

Original Paper

The Achievement of USAIDS Tusome Pamoja in Improving Early Grade Reading Skills in Primary Schools in Morogoro Municipal

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Received: August 13, 2022 Accepted: September 18, 2022 Online Published: September 22, 2022

doi:10.22158/wjer.v9n4p91

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/wjer.v9n4p91>

Abstract

Following establishment of the low reading and writing levels among primary school levels (UWEZO, 2013), three projects were designed to test possible programs to raise primary school reading levels. These included EQUIPT literacy program, LANES and Tusome Pamoja programs. They ran parallel in Tanzania, each operating in separate districts of focus. Tusome Pamoja operated in Mbeya, Zanzibar and Morogoro. The aim of this study was to evaluate the achievement of Tusome Pamoja program in improving reading ability of standard two pupils in primary schools. Only 4 school were involved in the study. The sample of the study constituted 89 respondents including 4 teachers, 4 head of schools and 81 standard two pupils. Data collected through in Morogoro municipality through testing, interviews, observation, questionnaire and documentary review. The help of Microsoft Excel Program, Microsoft Word, SPSS, and content analysis analyzed the data. Findings of the study revealed that, the teachers are not well prepared in teachers' colleges. Most of primary teachers who teach reading are not interested with carrier development. There are some intervention programs, which help in improving teacher's ability in teaching reading. These programs are especially important, as they are specific to early grade skills. It also revealed that, the teachers faced a number of problems in teaching reading including shortage of resources, poor cooperation from parents and lack of food program. The study recommended that the school owners should prepare in-service education program and seminars that enhanced teaching of reading skills in Tanzania.

Keywords

early grade, reading skills, Tusome Pamoja

1. Introduction

Since 2016, the number of students who joined form one in public schools in Tanzania increased by 20% from 44, 8826 in 2015 to 53, 8826 in 2016. This was influenced by fee-free education policy implemented since January 2016. The challenge is inability of some of students to read, write and count when they are selected to join form one. The nature of examination itself that contains multiple choice questions favors students to pass even if they are not able to read or write. This is correlated with what has been found by USAID report of 2014 as it revealed that, in the meantime, 2012, more than 90 percent of school-aged Tanzanian children were enrolled in primary school however, primary school completion remains a challenge. In 2013, the Government of Tanzania adopted the Big Results Now (BRN) initiative to boost upgrading from a low-to middle-income country. Education was among of sectors that received much attention, particularly in the early primary grades. Education was given priority in the BRN initiative. From that fact, it is necessary to evaluate the programs adopted in Tanzania to improve early grade skills.

The issue of early grade skills is particularly important in primary school in Tanzania. This is referred to primary school curriculum in the section of competences where it stated that:

The competencies concur with the objectives of primary education as shown in the following section:

a) Competencies in Standards I-II

The Standard I-II curriculum focuses on the competencies which will enable the Standard I-II pupil to do : (i) read; (ii) write; (iii) do arithmetic; (iv) maintain personal hygiene and care for the environment; and (v) participate in games, sports, and arts activities (TET, 2015)

Teaching early grade pupils to read is a cornerstone of improving education achievement. If the students are not able to read well at an early age, they cannot absorb more advanced skills and content from the literature. Children who do not learn to read at early grades will be further behind in every step later as it will be difficult for them to follow written instructions, to absorb printed information or writing well (Gove & Wetterberg, 2011)

The current issue with basic skills instruction at early grade is quality. The major problem is inability of pupils to read, write and count at appropriate level. This problem is experienced in Tanzania and other parts of the world as revealed by different studies in literature. Akyeampong et al., (2013) conducted a study in six African countries (Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, and concluded that there is clear difference between what is taught in teachers' colleges and what is required by curriculum to be delivered in the classroom. The study argues that teacher- training is based much on subject content rather than methods of teaching. The teacher can be competent on subject content but he or she may fail to deliver the knowledge to pupils.

