

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**METHODS TEACHERS USE TO IMPROVE THE READING ABILITY OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNERS. A CASE STUDY OF TEACHERS
WITHIN ASHALLEY BOTWE SCHOOLS**



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**A dissertation in the Department of Early Childhood Education,
Faculty of Educational Studies, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Education
(Early Childhood Education)
In the University of Education, Winneba**

NOVEMBER, 2022

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Akosua Effah Ofori, declare that this dissertation, 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:

Date:

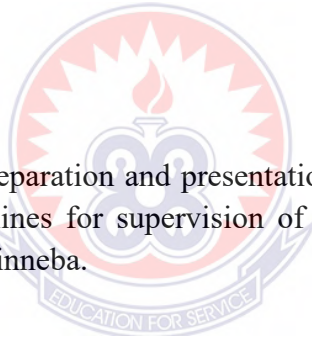
Supervisor's Declaration

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

Madam Justina Adu (Supervisor)

Signature:

Date:



DEDICATION

To my cherished parents and family, my dear friend Samuel Enti as well as the whole faculty of my department, and my supervisor, Madam Justina Adu.



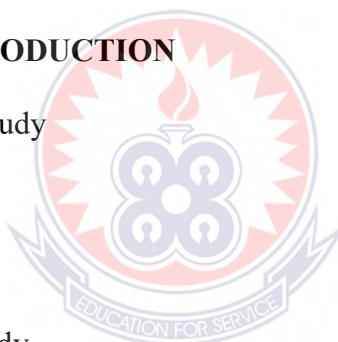
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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

- CRDD – Curriculum Research and Development Division
- GES – Ghana Education Service
- HND – Higher National Diploma
- LLI – Levelled Literacy Intervention
- SPSS – Statistical Package for Social Scientist
- SRT – Schema Reading Theory



ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to assess methods teachers use to improve the reading ability of learners. A descriptive research design was adopted and schools within the Ashalley Botwe area was used as the study population. Using a simple random sampling method, a sample size of 50 out of the target population was used to gather the needed information using a questionnaire (google form). The Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS) and excel tool were used to analyze data. The data was analyzed by making inferences to existing assertions captured in the literature review. The study revealed that English teachers within schools in the Ashalley Botwe Township use both the phonic and look and say methods in their quest to improve the reading ability of their learners. However, it was observed that greater majority of them use the phonic methods and the intensive and extensive classroom reading methods. According to the findings of the study, the teachers who teach the early childhood learners are faced with the challenges of unpreparedness of teachers, lack of reading resources, poor remuneration of teachers, lack of teaming, poor training of teachers, overcrowded classrooms and communication difficulties. The study revealed that not all learners in a class may benefit from a single teaching method used by the teachers because each method has disadvantages. As a result, it was recommended that English teachers in Ashalley Botwe Township schools use multiple teaching methods to compensate for the shortcomings of individual methods.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Early childhood learning is of utmost significance in relation to the mission of the government of this nation to supply children in this country with high-quality education and care, as well as free and obligatory primary education. Early childhood education and development should serve as the cornerstone upon which our whole educational system, most notably the elementary level, is built (Mwai, 2003). Therefore, it is the responsibility of the various stakeholders to create a congenial learning environment for the purpose of laying a strong foundation for our basic education. They can do this by providing early childhood schools with an appropriate learning environment and relevant materials to facilitate the development of skills and the successful implementation of early childhood programs. This will ensure that it is easy for young children to transit from early childhood settings to primary schools. Reading, on the other hand, is one of the four linguistic abilities that are taught with hearing, speaking, and writing in the process of acquiring English as a second language. Nevertheless, of all the talents, reading is regarded as the most essential.

According to Snow (2014), "reading is vital for success in modern culture" (p. 83). Reading proficiency is highly recognized and essential for social and educational success. Therefore, it can be stated that a person's everyday life and reading activity are closely associated, since reading is important not only in the educational sphere, but also in social and professional life. The development of excellent reading abilities is, therefore, one of the primary objectives of any educational program. Learners may increase their vocabulary and learn about the world via reading. Reading is also essential for spelling and writing performance (Freeman, 2002). Reading quickly and

effectively is essential not just for classroom-based instruction, but also for completing homework, assignments and scoring well on standardized tests. Reading is one of the four necessary abilities, along with listening, speaking, and writing. Reading plays a significant part in language instruction by enhancing the learners' gained abilities in listening, speaking, and writing (Maxom, 2009). Reading ability influences the acquisition of other abilities. Reading is not a simple process, and most learners have difficulties when reading a book; they find it difficult to identify both the symbol and the meaning of the text. Therefore, the learner should receive the finest reading instruction from a teacher. Before acquiring the reading talent, children must often learn how to read English words and phrases as a basis for improving their reading ability, one of which is the "look and say" approach. Learners may look and pronounce what is being read to them, and they can immediately recall the term because each word will be spoken several times. In Ghana, English is the official language; hence, all of our educational levels' content is constructed with all materials in English as a means of communication.

Reading has, therefore, become an essential ability for success in the worldwide digital 21st century. Reading growth is a crucial aspect of a learner's educational and academic career, as well as a significant component of high-stakes assessments that need higher order reading abilities. It is even more important for second language learners, who must read to increase their vocabulary and communication abilities (Grabe & Stoller, 2002). Crossley et al. (2006) were of the opinion, however, that second language reading texts at the beginning and intermediate levels must be simplified in order to make the text more intelligible for second language learners and to assist prepare them for more genuine readings.

1.2 Problem Statement

Today's technology is unquestionably advancing swiftly, but it has yet to improve learners' reading skills (Abdul-Wahab, 2018). In Africa, the United States of America, and Asia, a number of researches on the reasons of kids' low reading skills have been conducted (Njie, 2013; Rany, 2013; the National Reading Panel, 2000). Included in the scope of these investigations are Gambia, California, and Malaysia. Inattention to phonics training in the classroom, learners' laziness, a lack of ambition to learn to read, and the change from phonics instruction to reading comprehension in the third grade are important contributors to learners' low reading ability. In nations like South Africa (Lindner, 2008; Klapwijk and Van de Walt, 2011), the United Kingdom (Cain and Oakhill, 2011), and Kenya, more research on learners' reading ability has been undertaken (Lucas, 2011). Reading promotes vocabulary growth, according to Cain and Oakhill; however, when learners do not read fluently or consistently, their vocabulary abilities suffer. In addition, Caccamise and Snyder (2005) demonstrated that language knowledge favorably influences academic performance and understanding. Without a solid vocabulary foundation, kids will struggle to comprehend what they have read, as they constantly process words to build meaning throughout reading (Caccamise & Snyder). According to Lindner (2008), the majority of learners have poor reading skills as a result of the following: primary school teachers' inability to move beginning readers toward immediate reading skills, learners' lack of exposure to reading strategies, and teachers' prevalent attitude toward reading strategies. Klapwijk and Van de Walt (2011) verified this by adding that some primary school teachers still struggle with reading teaching and are averse to using it in the classroom. Botha et al. (2008) asserted that many educators are underdeveloped. The problem with reading among learners is that the teaching

approach is typically teacher-centered, relying on course book materials, and most teachers use textbooks and printed materials to teach learners. These materials are frequently presented in a monotonous manner, so that learners become bored. The availability of interactive multimedia sources, the lack of opportunities for learners to participate actively in the teaching and learning process due to time constraints, the learners' low motivation, their passivity during the English teaching and learning process, and their lack of vocabulary mastery in understanding texts contributed to the poor level of reading comprehension among learners (Nurhana, 2014). In addition, Nurhana found that the category and size of the class have an effect on the reading skills of the learners. Each learner has distinct requirements and skills. The most notable individual distinctions in the class are the variety of learners' competence levels and, in particular, their reading ability. Lawal (1995) commented, "If a learner has bad reading habits, he suffers not just in school but also in the working world in the future" (p. 2). However, most early childhood schools are not handled by professionals. Usually, the owners employ SHS leavers as teachers or caretakers. However, these individuals do not have the requisite teaching skills and it is unclear if they employ the right teaching methods that will help equip the early childhood learners improve their reading abilities. These early childhood learners may struggle with reading when they get to the primary level if not given the right reading method at their early stage, hence the quest to undertake this study to determine if the right methods are being employed by teachers within the Ashalley Botwe township.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The study was to assess the methods teachers use to improve the reading ability of early childhood learners within the Ashalley Botwe township.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The following specific objectives were considered;

1. To examine the methods used by the teachers within the Ashalley Botwe town to improve early childhood learners' reading skills.
2. To examine the relationship between the method and the early childhood learners' performance in Ashalley Botwe.
3. To identify the challenges the teachers face in improving the early childhood learners' reading skills in Ashalley Botwe.

1.5 Research Questions

1. Which methods are being used by teachers within the Ashalley Botwe town to improve early childhood learners' reading skills?
2. What is the relationship between the method used by the EC teachers and the early childhood learners' reading performance in Ashalley Botwe?
3. What are the challenges early childhood teachers face in improving pupil's reading skills?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The result of this study is expected to be useful theoretically and practically in developing teaching and learning process.

1.6.1 Theoretical

It is anticipated that the findings of this research would be able to give information on the usage of look-say, phonics, and other approaches in the teaching of reading comprehension to increase the learner's skill in reading comprehension.

1.6.2 Practically

To encourage and make learners enthusiastic about the learning process, the study would employ learning methods that are both more pleasurable and more meaningful. However, with instructors, this approach makes it easier to teach reading, and expects to produce a helpful contribution in teaching reading, as well as give another means for teachers to increase their learners' reading abilities. In conclusion, the findings of this study are valuable for enhancing the level of education provided in the schools located in the Ashalley Botwe Township as well as the development of English language instruction.

1.7 Definition of Terms

- **Method:** A technique is often regarded as an action or course of action that must be completed in order to accomplish the desired outcomes. Method is derived from the Greek word "Methodos," which meaning "way" or "road." Method serves as a means to an end or describes how to do and manufacture anything.
- **Look-Say Method** is a method for teaching beginning readers to read by memorization and recognition of full words, rather than by letter-sound association (Scott & Yterberg, 2001, p. 72).
- **Reading Comprehension** is the process of building meaning through the coordination of several complicated processes, such as word reading, word and world knowledge, and velocity (Klingner, Vaughn & Boardman, 2007, p. 69).

1.8 Scope of the Study

This research covered the methods and other approaches of improving the reading abilities of learners from schools within the Ashalley Botwe Township.

1.8 Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to the methods teachers use to improve the reading ability of Early Childhood learners within Ashalley Botwe Schools. It focuses on the methods used by teachers to improve the reading ability of Early Childhood learners. The study would be focused on the Early Childhood learners within Ashalley Botwe Schools in the Greater Accra region of Ghana.

1.9 Limitation

The study only covered schools within Ashalley Botwe, which means that the findings may not produce a true reflection of the methods used by most schools in Ghana. Unlike other professors who take a very long time in doing their research sometimes, it could be a lifetime, this academic research will be for a short duration. Access to various school was a challenge and has cost implications since all the school were not stationed at one particular location within the Town.

1.10 Organization of the study

The study is divided into five chapters or parts. The first chapter discussed the study's background, the research problem statement, the purpose, the study's aims, research questions, significance, definition of terms, scope of the study and limitation, and the organization.

The second chapter establishes the research's theoretical foundation. This chapter discussed the concepts of reading, a review of the available research, and the various methods of improving the reading and the challenges of reading by the learners.

Chapter three discussed in depth the research methods utilized in the study. This section discusses the different data sources, the techniques utilized to acquire the study's data, and the research's validity and dependability.

The data obtained was analyzed in chapter four. Chapter five reviews and concludes the results, as well as make suitable suggestions based on them.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

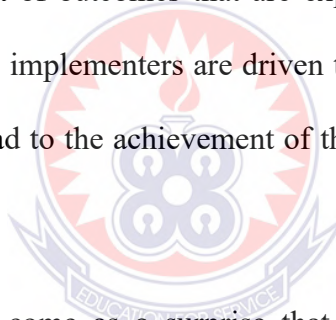
2.1 Overview

This chapter examine the similar literature on the concept and methods used by teachers to improve learners' reading skills, the relationship between the method and the learners' performance and the challenges the teachers face in improving the reading ability of the learners.

