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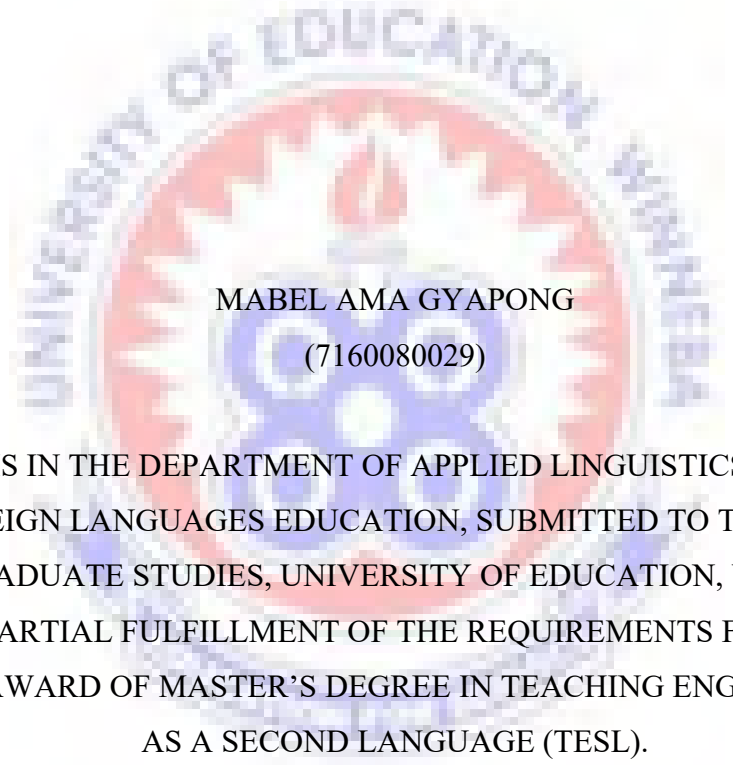
IMPROVING READING SKILLS OF PRIMARY FIVE PUPILS OF SALVATION ARMY PRIMARY SCHOOL, APAM

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2019

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

IMPROVING READING SKILLS OF PRIMARY FIVE PUPILS OF
SALVATION ARMY PRIMARY SCHOOL, APAM

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DECLARATION

I, Mabel Ama Gyapong declare that this Thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE……………………………

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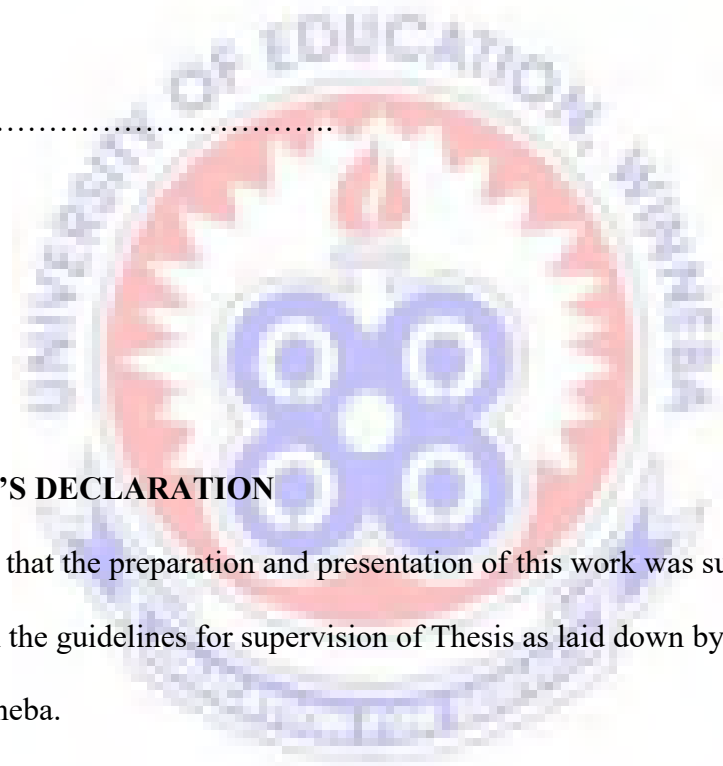
SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised by me in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of Thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: Assoc. Prof. Charles Owu-Ewie.

SIGNATURE……………………………

DATE…………………………………..

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

To the loving memory of my late parents and brother Antwi of blessed memory.

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ABSTRACT

Reading is one of the basic skills that a child has to master during their first school years to be able to assimilate new knowledge and skills in future. The aim of the study was to explore factors that contribute to reading difficulties among primary five learners and the challenges faced by teachers in teaching them how to read. The sample comprised sixty (60) participants drawn from the Salvation Army Primary School in Apam. The study employed the qualitative research design based on interpretivism and verbatim descriptions of events. Information was elicited from respondents using semi-structured interview and observation. The study found that most of the primary five pupils were not able to read fluently as expected of their age and class. As they read, they committed errors such as mispronouncing, substituting, adding and omitting of some words. The teachers had their own perceptions of the causes of reading difficulties and these included, language and communication problems, overdependence on the local language and inadequate teaching and learning materials. There was also a significant connection between teachers' methods of teaching reading and actual performance of learners. The study further revealed that teachers faced a number of challenges in teaching reading to these learners. These challenges included, parents' poor socio-economic background, poor infrastructure e.g. tables and chairs, and others. Pupils' overdependence on and use of the local language during reading were also found to be factors contributing to pupils' inability to read. Based on these findings, the researcher has recommended that apart from just providing adequate learning and teaching materials and procuring durable and adequate furniture, varied methods of teaching how to read such as the whole word method and phonemic awareness should be used.
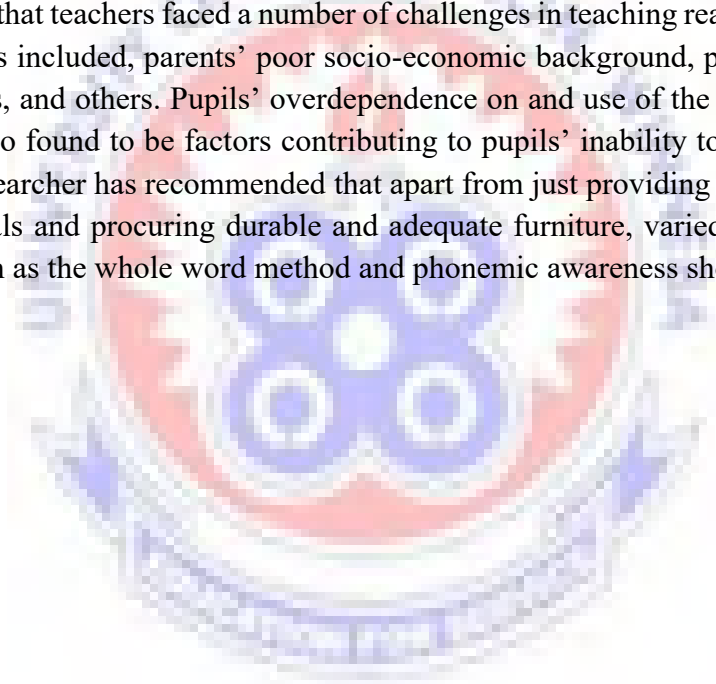
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Globally, reading difficulties have been estimated to be at two to five percent among school-going children (Wong, 1998). Research by Gross (1995) has revealed that in the United Kingdom among the English-speaking children, "out of the primary classes two and three children whose reading was assessed, approximately a quarter were functioning at a low level for their grade and approximately one in twenty, were hardly able to read at all" (p. 143). It is therefore imperative that teachers teach pupils to learn to read in early grades so that these pupils will develop the habit and culture of reading to learn.

1.1 Background to the study

According to the International Reading Association (IRA) (2014), reading forms the basis for all other areas of learning, and it is expected that children succeed in the process because when children are able to apply reading competencies independently, they succeed in the academic activities. This research has focused on identifying basic literacy skills that are reliably assessed to understand the reading process in typically achieving and struggling readers. Furthermore, these research efforts have aided the ability to identify and to respond to children who may have reading difficulties in the early school years.

On the African scene, Mwanamukubi (2013) noted that a study involving fifteen countries revealed that most of the pupils read below what was expected of their grade levels while some of them were not able to read at all. The author lamented that 97.6% of primary six pupils were virtually unable to read and indicated that such revelations do not paint a good picture about what is happening in the primary schools. The relevant questions to answer include: where lies the problem? Is it the pupils who are poor readers? Is there something wrong with the literacy curriculum? Could it be the teachers who are ill-equipped, or there is something fundamentally

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wrong with the teaching strategies? All these questions deserve to be answered, for the problem to be adequately resolved.

On the local front, researchers in Ghana have encountered similar reading difficulties of primary school children. Kuyini (2010) reported that poor reading is one of the major problems that confront students at the basic school level in the country. The author noted that the poor reading problem has resulted in poor student performance in other subjects and English language in particular at the basic level and beyond. In South Africa, since 2000, there has been a number of interventions to address the reading crisis at the basic education level (Meier, 2011; Motshekga, 2014; & Piper, 2009).

The Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) studies in Ghana conducted in 2013 and later in 2015 provided data on the current state of reading performance among primary pupils in public schools. EGRA was developed in 2006, and it has since been adapted for use in more than 65 countries and in over 100 languages. EGRA can be used as a system-level progress monitoring tool or for programme evaluation purposes (UNESCO, 2015; Ghana EGRA Report, 2015).

In Ghana, EGRA was administered in the Ghanaian language of instruction (LOI) in selected schools (Akuapem Twi, Asante Twi, Dagaare, Dagbani, Dangme, Ewe, Ga, Gonja, Fante, Kasem, or Nzema), as well as in English (Ghana EGRA Report, 2015). At each sampled school, ten pupils (five males and five females) were randomly selected from a P2 classroom. Trained GES assessors administered the two EGRAs. EGRA offers several purposes. First, it serves as a baseline of early reading acquisition. This is clearly seen with large donors (UNESCO, 2014), NGOs (Concern Worldwide, 2014) and academics (Halliday, et al., 2012). Second, EGRA guides the content that is included in an instructional programme. For example, the Early Grade Reading: Igniting Education for All report (Gove and Cvelich, 2011) outlined the EGRA results

from multiple continents, summarizing zero scores (i.e., the share of students unable to read a single word in a grade-level passage) for multiple languages and countries.

These types of results serve as the foundation for programme content usually funded by large-scale donors. Third, EGRA helps in the evaluation of programmes. This is seen in many pilot studies to inform country-wide reforms (Piper & Korda, 2011) and academic research from various disciplines (Halliday, et al., 2014). Because of its informed theoretical framework and consistent procedures, EGRA provides valid and reliable information for each of the purposes that have been described. Finally, EGRA provides a common platform or language to discuss children's literacy abilities. For example, when presenting the results on the passage reading subtask, there is a means to understand the extent to which the children can handle grade-level text.

EGRA is based on many subtasks and there is need to be concerned about the selection of subtasks for some intervention designs for which EGRA is not sensitive. An intervention that aims to improve social and emotional development, a domain of school readiness, will likely not show gains through most EGRA subtasks. In a nutshell, EGRA should be considered as a research-based collection of individual subtasks that measure some of the foundational skills needed for reading acquisition in alphabetic languages. The purpose and the context for which EGRA is used contribute to its parameters. Its theoretical framework allows for it to be adapted to other languages relatively quickly to have it available soon after the need is identified.

The context in which EGRA is used determines some of its parameters. It has been used primarily with children in the early primary grades so the subtasks seek to gather a maximum amount of information in a short time. Depending on the number of subtasks, the entire instrument could be administered in 10–20 minutes with the assessor actively aiming to maintain the child's attention. For each subtask that could be added to provide arguably useful

information, administration time is lengthened, requiring more attention from the child and potentially reducing the validity of the results. Therefore, subtasks should be selected to give the most useful information and should be limited to avoid overloading the child.

EGRA administration procedures are child-centred and they are aimed at increasing the child's comfort and also the validity of the results. Individually administering the assessment allows the assessor some flexibility to adapt to a child's response. The assessor begins by establishing rapport and describing what will happen during the assessment to help the child realize that this will be a safe and supportive interaction. At this time the assessor also obtains the child's agreement to participate. Many of the subtasks have rules that allow the children to stop to limit the discomfort children may feel if they are unable to perform. If a child initially responds incorrectly to an item but then changes the response before proceeding to the next item, the response is considered a self-correction and scored as correct.

Consistent procedures for administering each subtask increase the confidence in the results. To increase comparability, the child is prompted at pre-established intervals (i.e., 3 seconds) to attempt the next item. This ensures that children are all exposed to an equal number of items to determine their score. Furthermore, the oral comments that are used are intended to encourage the children that their effort is noted (e.g., I can tell you are doing your best). Comments that provide evaluative statements about correctness (e.g., You got them all correct!).