In Tanzania, the problem is still the same as other parts of the world. According to USAID report of 2014; 1 out of 3 students scored between 0-10 syllables correct in 1 minute that means many are still struggling with identifying sound. In addition, students are not able to read a passage in English; in that case they cannot answer comprehension questions from the passage. More than 90% of students fail to

answer correctly even a single comprehension question.

Due to importance of early grade skills, different programs have been established to remedy the situation globally, in Africa and Tanzania particularly. One among the programs was LBP aimed to save children from illiteracy worldwide. According to Trudell et al. (2012) this program in 2010 succeeded to reach more than 73 million children in 120 countries. The program supports reading skills, trains teachers and mobilizes communities for reading action. The program resulted to increase in parents' awareness and reading habit among students in and out of school.

In Tanzania, various programs on improving early grade skills were conducted including EP4R, LANES, EQUIP-T and USAID-*Tusome Pamoja*. (URT 2017). LANES, for example focusses on improvement of 3Rs skills. LANES print and distribute standard I textbooks, II and III. Through LANES schools work with support from GPE teachers who teach standard, I, II, and Ward Educational Officers trained.

The USAID *Tusome Pamoja* program target on implementation of early grade basic skills instructions, strengthen skills delivery system and increase engagement of parents and communities in education (USAID, 2019). The activity focused on four regions (Morogoro, Mtwara, Iringa, and Ruvuma) and Zanzibar targeted to 1.4 million students in grade 1 through grade four including 26,000 teachers with a budget of \$ 67 million. As mid-2017, *Tusome Pamoja* published 50 levelled and 12 decodable readers for grades 1 and 2 and distributed to more than 650,000 copies. The program also trains 1,300 primary and 315 pre-primary teachers (Gove et al., 2017).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The USAID *Tusome Pamoja* program was introduced in year 2016 to improve early grade skills instruction through training of teachers and distribution of learning materials. The program ran for 5 years (2016-2021) and it is still on progress focusing on the improvement of the quality of early grade basic skills instruction (USAID, 2019).

In Tanzania, contrary to curriculum expectation, many primary pupils do not master basic skills (3Rs) quickly. According to NECTA report of 2019, the reading comprehension at national level for grade two pupils was 38.7% correct while the benchmark is 80% correct. In addition, Oral Reading Fluency in the same report was 26.18 Correct Words per Minute while the benchmark is 50 Correct Words per Minute. The reading ability of standard two pupils in Tanzania is still below the established benchmark. Early grade reading skills if not well imparted to pupils can lead to negative impacts to learners and education system at large. As revealed by Gove et al. (2017) children who do not learn to read at early grade will face difficulty to follow written instruction, to absorb printed information or writing well.

Within 5 years of its implementation the program of USAID *Tusome Pamoja*, it showed some achievement in various regions. In Mtwara and Ruvuma, for example, the program succeeds to involve parents through PTP groups and CEMs where parents worked closely with their children in reading at home. In Morogoro Municipal, teachers were trained to teach letters as sound through *Tusome Pamoja* phonics training session. Meanwhile little is known about what is more achieved and what is less

achieved in early grade reading skills specifically in Morogoro municipal. Therefore, this proposed study aimed at assessing the achievement of *Tusome Pamoja* in improving early grade reading skills of primary school pupils in Morogoro municipal.

1.2 Study Objectives

- 1) To assess the ability of teachers to effectively implement *Tusome Pamoja* Program specifically reading skills
- 2) To evaluate the improvement of students' reading ability (non-word, fluency, and comprehension)
- 3) To examine the challenges faced by teachers in teaching early grade reading skills

1.3 Schema Theory

This study was guided by Schema theory. According to Pappas, (2014) Schema theory was invented by Sir Frederic Charles Barlett (1886 – 1969) in 1932 and further developed by Richard Anderson in 1932. The schema theory has four key elements, which are:

- 1) Individual can memorize and use a schema without even realizing of his/her doing so.
- 2) Once a schema is developed, it tends to be stable over a prolonged period.
- 3) Human mind uses schemata to organize, retrieve, and encode chunks of vital information.
- 4) Schemata are accumulated over time and through different experiences.

