THE TEACHING OF READING IN BOTSWANA GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Margaret O. Biakolo*

Abstract
This study investigated how reading is taught in Botswana Government schools. The findings indicate that inadequate reading instruction by teachers, their inability to model and provide students with research-based proven strategies, lack of reading specialists/coaches in the primary schools, the use of only basal series as the primary texts for reading, were responsible for the presence of many struggling readers and non-readers in the Botswana Government Primary Schools. The study is important in that it will reacquaint teachers with some aspects of the reading process, adequate reading instruction and ability to model reading strategies in their classes. In this regard the Ministry of Education may have to employ reading couches in the primary schools. The paper also recommends, among other things, raising the status of reading by making it a school subject in its right so that it can be examined just like any other school subject.

Keywords: primary, reading, instruction, model, strategies, specialists

Introduction
In Botswana Government Primary Schools, there is a growing number of students who cannot read either Setswana or English language. These students carry these problems to the Junior Secondary School levels as there is no consistent reading instruction beyond Standard One. Some of these students cannot recognize the letters of the alphabet, let alone the reading print. This low development of reading skills from the primary level has been one of the main reasons for the high rate of school dropouts from Junior Secondary Schools in Botswana (Matheo 2004). The poor performance of pupils in the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) has been attributed to poor skills in English language (The National Commission of Education 1993), including reading. The low level of reading development in the primary schools also reflects on First Year University students' low achievement in basic reading requirements of the English language courses; these students are after all mainly products of Botswana Government Primary schools (Arua and Lederer 2003).

The present study is motivated by non-readers who were identified by the researcher and by University of Botswana in-service student teachers during teaching practice supervision for a period of three years. The semesters that followed these supervisions were devoted to instructing these students in reading in a course which the author teaches at the University of Botswana, namely, EFS 450 (Services to Individuals with Learning Disabilities). This instruction was given to the students in collaboration with the final year students who were specializing

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in learning disabilities. The reading strategies were modeled in class, after which the students, who had permission to work with the pupils either at school or at the home of the pupils, gave the instructions with close supervision from the author.

Within 10 weeks of consistent instruction with research-based strategies, all the 15 non-readers turned fluent readers. The strategies were: interest-based reading, language experience approach, repeated reading, guided reading and reading aloud, to name some of them. It is worth noting that these strategies were combined according to what worked best for each pupil. One thing that was prominent was the ability of the teachers to model these strategies to the students as well as the provision for consistent practice. After this outstanding success, the researcher was motivated to investigate what happens in reading instruction in the Government Primary classrooms. The pupils in the study were in Standards Three, Four, Five, and Six.

The study revealed that Botswana Government primary schools teach reading instruction in Standard One, where the breakthrough method is used. Breakthrough is a method used in teaching reading and writing in the mother tongue. It is therefore an integrated approach, in which phonological awareness, phonics, reading, writing and spelling are all seen as interdependent parts of language. The breakthrough method also makes use of the language experience strategies, which build up the student’s knowledge and language base. Language experience approach also links different forms of language practice such as listening, speaking, reading and writing (Lerner 2003). The other benefit is that it makes use of children’s experiences, which later become the basis for reading instruction. Moreover, it gives room for students to be involved in their own reading, thereby making them active participants in their reading process.

What constitutes reading in other classes is a number of short passages from either Top Class English Learner’s Book, or Rainbow basal series published by Longman. The texts are graded from Standard 1 through 7. Pupils proceed from one book to another as they move through the grades. They also have workbooks to go along with them in which they fill blank spaces to practice various language skills. The point being made here is that these passages are too restricted for any meaningful reading and, as a result, pupils do not have any interaction with the texts in order to construct meaning (Biakolo 2000). The questions and the entire process are author-based. Since reading involves deriving meaning from texts through the information gathered from texts and the knowledge and experiences of the reader, what meaning does the reader make from author-based questions only?

