STRATEGIES OF IMPROVING READING IN ENGLISH AMONGST LEARNERS WITH SPECIFIC LEARNING DIFFICULTIES IN REGULAR PRIMARY SCHOOLS, CENTRAL ZONE, MUMIAS DISTRICT, KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION

I NAMUTIRU RUTH ADHIAMBO do declare that, this research will be entirely my own original work except where acknowledged and that it has not been submitted before to any other University or institution of higher learning for the award of a degree.
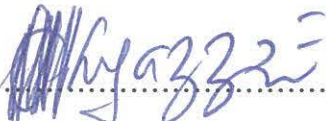
Signed .....Namutiru...........   Date ...12/10/09.......

APPROVAL

This research report will be submitted for the examination with my approval as the candidate's University Supervisor.

Name: <u>MR. KYAZZE EDWARD</u>   Date 13th/10/2009.

Signed: ...Kyazze...........

DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this special study paper to my beloved husband, David Christopher and my dear children Edward, Dennis, Evans and Alex for their tolerance, patience, understanding and encouragement they have given me for the two years of my study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

I sincerely wish to express my appreciation and in-debtness to all those who assisted me to come up with this research report.

In a special way, I wish to compliment Edward Kyazze of Kampala University for the tireless efforts he put in to make sure that I come up with this research paper.

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LIST OF SIMPLE DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

ABSTRACT

This research study was carried out properly to explore strategies of improving English amongst learners with specific learning difficulty (S.L.D) in regular primary schools, Central zone, Mumias District.

The researcher intended to find out the behaviour characteristics that can be shown by a learner with reading difficulty , teaching methods , teaching and learning activities , teaching and learning resources and finally support services that can be offered to those learners.
The research was intensively and comprehensively carried out using survey and quantitative approach. Questionnaires were used as tools of data collection. The data was analyzed and interpreted using tables , pie charts and bar graphs.

From the findings , it was realized that learners with SLD in reading can be identified by behaviour outlook . Also they perform poorly due to lack of varied teaching methods. A part from that, the mostly used teaching and learning activities was teacher centered. Most classes had no learning centers. Lastly learners did not get adequate support services.

Hence teachers of English can identify learners with reading difficulty by behaviour shown . Also, should vary teaching methods and make child centered teaching and learning activities. There is also need for learning centers and other learning resources to be made in use , peers, the community and teachers need to be enlightened on how they can offer support services to these learners.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will highlight the following background of the study , statement of the problem, purpose of the study , limitations delimitations of the study , scope of the study and operational definitions of terms.

1.1 THE BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY.

The disabled were perceived as lesser human beings as long as before 17th century . Hence they were not accepted and regarded as part and parcel of the family and community . The disabled may include the physically handicapped , learning , disabilities , hearing impaired among others (Randiki 2002)

Learning disabilities was renamed by Educationalist. It was used as minimal brain dysfunction by medical physicians. It described learners with learning difficulties in one or more processes such as speech , behaviour , reading (dyslexia) (Kilei, 2002) . Mellard, Destiler and Barth (2004) noted often deficits occurred particulars academic areas and could not be explained by other factors.

Specific learning difficulties (SLD) in reading (dyslexia) under the umbrella of learning disabilities historically were manifested by a discrepancy between achievement and intelligence. Traditionally, a requirement in the diagnosis of learning disabilities was by the I.Q discrepancy formula. This discrepancy was measured by the difference in intelligence and the child's actual ability to be eligible for special education services for a learning disability . This created significant controversy such as over identification from monitory groups (Coffey and Obringer, 2000)

Difficulties with basic print reading and reading comprehensive are the most common problems associated with learning disabilities (Gersten, Fuchs, Williamds and Baker , 2001) . This is because of strong connection between spoken and written language . Reading problems always can be traced to early delays in expressive language development (Catts, Fey,Zhany and Tomblin , 1999; Cats and Kmhi 2005; Scarborough , 2001) Mwaura and Klanyera (2002) explain SLD can be caused by any of the four categories . These are educational factors where can be too low or high expectations of the child.

Environmental factors under which nutrition, health and safety , sensory stimulation and emotional and social development fall, psychological factors whereby a learners may have a problem in basic psychological factors such as understanding directions . Lastly psychological factors thus specific difficulties in learning can be caused by genetic or acquired trauma. In acquired trauma, brain injury can result to disturbances in perception , thinking among others.

Inclusion is the current goal of the global education reform for the provision of education to children with varying abilities and circumstances . This is as recommended by national international educational policies. World Conference on education for All (EFA) 1990 , indicated a need to look at general education reform and to address issues of access and equality for all children (Randiki , 2002)

Just as Uganda is practicing inclusion despite the large population , Kenya is embracing universal Primary Education and EFA by the year 2005 and 2015 respectively.(Ngugi, 2002) Free Education was introduced in January 2003. Increase in number of children going to school contributed to enlarged number of dyslexic learners. Most of them go unnoticed and unattended to.

Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) EFA project supported by Education International held at Tea Hotel in Kericho in August 2003, aimed at promoting EFA goals . Difficult questions had been asked by Education programme . They include sustainability , quality of education and the capacity of the Ministry of Education . There have been workshops going on at zonal levels " They key resource teacher" in various subjects for quality education.
In classes , identification of dyslexic learners should emphasis on failure rather than discrepancy approach (Vaugn and Fuchs , 2002) Kathenta and Mwereria (2002) noted that a dyslexic learners is supposed to face a multi – disciplinary team for assessment . the team needs to b sensitive both Education and effective aspects of Vicious circle of dyclexia.
Still , many children who receive Special Education Services are able to close the achievement gap and read print on the same level as their peers. With the used of specialized techniques , these learners can learn to generalize specific skills and strategies to a variety of reading situations.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.