Schema is a hypothetical mental structure in which experience and knowledge are organized and stored in memory. It created through experience with people, objects, and events in the world. For example, when we encounter something like a car repeatedly, we begin to generalize about such a car. This is useful because if someone tries to explain about the car, they do not need to tell us everything because we already know things like structure, driver, colour, and number of doors of that car (Ajideh, 2003).

Schema theory insist on background knowledge of people as an aid to information processing in fostering understanding and comprehension. Pre-existing schemata among learners are activated by the incoming information from text they read. This helps the learners not only to pronounce words but also to understand and make sense of what is written on text. Yusuf et al. (2017) added that, Reading is more than the ability to pronounce words. The fact is, a pupil can be able to pronounce all words within a text but he/she may fail to make sense of it. Reading is a combination of both, what presented is within text and what is outside the text as schema.

Information needed for comprehending a text comes from what is already known about the topic of the text and familiarity with the words and sentence structure used. During the reading process, there is interaction between what the text says and what the reader already knows. In that case, it is particularly important to consider pupils experience and background before the process of teaching reading. Pupil's background and prior knowledge related to the topic can be developed or enhanced through pre-reading activities.

2. Method

The researcher employed descriptive case study design which studied in detail a specific program (*Tusome Pamoja*) within specific subject (Reading). This design was implemented in three steps; first the study selects a sample of four primary schools, from each school head teacher and subject teachers of standard two were selected by using purposive sampling. A sample of pupils was randomly selected depending on the total number of pupils in that particular school.

Second, preliminary investigation was done for the purpose of verifying schools if they meet appropriate requirements for assessment. The criteria were: one, a primary school which has registered standard two pupils and two a primary school which their head teacher and a teacher who teach standard two attend a seminar of *Tusome Pamoja* program. All four primary schools involved in this study met the required criteria.

Third, a questionnaire was administered to head teachers and subject teachers focusing on training of teachers and the impact of that training on improving early grade skills as well as challenges. For more detail head teachers and teachers who teach reading in standard two were interviewed to supplement the information obtained from the questionnaire, observation, and documentary review. Lastly Early Grade Reading Assessment [EGRA] was used to measure standard two pupil's ability in three main reading subtasks which are non-word reading, oral reading fluency and reading comprehension.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1 The Ability of Teachers in Implementing *Tusome Pamoja* USAID Program

The study involved four teachers who teach reading in standard one. The teachers were asked to indicate their academic qualification and as presented in figure 4 all 4 (100%) teachers indicated Certificate in education as their highest level of education. Through semi structured interview, the teachers were further asked if that was their academic qualification during the time of their first appointment or otherwise. All four subject teachers said yes meaning that since the time of their first appointment till the date of this study (July, 2021) the teachers who teach reading in primary schools in Morogoro municipality remain with the same level of academic qualification. The study also was interested to understand the content and methodology imparted to teachers when they were student teachers in different colleges. All four teachers revealed that, the content was too general as every student teacher was expected to teach any subject at any level from standard one to standard seven. With the same line of content, one of the teachers reported following:

During the study, we all taught together, no specialization of any subject. The content was the same covered by all teachers in college. Even here at my working station when I started to work, I used to teach Mathematics in standard four. However, currently I teach standard two all the subjects including reading, writing and arithmetic. (Semi structured interview-July, 2021)

The study revealed that in colleges where primary teachers are prepared there is no specialization. All students-teachers taught the same content, expected to teach any subject, and at all levels of primary.

These findings concur Akyeampong et al. (2013) who concluded that there is clear difference between what is taught in teachers' colleges and what is required by curriculum delivered in classroom.

Due to the challenge observed by researcher in preparation of teachers in different colleges it led to the need of exploring any intervention program for improvement of reading before the introduction of *Tusome Pamoja* in 2016. The most mentioned program by primary teachers was LANES. This is a program was established in 2014 and run up to 2018 for the main purpose of supporting literacy and numeracy for pupils of lower level. Through semi structured interview to primary school teachers in Morogoro municipality it revealed that the LANES program succeeded to train teachers and supply some learning materials.