2.2 Early Childhood Curriculum

Every organization and field of endeavor has its own set of predetermined standards and norms that regulate how they do business. Similarly, the teaching profession has codified a set of standard criteria that regulate how educators should instruct and evaluate the work of their students or learners, and these guidelines are governed by the curriculum. According to Nan-Zhao (2004), the curriculum is an essential factor that determines the quality of education and the amount of success that students have in their studies. The curriculum is the sum of all the experiences that are intended to be gained by children, teenagers, and young adults during the course of their education. Children gain the most from their education when they are actively immersed in a variety of activities on several levels, including physically, intellectually, socially, and artistically (Kagan & Kauerz, 2012). According to the New Jersey State Department of Education (2014), an educational doctrine is a doctrine that is set to achieve desired educational outcomes through procedures and demonstrations of an arranged scope and succession of activities with a characterization of appropriate instructional materials. This is what the department refers to as the curriculum. A collection of teachings or instructions that serves as the

foundation for the education provided by an institution is referred to as a doctrine. The theory might be written down or it might not be written down, and in this case, it might be inherent in the implementer. This suggests that the instructions that direct educators to accomplish particular results constitute an educational doctrine, as shown in the definition of a curriculum that was presented before. This understanding of an educational philosophy can indicate that those responsible for implementing a curriculum over a period of time would, as a result of their consistent application of the guidelines outlined in the curriculum, eventually arrive to a belief system of their own making. And with the set of outcomes that are expected to be achieved, the belief that adhering to the guidelines of the curriculum could be realized encourages its use. This is because of the set of outcomes that are expected to be achieved. Therefore, because of this belief, the implementers are driven to adhere to it in a devout manner in the hope that it will lead to the achievement of the outcomes that have been set by the institution.



It should, therefore, not come as a surprise that policy makers and managers of various educational settings around the world have developed a variety of models for teaching and implemented them as part of their doctrinal practices in the majority of educational settings around the world. For instance, Friedrich Froebel (1782–1852), Maria Montessori (1870-1952), and the Reggio Emilia curriculum were some of the earliest progenitors of curricula for young children. These curricula are now widely used all over the world (Laar, 2018).

The Ghana Education Service syllabus is the most widely adopted educational program for use in kindergartens across Ghana, particularly within public schools but also within some private schools. Even though an educational doctrine could be

written down, it would still be accompanied by a set of specific procedural processes or steps that teachers who enact this doctrine would need to follow, even though these processes sometimes are not written down. This would be the case even though an educational doctrine could be written down ((Laar, 2018).

Therefore, teachers, who act as the enactor of these strategies that are inherent in them, employ their own prerogative. On the other hand, if a teacher has received training, then it is a necessary component of these educational tenets that the trained teacher be instructed on how to put these tenets into practice as part of their training. However, by implication, teachers who do not have training, will utilize their own understanding or work under the guidance of an experienced person or professional working in the school by following the standards. Regardless of the training that instructors have, that is, regardless of whether or not they are taught, there are certain results that are expected from them. On the other hand, Alviator (2014) and Marsh and Willis (2007) defined curriculum as “all of the experiences in the classroom that are planned and implemented by the teacher, and also learned by the learners”. This indicates that the instructor plans and teaches the children's experiences, and that the children are held to the expectation that they will learn. Their perspective on the educational program places the focus, rather than on the educational system as a whole, on the individual teacher. Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that the instructor arranges the experiences that he or she intends for the students to undergo at a specific point in time. There is also the possibility of the implication that these experiences have been prepared for the English teacher, and that the duty of the teacher is to carry out the plan. In spite of this, the teacher continues to be the most important person in charge of putting the curriculum into practice. This is due to the

fact that the learning outcomes that the students achieve are so dependent on the teacher and his or her qualities, such as his or her level of education and experience.

2.2.1 Early Childhood Assessment

An ongoing process of recognizing and assessing children's learning in order to make judgments about their development and to guide and prepare instructional techniques for instructors is sometimes referred to as assessment (Epstein et al., 2004). This indicates that evaluation will continue to take place so long as students are actively participating in the day-to-day activities offered at their schools. When instructors evaluate the learning and development of their students' children and identify the children's strengths and shortcomings, it enables the teachers to select instructional techniques and activities that will best promote the growth of their students. Instruction should invariably be informed by assessment (Asare, 2015; Wren, 2004). A continuous process in which teachers identify, collect, and evaluate children's learning capabilities and experiences in order to inform instructional plans and approaches by means of daily schedules, routines, and activities using informal strategies within the learning environment is how the researcher defines assessment.

According to Asare, the need for early childhood educators to provide proof of learners' learning has resulted in the subjecting of children to various kinds of tests, which deviates from the true purpose of assessment. Asare argued that this is because the purpose of assessment is to provide proof of learners' learning.

Consequently, evaluating children shouldn't be inflexible and totally dependent on instruction that's directed toward getting results; rather, teachers and other educators should take into account children's growth as an essential factor in the evaluation process. In spite of the fact that children's learning, growth, and development are

supposed to be evaluated in order to keep track of their progress, test scores are more often used as a benchmark to judge academic achievement in schools. Therefore, rather than testing children's abilities to produce correct answers to tests, educators should evaluate students' growth based on how well they are able to master new tasks, starting with what they already know. Consequently, evaluation can have either a formal or informal shape. Formal assessment refers to the utilization of standardized tests, in which a child's performance is evaluated in a variety of developmental domains, and the results are then converted into a score that is compared with either the performance of other children who share the same characteristics, or with particular norms or instructional goals (Brown & Rolfe, 2005). To put it another way, formal assessment consists of giving children tests in which they are expected to reproduce what they have been taught. Following this, the results are compared to children who share similar characteristics, and the children are required to achieve a certain level of performance on standardized tests. In order to ensure validity and reliability, formal assessment tools are required to possess and meet an acceptable level of measurement (Brown & Rolfe, 2005).

On the other hand, the informal assessment is typically carried out through observation, the use of anecdotal records and portfolios, ratings from teachers and parents, and face-to-face interaction with the children (Brown & Rolfe, Epstein et al., 2004). This is normally done during daily routines and normal classroom experiences, in which children are engaged in various activities on their own, in groups, or with their peers. Typically, this takes place in the classroom. Different modes of evaluation are available through the use of informal assessment methods.

2.2.2 Early Childhood Education Policy and Practice in Ghana

The policy and practice of providing early childhood education is of the utmost importance. ECE programs, services, and practices have grown as an integral part of the education system in Ghana over the course of the past half century. This growth can be attributed to the fact that Ghana's first president, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, recognized the significance of early childhood and youth in the process of constructing a powerful and prosperous independent nation (Dillard, 2009). In the past two decades, there have been significant shifts in early childhood education, which have attracted more attention from state stakeholders as well as increased support, collaboration, and funding. The essential part that parents play is acknowledged by Ghana's Early Childhood Education program (Lowi & Ginsberg, 1994), which is a policy that may be distributive, redistributive, or regulatory (Ackah-Jnr, 2021).

This study applies the paradigm developed by McDonnell and Elmore (1987) and McDonnell (1994) to conduct an analysis of the implementation of Ghana's ECE policy. It determines whether or not the implementation is successful and identifies any obstacles that remain. During the course of the study, ECE policy papers and research information gleaned from the field were utilized to do an analysis that aimed to determine the elements that enable and impede ECE and to develop recommendations for improving practice. Additionally, we spoke about how the implementation affects the accessibility, equity, and quality of the care and education that is provided. This section of the article begins by providing a summary of the ECE policy and practice. The terms "ECCE" and "ECE" are used interchangeably throughout this article.

2.2.3 ECE Policy, Provision, and Implementation in Ghana

Research has shed light on the fact that nations must create ECE policies in order to remain competitive (Bertram & Pascal, 2016; Dillard, 2009; Schleicher, 2019; Vandebroek, 2020). These policies, which are an important component of early childhood settings, serve as indicators of the roles, duties, and obligations of educators, parents, and other stakeholders. They also give a legal framework and direction controlling care and education services for children. When we talk about the implementation of ECE policies, what exactly do we mean? We're talking about the activities that governments and other important stakeholders and partners do in regard to educational practices in order to address the development, delivery, and maintenance of ECE programs. In education, implementation refers to a process of change that is intentional and multidimensional, with the goal of putting certain ideas and deeds that have an impact on the educational system into action (Viennet & Pont, 2017). Early childhood education refers to all of the several ways that children who have not yet reached the age of compulsory schooling can receive care and instruction, independent of the location, source of financing, operating hours, or curriculum covered (Schleicher, 2019). The Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) policy was first introduced in 2004 by the Ghana Ministry of Education. It is also known as the Early Childhood Education (ECE) policy, and its purpose is to guide the provision of care and education services and programs to children between the ages of birth and eight years old (Government of Ghana [ECCD Policy], 2004). The policy acknowledges the intimate linkages between education and care, as well as the inseparability of growth and education for the individual (Elliott, 2006; Vandebroek, 2020).

The Early Childhood Education (ECE) policy of Ghana strives to enhance the survival of early children as well as their growth, development, and protection. It lays the duty of early childhood education squarely on the shoulders of the government in order to guarantee that parents will continue to fulfill their customary duties of caring for and nurturing their offspring. The formulation of ECE-focused programs and the creation of an enabling environment for parents, caregivers, and children as well as ECE services and sectors to function effectively in providing the required care and education are two of the primary responsibilities that fall squarely on the shoulders of the Ghanaian government. The government's goal is to provide parents more autonomy through the creation of jobs, while simultaneously offering developmental initiatives such as educational, health, and recreational facilities, learning centers, and other amenities to suit the requirements of children. These are the kinds of chances that should be taken advantage of by parents so that they may educate their children effectively and meaningfully contribute to their children's education. There is a commitment to guarantee that every child in Ghana has access to quality early childhood education by the year 2030 (ESP 2018-2030), and a play-based approach is being used to boost children's learning and development (Ministry of Education, 2018).

The Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) policy of Ghana places an emphasis on the cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor development of children, as well as the provision of early childhood development services like as feeding, weighing, and vaccination to all children (Government of Ghana [ECCD Policy], 2004). In addition to this, it seeks to safeguard the rights of children and provide them the opportunity to realize their full intellectual, emotional, social, and physical potential (Duchesne & McMaugh, 2019; Bredekamp, 2011; Essa & Burnham, 2019).

The policy also aims to promote and defend the rights of young children to survive, grow, and develop, all of which are regarded crucial to the future development of human resources and country building. The Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) program was conceived of as a poverty reduction strategy to invest in early children, as a method of tackling the issue of poverty, and eventually as a means of increasing Ghanaians' standard of life (Government of Ghana [ECCD Policy], 2004). In layman's terms, the ECE is tasked with encouraging economic growth and employment, in addition to its social and educational responsibilities (Vandenbroeck, 2020). Creche, Daycare, Nursery, and Kindergarten (KG) are all examples of formal Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) programs that provide care and education services. However, only Kindergarten (4-5 years) is provided for free and is required for all children who attend public early childhood centers and schools in Ghana.

2.3 Reading

Reading is one of the four key English abilities, along with speaking, listening, and writing. It is the process of comprehending textual messages. According to Nuttal (2000), reading is the consequence of interaction between the mind of the writer and the mind of the reader. It is how the reader attempts to comprehend the writer's message or intended meaning. In this process, the reader attempts to generate the meanings intended by the author so that he or she may comprehend the argument. Reading may be described as the immediate recognition of different written symbols based on prior knowledge, as well as the understanding of the information and the notion presented. Reading is viewed as a message-obtaining, problem-solving activity whose effectiveness and adaptability grow with practice. Reading is an essential ability that all learners must acquire. According to Tarigan (2008), reading is the act

of obtaining the writer's message through written languages. This would aid learners in comprehending the meaning of school-learned texts. Reading is the process of comprehending the suggested meaning of a text and examining the concepts inherent in the written word (Anderson, 2003). Reading is a method for comprehending the meaning of a written language. Reading is an action or process for understanding the meaning, message, and purpose of printed or written content that connects the reader to the writer's concept, as shown by the preceding definition. According to Anderson et al. (1985), the ability to read is a fundamental life skill. It is essential to a child's success in school and in life in general. Without proficient reading skills, prospects for personal fulfillment and professional success will surely be missed.

There are four fundamental abilities in language acquisition. They are communicating by speaking, listening, writing, and reading. One of the abilities is reading, which serves so many uses in and of itself. Everyone who reads something does so for his or her own reason or reasons. According to their own view, specialists differentiate reading's purposes. Here, according to Grabe & Stoller (2002), I will discuss the aim of reading: Reading to search for simple information, reading to skim quickly, reading to learn from texts, reading to integrate information, write and critique texts. However, depending on the intention of the readers, many forms of reading may be distinguished. According to Brown (2004, p.66), there are three sorts of reading: academic reading, job-related reading, and personal reading. Textbooks, theses, essays, articles, reference material, editorials, and so on are all examples of academic reading genres. Job-related reading includes memoranda, applications, schedules, letters or emails, reports, and other documents. Personal reading includes newspapers, magazines, invites, novels, and short tales, among others.

2.4 Methods used by teachers to improve learners' reading skills

The evaluation of techniques for carrying out tasks that are incorporated into the framework of an environment made up of teachers and learners is, in general, the method of teaching skills. In order to guarantee that learning proceeds smoothly and that the relevant teaching objectives are reached, the purpose is to improve interactions within a single learning session.

