

Aetiology of Instructional Practices for Reading in English in Rural Primary Schools in Kisii Central District, Kisii County Kenya

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Abstract

Learning to read in a second language is a complex challenge for every child. Children require a range of skills and abilities to learn to read. The ability to read with understanding is one of the most important skills for learners, not only in English language but also in other school subjects. Kenyan primary school pupils' reading performance as indicated in the sources cited in this thesis has for a long time been generally poor. Perhaps, this may be due to the inappropriate instructional practices used by teachers during reading lessons. This study aimed at examining the aetiology of the instructional practices prevalent in the teaching of reading in standard 4 in selected rural primary schools in Kisii central district, Kisii County, Kenya. The study was guided by the following objectives: Explore the nature of instructional practices that characterize the teaching of reading in standard 4, investigate the factors that influence a teachers' choice of instructional practices in teaching reading, establish the level of parental involvement in promoting children's reading development, explore the instructional resources used in the teaching of reading, establish the challenges teachers face in the teaching of reading and find out how teachers cope with the challenges encountered. The researcher used a descriptive survey research design to establish the standard 4 reading instructional situation in rural primary schools in Kisii central district. Three sampling techniques were used to draw the samples for the study namely: proportional stratified sampling technique, criterion purposive sampling technique and simple random sampling technique. The study sample consisted of: 20 headteachers and 20 teachers teaching standard 4 English Language from the sampled schools. The research instruments used for data collection included: classroom observation schedule, interview schedule, questionnaires and instructional resource checklist. The instruments were pilot tested to ensure validity and reliability. Both qualitative as well as quantitative data were generated. Qualitative data were organized according to the study themes and presented descriptively on the basis of the study objectives and research questions. Descriptive statistics was used to analyse quantitative data, Chi square was used to test for association between independent and dependent variables. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17 was used to process the data. The key findings of this study point to the fact that the reading instructional situation in the study location is wanting. The reading instructional environment in the classrooms lacked key literacy support materials, most teachers' instructional activities were course-book driven. If teachers are to make reasonable progress in reading instruction then, appropriate reading activities must be selected and applied in classroom instruction. The findings are to help Kenyan primary school teachers evaluate their instructional practices in the teaching of reading, help the curriculum developers in: selecting and sequencing appropriate content for primary English

language education and English language education for teacher trainees and also aid in carrying out in-service training courses among others.

Keywords: Aetiology, Instructional Practices, English, Rural Primary Schools, Kisii Central District, Kisii County, Kenya

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