The challenge of learning English and having a learning disability adds another level; of complexity to learning to read and demonstrating reading achievement.(Muller and Markowtz, 2004, Spear – Swerling , 2004)

The learners with dyslexia over-study in classes in name of repeating due to maintenance of a mark of promotion . It has been found to promote a poor self concept , diminished self esteem, emotional difficulties and lack of motivation , In fact , some learners drop out of school due to loss of hope which leads them to believe that their situation cannot be improved . Some end up being child labourers. In addition , being left by one's classmate may make the child feel embarrassed and pushed a child to state of learned helplessness.(Waithakas, 2005:6)

Ogonda (2002) noted that many learners with SLD in reading do not read fluently, but read in a choppy way. This problem may be due to their lack of work attack skills . The choppy reading reduces their reading speed and may interfere with their ability to derive meaning from a texts.

Apart from those learners with reading difficulties under SLD tend to have major difficulties in visual discrimination , sound blending , word analysis skill and sight words (Mwaura and Wanyera, 2002). Hence teachers without knowledge in Special Needs Education may find it difficult to handle the dyslexic learners which may lead to classifying /labeling for example non-performers, teach a class where a good number of learners fail to meet expectations, learners may have adoptive behaviour among other.

It is because of the problems highlighting that the researcher decided to examine strategies of improving reading in English amongst learners with SLD in regular primary schools (lower primary) Central zone , Mumias District.

.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY.

It was to explore strategies of improving reading in English and amongst learners with SLD (std 1-3) In regular primary schools, central zone Mumias District. Hence letters to make meaning as well as words and sentence , thus success in literacy and academic work in general

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The study intended to address the following objectives;

- To identify the behaviour shown during reading difficulty amongst learners of lower primary (1-3) in regular primary schools, central zone , Mumias District.

- To determine the teaching methods use by teachers teaching reading to learners in lower classes (Std 1-3) in regular primary schools, Central zone Mumias District.

- To identify teaching and learning activities used by teachers teaching , reading to learner in lower primary (Std 1-3) in regular primary schools Central Zone , Mumias District.

- To find out the learning resource available in lower classes (std 1-3) in regular primary school, Central Zone , Mumias District.

- More over identity the support services provided to children with SLD in reading amongst learners in lower classes in regular primary school zone , Mumias District.

.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The researcher intended to address the following questions:-

How do learners with SLD in reading behave when asked to read aloud in class 1-3 , Central Zone, Mumias District?

What teaching methods do teachers of English use in lower primary (1-3) classes Central Zone, Mumias District?

What are the teaching and learning activities for learners in lower Primary 1-3 in relation to SLD in reading in regular primary schools, Central Zone Mumias District?

What are the learning resources or learners with SLD in class 1-3 Central Zone Mumias District?
What are the support services available for children with SLD in reading standard 1-3 Central Zone Mumias District?

6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The result of the study will be used to help other educationalist find better ways to assist learners with SLD in reading . This will see then in their comprehension much, as the hindrance leading to reading difficulty will have identified.

The findings will benefit the learners with SLD in reaching develop basic literacy and numeracy skills. They are essential tools for learning, communication, identify among others

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Also the society will find a way of changing. Negative attitude can be expressed inform of abuse, neglect , naming.

Apart from those , the finding will give a hand to other researchers in doing more research towards reading difficulties.

In addition, the finding will pave way for the Ministry in recommending needs of learners with SLDs.

On other hand, the results will benefit parents. This is more so to parents whose children do not satisfactorily read.

The findings will benefit the government in seeing need to train more teachers of Special Needs in Education through in-service, workshops and pre—service so as to cater for learners with SLDs in reading . Parallel to that, the study will help the government in achieving the Education for all (EFA) Policy by 2012

1.7 LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.

1.7.1 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY.

During research , the researcher faced some conditions that were unfavourable to the study . To start with, all the activities undertaken required finance. They included transport , stationery among others. So it was expensive for her.

The researcher also encountered time problem . This was done to the length of study which was short . As much as the researcher was carrying out research , she was carrying out professional duties

Also time forced the researcher sampled out few schooled from Central Zone which led to a generalized finding . Weather was another factor . Most roads in Central Zone are not all weather roads, therefore , during rainy time the researcher found it difficult reaching some schools as they were impassable and no readily means of transport.

Also in the questionnaires, some respondents did not answer other questions hence not getting the real outcome.

Finally, unfamiliarity with the data collection procedures made the researcher not comfortable with modes of compiling the finding researched upon.

.2. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

However there were a number of factors which favoured the research during the study. Knowledge of the language of instruction in the area was such an advantage as the researcher freely communicated with the community during data collection.

In addition books, newspapers, magazines the researcher had collected availability of internet services at Mumias town were helpful sourcing information required for the study.
Also , coming from the area of study , the researcher was familiar with geographical terrain of the area and some respondents

The researcher also gained an advantage of having mate on the same staff as they were consulting each other.

THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study was carried out in St. Peters Boys Primary School , Central Zone Mumias Division , Mumias District Western Province.

It is limited with learners with Specific Learning Difficulties

9 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. **Assessment** – An opinion or judgment about somebody that has been though about very carefully.

2. **Community** - People who live in particular area

3. **Data** - Facts/Information used to find out solutions to the study

4. **Discrepancy** - A different between two or more things that should be the same.

5. **Dyslexia** – Severe reading difficulty in which one finds difficulties with languages skills.

6. **Educationalist** - A specialist in theories and methods of teaching

7. **Expressive language** - A way of passing information by showing or able to show feeling and thoughts.

8. **Global** - Covering or affecting the whole world.

9. **I.Q (Intelligence Quotient) Discrepancy formula.** - A test to measure how well a person is able to understand and think in a logical way about things.

10. **Inclusion** - Recognizing individual differences thereby enabling those individuals obtain a good quality of life in their natural environment.

11. **Intelligence** - Being able to think, learn and understand quickly and well

12. **Intervention** – To become involved in a situation in order to improve it or help

13. **Learning Disability** - Generic term that refers to a hetero-genius group of disorder manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition of and use of listening, speaking, reading writing reasoning or Mathematics ability.