2.4.1 Look and Say Method

A technique for teaching reading to kids about English word spelling is called the "Look and Say Method" (Edhitin, 2000). In essence, the Look and Say method teaches kids to recognize words on their own. Reading words as a whole rather than in parts is how children are taught to read. This technique is the culmination of more than three decades of study involving both healthy and brain impaired youngsters. The look-and-say technique of teaching reading, commonly referred to as the entire word method, was created in the 1830s and quickly gained popularity. By the 1930s and 1940s, there was a big emphasis on using this approach to teach kids to read. However, phonics-based instruction was strongly attacked in the 1950s. Stephanie Early childhood learning is regarded as one of the most successful uses of the Look and Say approach. It is based on the belief that learning is a young child's natural innate need, which is frequently stifled either by neglect or lack of exposure caused by obligatory instruction. Instead of breaking words down into individual letters or groups of letters, the look and speak technique teaches learners to read words as full units. Children are constantly instructed to say the word name while viewing the printed word, maybe with a picture or in a significant context.

Instead of teaching beginning readers to associate letters with sounds, the look and say technique teaches them to memorize and recognize full words. The foundation of the Look and Say Teaching Method is teaching kids to identify whole short phrases. Flash cards with illustrations are used for this, and parents can read each word aloud as the youngster repeats it. Picture cards must be utilized because if they are not, the youngster would guess what is on the card, which is not the intended outcome. Children can begin to learn each word by pointing to it while the adult reads the sentences. Children will ultimately start comprehending written language if they have gone through a large number of cards and are ideally supported by other methods like the Phonetics Method. Preschools, special schools, integrated educational institutions, or early primary schools can all employ look and speak during individual or group sessions or lessons.

2.4.1.1 Teaching English by Look and Say Method

The instructor points to the object and speaks the word while demonstrating the look and say approach to the learners. The term must be repeated by the kids. Each word has numerous instances of this (Endriani, 2020). Since word introductions are brief and swift, the instructor may choose to focus five minutes of a thirty-minute class on four new terms. At this point, there are several word recognition games that may be played. which include pointing to the thing on the card, matching words and pictures, and guessing which card it is. Therefore, this approach promotes the recognition of a variety of words and phrases prior to reading a text.

There are many steps to apply in look and say:

First step, provide material in the form of text with theme home.

Second step, provide flash card in the form of sentences and accompanied with picture, then stick it in the blackboard and arrange it randomly.

Third step, invite learners to read the text accompanied with the meaning.

The following phase was to split the class into three groups, with one representative from each group standing in front of the class. Then the instructor randomly selected a phrase to read, and the learners had to pay attention to which one. The next step is for the kids to pronounce the words correctly and match each sentence to a picture.

The last phase requires learners to accurately respond to one question based on the material. Learners will receive points for accurately reading the phrase and responding to the question. The "Look and Say" approach is not the only one used to teach reading in a foreign language (Ingrid, 2000a). An instructor reading sentence by phrase from a properly chosen material while clarifying its meanings when appropriate is another effective way to educate beginners.

2.4.1.2 Teaching Principles of Look and Say Method

The kid is systematically exposed to new words by being given the opportunity to see, hear, and observe an image or statement containing the word (Edhitin, 2000). Individual words are frequently put on flashcards, sometimes with a picture to go along with them. The youngster is exposed to them repeatedly until he learns the word's pattern. Progressive texts are employed together with highly regulated vocabularies that only include terms that have been taught. The youngster may initially focus on memorizing a few hundred words. New terms are gradually introduced to the vocabulary when they are learned. In his first three or four years in school, a youngster would typically learn to recognize 1500–3000 words.

2.4.1.3 The Advantages of Look and Say Method

Even individuals who were first taught using phonics-based techniques ultimately need to be able to recognize full words in order to become competent readers. Literate adults employ whole word recognition to read all common words (Nurnianti, 2012).

1. The look-and-say technique can help a kid learn to recognize any word. Contrarily, many English words are not phonetically regular and cannot be learned purely by phonetic methods. These "tricky" words are frequently high frequency words that kids frequently come across as they read and write.
2. Given that it bases instruction on words rather than individual sounds, this teaching approach is simple for parents to understand. Additionally, acquiring sounds and their blends, as required by phonics-based techniques, may be less engaging for the kid.
3. Teaching reading to newborns and early toddlers is a particular strength of this approach. These activities have been observed for them to enjoy.
4. Because they learn to naturally recognize a small number of words, learners taught using the look-and-say approach initially demonstrate greater reading skills than learners studying phonics. Later studies, however, show that the look-and-say technique performs worse as kids start learning longer, more complicated words.

2.4.2 Phonic Method

The alphabetic principle is the foundation of the reading instruction method known as phonics, which emphasizes the teaching of correspondences between letters or groups of letters and their pronunciations (Adams, 1994).

Phonics, then, is the process of connecting letters or groupings of letters to the sounds they stand for. In phonics, learners learn how to associate spoken English sounds with individual letters or groups of letters (for example, that the sound /k/ can be represented by the spellings of c, k, ck, or ch) and how to combine letter sounds to approximate the pronunciation of new words. As a result, phonics is a strategy for teaching English speakers to read and write rather than necessarily a means for teaching English pronunciation. intensive training in phonics (reading-like behavior) In-depth and systematic All significant letter-sound correspondences are taught in order in phonics: Reading is first learned by mastering the laws of phonics, which include sounding out words and reading aloud ("decoding to sound"). It is necessary to intentionally teach and consciously acquire phonics. It's laborious job. The key guidelines: "Vowel digraphs made up of two letters that each indicate one phoneme, such as the long and short vowels and vowel and consonant digraphs oi, ea, sh, and th. Additionally, phonics training may contain combinations of letter sounds that stand in for more substantial word constituents, such as consonant pairs (such as st and bl), onsets, and rimes." According to Tompkins (2011), phonics is "the set of relationships between phonology (the sounds in speech) and orthography (the spelling system)" and involves both an understanding of the alphabetic principle, which states that spoken words and particular letters or combinations of letters have specific sounds associated with them. (Strickland ,2011). According to Maxwell (2005), this aids the researcher in comprehending what issues have been raised by prior research and theory, what inconsistencies have been discovered in accepted theories, and how the study might offer a unique contribution to knowledge. In this study, I employed a theoretical framework for understanding reading instruction that was not only theoretical but also

took into consideration current practice, or at the very least acknowledged the limitations brought on by the discrepancy between theory and practice.

The Schema Reading Theory served as the study's theoretical foundation. The Schema Reading Theory (SRT) is an interactive reading strategy that makes use of the learner's past knowledge or background information to enhance understanding of what is read. Ajideh (2003) claimed that proponents of the SRT like Bartlett (1932) and Rumelhart (1977) thought that learners should engage in an interactive learning process when processing knowledge. According to the SRT model, comprehension of the text must be in line with the reader's existing understanding of the topic or text since information processing involves both the learner and the text. These theory's proponents as well as other individuals have characterized the schema theory in a variety of significant ways. Several proponents of the schema theory, including Bartlett, according to Li et al. (2007), characterized a schema as "an active arrangement of previous reactions to past experiences, which must always be considered to be operative in every well-adapted biological response " (p. 97). The Schema theory is simply described as a theory of how information is mentally represented in the mind and utilized by Rumelhart (1980). All information is packed into units," he contended. The schemata are these components. Because of the context in which what we read is given, we are able to comprehend it.

2.4.2.1 Phonological Awareness

Numerous studies have examined the significance of phonological awareness and phonics for beginning readers. Phonological awareness is a "strong and substantial predictor of primary learners' word reading ability" (Park & Lombardino, 2013). In the early stages of reading, when kids are beginning to read and must be taught

directly by the instructor, these decoding abilities are very crucial. Word recognition is a core ability for reading comprehension, and phonological awareness is crucial for word recognition. In an effort to assist struggling readers, Park and Lombardino suggested specific strategies that teachers can implement during instruction time to improve phonics skills: phonological awareness, phonics/decoding instruction, spelling instruction, vocabulary instruction, and morphological instruction. Together, these components enhance learners' phonological skills during word study training. Effective instructors use all of these throughout reading instruction time to engage, model, coach, and offer direct teaching that facilitates the development of reading abilities in their learners.

2.4.3 Oral and silent reading

Learners' initial performance consists of oral reading. This is intended to act as an assessment check on bottom-up processing abilities, double as a pronunciation check, and encourage further learner engagement if teachers wish to spotlight a particular small section of a reading piece. In practice, however, learners will struggle to grasp texts while reading aloud. They must read silently so that the readers may practice the following paragraph and so that other readers are not distracted by those who are reading aloud (Nurhana, 2014).

2.4.4 Intensive and extensive reading

The goal of intensive reading is to concentrate on linguistic or semantic subtleties. Learners will focus more on the surface structural features in order to comprehend the literal meanings, implications, and rhetorical linkages, among others. This reading, also known as content-related reading, focuses on brief texts. Reading extensively increases one's focus on the overall comprehension of a lengthy material. Texts longer

than one page, such as essays, articles, technical reports, and novels, constitute extensive reading (Brown, 2004, p.66). Even if the learners read larger texts, comprehension remains the primary purpose of reading. This is the reason why teachers encourage learners to read.

2.4.5 Learner Engagement

Learner involvement is a crucial aspect that promotes reading performance. When readers struggle, participation in classroom activities is frequently diminished. Early on, kids learn to recognize and compare their academic and nonacademic talents to those of their siblings and peers. Learners see reading abilities; hence, without ever distinguishing precise reading levels, they rapidly conclude who is the "better reader." Wiseman (2012) examined the impact of falling behind peers in a case study of kindergarten learner Kevin, who, at age five, had already disengaged from literacy education owing to his poor reading abilities. Teachers must be aware of their learners' learning requirements and assist them in developing a desire to study at a rate and in a manner that facilitates individual achievement, as no two individuals acquire knowledge at the same rate. Wiseman highlighted that performance inequalities among "at-risk" kids are largely attributable to classroom instruction. I concur with Wiseman that schools frequently adopt a deficit-based approach to education rather than one that focuses on learners' strengths. In my efforts to develop reading abilities, I frequently grow disillusioned and overwhelmed by what particular children cannot achieve, and I neglect to consider how far they have come as readers. Wiseman (2012), also referenced that an inadequate instructional technique that diminishes learner engagement: " The final outcome of learners spending more time on individual skill training and intensive repetition is disengagement and dissatisfaction" (p. 21). Wiseman identifies interactive read-aloud as an effective

approach for increasing learner engagement and reading abilities. Through teacher-directed modeling and higher-level questioning, interactive read-aloud give all children with the chance to be challenged and to deepen their comprehension of reading. During the nine-month qualitative study conducted by Wiseman (2012), a three-person research team watched the kindergarten classroom four times per week from October to May. During the morning meeting, read-aloud, and writing periods, data were collected. Field notes concentrated on instructor instruction, learner engagement, and responses to Kevin's read-alouds. Despite Kevin's difficulties with reading, which led to disengagement and frustration during teaching, the study found that read-aloud gave Kevin with chances to contribute in class in ways that enlarged his thinking about reading. As the year went, Kevin's replies were increasingly nuanced, demonstrating a deeper degree of comprehension, personal connections, and greater involvement. Kevin's comments mirrored the instructor's focus on nuanced thought and open-ended responses.

Wiseman utilized the data from the case study to conclude that read-aloud are a successful instructional method for increasing learner comprehension and interest in reading. In the same way that instructors deliberately select read-aloud books to enhance learner interest and engagement, they should also select appealing novels for guided and independent reading. Teachers must have a wide selection of books at various reading levels so that children may pick what to read. Important factors that encourage reading include the appeal of a book's subject matter and characters' relatability. E-books have rapidly become accessible to readers of all ability levels, and many websites and publishing businesses recognize them as a powerful tool for boosting learner engagement. Jones & Brown (2011) described a research that examined children's reading engagement and comprehension when reading e-books.

The participants were 22 third-grade learners whose teacher concluded that they were proficient in reading. The data for the study were collected using satisfaction questionnaires and understanding ratings. The results suggested that the majority of learners did not have a preference between reading e-books or traditional print books; rather, a large variety of books was the most important aspect in reading happiness. This does not mean that instructors should not utilize e-books; rather, they may be used in conjunction to a print book library to improve book and format selection, and hence boost learner reading engagement.

Reading motivation and engagement are boosted when learners have choice in reading material (Jones & Brown, 2011). To interest children in reading, particularly those who struggle, instructors must arrange the reading experience so that all learners achieve success. Read-aloud are an example of modeling the sound of effective reading. In addition, they invite learners to join in extensive literary dialogues. The fact that a teacher may acknowledge all comments and consciously select learners to participate in book discussions boosts learner confidence and facilitates excellent learner involvement. The selection of books is crucial to encourage reading. Children will not readily interact with novels that are too tough or uninteresting for them, just as adults would not. Number of the platform, e-books or conventional print materials, teachers must maintain an extensive library and allow learners to choose what to read in order to cultivate really engaged readers. Once a learner has the flexibility to select a book based on his or her reading ability and area of interest, specific instruction is necessary for the learner to gain the skills and techniques needed to become a better reader and be fully engaged in reading.

