focused on lower primary section specifically primary one and two showing its applicability and benefits.

Furthermore, the study found out that, some teachers had shallow content knowledge and pedagogical skills of teaching reading using syllabic method which hinders pupils from developing foundational reading skills since the teachers are not well conversant with the approach practically. This disagrees with Indriyani (2021) who is of view that the effectiveness and growing application of the syllabic method improved early reading skills across diverse educational contexts and this suggests that teachers need to be trained on how to apply syllabic approach during the literacy hour lesson to bridge this gap.

Additionally, the study found out that whole word approach was effectively applied by the teachers during the teaching and learning reading skills and pupils were able to demonstrate the acquired reading skills by writing and reading words correctly. The findings aligned with Sharma & Singh (2023) who reported improved word recognition and reading fluency among pupils after using the whole word approach. However, unlike their study which focused only on pupils with specific learning disabilities, this study was conducted in inclusive classes during the literacy hour and it was of great achievement.

5.1.2 Reading instruction resources teachers, use to develop reading skills for learners in lower primary

The study also found out that instructional materials play a central role in developing pupils reading skills where by pupils develop reading skills through active participation in the learning process. They learn collaborative skills and they stay motivated to learn because the instructional materials make the learning process very easy and interesting. The study findings align with the study that was conducted in Kenya on the role of instructional resources on reading skills which revealed improved reading skills among primary school learners with effective availability and utilization of instructional resources Ngunjiri; et al

(2019). However, unlike their study that focused on the entire primary school learners, this study's focus was on lower primary section focusing on primary one and two during the literacy hour and it provided vivid understanding.

The study found out that most of the teacher did not spare time to make reading materials and for a few that had them did not know how to use the available learning materials while teaching literacy 1. They lacked knowledge on how to engage pupils with the learning material which limited pupils from active participation and development of the reading skills. This was not any different from Connor & Morrison, (2019) who asserted that lack of proper, plenty and clear instructional resources in a classroom could result into serious reading problems. Furthermore, a study that was conducted by Taylor, (2019) in South Africa found that the average grade 3 learners scored 20% in English reading test due to teachers' ineffective utilization of the instructional materials.

Similarly, a study also found out that the all classes had wall charts which were well displayed with relevant information for teaching reading, but none of the teachers was observed using them, this limited the pupils' exposure to a number of words, sounds and sentences that would help them to develop reading skills. However, according to Danielson's Framework for Teaching (1996), teachers are encouraged to use classroom displays such as word walls, sentence strips, and learner-written texts, to engaged pupils with written language during instruction to develop their reading skills.

5.1.3 Reading assessment methods used by teachers to develop reading skills for learners in lower primary

The study found out that teachers used different assessment methods to assess reading pupils progress in order to improve their reading skills, assessment methods like continuous assessment and formative assessment were highly employed by teachers during reading instruction. Teachers used the "I do, we do, you do technic to assess learner's fluency, word

recognition and articulation of words which were key in developing their reading skills in all the lessons that were observed. This aligns with domain three of Danielson's Framework for Teaching (1996) which supports the use of continuous formative checks, such as oral reading tasks or spelling assessments, which allow teachers to identify and address specific reading gaps for effective literacy teaching.

Similarly, Brady (2020) agrees that, educators can use a variety of assessment methods and tools to gain information about specific foundational reading skills for example, phonological awareness and through on-going reading assessments, teachers may recognize students who require additional support and use an alternative approach to teaching reading to help the pupil develop the skills required and this should be done regularly.

Additionally, Lwanga and Kintu (2023) supported that, teachers who adapted instruction based on ongoing assessment such as switching from group to individual phonics support demonstrated higher pupil reading gains and this directly aligned with Danielson's notion of being responsive and flexible in instruction.

Furthermore, the study found out that teachers did not give construct feedback to pupils during the assessment process although they were observed listening to pupils as they were reading. The nature of feedback was restricted and no teacher was observed recording the individual pupil's progress. This misaligned with the study which was conducted in Kenya by Piper et al., (2020) which affirmed that the successful implementation of the Tusome Early Grade Reading Program used formative assessments to provide teachers with continuous feedback on students' reading abilities. The program, was applied across over 20,000 schools, involved regular monitoring of students' reading fluency and comprehension, resulting in significant improvements in literacy levels. However, depending on this study's findings, teachers did not play a central role in giving pupils feedback which affects their literacy development.