14. **Multi Disciplinary** - A group of people involving several different subjects of study. Such as professionals from different fields such as teachers, social workers, doctors.

15. **Specific Learning Difficulties** – Describes the conditions that affects the learners ability to acquire specific skills in academic areas basic reading, reading comprehension, writing, spelling, spoken language, mathematics both calculation and reasoning.

16. **Reading** - The particular way in which you understand a book/print comprehension.

17. **Remedial Instruction** - Process of diagnosing and solving specific reading problem or strengthening weak areas of reading.

18. **Reading difficulty** – Problem that involves ability to decode and comprehend print.

19. **Resource** - material used to help achieve an aim or facilitate both teaching and learning.

CHAPTER TWO

RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

According to the Learning Disabilities Association of America, 'Specific Learning Disabilities' (SLDs) are chronic conditions of presumed neurological origin which selectively interfered with the development, integration and/or demonstration of verbal and/or non verbal abilities. (It exists) as a distinct handicapping condition and varies in its manifestation and in degree of severity'.

Learning disability is an umbrella term that refers to the various groups of disorders marked by significant difficulties in the acquisition or use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or Mathematical skills (National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities, 1998)

While Ogonda (2002) describes SLD as the problem that effects the learners in only one or two of the aspects of the curriculum.
Specific skills in academic areas include basic reading, reading comprehension, writing, spelling Mathematics and spoken language.

BEHAVIOUR CHARACTERISTICS SHOWN DURING READING DIFFICULTY

Learners with SLD often face unique barriers that hinder the process of learning to read. Yet with targeted intervention and accommodation in reading instruction and assessment, these learners can gain proficiency in reading and achieve academically to their full potential. Understanding behaviour characteristics of learners which have SLDs in reading is an important step towards the development of effective instruction, and appropriate assessment.

Ogonda (2002) noted that a earner facing a problem in reading can be identifies by failure to recognize familiar words, hesitate /laboured or slow choppy reading, especially when reading aloud. They also can miss out of line or reading the same line twice or inability to blend letter together and sound them among others.

Still, Ogonda (2002) explains indicators of difficulty to read can be accompanied by possible behaviour characteristics. They may include pretending to yawn or may develop a tickly cough, frowning or fidgeting, refusing to read, crying or attempting to distract, use high pitched voice, monotone or lip biting /mounting with no sound coming out when attempting to read. These avoidance tactics disappear as the learner becomes confident in reading.

2.1 TEACHING METHODS

Respect for individual differences means we are committee to providing education to all learners including those with special needs.

(Republic of Kenya , 2007) many learners become fluent readers of print through systematic and explicit instruction . Yet , the question of which practices are best for learners and have research – based evidence remains the subject of considerable controversy.

.2 THE PHONIC METHOD

Gerstein et al (2001) reviewed a research on reading comprehension for learners with SLDs, found direct instruction of comprehension strategies has been a perennially effective approach in improving learners' ability to decode and comprehend print. Refusing to read, crying or attempting to distract . the learner may also use high pitched voice , monotone or lip biting/mouthing with no sound coming out when attempting to read

These avoidance tactics disappear as the learner becomes confident in reading.

.3 THE SIGHT (WHOLE) METHOD

It is also called look and say method. Here the childs exposed to whole words or whole phrases. The idea behind such exposure is that repeated visual exposure helps the learner recognize, memorize and read the words , eventually , build a sign vocabulary of commonly used words.

The learner recognize words in their totality as whole visual units. It does cater for individual differences especially SLD s with severe reading difficulty. Hence the need for combination with other methods (OGANDA 2002).

.4 LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE MODEL (THE WHOLE SENTENCE METHOD)

The learner is exposed to the whole sentence then encouraged to use text to guess the meaning . The learners may find it difficult if he/she encounters unfamiliar words.

To help the SLDs best the teacher can write a story as told by the learners. Let the teacher write word by word after he/she has pt the title of interest after writing, the teacher should read out pointing using a pointer by words using a pointer. Then, let the learner have the story for practice. Follow up later to check reading mistakes. If the learners read without mistakes, introduce a new story following the same procedure . Make a book let the learner design an illustrate the cover (Ogonda 2002)

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.2.5 REMEDIAL APPROACHES TO READING

As the saying goes " if you can't beat them, join them ", similarly to learners who can not learn to read the way we teach. We should teach them the way they learn . Remedial approached typically labour intensive and involve direct instruction in the area of phonemic awareness, word recognition and comprehensive strategies of reading to cater for individual differences.

Through workshops, in-service courses, seminars and symposium, the MOEST can create awareness on who SLDs are and alternative methods of handling SLD learners in reading for example developing instructional Educational Programme(I.E.P)

Other researchers are encouraged to discover the teaching method that will help SLD in reading gain proficiency as fast as possible

Teachers to prepare and plan teaching /learning activities that are more of child centered

The inspectorate department of the Ministry of Education and other related department should ensure that there are sufficient teaching/learning resources in learning institutions and are used to the maximum by the teachers. Trained teacher in Special Needs Education create awareness campaigns to other stakeholders to understand support services learners with reading difficulty needs.

!.2.5.1 MULTI-SENSORY APPROACH.

All senses are made in use . The learner is made to see , say the word , write the word in the air, ground or book as he/she says it.

The learner may also model the word using clay or plastic in e or may even cut out the paper . The word can then be used in sentences, by repeating and being guided to construct (Ogonda 2002)

.2.6 OVER-REHEARSAL AND SPELLING TEST.

The teacher can list words and/or sentences on the blackboard or ud\se flashcards for learners to practice reading by – over – rehearsal.

Also, a spelling test can be given where the learners have to fill the blanks or given a dictation. It is necessary for correction to be done and emphasis on pronunciation of the word (Ogonda , 2002)

3 GAMES

There are many games that can promote reading . They may include fishing game, word puzzle , bingo game among others.