2.4.6 Explicit Instruction

Explicit education entails customized or small-group training that is tailored to the unique learning needs of each learner. It focuses on a skill or method that the learner must develop to become a better reader. Often, explicit teaching happens during small-group guided reading sessions, during which a teacher may emphasize tactics such as phonological awareness, decoding, and segmentation skills, among others. Guided reading is a chance for a teacher to read with small groups of children. In guided reading, learners can be categorized homogeneously or heterogeneously based on their reading ability or the methods they are working on, such as rereading or chunking. During guided reading sessions, the teacher delivers direct teaching tailored to the specific learning requirements of each learner.

Wiseman (2012) noted from the findings of Stevens et al. (2010) that explicit teaching on reading techniques, such as recognizing tale structure or using context clues to identify unfamiliar words, has been found to boost learner reading ability and comprehension. McIntyre et al. (2006) conducted a research to estimate how much time children should spend in school reading related material. In 26 classes across the United States, 66 first-grade learners were recognized by their instructors as poor readers. These children scored in the bottom twenty percent on class reading examinations. McIntyre et al. gathered data about the teaching techniques of instructors through observations and interviews. They examined the amount of time learners spent reading linked material, which was defined as literature containing meaningful sentences that were one or more sentences in length. The settings for reading included echo reading, chorus reading, silent and spoken guided reading, and individual reading time. Also covered were read-aloud time, direct instruction to the class, word practice, and non-print reactions to literature. The study by McIntyre

(2006) could not offer a numerical solution to the question, how much should young children read? Rather, the findings indicate that the sort of reading practice (and other teaching) that is occurring in the classroom is the most significant factor in predicting and sustaining reading progress for struggling readers (McIntyre). McIntyre emphasized the necessity of teacher mediation for early readers to develop reading abilities, as the first-grade learners who benefited the most received either guided reading practice or autonomous reading with feedback. Typically, first-grade learners are not prepared for independent reading and cannot independently apply what they have learned during reading instruction. According to McIntyre et al. (2006), “phonics education is beneficial in promoting reading progress, but it must be child-specific to be most successful” (p. 610).

2.4.7 Reading Recovery

Reading Recovery is provided in several schools for kids who need a more rigorous reading assistance. Reading Recovery aims to improve a learner's literacy abilities. It consists of rigorous, daily, one-on-one training and evening reading assignments at home. The 30-minute daily classes consist of three sections: (a) familiar reading and a running record; (b) alphabet, word practice, and writing; and (c) introducing and reading a new book. Each of the three sections of a lesson is given equal weight and duration (10 minutes). Learners selected for Reading Recovery fall within the lowest 20% of the school's first-grade learners in terms of academic performance. This is determined using standardized tests included in An Observation Survey of Literacy Achievement (Clay, 2013). Reading Recovery normally lasts between 10 and 20 weeks. When kids are removed from Reading Recovery, it is because their reading and writing abilities are comparable to the average level of their peers at that time. Jesson and Limbrick (2014) discovered that kids who get Reading Recovery

intervention remain at risk and must be monitored by instructors to ensure that their abilities remain on pace with those of their classmates. For Reading Recovery kids to maintain their reading abilities post-intervention, a school focus on literacy, home-school linkages and communication, high levels of literacy standards for all learners, and a joint duty by all staff are also required. The program is successful despite the limited number of children who can get Reading Recovery help in a school each year and the selection procedure.

Despite this, not every learner will be able to successfully complete the program after 20 weeks and may instead need to be sent to alternative supports. Even yet, those learners are still ahead of where they would have been had they merely attended class. There are no set lesson plans or guidelines on how to teach reading recovery. To recognize the reading areas in which specific learners need assistance, teachers are taught and get continual training. The fact that a teacher must select specific books from a list is one disadvantage of Reading Recovery. There is a diversity, however some learners find the books uninteresting, which hinders their progress in reading. Classroom instructors who are lucky enough to also have received Reading Recovery training have a unique set of abilities that they bring to the classroom to help all struggling readers since reading recovery teachers are highly skilled (Jesson & Limbrick, 2014).

2.4.8 Home Reading

A home reading component is a necessary part of a successful reading program. To reinforce the reading skills being taught at school, it is crucial to spend time reading aloud at home. Learners must read in order to become effective readers; the more reading practice they receive, the better they will become at it. For parents to

participate in school activities, a teacher must encourage the home-school link and develop a friendly relationship with the families. No parent likes to watch his or her kid struggle in the classroom, yet parents sometimes feel helpless to intervene. It is the duty of teachers to encourage parents to read to their children at home and to work to provide them the assistance they need to make reading at home a positive experience for both parents and kids. Martin (2011), a classroom teacher, saw that although the families of her learners wanted to support their children academically at home, they frequently felt upset for not having the knowledge and abilities to do so. Martin did a research based on this finding to ascertain how to remove the obstacles that prevent parental support of a child's reading development at home. She came to the conclusion that providing parents with clear instructions, academic assistance, and the required resources is crucial for home reading to be successful. Giving parents detailed homework instructions eliminates the obstacle preventing parental support. Success is more likely to be attained when a teacher incorporates a range of tactics into classroom programming, caters to individual learning needs, obtains extra help when necessary, and collaborates with parents to support struggling readers. It is impossible to compel someone to learn to read, but every step they take must be applauded and regarded as progress toward becoming a lifelong reader.

2.5 The relationship between the Phonics and Look and say Method and the Learners' performance

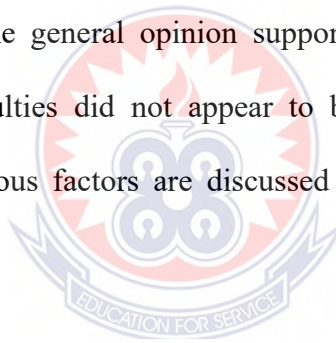
A study by Alshumaimeri (2011), investigated the relative effects of different reading methods on the comprehension performance of Saudi EFL 10th grade male learners. The scores of participants who read three comparable passages in three ways (oral, silent and subvocalizing) were compared. Results revealed a significant difference between oral reading and subvocalization, and between oral reading and silent

reading. Oral reading had the greatest effect on comprehension performance among the three reading methods examined. All groups reported that oral reading was the most preferred reading method with the majority of respondents feeling the style best supported comprehension. Feedback suggested that oral reading was preferred specifically because it helps in memorizing words and texts, concentration, and practicing and pronouncing words for real world encounters. It is recommended that second language teachers and learners use all available reading methods in order to identify which method best serves their study objectives.

However, a study by Oluoch (2008) which determined the relationship between teaching methods that teachers employed in teaching English language and the academic performance of secondary schools learners of Winam. The researcher was prompted to carry out this study after an outcry that the integration approach in the teaching of English was not yielding optimal academic results, in the 8-4-4 system of education in Kenya. Thus, an empirical examination of the effects of teaching methods and academic performance was carried out. The focus was Kisumu District, Winam Division. Research questions were formulated in order to guide the study. Qualitative research method based on district methodological traditions of enquiring that explore a social or human problem was used. Systematic sampling was used to get 6 schools out of the 15 in Winam Division. Stratified sampling was then used to get the sample size of 60 learners. Self-administered interviews as well as face-to-face interview was used to obtain data required to meet the specific objectives of the study. Face to face interviews with teachers provided the research within. The findings revealed that performance levels are higher where learner centered methods are used frequently, however, this may vary with the age of the learners. The study established that teaching methods have a degree of impact on the performance

outcome in English. There may be no difference in performance in English between boys and girls. The indicator of performance in this case is their score in English achievement tests.

Nevertheless, in the study of Oberholzer (2005) whose purpose was to examine the relationship between reading difficulties and academic performance. To this end a group of Foundation Phase learners were selected on the basis of having an already identified reading difficulty. Using data from their school academic progress reports and from a scholastic assessment carried out by an educational psychologist, correlations were calculated between the learners' reading ability and academic performance. The research findings showed no significant correlation. These results were not in line with the general opinion supported by the literature, in that the children's reading difficulties did not appear to be impacting negatively on their academic potential. Various factors are discussed as possible explanations for this phenomenon.



2.6 The Challenges Teachers Face in Improving Pupil's Reading Skills

2.6.1 Unpreparedness of Teachers

According to Moswane (2019), within the scope of this study, the term "unpreparedness" would relate to a scenario in which English language teachers fail to select a specific text for a certain class. The teachers come to class unprepared and unsure of which book to read; as a result, they end up giving a lengthy lesson on the text that they have selected, although not being certain of the path that they should follow in presenting their material. The appropriateness of the text in relation to the levels of study is irrelevant to the educators. In order for them to be eligible for their pay checks, all that is required of them is to be present throughout the entirety of the

allotted class period. The instructor, who is intended to serve as a facilitator for the learners and provide them with models and scaffolding, is entirely confused and unable to point the learners in any particular direction. This is a significant problem among our educators, and action should be taken to address it as soon as possible. The difficulty that results from instructors' lack of preparation makes it impossible for them to teach reading in an effective manner, and as a result, they end up acquiring unfavorable attitudes about the subject.

2.6.2 Lack of Reading Resources

As a result of the lack of a well-defined policy regarding the funding of schools with libraries, the libraries that can be found in our communities are either poorly equipped, do not have adequate seating accommodations, employ staff members who are not qualified, or do not have access to relevant information resources such as books and other educational materials. Books and libraries are crucial, particularly in this era of information, when knowledge and information have taken on the materiality of money and commodities, and the uneven accumulation of which will define whether or not countries are wealthy (Igwe, 2011). In order to achieve a total national consciousness of the value and benefits of reading, all stakeholders in the reading chain, including writers, publishers, booksellers, the media, teachers at all levels, librarians, the NGOs, the Government, and the religious community, among others, must join hands in supporting and participating in this clarion call. This includes writing about the value and benefits of reading, publishing books, and selling books. Research has revealed that the present lower levels of reading competence are attributable to the under-funding of libraries and the services that they provide, despite the fact that libraries are an essential part of education (Eyo, 2007).

It should come as no surprise that having less money means having fewer resources. The lack of learner teacher support materials (LTSMs) and libraries is a prevalent problem in our rural secondary school, and this ultimately makes it difficult for teachers to properly teach reading (Eyo, 2007). Reading materials are lacking in many rural schools, as seen by the researcher in and around the Seshego circuit. These schools have a high concentration of learners who are learning English as a foreign language. According to Pretorius and Mampuru (2007), Makoe (2007), and Minskoff (2005), schools do not have sufficient resources, and their libraries do not have enough books and other reading materials. Hugo (2010) observed that many schools suffer from both an insufficient number of readers and an absence of suitable reading resources. It is impossible for instructors to plan lessons since the libraries do not offer books, reading materials, or teacher's guides to teaching, which makes it difficult for them to find resources for their learners. To make matters even more difficult for instructors, there is a shortage of resources that they might use for teaching reading, and as a result, they often have to read aloud whatever it is that they do have so that learners can only listen. This circumstance does not generate an atmosphere that is conducive to the instruction of reading.

Accordingly, Kruizinga and Nathanson (2010) believed that there is a shortage of level-appropriate Guided Reading books, which makes it exceedingly challenging for instructors to appropriately execute the Guided Reading Approach. Beukes et al. (2010) express agreement with the idea that instructors are limited in the variety of instructional strategies they are able to implement in their classes due to a lack of appropriate quantities of the essential resources. The provision of schools with sufficient resources, such as books and libraries, or any other reading materials, on the part of the government, would have a good influence on the improvement of reading

instruction. Learning and reading can and do improve people's lives, and libraries have a part to play in defining the future of our society. Both of these activities may be done in library settings. This study is further supplemented by a study that was carried out by Singh (2009). Singh found that the most significant obstacle that instructors have while teaching reading to learners is a lack of resources.

2.6.3 Insufficient Budget to Schools

According to Meador (2016), the financial situation of a school has a substantial influence on a teacher's capacity to operate at their highest level of effectiveness. The majority of the time, rural schools are put in a position where they are compelled to make cuts to their finances, which in turn has a detrimental influence on the delivery of the curriculum. Given this circumstance, budget cuts almost always result in an uneven distribution of funds and standard money from the National Department of Education. This has a tendency to have a negative impact on rural schools since these schools tend to suffer the most as a result of their lower resources, which tend to prevent them from engaging in appropriate procurement. There is a correlation between decreased budgets and decreased morale, as well as an increase in the amount of stress experienced by the school administration and the teaching staff (Hurst, 2013). In this regard, instructors may eventually abandon their teaching roles in rural areas to seek for better opportunities, most often in metropolitan schools that have booming budgets. When this occurs, the caliber of instructors recruited in remote schools may not meet up to expectations and may not provide as academically as is necessary. This helps to explain why the reading instruction provided by teachers with inadequate training or qualifications may not be up to snuff.