In their lesson preparation four aspects, namely: scheme of work, lesson plan, lesson notes and instructional materials (teaching materials) were assessed. The primary teachers who teach reading in Morogoro municipality regularly prepared the scheme of work and lesson plan. However, the problem was on supervision of these important documents in teaching and learning process.

In preparation of scheme of work, for example some vital information in scheme of work was missed. In a scheme of work for a standard two teacher of school 'A' some of the pages were not filled in the part of months and weeks. It was further revealed that, the information filled in scheme of works for all 4 teachers of standard two pupils were copied from other schemes as it shows that there is no improvement from one year to another.

All 4 lesson plans prepared by teachers were observed by researcher. All four primary teachers always prepared lesson plans but the weaknesses observed are repeated year in and year out. In filling some part of the lesson plans the teachers were not careful for example in one of the lessons plan it was observed that the number of students who attended the class was higher compared to number of pupils registered to that class. This is impossible but it shows how the teachers were careless in filling these documents. The other observed lesson plan from school B indicated that, the distribution of time was not appropriate. For example, the teacher allocated time equally on each stage while in some stages like a stage of "new competences" and "reinforcement" required to have more time than other stages such as a stage of "Introduction" and "Summary and Conclusion".

The researcher needed to find out if the standard two teachers used to prepare the lesson notes and teaching materials. In all 4 visited primary schools it was revealed that, the standard two teachers did not prepare lesson notes at all. In the case of teaching aids, the situation was the same, as most of them did not prepare anything as teaching media. What was observed by the researchers during the study revealed that, the teachers of primary schools in Morogoro municipality were only using the teaching materials drawn on walls of classrooms as indicated in Figure 1

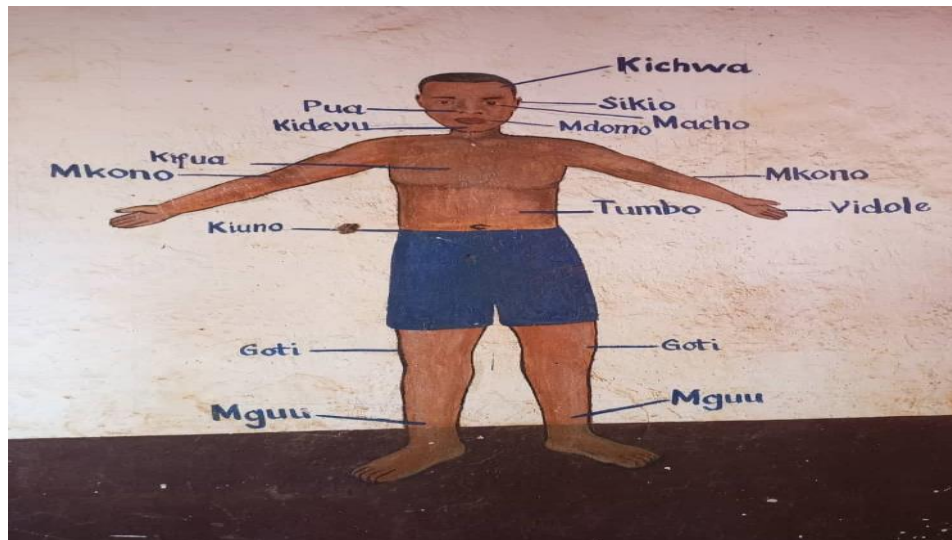


Figure 1. Parts of the Human Body Drawn on Classroom Wall

Source: Researcher 2021.