EGRA is adaptable to languages and to the grade level of interest. The items are informed by creating a grade-level amount of words for that language generated from existing text. Questions are then selected based on their frequency in the language which, again, increases confidence in the validity of the subtask (Dubeck & Gove, 2015). For example, the non-word reading subtask measures the ability to apply the knowledge of letter-sound relationships to

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decode unfamiliar words. The orthographic structure of the non-words is determined by the orthographic structure of actual words in the language. A structure that appears frequently and is grade-appropriate is followed to create the non-words.

For nearly all of the subtasks, the questions are considered to be of equal difficulty and, therefore, measuring the same construct, that is grade-appropriate familiar words. This implies that the items that appear in the first row of text (e.g., individual letters or words) have the same level of difficulty as the items in the last row of text for that subtask. Ultimately, when the early stop rule is employed because the child had zero correct in the first row of items, it is done because the child would have performed similarly on the remaining items.

In general, Snow and Beals (2006) stated that reading is significant to every educated person because the ability to read and write is an essential ingredient of success in most societies where, so much information is transmitted in written form. Learning to read seems like something which comes about naturally but for most children in our schools, learning to read requires much effort and it may be a long and complicated process lasting for quite some time.

The causes of reading difficulties vary from one child to another. McGuiness (2004) argues that, children who fail to learn to read do so mainly because of environmental causes and not necessarily biological factors. This means that there are certain factors in the environment which may cause the child to have a reading difficulty. For example, if there is no one to motivate the child both at school and at home, the child might not acquire reading skills due to non-exposure. When the effective methods of teaching are missing, learners may become unable to read.

Reading skills are usually taught during the first three (3) years of primary education so that as children progress in their education, they understand the concepts that they are taught (Paananen, Aro, Kultti-Lavikainen, & Ahonen, 2009). In addition, research has shown that, there are high chances for children who have not acquired reading skills by grade 3 or 4 to

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develop reading problems (Torgesen, 1998). In other words, the ability to read becomes useful if one is to gain more knowledge. This is so because, the technological society has brought increasing demands for literacy (Chall & Stahl, 2008). However, most learners are unable to use reading as a tool for learning. They are unable to read accurately at acceptable rates.

Reading difficulties are usually detected in childhood, but it takes professionals to identify that a child has a reading difficulty and if no interventions are put in place, reading difficulty can affect someone through adulthood.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Ideally, pupils are expected to be fluent in reading very early because reading skills are taught during the first three years of primary education (UNESCO, 2000), usually in the child's first language. Reading is foundational to all other academic activities since without the ability to read, one's performance in other school subjects might be affected (UNESCO, 2007; 2008a; 2008b). According to a general local daily news report on citifmonline.com of October 19 2015, about 90% of pupils in basic schools in Ghana cannot read. The news item was reported when stakeholders discussed the Ghana Early Grade Reading and Mathematics Assessment report. The head inspector of schools in the Northern Region of Ghana, Alhaji Mohammed Issah Abba lamented and described the state of affairs thus: "we should be worried about the situation because if you look at English language, it has become the medium of instruction in our schools. Examinations are written in English; questions are set in English and the students respond in English and so if they cannot read, how are they going to respond appropriately to be able to pass their tests?" p.3. It is worrying that our basic school pupils cannot read. Against this background, the researcher attempts to investigate and establish the factors that lead to reading difficulties among primary five pupils in Salvation Army primary school in Apam. The study

further identifies the challenges that teachers encounter in teaching reading to their pupils and subsequently proffers suggestions for improving on the reading skills of the pupils.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

Research suggests that the levels of reading in Ghanaian schools are not the best (Kuyini, 2010). Although reading may seem like something which comes about naturally, it is a real struggle for many children to acquire reading skills. As a result, those pupils who cannot read and understand their primary school course books repeat their classes for one or two years because of their poor performance. In certain cases, some of the pupils drop out of school because they develop negative attitudes towards school maybe as a result of not being able to read. However, not much is known about the kind of reading difficulties that pupils face as they are reading as well as the challenges that teachers face in teaching reading to primary five pupils hence the need to conduct this study.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Generally, the objectives of this study are to:

- Identify factors contributing to reading difficulties among primary five pupils.

- Identify teachers' challenges in teaching reading to primary five pupils.

- Investigate the methods used by teachers in teaching reading to the pupils.

- Strategize how to improve reading among primary five pupils.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What factors contribute to reading difficulties among primary five pupils?

2. What challenges do teachers face in teaching reading to primary school pupils?

3. What methods do the teachers use to teach reading to the pupils in primary five?

4. How would the teaching of reading to pupils in primary five be improved?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study would expose some of the factors that cause reading difficulties among school children and bring the stakeholders together to remedy the situation. Particularly, it would serve as a guide for teachers to improve their instructional methods in teaching reading. The findings would be forwarded to the District Education office for the Directorate to be informed about the pupils' reading difficulties in the district for interventions to be put in place. The results of the study would also be made known to parents to become more involved in the reading activities of their children. This study's interventions would help improve the reading difficulties of the pupils which will go a long way to improve the overall education of the pupils.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

The scope of the study was delimited to improving the reading difficulties of primary five pupils, of Salvation Army primary school, at Apam in the Central Region of Ghana. The school was selected for the study because of proximity, the nature of the problem and time for the conduction of the research.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

The study results cannot be generalized across the country. Using the EGRA subtasks in this study and coupled with contextual observations, it is expected that the findings and recommendations derived from the study would be specific to only the pupils in the school since the reading difficulties may vary from school to school or district to district.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study is presented in five chapters. Chapter one of the study covers the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, and research questions and the significance of the study. Other aspects of chapter one include the delimitation, limitations, operational definition of terms and organization of the study. Chapter two deals with the review

of related literature. It presents an overview of the theoretical framework of the study. It outlines what other authorities or writers have written and found out about the topic of the study. Chapter three focuses on the general methodology adopted for the study. It describes the research design, the population, sample and sampling techniques, data gathering instruments, validity and reliability, and data collection procedures of the study. Also covered in the chapter are procedures adopted for data analysis. Chapter four also presents the results of the study, and the discussion of the findings. Finally, the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations constitute the concluding chapter of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

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In this chapter, relevant literature on reading and causes of reading difficulties is reviewed according to the objectives of the study. The literature is reviewed based on the following sub-divisions:

(i)   General concept and importance of reading

(ii)   Physical home environment

(iii)   Reading difficulties,

(iv)   Causes of reading difficulties

(v)   Approaches to teaching reading,

(vi)   Challenges faced by teachers in teaching reading,

(vii)   Theoretical framework

(viii) The EGRA report and strategies to improve reading skills in class to promote fluent reading.

2.1 The general concept and importance of reading

Reading forms the basis for all other areas of learning, and it is expected that children succeed in the reading process. When children are able to read, they apply reading competencies independently as they try to obtain and make use of information from a variety of sources. Unfortunately, the ability to read has become evasive for many children, and the high rate of illiteracy continues to have adverse effects in many nations (UNESCO, 2004). There is increasing demand from societies that schools must produce students with the required competence in reading. Literacy skills enhance our opportunities in life. Reading skills are associated with and enhance literacy and language skills.

According to Owu-Ewie (2012), language is purely human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions and desires by means of voluntarily produced symbols. It is a code or vehicle through which meaningful messages are transmitted and understood between two or more people. When children learn to read, they learn to use language, and this is

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undoubtedly one of the remarkable achievements of childhood. This is because language provides children with the means of communicating their feelings and expressing their decisions. A child's ability to read means he or she can have access to new opportunities for social understanding as well as psycho-emotional development. Childhood academic success in literacy and numeracy has also been associated with early language and or reading skills (RTI International, 2009).

Learning how to read is one of the most important things a child does before the age of 10. That is because everything from vocabulary growth to performance across all major subjects at school is linked to reading ability (UNESCO, 2015). The phonics method teaches children to pair sounds with letters and blend them together to master the skill of decoding. The whole-word approach teaches children to read by sight and relies upon memorization by means of repetition to the written form of a word paired with an image and an audio (August & Shanahan, 2006). The goal of the language experience method is to teach children to read words that are meaningful to them. Vocabulary can then be combined to create stories that the child relates to. Yet while there are various approaches to reading instruction, some work better than others for children who struggle with learning difficulties (Jordan, Burgess, Hecht, & Lonigan, 2002).

The most common kind of dyslexia and/or phonological dyslexia, causes individuals to have trouble hearing the sounds that make up words. This makes it difficult for them to sound out words in reading and to spell correctly (Fitzgerald, 1990; Kellog, 1994). Dyslexic learners may therefore benefit from a method that teaches whole-word reading and de-emphasizes the decoding process. Orton-Gillingham is a multi-sensory approach that has been particularly effective for dyslexic children. It combines visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile learning to teach English phonics, allowing children to proceed at a pace that suits them and their ability (Cicerchia, 2016).

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No two students will learn to read in exactly the same way, therefore, the teacher has to remain flexible in his or her approach as key to teaching reading to learners. It can be useful to combine methods, teach strategies and provide the right classroom accommodations, particularly for students who have specific learning differences. Motivation is another important key and the teacher must be patient so as to avoid introducing any negative associations with school and learning to read (Cicerchia, 2016).

2.2 Types of reading

There are different types of reading done at school. The four main types of reading done in schools are skimming, scanning, intensive and extensive readings. According to Bergensen (2015), "between the ages of 18 months and about three years of age is the most influential time with regard to language learning. It is therefore important to read to children often from an early age. When starting school, children who have a lot of children's books at home and who have been read to before reaching two years of age have a vocabulary that is almost twice that of children who have few children's books at home and who have only been read to aloud after the age of four years. Children with a large vocabulary understand more of what is going on at school and are better able to keep up with what is being taught. Children with poorer vocabularies understand less, and this can negatively impact their education. During the school years, the pupils must read as part of learning different subjects. This means that it is very important to have good basic reading skills and a good understanding of written material. A child's vocabulary can be enhanced by providing a good reading environment at home," p.44.

In many language classrooms, reading has been categorized into four main groups as skimming, scanning, intensive and extensive reading. Skimming and scanning are reading techniques that use rapid eye movement and keywords to move quickly through text for slightly different purposes. Skimming is reading rapidly in order to get a general overview of the material.

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Scanning is reading rapidly in order to find specific facts. According to Diaz and Laguado (2013), skimming-scanning strategy is required to help students comprehend texts, get detailed information, and other reading tasks.

There are different types of skills used when approaching the reading material. When people wish to find only important ideas and not all the details, they often skim a text. This involves different strategies; for example, when a person skims a newspaper article, he/she reads the headline, the opening lead line, the first paragraph which contains an overview of information. However, the reader probably merely skims the remaining paragraphs of the article, reading the beginning sentences and glancing at nouns in the paragraph. Skimming is used when a person is not interested so much in total comprehension, but is instead trying to locate essential points and major details. Skimming is used to find the main ideas of a text.

Scanning is a technique used when a person tries to find a specific item such as a telephone number, a date, or time, etc. For instance, people often scan flight and train schedules, or they scan a page in a telephone book. Scanning involves very rapid movement of a person's eyes up and down a page. When scanning people often focus on the author's use of organizers such as bold print, lettering, numbering, colors, signal words such as first, second, and so on. After locating the area on the page that the person desires, he/she may then skim for more information.

2.3 Pre-literacy skills

Children begin acquiring the skills they need to master reading from the moment they are born. In fact, an infant as young as six months old can already distinguish between the sounds of his or her mother tongue and a foreign language and by the age of 2 has mastered enough native phonemes to regularly produce 50+ words (Chabbott, 2014). Between the ages of 2-3 many children learn to recognize a handful of letters. They may enjoy singing the alphabet song and reciting nursery rhymes, which helps them develop awareness of the different sounds that make-

up English words. As fine motor skills advance, so does the ability to write, draw and copy shapes, which eventually can be combined to form letters (Adams, 1990).

2.4 Literacy skills

Literacy skills are all the skills needed for reading and writing. They include such things as awareness of the sounds of language, awareness of print, and the relationship between letters and sounds (Badian, 2001). Other literacy skills include vocabulary, spelling, and comprehension.

According to Berninger, Abbot, Whitaker, Sylvester, and Nolen (1995), there exist associations between reading and spelling skills. These authors indicate that learning to read and spelling are two sides of the same coin because they aim at literacy. In learning to read and spell, three processes are involved. These include planning the text beforehand, translating ideas into written text, and reviewing the produced text. In this research, the focus is on reading as it relates to other areas such as writing, understanding, and spelling. Fitzgerald and Shanahan (2000) contend that word recognition and spelling share several similarities. For example, Langer (1986) and Kellog (1994) have shown that the knowledge representations and cognitive processes underlying reading and spelling are very similar. There is evidence that factors such as the ability to identify letters and to recognize and produce meaningful syntax affect the development of both reading and spelling skills (Fitzgerald, 1990; Kellog, 1994).