For bingo game activity , let the learners brainstorm materials found in the classroom , environment or even vocabulary learnt. The teacher should be listing as the learners give. Let pupils fill a table at random (choose a word from any number and fill in) when all is done, the teacher will read any given word from the list as the learner crosses the word incase it is in a box (Staley and storey, 2007).

.4.1 PRE-READING MATERIALS

Pre-reading materials skill books contain activities that will enhance a child's reading ability. Pre-reading skills may include picture word matching, picture observation colouring , arranging the shapes from left to right, object discrimination just named a few. In addition , alphabetical charts; as alphabetical aids are recommended for use in reinforcement of letters, words sounds and shape. Other real object pre –reading materials are also necessary such may include beads , strings , dolls objects in the class(Ngaroga 2002)

.4.2 TEXT BOOKS READERS , FLASH CARDS , NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

Flashcards play a big role in reading. A child is shown word/sentence to read. Hence fosters word recognition.
Relevant readers , textbooks , newspapers and magazines are also important , learner should be initiated from simple to complex . They boast word attack skills(Ngaroga, 2002)

l.3 GENERAL INFORMATION CHART /CURIOSITY CHART.

Pictures of class level are supposed to be cut from magazines , calendar , and newspaper among others and glued in one piece of paper. The pictures should be numbered . A question box below will contain questions on pictures displayed for example " what can you see in picture 4?" the question on pictures should be changed frequently (Ngaroga , 2002).

5 SUPPORT SERVICES

Learners with SLD in reading need to be taught survival skill, how to manage day to day literacy demands such as reading , note taking and organization of materials , presentation and study techniques.

Early provisions of support services can lead to the achievement of maximum outcome for learners. Support services should therefore meet the child's development in the area of difficulty (Kathenya and Mwereria , 2002)

5.1 EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT

The first step to identify the learners' difficulties and abilities . the service can be offered by the Educational Assessment and Resource Services (EARS) for learners ages 0-16 years , this is in order to offer support services at an early age. The team may comprise of trained assessment teachers and personnel from other Ministries such as health, culture and social services (Kantheenya and Mereria , 2002) . According to Republic of Kenya 2007), the Ministry of Education intends to implement development of national programme for assessment of learners with special needs.

Ngaroga (2002) noted one basic goal for education is all children acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills; therefore , it is important that learners with special Needs and Education (SNE) to acquire education like the peers get an opportunity to learn and acquire knowledge in reading. Republic of Kenya (2007) also noted a need to train teachers on new teaching approaches and develop adequate curriculum materials for all areas of special needs to meet special needs in inclusive classes

5.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

These learners with Educational difficulties need and assurance that they room, can equally perform well. This is where the psychologist or counselors came in handy (Republic of Kenya, 2002)

The Psychologists need to carry out interviews and observations of the learners in various settings for assessment purposes. They also need to counsel the child and parents on importance of education (Kethenya and Mwereria). Guidance and Counseling is important and psychological problem that could affect learning. Psychologists may include teachers, social workers , learners peer, community elder , religious and health workers.

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CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

0 INTRODUCTION

The researcher will discuss the following research approach. The research design, the target population , the sample population, the sampling procedure , the research instrument . The researcher will also discuss how tools were administered and data analyzed.

1 THE RESEARCH APPROACH

The researcher used quantitative approach to conduct the study . This was because quantitative method uses numeric data to explore traits and situations. The data was then analyzed using statistical methods to give meaning to the study.

In this method, the researcher collected information using a standardized tool- the questionnaire . The data was analyzed to arrive at valid and sound generalization that meets scientific rules of research

2 REASEARCH DESIGN

The researcher used the survey method whereby collection of data was done using questionnaire . This was because of large population and many respondents could be reached at a relatively short period and a low costs.

The standardized form from each individual would enable collection of information of relatively small amount of data for example how old someone is.

A part from that a group of people , enabled the researcher collected information on behaviour characteristics , teaching methods , teaching and learning activities , learning resources and support services amongst learners with SLD in reading (lower Primary) central zone , Mumias District . From sample population to determine the current status , it was used to make a more intelligence plan for improving the status or condition.

This was because survey method using questionnaire provided simple and straight forwards information for people to understand . A part from that, it allowed anonymity which encouraged frankness when sensitive areas were involved.

.3 TARGET POPULATION.

The population of interest was primary school teachers in regular primary schools, Central Zone, Mumias District . The zone had 23 public schools. The number of pupils was 93,823 whereby boys were 52,541 and girls 41,282.

Number of teachers was 1980 whereby 780 were male and 1200 were female.

3.4 THE SAMPLE POPULATION

From 23 schools in the central zone , the researcher sampled out six schools. The researcher mainly targeted to carry out the research. Since time was limited , the researcher felt that the sampled population would represent the entire zone.

3.5 THE SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The researcher use simple random sampling procedure to arrive at the sample population . After listing down all schools, she chose six schools at random.

From the six schools, the researcher chose three teachers in five schools, then 2 in the sixth school using simple random sampling procedure. The sampled teachers were given the questionnaires and time duration to be filled.

3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The researcher used the questionnaire as the research instrument. It comprised of a number of written questions basing on research objectives and research questions.

The questionnaire had 2 Part A and B. 'A' comprised of personal information of the sample teacher while section 'B' was core of the research.

The questionnaire worked effectively as it was sent to a distant respondents using postage . A part from that , respondents had the freedom to say what they didn't have to reveal their identities. In addition, many respondents were reached for the same duty at the same time.

.7 PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION

The researcher developed the questionnaires. Using the letter of authority from Kampala International University , the researcher introduced herself to the sampled schools.

In six schools, the researcher sampled out teachers' mainly lower primary teachers through random sampling , explained briefly then issued out the questionnaires

Twenty (20) questionnaires were sent leaving one for filing.