5.2 Conclusion

Basing on the research objectives and the key findings on reading instruction in lower primary classes in government primary schools in Kampala district. It was concluded that; Teachers used different reading instruction approaches to develop pupils' reading skills in primary one and two during the literacy hour. The approaches they used include phonics approach, whole word approach and syllabic approach. The study found out that teachers effectively apply the phonics approach and was more relevant in developing pupils reading skills compared to other approaches. From the study findings it was also evident that some teachers lack pedagogical skills of applying syllabic approach during instruction which hindered pupils from acquiring the reading skills. If teachers had the pedagogical skills, they would have helped pupils to develop reading skills. Therefore, effective use of reading instruction approaches help pupils in lower primary classes to develop reading skills as informed by Danielson's Framework for Teaching (1996).

The reading instruction materials that teachers used to develop reading skills included flashcards, real objects, letter cards. Most of the classes had reading materials which were pinned all over classes, but none of the teachers had the knowledge to use them to develop pupils reading skills, some teachers did not take any initiative to make their own reading instruction materials. If the teachers were able to use the available reading instruction material during the teaching and learning process, pupils would have developed the reading skills. Not only that, but if teachers had also taken an initiative to make more reading instruction materials, primary one and two would have had higher chances of developing the reading skills, because they encourage active participation, collaborative learning and they aid memory. Therefore, through applying Danielson's Framework for Teaching (1996), teachers should employ the use of reading instruction materials to develop pupils reading skills for better reading outcomes.

Lastly, the assessment methods that were used by teachers during reading instruction in the literacy hour to develop reading skills were those assessments that subscribe to continuous assessments like formative assessment. This helped the pupil and the teacher to identify areas of weakness and support for the pupils to be given. This continuous assessment should be used in each literacy hour lesson for effective assessment. This is because these assessments have values towards literacy development. Formative assessment helps the teacher to give immediate feedback and necessary support to the pupils during and after the lesson. Lastly, the teacher should also embrace summative assessment because it helps the teacher to grade pupils at the end of the theme or at end of the term, depending on their ability to show their level of understanding through assessment. Therefore, all continuous assessments are vital and if embraced by the literacy teachers, they would help support learners to develop reading skills.

Generally, the successful development of reading skills in lower primary classes was influenced by the teaching approaches, availability and use of instructional materials, and the assessment methods employed during the literacy hour. When teachers apply appropriate approaches such as phonics, effectively utilize instructional resources and integrate both formative and summative assessments, pupils in government aided primary schools are more likely to develop and strengthen their reading skills.

5.3 Recommendations

This section represents the recommendations as informed by the study findings for reading instruction in lower primary classes; a case of two government primary schools in Kampala district.

Reading instruction approaches to be applied successfully, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) should work closely with National Curriculum Development Centre, (NCDC) to train and re-tool teachers through continuous professional development (CPD) on reading

instruction approaches and how they are applied during the literacy hour lesson. If teachers are trained and re-tooled to the principles of their practice, then reading skills development among pupils will be achieved.

In regard to reading instruction resources, Literacy one teachers should consider making their own reading resources and as well use them effectively when teaching reading to engage pupils. This is because it allows a comprehensive understanding of how reading instruction materials help to develop pupils reading skills when they are available and well utilized in the teaching and learning environment.

Furthermore, teachers' continuous reflection on availability of reading instruction materials and usability of the reading instruction materials during literacy lesson will contribute to reading skill development during the literacy hour.

Reading instruction assessment methods to be effective, teachers in primary one and two should endeavor to photocopy Continuous Assessment Monitoring (CAM) forms which are required for recording continuous assessments since they have different components recommended for teachers to assess the Literacy hour lessons. This will enable teachers to record the daily observations or achievements of pupils in specific learning areas such as; reading texts with increasing fluency, identifying letters by name and sounds, read known syllables with fluency, and segments words into syllables.