Figure 1 reveals that, the primary teachers of Morogoro Municipality were using the pictures drawn on walls of classes to instruct the students. However, from what was observed by the researcher some of these painted letters printed outside the classroom something, which make difficult for pupils to refer while the teaching process is on progress. The researcher was further reviewing the Curriculum of primary school to find out what was stated concerning with teaching and Learning Materials. From curriculum of primary school, it was shown that, the standard two teacher must prepare “Kivunge” [a package] which consists of basic teaching aids including cards and charts of Letters (A-Z) and words. Kivunge also Contains human body with labeled parts. If “Kivunge” well prepared the teaching of standard two primary would be better and interesting. The standard two teachers were reluctant in preparation of lesson notes and teaching aids. The study revealed that the teachers were going in the classroom with only books and chalks. The researcher was further trying to find out why the situation was below established standard. One of the head teachers interviewed by researcher and said this:

It may be generalized that, the preparation of lessons by standard two teachers in Morogoro municipality done below the standard set. The supervision of these documents is not effectively done as claimed by head of schools as they have many other duties to perform. The head teacher did not establish effective an internal supervision team, which would assist the head of school in supervision of teaching and learning process.

During the study, the researcher observed 1 lesson presentation and the Lesson transcript for was recorded:

The teacher entered the class at 8:00 am and started with a greeting to the pupils.

Teacher: Vijana Awiiiiii

Pupils: Awaaaaa

Teacher: Awaaaaa

Pupils: Awiiiiiii

After the greeting, the teacher wrote on the blackboard the main topic and the sub-topic. The lesson prepared by the teacher was identification of letters and she taught a sub topic called combining the sounds of the double/triple consonant letters in conjunction with vowel in forming the syllable. Within 30 minutes, the teacher spent 12 minutes in the introduction of which only 5 minutes were used to ask students about the previous lesson and 7 minutes used to calm students who were causing chaos in the classroom. Within the first 10 minutes of the lesson, the teacher resolved more than three student disputes, including students sharing pens.

After the introduction, the teacher spent the rest of the remaining 18 minutes introducing a new subject, which is the integration of sounds of the double/triple consonant letters with vowel into syllables. In this step, called new knowledge the teacher used the chalk-board to write six consecutive letters and six syllables by combining them and asking the students to distinguish. Only two students had the opportunity to distinguish between the letters. The teacher often spent 20 seconds to 1 minute calming the students. The lesson ended with distinguishing between the corresponding letters and the syllables that were written on the board.

In summary with regard to classroom observation of lesson 1, the teacher prepared a standard lesson plan with all important steps and activities. She entered in the class on time and great pupils in a way, which make pupils to be active. The introduction was good as she tried to recall the previous lesson before the new one. She also used pupil's real names in appointing them to participate in learning. Through this observation, the researcher observed some areas, which need improvement for example a teacher used more than 10 minutes to calm the pupils instead of teaching. It recommended that, the teacher had to improve her skills on classroom management something, which help the maximum utilization of time. Teacher did not follow the prepared lesson plan as she failed to reach important stages like a stage of consolidation and summary. The teacher did not use any teaching media while the recommended teaching media were cards and charts of letters and words.

In summary, with regard to classroom observation, this current study found that the number of pupils in class was large (78 pupils) with some of pupils sitting on the floor, which created difficulty in classroom management. The lesson was not well taught as most of the time the teacher was busy in calming down the pupils instead of teaching.

The ability of teachers in implementing reading programs go hand in hand with supervision of instruction. In addition, in that case this study explored how school heads supervise the teaching process in which two components put forward to examine this phenomenon. These aspects included teachers' attendance in classes, inspection of classroom teaching and assessment procedures. The study revealed that, the attendance of primary school teachers is not 100 percent as some sessions were missed and even the supervisors of visited primary schools in Morogoro municipal did not always inspect teachers while they taught inside the classroom. In addition, the assessment procedures done by

primary school teachers in Morogoro municipality did not meet the standard. These aspects discussed in details in different themes below.

