A SURVEY OF THE TEACHING OF READING IN ENGLISH IN LOWER PRIMARY CLASSES OF GATUNDU DIVISION IN RURAL THIKA DISTRICT

BY

HELLEN KIENDEMBERIA

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN ENGLISH AND APPLIED LINGUISTICS OF KENYATTA UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH & LINGUISTICS
KENYATTA UNIVERSITY
NAIROBI.

APRIL, 2002

Mberia, Hellen Kiente
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DECLARATIONS

(1) I declare that to the best of my knowledge, this dissertation contains no material previously presented for the award of a degree or diploma in any University. This work is therefore original except where due citation has been made.

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DEDICATIONS

To my parents, Silas Mberia and Sarah Mberia for the education they enabled me to get.

To my husband Mr Kinoti and daughter Fidella for the encouragement and support they gave.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many hands make light work. I must admit that this work is a product of a concerted effort to which I have accumulated many debts, only a proportion of which I have space to acknowledge.

I must unreservedly and most sincerely thank my supervisors Dr. Nyamasyo and Mr. Victor Omasaja who have been very understanding, co-operative, resourceful and absolutely helpful. Their critical appreciation of my drafts and constant reminders to work hard have made me come this far.

It goes without saying that this dissertation would not have been without encouragement, support and understanding of my husband Mr Kinoti and our daughter Fidelia. I am especially indebted to them for the sacrifices they made while I pursued this study.

Lastly but by no means last I would like to express my gratitude to other members of the family for their moral support and consistent encouragement during the period this work was in progress.

I thank God for the abundant blessings. “Ni bwega Mono”, (God bless you all).
ABSTRACT

This study was done to investigate how teachers conduct reading lessons in English in the lower primary classes of Gatundu Division of rural Thika District.

The survey involved an attempt to determine the methods used by teachers in teaching reading in English and to expose pupils to varieties of reading materials. It also involved an identification of the methods they followed while assessing pupils' reading levels and the readability of materials; the instructional materials they use and the factors that influence their choice.

The data was collected with the aid of questionnaire, actual classroom observation and informal interviews with the teachers. Eighteen (18) lower primary teachers were selected. The teachers were selected from six (6) randomly selected primary schools out of the fifty six (56) primary schools in Gatundu Division.

The sample of 18 teachers revealed that teachers are aware of, and employ the various methods of teaching reading in English. However, they do not provide basic prerequisite activities that would prepare and aid pupils when reading in English.

It was further discovered that both in terms of quantity and variety instructional materials that are essential for effective instruction in reading in English were inadequate in Lower primary classes. The findings also established that teachers did not know that there were formulas for assessing readability of materials exposed to learners.
The findings revealed further that teachers mainly followed the syllabus recommendations when choosing reading materials for pupils.

It was also discovered that teachers do not seem to be aware of, and hardly make use of the techniques recommended for evaluating reading in English. The most common methods used to evaluate reading skills are by use of tests and examinations. The study also established that teachers of reading in English have to grapple with such problems as lack of textbooks, lack of pupils' motivation and interest, mother tongue interference and inadequate instructional materials.
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ABBREVIATIONS

SLA  Second Language Acquisition
K.I.E  Kenya Institute of Education
C.P.E.  Certificate of Primary Education
K.C.S.E.  Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
STD  Standard

Definition of terms

1. Reading instruction: a process of guiding learners to build proper habits of reading for information as well as for enjoyment.

2. Readability: It is the sum total of all those elements within a given piece of printed material that affects the success which a group of readers has with it. The success is the extent to which they understand it, read it at the optimum speed and find it interesting. Specifically one may consider vocabulary and sentence structures concepts covered, text layout and print type illustrations etc as factors, which affect readability.
3. **Sight vocabulary**: The words the child knows instantly on sight. No analysis is necessary because they are read instantly.

4. **Eary Stage**: This is the stage where the pupils are learning to read.

5. **Lower Primary**: This refers to standard One, Two and Three.

6. **Assessment**: This is a kind of measurement carried out on an existing ability or ability achieved through a process of learning.

7. **Pre-service Course**: Teacher Training Course given before a person is officially employed as a qualified teacher.

8. **In-service Course**: Seminar, Course or meeting to train or refresh teachers on methods of teaching.

9. **Appropriate**: Methods recommended by Kenyan education systems and which are suitable for a given stage of reading.
10. **Approach**: In this study, it refers either to methods teachers use for choosing pupils' reading materials or to teach reading in English.
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background to the problem

In the Kenyan Education System, most pupils, except those from urban areas, are instructed in the language of the catchment area from standard 1 to 3. At this same level, English is introduced as a subject due to its importance as a language of instruction in the country. The children are introduced to its basic language skills. However, pupils at this level who are mostly between the ages of 7 and 9 years old are still at the stage of first language development. According to Chomsky (1969), children at this age have not fully mastered the structure of their first language. Thus learning a new language before the age of 9 or 10 years is therefore not fully additional or sequential, but rather a simultaneous process occurring side by side with the acquisition of the mother tongue. This means that learning to read in English language is one of the language skills taught to pupils in Kenyan schools before they fully acquire literacy skills in the first language.

According to Huck (1998), pupils who have not fully acquired literacy skills in their first language have limited background skills to bring to the task of learning to read English. For such a child, skills in word recognition and comprehension of written English cannot be built upon the literacy proficiencies he already possesses. In this regard teachers should strive to apply appropriate
methods and approaches to teaching of reading in English in these early stages where the pupils have not acquired literacy skills in their first languages.

The Kenyan primary education pre-service course syllabus for English (K.I.E, 1992) has a section for the training of teachers to teach the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Under the teaching of reading as a skill, student teachers are introduced to the specific methods involved in the teaching of reading at the lower primary level (classes 1-3). Among the recommended methods of teaching reading to the lower primary level pupils by the Kenya Institute of Education are phonic, alphabetic and look and say methods. The teachers are also trained on how to assess the readability of materials and how to expose the learners to reading materials by use of methods such as interest level, vocabulary difficulty, conceptual demands and readability formulae (KIE, 1992). Kenyan teachers for primary level of the school who have received training are therefore expected to be able to develop English reading ability in their learners and in effect enhance their learners’ capabilities to read instruction and information and to foster a culture of reading.

Additionally, the pre-service course for primary level teachers incorporates various subject areas in which a trainee teacher is prepared. At the end of the two year training program, the teacher will have been trained not only to teach English but also a host of other subjects in any part of the country. As a consequence the trained primary level teacher is a jack-of-all-trades and a
master of none. Yet such teachers are expected to be able to develop reading ability in English in their learners.

However, there have been mounting complaints about the inability of pupils in Kenyan primary school classes to read in English (Maina, 1991); likewise complaints have been raised regarding poor reading ability among school leavers (Nyamasyo, 1992; Kirigia, 1995; Chege, 1999), and also regarding a poor reading culture among Kenyans (East African Standard Saturday, June 16, 2001) and a general dissatisfaction with the performance of school leavers in the area of reading. This necessitates answers to the following questions: Are the primary school teachers doing the right things in teaching reading in English or does the phenomenon of "Jack of all trades and master of none" associated with primary teacher training programs suggest inadequate training of teachers in teaching reading in English? Have teachers of reading borne in mind the qualities of effective reading when devising their methods of teaching reading, materials and assessing readability levels of learners? This study sought to find out how teaching reading in English to 7 - 9 years old learners is done in Kenya with a view to providing insight on how this may be improved.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Despite the fact that English is taught from the first year of primary school in Kenya, many pupils leave school without the ability to read effectively or efficiently. These leavers who are normally not proficient in the English
language cannot climb up the education ladder nor can secondary school leavers who are not proficient in the language ever hope to gain entrance into an institution of higher learning. Considering the role supposed to be played by education in the country this is a sad scenario. The ability to read in English is therefore very vital in the Kenyan society, as it is central to both academic and professional development of the individual.

The inability of the pupils to read in English in their early year of primary education is attributed to a number of factors. Amongst these factors are that: first language literacy skills are not yet fully developed and therefore the consequent lack of background skills to bring to the task of learning to read English as a second language and the methods used by the teachers in enabling pupils to read text, and the type and nature of books to which they are exposed to during the reading lessons. This means that the methods and approaches used by teachers of reading at this lower primary education is critical. It is on the basis of factors named above that this study sought to survey the present methods and approaches in the teaching of reading in English in the early years of primary school education in Kenya. The survey was confined to:

1. Methods of teaching reading in English and of exposing pupils to reading materials.
2. Assessment of pupils reading levels.
3. Assessment of the readability of materials.
It was hoped that the study would provide some insight into the approaches used in the teaching of reading to children at this early stage. On the basis of such insight, the study would suggest and or make recommendations regarding approaches and methods that may contribute to improving the teaching of reading in English to pupils in the lower levels of primary school (1-3).

1.3 Objectives of the study

1. To identify the methods used by teachers to teach reading in English and to expose pupils to varieties of reading materials in the lower classes (1-3) of primary school.