2.6.4 Poor Remuneration of Teachers

There is credible evidence that an increasing number of South African teachers are taking up permanent employment in the Middle East, Australia, London, and other places overseas simply because they are suitably compensated and also enjoy decent working circumstances in those nations (Vegas, 2005). According to Wragg (2004), English instructors in London, for example, receive wage rises year after year following their appointment for around eight years until they reach a threshold. This is not the situation in South Africa, where the income of English teachers does not grow over time. South African teachers are willing to move to first world countries and to do whatever is required of them in order to work there as teachers. This is especially true if doing so will enable them to earn an income that is competitive with the remuneration packages offered to local teachers in South Africa. According to Whitlow (2002), one aspect of the answer to the problem of teachers leaving the teaching profession is to pay them competitive incomes and provide them with a variety of enticing perks. If the government is serious about keeping qualified and experienced teachers in the classroom, it is imperative that it provide these individuals with alluring ancillary advantages that will encourage them to put in even more effort into their work.

The retention of the top instructors in the teaching profession is directly correlated to the improvement of teachers' financial incentives (Prince, 2003). It is consequently the obligation of the government, and the Department of Education in particular, to formulate enticing policies that would aim at hiring qualified teachers and retaining effective teachers in the system. At the level of the district or the circuit, the government should institute an incentive scheme for educators with the goal of ensuring their continued professional support and growth. It is self-evident that

providing instructors with an appealing salary will motivate them to perform to the best of their abilities in order to produce high academic achievement among their learners. A payout of this nature might alleviate some of the anxiety and melancholy that are so prevalent in the teaching profession. Teachers ought to get salaries that are commensurate with their levels of experience and education; doing so would incentivize higher levels of performance and, as a consequence, better overall academic outcomes. A high level of performance would be the result of attractive remuneration, as instructors would be motivated to put in their best effort to grow both personally and professionally if they were offered attractive compensation packages (Moswane, 2019).

2.6.5 Lack of Teaming

It is essential for the success of any educational establishment to have collaborative teaching. According to Ryde (2009), the task of teaching may be simplified by the use of collaboration and teamwork, which ultimately leads to improved outcomes for learners as well as their instructors. According to Foncha et al. (2018), teaming presents a chance for instructors to advance professionally in their careers. This might be done in the form of workshops or seminars, in which educators gather together to discuss and compare the many approaches and procedures that are making teaching easier in their own classrooms. These kinds of seminars would provide opportunities for inexperienced instructors who are having difficulty in their classrooms to seek assistance from more competent teachers who have more experience. It is my opinion that if instructors of the English language are able to collaborate effectively as a team in the classroom when instructing reading, their learners will experience greater levels of personal agency.

2.6.6 Poor Training of Teachers

According to the findings of the National Reading Panel (2000) in the United States, it is essential for teachers to participate in ongoing professional development in order to acquire sufficient information on reading comprehension strategies and to be able to distinguish among the various learners the reading comprehension strategies that are the most successful overall. In addition to this, it makes an additional effort to discuss and demonstrate several instructional tactics that teachers should implement in their classrooms. The authors McKeown et al. (2009) were in agreement with the attitude that the success and efficacy of the teaching of reading is somewhat dependent on the training that teachers receive in reading comprehension methods. In keeping with the preceding, the only time the training can be considered significant is when the teachers' motivation has been revitalized. The severe scarcity of competent instructors is a problem that exists in both developed and developing nations, and it is one of the driving forces for the recruitment of teachers who do not have the necessary credentials (Moore et al., 2008). Because of this, many schools are obliged to hire instructors who do not have the necessary qualifications to teach the subjects for which they have not received enough training. According to Sterling (2004), there is a persistent shortage of teachers, which is contributing to a rise in the number of inexperienced instructors entering the workforce without having completed any kind of formalized educational program. The majority of these educators are unable to provide evidence that they are knowledgeable in the subject area they teach, and they lack both official training as educators and past experience instructing reading (Futernick, 2003).

In addition to this, Fakeye (2012) examines the dismal performance of learners of the English language in Nigeria since the year 1960. In his opinion, "it needs a competent

teacher to be able to teach the language skills successfully and to make them proficient users of the English language," (p. 96) and he made this observation as a statement. According to Moats (1999), in order to effectively teach reading, one needs a significant amount of information and abilities, which may be obtained over the course of several years via concentrated study and supervised practice. As a result, Maswanganye (2010) and Mhlongo (2012) hypothesized that there is a shortage of teaching abilities due to the fact that instructors are not provided with sufficient training assistance. When it comes to instructing learners how to read, it is quite clear that educators do not receive sufficient backing from the Department of Education in the form of adequate teacher training and direction.

In this regard, Singh (2010) stressed and underscored the necessity of in-service training for the foundation phase instructors who are responsible for teaching reading to learners. In addition, the same training need to be offered during the senior phase as well as during the FET. It is on the basis of this notion that Theron and Nel (2005) argued that when teachers teach reading without sufficient training and expertise of creating learners to read, it becomes extremely difficult to achieve reading development. Therefore, a key cause for worry among educators is the limited number of chances for professional development that are now accessible (Hurst, 2013). It is arguable that the Department of Education does not host any in-service training sessions or reading workshops specifically for language instructors at the national, provincial, or district level. This is true for all three levels. Due to the inadequate training provided, schools often wind up filling teaching vacancies with newly-trained individuals who do not have the required qualifications. To this end, educators develop and implement their own reading instruction programs and strategies in the classroom.

2.6.7 Overcrowded Classrooms

The Department of Education has asked a number of rural schools to reduce their enrollment numbers, but these institutions are unable to do so since they cannot deny entry to local learners. This kind of request is founded on the long-held notion that the school belongs to each and every member of the specific community in which it is situated, and it is for this reason that the notion underpins the demand. Teachers in South African rural schools are up against a significant obstacle in the form of classrooms that are too full (Hugo, 2010). As a consequence of this, teachers in classrooms may not always have the capacity to devote the essential amount of attention to each individual learner. The teacher-learner ratio in the classrooms is not taken into consideration since there is a shortage of space, and as a result, it is difficult for the instructors to conduct a variety of instructional activities and tactics. The issue of classrooms being too packed is still a concern in South Africa, particularly in the country's more remote parts, despite the country's status as a second world economy (Hugo, 2010). Even after twenty-two years of democratic rule, this obstacle has not yet been addressed with the kind of urgency that the situation warrants.

2.6.8 Communication Difficulties

According to Skinner (2010), issues in communicating are one of the most significant challenges that educators encounter. Since the majority of learners in a classroom are not proficient in English, teachers may often utilize learners who are fluent in the language to act as translators when necessary. As a result of this, Gan (2012) says that poor English vocabularies restrict both instructors and learners from expressing themselves clearly, which in turn affects the fluency of communication. Because of this, many learners would have trouble understanding lessons taught in English, both as a topic and as the language used for learning and teaching. This would, in some

way or another, have an effect on the teaching of reading. Reading instructors have made a decision to prioritize learner-centered techniques rather than teacher-centered ones in their classrooms as part of an effort to bridge the communication gap that currently exists between them and their learners. (Fareh, 2010).



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

This chapter discussed the research design used in the report, population size and sampling techniques, data collection methods, testing processes and analysis of data.

3.2 Research Design

The design of the study consists of creating the circumstances for data collection and analysis in such a way as to integrate the relevance of the research objective with the processes of the economy. It is an in-depth strategy that outlines how a research study will be carried out, from the gathering of data through the analyzing of the data. According to De Vaus (2006), the term "research design" refers to the overall strategy that the researcher chooses to integrate the various components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby ensuring that the researcher will effectively address the research problem; it represents the framework for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data.

This research employed a descriptive design. A descriptive research design is a set of methodologies and processes that explain the variables. It addresses the questions what, how, and why. Because it helped the researcher gather information on the current status of the phenomenon and characterized "what existing" in terms of variables and the subject under investigation, descriptive research was utilized. According to De Vaus (2006), descriptive research involves seeing the topic in a totally natural and unaltered natural setting. The descriptive research design used was a survey. According to McCombes, (2019), survey research allows the researcher to gather large volumes of data that can be analyzed with frequencies, averages and

patterns. Common uses of surveys include: describing the demographics of a country or region, gauging public opinion on political and social topics and evaluating satisfaction with a company's products or an organization's services.

3.3 Research Philosophy

Saunders et al. (2015) indicates that research philosophy is the advancement of information that clarifies a research model or approach. Such information advancement depends on specific concepts on how people see the world. It also clarifies the nature, establishment, and improvement of information in research that upholds the conviction regarding how the information on friendly reality ought to be accumulated, assessed, and deciphered to make significant findings.

3.3.1 Subjectivism

Hamati-Ataya (2014) analyzes that subjectivity guides everything from the decision of the theme that one examines, to forming theories, to choosing procedures, and deciphering information. Subjective accounts of well-being keep up with those normally unforeseen mentalities ground genuine cases concerning what is beneficial for one (MacLeod, 2015). Subjectivists will generally recognize that the specialist's genuine expert mentalities can neglect to direct them to that which would help them.

3.3.2 Reason for selecting Objectivism

The researcher wanted the truth to be established with empirical indications (Mason, 2012). Also, objectivism is the deepest respect for facts, a serious regard for the content and processes of the researcher's mind, healthy concern with the development of oneself and the realization of the research goals, benevolence toward others, and a passion for life-affirming art (Bernstein, 2011). The analyst needs reality to be set up with experimental signs. Likewise, objectivism is utilized for this review since any

analyst applying objectivism implies living by rules that empower and urge the researcher to respect reality, the psyche, and the qualities, the singular freedoms of others and one's own feeling of life. That implies the most profound regard for realities, a genuine respect for the substance and cycles of the psyche with the improvement of an individual and the acknowledgment of one's objectives and altruism (Graham, 2010).

3.4 Population, Sampling and Sampling Technique

3.4.1 Population

The study's population was the 57 schools in the Ashalley Botwe Township. According to Kabir (2016), the population has been determined by the use of elements, sample units, and area and time. Due to the difficulty of collecting information from everyone in a population or everything else, the objective is to identify a population's representative sample (or subset). The population is the entire collection of humans, events, or things having particular observable qualities. It is the total of everything that fits a requirement. It is the total of all the factors upon which decisions can be made.

3.4.2 Sampling and Sampling Technique

The study's sample frame consisted of schools in the Ashalley Botwe Township. A sampling frame is a list of units from which a sample was drawn. A sampling frame is an exhaustive list of all persons or units from whom a sample is obtained. The sampling frame is a list of elements from which to draw the sample. A list of elements of the population (ideally the complete population) with relevant contact information is the simplest sort of frame (Kabir, 2016).

According to Kabir (2016), the sampling procedure describes the selection of sample units. The selection of the sample technique is impacted by the study objectives, the availability of financial resources, time restrictions, and the nature of the topic under investigation. A straightforward random sampling method will be utilized. A simple random sample is the most fundamental sampling strategy, in which we choose a set of participants (a sample) from a larger group for research (a population). Each person is selected completely at random, and each member of the population has an equal chance of being included in the sample.

3.5 Sample Size

The sample size represents a subset of the entire population. It is a group of entities selected from a population to evaluate its characteristics. It is a fraction or subset of a population chosen so that it appropriately represents the entire population. A sample size of fifty (50) teachers was chosen from the teaching department in order to represent the total population (Ashalley Botwe Township).

The researcher applied a simple method to determine sample sizes of fifty (50) based on Yamane's (1967). The study utilized a 95% trust level and a 5% error margin. The estimation formula is as seen below:

$$n = \frac{N}{(1 + N(e)^2)}$$

The population size is denoted by N, while the sample size is denoted by n and the degree of accuracy is denoted by e. This model is utilized when 95 percent confidence and a 5% margin of error are required.

$$n = \frac{57}{(1+57(0.05)^2)}$$

$$\mathbf{n = 50}$$

The analysis utilized 50 sample measurements (n). The questionnaire was completed by 50 teachers from the 57 schools within the Ashalley Botwe Area.

3.6 Data Source and Collections Methods

3.6.1 Data Source

The main source of the data source was the primary source, which represents the raw data gathered through the fieldwork and the secondary data, which are already existing such as journals, articles, and other research work in line with the objectives of this study.

3.6.2 Data Collection Methods

A data collection instrument is a device used to collect data objectively and systematically. The primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire. This collection tool is appropriate because it is stable, consistent, and uniform. The study was a self-administered using google Forms. Ample time was given to respondents to fill in the questionnaires. Questionnaires were downloaded and checked for accuracy and consistency. The downloaded instrument was modified to meet the needs of the objective of the study. Each question's response was coded with unique numbers. All the responses that were inconsistent with the study were omitted. The questionnaires were subdivided into three sections. The first section will address the biodata of respondents, the second, and third sections addressed the methods of teaching and the various challenges thereon.

3.6.3 Pre-test Procedure

The research procedure is a technique for gathering and interpreting data for a specific objective. There will be a pilot research undertaken. Five participants were utilized to perform the pilot research. Validation and dependability of the questionnaire must be

determined by pilot testing. The pilot testing also assisted the researcher in detecting flaws in the questionnaire and pinpointing places where respondents had trouble responding. Checking that the questions were accurately understood and interpreted was also crucial.