Some studies have portrayed the reciprocal relationship between reading and spelling (Ehri, 1995). Ehri's study for example, demonstrated how word-specific information affects reading and spelling in a continuous and parallel manner, showing that reading skills affect spelling and in turn spelling skills also affect reading. While Ehri believes in the reciprocal relationship between reading and spelling, others such as Frith (1985) believe that one influences the other and is subject to change over time.

2.5 The skimming technique of reading

This is the most rudimentary type of reading. Its objective is to familiarize the reader as quickly as possible with the material to be read. Skimming is done to confirm expectations for communicative tasks. Skimming is sometimes referred to as gist reading. Skimming may help the reader to know what the text is about at its most basic level. The reader might typically do this with a magazine or newspaper and would help him/her mentally and quickly shortlist those articles which he/she might consider for deeper reading.

Owu-Ewie (2015) citing Brown (1989), stated that skimming is quick reading to get to know general meaning of a passage, its structure or organization and intent of the writer. The author indicated that during skimming, both the teacher and the student have specific roles and activities to perform during the skimming lesson. He outlined that some of the roles and activities expected of the teacher during skimming lessons focus on type of text, text intended for who, and purpose of text and the activities include speed to read through text, reading text severally, and how to locate facts from texts.

2.6 The scanning technique of reading

This is another relevant reading skill which is done quickly while looking for specific information. Usually, scanning is done by reading from the top of the page and moving the eyes quickly towards the bottom of the reading page. Scanning involves getting one's eyes to quickly scuttle across the text and is used to get just a simple piece of information.

In this type of reading, Owu-Ewie (2015 citing Brown (1989), indicated that scanning and skimming are both quick reading but scanning focuses on locating specific information. The author indicated like skimming, during scanning lessons both the teacher and the student have specific roles and activities to perform. In the course of teaching reading using scanning, the

following roles and activities are expected of the teacher are selection of texts, use of authentic materials, and guiding student to look for contextual clues; some of the activities include use of prediction and anticipation skills, use of titles, pictures, and prior knowledge to anticipate text content (Owu-Ewie, 2015).

2.7 The intensive reading technique

This is a reading technique that is far more time-consuming than scanning or skimming. During examination times, many students employ this reading technique, but they soon forget the essentials afterwards. This type of reading is known as searching reading. Owu-Ewie (2015) states that both intensive and extensive reading fall under silent reading. In the author's view, this type of reading is used to teach specific reading strategies especially during comprehension lessons. According to Owu-Ewie, Brown explained intensive reading as that type of reading that calls attention to grammatical forms and other discourse markers. The author described intensive reading as "narrow reading" in which students reading selections by the same author or several texts about the same topic.

Additionally, Owu-Ewie outlined the merits and demerits of intensive reading as follows: the provision of basis for structure, vocabulary, and idioms for the development of greater control of language and the provision of a check for comprehension. The demerits or limitations of intensive reading include but not limited to usually small amount of text, limited practice time, limited time to learn language patterns and the likelihood of associating intensive reading with testing.

2.8 The extensive reading technique

Extensive reading involves reading for pleasure. Because there is an element of enjoyment in extensive reading, it is not likely that students will undertake extensive reading of a text they are not interested in. This type of reading also requires a fluid decoding and assimilation of the

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text and content before the reader. If the text is difficult and the reader stops every few minutes to figure out what is being said or to look up new words in the dictionary, he/she breaks the concentration and diverts his/her thoughts.

The merits and demerits of extensive reading are that students develop reading culture "habit", students gain more confidence in reading, and students expand their vocabulary scope, and their overall language competence by reading large quantities; the challenges however include, cost and time-consuming nature (Owu-Ewie, 2015; Brown, 1989).

There are other types of reading techniques used by teachers and reading experts to teach reading to children. Some of these have been enumerated by Bergensen (2015) to include silent reading, reading aloud, and reading together. Others are, explicit modeling, implicit modeling, choral reading, echo reading and paired reading. Some literature also outline some as duet reading and so.

The explicit model helps children learn to think about what they already know while they are reading. For example, what does the reader do to get meaning from the words and understand the text (Henderson, & Templeton, 1986; Bergensen, 2015). For example, if the pupil comes across a new word, the teacher realizes it as he or she gets stuck in the reading process. The teacher indicates to the pupil, oh! that's a new word. It begins with *cl.* The pupil may also say, I don't know how to pronounce the next part-*ue.* Teacher then gives the pupil a prompt such as: John is a spy. It must be *clue* because spies look for *clues.*"

Henderson and Templeton (1986) stated that the implicit model helps children think while they read. When a child is stuck on a word, teacher can suggest strategies he or she can use to figure it out. The child can use these strategies immediately and when reading in the future. Teacher might say, "Try reading the sentence again." "Try reading the next sentence." "Where did the

boy go at the beginning of the story?" "Where do you think he might be going now?" This is in line with the EGRA subtasks and their discontinuation rules (early stop).

The choral reading strategy helps children to become more fluent and confident readers. The teacher holds the book together and asks the child to read along with him/her. To begin with, the reading is done in a voice that is slightly louder and faster than the child's. As the child becomes more comfortable with reading the text, teacher lowers his/her voice and slows down the reading speed. If the child slows down, teacher increases his/her volume and speed again. Dubeck and Gove (2015) pointed out that the EGRA subtasks of familiar word reading, non-word reading, oral reading fluency and reading comprehension align with the choral reading strategy.

The echo reading technique is another way to help a child develop confidence and fluency in reading. Teacher reads aloud a line of text and asks the child to read the same line. Teacher and pupils continue taking turns reading and re-reading the same lines. When the child begins to read with more expression and fluency, teacher suggests that he reads aloud on his own. This strategy is associated with the EGRA subtask of oral reading fluency which measures the child's ability to read a grade-level passage of approximately 60 words. It is scored for accuracy and rate. It is timed to 60 seconds and is discontinued if none of the words in the first line (i.e., about 10 words) is read correctly (Dubeck & Gove, 2015).

Finally, in the paired reading technique the teachers vary the amount of support they provide to a child while reading aloud together. According to Wang (2000) teacher explains to the child that sometimes they will all read aloud together. This is also known as duet reading. However, sometimes the pupil or teacher will read alone – solo reading. Thus, the teacher and pupil have to agree on two signals which the child can use to switch back and forth from solo to duet reading. When the child gives teacher the duet signal, teacher will begin reading together. When

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the child feels ready for solo reading, he/she will give the solo signal and teacher will stop reading.

2.9 Causes of reading difficulties among pupils

From the literature the following summarise the reading difficulties of the pupils. According to Lyytinen (2006) when there are too many pupils in one classroom that is high pupil-teacher-ratio where few teachers attend to huge numbers of pupils, this can cause reading difficulties since the teacher cannot have individual attention for all the learners during the reading session. In sum, only few teachers attend to huge numbers of pupils.

It is important to note that most teachers work under unfavourable conditions such as inadequate reading materials and experiencing irregular attendance at school by pupils (MoE, 2012). Kalindi (2005) found out that poor readers are most often left out of the learning process. The author stated that even when all the necessary materials are put in place, it may not help improve the skills of poor readers as long as the teacher is not competent enough to help the poor readers because the poor readers are not given a chance to improve themselves where reading is concerned.

Kalindi further found out that in almost every classroom, there are both slow and fast learners and/or good and poor readers. Some are good in reading while others are poor readers. In such situations, it is the teacher's duty to use those methods of teaching reading which will help the poor readers.

Cicerchia (2016) revealed that some children are unable to read because they forget words even right after being helped. Such children frustrate their parents and teachers by failing to recognize the same word on the same or next page, within a few minutes of receiving help with the word earlier. After seeing a word, when they come across the same word even on the same line, they feel that it is written in a different language.

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Another finding by Cicerchia (2016) is that poor readers are unable to recognize letters and basic words. Words are skipped or guessed because they are not recognized by a reader who is getting around a decoding problem so he or she tries to memorize all words.

Phonological awareness helps readers to discover the alphabetic principle to be able to grasp the idea that letters generally represent the small speech segments called phonemes. Mando (2008), indicated that some beginning readers may not be aware of this alphabetic principle and this unawareness causes them to have reading difficulties because of lack of letter-sound correspondence skills.

Cicerchia (2016) again found out that some readers resist reading because they become ashamed if they cannot read in class; they become easily distracted in reading times in school. It can be noted that while many children learn to read with good instruction, some do not. Children have problems learning to read because of such factors as poor instruction. The kinds of additional instruction usually called "interventions" are likely to help remedy the difficulties.

According to the United States National Research Council (1998), children having reading difficulties need to be provided with extra instructional time the purpose of which is to help children achieve levels of literacy that will enable them to be successful through their school careers and beyond. Fisher and Hiebert (1990) stated that pupils are expected to use informational texts independently; and they are expected to use text for the purpose of thinking and reasoning.

Many children have reading difficulties because phonologically, they are unaware of how to appreciate speech sounds without regard for their meaning. Phonological awareness helps the reader to discover the alphabetic principle to be able to grasp the idea that letters generally

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represent the small speech segments called phonemes. Beside phonological awareness, there is need for instruction in letters and letter-sound relationships also.

It is important to note that common reading problems can be grouped by age. According to Cicerchia (2016), elementary common reading problems include situations where learners do not always recognize start or end sounds. The author indicated that many children know their letter sounds but cannot recognize these sounds when sounding out words. Cicerchia stated that one of the most common causes of reading problems is a delay in phonemic awareness. Phonemic awareness is the ability to break words into individual sounds while reading. For example, turning /cat/ not /c/ /a/ /t/. Blends such as /br/ or /bl/ are even more challenging as are similar sounding consonants like /mu|/ and /nu/. This skill requires strong language processing. Other reading problems in the elementary classes include guesses, mispronunciation or skipping of words while reading. Many struggling readers skip words when reading, preferring instead to read the words they recognize first and fill in the unknown words later. Or if they cannot decode the word, they guess (Cicerchia, 2016).

Words are skipped or guessed because they are not recognized by a reader who is getting around a decoding problem by trying to memorize all words. This is an inefficient strategy that runs into trouble in primary classes three, four, and five as the word list expands dramatically.

Again, some children are unable to read because they forget words even right after being helped. Many children frustrate their parents and teachers by failing to recognize the same word on the same or next page, within a minute of two of receiving help with the word earlier. For the struggling early reader, text can look like it is written in another language different. There are so many unrecognizable words that it is overwhelming. Also, retention requires context. If you tell the child a word, and he hears it the way you say he sees it written on the page, he will retain

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it. But more often than not, the text and spoken word are not a match and so it is not retained (Cicerchia, 2016).

Additionally, some children are not able to spell common words. This is a real problem in schools and homes. It is a fact that spelling rules, conventions and exceptions take time to learn. However, spelling in the early grades is only a concern if the child struggles with regular, phonetic words. There is more at stake here than just spelling accuracy.

Recognition of spelling patterns is a big part of how the brain reads. Spelling is a key decoding skill. Poor spelling is most often indicative of poor phonics caused by weak phonological awareness. If phonetically regular words are a problem, then the child will have a hard time learning conventions and exceptions, since every word appears very difficult for the child.

Again, some children have reading problems because they resist reading. According to Cicerchia (2016) many children with reading difficulties start to resist reading out loud to their parents. Furthermore, they become easily distracted in reading times in school.

Reading out loud in school is humiliating for struggling readers. They feel the pressure of their audience. In addition, they see how easily their peers read, and so they feel frustration and shame that they cannot read. Consequently, they avoid the torture of reading wherever possible.

Others are unable to learn spelling rules, conventions, and exceptions smoothly and as a result they struggle with regular, phonetic words identification.

2.10 The physical home environment

The home environment can be defined as a setting which contains features of the literacy and living environment (Barnett & Casper, 2001). The living environment includes physical objects such as housing variables (Wachs, 2003). In developing countries, measures of the home environment include quality of housing and kind and source of facilities such as water, light

and fuel (Ngorosho, 2009). For the purposes of this study, home environment has been used to refer to availability of reading tables and chairs and source of light.

According to Paananen et al (2009), home environment plays a role on pupils' reading ability. It can affect someone either positively or negatively. In the home environment, there are many factors which can cause someone to have reading difficulties. These include, mother tongue interference, lack of motivation, lack of textbooks and reading materials, parents' literacy levels, socio-economic factors (for example, poor nutrition, lack of proper furniture for studies), type of lighting system at home, lack of support by parents or guardians and no community libraries. The home environment is important for a child's growth in all aspects of life including (basic) education. For one to thrive academically, there is need for a conducive home environment.

In Bergensen's (2015) study, it was revealed that children that are seldom read to and whose parents read very little are at a disadvantage when they start school. There is a strong connection between a child's reading environment at home from the time they are very young and the progress a child makes in being able to read once they start school. According to the author, "There are big differences among six-year-olds. While many new first grade pupils can already read on their own, others are not even at the point where they understand that letters represent sounds. We know from the research that it is important that children are well-prepared for reading when they start school and will be embarking on formal literacy. This study shows that the parents' attitudes to reading, the number of children's books in the home, the age at which parents start reading aloud to children and how often they read to them all determine how well-prepared children are to learn to read when starting school," (p.58).