3. To identify methods used by teachers to assess pupils reading levels in the lower classes of primary school in the Kenyan education system.

4. To determine approaches used by teachers to assess the readability of materials used by class 1-3 pupils in the Kenyan education system.

5. To find out what resource materials are employed by teachers to teach children how to read in English in the lower primary school.

1.4 Research assumptions

1. Teachers adopt various methods to teach reading in English and to expose pupils to varieties of reading materials in the lower classes (1-3) of primary school in the Kenyan education system.

2. Teachers assess pupils reading levels in the lower classes of primary school
in Kenyan education system.

3 Teachers assess the readability of materials used in classes 1-3 in the teaching of reading in English.

4 Resource materials are employed by teachers to teach children how to read in English.

1.5 Research questions

1 What methods do teachers use to teach reading in English and to expose class1-3 pupils to varieties of reading materials?

2 What resource materials are employed by teachers to teach children how to read in English in the lower classes (1-3) of primary school?

3 What methods do teachers use to assess pupils reading levels in English in the lower primary school?

4 What methods do teachers use to assess the readability of materials exposed to pupils in the lower classes (1-3) of primary school?

1.6 Scope and limitations of the study.

The study only concentrated on the teaching approaches in enabling the development of reading ability in English language. In this study teaching approaches include: teaching methods, readability of materials and reading levels. Pupil's performance (determined by testing) as the result of the use of the methods is outside the scope of this study. This is because a comparative study that would look at cause and effect of the teaching techniques would
require a lot of time and standardised instruments to measure the change, which would occur when one particular method is used.

The study is also limited to the teaching of reading in English to learners in classes 1 to 3 of primary school in Kenya. The rationale for carrying out this study in lower primary level is strengthened by (Chege, 1999) when he says, "The proper foundations for the acquisition and development of skills are best laid during the early years of schooling"

In Kenya at the end of class 3, all pupils are expected to have acquired a sufficient command of the four skills of the English language to enable them to communicate freely, to follow subject courses offered to them from class 4, and to read for pleasure. Additionally critical analysis of why one teacher used one method instead of another will not be done.

1.7 Significance of the study

This study sought to provide insights on how teaching reading in English can be improved, make recommendations on appropriate teaching methods to be used with learners at the early stages of reading and also provide additional information on the nature of language skill development to pupils in the lower primary classes in a multilingual environment.

Because English is used as the medium of instruction in Kenya, it is becoming urgent that studies are undertaken to evaluate the instructional techniques
adopted by teachers of the subject. This is because there is the need to constantly remind the teachers the reasons why pupils completing their formal education at primary eight should be fluent in English language skills. To do this a survey of this nature, taking stock of the current practices is useful in providing insight to possible and practical decisions in the school language curriculum. It is the hope of the researcher that teaching points and problems in reading in English, which are highlighted in this project, will go along way in enriching the practice of teachers, teacher trainers and policy makers who may need to use them in the field.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Literature review and theoretical framework

2.1 Theoretical framework

In this section models of reading process as well as theories of second language acquisition upon which various teaching methodologies and approaches of reading are based is discussed.

2.1.1 Second language learning theory: the Monitor model

The most ambitious theory of second - language-learning process is Stephen Krashen's Monitor model. The theory evolved in the late 1970's in a series of articles (Krashen 1977, 1976, 1978, 1980) and has been elaborated and expanded in a number of books (Krashen 1981, 1982, 1985; Krashen and Terrell 1983). Krashen has argued that this account provides a general or overall theory (1985) of Second language, acquisition with important implications for language teaching. The Monitor model constitutes of five basic hypotheses;

The acquisition - learning hypothesis, the Monitor hypothesis, the natural order hypothesis, the input hypothesis and the affective filter hypothesis.

The most relevant one to this study is the input hypothesis.
2.1.1.1 Input Hypothesis

According to Krashen (1985), the input hypothesis states that learners acquire language in one way; that is, by understanding messages or by receiving comprehensible input. The language that is read or heard must be understood to be termed 'comprehensible'. Krashen further argues that a learner moves from (i) which is a learner's current level to 'i+1', which is the next level along a natural order. The hypothesis also claims that input, which is comprehensible, is at the right level but that which is incomprehensible is not valuable to the learner. Reading materials are inputs used to develop and improve reading skills. Therefore these materials should be at the right level of difficulty so that they can be suitable and comprehensible to the learners.

Language learning, according to Krashen (1982), depends upon the type of input the learner receives which in turn affects the amount of intake. Richard's and Gallow (1994) note that input must be comprehensible and interesting or relevant to the learners. It must be experienced in low anxiety contexts and in sufficient quantity. Thus the teaching of reading in English in the lower classes of primary school should be taught in comprehensible and meaningful context.

It is the teacher who must stimulate interest in reading, who must project his or her enthusiasm for books, and who must help students to see that
reading can be of real value to them. It is also the teacher who must choose, or edit, or modify or even in some circumstances, create appropriate materials for students with varied needs and purposes to read in challenging but not overwhelming amounts and in a sequence of increasing difficulty, which will lead to improvement, but not to frustration. Bringing students and appropriate materials together is a very large part of the reading teachers job.

In the Kenyan Education system, the teacher plays a great role in determining how much and what his or her students read (Matuu, 2000). To ensure that pupils are exposed to suitable input, K.I.E in Kenya has recommended certain methods to assess the readability of materials. These methods are: readability formulas, interest level, presentation, syllabus recommendations etc. The input hypothesis is therefore relevant to this study in that it informs the above methods used by teachers in assessing the readability of materials.

However, Richards and Rodgers (1986) argue that these claims of the input hypothesis are incomplete in them and need to be complimented by models of the reading process. They argue that input hypothesis informs the methods of assessment of reading materials it. It leaves out the instructional devices used by teachers to develop reading skill in the pupils in the lower primary classes. Models of the reading process have
important implications in relation to methods used in the teaching of reading in English. It is to these models that we now turn.

2.1.2 Models of reading

Among the models of reading that try to explain the development of readability are: the Ekwall model, Bottom up model, Top-down model and Interactive model.

2.1.2.1 Ekwall’s model of reading skills

According to the model postulated by Ekwall (1976), reading involves recognising words and understanding them (See figure 1). Word recognition skill is further divided into sight words and word analysis skills.

Sight words are high utility words that appear most often in print. They are known as sight words as they are recognized immediately and do not require any application of word attack skills. Such words include a, and, are, he, but, one, you, who, where and when. Word attack skills are skills that are involved by the reader to help him read out the word. They involve: Configuration skill, Context clues, Phonics structural analysis, Dictionary skills and Study skills.

The other aspect of reading, that is, understanding, words involves both vocabulary development and other comprehension skills. Vocabulary development refers to the building up of student’s vocabulary. Such a
vocabulary comprises of words whose meaning the student knows and is able to use correctly in a sentence.

This model therefore shows that reading is a process that consists of both recognizing skills and understanding words with various sub-processes involved, in each of these sub-processes building upon the former one (see figure below)

![Diagram of reading skills](image)

Figure 1. Ekwall's model of reading skills.

Source: Ekwall (1976) Diagnosis and remediation of the disabled readers.
Ekwall's model is relevant to this study in that it provides reading skills to be tested in determining the reading levels of learners. According to Ross, (1978) reading is a complex skill involving many processes, so teachers must be sure that they know which part of the skill they are evaluating. In the Kenyan context teachers should assess the reading ability of learners at the lower primary levels to ensure that a firm foundation is laid in all aspects of reading as they progress.

2.1.2.2 Top-down model

Goodman and Carolyn Burke (1972) hold the view that meaning is not gained from individual words but from the surrounding context. They contend that when we read we do not make predictions on the basis of looking at every punctuation mark, letter word or sentence. Instead we select certain aspects of the available language. Because of the background and experience accumulated over the years, we know what is usually significant and select only the most significant ones to make predictions. One of the chief gains of adopting a top-down approach to the study of reading is that it draws attention to some aspects of reading behaviour, which tends to be overlooked. Chief among them is that reading can be pleasurable and purposeful.

This model is relevant to the study in that it helps in explaining certain methods used in teaching reading; methods which place emphasis on meaning from the beginning such as: look and say method, story method and language experience
method. But top-down model has some limitations. It tends to emphasize higher level skills such as the prediction of meaning by means of context clues or certain kinds of background knowledge at the expense of such lower level skills as the rapid and accurate identification of lexical and grammatical forms (Eskey, 1988). The model they promote is an accurate model of the skilful, fluent reader for whom perception and decoding have become automatic.

Such a model will not account for all the needs of pupils who are acquiring reading skills. In the Kenyan education system, the pupils in class 1 and 2 are acquiring reading skill. They therefore require to be taught the lower level skills such as recognition and identification of letters, number, lexical items and grammatical forms.

However those in class 3 according to (Owino, 1986) have acquired sufficient ‘word bank’ to be able to read for meaning and comprehension. Therefore teachers at this level can use these methods informed by the top down model.