3.7 Reliability and validity

According to Miles and Huberman (1994), credibility is the extent to which the elements of an instrument elicit clear responses over many trials under the same conditions or from different audiences. The reliability of instruments and data was established through a pre-testing procedure with individual testing respondents prior to their use. At the end of the test it was realized that the outcome had a reliability coefficient of 95%.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

It was a voluntary involvement of respondents in the data collection process. Participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time. The respondents participated in their own will. Thus, the researcher gave accurate information and allowed the volunteers to make an informed decision whether to take part or not. Aggressive and other derogatory terms were omitted in the questions used and interview subjects were handled as well. The details gathered by the respondents were kept confidentially.

3.9 Data Analysis Method

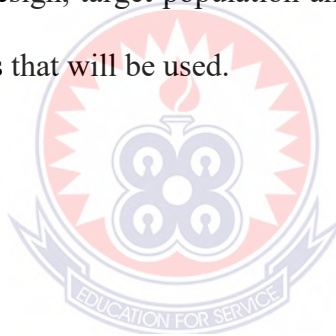
Data analysis is a process of transforming a mass of raw data into tables, charts, with frequency distribution and percentages. Data collected from the field will be sorted and summarized in tables and graphs. The Microsoft excel tool was used to analyze data. The process of data analysis involved several stages. Completed questionnaires

were edited for completeness and consistency. The data was coded and checked for any errors and omissions. Bar graphs and pie charts were used to present findings. The data was then generated into a pivot table and with the help of the pivot tables all the charts, figures and tables for each question was generated.

These charts, figures and tables were copied from excel to Microsoft Word and the necessary analysis thereon were made. In performing the analysis, the outcome was linked with existing assertions made by other researchers.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter addressed the research methodology that was used in the study. It has also discussed research design, target population and sampling design and technique, and data analysis methods that will be used.



CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.1 Review

This section dealt with the results of the findings, their interpretation and discussion thereon. This chapter has three (3) main sections. The first section dealt with the methods used by the teachers to improve learners' reading skills, the second dealt with the relationship between the method and the learners' performance and the final part dealt with the challenges the early childhood learners face with reading. The researcher targeted and administered 50 questionnaires to the schools within the Ashalley Botwe Township. All the 50 questionnaires were received representing a response rate of 100%.

4.2 Which methods are being used by teachers within the Ashalley Botwe town to improve early childhood learners' reading skills?

This section assessed the methods of improving the reading skills of learners, the other classroom reading approach used, the most effective approach in improving the reading skills of the learners, the advantages of the look and say method, the comparative ranking of both methods, and the test of the relationship between the teaching method used by the teachers and learners' performance.

4.2.1 Awareness of Methods

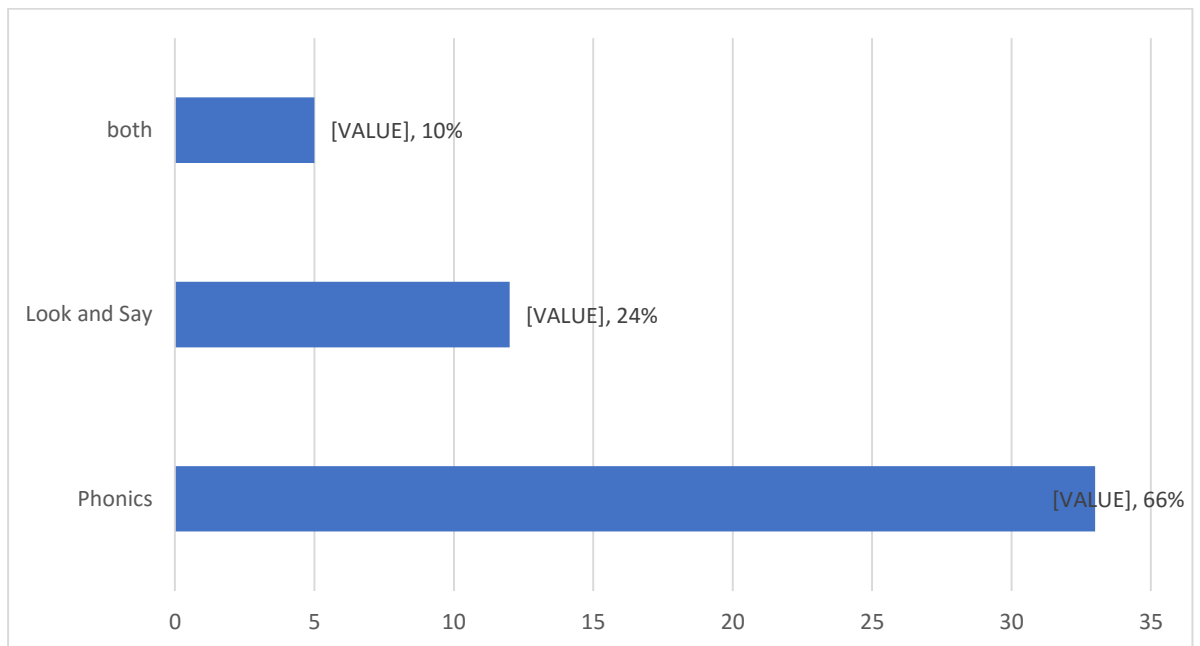


Figure 4.1 Awareness of Methods

Source: Field Data, 2022

The survey results show that out of the numerous methods used in improving reading, Phonics and Look and say are the common once used. From figure 4.1 the 33 respondents representing 66% were aware of phonics, while 12 of them representing 24% were aware of look and say while 5 of them representing 10% were aware of the two-approaches. This means that majority of the teachers in schools of the Ashalley Botwe are aware of the phonics method of teaching learners how to read. This however, did not support the assertion made by Stephanie (2009), which indicated that Look and Say method appear to be popular and is considered as a highly successful method early childhood learning.

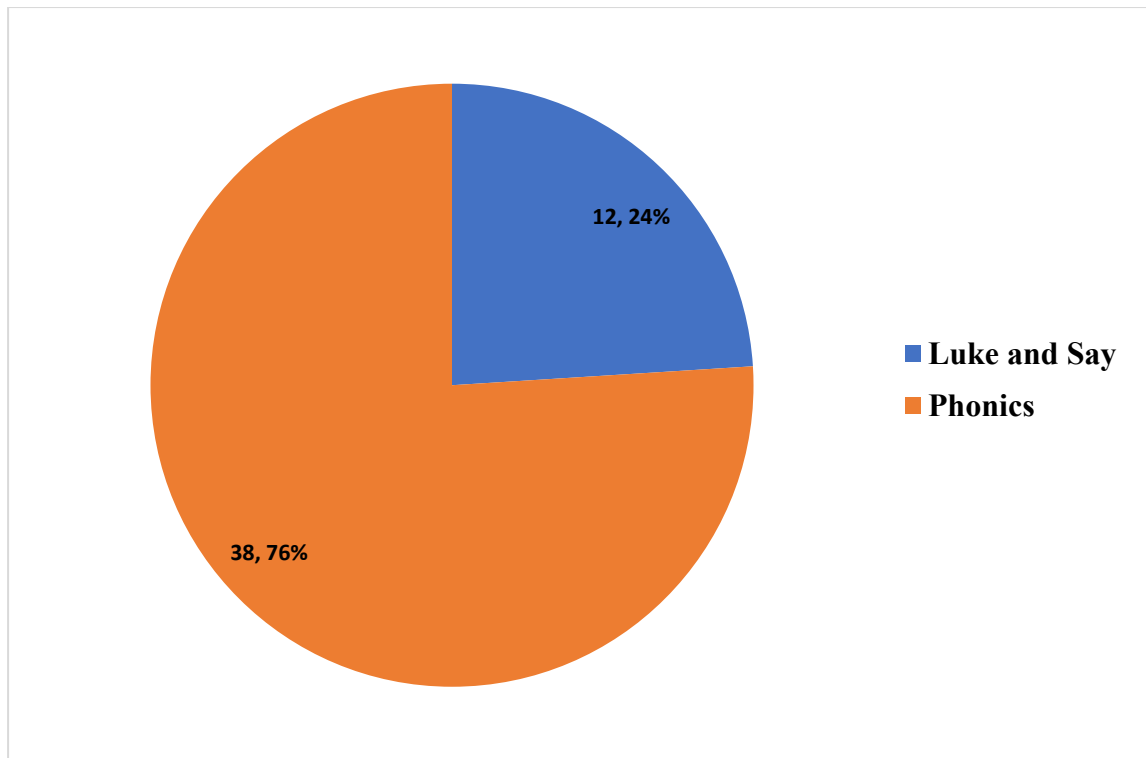


Figure 4.2 Method Used

Source: Field Data, 2022

Out of the Methods indicated, Phonics and Look and Say are the ones commonly used. The number of respondents who attest to the use of phonics were 38 which is equivalent to 76% while 12 of them representing 14% agreed they use Look and Say according to figure 4.2 above. This implies that a lot of the respondents use the phonics methods in improving the reading skills of their learners over the look and say approach because they believe it is more effective. This finding supports the assertion of McIntyre. (2006) which suggested that phonics instruction is effective in supporting reading growth, but it needs to be child specific to be most effective.

4.2.2 Other Methods

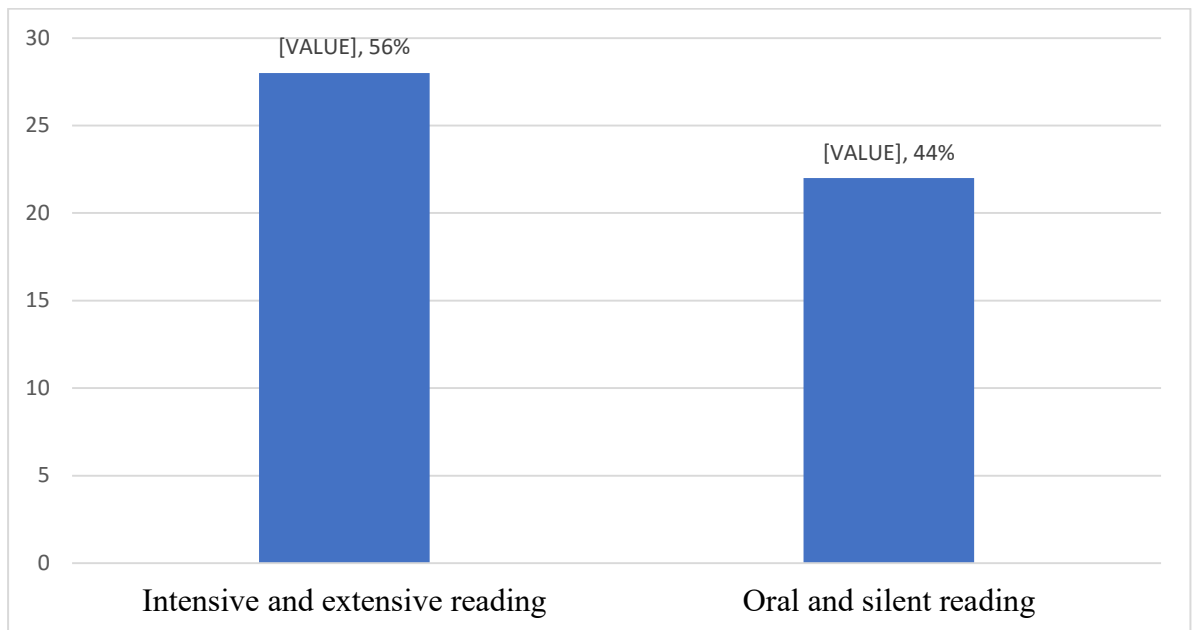


Figure 4.3 Other classroom reading approach Used

Source: Field Data, 2022

The data gathered in figure 4.3 above show that 28 of the respondents representing 56% were aware and use the intensive and extensive reading approaches while 22 of them representing 44% also were aware and use the Oral and silent reading approach. The survey results indicate that aside the common method used in improving reading skills of the early childhood learners of schools in Ashalley Botwe Township, some Teachers also used methods such as Intensive and Extensive reading and Oral and Silent reading. This finding supports the reading performances proposed by Brown (2001).

The study further assessed the most effective classroom reading approach used. The findings thereon are shown in figure 4.4.