5.4 Contribution to the Existing Bodies of Knowledge

The research study was intended to broaden the understanding and use of reading instruction approaches, reading instruction resources and reading instruction assessment methods that literacy teachers use to develop pupils reading skills during the literacy hour.

5.5 Area for Further Research

- i. Exploring the impact of continuous teacher professional development and the development of pupils' reading skills in lower primary classes.
- ii. The role of reading instructional material in the development of pupils' literacy skills.
- iii. Literacy teacher's perception towards continuous assessment.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Audio Recording Consent Form for a Teacher Teaching Reading in Lower Primary Class

STUDY TITLE: Reading instruction in lower primary classes. A case study of government primary schools.

Tape/audio recording.

During the interview, your voice will be recorded with a digital voice recorder for accuracy during transcription for coding and theme analysis. Your voice recordings will be stored on a password protected computer. Your voice recording will not be shared among anyone. All audio recordings will be destroyed after my research thesis has been marked.

Statement of consent to the audio taped.

I understand that audio recording will be taken during the study, I hereby consent for my voice to be recorded by the researcher.

Name of the participant (please print).....signature.....and date.....

Name of witness (please print)signature..... and date.....

Name of the researcher obtaining consent.....signature.....and date.....

Appendix A: Interview Guide for Literacy Teacher

Interview guide for the teacher of reading in lower primary school towards reading instruction in lower primary classes in Kampala district.

Date	
Division	
School	
Type of interview	
Place of discussion	
Moderator	
Note taker	
Recording system	
Time taken	

Research idea: Reading instruction in lower primary classes. A case study of government primary schools in Kampala district

Demographic information

No	Pseudo Name	Age	Sex	School	Position in school	Years of experience	Education level	Year in which you graduated	Institution

1. Reading instruction approaches.

- a) What do you understand when we talk about reading instruction approaches?
- b) Which method do you use while teaching letters or group of letters representing sounds.
- c) How do you teach syllables during your lesson?
- d) How do you teach single words during literacy class?
- e) When do you teach sentence and how?
- f) How do you teach extended texts during lesson?
- g) Which approach do you think is most important in developing the pupils' reading skills and why?

2. Reading instruction resources.

As teachers, we all know that teaching becomes easier and enjoyable when we have resources. Basing on that assumption;

- a) Which reading materials are available for you to use while teaching;
 - I. Letters or group of sounds.
 - II. Single words.
 - III. Sentences.
 - IV. Extended texts.
- b) Have you ever taken any initiative to make your own reading resources?
- c) How do you engage learners with the available reading resources while teaching?
- d) How do teaching materials help you in developing learners' reading skills?

3. Reading instruction assessment methods.

- a. Which reading assessment methods to use while teaching reading?
- b. Why do you think reading aloud to class is important in developing their reading skills?
- c. How does the idea of the whole class reading aloud together with teacher help to improve the learners' reading skills?
- d. Why do you think it's important for learners to after the teacher?
- e. What benefits do learners gain from reading aloud in pairs or groups?
- f. Do you think learners reading individually is important? Why?
- g. Why do you think asking questions to pupils while teaching is important?
- h. At what point do you mark and give feedback to pupils?

Appendix B: The observation guide with a teacher teaching reading in lower primary

Location.....

Class.....

Date.....

Teacher’s name.....

Start time.....

Stop time.....

Research Area

Instruction approaches, assessment methods and instruction resources teachers use to develop reading skills.

Lesson observation guide.

Area of observation	Yes	No	Comments
1. Teaching and learning approaches.			
•			
•			
• Letters or groups of letters representing sounds			
• Word broken into syllables			
• Single words			
• Sentences			
• Extended texts			
2. Reading instruction resources used while teaching:			
• Letters or group of letters representing			
• Word broken into syllables			
• Single words			
• Sentences			

• Extended texts			
3. Assessing learning			
• The teacher reads aloud to the class			
• The whole class reads aloud together with the teacher			
• The whole class reads after the teacher			
• Learners read aloud together in pairs or groups			
• Learners read individually to the class			
• Learners read individually silently (whispered)			
• Teacher asks questions and give feedback to pupils.			
4. Strong points	Areas of improvement		

Teacher's namesignaturedate

Researcher's namesignature.....date.....