A typical reading class starts with the teaching of new words, something that occurs in isolation from context. The purposes for reading are not usually indicated to students; the teacher simply calls on individual students to read rotationally. After reading, pupils answer the comprehension questions which the teacher confirms as right or wrong. As far as this author is concerned, it is the testing of reading that is in practice and not the teaching of reading since teachers do not offer reasons for reading so that the pupils can be focused. Providing instructions include pre-reading activities, for example, allowing students to preview the passage, giving background information, asking questions so that students can relate it to what they already know. Students may also be asked to
make predictions after viewing the illustrations and the subheadings, among other possible pre-reading activities. After this, the teacher may read to model good reading before asking the pupils to read.

In fact, teachers in Botswana Government primary schools, except those who teach in Standard One, are not even aware of the reading levels of their students as they do not keep any records of the activity. The schools do not have any reading teacher or reading coach to take charge of supervising or modeling good reading instruction for teachers. They believe that reading instruction is meant for Standard One pupils and those that are not able to read. In such cases, teachers try to do remedial teaching after school hours for pupils who cannot read using strategies learned in their pre-career training. This practice is not effective as remedial teaching is done after school hours using the materials that the students could not read during the regular classes. In fact, pupils run away from such isolation teaching as they view it as punishment. As schools do not have any reading teacher or reading coach to model research-proven strategies on reading, the teachers get frustrated as the remedial teaching is not effective in providing the pupils reading achievement (Tirelo, 2005).

The findings revealed a serious flaw in what goes for reading instruction. The primary school is the bedrock for learning to read; if the background is weak, students will find it very hard to cope with reading to learn, which takes place in the secondary school and the University. It is no wonder then that Botswana was rated last in reading literacy achievement among the 32 countries studied in 1990-1991 by the International Association for Educational Achievement (Elley 1996).

**Purpose and Significance of the Study**

In Botswana primary schools, reading instruction is taught in Standard One through the breakthrough method. Children who are not able to read with the breakthrough method in Standard One continue to struggle with reading at all levels as there is minimal reading instruction at other primary levels because teachers believe that reading instruction is for Standard One only.

This study seeks to investigate why struggling and non-readers continue to experience problems at all levels in the primary schools. This study is significant for teachers, as its findings will be made known to them. It is also significant for struggling readers, as well as non-readers, since teachers may implement some of the recommendations to help them read. The Ministry of Education and teacher educators will find it significant too as some of the findings might be useful to them for policy or strategy development.

**Literature Review**

The following review of literature is organized under three main sub-headings, namely Reading Instruction Modeling, Professional Development of Teachers, and Reading Approaches/Strategies. The third one is further sub-divided into Interest-based Reading, Multi-Sensory Methods, Repeated Reading, Language Experience Method, and Reading Aloud.
Reading Instruction/Modeling

Ellery (2005), citing the report by the Commission of Reading, *Becoming a Nation of Readers* by Anderson, Hibert, Scott and Wilkinson (1985), states that reading is a process where the reader gathers information from texts. This information is combined with previous knowledge and experiences of the individual in order to construct meaning. She further states that it is the interaction between the reader and the text that produces critical thinking which enables the reader to become an active participant in the reading process. Therefore, participating in the reading process is not automatic for students as they need to be guided by instructions and modeling of the reading art. In this respect, the duty of the teacher is to provide support by providing the readers with adequate strategies, techniques and reflective communication. Ellery (2005) further indicates that teachers need to be experienced in instructional ‘techniques’ and ‘teacher talk’ to enable them to model the art of reading.

A number of scholars (Onukaogu 1999, Cambourne 2002, Ellery 2005, Neufeld 2006) have stated that it is only teachers who are vested in pedagogic competences in reading and are aware of current and proven trends in the teaching of reading that can model the art of reading. The ability to use strategies to monitor reading does not come to students by chance or by merely providing opportunity for students to read. Students usually benefit from teachers’ instructions that explicitly teach students reading strategies. It is important to ensure that, before reading, teachers should clarify to the pupils the purposes for reading as this gives them a focus and improves their comprehension. For example, students may read in order to write reports, take part in class discussions, review tests and to enjoy and respond to literature. All these scholars agree that students require modeling of active learning before they can be engaged in it. Learning can only take place where there are clear goals and purposes that learners bring to such learning.

Wirt, Bryan and Wesley (2005) identified five principles which are crucial in any reading program. These include: Meaningful Conversations which the teacher uses to develop thought patterns and establish rapport with students; Choice, which helps to motivate and engage pupils; Consistent Support, which offers students constant clarity of important aspects of learning; Purpose, which is used as the student’s guide to learning and provides students with direction.