A bottom up model of reading process is better able to account for the role of certain lower levels skills such as recognition and identification skills that are important to successful reading acquisition (Eskey, 1988).
2.1.2.3 Bottom - up model

This model of the reading process as propounded by Gough (1970) and Laberge and Samuel's (1975) assert that it is necessary for children to excel in phonetic decoding and word recognition, so as to comprehend the text. They all emphasise the role of first, understanding the words singularly as they are presented, and then, moving from the decoding of the word to comprehension. In Gough's model, the reader perceives individual letters and words and then transforms these into phonemic codes.

Another bottom-up theorist, Newman (1979) holds that without phonics, which is the backbone of word recognition, it would be impossible for a child who did not know words by sight to make sense of anything he reads. Knowledge of a simple phonetic rule would enable him to decode words. This is evident in the recommendations of the Kenya Institute of Education (K.I.E) regarding the teaching of reading at lower levels of school in Kenya. Methods such as Alphabetic, Syllabic and phonic methods described in this model makes it very relevant to the study in that it helps in identifying and explaining certain methods of teaching reading in the early stages.

Another model that is relevant to this study is the interactive model. It incorporates the claims of both bottom-up and top-down model.
2.1.2.4 Interactive model

Rumelhart (1977), Stanovich (1980), and Ulijn (1980) propounded the interactive model of the reading process. The model assumed that during reading, skills at all levels (Lower and Higher) are interactively available to the reader to enable him/her to process and interpret the text. It subsumes both bottoms-up and top-down strategies already mentioned in this chapter. This model incorporates the implications of reading as an interactive process- that is, the use of background knowledge expectations, context, and so on. At the same time it also incorporates notions of rapid and accurate feature recognition for letters and words, spreading lexical forms and the concept of automaticity in processing such forms – that is a processing that does not depend on context for primary recognition of linguistic units. This model has informed the Eclectic category highlighted by Gray (1969). This is the category that emphasises both Analytical and Synthetic method of teaching reading.

Eskey (1988) believes that the interactive model is able to explain the observed process of reading especially in the context of second language reading. In second language reading, decoding is an important part of the reading processes as much as are the higher-level skills of interpretation. Rapid and accurate decoding facilitates these higher-level skills. He stresses that reading should not be limited only to decoding, but the reader should also be taught and encouraged to make appropriate interpretation of text through the use of top-down reading.
strategies. Both strategies should be developed conjointly since both contribute
directly to the successful comprehension of text.

Another researcher Carrell (1988) also asserts that the interactive model of
reading best describes the reading patterns especially of second language readers
and in fact blames some of the reading problems experienced by second
language readers on over-reliance on either top-down or bottom up processing.

In Kenya for example, there are mounting complaints about the poor reading
ability of school pupils, school leavers and the poor reading culture among
Kenyans. This may be attributed to overuse of methods of teaching reading
informed by either of the models (top-down or bottom-up). This study aims to
establish whether this assumption is true.

All the above theories have influenced the development of some teaching
methodologies and approaches to reading. Hence, they are all relevant to this
study since they will help in the analysis and interpretation of the data
collected.

2.2 Literature review

2.2.1 Introduction

A lot has been published about the methods of teaching reading (Nuttall 1986,
Eskey, D. E. (1988), Allwright (1991). However, very little has been done by
way of research to evaluate the use of these methods in Kenyan schools. In this section, a review of the situation of teaching reading in English in Kenya is given before a discussion on what experts say about the instructional programmes in reading.

Research locally available on reading has shown how these methods are being used in the teaching of mother tongue (Ki-embu; Muciri, 1984, Kikamba; Matuu, 2000 and Kiswahili; Ipara, 1986). Except for these, no studies reviewed so far, have treated the teaching of reading in English in Kenyan primary schools so as to take into account the instructional procedures with the aim of showing whether the recommended methods are effectively being used or not.

A look at the studies so far undertaken in the area of reading reveals that the researcher's sole purpose was to help improve reading instruction so that pupils may read with understanding.

Wario, (1981) in an analysis of reading attainment and its relationship to some school condition concludes that school building and materials, classroom condition, size and location of the school, availability of reading materials and library facilities, among others have an effect on the reading attainment of the pupils. Wario does not however, define what he means by "attainment" in his study, but it is possible to equate it with 'ability' which would mean the level at which the pupils can read with maximum understanding. The study, also hardly
Obuya-Deya (1980) surveys the effect of certificate of Primary Education (C.P.E) English language comprehension testing on the development of reading ability in primary schools. His findings are that classroom teaching and testing practices tend to follow quite closely the pattern of the final examination from year to year and that the passages used in the final examination have no relationship whatsoever with the reading levels of the children because they were difficult. He concludes that the manner in which this paper is tested in the final examination:

"Significantly affects the development of reading ability in primary schools in Kenya".

He notes particularly the lack of assessment of the readability of the passages used in the classroom and in the examination; a factor, which he thinks has a serious negative impact on the reading habits of the primary school children. The comprehension exercises do not present reading to the pupils as a pleasurable activity. Obuya - Deya does not observe how these passages are being taught in the classroom in the lower primary level. The study also concentrates on one aspect of reading instruction that is comprehension.

Obondo (1984) identifies and evaluates the existing practices in parental involvement in the teaching of reading in selected primary schools (Std.1) in
Nairobi southern division. Involvement is taken to mean the degree in which the parents are committed to a "Collaborative supportive relationship" with the child's teachers in school. This is expressed in terms of provision of reading materials, helping the child with homework, teaching the child to read at home and parents' acknowledgement and acceptance of themselves as the child's most important 'teachers'. Obondo's finding is quite interesting because in many cases parents are not aware of their involvement even when they are involved and teachers never encourage them even though they (teachers) know the usefulness of such involvement.

Wegesa's (1986) investigation on the concepts of reading held by secondary school teachers has brought to light what might be the case with primary teachers as well. Latham (1968) argues that what a teacher thinks reading entails will determine the aims, methods and assessment techniques employed during the teaching of reading. According to Wegesa, 76% of his respondents have a narrow view of reading restricted to literal comprehension (answering factual questions after passages have been read without any further follow-up activities based on those passages.

Although the studies so far reviewed above have looked at certain aspects of reading as a skill in the process of learning, none of them has focused on the teaching of reading in English that takes into account the methods used, assessment techniques and materials used in the instructional process. This
study concentrates on the teaching of reading in English, which will be confined to the following aspects:

(i) Methods of teaching reading

(ii) Assessment of pupils reading ability and readability levels of materials

(iii) Exposure of pupils to varieties of reading materials.

(iv) Reading materials

Each of these aspects is reviewed briefly here below.

2.2.2 Methods of teaching reading

Approaches to the teaching of reading to beginners are many. Aukerman (1971) identifies nearly one hundred approaches of teaching reading and categorises them into ten classes. Harris and Malquist (1973) on the other hand suggest that the major approaches could be fitted within Grays (1969) four categories as follows:

(i) Analytical methods:
which consist of methods, which initially emphasise the teaching of the elements of Sounds and Words. The methods focus on alphabets, Phonemes and syllables respectively;

(ii) Synthetic Methods:
are those that put emphasis on meaning from the beginning. They approach reading from the whole word, the phrase, the sentence and the story;
(iii) Eclectic trend:

which is characterised by the use of a variety of methods, including: Analytic, Synthetic or a combination of both and,

(iv) The Learner Centred Approach:

which puts emphasis on the needs of the learner and use of materials, which are prepared by the learner, the teacher or by the author who has a particular child in mind. Methods such as programmed learning, individualised and language experience approach fall under this category.

These methods identified are in line with the teaching approaches recommended in the syllabus for teaching reading in English in Kenya at the lower primary level, (Kenya primary syllabus vol.1 1992).

The Kenya Syllabus for primary school states as part of its objectives that at the end of 3 years the child should acquire reading skills to enable him to read and understand instructions to read for information and for pleasure. In order to achieve this objective, the teacher is supposed to use the recommended methods. Gichuru (1979) observes that:

"The initial reading method used with a child will generally affect his ultimate standard and his attitude to reading".

This study aimed to establish whether the recommended methods are used in the lower primary classes. The following is a brief discussion of these recommended methods.
2.2.2.1 The alphabetic method

It assumes that familiarity with the forms and names of letters helps pupils to recognise and pronounce words (Gray, 1969). In learning such a word as CAT for example, a pupil repeats the names of the letters C-A-T, until he guesses (senses) the pronunciation of the letters, or until he is told what it is. The chief objection to the alphabetic method is that the names of the letters do not always indicate the pronunciation of words. The arduous and meaningless repetition often establishes a permanent dislike for reading. Furthermore, since the child learns and repeats the letters before he recognises their function as component elements of words, he'll not be able to apply them properly. He needs to know gradually the function of "s" at the end of a word - whenever indicating plural or third person singular of a verb; etc.

Although it is the naming of letters as a means of learning to read that has fallen into disfavour, no teacher, of course would deny that children should learn the letter names at some stage. Wilkinson (1971), noted that if a child cannot tell letters apart it is futile for the teacher to teach him words. Words are composed of letters. Recognition of letters and ability to name them aids in remembering word shapes and structures.

