

Setting the Basis for Success in the Competency-Based Curriculum: Experiential Instruction Process Issues In Emergent Reading in Kenya

Philomena Chepsiror

Abstract

Study after study has shown that reading is the single most important skill necessary for success in school and life. Emergent reading is the first stage in the developmental continuum in learning to read and consists of the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that are presumed to be developmental precursors to conventional reading. In other words, students who are unable to grasp early print concepts as emergent readers may experience difficulty with reading later. In this regard, multiple assessments of reading have reported poor reading achievement in Kenyan primary school children. The Uwezo studies since 2010, for instance, have highlighted a reading crisis. The reports indicate that there has been no improvement in reading from the inception of the study despite the government launching intervention programs among them ‘Tayari’ and ‘Tusome’ which were meant to improve reading skills. This study investigated the instructional process issues in emergent reading in a bid to unravel this predicament. The study was carried out in Bureti Sub-County in Kericho County. It involved a sample of 95 pre-primary 1 teachers randomly selected from public and private schools. Data was collected using an observation checklist, a questionnaire a focused group discussion and was analysed descriptively. Instructional process factors found to impede experiential emergent reading strategies included unclear goals for reading lessons, pressure from parents for quicker learning outcomes, time allocated for the experiences was insufficient, that the teachers were overloaded with other responsibilities, large pupil numbers, among others. The results of the study will inform evidence-based policy on the implementation of the Competency-based Curriculum in Kenya and any other part of the world.

Keywords: Competency-Based Curriculum, Experiential Instruction Process, Emergent Reading, Kenya

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