The receiving the questionnaires back, she calculated the return rate which was 100%

.8 PROCEDURE OF DATA ANALYSIS

The researcher used quantitative approach of data analysis. Under quantitative approach, the data was analyzed using simple statistics.

The findings of this study have been in two sections. The first section is on general information as the second section dealt with question basing on research objectives and research questions

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CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The findings of this study have been reported in one section. The section deals with questions on research objectives and research questions.

4.2 BEHAVIOUR CHARACTERISTICS

This study was meant to find out the behaviour shown during difficulty amongst learners of lower primary (Std 1-3) in regular Primary schools central some Mumias District.

The results of the responses are presented as follows concerning the questions on behavior character shown by learners when asked to read aloud. The following were responses:

Table 1 : Behaviour characteristics response of learners with SLD when asked to read aloud.

Category	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	20	100
No	0	00
Total	∑20	100

From table 1 , it was clear that majority of learners with SLD in reading showed behaviour characteristic when asked to read aloud. This was because most teachers (100%) responded by saying there is behaviour characteristics shown by learners with SLD when asked to read a loud .

3.1 TEACHING METHODS

This study had to determine the teaching methods used by teachers teaching reading to learners in lower classes (Std 1-3) in regular primary school central zone , Mumias District . The results of the responses gathered are presented as follows concerning the question on methods preferred by teachers when teaching reading in English to SLDs learners , the following were responses:-

Bar graph 1: Response on teaching methods
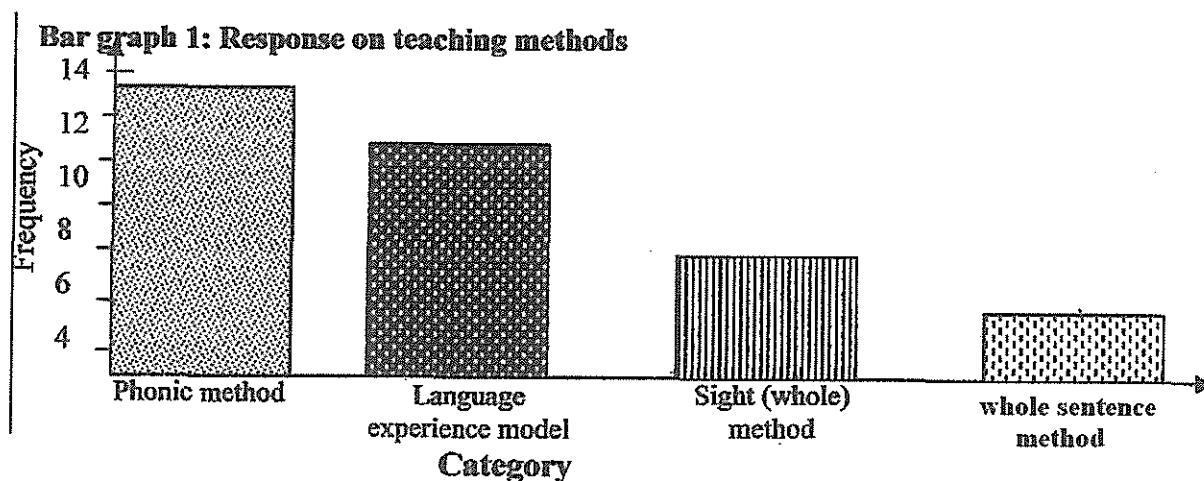
From bar graph 1 , it can be seen that the mostly used method was phonic method (52%) by teachers , followed by language experience model (24%) which was followed by sight (whole) method (16%) and at least (8%) which was key word method.

Table 2 Response of remedial to learners with SLD

Category	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	15	75
No	5	25
Total	$\sum 20$	100

It is clear from table 2 that a majority of learners with SLD in reading need remedial as most teachers (75%) respond by saying there is need for remedial as only a minority (25%) said learners with SLD in reading cannot improve with remedial

Table 3: Showing reflective method of teaching can ensure success to learners with SLD in reading

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Category	Frequency	Percentage %
Agree	13	65
Strongly	6	30
Undecided	1	5
Disagree	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0
Total	$\sum 20$	100

From table 3, it can be seen that a majority of teachers (65%) agree that reflective teaching ensured to learners with SLD . This was followed by 30% who strongly agree, while 5% was undecided . Both Disagree and strongly disagree had 0%
This shows that a majority of teachers (95%) supported reflective method of teaching towards SLD s in reading and no teacher (0%) had negative feeling towards it. Only (5%) appeared to be undecided

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.2 TEACHING/LEARNING ACTIVITIES

This study sort to identify teaching and learning activities by teachers teaching reading to learners in regular primary schools, lower classes (Std 1-3) Central Zone Mumias District. The results of the response gathered are presented as follows concerning the question of what are the teaching and learning activities for learners with reading difficulty that can improve reading ability.