2.2.2.2 The phonic method

The word 'phonic' comes from a Greek word Phone meaning sound (Pearson 1981). This method focuses on the individual sounds or the phonemes, which
comprise a word. In this method, the sequence of teaching activities is based largely on logical considerations. At the initial stage the forms and sounds of the letters are taught, as a rule the vowels first (Gray, 1969). The consonants are introduced in some prescribed order and their sounds combined with each of the vowels. For example, after they have learnt the four letter a, I, t and p the children should be able to read seven English words: at, it tap. Pit pat, pip and as they advance in reading, be able to read the word apt. Among the advantages of this method of teaching reading are firstly, the child develops the ability to 'sound' the letters of any new word. This is by blending the component sounds that constitute the word. Secondly, this approach enables children to thoroughly master spelling. This is because they deal with elements of a word and not the whole appearance of the word.

However, other experts on the teaching of reading have pointed out many shortcomings of this approach. Pearson (1981) states that the assumption of mastery of letter sounds is not that easy. In English not all letter groupings represent one sound. In response to this problem, Pappas (1970), recommends that children need to develop an understanding of how the phonetic elements of the language function in printed words, rather than learning to respond in a stereotyped fashion to certain combinations of letters. Perhaps this is why others (Wandera, 1978) have contended that phonic reading can only be introduced when the child's vocabulary is large enough to include many words
that have phonically regular spacing. Horner (1972) enumerates several other disadvantages, chief among them being:

(i) Phonic teaching with its insistence on phonic build up leads to boring drilling of symbols and sounds.

(ii) Skills in the mechanics of reading is often gained at the expense of meaning.

(iii) Words and phrases are often presented out of context and so are meaningless to children.

Some of these disadvantages can be a source of frustration to a child. And as Schonell (1946) points out, phonic method may produce "word callers". It must also be mentioned that sound blending is not all that there is to reading because no pronunciation of individual sounds builds up exactly into the pronunciation of the whole word (Wilkinson, 1974).

### 2.2.2.3 The syllabic method

The purpose of syllabifying a word is to break it into its components so as to pronounce it. Like other linguistic approaches, syllabification is only applicable when children have reached a reading age of eight (Bowers, 1957). The assumption is that pupils will have acquired enough sight vocabulary on which syllabication can be based. The use of syllables is preferred to that of letters because many consonants can be pronounced accurately only in combination with vowels. Although syllables are identifiable in English, the clustering of consonants makes it difficult to an elementary reader to master its use. A major
limitation of this approach is that children become "word callers" instead of readers when it is used solely. The three methods of teaching reading viz., alphabetic, phonic and syllabic, which comprise Gray's first category, are referred to as the analytic approaches or methods.

The second category of methods of teaching reading as articulated by (Gray, 1969) is those that put emphasis on meaning from the beginning. They approach reading from the whole word, the phrase, the sentence and the story. The second category has been supported by two arguments:

First, that since reading is a thought getting process, use should be made from the beginning of meaningful material, with emphasises on the development at a thoughtful reading attitude. It must consist of words and sentences, which convey meanings. Use can be made of picture clues initially and later context and syntactic clues. Learning to read thus becomes an interesting, enjoyable and rewarding process and progress is greatly hastened (Katharine 1987).

Secondly, as psychologists such as Thorndike (1972) have demonstrated that children recognise things and ideals as whole at first, proceeding gradually to the recognition of details, the second category of teaching and reading does not contradict the natural way in which the child first perceives the world around him.
2.2.2.4 The whole word (look 'n' say) method

This is the first of the second group of methods, which lay emphasis on meaning of what is read. The method is based on the assumption that children see words as Whole and when these words are put into meaningful sentences pupils will find enjoyment and so be motivated to go on reading (Horner 1972).

The whole word approach is based on further assumption that each word has certain characteristics with which it can be remembered. Often pictures, objects and demonstrations accompany the words in establishing meaningful association. At the same time attention is directed to details of words, such as syllables and letters and their sounds (Gray, 1969). Other cues important in whole word method are shape and length of the word. Using this approach, it is interesting to note that children sometimes learn to read longer words faster than shorter ones! The advantage of using this method have been broadly expressed: "...attention in reading is focused from the beginning on the meaning of what is read, thus cultivating a thoughtful reading attitude and keen interest in reading as a source of pleasure and information; the learning of words as wholes before their elements are singled out corresponds closely with the way most children and adults normally learn visual form. (Ibid, 1969, p. 84).

However, the above strengths do not make the "Look - and - Say" method the best one for teaching children to read. There are instead drawbacks, which militate against it. It often fails to equip the child with skills of 'attacking' new
words and therefore retards reading. Children have to rely on their memory, which is often inadequate where words appear similar in shape and length for example, 'book' and 'look'. Furthermore, some of the words cannot be presented with picture or demonstration associations. How does one teach of? Is it possible to draw a picture to correspond to the word of or can one demonstrate it? Nuttall (1982) maintains that whatever the limitations, teachers find the Look-and-say (whole word) a convenient method because labels and captions on terms in the classroom often augment the teacher's effort. In a classroom environment, sentences such as "This is a book" with the object book presented at the same time and the wordbook immediately written on the blackboard dominate the practice in Kenyan lower primary schools (Matuu, 2000).

2.2.2.5 The sentence method

To overcome the discrepancies that bedevil the whole word method, the sentence method was devised. Whereas words carry meaning sentences convey messages (Pearson, 1981). This method argues that the sentence, and not the word or letters is the true unit in language expressing whole thoughts which are units of thinking (Huey, 1972).

It should be noted, however, that this is an extension of the Look-and-Say" method in that sentences are made up of words and in order to read the sentences the child as to read words (Ibid., 1981). But it goes a little further because the function words can easily be presented using this method. Research
is available to support the fact that if function words are taught using phonic or other methods without applying them in sentences their orthographic identities may be mastered without the children learning the semantic/syntactic identities of such words (Enriewike, 1980). This point underscores the need for mixed (eclectic) methods because no method appears comprehensive on its own.

2.2.3 Developing word recognition skills (word attack skills)

The task of the teacher is to help the child to be an independent reader who can advance without anybody's guidance. To do this, pupils must have certain skills of 'unlocking' the new words, which they come across, as they read on their own. A child who 'reads' out a word but cannot understand the meaning of what he 'reads' is wasting his time and will soon stop trying (Klein, 1876). Pappas (1970) puts it simply that:

"A child who pronounces words and 'barks' at it without realising the meaning for which the words /stand does not read.

Each method discussed above has with it certain inbuilt clues of "guessing" the meaning of a new word. However, unless the inbuilt skills are given prominence with individual teacher giving guidance in the process of 'unlocking" new words the clues may not be used at all.

Labels may differ, but experts in teaching reading have agreed on what constitutes "word attack skills." (Pappas, 1970; Hafner and Jolly, 1972; Duffy and Sherman
31


All said and done, it is not possible to isolate any one method or approach which is inherently superior to all others and which, of itself, offers the best chance of success in teaching children to read. Taylor (1973) argues "...the most important single factor in the whole process is the skill of the teacher. This outweighs all other elements in the attainment of the ultimate result."

Chark (1970) backs this idea when she says:

…That though in the short term a new method may appear to improve the standard of reading, in the long-term analysis there is no single best method of teaching reading. Some methods are better for some children and some teachers better use certain methods. The teacher is the important variable. What is important is that the teacher whatever methods she uses; is aware of the individual members of her class, and prepared to vary the approach to account for their strengths and weaknesses. Reasonably then, we tentatively suggest that a mixed approach is the most likely to harness the advantages and counteract the disadvantages inherent in any one way of teaching.

2.2.4 Assessment of readability of materials

Katharine (1984) emphasises the importance of teachers being able to make an accurate assessment of readability levels of books and work cards, both when selecting materials for purchase in the first instance and when choosing books
from the stockroom, that will match as closely as possible the reading levels of the various groups within a class.

Teachers habitually take into account such factors as presentation, interest level, vocabulary difficulty and conceptual demands, but they need also to be aware of the comprehension problems that can be caused by grammatical complexity and by certain types of discourse structure. Such an awareness is particularly valuable in those cases where the physical presentation of the book does not accurately reflect its levels of linguistic difficulty (Ibid., 1984). Gilliland and Merrit (1972) argues that it is not uncommon, e.g. for books with large print and full colour illustration to contain language that is more suitable for secondary pupils than for the juniors that the publishers have apparently had in mind.

The most important of all for teachers to be able to analyse the language structure of reading materials is that, having pinpointed linguistic difficulties, they are then in a position to provide explicit teaching to help children tackle them. The teachers aim should not be always to present pupils with the simplest language available. Books, which contain vocabulary and grammatical construction not commonly, used in every day speech are a potent source of language enrichment (OP. Cit. 1984). To choose only simply written books or more demanding ones would deprive children of this vital stimulus to their linguistic development (Pearson, 1987). The skilful teacher, who knows precisely which aspects of a text the pupils will find difficult, can afford to
present linguistically demanding material on occasions, so long as appropriate support is provided to help them master the new constructions.