2.11 Characteristics of the home environment

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There are conflicting beliefs as to whether or not the home environment is directly related to literacy development in children. Studies by Phillips and Lonigan (2009) and Roberts, Jurgens, and Burchinal (2005) have found that the home environment is a strong predictor of early language and literacy development. Roberts et al. (2005) trust that responsiveness of the home environment may be more important for early literacy development than specific literacy strategies. They believe that these specific literacy strategies may become more effective later on in the school years when literacy becomes more print-based. In particular, emotional and verbal responsivity, acceptance of a child's behavior, organization of the home environment, academic and language stimulation in the house, and parental involvement are of importance. "Parents who are responsive, sensitive, and accepting of a child's behavior, and who provide structure, organization, and a positive general emotional climate at home, along with stimulating toys and interactions, facilitate children's language and early literacy development" (Roberts et al., 2005, p. 347).

On the other hand, Burgess, Hecht, and Lonigan (2002) suggested that directly engaging children in literacy activities in the home at an early age may have a greater effect on literacy development than does the home environment as a whole.

They suggest that by manipulating specific aspects of the home environment, such as shared reading, rhyming activities, and word decoding, that children will be better prepared with early language development skills. According to Jordan, Snow, and Porche (2000) storybook telling promotes literacy development. These authors found that when the frequency of shared reading was increased, along with parent-child communication during the reading, literacy development is enhanced. The importance of high-quality language interactions is highlighted, and the findings of the study "demonstrates the powerful contributions of families to children's preliteracy accomplishments" (p. 527). Despite the conflicting evidence, it only seems appropriate to assume that the home environment as a whole, as well as specific literacy

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activities, are all contributing factors to a child's literacy development. It remains to be decided which factors have the biggest influence.

The importance of using environmental print to expose children to a variety of literacy experiences in the home is also highlighted (Neumann, Hood, & Neumann, 2009; Lenters, 2007). They suggest a multisensory approach to literacy, incorporating body movements, household objects, and using letter names, sounds, and shapes in order to make learning relevant and engaging to young children. In addition, this may also allow for literacy events and activities to be more enjoyable for parents, especially those of low literacy, because environmental print is familiar. The use of enjoyable and engaging activities for both parents and children not only improves literacy learning but may also foster positive relationships between parents and children.

The work of Lenters (2007) also proposes that the enjoyment of reading at home may help children to incorporate this enjoyment into other areas of life, such as at school and during play with friends.

She holds that parents should try to instill their own enthusiasm for reading in their children, in hopes that this enthusiasm will carry over into. Examples of this may be to turn reading into play, acting out stories, writing new stories, or turning stories into songs with friends.

Another factor that influences the home environment is the degree of household order. Johnson, Martin, Brooks-Gunn, and Petrill (2008) suggest that characteristics of an orderly household "give rise to both orderliness and better reading skills in children" (p. 462). The study shows that home environment predicts reading ability in children whose mothers are of average reading ability. Household order may provide calm and structure for children whose mothers are of average reading ability, which may lead to an increase in reading ability.

These studies all help to paint a better picture of how the home environment influences children's early literacy development. While there are still many gaps in the research and various opinions as to which aspects of the home environment are most influential or most important, it behooves educators to consider all of these aspects when thinking of improving upon children's reading skills. Parental involvement, cultural differences, parental education, and the home environment all play a part in shaping early language and literacy of children.

2.12 Instructional methods of teaching

Teaching has been conceptualized in a variety of descriptions and definitions. Generally, it has been described as an art of persuading students to behave in ways that are assumed to lead to learning. Tamakloe, Amedahe, and Atta (2005), define teaching as an activity that imparts knowledge, skills, attitude and values to learners. Teaching also means giving information and imparting knowledge and the means by which society trains the young in a selected environment (Reddy, 2004). In the opinion of Reddy, teaching is closely defined to be the casual imparting of knowledge from the teacher to the learner. However, Melby (1963) as cited in Tamakloe et al. signifies that the teacher does not consider him/herself as a storehouse of wisdom and knowledge where the students enter and assimilate wisdom. In the lens of Melby, teachers serve as guides to learners. They stimulate learners' mental faculties to acquire knowledge without any pretention on their part as being the only sure way of knowing.

It is therefore, not logical to conclude that teaching is merely neither lesson-having nor merely information giving. It is a knowledge construction process between the teacher and the learner. This notion also suggests that learners must be engaged in their own learning process, analyze, synthesize and evaluate information to solve life problems. Teaching is thus regarded as a process of bringing about learning.

Teaching and learning are the opposite sides of the same coin; they are complimentary (Farrant, 1995 as cited in Tamakloe et. al., 2005). In this sense, a lesson that is learned well is the one that is taught well. Learning therefore becomes an active construction of meaning rather than a passive acceptance and memorization. Gagne (1985) as cited in Tamakloe et al., state that learning is a change in human disposition or capacity that persists over a period of time. It is a change that children acquire as a result of gathering experiences through actions, observations and perceptions. Undoubtedly, teaching and learning in preschool can take a format that will not only impart knowledge to children but also equip them to be critical thinkers. For example, children who are deaf need more guidance in their learning process. Teachers' interactions, joint attention, conversational style, use of questions and feedback are all part of the teaching and learning process that impact on deaf learners and this is also the case with all children.

A study conducted by Gosse et al. (2014) shows that classroom support during teaching and learning process can have direct impact on children's language acquisition. The study examined the extent to which relational and instructional supports in preschool classrooms are associated with children's language development and whether these associations vary as a function of children's language ability.

In almost every classroom, there are both slow and fast learners. There are also good and poor readers. Some are good in reading while others are poor readers. In such situations, it is the teacher's duty to use those methods of teaching reading which will help the poor readers. Unfortunately, most of the teachers do not have adequate knowledge on how to help such learners with reading difficulties. The kind of training that teachers get does not adequately prepare them to handle all pupils according to their learning needs. Most pupils require close supervision if they are to perform better in academic work. As a result, even when the teacher knows that a pupil is a poor reader, he or she is not in a position to help (Kalindi, 2005).

Based on the above description, it can be said that, teachers use the same method of teaching for all pupils in a classroom despite one being a good or poor reader. All the necessary materials can be in place, but this will not help improve the skills of poor readers as long as the teacher, who is the key person in this whole process is not competent enough to help the poor readers (Kalindi, 2005). This means that the poor readers are not given a chance to improve themselves where reading is concerned. The good readers have an advantage in this case and the poor readers are left out of the learning process.

Teaching normally starts with the smallest and easiest things, that is, from known to unknown and children learn to read and write longer and more complicated things as time goes by (Lyytinen, 2006). Learning to read is a gradual process. Today, a child will learn to read letters of the alphabet, the next day the child will be able to read words, then sentences and so on. It is important to note that most teachers work under harsh conditions such as, attending to many classes in a day, having too many pupils in one classroom, inadequate reading materials and experiencing irregular attendance at school by pupils (MoE, 2012).

Furthermore, there are no incentives to motivate the teachers especially those in remote areas. As a result, such teachers will have no drive to concentrate on poor readers. It is up to the pupil whether s/he has understood or not. The methods of classroom approaches to reading, such as the 'look and say' method, resulted in most pupils in primary schools' level of reading in English to be inadequate for learning to take place (Kalindi, 2005).

There is also the primary reading programme (PRP) aimed at providing child-centred classroom instructions. However, it has not been easy to attain this goal due to the high number of pupils in classrooms hence making it difficult for teachers to offer education on a one-to-one basis for those children with reading difficulties (Matafwali, 2005). The classrooms are very crowded

hence overburdening the teachers. These disadvantages those pupils with reading difficulties as teachers are too tired to concentrate on such pupils on an individual basis as earlier mentioned.

Lyytinen (2006) goes on to say that, there are traditional methods of help which involve one-to- one teaching with a teacher, doing some extra exercises and giving more time in written examinations. But in a country like Ghana, this is very difficult to achieve due to the high pupil teacher ratio - there are few teachers attending to huge numbers of pupils.

2.13 Approaches to or methods of teaching reading

There are a number of methods that teachers can employ in teaching reading to beginners. Among the most commonly used are the phonic method, look and say, language experience approach and the context support method. Other approaches in the literature have been enumerated as reading together, reading aloud and independent reading. Under these approaches, experts have further categorized the methods of instructions as explicit model, implicit model, choral reading, echo reading, and paired reading. The following approaches/methods of teaching reading have been considered in this section.

2.14 Phonic method

The phonic method is probably the best known and widely used method to teach reading and writing in the English language. Phonics instruction teaches children the relationships between the letters (graphemes) of written language and the individual sounds (phonemes) of spoken language (Boison, 2008). It relies on children being taught the alphabet first, the names of the letters and the sound they make. Once they have learnt the letter sounds they would begin to blend two letters together to make simple words, then three letters, then four and so forth. For children to learn the phonic method they need phonically written books using regular words that are interesting to them.

Each word must be sounded out by the child in order to achieve the highest outcome. Learning the sounds and their blends may be disinteresting for beginning readers, so the teacher should keep it short and entertaining. Often the children are so busy concentrating on sounding the words and blending the sounds that they do not learn the meaning of the word, making it quite boring for them (Griggs, 2000). Teachers should therefore ensure that they explain the meaning or expound on the word to keep interest and enthusiasm for learning. When using the phonic method, most children learn to read basic words and sentences within three to six months. The method supplies the learners with tools to expand their vocabulary (Griggs, 2000).

2.15 Look and say method

With the look and say method, children learn to recognize whole words or sentences rather than individual sounds. In this method of teaching reading, word cards or sentence cards and accompanying pictures are mostly used. Children look at a word which the teacher sounds and in return repeat the word. It is recommended with this method to use whole short sentences rather than individual words.

The teacher writes a short sentence representing the picture displayed then the teacher says the sentence and asks the child to repeat it while pointing at each individual word as he/she repeats what the teacher says. By use of work cards, the teacher can create many different sentences again and again (Njue, Aura, & Komen, 2014).

2.16 Language experience approach

This method employs learners' own words to help them read. Learners may draw a picture of dad in the car. The teacher writes underneath the drawing 'dad is in the car'. The teacher continues to collect drawings and the learners make and write short sentences about them. Some teachers use this method as a first approach to teaching reading in order to help their children

understand that what they have drawn and what is written is a form of communication. The language experience approach supports the child's concept development and vocabulary growth while offering many opportunities for meaningful reading and writing activities through the use of personal experiences and oral language (Griggs, 2000).

2.17 Context support method

When children are just learning to read, it is important to choose books that really interest them. If boys like cars, the teacher should choose a book with pictures and simple words about cars. This would keep their interest and they would enjoy learning with the teacher. If girls like cooking on the other hand, then the teacher gets a book with pictures and simple words that relate to cooking. Griggs (2000) noted that this method encourages enthusiasm because children are actually looking at something they can relate to. In the case of pupils from the fishing community, the objects or reading materials could begin with fishing and associated activities.

2.18 Challenges faced by teachers in teaching reading

In virtually every class, there could be a learner with a reading difficulty and for that matter during teaching, teachers meet several learners for whom reading is laborious, and even learners who think that they cannot read. Teaching these learners is a challenge for the teachers and the entire school (Paananen, et. al., 2009). Classroom effectiveness of teachers heavily depends on their knowledge of the subject matter and their pedagogical skills.

Unfortunately, most teachers are not oriented towards helping poor readers in their classes. In their training, they were not adequately prepared to teach all children according to their needs. Therefore, even in cases where reading materials are adequate, reading skills of poor readers are not improved. The most important person, who is the teacher in this case does not know how to help the poor readers (Kalindi, 2005).

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It is also important to bear in mind that, teachers have been working under difficult conditions such as, too many pupils in classes, erratic pupil attendance and others (MoE, 1992). When there are too many pupils in a classroom, it becomes difficult for the teacher to give individual attention especially to those who may be lagging behind in reading.

Furthermore, serious shortages of teaching and learning materials, as well as poor staffing especially in remote areas also make it a challenge for teachers in teaching reading (MoE, 2008). A teacher may have the required skills in teaching reading, but it becomes difficult for him/her to teach effectively if the necessary teaching and learning materials are not in place.

Poor staffing levels are indications that teachers have to attend to more than one class hence they become overburdened. In turn, they will not be able to pay particular attention to those learners who have difficulties in reading.

2.19 Theoretical framework of the study

Allington (1983) referred to reading fluency as the "neglected" goal of reading; this has changed dramatically in the last three decades. Fluency is now considered a critical component of skilled reading and was recognized by the highly influential National Reading Panel Report as one of the five "big ideas" of early reading instruction (NICHD, 2000). Today, most literacy educators believe fluency is essential to successful reading development (Rasinski, Blachowicz, & Lems, 2006; Samuels, 2006).