In teaching process, the inspection during teaching process is important. During the study, the teachers who teach reading in 4 visited primary schools in Morogoro municipality were asked the rate for which head of school visited them while they are teaching and their response were minimum inspection. It revealed that their head visit all 4-subject teachers very rarely. The head of school of all 4 primary schools in most of time are busy with other administrative duties rather than inspection of classroom teaching. The wretched issue on inspection of classroom teaching was observed that, all 4 visited primary school has no internal supervision team. It established that in visited primary schools, there was a necessity of using internal supervision team to help head teachers but fortunately, these teams were not established. The researcher through semi-structured interview with a head of school D the following revealed:

By now, I have already started strategies to ensure we have an internal audit team. Guidance provided and we are in the final stages of appointment and preparation of training for teachers who will be involved in supporting internal audits. As a matter of principle, I believe that the issue of internal audit will be of great help in managing the teaching process in the classroom. (Teacher of school D)

In Morogoro municipality for all 4 visited primary schools, the issue of classroom inspection needs more improvement. Moreover, once this improvement of the teaching of reading of standard two pupils is achieved, things would be in such a way that all the targeted standards are met on time.

In assessment procedures, the purpose of researcher was to assess the ability of standard two teachers to measure the ability of pupils to read. The data were collected by using observation and semi-structured interview. The teachers were asked to explain how they assessed their students in reading. With help of observation the commonly practiced assessment in Primary schools in Morogoro municipality was observed to include normal exercises after teaching, reading passage on books and repeating words correctly as pronounced by the teacher. These kinds of assessment do not meet the standard assessment like EGRA. In EGRA, the ability of students in reading is usually measured by speed, accuracy, and comprehension. This situation made the researchers to find out the suggested means of assessment procedures from the curriculum.

Through observation and semi-structured interview, the researcher revealed that, this National standard two assessment was prepared and managed by NECTA. The study found that, currently there isn't any standard two national assessment conducted by NECTA in all 4 visited primary schools. This was due to the fact that, the national standard two assessment was not done to all primary schools and instead it is done by selecting only a sample form each district. Even if this assessment is not done but the purpose of establishing, it was to improve the ability of standard two pupils to read where by the school had to make sure that they get a copy form NECTA. Addition to that this national assessment aimed at supervising and making follow up of teaching reading country wise.

Reading of meaningful words is practiced but in a wrong way. As was suggested, a stopwatch used to

know how many words a student is able to read in a Minute. This is important as it encourages the pupils to increase their speed and accuracy in reading.

The study further revealed that, the area of reading vocabulary was ignored by teachers. This was observed when the pupils were given words to read during the test. Most pupils were stuck in reading some of vocabulary within their class levels hence it affects their speed in reading. In a summary, regarding assessment procedures the primary school teachers in Morogoro municipal had practices that did not meet the set standard. Few assessments are used and important assessment like Entry assessment ignored by standard two teachers. In addition to that, even the few assessments were not done as required by the standard set-in primary curriculum. In a nut shell, there is a need of improvement in area of assessment of reading.

The improvement of students' reading ability

The second objective of the study was to measure the ability of students to read. The measurement done in four subtasks: Identification and correct pronunciation of letters, reading of unfamiliar words, reading of familiar words, and reading for comprehension. The researcher used test and stopwatch to assess the ability of pupils in reading for each subtask. The results of reading tasks are presented in figures and followed with discussion.

3.2 Identification and Correct Pronunciation of Letters

The purpose of this subtask was to assess the ability of primary pupils to read different letters in upper and lower cases. 25 letters in upper and lower cases with repetition were provided to pupils so as they can read loudly and the results presented in table 4.

Table 1. Identification and Correct Pronunciation of Letters

Words	Performance	Number	Percentage
0 – 6	Poor	3	4%
7 – 13	Average	7	9%
14 – 19	Good	19	23%
20 – 25	Very Good	52	64%
Total		81	100%

Source: Researcher 2021.

The findings as summarized in Table 4.5 show that most pupils 52 (64%) were able to read 20 up to 25 words while 19 (23%) of pupils were able to read 14 – 19 letters correctly. The pupils who were able to read 7 – 13 letters correct were 7 (9%) and 3 (4%) of pupils were able to read 0 – 6 letters correctly. In all 4 visited primary schools there was no pupil who was not able to read any letter. Most of the pupils (more than 50%) were able to read up to all 25 words given to pupils and their performance was rated as exceptionally good.