Formulae for the assessment of readability of books are numerous. (Fry, 1968; McLaughlin, 1969; and Gunning, 1952) are just examples. But the demands they put on the teacher are such that one would be advised to use personal experience and syllabus word lists (Owino, 1986). In any case, in his own environment the teacher is best placed to tell the needs of his pupils. Certain common principles must however be applied in order to arrive at correct decision. The teacher may have to consider the following as enumerated by (Ibid, 1986:49):

(i) How well the pupils understand the words and phrases leading to relating the ideas to their own experience.

(ii) The speed at which the materials can be read with optimum Understanding.

(iii) The motivation factors, which encourage the pupils to continue reading.

2.2.5 Assessment of reading levels

As for the assessment of pupils reading levels, there are no less than ninety test types. A word of caution is, however, necessary. Testing reading is not the same type of operation as measuring height or weight. Reading is a complex skill involving many processes so teachers must be sure that they know which part of the skill they are evaluating (Ross, 1978). When a test has been
administered, the result should be well recorded for appropriate action. The teacher may need to provide the correct text group pupils according to their abilities or provide pupils according to their abilities or provide pupils with activities that will enable the pupils to read fruitfully. Hence, the teachers are faced with the responsibility of assessing pupils reading levels and keeping records, which form the basis for improvement strategies.

In Kenya the primary education syllabus (1992) suggests various types of tests for assessing reading levels in lower primary classes. These tests are:

(i) Matching words with objects or pictures
(ii) Identifying words on cards or on the blackboard
(iii) Sentence building with word cards
(iv) Word building with letter cards
(v) Matching written sentences with pictures

Other methods that can be used to assess pupils reading levels according to Dubin and Eskey (1988) include teacher observation, teacher-student interviews and homework assignments.

2.2.6 Materials for reading instruction

Pearson (1987) argues strongly that reading process cannot be developed successfully without something of substance to read, without materials that will engage the reader and without books that are worth reading.
And yet it has been known for teachers to introduce children to reading using no books at all! (Ibid, 1987). This must be like trying to learn to swim without water. Even amongst those books which are used as part of the resources for early reading programmes, there are some that are so dry and uninteresting that they must actually put children off reading rather like learning to swim in mud (Katharine (1984). These are books where the story is either of little value or in some cases, non-existent. This is because the story has been sacrificed in the name of structure, books in which the authors have become so pre-occupied with their own thoughts on what the process of reading might involve than the content, the very thing that should give a book its reason for existence has been forgotten. Thus children according to (Pearson, 1987)

"Are exposed to tests in which key words are repeated ad nauseam, in which attempts have been made to produce phonically consistent texts resulting to ludicrously tilted prose and in which simplicity has been confused with paucity."

Such books are unlikely to interest children without interest and will deny them of a very important incentive for learning. Staiger (1973:17) observes that:

"Many children are put off reading at the crucial early stage because of the poor quality of materials that they are expected to read."

Therefore, teachers should expose pupils to reading materials, which are meaningful, interesting, and which contain ideas familiar to the child. They can do this (expose) by reading short stories to pupils so that they can appreciate the fact that books are a source of pleasure and enjoyment. As they become
independent readers pupils should be encouraged to make good use to their free
time by venturing into storybooks and subject tests for enjoyment and gathering
classes states that at the end of the course pupils should have acquired ability to
"Communicate freely, follow subject courses and text-books and read for
pleasure and enjoyment."

If this aim is to be achieved, the teachers must expose children to a lot of
reading materials within and outside the school. How effectively this is done
will depend on whether the teachers realise the usefulness of library lessons and
their skills at conducting such lessons. Teachers’ concept of a library is
important because there is a tendency not to programme library lessons under
the pretext that books are not available. Current views (Pearson, 1981;
Artkinson, 1980) are that from magazines and newspapers dedicated teachers
can establish good class libraries. Cut-outs of stories, puzzles, riddles and other
language activities are pasted on cardboard for durability. These then can be
stocked in a safe place for use during the library lessons.

Huck (1998) lists three specific ways classroom teachers can strengthen the
child's interest in reading: Willingness on the part of the teacher to let each child
read on the level at which he can be successful, Create a climate which is
conducive to promote reading interest, Expose children to many books and to
many different kinds of books and reading to children.

The next chapter gives the methodology used in this study.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 Research design

3.1 Introduction

This research mainly sought to identify the practices followed in teaching reading in English in the Lower primary classes in Gatundu Division of Thika District. It was conducted by means of a survey. The information gathered can be considered to be representative of the instructional practices of teachers of reading in English for all Lower primary classes of schools within the Division.

The Lower- primary level was chosen because in the Kenyan education systems this is where the reading foundation is laid. This foundation determines the success in reading in the upper primary and secondary levels of school and thereafter.

3.2 Area of study and study population

3.2.1 Area of study

The study was carried out in Gatundu Division of rural Thika District. The one division was selected randomly from 6 divisions in the district. In the rural areas pupils are instructed in the vernacular from standard one to standard three and in these years English is taught as a subject where the pupils are introduced to the basic language skills. Therefore, in the rural area the child is exposed to
three languages (English, Kiswahili and Vernacular). The child is taught literacy skills in all the three languages in school.

### 3.2.2 Sample and sample size

The subjects under study were selected from teachers of English in lower primary classes in Gatundu division of rural Thika District.

The sample of the study consisted of eighteen (18) lower primary school teachers who were selected from six primary schools. The Eighteen teachers participated as subjects in the study. The schools selected were:

- Kimunyu Primary School
- Gachooka Primary School
- Kibii Primary School
- Mutomo Primary School
- Gatundu primary school
- Gatumo primary school

### 3.3 Sampling procedures

The schools that were used in this study were randomly selected using the balloting method. The names of the 12 schools in Gatundu division (which was also randomly selected from the 6 divisions of rural Thika District) were written on pieces of paper of equal size, which were then folded and put into a
small box. These were shuffled and the above six schools were selected randomly. This procedure gave each school an equal chance of being selected.

In each of the above schools, one class 1, 2 and 3 were selected again by balloting. This applied in only Gachooka Primary School and Gatundu Primary School, which has three (3) streams for each class. The research instruments were then administered to all the teachers in the selected classes 1, 2 and 3. Due to limited time a total of twelve lessons taught by these teachers were observed. That is, one lesson in each class (1, 2, 3) was observed in four schools (Kimunyu, Kibii, Gachooka and Mutumo)

3.4 Data collection procedures

The study entailed the use of a questionnaire (see appendix 1) administered to the teachers, informal interviews with the teachers and an actual classroom observation.

3.4.1 Questionnaire development and administration

The questionnaire was the major instrument of the study. It was designed to elicit information on:

1. The methods teachers employ in teaching reading in English in lower primary classes.
2 Methods used by the teachers to assess reading levels of pupils in lower primary classes.

3 Assessment of readability of materials.

4 Methods used by teachers to expose pupils to variety of reading materials.

5 Resource materials used by the lower primary school teachers.

Following two letters one written to the Assistant Education officer and the other to the Head teachers, the researcher visited the schools in early January and met the Head teachers.

The purpose of the visit was to have them arrange for the researcher to meet the lower primary English teachers. A week later the researcher visited the schools and gave a questionnaire to each of the identified subjects and asked them to complete it within a period of one week. Arrangements were also made between the researcher and the teachers for the day and time they could be observed in class. The questionnaire was delivered by the researcher to the subjects and collected in completed form from the respondents by the researcher.

Subjects were informed what the purpose of the researcher was and that the information would be used for descriptive and not evaluative purposes.
3.4.2 Actual classroom observation

Twelve teachers were observed over a lesson of thirty minutes each. The observation was carried out on different days for each teacher in order to allow for an analysis of a wide range of instructional patterns followed in different classroom situations. Teachers were selected on the basis of their willingness to be observed.

An observation schedule (see appendix 2) constructed by the investigator was used. The investigator observed and checked against her list the aspects she observed. This observation was meant to validate the responses on the teacher’s questionnaire.

3.4.3 Informal interviews

Informal interviews were also conducted at the end of each lesson to elucidate points, which had not been made clear by both the questionnaire and the observations.

3.5 Data analysis and presentation

Each item in the questionnaire belonged to one of the areas under survey. The responses to it were therefore, added together to get the total number of responses per item. These were grouped according to the types of responses made.
The responses were expressed as percentages of the survey sample. The outcomes were tabulated.

From the analysis of the data, the researcher was able to interpret the findings for the instructional practices used in the teaching of reading in English in lower primary classes in Gatundu Division of Thika District. It was also possible for the researcher to come up with suggestions and recommendations depending on the interpretations that came out as a result of the study.
4.0 Data analysis and interpretation

4.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the responses of the teachers to the questionnaire (see appendix 1). Eighteen teachers were used in this study. One teacher from each of the 3 classes of the lower primary in the six schools selected as the sample to represent Gatundu Division was used. All completed the questionnaire.