Appendix C: Document analysis tool on the teacher teaching reading in lower primary classes.

Reading instruction in lower primary classes. A case study of two government primary school in Kampala district.

WRITTEN DOCUMENT ANALYSIS WORKSHEET.

Type of document

5 Syllabus

- a) Dates of document.....
- b) Reviewer’s name.....
- c) Author of the document (names and title)
- d) For what audience.....

Name	Key components	Strength	Gaps
1. Suggested instructional approaches for teaching; I. letters or group of letters representing sounds II. Word broken into syllables III. Single words IV. Sentences V. Extended texts			
2. Suggested instructional resources for teaching; I. Letters or group of letters representing sounds			

II. Word broken into syllables III. Single words IV. Sentences V. Extended texts			
3. Suggested assessment methods for assessing: I. Letters or group of letters representing sounds II. Words broken into syllables III. Single words IV. Sentences V. Extended texts			

Type of document

6 Teacher’s guide

- a. Dates of document.....
- b. Reviewer’s name.....
- c. Author of the document (names and title)
- d. For what audience.....

Name	Key components	Strength	Gaps
1. Suggested instructional approach for teaching: I. Letters or group of letters representing sounds II. Words broken			

<p>into syllables</p> <p>III. Single words</p> <p>IV. Sentences</p> <p>V. Extended texts</p>			
<p>2. Suggested instructional resources for teaching:</p> <p>I. Letters or group of letters representing sounds</p> <p>II. Words broken into syllables</p> <p>III. Single words</p> <p>IV. Sentences</p> <p>V. Extended texts</p>			
<p>3. Suggested assessment methods for assessing:</p> <p>I. Letters or group of letters representing sounds</p> <p>II. Words broken into syllables</p> <p>III. Single words</p> <p>IV. Sentences</p> <p>V. Extended texts</p>			

Type of document

7 Scheme of work

- a. Dates of document.....
- b. Reviewer’s name.....
- c. Author of the document (names and title)
- d. For what audience.....

Name	Key components	Strength	Gaps
1. Suggested instructional approaches for teaching: I. Letters or group of letters representing II. Words broken into syllables III. Single words IV. Sentences V. Extended texts			
2. Suggested instructional resources for teaching: I. Letters or group of letters representing sounds II. Words broken into syllables III. Single words IV. Sentences V. Extended texts			
3. Suggested assessment methods for			

assessing I. Letters or group of letters representing sounds II. Word broken into syllables III. Single words IV. Sentences V. Extended texts			
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Type of document

8 Lesson plan

- a. Dates of document.....
- b. Reviewer’s name.....
- c. Author of the document (names and title)
- d. For what audience.....

Name	Key components	Strength	Gaps
1. Suggested instructional approaches for teaching: I. Letters or group of letters representing sounds II. Word broken into syllables III. Single words IV. Sentences V. Extended texts			
2. Suggested instructional resources for			

<p>teaching:</p> <p>I. Letters or group of letters representing sounds</p> <p>II. Word broken into syllables</p> <p>III. Single words</p> <p>IV. Sentences</p> <p>V. Extended texts</p>			
<p>3. Suggested assessment methods for assessing:</p> <p>9 Letters or group of letters representing sounds</p> <p>10 Words broken into syllables</p> <p>11 Single words</p> <p>12 Sentences</p> <p>13 Extended texts</p>			

Appendix D: Introductory Letter



**COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND EXTERNAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DEAN'S OFFICE**

24th March, 2025

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: NAMUDDU PHOEBE (2022/HDO4/1583U)

Ms. Namuddu Phoebe is a Masters student in the School of Education, College of Education and External Studies, Makerere University, offering Master of Education in Curriculum Studies. She is proceeding to collect data for her dissertation titled: *"Reading Instruction in Lower Primary Classes: A case study of Two Government Primary Schools in Kampala District"*.

Any assistance rendered to her will be highly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

**Mulumba Bwanika Mathias, PhD
Associate Professor,
DEAN, SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