4.2.3 The Effective Method

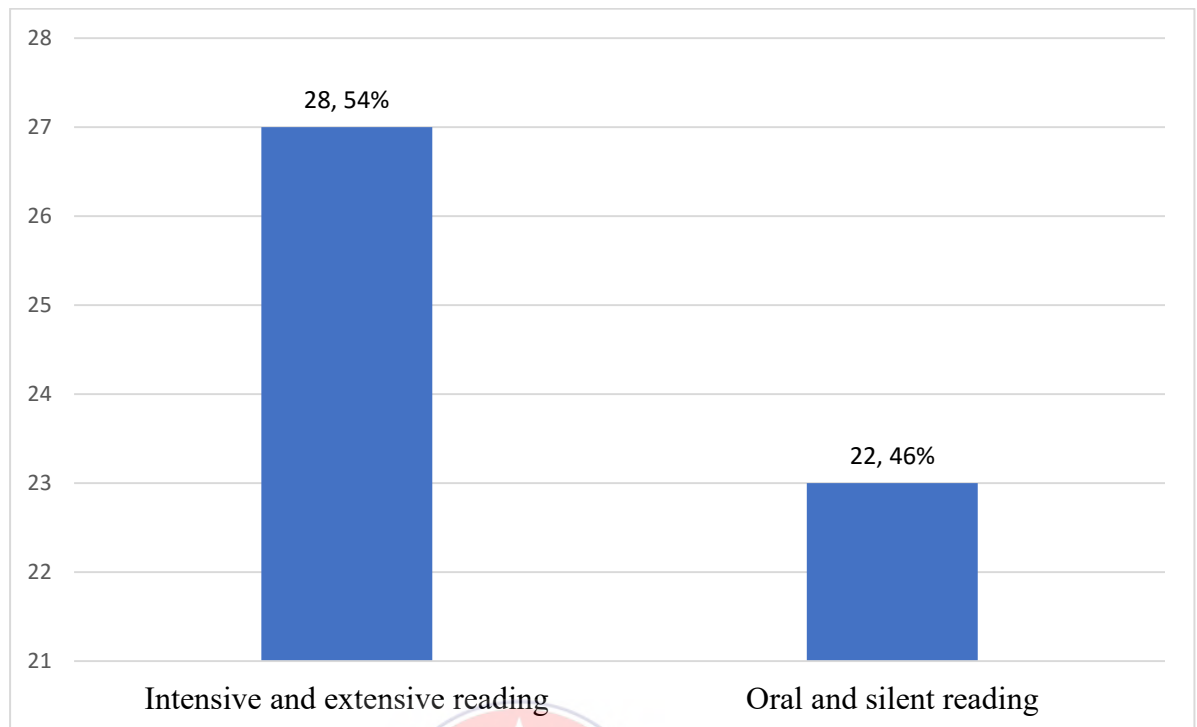


Figure 4.4The Effective Classroom Reading Approach Used

Source: Field Data, 2022

The rate allocated for these two approaches were 27 which is represented by 54% and 23 which is represented by 46% for Intensive and Extensive reading and Oral and silent reading respectively. It implies that most of the respondents believe that the intensive and extensive reading approach is more effective compared to the oral and silent reading approach as revealed by Brown (2004 p. 66), that extensive reading gives more concentration on the general understanding of a longer text as against the oral and silent reading approach where the learners will find it difficult to comprehend texts.

4.2.4 Assisting Struggling Readers

Table 4.1: Elements Necessary for Assisting Struggling Readers

Element	Frequency	Percentage
Classroom Instruction	7	14%
Home Reading	1	2%
Phonological Awareness	13	26%
Reading Practice	14	28%
Learner Engagement	15	30%
Grand Total	50	100%

Source: Field Data, 2022

The following are the necessary methods designed to assist the struggling readers to improve their readings as shown in Table 4.1. Out of the 50 respondents, 15 of them representing 30% agreed that struggling readers should be engaged more. However, 14 of them representing 28% indicated that they should practice reading a lot at school while 13 of them representing 26% revealed that they should have an idea of Phonic that is the sounds of the letters. Home reading method and classroom instructions were also indicated by only 1 of the respondents representing 2% and 7 representing 14% respectively. This finding falls in line with the observation made by Park & Lombardino (2013), Wiseman (2012), Alber-Morgan (2006) and Martin (2011) on the various classroom instructions.

4.2.5 Advantages of the Look and Say Method

Table 4.2 Advantages of the Look and Say Method

Advantages of Look & Says	Frequency	Percentage
A child can study to identify any word using the look and say method.	32	64%
This teaching method is easy to grasp for the parent as it is based on words rather than individual sounds.	4	8%
This method particularly lends itself to teaching infants and young toddlers to read.	10	20%
Children taught with the look and say method initially show higher reading levels than children learning phonics.	4	8%
Grand Total	50	100%

Source: Field Data, 2022

Data in table 4.2 shows that 32 of the respondents representing 64% confirm that the look and say method helps the learners learn to recognize any word. However, 4 of them representing 8% believed that the approach is easy to grasp for the parent. Another advantage revealed by 10 of them representing 20% was the fact that look and say technique is good for teaching infants and young toddlers. Lastly, 4 of them representing 8% also revealed higher reading levels under the look and say method than children learning phonics. This implies that the respondents were aware of most of the advantages of proposed by Nurnianti (2012).

4.2.6 Use Both Methods

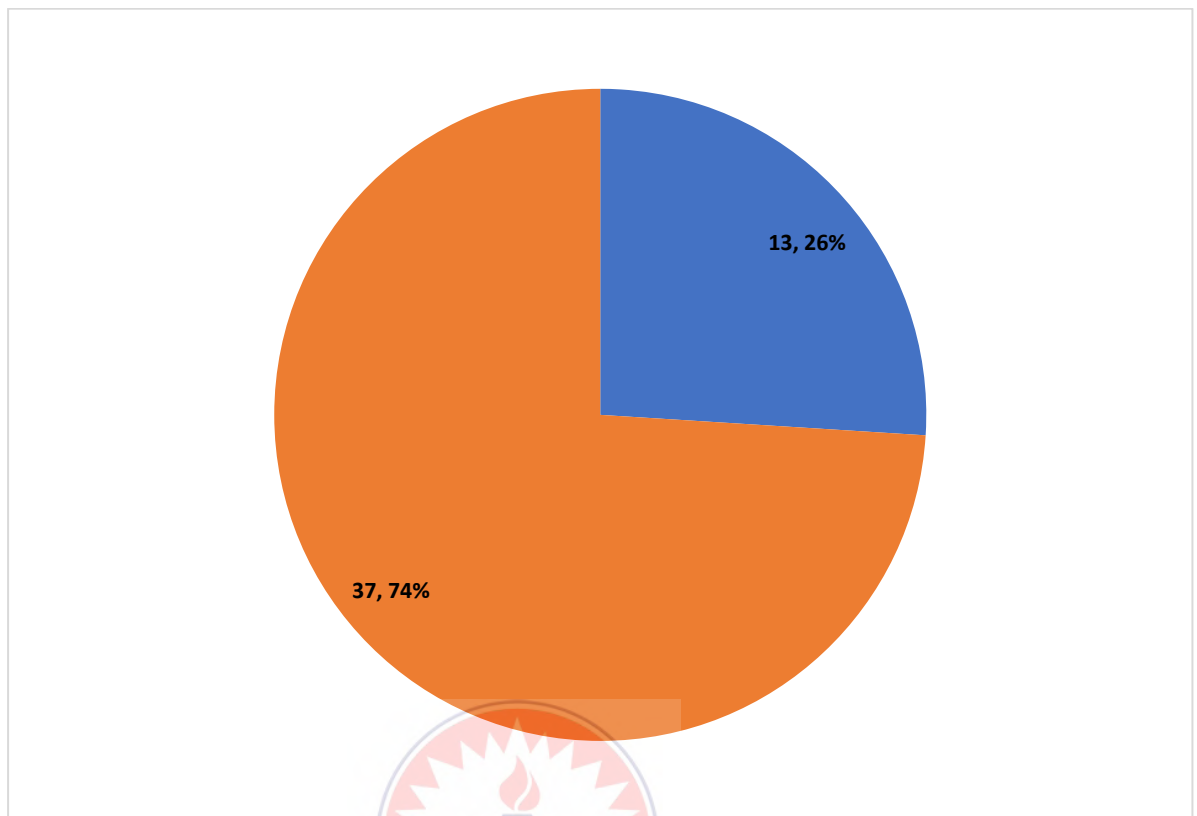


Figure 4.5 Use Both Look and Say and Phonics Method at The Same Time

Source: Field Data, 2022

The survey indicates that 37 respondents representing 74% of the total respondents said they were not using both look and say and phonics methods at the same time while 13 of them representing 26% said they use either look and say or the phonics at the same time. It implies majority of the respondents do not apply both teaching methods. They either use the phonics method or the look and say at a time. This means that not all learners within the class may benefit from only one particular teaching method adopted by the teachers since each method has its negative side as revealed by Wiseman (2012).

4.2.7 Effectiveness of Look and Say

Table 4.3 Look and Say Method Is More Effective

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	7	14%
Agree	10	20%
Neutral	8	16%
Disagree	20	40%
Strongly disagree	5	10%
Grand Total	50	100%

Source: Field Data, 2022

The data in Table 4.3 show how the respondents responded to the effectiveness of the look and say method. Out of the 50 respondents, 10 of them representing 20% agreed that the look and say method is very effective while 20 of them representing 40% disagreed. While 8 of them representing 16% were on neutral background 7 representing 14% and 5 of them representing 10% strongly agreed and strongly disagreed respectively. This implies that majority of the respondents disagreed that the look and say technique was more effective than the phonic method. This confirms the assertion made by Kalindi (2005) which observed that the look and say method resulted was inadequate for learning among most learners in primary schools level.

4.2.8 What is the relationship between the method used by the EC teachers and the early childhood learners' reading performance in Ashalley Botwe?

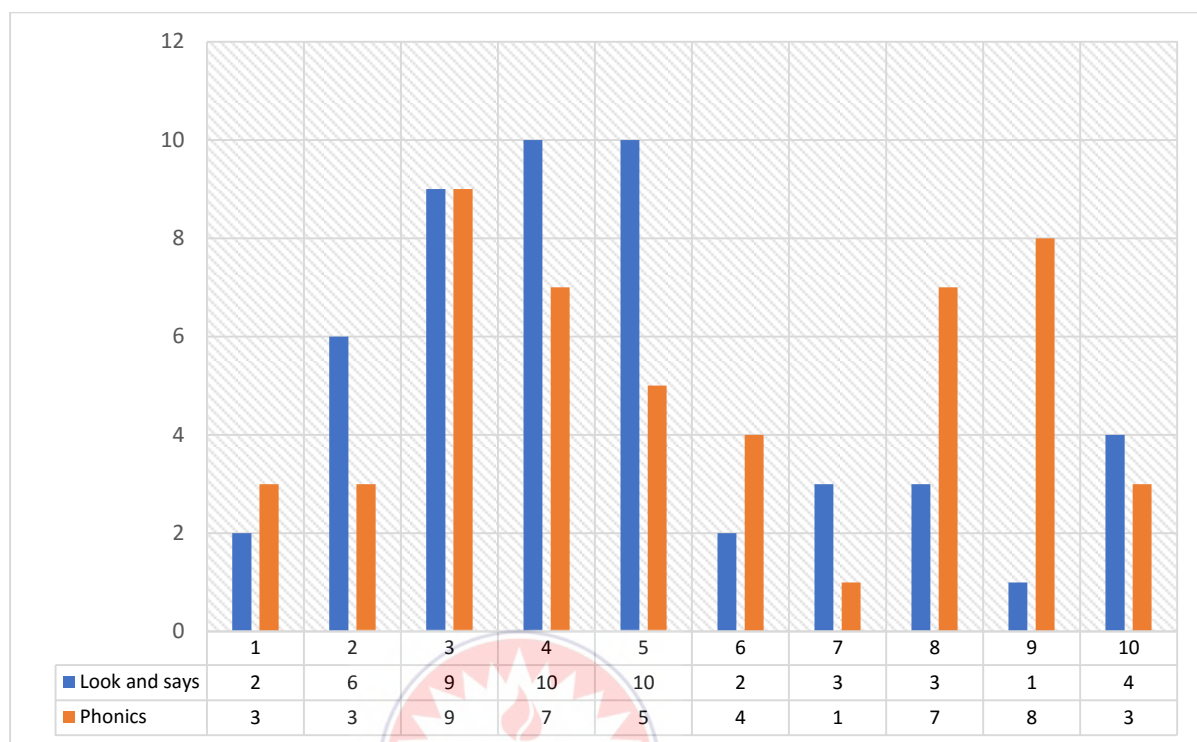


Figure 4.6 Rank the learners' performance base on both methods

Source: Field Data, 2022

Ranking the learner's performance based of the two major methods used, that is the look and say and phonics by the respondents, one could clearing tell that the phonics help at the beginning stage. So, at mark 1, Look and say recorded 2 points while the phonics recorded 3 points. But comparing their lowest and their highest scores, it shows that they both recorded a lower score of 1 each at different point but at their highest point look and say recorded 10 points while the Phonics recorded 9 points. This shows that the look and say improve the performance of the learner than the phonics. This appears to be inconsistent with the previous findings and existing studies that suggest that the phonic method is more effective.

4.2.9 Relationship between the teaching method and performance

This section assessed whether or not the respondents agree that there was a significant relationship between the teaching method adopted by the teachers and the performance of the learners. The finding thereon is shown in table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 Relationship between the teaching method and performance

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	12	24%
Agree	24	48%
Neutral	6	12%
Disagree	2	4%
Strongly disagree	6	12%
Grand Total	50	100%

Source: Field Data, 2022

From Table 4.4, the data show that after comparing the teaching methods and the actual performance, 24 of the respondents representing 48% agreed that there was significant relationship between the teaching method and the performance of the learners. However, 2 of them representing 4% disagreed while 6 of them representing 12% were on Neutral grounds and 12 of them representing 24% strongly agreed and lastly, 6 of them representing 12% strongly disagreed. This suggest that most of the respondents agreed that there is a significant relationship between the teaching method adopted and the performance of the learners.