Bar graph 2: Teaching / learning activities employed when teaching learners with SLD in read
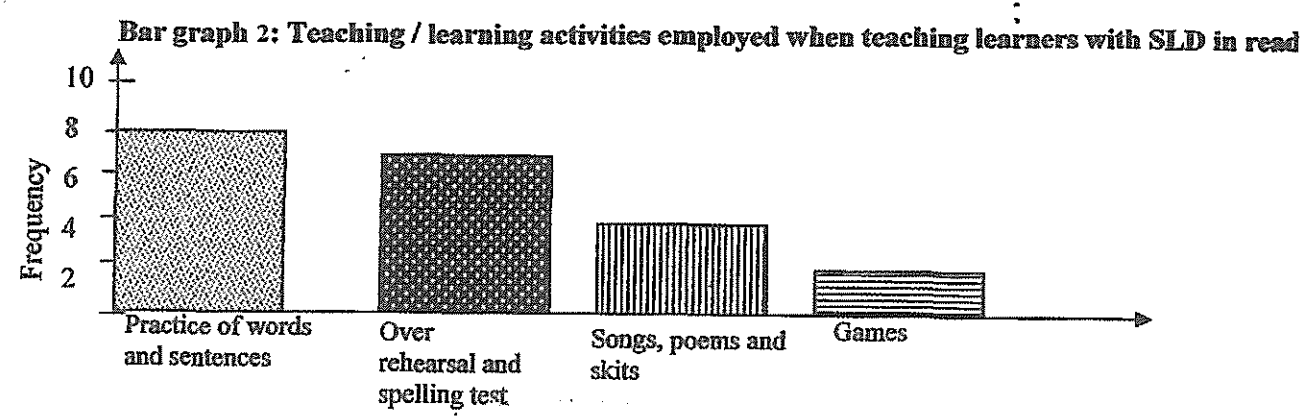
From Bar graph 2, most teachers in Central Zone, Mumias District employed practice of words and sentence (36.36%), others employed over rehearsal and spelling tests (31.36%) as some employed songs, poems, and skits(27.27%). Only minority (4.55%) employed games.

Table 4 Response of remedial to learners with SLD

Category	Frequency	Percentage %
Nature-table	10	50
Curiosity chart	5	25
Projects and Chart	5	25
Total	$\sum 20$	100

From table 4, it can be seen that nature table takes a higher percentage of 50% followed by both curiosity chart and Projects charts.

) SUMMARY DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

l SUMMARY

From title Strategies of improving reading in English amongst learners with SLD in regular Primary Schools, Central Zone , Mumias District , the research came out with findings from questions basing on objectives . The research was done to basically seek information on lower primary (Std 1-3) learners for behaviour characteristics , the researcher intended to find out the behaviour shown by learners with reading difficulty when asked to read aloud. Most learners would Labette others frown and fidget , some would cry or attempt to distract, refuse to read . Hence learners with reading difficulty could be identified by behaviour characteristics

On teaching methods used by teachers who teach SLD s to read , it clearly came out that most teachers used one method of teaching which is phonic method . Remedial using remedial approaches was found to promote special attention , ensure continuity and enhance encouragement Reflective method of teaching was proved to serve as a stepping stone to success.

For teaching and learning activities , most teachers opted for teacher centered teaching and learning activities to child centered activities. Teacher centered activities mostly used was practice of words and sentences . More on a learning and teaching activity that was found to promote word recognition skill was practice of words and sentence \s and or over rehearsed and spelling test

Under teaching and learning resources , most lower classes in central sone do not have learning centres.

For other learning resources , the mostly used resource was text books and readers. Quite a good number also used flash cards, pre-reading materials , newspaper and magazines and peer tutoring are rarely used.

Lastly , on support services , parents were found to be the key partners to their learners education. Parents are supposed to provide love, appreciation and motivation , visit school to keep in touch with learners school work and ensure completion of school. Parents are however, not supposed to decision male and punish their learners.

Other support services were found to be offered at low rates. They include psychological support, educational support and community support.

DISCUSSION

.1 BEHAVIOUR CHARACTERISTICS.

The researcher intended to find out how learners with reading difficulties behave when asked to read aloud in an inclusive setting(std1-3) in central zone , Mumias District . From the data analysis it clearly showed that learners with reading difficulties show behaviour characteristics when asked to read aloud. They may include lip biting with not sound coming out frowning and fidgeting , crying or attempting to distract and refusing to read. Ogonda (2002) noted that indicators or difficulty to read can be accompanied by possible behaviour characteristics. This avoidance tactics disappear as the learners becomes confident in reading.

Teachers of English need to understand behaviour characteristics of learners with reading difficulty as stepping stone to development of effective instruction so as to ensure success of these learners

.2 TEACHING METHODS

.2.1 TEACHING SLD LEARNERS HOW TO READ.

The researcher wanted to determine methods used to teach reading SLDs in inclusive setting in Central Zone , Mumias District . The data showed most teachers of English used phonic method , whereby a teacher teaches the relationship beteen letters and sound (OGONDA 2002) It was followed by language experience model. Ogonda (2002) noted that a learner had to be exposed to whole sentences then encouraged to use text to find meaning . Next was sight (whole) method where Ogonda (2002) explained that repeated exposure helps learners to recognize , memorize and in order to improve it or help read words. Minority of teachers in central zone used key word methods where a letter to be learnt is written together with a word whose initial sound is similar to the sound of the letter , apicture can be accompanied to reveal meaning (Ogonda 2002)

Most teachers opted for phonic methods which seem to be more direct method to teach reading but other pupils can gain profiency in readfing when other methods are used . That is why the question of which practice are the best for learners with SLD in reading and have research based evidence remains the subject of considerable controversy. Hence, all these methods should be interchanged to cater for differences in learners with reading difficulty.

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.2.2 REMEDIAL APPROACHES TO READING

The researcher wanted to determine the methods of teaching in English reading to learners with reading difficulty . From data analysis most teachers agreed that learners with SLDS can improve with remedial approaches named were important.

Special attention was suggested by a majority of teachers (40%) , to ensure continuity was yet another one (27%), (20%) had no reason as (13%) of teachers said it encourages the weak pupils in reading.

Ogonda (2002) explained remedial approached that can be used to enhance reading include multisensory approach where all senses are made in use, paired reading where learner with reading difficulty and a helper /teacher sit side by side where the helper had to offer praise, motivation, feedback , help. Neurological – impress method entails a learner with reading difficulty sitting slightly infront reason being the helper /teacher reads directly to the learner's ear.

.3 TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES.

The researcher intended to identify the etaching and learning activities for learners with SLD in reading , mainly lower primary , central zone , Mumias District.

From data analysis , majority of teachers preferred practice of words and sentences as a Teaching/Learning activity to enhance reading. It was closely followed by over rehearsal and spelling test then songs, poem and skit the least used learning /teaching activity was games.