The key to teaching reading, according to the literature reviewed above, is the competence of the teacher, the quality of the instruction given to students, reading strategies used in giving the instruction, and the ability of the teacher to model these strategies. The implication, therefore, is that teachers who are not adequately trained and experienced in teaching reading would not be able to teach reading effectively. Consequently, professional development of teachers cannot be overemphasized in the teaching of reading.

Professional Development of Teachers

Singham (cited in Braunger & Lewis, 2006) states that curriculum reform and intentional sustained professional development of teachers have great impact on quality teaching and in closing the gap in achievement among students. Further,
for the teaching of reading to be effective, the teacher’s knowledge of the teaching process has to be applied in the teaching of reading. Cox & Hopkins (2006), after reviewing *Reading Recovering*, an internationally recognized program for low-achieving first grade pupils in reading, conclude that the key to reading lies in the hands of professional development. They, therefore, advise that undergraduate teachers should be given extensive experience during training to observe emergent and developing readers and writers in real primary classrooms. Student-teachers need to spend extended time in literacy classrooms under the guidance of mentor-teachers and university instructors. In addition, student-teachers should be made to access and provide instructions based on their assessment and observation so that they can receive feedback on their efforts. It is in such a model approach that teachers would have confidence in the instruction that they give to pupils in reading. In order to offer teachers continuity on feedback, the United States has adopted the employment of reading coaches to model and give feedback to teachers in the art of teaching reading.

Dole (2004) restates the fact that reading coaches are the answer to many struggling readers and non-readers that are found in all primary schools. She recalls that the *No Child is Left Behind* legislation in the United States resulted in the employment of reading coaches as a viable and important development in the professional training of teachers. Many of the reading coaches have deep knowledge of the reading process as well as high quality reading instruction skills that can be placed at the service of teachers. Moreover, the reading specialists can also serve as mentors and models to teachers to enable them apply their reading strategies. She further notes that with their presence in primary schools, teachers can obtain feedback on what they are doing well and on what they need to modify. They can also act as consultants for teachers. They would also need to ‘push teachers from their comfort zone’ to required levels in the art of teaching reading.

The literature reviewed has implications for Botswana schools as there is dire need for reading coaches in every primary school in the country. Many of the reading problems in Botswana are environmentally oriented since the children in our study only needed consistent instruction that matches their interests. We will now review some of the reading approaches /strategies used in this study.

**Reading Approaches/ Strategies**

*Guided Reading*

Guided reading is referred to as the heart of reading programs, according to Fountas & Pinnell (cited in Oczkus 2003). In guided reading, teachers guide students through a text, which might be at their instructional level (Oczkus (2003). She contends that many primary teachers use a strategic type of guided reading that incorporates good reader’s strategies, including making predictions, using various strategies to figure out unknown words, reading familiar texts, building fluency, and reading silently. Other elements of the strategy which she recommends are coaching students to figure out unknown words, participating in manipulating word parts, writing activities and games. For Oczkus, setting purposes for reading and using reciprocal strategies to discuss texts are very
effective. She also indicates that before reading, teachers should build background knowledge to make connections with the texts. In addition, headings and illustrations should be studied so that the students can make predictions on what they are going to read. Moreover, visual learners benefit greatly from the use of graphic organizers during instruction. Druker (2003) supports Oczkus’ views by indicating that the involvement of students in so much preparation before reading is one way of ensuring that students should comprehend what they read.

**Interests Based Reading**

Fink (2006) argues that interests could be used to help readers who lack phonological decoding skills (inability to convert letters to sounds). In this model, personal interest is used as a starting point to reverse reading failure, by providing children with opportunities to listen to readings of their personal interests. Listening to reading of interests was the starting point for the students in our own study. Students who listen to stories that are based on their personal interests are motivated to read intrinsically. A substantial amount of research has also supports interests-based models of reading (See Gardener 1983, Guthrie & Alverman 1999, Guthrie 2004, Ritchey 2004, Fink 2006).