Twelve teachers were observed in actual classroom teaching. A total of twelve lessons were observed each lasting 30 minutes. Although the data obtained from the observation and informal interviews is not reported separately in this chapter, it was used to validate, some of the responses in the questionnaire.

Data analysis and interpretation has been presented in four sections as follows:

a) Methods teachers use to teach reading in English and to expose pupils to varieties of reading materials.

b) Assessment of reading levels.

c) Assessment of readability of materials.

d) Resource materials used by teachers

Analysis of the data is in the form of raw scores. Percentages are then calculated from these and presented in tables.
4.2 Teaching methods

Section one (1) of the questionnaire sought information on the methods of teaching reading employed in English reading lessons. The results are tabulated below:

**Table 1: Methods of teaching reading in English adopted by teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>No of Teachers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alphabetic</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonic</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syllabication</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole word</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eclectic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the specific methods used in teaching reading in English, the three most popular are the Alphabetic method (27.8%), the phonic (16.7%) and the whole word method (16.7%). 5.5% of them said they use the syllabic method and the Eclectic method while 11.1% story and the sentence methods respectively.

The two popular methods above (Phonic and Alphabetic) are informed by the bottom up model (Chapter 2). These methods enable the learners to excel in phonetic decoding and word recognition. At the early stages of reading, word recognition skill is very important in that it enables the learners to build up a word bank, which can be used in comprehending and interpreting a text.
The other methods except the Eclectic method are informed by the top-down model. According to this model reading is a thought getting process, and therefore meaning is not gained from individual words but form the surrounding context.

These methods i.e. story, sentence and syllabic emphasis meaning from the beginning. A plausible reason as to why they are not popular at this early stage is that pupils are beginning to learn how to read and hence have not accumulated enough words to enable them read for meaning.

The teachers observed were familiar with the methods, but they did not show awareness of the fact that the ‘whole word’ (look and say) is useful for beginners because young children recognize things and ideas as wholes, more or less vaguely at first proceeding gradually to the recognition of details (Thorndike 1972). They gave no order of sequence in the methods they preferred when teaching. Most of them thought that the phonic method should be used during the first few weeks when children go to school. All the teachers said that they used more than one method in the same lesson. But during the observation this assertion was not confirmed. For example, in most of the schools reading lessons in class 3 were performed in the same way. The pupils were given textbooks and asked to read a loud as the teacher listened. This is an inappropriate method of teaching reading especially in this class. This method according to Schonell (1946) produces ‘word Callers’. In class three, pupils are
supposed to comprehend and interpret text read because they have acquired sufficient sight vocabulary to facilitate comprehension (Pearson 1987).

Therefore, teachers of reading in English at the lower classes should not over rely on one method like reading loud because it only emphasizes intonation, rhythm and pronunciation. It leaves out others skills of reading such as comprehension. Since reading is a complex skill, all the skills be taught and developed in learners to make them effective and efficient readers.

Table 2: Teachers assessment of pupils ability to use word attack skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>No. of Teachers</th>
<th>Context clues</th>
<th>Structural</th>
<th>Phonic</th>
<th>Dictionary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>√ XXXXX</td>
<td>XXXXXXXX</td>
<td>√√√√√</td>
<td>XXXXXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>√√XXXX</td>
<td>XXXXXXXX</td>
<td>XXX√√√</td>
<td>XXXXXXXX</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>√ XXXXX</td>
<td>√XXXXXX</td>
<td>X√√√XX</td>
<td>√XXXXXX</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:

√ Use of the skill

X Skill not used at all.

Teachers’ choice of the ‘word attack’ skills, which their pupils could use independently, showed that either they were not familiar with these skills or it was a further confirmation of the inefficient instructional practice in reading in English. It was the researcher’s feeling that the teachers did not understand what was meant by “word attack skills because of the anomaly in teachers’ judgment
of the pupils' ability to use these skills. A child who can use the dictionary clues usually would be able to use the other 3 skills. Dictionary clues involve the use of both phonic and structural analysis. Context clues are useful in verifying the use of a word even when dictionary meaning is given.

Taking class 3 teachers as an example, table 2 shows that one of the teachers indicated on the questionnaire that his pupils could use all the skills except the phonic clues. It is unlikely that a child who can use structural analysis cannot apply phonic skills. For example by the time he recognizes and isolates prefixes and suffixes, he is already using some phonic skill'.

If they were familiar with these skills then the anomaly can be described as inefficient instructional practice observed in classrooms. In class one, it would be expected that pupils should rely more on picture clues than on phonic ones.

The theory behind this assertion states that by standard one pupils' average age is seven, an age when they are not likely to have leant enough sight vocabulary to aid the use of. Phonic Skills (Bowers, 1978) of the six class one teaches in the sample only one indicated in the questionnaire that his pupils could use context clues.

From table3 below, (12) teachers thought that teaching of reading was difficult. The twelve were further asked to give reasons why teaching of reading in English is difficult.
Table 3: Teacher’s opinion about the teaching of reading in English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>No. of teachers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficult</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not answered</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

They stated reasons for the difficult in different ways.

Table 4: Teachers reasons for the difficulty of teaching of reading in English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of Reasons</th>
<th>No. of teachers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inadequacy of textbooks</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of pupil motivation or interest</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother tongue interference</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of readiness/practice of the language.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequacy of instructional materials.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overcrowded classrooms</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two new languages to be learned at the same time</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents demand to Promote pupils to next grade even when they should repeat</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most prevalent problem cited was the inadequacy of textbooks (27.8%). Lack of pupil motivation or interest is second (22.2%). Third is mother tongue interference 16.7%. Fourth is lack of readiness and practice in learning English.
(11.1%). Except for the problem of inadequacy of textbooks discussions with teachers revealed one interesting and important observation about these. That is, most pupils start attending school without the necessary basic prerequisite aptitude for learning reading in English. For instance, on joining standard one the majority of the pupils will not have attended any nursery school. Teachers have to in fact first teach them how to talk (in mother tongue), for they will, like most rural children, still be speech shy.

Though given less rating but nonetheless hampering efforts to teach reading in English are such problems as, Inadequacy of instructional materials (5.6%), overcrowded classrooms (5.6%), two new languages to be learned at the same time (5.6%) and the fact that parents demand to promote pupils to next grade even when they should repeat. The two languages referred to are English and Kiswahili. Teachers pointed out that sometimes pupils take long or out rightly fail to distinguish the pronunciation and grammatical rules that govern Kiswahili from those of English. This checks their effort to learn reading in English.

Although the reasons in this table (4) may appear genuine, some of them can easily be overcome by extra commitment among teachers and efficient instructional practice. A teacher who is the master of his situation and who has been in the field for a considerable time should have accumulated adequate reading materials from cut outs. It is possible for a teacher to make simple
reading materials from stories from children’s sections and other stories of interest from News papers.

As for the large numbers of pupils, effective grouping would reduce the strain on teachers especially when group leaders are used to guide other pupils in the activities programmed by the teachers. There was very little evident use of grouping technique even where textbooks were few and could only be read by pupils in groups.

The last reason presents a major difficulty because Parents want their children to get through the primary cycle as soon as possible. The best a teacher could do is to organize remedial work for backward pupils without resorting to making them repeat. Teachers did not Programme remedial work for the backward readers because there was no time for it.

Table 5: Methods used by teachers to expose pupils to reading materials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>No. of Teachers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i Class Libraries</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii Reading aloud to students</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iii Library lessons</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iv Listening to individual children read</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>v Opt for exchange of creative stories composed by pupils</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All the respondents indicated that they do not use class libraries and library lessons as methods of exposing pupils to reading materials. A plausible explanation for this situation is that there were neither class researchers nor school libraries observed in all the school libraries observed in all the schools surveyed.

55.6% of the teachers used listening to individual children read method. These teachers were mainly class one teachers. This could be explained by the fact that the pupils in these classes have not learnt sufficient words to enable them read individually (Thonis, 1970).

Only 16.7% of the teachers used exchange of creative stories composed by pupils as a method. These teachers were mainly from class three. In class 3 most of the pupils have developed a ‘word bank’, which they can utilize to compose meaningful stories. Thus, they can exchange what they have written with other pupils if only their teachers encourage them.

Reading aloud to students was only used by 27.7% of the teachers. When interviewed, these teachers said that they used this method incases where there were no textbooks for pupils to read individually. Unfortunately the value of reading to children as a device for teaching reading is often not recognized, many regard the activity as filigree to entertain children for the last fifteen minutes of the school day (Pearson, 1987). But Teal (1984) maintains that
reading aloud to children is beneficial in developing aspects necessary for the development of literacy skills and that being read to is one type of experience that delightfully and effectively ushers a child into the word of literacy.

In this study it was observed that 55.6% of expend a great deal of time and effort in listening to children. This invariably poses enormous problems according to (Matuu, 2000). In attempting to give sufficient attention to all children and to all areas of the curriculum simply because the exercise of hearing each child read frequently is so time consuming. Therefore reading aloud to pupils in lower classes should be used as an instructional device and not an alternative to lack of text books.