Further to the above , the researcher found a teaching /learning activity that greatly contributed to word recognition skill was practice of words and sentences (35%) followed by over rehearsal and spelling test (25%), songs , poems and skit had 10% which also applied to games (10%)

Muller and Markowitze (2004) ; Spear – Swerling (2006) noted that the challenge of learning English and having a learning disability adds another level of complexity to learning to read and demonstrating reading achievement . As presidents commission on excellence in special education (2002) noted among learners who are diagnosed with learning disabilities, 80% are diagnosed because their reading as their primary difficulty . Staley and Storey (2007), explained teaching and learning activities may include practice of words and sentences, songs, poems and kits and games while Ogonda (2007) noted over rehearsal and spellings test.

All these are good as learners learn by doing despite the fact that songs, poems, skits and games need a lot of preparation, planning, time, space, learners learn through discovery, motivation and are more of child centered.

2.4 LEARNING AND TEACHING RESOURCES

The researcher wanted to find out the learning resources of teaching, reading to SLDs in class (1-3), Central Zone, Mumias District. The data analysis showed that most classes had no learning centers (40%) for nature table (30%) while projects and charts had (20%). The least was curiosity chart (10%) for other learning resources. Text books and readers were the mostly used (43%-29%) followed by flash cards (23.31%) then pre-reading materials (16.65%) Newspapers and Magazines had 10.09%. the least used learning resource was peer tutoring (6.66%).

Ngaroga (2002) noted that pre-reading material contained activities that enhanced reading readiness. Also class text books, flashcards, relevant newspapers, magazines and readers boosted word attack skills. Kethenya and Mwereria (2002) explained that peer tutoring can serve as a human resource as a good reader can help a poor reader.

Ngaroga (2002) noted, following the themes, learning centers for example nature tables, curiosity charts and project charts can be used during teaching.

Making learning centres is tedious and may require a lot of time. When made and effectively used enhances brain retainance. Teaching without learning resources denies the learners a lot, for instance practice of skill taught. Frequent use of the same learning resources is boring hence they should be alternated.

2.5 SUPPORT SERVICES

The researcher had to find out the support services available for learners with SLD in reading Std 1-3 in regular primary schools, Central Zone, Mumias District.

The data analysis showed parents are the key partners to enhance their children's reading ability. The data also showed out how parents can support their learners. It descended as a provision of love, appreciation and motivation (46-16) visit the school to keep in touch with learners school work then ensuring completion of work (19-23%). However, decision making and punishing of learners remained hanging (0.00%). More over, the data revealed other support services that offered to assist the poor readers. They include psychological support (37.04%), educational support (33.33%), peer support (18.25%), community support (11.11%).

Republic of Kenya (2007) noted a need to train teachers on new approaches and develop adequate educational support material for all areas of Special Needs to meet inclusion . Republic of Kenya (2002) explained learners with SLD in reading need assurance. While in peer

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support , Kathenya and Mwereria (2002) wrote down that it can be practiced through peer tutoring and behaviour modeling . Still Kathenya and Mwereria (2002) noted a need of medical support to help those with eye or ear problem . For community support, Republic of Kenya (2007) noted that for inclusion there is need, to mount national sensitization campaign to prepare communities of changed needs in schools.

Parents can support their learners by decision making , providing love, appreciation and motivation , visiting the school to keep in touch with school war and ensuring completion assignments (Kathenya and Mwereria , 2002)

As much as parents support their learners in different ways , they should also support in decision making for example whether they should attend remedial or not from data analysis support services are offered at low percentages . They should be improved to enhance the learners ability.

3 RECOMMENDATION

From the study, the researcher made the following recommendations which if implemented could make a learner with SLD improve in their performance in English reading.

i. Teachers need to identify learners with SLD in reading through behaviour characteristics shown.
ii. Teachers should incorporate all teaching approaches like remedial multisensory.
iii. Through workshop , in-service course , seminars and symposium , the MOEST can create awareness on who SLDs are and alternative methods of handling SLD learners in reading for example developing instruction Educational Programme(I.E.P)
iv. Other researchers are encouraged to discover the teaching method that will help SLD in reading gain proficiency as fast as possible.
v. Teachers to prepare and plan teaching /learning activities that are more of child center.
vi. Government should restructure the curriculum to incorporate learners with specific learning difficulties.

4 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore strategies of improving reading in English amongst learners with SLD in regular primary schools, Central Zone Mumias district.

Data was collected using questionnaires from six zones in the zone with 23 public schools. This after letter from Kampala University was presented and at least 3 teachers were chosen. Data was analyzed using simple descriptive statistics and the results discussed. It can therefore be concluded that learners with reading difficulties show behaviors characteristics when asked to read aloud.

Also, most teachers in central zone Mumias district used phonic method to teach reading in English. Learners with reading difficulty need remedial to catch up with peers. More on, teaching and learning activities used are mainly teacher centered.

In addition most classes do not have learning centres. Also tutor centering was found to be overlooked
Parents are the key partners in all educational programmes geared towards supporting learners with reading difficulties. Lastly, the community needs to be sensitized on changes in school for inclusion. The inspectorate department of the ministry of education and other related departments should ensure that there are sufficient /learning resources in learning institutions and are used to the maximum by the teachers.

Trained teachers in special needs education create awareness campaigns to other stakeholders to understand support services learners with reading difficulty needs

APPENDIX 1

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE FIELD

:

KAMPALA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

Ggaba Road - Kansanga
P.O. Box 20000, Kampala, Uganda
Tel: +256- 41- 266813 / +256- 41-267634
Fax: +256- 41- 501974
E- mail: admin@kiu.ac.ug,
Website: www.kiu.ac.ug

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
INSTITUTE OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING (IODL)

DATE: . . . .

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: INTRODUCTION LETTER FOR MS/MRS/MR

The above named is our student in Institute of Open and Distance Learning (IODL), pursuing a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

He/She wishes to carry out a research in your Organization on:

. . . .