Materials for reading should include the child’s own stories, newspaper strips, magazines or anything that reflects the interests of the students. After carrying out several studies on how non-readers and struggling readers overcame their problems, Reeves (2004) came to the conclusion that children/students need something that interests them in order to develop their reading skills.

**Multi-sensory Methods-Fernald**

The Fernald method is one of the multi-sensory programs. The multi-sensory method is based on the use of several senses to reinforce learning as indicated in the acronym VAKT, which stands for Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic and Tactile. In order to stimulate all the senses, students ‘hear’ the teacher say a word to them, hear themselves say the word, feel the muscle movement as they trace the word, feel the tactile surface under their fingertips, see their hands move as they trace the word, and hear themselves say the word as they trace it (Lerner, 2003: 443). The method is characterized by several steps.

**Step I**
The student selects the word to be learned. The teacher writes the word on a paper with crayon. The student traces the word with her/his fingers. The purpose is to enable the students to make contact with the paper in order to make use of their tactile and kinesthetic senses. As the student traces the word, the teacher pronounces the word to enable the students to hear the sounds of the word. This gives the students opportunities to make use of the auditory sense. The process is repeated until the student can write the word correctly without the help of the sample. As soon as the student learns the word, the sample is filed in a box. The student continues to learn many words using the same process until the words accumulated in the box are enough for the student to write a story.
Step II
At this stage, the students trace each new word by looking at the written copy, saying and writing the word to themselves.

Step III
The students learn new words by looking at printed words and repeating them before writing them. The students read from simple books, which are at their independent levels.

Step IV
The students are able to recognize new words from similar words as a result of constant touch with the printed words learnt. Finally, the pupils read new words through the knowledge they have acquired through the multi-sensory process. In the study reported in this paper, this method was used for students who could not name the letters of the alphabet.

Repeated Reading
This is a technique in which a student is made to read and re-read a passage or text several times in order to improve reading fluency, word recognition, reading accuracy, reading speed and oral reading. Repeated reading efficacy is supported by the National Reading Panel (NRP) report as indicated by (Samuels, 2002). Samuels states that before the method is introduced, the teacher should find out from students how one becomes skillful in any sport such as dancing, singing, running, basketball, and football. The teacher then explains to the student that being a skillful reader requires the same effort and practice.

In repeated reading, a short passage of 50 to 100 words is selected from a story or text of interest to the student. The teacher reads the passage to the student while the student listens. The student is made to read the passage three or four times until a satisfactory level of achievement is attained (Lerner 2003, Samuels 2002). Sometimes, two students, a good reader and a struggling reader, take turns to read after the teacher has read. The struggling reader improves his/her reading by the repeated reading of the skillful reader while the teacher just listens. Research findings have consistently documented the positive effects of repeated reading on reading achievement of struggling and non-readers. The method is not without its shortcomings. For instance, the ability to transfer the reading gain to an unfamiliar passage or texts has been a challenge to the method (Samuels 2002).

The Language Experience Method
The language experience method is built on students’ knowledge and language. It links different language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing (Lerner 2003). This is done by writing down students’ stories for them. The stories become the primary reading text for the students. The language experience approach is built on the following premises:
What I can think about, I can talk about
What I can say, I can write (or someone can write for me)
What I can write, I can read
I can read what others write for me.

(Lerner 2003: 344)

The language experience method is advantageous in that it is based on the students’ interests and creativity. The method is used for beginning readers as well as older students who are not able to read. The disadvantage is that the vocabulary and syntax or content cannot be controlled as it is based on students’ stories.

**Reading Aloud**

In this approach, the teacher reads aloud and models reading behaviours to the students. This is done with appropriate expressions and think-aloud demonstration (Ellery 2005). In Ellery’s (1992) study, countries with higher reading achievement were those in which teachers consistently read aloud to students. Ellery (2006) contends that teachers should have clear purposes for reading aloud to students. The method may be used to build background information and is also based on student interests. Reading aloud has the following benefits for students: it develops vocabulary, sense of story, written language syntax, knowledge of text structure, promotes language development and also introduces good reading texts to students.

The literature that has been reviewed clearly demonstrates that effective and adequate instruction from ‘knowledgeable’ teachers is the primary factor in reading achievement in primary schools. This finding is consistent with the results of the current study. In fact, the students in this study, including the non-readers, clearly demonstrated remarkable reading achievements. In fact, one of the teachers was encouraged to seek admission to read Special Education after seeing the reading achievement made by her student.