4.3 Assessment of reading levels

Information on teachers' evaluation procedure includes data on methods of pupil assessment and evaluation, the most popular skills evaluated in reading and the reasons why a teacher should keep reading records of his pupils.

Table (6) reveals that the most popular procedure that teachers use in evaluating their pupils ability to read is, assessing their progress through reading test (50%). The next popular is method is teacher observation (27.8%).
Table 6: Methods teachers use for assessing reading levels of pupils

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>No. of teachers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Reading test</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teacher Observation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Teachers student Interviews</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Home work Assignments</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Dictation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Assessing by monitoring</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of borrowing books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher-student interviews are conducted by only 11.1% of the teachers. This method would be expected to be more popular than what it is. A plausible explanation could be unfavourable pupil – teacher ratio (see table 4). The immense size of some classes would preclude meaningful reading interviews for each and every pupil.

The other methods of evaluation used by teachers are dictation (5.6%) and homework assignment (5.6%). No teacher indicated that he/she used frequency of borrowing books as a method of evaluating pupils' ability of reading. This could be explained by the fact that the schools surveyed had no class libraries or class readers. Hence, there are no books to be borrowed by the pupils.
The researcher observed that various reading tests were used during the reading lessons. These included sentence completion (with blank space) word completion (with missing letters), Drawing pictures to match the word and Oral tests.

Oral tests were mostly used in class one. This may be due to the fact that most of class one pupils are handicapped in reading and writing and have limited word bank (Garry, 1953).

Table 7: Skills in which pupils are tested most.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>No. of teachers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a Recognizing words accurately</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b Use of word form clues</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c Reading in a natural tone or voice.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d Understanding and interpretation of meaning</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e Attempts to read independently</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The findings (table 7) show that recognizing words accurately (33.3%), understanding and interpretation of meaning (33.3%) and reading in a natural tone or voice are, of all the skills suggested, the most tested.

According to Ekwall’s model of reading skills, reading involves recognizing words and understanding them. The other skills such as the use of words form
clues (11.1%), reading in a natural tone or voice (16.7%) and attempts to read independently are sub-skills, which make up the complex reading skill (Ross 1978). Attempts to read independently are the least tested. This could be explained by the fact that all the schools did not have class readers or class libraries. Hence the students were not exposed to extensive reading. In all the schools observed there was over reliance on the class text book i.e. progressive English Course book 1,2,3

Ekwall’s model of reading skills suggests that teachers should test all the skills involved in reading, this helps in determining the reading levels of learners. However, in this study it was observed that some of the skills were most tested as compared to the others. For example, class one teachers were observed to mainly test recognition of letters and words without considering the meaning of those words.

Table 8: Frequency of keeping pupils’ ability to read records

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>No. of teachers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Daily</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Weekly</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Monthly</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Termly</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Yearly</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to table 8, all the teachers indicated that they kept records of pupils reading progress. 72.2% of them keep their pupils ability to read records weekly, while 16.7% keep them monthly and only 11.1% keep them daily. Actual classroom observations and informal interviews held with teachers tend to disagree with these figures. It was found that in practice, most teachers infrequently keep records on pupil reading ability. Subsequently, the same teachers were asked to give reason why a teacher should keep reading records of his pupils. The reasons given are tabulated below.

Table 9: Reasons why teachers should keep reading records of pupils.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>No. of teachers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identification of reading difficulties</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Monitoring of children’s mastery of specific reading skills</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Help the teacher group the pupils</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Identify effectiveness of teaching methods</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Helps the teacher plan for remedial work</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the findings 50% of the teachers indicated that they kept reading records of their pupils so as to identify reading difficulties of these pupils. Another reason that was given by most teachers (27.8%) was to monitor children’s mastery of specific skills. Most of the teachers who gave this reason were found out to be class one teachers. The researcher observed that the class one teachers closely monitored whether the pupils had mastered the recognition
skill of both words and letters. Those who failed to master the skills were required to repeat the exercises severally and the reading out of letters.

This is a very important skill at this level because it ensures that the pupils have enough words to facilitate the reading in other classes. Other reasons given by a few teachers were to help the teacher group pupils (16.6%), identify the effectiveness of teaching methods (5.6%) help the teacher plan for remedial work (11.1%).

Plausible explanations can be given why a few teachers gave the above three reasons. The teachers said during the informal interviews that they had no time to plan for the remedial work. They were more concerned with completing the syllabus.

The one teacher who gave the reason for keeping the pupils records as; to help identify the effectiveness of teaching methods, when asked to further elaborate the reasons, he said that he had taught for many years and he has realized that when certain methods are used to teach reading, pupils perform better and participate in class actively. So the records help him to keep an inventory of the methods, which give good results.

The researcher also observed that grouping of pupils as a teaching procedure was not commonly practiced. In schools where it was done, it was haphazardly
practiced. The concerned teachers gave no reasons as to why they grouped the learners in different groups.

4.4 Assessment of readability of materials

Satisfactory information was not available to deduce whether teachers assessed readability of materials used in the process of teaching reading. Lack of Libraries ruled out possibility of personal initiative among teachers to choose materials for their pupils. The teachers used basic class texts recommended by the syllabus for example the Progressive English Course book for class 1, 2 and 3. The texts were used page after page and without proper planning that can take into account pupils’ ability to comprehend the Language involved.

Despite the unavailability of class and school libraries 6 out of 18 teachers (see the table below) indicated in the questionnaire that they did some assessment of materials before they chose the texts for pupils to use (see table 5). Lessons observed were not pupil centred and quite often the content to be covered was not specifically stated for one to assess pupils’ level of attainment.
Table 10: Methods teachers use for choosing pupils’ reading materials.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basics of Choice</th>
<th>No.of teachers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Following syllabus recommendations.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. From books read during teachers primary school education.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. According to pupils interest</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. According teachers assessment of pupils’ reading levels</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 3 teachers (16.7%) thought that pupils’ interest was useful in deciding what materials pupils should use. Choice of materials was broadly based on syllabuses recommendations (38.9%) and on the basis of teachers assessment of pupils reading levels (33.3%). 11.1% of teachers also based the choice of pupils materials on books read during teachers primary school education.

Choice of materials was broadly taken to include the passages read in class and teaching aids. In all the schools surveyed there were no class readers and therefore the teachers choice of materials did not refer to class readers. The twelve lessons observed did not seem to concur with teachers’ response to the questionnaire item. The lessons showed that the teachers did not assess pupils’ attention span and their pupils’ ability to comprehend what was being taught as the lesson progressed.

When interviewed on the formulas they used for assessing readability of materials, the teachers (18) did not know that there were tests available for
measuring such levels. They said they were not trained to judge whether a passage was within the reading levels of their pupils. That, to them, was the work of syllabus writers and those who recommended the use of materials.

### 4.5 materials for reading instruction

**Table 11: Resource materials used by teachers in teaching reading English**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Materials</th>
<th>No. Of teachers</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Text books</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Centre of interest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Flash cards</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D Pictures/ Pie chart</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E Models</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tabulated information (table 11 above) shows that the most commonly used materials by teachers are pictures/pie charts (33.3%), Models (27.8%) and textbooks (22.2%). The most notable in their non-availability are: Centre of interest (5.6%) and use of flash cards (11.1%).

It is also noteworthy that 77.8% of the respondent reported that they do not have textbooks, a vital resource in any educational enterprise. Literacy entails the use of textbooks in order to read and write words (Garet *et al.*, 1994). The textbook thus remains the means as well as the target of teaching to read and write in any language.
It was observed that where there were no textbooks, the teachers were forced to use their initiative to come up with well sequenced language material for each lesson. Lack of initiative and laziness can lead a teacher to dwell only on familiar ground leaving other aspects of language untouched.

Centre of interest/nature corners according to Pearson (1987) are vital materials necessary for training visual perception and discrimination. Yet, only about 5.6% of the teachers use them in lower primary classes.

In one instance, a teacher in standard 3 opted to use flash cards perhaps because she was preparing a special lesson for the researcher. The cards were brown and the writing was in red ink. The words were all written in capital letters and these were not consistent in shape. In short, the flash cards did not motivate the pupils to learn the new words.
CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 An overview

The study was undertaken with the major purpose of determining whether reading in English is being taught effectively at class 1-3 in the primary level of the school system in Kenya. The study specifically focused on:

i) The methods discussed in chapter II section 2.2.2 of this study.

ii) Assessment of pupils reading levels and readability of materials

The view of the researcher in this study was that, if reading is taught well, pupils would become fluent readers capable of communicating with the writer both emotionally and intellectually as they read, and be able to:

(a) Recognise the main idea or purpose of what is read.

(b) See relationships among facts.

(c) Grasp sequences of ideas and predict outcomes.

(d) Draw conclusions from what is read.

These abilities would help the pupils to study on their own across the curriculum thereby covering some sections of the syllabuses without having to wait for the constant guidance of the teachers.