4.3 What are the challenges EC teachers face in improving pupil's reading skills?

This section assessed the various challenges that affect the reading skills of the early childhood learners within the schools in the Ashalley Botwe Township. Table 4.5 shows the findings thereon.

Table 4.5 Challenges Early Childhood learners face with Reading

Statements	Frequency	Percentage
Unpreparedness of Teachers	15	30%
Poor Training of Teachers	3	6%
Lack of Reading Resources	7	14%
Overcrowded Classrooms	12	24%
Communication Difficulties	9	18%
Poor Remuneration of Teachers	4	8%
Grand Total	50	100%

Source: Field Data, 2022

In Table 4.5 the data show that 15 of the respondents representing 30% indicated unpreparedness of teachers was a challenge by some teachers in teaching learners how to read. Three (3) of them representing 6% revealed poor training of teachers as another challenge while 7 of them representing 14% indicated lack of reading resources as another challenge. Twelve (12) of them representing 24% indicated overcrowded classroom as another challenge. Again, 9 of them representing 18% indicated communication difficulties as another challenge to the teachers and lastly, 4 of them representing 8% revealed poor remuneration of teachers as a challenge. These challenges revealed are in line with findings on the challenges early childhood learners face with reading revealed in the study of Igwe (2011), Meador (2016), Foncha et al. (2018), McKeown et al. (2009) Hugo (2010), Gan (2012) and Fareh (2010).

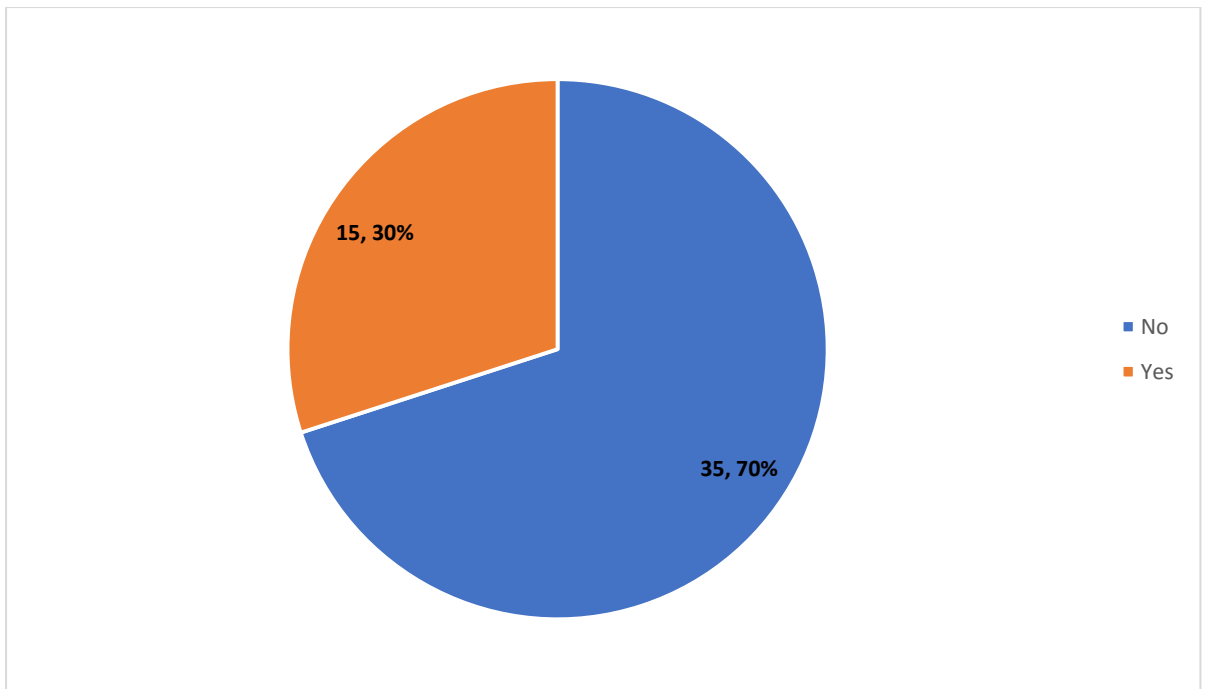


Figure 4.7 Use of same methods for all learners by Teachers

Source: Field Data, 2022

The survey shows that 35 respondents representing 70% said they do not use the same methods for every child. Reason being that each child has a way of understanding lessons introduced to him or her while 15 of them representing 30% said they used the same methods for every child.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Overview

This chapter dealt with the summary of the findings, conclusion and the recommendation made based on the study findings.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The study was classified into five chapters. The first chapter included the study's history, research problem statement, purpose, goals, research questions, importance, definition of words, scope, limitations, and organization. Chapter two provides the research's theoretical framework. This chapter will cover reading ideas, research approaches for increasing reading, and student reading obstacles. Chapter three detailed the study's research methodologies. This section describes the study's data sources, methods, and reliability. Chapter four evaluates the data. It analyzes, presents, and interprets respondents' data. Chapter five will summarize and recommendation.

Findings:

5.2.1 The Methods Used by the Teachers to Improve Learners' Reading Skills

It was shown that the majority of respondents do not employ both phonic and look and say instructional strategies in their classrooms. They will either teach their children to read using the phonics approach or the look and speak method at a time. Because of this, it is possible that not all of the learners in the class will profit from the use of a single teaching style that the teachers choose to implement because, as Wiseman (2012) demonstrated, every approach has certain drawbacks.

It was found that the majority of respondents prefer the usage of phonics approaches over the look-and-say strategy when it comes to enhancing the reading abilities of their learners. This is due to the fact that the majority of respondents think that phonics is more effective. This conclusion lends credence to the remark made by McIntyre et al. (2006), which said that phonics education is useful in fostering reading progress, but that in order for it to be most successful, it must be tailored to the requirements of each individual child. The survey findings reveal that some teachers in Ashalley Botwe Township employed Intensive and Extensive reading, as well as Oral and Silent reading, to improve the reading skills of their learners in addition to the usual technique supporting to revelation in the study of Brown (2001).

However, as revealed by Brown (2004), it was observed that extensive reading gives more concentration on the general understanding of a longer text as opposed to the oral and silent reading approach, in which the learners will find it difficult to comprehend texts. The study showed that the majority of respondents believe that the intensive and extensive reading approach is more effective than the oral and silent reading approach.

5.2.2 Relationship Between the Teaching Method and Performance

The look-and-say approach was shown to be more effective in improving the learner's performance than the phonics method, according to the findings of the study, which evaluated the effectiveness of the various ways based on how well they performed. This seems to be in contradiction with the prior findings and research that have been done, both of which imply that the phonic method is the more successful approach. It was observed that the vast majority of respondents are in agreement that there is a

substantial link between the instructional strategy utilized and the level of performance exhibited by the learners.

5.2.3 The Challenges Teachers Face in Improving Learners's Reading Skills

According to the findings of the study, teachers who work with children in their early years face a number of obstacles in their work, including a lack of adequate preparation, an absence of adequate reading resources, inadequate remuneration, an absence of adequate teaming, inadequate training for educators, overcrowded classrooms, and difficulties in communicating with their learners. This discovery is consistent with the statements that have been made by other researchers, such as Igwe (2011), Meador (2016), Foncha et al. (2018), McKeown et al. (2009) Hugo (2010), Gan (2012), and Fareh (2010) on the challenge teachers face in improving the learners' reading skills.

5.3 Conclusion

The study revealed that English teachers within schools in the Ashalley Botwe Township use both the phonic and look and say methods in their quest to improve the reading ability of their learners. However, it was observed that greater majority of them use the phonic methods and the intensive and extensive classroom reading methods. However, it was observed that among the methods identified, the phonics was the most effective for the English teachers in improving the reading skills and performance of their learners by many researchers but in the case of this study the look and say appealed to be the most effective method.

The results of the study demonstrated that there is a significant relationship between the method used by English teachers and the reading performance of their learners, corroborating previous assumptions about the nature of this relationship.

According to the findings of the study, the teachers who teach the early childhood learners are faced with the challenges of unpreparedness of teachers, lack of reading resources, poor remuneration of teachers, lack of teaming, poor training of teachers, overcrowded classrooms and communication difficulties.

3.4 Recommendation

1. The study revealed that not all learners within the class may benefit from only one particular teaching method adopted by the teachers since each method has its negative side, in view of that it is recommended that English teachers in schools in the Ashalley Botwe Township adopt multiple teaching methods to cover for the shortcomings of the individual methods.
2. The researchers recommend classroom instruction, reading at home, reading practice with a focus on phonological awareness, and learner engagement as ways to assist learners who have difficulty reading in the schools located in the Asshalley Botwe Township.
3. Qualified and trained teachers are not sufficiently motivated to go to isolated and rural locations where learners require basic reading abilities the most. Therefore, it is advised that the Ministry of Education pay attention to these places and establish incentives to encourage well-trained and competent instructors to work without skepticism and reluctance in remote and rural locations.
4. The learners in the first phases of their education need to be taught phonological concepts and abilities in alphabetic coding. As kids climb higher and higher on the academic ladder, this will help them enhance their reading abilities.

5. More educational programs and training ought to be design and implemented by the Ministry of Education to help equip the English Teachers understand the best teaching methods to adopt considering the uniqueness of their learners.
6. The various schools within the Ashalley Botwe district must ensure they try to reduce the class size to ensure effectiveness and ability to identify the special needs of each learner.



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APPENDIX 1

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNIBA

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

**METHODS OF IMPROVING UPON THE READING ABILITY OF
LEARNERS: (A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN ASHALLEY
BOTWE)**

This questionnaire is for academic purposes only. It fulfills a part of the criteria for the University of Education, Winneba's Masters in Education degree. Any information you give will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.

It is divided into two sections: demographic data and reading-related problems pertinent to the particular study goals.

Kindly answer by ticking where necessary [] or fill in.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Name of School

.....

2. Type of School

[] Private [] Government [] Montessori [] Missionary

[] Others, specify

.....

3. How long have you been working with this school?

[] < 1 year [] 1 – 3 years [] 4 – 5 years [] More than 5 years

4. Gender [] Male [] Female

5. Qualification

[] HND [] Degree [] Masters [] PhD

[] Others,

6. Do you teach English Language?

[] Yes [] No

7. What is the size of your class?

Less than 10 10 – 20 20 – 40 More than 40

8. Do you have an assistant?

Yes No

If “Yes” Is your assistant qualified as a teacher?

Yes No

READING RELATED ISSUES

METHODS

1. Which of the following methods of improving the reading skills of learners are you are aware of?

Look and Say Phonics Others, please indicate below

.....
.....
.....

2. Which of the methods do you use to improve the learners’ reading skills?

Look and Say Phonics Others, please indicate below

.....
.....
.....

3. Aside the broad methods which of the following classroom reading approach do you use?

Oral and silent reading

Intensive and extensive reading

_____ Others, please specify

.....
.....

4. Which of these reading approaches do you consider more effective in improving the reading skills of the learners/learners?

Oral and silent reading

Intensive and extensive reading

5. Which of the following elements do you considered necessary for assisting struggling readers?

Classroom Instruction Learner Engagement Explicit Instruction

- Phonological Awareness Reading Practice Home Reading
 Reading Recovery Levelled Literacy Intervention (LLI) Others,

6. Which of the following do you consider as advantages of the look and say method?

- A child can learn to recognize any word using the look and say method
 This teaching method is easy to grasp for the parent as it is based on words rather than individual sounds
 This method particularly lends itself to teaching infants and young toddlers to read
 Children taught with the look and say method initially show higher reading levels than children learning phonics
 Others,

7. Why will you use the phonics method of teaching instead of the look and say method?

.....

8. Do you use both look and say and phonics method at the same time?

- Yes No

9. The look and say method is more effective than the phonics method per my observation?

- Agree Strongly Agree Disagree Strongly disagree Neutral

10. Rank the learners' performance base on the following methods.

1 – 10 represents the weight of performance during reading by learners

Methods	Ranks
Look and says	
Phonics	

11. There is a relationship between the teaching method used by the teachers and learners' performance. To what extent do you agree or disagree?

Agree Strongly Agree Disagree Strongly disagree Neutral

CHALLENGES

12. Which of the following causes the reading challenges of Learners/Learners in your school?

There are no incentives to motivate the teachers especially those in remote areas.

Teachers using generic method for all learners

Gender bias

Home environment not conducive for learners' reading practice

Failure to acquire phonological awareness and skills in alphabetical coding

Visual, auditory, temporal and kinesthetic disorientation and disorganization

13. Do you use the same reading method for all your learners?

Yes No

