

Preferred Methods of Teaching Reading in Early Childhood Classes in Dagoretti and Westlands Divisions in Nairobi County, Kenya

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Abstract

Proficiency in 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 contribute actively to society. Research findings in Kenyan primary and secondary schools reveal inadequate reading skills among the 'students, two of the main approaches in teaching of reading in English are Phonics Approach and Whole Word Approach. The purpose of this study was to identify the approaches used in teaching of reading in Early Childhood Education and the usage of phonics and whole word approaches in Pre Unit and class 3 levels. The study sought to establish teachers' orientation towards usage of Phonics and Whole Word Approaches in reading instructions in early childhood settings. A sample of 10 schools from each of the two Divisions, (Dagoretti) and (Westlands) in Nairobi County were studied. The researcher adopted the Descriptive research design using the survey method and observation technique. According to the findings 60% of pre-unit teachers were very confident in the phonics method. The results showed that 100% of class 3 teachers and 70% of Pre-Unit teachers indicated that they faced challenges in the teaching of reading. The study concludes that although the teachers indicated that they were confident, they also acknowledged that there were challenges in teaching of reading which indicates that they are not well equipped with the relevant methods of teaching reading. The study recommends clear policy guidelines on how to teach reading and compulsory in-service training for teachers on how to teach reading.

Key words: Teaching reading; Orientation towards teaching methods; Teacher qualification