Case Study.. . . . .

The research is a requirement for the award of a Diploma/Bachelors degree in Education.

Any assistance accorded to her regarding research will be highly appreciated.
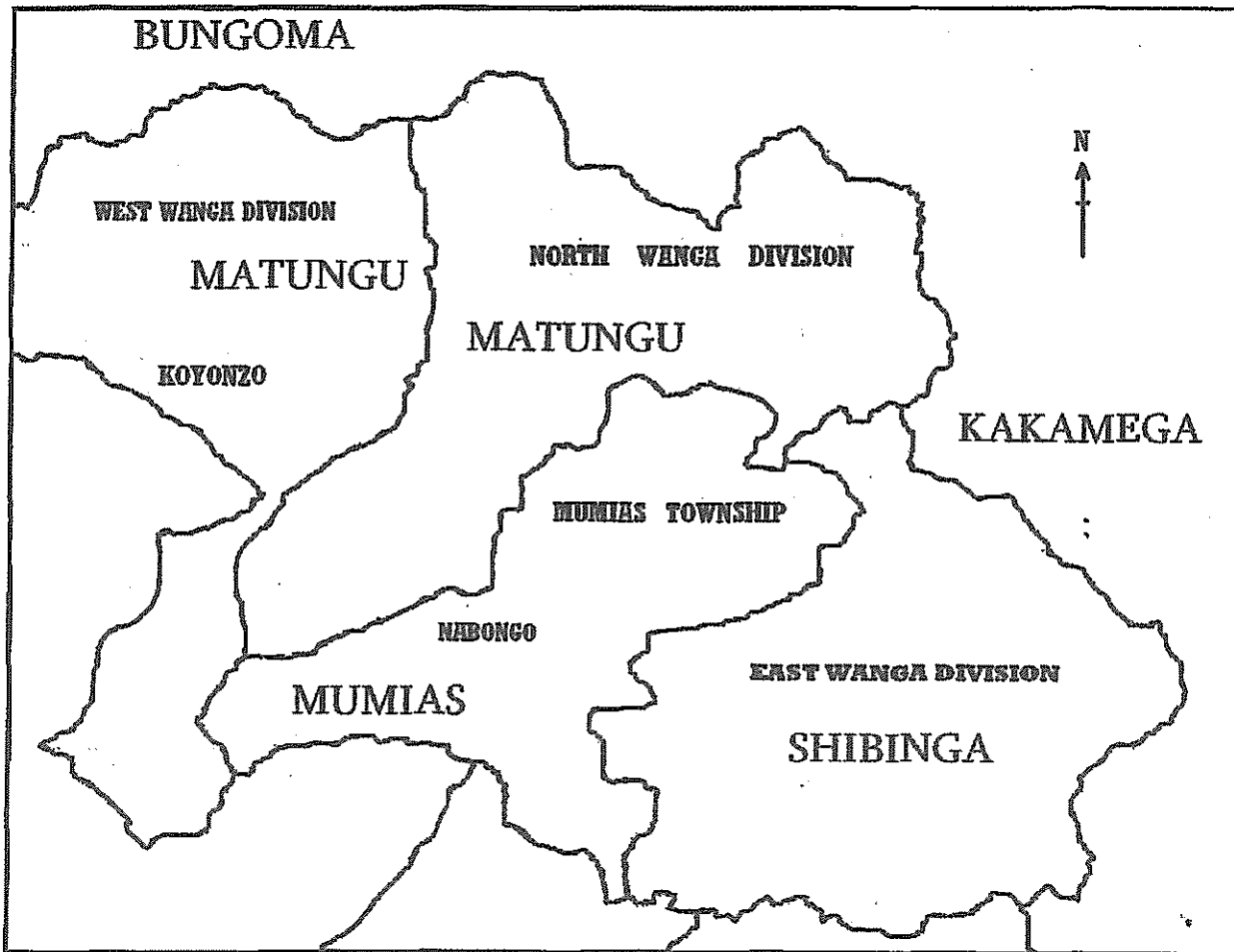
Yours faithfully,

MR. MUHWEZI, JOSEPH
HEAD, IN-SERVICE

MAP OF DISTRICT AREA OF STUDY

MUMIAS DISTRICT (Administration Boundaries)

BUNGOMA

WEST WANGA DIVISION

MATUNGU

KOYONZO

NORTH WANGA DIVISION

MATUNGU

N

KAKAMEGA

MUMIAS TOWNSHIP

NABONGO

MUMIAS

EAST WANGA DIVISION

SHIBINGA

APPENDIX 3

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear teacher,

This is a questionnaire meant to collect information on strategies of improving English reading amongst learners with Specific Difficulties in Central Zone, Mumias District.

Please write your response in the space provided or tick where appropriate in the box.

DO NOT write your name or that of your institution. The information provided will be treated with ABSOLUTE confidentiality.

Objective Questions

1. a) Do learners with reading difficulty show behaviour characteristics when asked to read aloud?

   Yes ☐   No ☐

2. What teaching method do you employ when teaching English reading?

   Phonic method ☐   Sign (whole) method ☐

   Language experience model ☐   Keyword method ☐

3. Can learners with reading difficulty improve with remedial using various remedial appr ☐   ☐

   Yes   No

4. What learning activities do you employ when teaching learners with difficulty to read?

   Games ☐   Practice of words ☐

   Over rehearsal and spelling test ☐   Songs poem and skits ☐

5. Which of the learning/teaching activities need in question mainly contributes to word recognition skills?

   Games ☐   Practice of words and sentence ☐

   Over rehearsal and spelling test ☐   Songs, poems and skits ☐

6. Give example of learning centres found in std 1-3 classes of your school

   Nature table ☐   Curiosity chart ☐   Projects and charts ☐

7. What other support services can benefit learners with reading difficulty

   Educational Support ☐   Psychological support ☐

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