**Methodology**

Two methods were used in this research, observation and interviews.

**Observation**

Observation was used in the study. It was guided by the following four themes: Before Reading, During Reading, After Reading, and Reading Opportunities in the Class.

**Instructions before Reading**

The following instructions were presented to the learners at the start of the reading:
- Are there purposes set for reading?
- Is vocabulary reviewed in the context of the passages?
• Is background knowledge related to the story that is being read?
• Are students given a chance to predict what will happen in the passage?
• Are students given opportunities to observe titles, pictures, and subheadings in the passage?
• Are students given opportunities to ask questions on what they are about to read?

Instructions during Reading

The following instructions were provided during the reading process:
• Is attention directed to difficult words and ideas during reading?
• Are students encouraged to monitor their reading?
• Are pupils’ attention drawn to author’s information during reading?

Instructions after Reading

After the reading, the following instructions were provided:
• Are students given opportunities to retell or summarize the story after reading?
• Does the teacher use graphic organizers such as cause and effect, charts, outlines, and pictures of story events together?
• Does the teacher link background information to what has been read? (Braunge & Lewis 2006, Fink 2006)

Reading Opportunities in the Classes

The number of times allocated to reading in the classes is crucial. The following considerations are important:
• Does the teacher read to the students to model good reading?
• Does the teacher give reading assignments?
• Are there home reading records?
• Are there discussion groups on books read?
• Are there direct instructions in grammar and punctuation skills?
• Do pupils have opportunities to share ideas, opinions and experiences of stories of books read?
• Do students respond to literature through oral and written responses?
• Are students offered opportunities to discuss composition topics before writing?
• Is there a good library in the class?
• Is the library accessible to students?
• Is the library well equipped?
• What types of books are stocked in it?

Interviews (Individual Interviews)

The interviews were directed by the following guidelines:
• Notes on observation are discussed and clarified
The type of reading program followed by the school
Who is in charge of reading supervision?
Who helps the teachers in modeling good, research-proven reading strategies in the school?
Do teachers maintain home-school reading records?
Do teachers make use of other texts and books in their reading process?

Setting

The schools used for the study were in the northern, central and southern parts of Botswana. Purposive sampling method was used as all the participants in the study were in the primary schools where the researcher was supervising students on teaching practice.

There were three categories of participants in the study. The first group was made up of first year diploma students. These were in-service teachers majoring in Special Education (Learning Disabilities/Difficulties) and Primary Education. They were holders of Primary Teachers Certificates (PTC) before being admitted to the University of Botswana. Their teaching experience at the primary level ranged from 7-18 years. They were on their first teaching practice at university level after spending one academic year at the University of Botswana. They were twenty-six in number.

The second category was made up of in-service second year students. Subjects in this group held diplomas in Primary Education. Like their Diploma counterparts, they had also spent one academic year at the University of Botswana and were also doing their teaching practice at the university level for the first time. Their teaching experience at the primary level ranged from 5-13 years. They were twenty in number. The reason why experienced teachers had to do teaching practice was that they had to practice how to meet the learning needs of students with special needs in their mixed ability classes.

The third group, whose participation was limited to the interviews, was made up of head teachers and cooperating teachers of our students on teaching practice. Ten of them had Bachelor of Education degrees; five had the Diploma in Primary Education (DIP) while twelve held PTC. Their teaching experiences ranged from 10-23 years. A total number of 73 participants took part in the study. There were 53 females and 20 males. Forty schools were used in the study. However, only ten head teachers participated owing to their busy schedules.

Method of Data Collection

Permission was obtained from heads of schools as well as the participants. Participants were also assured of confidentiality of the observation as well as information given during the interviews. Moreover, participants were briefed about the benefits of the study to teachers, students and the government of Botswana given that the findings of the study were going to be published locally. With this assurance, participants gave their cooperation and the study was carried out. Each of the classes was observed five times for reading and literacy activities. At the end of the observation in each class, interviews were conducted. Finally, notes taken
during observation were discussed during the interviews for participants to cross-
check whether they were true reflections of their teaching.