Furthermore, significant correlations between reading fluency and a host of other positive reading outcomes have also been shown. For example, Oakley (2005) found that fluent readers tend to enjoy reading more, have more positive attitudes toward reading and a more positive concept of themselves as readers than do less fluent readers.

There are many theories about reading. There are the experimental theories, the psycholinguistic theories, the cognitive psychology theories and others. Goodman's widely advertised model of

reading as a psycholinguistic guessing game (1976) has attracted some criticisms. Stanovich (1986) and Adams (1990) are among the most authoritative and convincing of these critics. They criticised Goodman's model of the reading process as weak on detail, leading to some mistaken conclusions. For example, according to these critics, Goodman stated that good readers depend on context for word recognition, and that the good readers make less use of letter information than poor readers as they read.

Stanovich and Adams indicate that Goodman's model turns the reading process upside down. They stressed that when it comes to word recognition, it is the good reader who has less need to use context in order to decide upon a word. The poor reader cannot recognise a word straightaway and needs context to facilitate word recognition. This takes up valuable processing capacity, which reduces the capacity for comprehension (Stanovich, 1986; Adams, 1990).

In his submission, Goodman argued that fluent readers are more efficient users of visual cues and need to use very few of them. However, advances in eye movement technology have shown that fluent readers not only fixate most words (apart from very short ones such as 'of', 'to', 'and', 'the') and do so very rapidly, but also appear to process the individual letters in each word, even when the word is highly predictable. Fluent readers are more efficient than poor readers, but they do not use less visual information. They sample the text more quickly and use fewer resources to do so.

The Stanovich model is which was propounded in 1984 is the interactive-compensatory model of the reading process. It is now more widely accepted among reading researchers than Goodman's model. Stanovich pointed out that reading involves a number of interactions with the text. One of the most important of these is the reader's allocation of 'processing capacity' to the text. Fluent readers need less processing capacity for word recognition, allowing more capacity for comprehension. If there are problems with word recognition, more resources are

allocated to that part of the reading process at the expense of some of the capacity for comprehension.

Stanovich argued that there was clear evidence of a 'rich get richer while the poor get poorer' effect in beginning reading. Children's initial success in acquiring vocabulary knowledge and reading fluency led to further success, because reading broadens the vocabulary and increases knowledge. On the other hand, those who fail continue to fail.

This study is based on the blend of these two theories. That is to say, there are strengths and limitations of both theories and combining the strengths of both theories makes an excellent theoretical framework. The significance of the challenges to Goodman's model vis-à-vis Stanovich's model demonstrate that to many cognitive psychologists, good readers are clearly distinguished from poor readers by more rapid, automatic, context-free and accurate word recognition.

How to help readers to achieve this, however, is a complex and challenging issue. Appreciating the importance of rapid word recognition should not lead to a 'whole-word' or 'look and say' approach to beginning reading. Neither should it lead us away from emphasizing the importance of reading for meaning and enjoyment, using the best available resources. Many of the challenges to Goodman's model arise from his inadequate account of word recognition, yet much of what he has written remains important and valuable.

Experimental psychologists have also abandoned the 'dual-route' theory of word recognition. This theory described two routes to word recognition: a whole-word route and a sounding-out route. It was simple and attractive but attracted much criticisms. It is now known that fluent readers do not process words as 'wholes'. In normal reading, they process individual letters during each fixation. They make use of knowledge of spelling. Fluent readers make use of

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knowledge of spelling patterns, word patterns and the constraints of syntax and semantics to produce a phonetic version of the text (though this is usually produced after, rather than before, words have been recognised). It is in this vein that I assume a middle course as far as the theoretical framework for this study is concerned. For example, according to Wall, Emerson, Holbrook, and D'Andrea (2009), fluency is a goal for all beginning readers. Several variables can influence a student's fluent reading of a given text: the proportion of words read correctly, the speed at which words are decoded, as well as the student's comprehension and vocabulary knowledge.

The theoretical framework for improving reading in primary five adopted by the researcher for this study is underpinned by Goodman's and Stanovich's theories of teaching reading discussed above with the assumption that children enter school with all the biological and environmental apparatus to be able to read. Therefore, focus is placed on the school environment to examine the relationship among the variables such as teacher's use of classroom teaching and learning activities and visual instructional strategies and pupils' readiness and ability to read.

The theoretical framework has been based on the literature review. It focuses on the concept of reading in the primary school environment. The connection is that in the school environment, teachers use both classroom teaching and learning activities and visual instructional strategies to facilitate the teaching of reading among pupils.

2.20 The EGRA report and strategies to promote fluent reading skill.

August and Shanahan (2006) define effective reading instruction as that which is provided at a reader's developmental level (not too difficult nor too easy); is informed and adjusted based on informal classroom-based assessments; and includes frequent opportunities to read and write a variety of text types both new to the child and self-selected.

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Moreover, developmental literacy research has identified specific early language and literacy skills associated with successful literacy acquisition (NICHD, 2000; Snow et al., 1998). The literacy skills that can be easily measured that contribute to reading achievement fall under three major domains: (a) phonological awareness, (b) print knowledge, and (c) orthographic knowledge.

These three domains of knowledge are influenced by various contexts. A structured context, such as classroom instruction or regular teaching, is an environment in which these skills are taught in a deliberate way. Informal contexts, such as market transactions (Olateju, 2010) or artistic endeavours (Marsick and Watkins, 2001) are also known to be motivators for literacy acquisition. It is in these informal contexts that the paths and the patterns of acquisition may diverge from other research studies.

Nevertheless, within these three domains are early skills known to be consistently strong predictors to later reading achievement. Many of these skills are measured in EGRA. Phonological awareness is a collection of skills that contributes to early reading. At the most basic level, it is defined as sensitivity to language at the phonological level. Many studies (Badian, 2001; Denton et al., 2000; McBride-Chang and Kail, 2002; Muter et al., 2004; Wang, 2000) have supported its role in predicting early reading achievement in both opaque and transparent languages.

Stahl and Murray (1994) have described the development of phonological skills and the difficulty of the various tasks. Adams (1990) has established levels of complexity for phonological awareness tasks from easier to more difficult: (a) knowledge of rhymes, (b) oddity tasks (i.e., a sensitivity to similarities and differences between words), (c) blending and syllable splitting, (d) segmentation (i.e., identifying the individual phonemes that comprise a word), and (e) manipulation (i.e., deletion or reordering). Phonological awareness tasks vary in difficulty

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due to the size of the linguistic unit that can be manipulated. The focus unit of manipulation would vary depending on the language.

In the same way that researchers have identified a typical path for phonological awareness skills, other researchers (Lomax and McGee, 1987) have examined the development of print knowledge, the domain that describes an understanding about the orthographic system and written language. Through investigations, print knowledge is understood to advance in a hierarchical, yet recursive way. In other words, each print knowledge component is a prerequisite of another component, but skills are not necessarily mastered before new learning commences.

Within print knowledge are multiple skills. Print concepts include a variety of understandings about print, including book orientation (e.g., the cover; where to start reading), directionality (e.g., left to right; top to bottom), and a purpose for reading (e.g., to inform; to entertain).

An understanding of the distinctive features and names of individual alphabet letters also appears under print knowledge. Besides letter recognition, alphabet knowledge encompasses knowledge of letter names and their corresponding sounds. Letter knowledge has been consistently shown to be a strong predictor of early reading (Adams, 1990; Ehri & Wilce, 1985; Piper & Korda, 2011; RTI International, 2013; Wagner et al., 1994; Yesil-Dagli, 2011).
Research has demonstrated that alphabet knowledge is also a robust predictor for non-native language literacy acquisition (Chiappe et al., 2002; McBride-Chang & Suk-Han Ho, 2005). More specifically, alphabetic knowledge is a stronger predictor for non-native speakers than for native speakers and predicts reading achievement one year (Chiappe et al., 2002) and two years later (McBride-Chang & Suk-Han Ho, 2005; Manis et al., 2004; Marsick & Watkins, 2001).

Orthographic knowledge involves the understanding about words in their written form and it is a third domain relevant to early reading acquisition. It includes the knowledge that certain

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sequences of letters compose words that represent spoken sounds. Applying this knowledge helps to identify familiar and decode unfamiliar words in isolation and in connected text. An explanation of this knowledge has been used to further describe literacy acquisition models.

Literacy acquisition models suggest that learners come to recognize progressively more complex aspects of written language, specifically through orthography (Ehri, 1995; Frith, 1986). Students advance through a series of phases, or stages, that represent their understanding about printed words (Chall, 1983; Henderson & Templeton, 1986). The concept of orthographic knowledge as a developmental phenomenon was introduced in the early 1970s (Chomsky, 1970; Read, 1971). Later, Ehri (1995) proposed five phases to capture this phenomenon: (a) pre-alphabetic, (b) partial alphabetic, (c) alphabetic, (d) consolidated-alphabetic, and (e) automatic. Although developed to explain children's English reading acquisition, the phases describe a student's evolving knowledge about symbols to represent sounds in a word, which is a common organizing principle across languages.

In the earliest phase, pre-alphabetic, students do not yet understand the alphabetic principle. They have yet to learn that speech can be turned into print or that letters represent speech sounds in the language. They can memorize text, associate meaning with pictures and environmental print, and identify words by their unique shapes. Students at this emergent stage notice the phonological features of spoken words (e.g., word length) and learn to navigate a book-its direction, purpose of pictures, and the like.

In the second phase, partial alphabetic, students now understand the alphabetic principle, meaning they use some of the word's letters (i.e., symbols) to cue corresponding sounds, and this, in conjunction with memory for that word's initial unit of sound, allows them to "read" the word. Students in this phase can give the names and sounds of some letters, recognize a few words, and match spoken to written words. They learn to combine picture cues with initial

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sounds or syllables to read new words and are developing a sight-word vocabulary (i.e., words read automatically).

The next phase, alphabetic, is marked by an ability to learn new words using several strategies. Students attend to more parts of the word and use their knowledge of grapheme–phoneme correspondences (i.e., symbol-sound) to decode unfamiliar words, and to develop an extensive sight-word vocabulary. Students in this phase can read some text independently and are learning to read fluently.

The fourth phase, consolidated-alphabetic, considers the importance of using larger spelling patterns within a word to read unfamiliar words. Students in this phase continue to learn new words through reading and writing, and attend mostly to comprehension instead of decoding. The last phase, automatic, is marked by proficient word reading. Students recognize nearly all the words they see in print and when they encounter a new word, they can identify it independently. Furthermore, they recognize more words in print than they use in typical conversations. The focus of attention is almost entirely on comprehension and these phases align with the EGRA subtasks that have been described in the following lines.

The EGRA battery of subtasks align with these five phases as they measure phonological, print and orthographic knowledge as well other skills understood to contribute to reading with understanding, such as receptive language and several types of comprehension (e.g., explicit, inferential, informed by syntax).

The EGRA subtasks are administered individually in an interaction between a trained assessor and the child in primary school. Questions incorporate age-appropriate words taken from the language of grade-level text. Word and letter frequencies are calculated to inform the development of the instruments. Selected words have a similar orthographic structure, and

represent the most common features of the language and also align with expectations for student reading in that grade.

The subtasks considered to be "core" to the assessment have been enumerated as follows: Letter name identification; Letter-sound identification; Initial-sound identification; Segmentation (phoneme or syllables); Syllable identification; Familiar word reading; Non-word reading; Oral reading fluency; Reading comprehension; Cloze; Listening comprehension; Vocabulary; and Dictation.

In a study conducted by the Ghana Ministry of Education (2012), it was revealed that one major reading problem was inadequate learning and teaching materials. Some school authorities have been found to stock their offices with new text books without releasing them to teachers and pupils to read. Reading available basic materials by pupils at school and in their homes makes pupils cultivate the culture or habit of reading in future.

Another remediation programme used in countries like Finland is the 'Ekapeli' which is a computer-based learning game that helps the child to become fluent in letter sound connections. The Ekapeli was developed by Professor Heikki Lyytinen in 2003. This game is now widely used and other language versions of the game have been tested (Kachenga, 2008).

Research evidence portray that it is very difficult to catch up or become fluent readers once learners lag behind in the language-based skills of reading unless intensive measures are put in place (Matafwali, 2005). Early intervention is very fundamental as it can help in ameliorating the problem rather than waiting until it is too late.

There is need to know the causes of reading difficulties before intervening. It is very difficult for a problem to be solved without understanding its cause. For example, if it is found that the cause of the reading difficulty is lack of phonological awareness and skills in alphabet coding, there is need for teachers to be trained on the letter-sound correspondence methods of teaching

which are based on alphabet codes (Mando, 2008). These teachers in turn help the pupils with reading difficulties.

Clay (2012) developed the reading recovery programme to assist teachers help children learn at least four approaches to decoding. These approaches include:

- focusing on the meaning – semantics

- relating sounds to letters – phonics

- looking at how words and phrases are formed – syntax

- recognizing sight words – visual

According to Clay, some children develop decoding strategies over time with little direct instruction. Other children however need one-on-one instruction to help them learn decoding strategies.