In order to collect useful data with which to arrive to conclusions about the
instructional practice in reading, four objectives were set out in chapter 1, (pp. 5). Some basic assumptions were also listed on the same page to guide the outcomes of the study especially for information, which the researcher thought, would not have been forthcoming in a simple survey such as this one. Both the objectives and the basic assumptions have been used to draw conclusions and make recommendations for further research as presented in this chapter.

5.2 Conclusions from the findings

While describing the findings in the previous chapter, some pertinent conclusions have already been made with regard to the objectives and basic assumptions of the study. In this chapter some of these have been brought together and others added so as to give an overall view of the conclusions drawn. The following are the conclusions made:

The teachers’ attempt to use the methods discussed in chapter 2 was haphazard as they failed to vary the practice drills so that the reading skills could become part of pupil’s reading habits. Teachers told pupils to read or say monotonously after them the words and sentences that sometimes were written on the board. Teachers indicated in the questionnaire that they used various methods to teach reading in English (table 1). These teachers did not show that they could use them in a classroom situation. The lessons observed being taught revealed a shallow use of these methods giving further impression that the pupils could not have benefited much from such practice.
Evident attempts by the teachers to use the word attack skills rarely went beyond helping pupils to pronounce the words. Apart from two teachers who tried to give the meanings of words after silent reading, no teacher provided practice drills which could not only prepare pupils to pronounce the words, but also to spell them accurately through flash cards using the new words in various ways to master contextual application and vary practice drills. For example they could have applied the words in role-play, language games and simulations. Their responses in the questionnaire showed that they were unclear about these skills. Where they indicated awareness of these skills, it was in such a way that the supposed knowledge contradicted the general practice.

Except for the pictures in pupils’ books, teaching aids were hardly used contrary to the guides recommendations. Flash cards used were in capital letters and colour of cards and inks used reduced visibility. Exposure time was short and there was no attempt to use them in a variety of ways to arouse pupil’s interest.

Both in terms of quantity and variety, instructional materials are inadequate in schools. Basal and supplementary readers are not used; not to mention the absence of small class and/or school libraries in most schools materials and resources such as manila paper (from which different types of charts and cards can be made) printed materials, nature corners and centre of interest, models and pictures though lacking in most schools are essential for effective instruction in reading in English in lower primary classes.
The inadequacy of textbooks and the unfavourable pupil-teacher ratio perhaps explain why lower primary school teachers do not seem to be aware and hardly make use of the various procedures that can be used to evaluate reading in English. Teachers, however use tests and examinations as the prominent techniques of evaluating a number of skills in reading.

The data revealed by the questionnaires, the observations and the informal interviews confirm that pupils are not being exposed to all the reading skills which would be possible when both intensive and extensive reading are programmed. The word attack skills are haphazardly applied in an interesting way with the teachers showing lack of understanding of these skills because they often conclude the practice drills after pupils have only repeated the words and sentences monotonously often in a chorus. Reading aloud which is characteristic of all the lessons observed during field work does no more than produce word callers' incapable of communicating with the writer emotionally and intellectually. Even the intensive reading is not done thoroughly with thoughtful guiding questions to challenge and arouse pupils' interest so that they can interpret what is read in the light of their own experiences. Such practices together with a total lack of extensive reading lessons meant that most of the skills remained uncovered.
In their endeavour to be effective in teaching reading English, teachers grapple with a number of problems. The most prevalent is the inadequacy of teaching resources. Other problems are lack of pupil motivation and interest, mother tongue interference and pupils' lack of readiness to learn English.

No remedial teaching is programmed for backward readers. The majority of the teachers aim at getting through the basic texts and also completing the syllabus. Pupils who are slow at silent reading of the passages for comprehension are not given an opportunity to finish them before an oral comprehension check is done. In any case interruptions, such as mispronunciation and wrong phrasing often interfere with comprehension. The result is that pupils appear frustrated when they fail to provide correct responses because they had not comprehended the passages.

5.3 Recommendations

a) Clear forethought and resourcefulness should be demonstrated by teachers of reading in English in lower primary classes. One sure way of doing this is providing excursions to whom clay and paper work, story telling by the teachers, reading, reciting poems and rhymes by the teacher as children join in and choral speaking, singing and dramatizing. Most pupils entering standard one and even those in succeeding classes would certainly need these as basic prerequisite for reading researchers.
b) A balance should be struck in the weight of attention given to choral, individual (pupil) oral and silent reading.

c) All teachers should keep records of their pupils’ ability to read regularly, preferably on a fortnightly basis.

d) There is need for developing a continuous in-service programme in English reading instruction. It is through such professional activities as seminars and workshops that teachers can update their pedagogical prowess.

e) Remedial teaching in reading should form part of correct planning. Errors made by pupils in lessons observed clearly indicated that most pupils required special instruction in order to avoid recurrence of such errors. When reading difficulties evident in these lessons are not corrected, a very serious backwash effect is evident because as they terminate their formal primary education, such pupils soon become illiterate and increase societies burden of eradicating illiteracy.

English subject panels should be established at divisional and district levels. These should find out ways and means of best helping teachers of reading in English that have professional difficulties.
5.4 Recommendations for further research

The importance of reading in English hardly needs to be overemphasized.

Further research could throw light on:

a) Remedial reading programmes in English Vis-a-avis academic achievement of primary school pupils.

b) Individualisation of English reading instruction.

c) A comparison of Kiswahili and English reading instructions methods in primary schools.

d) A comparative study between the schools with well stocked and well used libraries and those without would reveal if there is any contribution libraries can make towards the development of reading abilities of children.

e) Research is needed to prepare the groundwork for standardized reading tests, which would establish national targets, at which all reading instructors should aim.

f) There is a need to find out whether trainee teachers are being exposed effectively to the techniques of teaching reading.
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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Questionnaire

You are requested to answer the question as honestly as possible to the best of your knowledge. The information thus given will be solely for study purposes and nothing else.

School ____________________________________________

District __________________________________________

Division __________________________________________

Class ____________________________________________

Number of pupils in class ___________________________
A **Instructional methods**

1. List the methods you use in teaching reading in English

2. What order of preference do you use with the methods listed in (1) above.

3. Give reasons why each of these methods are appropriate for beginners in the teaching of reading.
4 Do you notice any change(s) in the attitude/responses of your pupils in class when you use any of the above methods?

Yes ()
No ()

If yes which one(s)

5 Are there times when you use more than one method in the same lesson.

Yes ()
No ()

6 I find the teaching of reading

(a) Easy
(b) Difficult

7 Give reason(s) which support(s) your choice in either of the alternatives in six (6) above.
8 Tick the word attack skills' which your pupils can now independently

(i) Context clues ( )
(ii) Phonic Clues ( )
(iii) Structural clues ( )
(iv) Dictionary clues ( )

9 Approximately what percentage of your class can use all the word attack skills in 8 above?

100% ( )
75% ( )
50% ( )
25% ( )
10% ( )
B. Assessment of readability of materials

1. How do you choose pupils reading material?


2. What methods do you use for assessing readability of materials that you expose your learners to?


C. Assessment of reading levels

1. List five methods you use for assessing reading levels of pupils.


2. How often do you keep records of pupils reading progress?
3. How often do you use a progress chart for assessing children's ability in reading?

(i) Daily 
(ii) Weekly 
(iii) Fortnightly 
(iv) Termly 

4. In these assessments to which skills of reading do you pay most attention to? List three.

5. Give reason(s) why a teacher should keep reading records of his pupils.
6. How often do you give written assessments of the following nature? 
Indicate by giving the number of assessments per term in the boxes given below.

(a) Sentence completion (with blank spaces) ( )
(b) Word completion (with missing letters) ( )
(c) Drawing picture to match the word ( )
(a) Others (Specify)

Reading materials

1. What resource materials do you use in preparation and teaching of reading in English?

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

2. What methods do you use to expose pupils to a variety of reading materials?
Appendix 2

Observation schedule

1. The class being observed
   (a) Standard one
   (b) Standard Two
   (c) Standard Three

2. Name of the teacher ________________________________

3. Number of children in class __________________________

4. How many are (a) Boys ________
    (b) Girls ________

5. Points to be observed by the researcher
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect Observed</th>
<th>Lesson One</th>
<th>Lesson Two</th>
<th>Lesson Three</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methods Used by the teacher</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>(a) Phonic</td>
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<td>(d) Look and say</td>
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<tr>
<td>(i) Word</td>
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<td>(ii) Sentence</td>
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<td>(e) Learner centred</td>
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<td>(f) Eclectic</td>
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<td>(f) Dictionary</td>
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<td>Reading Skills emphasized</td>
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<td>(i) Word recognition skills</td>
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<td>(ii) Interpretation skills</td>
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<td>(c) Charts</td>
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<td>(d) Own made-up notes</td>
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<td>(e) Planned activities</td>
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<td>(f) Flash cards</td>
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<td>(i) Class libraries</td>
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<td>(ii) Reading aloud to students</td>
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<td>(iii) Library lessons</td>
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<td>Level</td>
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<td>2. Make-up own exercise</td>
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