**Results and Discussion**

The analysis of the data was descriptive. It was based on notes obtained on each of 
the themes during the observations in conjunction with the interviews.

*Theme one: Instructions Before Reading*

With reference to the questions on this theme, the observation reveals that 
there were no purposes set for reading. The vocabulary on the passage was 
discussed in isolation. Twenty of the participants gave background knowledge 
before the passages were read rotationally. The students were not given a chance to 
predict what would happen in the passage read. Students were not given 
opportunities to observe pictures, subheadings and headings. They were also not 
given opportunities to ask their own questions on the passage.

*Theme Two: Instructions During Reading*

The study noted that there were no instructions directed at facilitating 
understanding of difficult words and ideas during reading. Students were not 
encouraged to monitor their comprehension during reading. Attention was not 
drawn to author's information during reading.

*Theme Three: Instruction After Reading*

Students were not given opportunities to retell or summarize the story after 
reading. Graphic organizers such as cause and effect, charts, outlines, and pictures 
of story events were not used in the classes observed. What was observed instead 
was rotational reading in which students read in turns. Background information 
was not linked to what had been read.

*Theme Four: Reading Literacy Opportunities in the Class and Reading Materials*

The actual number of times allocated to reading was once a week. However, 
students were encouraged to read freely using supplementary books after finishing 
their work. Good reading was modeled during listening comprehension in class for 
the purpose of testing comprehension. Reading assignments were given in some 
classes. However, home reading records were not maintained. There were no 
discussion groups on books read and, as a result, pupils did not share ideas, 
opinions and experiences of stories from the books read. Pupils did not respond to 
literature through oral and written responses. The responses that were made were 
to questions asked in the recommended texts. No information was required from 
the supplementary books read. They were read for the student's enjoyment. Direct 
instructions in grammar and punctuation skills were observed in all the classes.

The observations and interviews revealed three forms of reading instruction. 
These included discussions of vocabulary (i.e. new words), after which students
read and answered questions at the end of the passage to test comprehension. Some teachers gave background information before reading. Direct instructions on grammar and punctuation were observed in all the classes. There was no setting of purpose for reading, nor were there pre-reading activities such as previewing or predicting what was going to happen by studying the illustrations or the main ideas presented in pictures and subheadings. Teachers also did not ask questions during reading to draw the attention of the students to the main ideas or characters presented in the stories. Therefore, there were minimal reading instructions in the classes.

The analysis of all the data collected reveals that there were minimal instructions on reading in Government primary schools in Botswana. Moreover, teachers did not model reading instructions. As a result, many children, who were not able to acquire reading incidentally, could not read. All the studies reviewed above support the need for adequate reading instructions. For example, Fountas and Pinnell (1996), and Dole (2004) agree that meaningful and high quality reading instructions are the answer to many of the problems that struggling readers face. They recommend that teachers should involve guided reading in reading instructions in order to prepare students before reading, during reading and after reading. Studies by Onuakaogu (1999), Scala (2001), and Ellery (2005) all point to the adequacy of good and research-proven strategies and the ability of the teacher to model them so that the students can actually see and know how to apply these strategies in the reading art. Another flaw revealed by the study is the lack of reading teachers in all the government primary schools in Botswana. The professional development of the reading process by reading teachers and their ability to model strategies to teachers and students alike cannot be overemphasized. Their ability to coach and supervise teachers and oversee whatever problems and feedback they require cannot be underplayed. Last, but not least, the study noted the restrictive nature of the materials read. Using only one basal series in reading instruction is inadequate; asking pupils to read widely without any direction, or guidance, is not a useful exercise. Students need to apply and use the information that they obtain from materials read usefully. On the other hand, teachers need professional development in order to cope with the reading art.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to investigate how reading is taught in Botswana Government Primary Schools. In this respect, two instruments were used in collecting the data. They were observation of reading classes and interviews. Lack of adequate reading instruction strategies and the ability to model reading strategies by teachers were identified as major causes of many cases of non-readers and struggling readers in Botswana Government primary schools. Equally essential in the poor instruction of reading was the lack of reading teachers and inadequate materials used in reading in the Botswana Government Primary Schools.