2.21 Focus on the meaning

Young readers often figure out a new word by thinking about what would make sense in a sentence or story. The teacher can help by suggesting that the child looks at the pictures, then read a sentence again. If a child's guess at a word is incorrect, teacher asks questions such as, "Do you understand? What did the girl do at the last house she visited?"

2.22 Relate sounds to letters

Children apply what they already know about the relationships between letters and sounds to read a new word. For example, a child can read the word train, because she knows the *tr* in this word makes the same sound as the *tr* at the beginning of **truck**, a word she already knows. Teacher can help by reminding the child what he/she already knows about letter-sound relationships and helping him/her use this knowledge to attack new words.

2.23 Look at how words and phrases are formed

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Compound words are formed by combining two words (e.g., playground). You can help a child read an unfamiliar compound word by demonstrating how to break it down into its parts. "That was a good guess – raincoat. You recognized the first part of the word, *rain*. But look at the second part of the word again. Teacher can cover the first part. Now, what does the second part say? That is right, it is *bow*. So, what is the word? Correct! It is *rainbow*. Now the story makes more sense. After the rain, she saw a rainbow, not a raincoat."

2.24 Recognize sight words

High-frequency sight words make up about 50 percent of the words we read and often cause children problems. When a child masters high frequency sight words he/she experiences success, which can boost his/her self-confidence and interest in reading. Teacher can help children make flash cards for sight words to use during lessons and at home. Teacher and the child can celebrate and track progress in mastering sight words by recording them in a journal or notebook.

2.25 Summary of literature

In sum, the literature review examined the concept of reading and its importance to pupils. The author used EGRA as a progress monitoring tool to clarify how children learn to read as well as how the home environment can impact on children's reading skills. The literature review described the causes of reading difficulties among children, the instructional approaches to teaching reading, the challenges that teachers face in teaching reading to children. This chapter concluded with the study's theoretical framework and strategies aimed at improving upon the pupils reading skills at the Salvation Army Primary School at Apam.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the methods used in the study. Areas covered include the research design, population, the sample size and sampling technique, the research instruments, data collection and data analysis procedures, as well as ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

I employed a qualitative research design for the study drawing on interpretivism to describe the situation in its natural state and in the words of Bryman (2008: 31), "the design provides a framework for the collection and analysis of data". The choice for this design enabled the researcher to report the situation as it is in the school. I researched into the pupils' reading problems and how to improve their reading skills of primary five pupils at the Apam Salvation Army School. This enabled observation and dialogue (interview) to capture the essence of the research problems.

I employed this approach to understand from the point of view of the teachers the problems of the pupils as it pertained to reading. With this approach, I could better appreciate their point of views and suggest strategies to improve their reading difficulties.

3.2 Population

A population in research is a larger group with common observable features to which one hopes to apply the research results (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). The population for the study comprised all the pupils of the Salvation Army primary school in Apam and their teachers. The population was 290. The breakdown is two hundred and eighty pupils and ten teachers.

3.3 Sample Size

The sample for the study was sixty (60) made up of fifty-eight pupils in upper primary five and two class teachers in the Salvation Army primary school, Apam. The Table 1 that follows illustrates the demographic information of the respondents. Upper primary class four pupils were not included in the study because the study considered only pupils who have had more than one year learning experience in upper primary classes. Also, upper primary class six pupils were not included in the study because they formed the final year class and were busy with series of examinations. The participants were made up of thirty-three boys and twenty-five girls from both classes.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS

Table 1:

CLASS	BOYS	GIRLS	TEACHER	TOTAL
5a	17	12	1	30
5b	16	13	1	30
TOTAL	**33**	**25**	**2**	**60**

3.4 Sampling Technique

The researcher employed the purposive sampling technique to select the classes in the school and census sampling technique to select the teachers. This is because the pupils are in their penultimate year and have done more than one year upper primary education. In addition the pupils are expected to be fluent in reading so that come the ensuing year they can register and write their final upper primary school examination and get set for the junior secondary school education.

Purposive sampling is the type of sampling technique in which the researcher uses his or her own judgment regarding the selection of participants from whom required information will be collected. Again, the researcher used the census sampling technique to select the two teachers handling the upper primary five classes because the number is small and they have taught at their current classes, on the average, for 5 years. These respondents were considered capable of providing answers to explore the research questions on the improvement of reading in upper primary class five.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

Data collection instruments refer to devices used to collect data such as observation, interviews, tests and checklists. The researcher employed two main instruments to generate data for the study; observation and interview. These tools were selected based on the research questions for the study.

3.6 The Semi-Structured Interview Guide

The main instrument for the study was a semi-structured interview guide for the class teachers. I collected data with the help of the semi-structured interview guide from the teachers by asking them general and specific questions based on the research questions. Various views were sought regarding the pupils' reading abilities, their difficulties, teachers' challenges in teaching reading and how to improve reading among the pupils. The interview guide was divided into four sections. Section one elicited information on factors contributing to reading difficulties among the children. Section two sought information on challenges the teachers faced in teaching reading to the pupils and Section three generated data on identification of teacher's methods of teaching reading. The fourth section elicited information on how to improve pupils' reading skills.

To ensure validity, the entire instrument was subjected to peer reviews. The items were scrutinized by colleague students in order to offer the necessary suggestions and corrections. In line with this, I discussed the semi-structured interview guide with some lecturers and my supervisor who reviewed the instrument and offered some suggestions. For example, research question four was suggested by my supervisor to elicit information on how to improve pupils' reading skills.

The semi-structured interview guide was (see Appendix A) used to obtain in-depth information on the opinions of the class teachers since the researcher had the opportunity to clarify questions that were unclear and probed further in case of an incomplete answer. The interview guide had questions that reflected the research objectives.

3.7 The observation Protocol

Another instrument that I used for data collection was the observation guide. The observation guide (see Appendix B) also consisted of five items which covered more specifically the activities that unfolded in the two classrooms during the teaching of reading and how the pupils participated in the instructional activities and their responses. The observational information has provided me the ability to describe the activities that I observed in the two classrooms, the pupils who participated in the instructional activities and what they said as compared to what the teachers said during the interview. Through the observation process, I was able to observe the class size, the teaching and learning materials, the pupils' ability to read, the environment, and the teacher's methods of teaching reading.

3.8 Validity of Instruments

There are various ways of validating instruments. To achieve the validity of my instruments, I employed peer reviews. The items were scrutinized by some of my colleagues who offered the necessary suggestions and corrections. Then, I discussed the semi-structured interview guide

with some lecturers and my supervisor who reviewed the instrument and suggested that I consider the inclusion of the fourth objective of the study and subsequently the fourth research question on how to improve on the pupils' reading skills. They suggested that some of the statements should be re-phrased in simple and clear terms for easy understanding. The suggestions offered were used to reorganize the items.

3.9 Reliability of the Instruments

I did not do any pilot study to ensure the reliability of the instruments. However, to ensure consistency of the items in the interview and observation guides, the items were reviewed with the help of colleagues. I also used prompts and probes in the semi-structured interview to elicit further information or clarification consistently for the two upper primary five class teachers which enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the instruments. For example, in order to establish credibility, I restated and paraphrased the information received from the respondents to be sure that what was heard was accurate. I also contacted some of the respondents later to confirm or disconfirm what they meant with what they had stated.

3.10 Ethical Issues

The researcher adhered to the ethics of research. For example, before the data collection process, the researcher assured the respondents of confidentiality and anonymity. The respondents' names were not used in the study.

3.11 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher secured a letter of introduction from the Head of Department of Applied Linguistics of the University of Education, Winneba which stated the purpose of the study. This document enabled the researcher to seek and obtain permission from the study site and respondents at Apam Salvation Army primary school. At the school, the researcher explained the purpose of the study to the respondents and together, the time, date and venue for the

administration of the interview was agreed upon. The respondents were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. The researcher did not train any assistant to assist her because the classes were only two with 60 pupils in both groups so they were manageable, and the design did not warrant the training of research assistants.

On the agreed date and time, the researcher met with the teachers and pupils in their classrooms to administer the observation guide. The instruments were personally administered by the researcher after explaining the demands of both the interview and observation guides to the respondents mainly in the English language. The researcher also expressed her gratitude to the respondents for their time and energy spent in answering the items. Data gathered from the observation and the interview responses were triangulated and analysed.

3.12 Data Analysis Process

After the data collection process, the beginning of the data analysis started. After gathering the interview responses, they were sorted according to the four research questions. A response sheet was created to collate the responses based on the sections and the respective headings. The analysis was done using descriptive statistical tools such as percentages, frequencies, and means. The respondents' analyzed data were summarized, and the findings have been presented using narratives and direct quotes.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

In the following chapter, an analysis of this qualitative research study is presented, as it sets out to answer the research questions stated in chapter one of the study. The analysis of the study has been done for information on the improvement of class five pupils' reading skills at the Salvation Army Primary School in Apam.

Specifically, it focused on issues such as factors contributing to reading difficulties among primary five pupils; challenges teachers face in teaching reading to primary school pupils; the methods teachers use in teaching reading to the learners, and ways of improving the pupils' reading. The major themes were chosen from the interview guide which had pre-defined themes that were closely related to the research questions. In all four major themes, and other subthemes were identified.

4.1 Research Question 1: What factors contribute to reading difficulties among primary five pupils?

The first objective of the study aimed at identifying factors contributing to pupils' reading difficulties in primary five at the Salvation Army primary school in Apam. In order to identify the factors responsible for the pupils' reading difficulties, teachers were asked to enumerate some of the factors they thought could lead to pupils' inability to read. The factors covered weak reading foundation, insufficient textbooks, no help at home, no storybooks in and out of school, and pupils' inability to do silent reading or reading aloud. Other factors include pre-service and in-service training of teachers regarding teaching reading to early grade pupils, too

many extra mural activities leaving little time for the teaching of reading to pupils, and absenteeism of some pupils. Items on the semi- structured interview guide covered all these factors and responses were compared with what is contained in the literature.

4.1.1 Weak reading foundation

The teachers reported that the pupils were unable to read because their reading foundation was weak. They indicated that the pupils could not put letters together to form words and simple sentences. Probing further, it was evident that the pupils did not have the basic phonemic awareness to be able to pronounce words. They did not know which letters make what sound. Cicerchia (2016) stated that one of the most common causes of reading problems is a delay in phonemic awareness. Phonemic awareness is the ability to break words into individual sounds while reading. For example, turning /cat/ not /c/ /a/ /t/. Blends such as /br/ or /bl/ are even more challenging as are similar sounding consonants like /mu/ and /nu/. This skill requires strong language processing.

One of the teachers stated:

> *"When I started teaching reading to the class, I realised that the pupils have a big problem when it comes to reading. I therefore tried to do phonemic awareness activities with them before we read but they cannot simply read and understand. During English reading, these pupils prefer to use Fante. I think that they feel shy to speak or read the English language".*

According to the Ghana EGRA report (2013; 2015), letter-sound identification, initial-sound identification, segmentation (phoneme or syllables), and phonics are all subtasks in reading activities that when taught properly to pupils boost their ability to read with ease and with understanding. These subtasks may be employed to measure pupils' knowledge of letter-sound correspondences. For   example,   the   EGRA   report   indicated   that   during   letter-sound

identification activity, 100 letters are presented to children at random in both upper and lower cases for pupils to read within 60 seconds. The activity is discontinued if none of the sounds in the first line (i.e., 10 letters) is produced correctly. Then during the initial-sound identification stage, pupils' ability to discriminate beginning sounds are tested. Three words are presented for the pupils to identify the word that begins with a different sound from the other two. The initial-sound identification activity is purely oral in nature and has 10 sets of words. It is also discontinued if no points are scored in the first five items.

The EGRA report emphasized the importance of the segmentation (phoneme or syllables) subtask in reading which helps beginning readers to orally segment a word into individual phonemes or syllables. During the observation process, the researcher realized that pupils could not break the words into syllables.

4.1.2 Home environment

The home environment was another factor that the teachers indicated to be responsible for the pupils' reading difficulties. The two teachers stated that the pupils come from poor socio-economic home backgrounds where majority of the parents are illiterate fisher folks who cannot read let alone help their children read at home.

One teacher noted:

> There is no electricity in the homes and even some homes lack basic writing desks and chairs. If these things are not available for these children how can they learn to read at home? As for me, I do not blame them much. One, the parents cannot read; two, not even the adult siblings can read. All they think about is their fishing business and outdoor games.

The second teacher also remarked:

> I don't think that we should worry these children about reading at home. Some of them live far away and there are no comfortable amenities in their homes to

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make reading possible. The parents also cannot afford to pay private teachers to teach extra reading lessons to the pupils. Even if we want to organize extra classes for them in the school, they do not pay even though it is virtually free compared to what is charged in other schools.

These comments indicate that the pupils' parents have poor socio-economic background and so have difficulty supporting their children's reading activities at home and in school.

4.1.3 Insufficient reading textbooks

The two teachers informed the researcher that there are insufficient reading materials such as textbooks for the pupils. This point was evidenced during the observation period as the researcher clearly saw that about three to four pupils crowded around one book during reading lessons. Additionally, the pupils had no storybooks and supplementary readers to complement the already inadequate reading textbooks in the school. This implies that there are inadequate reading materials for the pupils and hence they are not motivated to read basic reading materials.

Simple interesting stories and reading passages from other sources and books could be brought to the class by the teachers for the children to read. These could be biblical stories and folktales relevant and interesting to the children's contexts to improve the situation.

One teacher remarked:

The issue of the textbook is all over in the schools in the country. The Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Ghana Education Service (GES) are all aware of the problem but nobody is doing anything about it so the children are suffering. Indeed, the teachers are doing their best in these difficult circumstances but that is not enough. How can you teach reading without textbooks? And the authorities expect the children to perform well in their examinations.

The second teacher stated:

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The children are also to blame for not taking proper care of the inadequate books available. These children tear or mutilate the books and some steal the few books to their homes. At a recent staff meeting, I suggested that we pay surprise visits to the nearby homes of some pupils and I believe that we can get some of these books but my colleagues are not supporting this idea. I bet you if they listen to me and support me, we can get more than ten books from the pupils' homes.

4.14 Teacher training

Another factor that was discussed centred on teacher training. Both teachers acknowledged that whereas they were trained as general education teachers and so could teach the English language, they were not specifically trained to teach reading and/or reading comprehension to early grade pupils. In their view, the issue of teacher training where teachers are specifically trained to teach reading to early grade pupils is very important and should not be taken for granted.

One teacher remarked:

In the beginning, I did not know how to teach these kids to read because I took it for granted that it would be easy but it wasn't so. What helped me was two in-service training workshops on reading organized for teachers in the district that helped me. At the in-service training workshops, we the participants had similar difficulties. However, after the training, we learned so much about how to teach reading to early grade pupils. The last time that such a training workshop on teaching reading to pupils was organized for us in the district was six years ago.

4.15 Absenteeism

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Absenteeism was another factor that the teachers considered a crucial factor on the part of some of the pupils to have contributed to the reading problems of the pupils. They explained that Apam is a fishing community and whenever there is plentiful catch, many of the pupils do not come to school. They go to the sea shore to help the fisher folks in order to get money at the expense of their education. This implies that during peak fishing season, many of the pupils abandon their books in search of money.

4.2 Research Question 2: What challenges do teachers face in teaching reading to primary five pupils?

4.2.1 Insufficient reading materials

The teachers stated that they faced numerous challenges during the teaching of reading to the pupils. Major among them was the issue of insufficient textbooks supplied to the pupils by the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ghana Education Service (GES). Apart from the teachers' copies of reading textbooks, three pupils or even four had to share one textbook which was usually torn.

Thus, during the reading process, the pupils were observed to be using their index fingers to point to the words while reading. They did not use their eyes to follow the reading passage. Therefore, when it got to a pupil's turn, the pupil drew the book to himself or herself and used the fingers to read. Those who could not decode words and so could not read or pronounce the words either got stuck or pointed on wrong words or refused to read at all. Many of the pupils used the guessing strategy as they pointed at some words but could not read those same words or phrases when they came across them again. This confirmed what Cicerchia (2016) stated in the literature that words are skipped or guessed because they are not recognized by a reader who is getting around a decoding problem by trying to memorize all words.

One teacher commented:

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> *As for this textbook problem, the earlier the Ghana government comes to our aid, the better. It is too much. You yourself you saw how many pupils shared one book. How can this situation help the children to do any meaningful reading? I don't blame the children and we the teachers are also doing our best. And whether we like it or not, we have to finish the syllabus. How is this possible with all these problems and many things to do?*

The second teacher also remarked:

> *As for me that is why I don't like researchers to come and observe me teach the children. There are no textbooks and the children are poor readers so as I try to help in this bad situation, maybe the researcher will think that I am not doing anything. But the situation is already bad and the teacher is rather doing his best. There is no time for individual attention. If you start giving individual attention during lesson delivery, you will be on the third pupil, and the time is over so you have to change lesson. It is a real challenge and the government must do something about it.*

This result corroborates the point of the Ghana Ministry of Education that most teachers work under unfavourable conditions such as inadequate reading materials in addition to irregular attendance at school by pupils (MoE, 2012).

Kalindi (2005) also found out that poor readers are most often left out of the learning process. The author stated that even when all the necessary materials are put in place, it may not help improve the skills of poor readers as long as the teacher is not competent enough to help the poor readers because the poor readers are not given a chance to improve themselves where reading is concerned.

4.2.2 Unfavourable teaching environment

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Another challenge that the teachers faced was the unfavorable teaching environment. The tables and chairs used by the pupils were broken and as a result the broken furniture were supported with bricks, cement blocks, and planks of wood or in some cases stones to maintain balance. Occasionally, there was instability causing the seating arrangement to become one-sided. In the literature review, McGuiness (2004) argued that, children who fail to learn to read do so mainly because of environmental causes and not necessarily biological factors. This means that there are certain factors in the teaching environment which may cause the child to have a reading difficulty. For example, if the child has to lie on the stomach or sit uncomfortably to read, this definitely will not promote good reading.

The issue of tables and chairs for the pupils to sit and read is crucial both at home and at school and this point is emphasized in the EGRA report that the home environment and prior experiences contribute to children's reading acquisition and maintenance (Guthrie, 2004, Neuman, 2007).

4.2.3 Many extramural activities

The teachers also indicated that a challenge which stared them in the face and they could do nothing about was the numerous extramural activities which go on in the school. Examples include sports and games, music and dance (cultural activities), grounds work, cleaning, and large class size. These activities are performed by all schools in the district usually on competitive basis so Apam Salvation Army school also engages in them as part of the school culture. These activities take a sizeable portion of instructional time including the time allotted for reading and as a result, the teachers have difficulty completing the syllabus.

4.3 Research Question 3: What are the methods used by teachers to teach reading to primary five pupils?

The teachers' methods of teaching reading to the pupils were quite problematic. There were both good and bad approaches to teaching reading to the pupils as contained in the literature. The researcher observed that one teacher usually explained unfamiliar words to the children using the same word which the pupils did not understand. For example, in one lesson, the unfamiliar word was "surprise" which the teacher explained to the class as "is this not a surprise? I hope you all understand surprise now!" I observed this type of explaining unfamiliar words by the teacher over and over again and agreed with Kalindi (2005) that so long as the teacher is not competent enough to help the poor readers, the poor readers cannot improve on their reading skills themselves where reading is concerned.

The teachers did not use the traditional methods of phonics, look and say, language experience approach and the context support to teach reading. Reading strategies involving skimming, scanning, etc., were also conspicuously missing in the teachers' lessons. My general observation can be summed up as follows: Teacher stands in front of her class of 29 pupils aged eleven and thirteen-year olds crammed together at desks, huddled over shared books. Some were seated on the floor and teacher commands the pupils. "Now, class, read from the top of the page". The pupils follow in a slow sing-song pronunciation manner. "Stop," says the teacher. "It is not 'Wed-nes-day', you say it 'Wensday'. Again!" "Wensday," the class responds. "Repeat." "Wensday." The reading resumes, with the teacher frequently stopping to correct her pupils' pronunciations.

Sometimes the children read aloud in groups. At other times, she invited a child to come to the front to read aloud. Not once does she ask a question about what the story means. Nor do the pupils discuss or write about what they have read. It was also observed that the teachers invited only the few brilliant pupils to answer questions in class and it was the same brilliant ones who were asked to occasionally read aloud in class.

It was observed that this core aspect of teaching reading to pupils was downplayed by the teachers. Maybe in the face of the many challenges, the teachers forgot to emphasize the foundational literacy strategies in class for the pupils to develop the necessary basic beginning reading skills needed to do independent reading in future. I also witnessed many of the children asking the teachers to allow them express themselves in 'Fante'– the local language of the area. It was apparent that they understood the questions in the English language but could not express themselves in English since any time they were permitted to answer in Fante, many of them attempted to be involved in the lesson. This was usually during explanation of unfamiliar words.

From my observation of the teachers' instructional methods, I tend to agree with Paananen, Aro, Kultti-Lavikainen, & Ahonen (2009) that reading skills are usually taught during the first three (3) years of primary education so that as children progress in their education, they understand the concepts that they are taught but when the effective methods of teaching are missing, learners may become unable to read and understand.

Again, it is evident that the Ghana EGRA report (2013; 2015) which emphasized subtasks like letter-sound identification, initial-sound identification, segmentation (phoneme or syllables), and phonics in reading activities to be taught to pupils were not followed. These maybe the likely causes of reading difficulties among the children since the teachers do not follow some of the basic evidence-based practices that most countries are adopting in teaching reading to beginning readers.

One teacher remarked:

> *If I am to follow the pupils' reading inability, then I will have to start teaching*
>
> *them like pupils in class one or class two; but this will not help them as we have*

to complete the syllabus. How can primary five pupils be taught what they should have learned in primary classes one or two at this level? Therefore, all I do is to try and teach those that can follow my teaching and to advise the rest to try and learn how to read when they are free. This is quite a big problem but there is nothing that I can do.

The second teacher stated that:

It is quite frustrating to teach pupils in primary five how to read as if you are teaching in primary class one. The teachers in the lower primary classes are not trying at all. What they should teach at that level is not being done so the pupils get to the upper primary level and cannot do simple basic reading or mathematics. This problem is all over not only in our school. I think that more experienced teachers should be posted to the lower primary classes to lay solid foundation in reading and mathematics at that critical stage. Our work is like building a house. The foundation or base is very important if the building is to stand the test of time.

4.4 Research Question 4: How would the teaching of reading to pupils be improved?

The main purpose of the question was to come up with suggestions and ways of improving on the children's reading problems. Generally, the respondents were found to mostly rely on the old ways of doing things. The pupils were required to take the few books available and sit in groups of three and four to listen to the teacher read and explain unfamiliar words and occasionally call one or two pupils who can read to read aloud. In order to change the pattern of teaching reading in the school to improve the pupils' reading skills, it is advisable to review the teachers' methods of teaching the subject and also consider how to arouse the children's interest in reading as well as how to involve the parents in the reading activities of the children.

4.4.1 Teachers' Methods of Teaching Reading

The improvement of reading among the pupils is dependent on the barriers to reading that have been identified. So far, the barriers that have been identified to cause reading problems or difficulties for the pupils include weak foundation in reading, inadequate textbooks, lack of supplementary and story books, poor socio-economic home environment, lack of basic learning materials such as tables and chairs, and teachers' methods of teaching reading. On the method of teaching reading to the pupils, the first teacher had this to say:

> *Usually, I ask the pupils to take their reading textbooks and read after me and then, I explain unfamiliar words and phrases that we come across in the passages to them. Since the reading textbooks are few, another teaching strategy that I apply is group or choral reading. In this method, I put the pupils into about three or four groups and assign them to read specific portions of the reading passage. I have observed that this method brings some healthy competition among the pupils. I think that I have to maintain this teaching method as it is working well to improve the pupils reading.*

The second teacher also indicated that:

> *As for me I discuss unfamiliar words with the class before reading starts but this takes more time and the actual reading is done in just a few minutes. However, I think that the purpose of teaching reading to the children is for them to understand whatever they read. Therefore, when I explain the unfamiliar words and phrases to them before the actual reading, it is good. If the reading textbooks were adequate for every pupil to possess one, this method would have been the best way to teach them because they can continue reading at home from where we stop in class. At other times, if we have staff meetings and I will not be able to teach them, I group them to read. This reading in groups is also helping them*

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> *a lot as the few pupils who can read help those who cannot read so that after the*
>
> *staff meetings, when I come to teach, we organize reading competition and this*
>
> *is improving their reading skills. At other times, I ask them to do silent reading*
>
> *so that they will not make unnecessary noise.*

With regards to the pupils' weak reading foundation, the teachers have realised it and have started teaching the pupils the fundamentals of reading as if they are in primary classes one and class two. This is a good thing and it corroborates the points in the literature by Kuyini (2010) that poor reading by school pupils is a major concern in the country since it is leading to the pupils' poor performance in all their school work.

Bergensen (2015) also noted that children with poorer vocabularies understand less, and this can negatively impact their education. During the school years, the pupils must read as part of learning different subjects which means that it is very important to have good basic reading skills and a good understanding of written material. The author further noted that a child's vocabulary can be enhanced by providing a good reading environment at home.

On the same point, Kalindi (2005) also noted that poor readers are often left out of the learning process. Solid reading foundation should as a matter of necessity be laid for the pupils if they are to succeed in school. These are the foundational stages and very crucial to improving the children's reading skills.