Based on the findings, the study makes a number of recommendations in order to improve reading literacy in Botswana Government primary schools and all other education sectors which share the products of these primary schools, such as Community Junior Secondary Schools, Senior Secondary Schools and the
University. Reading teachers/coaches should be employed in all the Government primary schools in Botswana, as their professional service to teachers and pupils is invaluable. Reading workshops should be held for in-service teachers for temporary management of reading instruction. In addition to the Rainbow basal series, other books such as storybooks should be used for reading instruction. Some of the in-service teachers that are being trained for the country should now be made to specialize in reading. All primary and secondary school teachers need course work on teaching and assessment of reading.

The service of special education teachers is not the same as those of reading teachers. Therefore, special education teachers who are being trained for the country now cannot undertake additional services of reading teachers. Their services complement one another but a single person cannot take on the two services. Reading should be examined like other subjects such as Mathematics, Social Studies and English Language. By so doing, teachers would be forced to take reading instruction seriously. If these recommendations are given attention, there is likely to be marked improvement in reading achievement among Government primary school learners. Other sectors, such as secondary schools and the University who use the products of these schools will also benefit from the reading achievement in Government primary schools.

Works Cited


Appendix: Field Notes

**Instructions before Reading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Observations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Are there purposes set for reading?</td>
<td>Not observed in all the classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) Is vocabulary reviewed in the context of the passages?</td>
<td>Vocabulary was reviewed out of context in all the classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3) Is background knowledge related to the story that is being read?</td>
<td>Twenty teachers gave background knowledge that is related to what was read.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4) Are students given the chance to predict what will happen in the passage?</td>
<td>Not observed in all the classes.</td>
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<td>5) Are students given opportunities to observe titles, pictures, and subheadings in the passage?</td>
<td>Not observed in all the classes.</td>
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<td>6) Are students given opportunities to ask questions on what they are about to read?</td>
<td>Not observed in all the classes.</td>
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**Instructions during Reading**

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<tr>
<td>7) Is attention directed to difficult words and ideas during reading?</td>
<td>Not observed in all the classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8) Are students encouraged to monitor their reading?</td>
<td>Not observed in all the classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Are pupils' attention drawn to author's information during reading?</td>
<td>Not observed in all the classes.</td>
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**Instructions after Reading**

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<td>10) Are students given opportunities to retell or summarise the story after reading?</td>
<td>Not observed in all the classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11) Does the teacher use graphic organizers such as cause and effect, charts, outlines, and pictures of story events together?</td>
<td>Not observed in all the classes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>12) Does the teacher link background information to what has been read? (Braunge and Lewis, 2006; Fink 2006)</td>
<td>Not observed in all the classes.</td>
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**Interviews (Individual Interviews)**

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<th>Interview</th>
<th>Responses</th>
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<tr>
<td>1) Notes on observations were discussed and clarified</td>
<td>All the teachers in the study agree to the observation that was made. They however wondered why I should be bothered about reading instruction. Reading instruction is meant for standard one pupils and those that cannot read. They however indicated that they do remedial for those that cannot read. Remedial is not effective as it is done after school hours and many of the children usually do not attend it.</td>
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<td>2) The type of reading program followed by the school</td>
<td>Teachers responded by saying that they do speaking, writing, reading and listening. They could not ascribe what they do to any programme.</td>
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<td>3) Who is in charge of reading supervision?</td>
<td>There is no teacher for reading in all the schools observed. They only have posts for senior teacher learning disabilities. Many of the teachers who hold the post of senior teacher learning disabilities are not trained. Moreover, many of these teachers have their own classes. As a result they are not effective.</td>
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<td>4) Who helps the teachers in modeling good, research-proven reading strategies in the school?</td>
<td>There is nothing like modeling research-proven reading strategies in the school. There is however a senior teacher for break through method in standard one.</td>
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<td>5) Do teachers maintain home-school reading records?</td>
<td>Teachers do not maintain home-school reading records, as they were not trained to do so. Moreover, there is no such structure in the schools.</td>
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<td>6) Do teachers make use of other texts and books in their reading process?</td>
<td>Teachers do not make use of texts in their reading process as they are not prescribed. However, there are supplementary books for students to read after finishing their work.</td>
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