Similarly, other stakeholders like the district or municipal assemblies could be contacted to assist in the procurement of sufficient furniture for the schools in their localities instead of waiting on the government to do everything. It is on record that the government is aware that most teachers are working under unfavourable conditions such as inadequate reading materials and experience irregular attendance at school by pupils (MoE, 2012).

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4.5 Discussion of Results

Results from the study show that majority of the pupils who were involved in the study could not read even the basal readers. The pupils' skills in reading the primary five reading textbooks were found to be relatively low. The primary five pupil is required to possess basic reading skills espoused in the EGRA (2013; 2015) report and in the professional literature. According to the EGRA report in addition to the subtasks, information about the child's literacy environment (i.e., language and family support) is also very crucial because the home environment and prior experiences contribute to the child's reading acquisition and maintenance (Guthrie, 2004; Neuman, 2007).

In general, professionals agree that reading forms the basis for all other areas of learning, and it is expected that children succeed in the process because when children are able to apply reading competencies independently, they succeed in other academic activities (International Reading Association (IRA), 2014).

This research has focused on identifying basic literacy skills that are reliably determined to understand the reading process in typically achieving and struggling readers. Furthermore, this research has helped to identify and to respond to children who may have reading difficulties in the early primary classes particularly primary five pupils at the Salvation Army School in Apam.

The respondents were able to give a fair description of the factors responsible for the pupils' poor reading skills attributing the causes of the reading difficulties to the pupils' poor socio-economic home backgrounds, inadequate reading textbooks, unavailable supplementary and storybooks, and weak foundation in reading. However, the respondents were unable to point to the teachers' instructional methods.

This may indicate that the teachers of the subject were not aware that their methods of teaching could contribute to the pupils' reading problem. As such, the argument is made that the teachers

teaching reading at the Salvation Army Primary School in primary five also contribute to the pupils' reading problems through their teaching methods. It suffices to say that the methods of teaching reading are complex and require much more practice and commitment from the teacher. The researcher observed that both teachers most often allowed pupils to use the local language to explain reading concepts which was rather what the Ministry of Education mandates teachers to do at the lower primary class levels (MoE, 2012).

The second research question of the study sought to investigate the challenges that the teachers face in teaching reading to the pupils. The study results indicate that majority of the pupils had difficulty reading their coursebook. This is an indication that the pupils of the Salvation Army primary five school probably are unable to read and understand basic course materials. The teachers' challenges included large class size but the school authorities tried to solve this challenge by splitting the class into two streams. Again, they confronted this challenge by putting the pupils into groups during reading instruction. On the issue of many extra mural activities, even though all work without play makes Jack a dull boy, there is need for the teachers to prioritize the activities and also apportion the instruction time properly.

The findings are similar to Chall & Stahl (2008) and Paananen, Aro, Kultti-Lavikainen, & Ahonen, (2009) who argued that most learners are unable to use reading as a tool for learning and are unable to read accurately at acceptable rates because the reading skill was not effectively taught them in the first three years in school.

The problem of the pupils' inability to read could be linked to the home environment where mother tongue interference, lack of motivation, lack of textbooks and reading materials, parents' literacy levels, socio-economic factors (for example, poor nutrition, lack of proper furniture for studies), type of lighting system at home, lack of support by parents or guardians and no community libraries are widespread. This finding confirms Bergensen's study that children who

are seldom read to and whose parents read very little are at a disadvantage when they start school (Bergensen, 2015).

The teachers and the pupils all agreed that most of the pupils' homes used the local language and the children were not motivated to read at home; in addition to that, there were not textbooks and reading materials at home for the pupils to read. Furthermore, the parents were mostly illiterate fisherfolks who could not read to their children at home. These parents did not encourage or support their wards to read at home after school. Facilities such as lights, and furniture were also lacking in most homes. All these home environment factors did not facilitate the pupils' reading acquisition.

The teachers' challenges were mostly lack of reading materials and inappropriate furniture for the pupils which appeared to be beyond the teachers' control. They also had many things to do in addition to teaching the children how to read. Juggling all these activities left them with little or no time for the real teaching work so they used all means to try to complete the academic syllabus. The teachers thus did not rigorously apply the professionally acceptable methods of teaching reading in their work.

According to Cicerchia (2016) and the EGRA subtasks, the pupils have to be taught reading using the phonemic awareness, letter sound and alphabetic methods not forgetting the segmentation rules and others. However, one teacher explained that in discharging her duty, she tried to do phonemic awareness activities with them before they read but they cannot simply read and understand. During English reading, these pupils preferred to use the local language (Fante). She explained that they feel shy to speak or read the English language.

This behaviour on the part of the pupils could be attributed to the teachers not employing the letter-sound identification, initial-sound identification, segmentation (phoneme or syllables),

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and phonics in their reading lessons to boost the pupils' ability to read with ease and with understanding.

On suggestions to improve upon the pupils reading skills, the teachers unanimously stated that in their view, the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service and all other stakeholders should do everything possible to get reading materials to the school, namely, adequate textbooks, supplementary readers, tables and chairs and exercise books. Lack of these basic materials do not promote the teaching of reading to pupils.

The researcher observed and noted the lack of reading materials at the study site and the few available ones that were in deplorable state to confirm the Ministry of Education's assertion that most teachers work under unfavourable conditions such as inadequate reading materials and experienced irregular attendance at school by pupils (MoE, 2012). The situation has to change for the better so that many of the pupils who are not able to read will not be left out in the education process (Kalindi, 2005).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusions, and recommendations.

5.1 Summary of Methods

The purpose of this study was to examine and improve on the reading difficulties of pupils in Salvation Army primary five and the challenges that teachers face in teaching reading to these pupils in the school. The study was guided by four research questions which include: the factors that contribute to reading difficulties among primary five pupils; the challenges that teachers face in teaching reading to primary school pupils; the description of the teachers' methods used in teaching reading to the pupils; and how the teaching of reading to pupils should be improved?

Literature was reviewed on the general concept and importance of reading; physical home environment, and reading difficulties of children. Literature was also reviewed on the causes of reading difficulties, approaches to teaching how to read and challenges faced by teachers in teaching reading. The rest of the literature review focused on the theoretical framework of the study and the EGRA report and strategies to improve reading skills in class to promote fluent reading.

This study adopted a qualitative research design drawing on interpretivism to describe the situation in its natural state to examine the pupils' reading problems and how to improve on the reading skills of these children at the Apam Salvation School. This enabled observation and dialogue (interview) to capture the essence of the research problems.

5.2 Summary of Key Findings

The key findings of the study are:

Research question one sought to investigate the factors that contribute to reading difficulties among primary five pupils in the school. The study showed that pupils from the Salvation Army Primary five were unable to read and understand basic textbooks and supplementary readers at

that stage. Therefore, pupils of the Salvation Army Primary five are unable to read age-appropriate texts with understanding.

Research question two aimed at determining the challenges the teachers faced in teaching reading to the children. The findings of the study showed that the teachers had challenges in teaching reading to the pupils in the school. This is an indication that the pupils from the Salvation Army Primary five were unable to read and understand basic textbooks and supplementary readers at that level. This was clear from the teachers concerning their pre-service and in-service training activities relating to teaching reading.

Research question three sought to find out what the teachers' methods of teaching reading to the pupils in the school are. The results of the study indicate that the teachers' methods of teaching reading involved "open your books and read after me", and occasionally, explanation of unfamiliar words and phrases with pupils and reading in groups of three and four. These were the most used methods by the teachers in the school. The number of methods that teachers can employ in teaching reading to beginners include commonly used ones like the phonic method, look and say, language experience approach and the context support method but these were not the ones employed by the teachers in the school which is an indication that their methods used to teach reading could also contribute to the pupils' inability to read in the school.

Research question four had to do with suggesting ways to improve on the pupils reading. Suggestions put forward include the provision of reading textbooks, supplementary and story-books as well as supply of enough furniture (tables and chairs) by the school authorities, PTA, district assembly, and the ministry of education for the pupils to be able to have the necessary materials ready for learning to read.

Finally, the results of the study show that measures to be adopted to improve the teaching of reading to the pupils in the school include ensuring that all the basic materials are supplied,

home and school environments are adequately resourced and parents encouraged to support the children's reading at home. The researcher also believes that the teachers can work on their teaching methods and the pupils motivated to read a lot.

5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings, it may be concluded that the teaching of reading to primary five pupils in the school is not as effective as it is supposed to be and as a result, pupils of the two primary five classes in the school are unable to read and understand basic reading texts. The major challenges faced by the teachers who teach reading in the school include lack of adequate textbooks, and insufficient furniture for the pupils. The pupils' poor home environment could also be a contributing factor to the reading problems.

By implication teaching reading to primary school pupils in Ghanaian basic schools are in a state where revamping is required. All the required materials have to be supplied. Language teachers need regular in-service training concerning the teaching of reading to pupils in lower and upper primary classes in all schools.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following general recommendations have been made and these are useful in teaching reading to pupils in primary schools in Ghana.

1. In training teachers to teach language, the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service in conjunction with the National Teaching Council should have to consider training qualified and interested language enthusiasts who can teach reading and help the children develop the confidence to read texts with understanding. This goes without emphasis that teachers in the field need regular in-service training in the methods of teaching reading to pupils in primary schools to become professionally responsible for effective teaching of the subject.

2. The Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service should put measures in place to procure adequate reading textbooks for all pupils in primary schools in the country. The same goes for the procurement of basic logistical materials such as tables and chairs.

3. The school authorities and the parents in the district assemblies should encourage the use of the school library by the pupils and also stocked it with books to motivate pupils to cultivate the habit of reading.

4. Parents and teachers should collaborate to support the pupils to read after school.

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APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS

MED (TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE)

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Dear Teacher,

The aim of this interview is to investigate how to identify pupils' reading problems, the challenges you face in teaching reading to the pupils, and how to improve reading skills of primary five pupils in the Salvation Army School, Apam. The information you supply will purposely be used for this research only and will be treated confidentially.

Thank you.

Mabel Ama Gyapong

1. School:………………………………………………
2. Class:………………………………………………
3. Duration of Interview:…………………………….

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR PUPILS' READING PROBLEMS

4. What in your view account for the pupils' inability to read?

5. Do pupils get help with reading at home?

6. Are pupils provided with story books to read in and out of school?

7. Are pupils able to read short comprehension passages?

9. Do pupils have problems with silent reading?

10. Are pupils able to read aloud in class?

CHALLENGES TEACHERS FACE IN TEACHING READING TO PUPILS

11. Are pupils able to do skimming?

12. Are the pupils able to scan for information?

13. How often do you do intensive reading activities with your pupils?

14. How often do you do extensive reading activities in class with the pupils?

15. What are the main challenges that you face in teaching reading to the pupils?

STRATEGIES EMPLOYED TO TEACH READING

16. Do your pupils skim before actual reading?

17. How do you teach English reading to your pupils?

18. How often do you do silent reading?

19. How often do you do reading aloud or choral reading?

20. How do you teach phonological awareness to your pupils?

21. How often do you include phonic activities in your reading lessons?

22. What are your concerns in teaching reading in your school?

SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE READING SKILLS

23. What suggestions do you make on how reading skills in your school can be improved?

24. Are you able to finish your reading syllabus?

25. Do your pupils read age-appropriate textbooks to improve their reading skills?

26. Do your pupils read age-appropriate story books to improve their reading skills?

27. Do your pupils read age-appropriate supplementary readers to improve their reading skills?

28. Do you encourage your pupils to use the school library?

DURATION OF INTERVIEW...

APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS

MED (TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE)

OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Dear Teacher,

The aim of this observation is to investigate how to identify pupils' reading problems, the challenges you face in teaching reading to the pupils, and how to improve reading skills of primary five pupils in the Salvation Army School, Apam. The information obtained would be used to confirm what the literature says and this research would be treated anonymously and confidentially.

Thank you.

Mabel Ama Gyapong

1. School:………………………………………………

2. Class:………………………………………………

3. Duration of observation:………………………………..

FACTORS RESPONSIBLE FOR PUPILS' READING PROBLEMS

Factor 1: Availability of books

Factor 2: Availability of furniture

Factor 3: Availability of story books and supplementary readers

Factor 4: Teachers' methods of teaching reading

Factor 5: Pupils' involvement in the reading lessons

Factor 6: The classroom environment

DURATION OF OBSERVATION ....

APPENDIX C

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION FROM DEPARTMENT

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

FACULTY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS

MED (TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE)

<div align="right">August12, 2017</div>

The Headteacher,

Salvation Army Primary School,

Apam Central Region

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I write to introduce to you, Madam Mabel Ama Gyapong, an M. Ed student of the Department

of Applied Linguistics of the University of Education, Winneba with registration number

7160080029.

She is currently working on her thesis on the topic: *Improving Reading Skills of Primary Five*

Pupils at Salvation Army Primary School, Apam.

I should be grateful if permission would be granted her to enable her carry out her studies in

your institution.

Thank you,

Dr. Fofo Lomotey

Ag. Head of Department.