3.3 Reading of Non-Word

In this subtask the purpose was to assess the ability of pupils to read the words which has no meaning. In this test pupils were supplied with 50 unfamiliar words and asked to read loudly, correct and with speed. The researcher used printed words on paper and stop watch to assess the speed of pupils per minute. The target of the study was to read 40 correct words per minute and the results revealed that, 38 (47%) of pupils read from 1 to 5 words correctly. In the category of 6 to 10 correct words there is only 18 (22%) pupils while from 11 to 19 correct words there is 25 (31%) pupils. There were no pupils who succeeded to read more than 19 words.

It is revealed that, in reading non words the reading ability of pupils was poor due to fact that most of them 47% were able to read correctly up to only 5 words. There was no any pupil out of 81 who succeeded to read correctly 20 non words half way to benchmark which is 40 correct words per minute. It can be established that the ability of pupils in reading non-words was poor and this was influenced by two major factors. One, the study found that the teachers who teach reading in standard two did not use this kind of assessment during their teaching process. And two, these words have no meaning then it is difficult for pupils to read the words which has no meaning.

3.4 Fluency Reading

This was another subtask assigned to standard two pupils in 4 visited primary schools in Morogoro municipality. The task aimed at finding out the speed and accuracy of pupils in reading familiar words. The pupils were provided with 54 words (See appendix I Part F) and were required to read as many words as they can, correct and with speed. The stop watch was used to determine the number of words read by pupils in 1 minute and the results revealed that, most of standard two pupils 69 (85%) were able to read 25 – 40 words per minute. Only 12 (15%) were able to read 11 – 24 words per minute. The pupils of standard two in Morogoro municipality reading ability seems to be improved as majority of them were able to read up to 40 words. Even if no pupils reach the targeted benchmark which is 50 words per minute but still, they show progress as they are still in standard two. In case of comparison with NECTA report of 2020 on reading ability of pupils as conducted in 2019 there are some improvements in reading ability of standard two pupils. The NECTA report as presented in chapter one indicated that, in average the ability of pupils in reading fluency was 26 correct words per minutes while this current study shown that the pupils reached up to 40 correct words per minute.

3.5 Reading for Comprehension

The last subtask was reading comprehension where by the pupils of standard two were given a short story to read. After reading the story they were required to answer the five questions, each carrying 20 marks. The purpose was to measure the ability of pupils to read and understand the contents in a story. For this subtask, the bench mark was attempting of 80% correct answers from the given five questions. The findings of the test in reading for comprehension indicates that, standard two pupils of Morogoro municipality could read a short story and attempt the given questions correctly. Most of the pupils were able to score 80 – 100 which makes a total of 43 (53%). The other group of 41 – 60 scored 9 (11%) of

pupils while 29 (36%) of pupils scored 61 – 80. This is greater improvement as some of the students performed above the benchmark which is 80% correctly of attempted questions.

It can be concluded that the reading ability of standard two pupils is improved towards established benchmark. In reading for comprehension for example the performance of standard two pupils were up to 100% correct answers after reading the story while in NECTA report of 2020 the average score was 39% national wise. If the teachers and head of schools put more effort this problem of difficulty in reading for primary pupils will be over very soon. It can be argued that the *Tusome Pamoja* program has fairly achieved the improvement of reading ability among pupils of standard two.

3.6 Challenges Facing Teachers Teaching Reading in Standard Two

This study has revealed that there were challenges faced by teachers when teaching and developing reading skills. The information was obtained through semi structured interviews and classroom observations. The observed challenges were summarized and listed here:

- i. Inadequate Teaching and Learning Resources in the schools;
- ii. Lack of feeding program, making the children hungry and lacking energy to learn and concentrate;
- iii. Large number of pupils in classroom, up to 90 in a classroom designed for 45;
- iv. Multitask among teachers, each teacher teaching all subjects and with extra responsibilities as well;
- v. Long Distance from Home to School, hence children arriving at school late and tired from long walk.

Acknowledgement

This study is a result of the support received from many individuals and institutions. It was submitted at St Augustine University, Tanzania as dissertation for the Master's Degree in Educational Management and Planning. We express our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all individuals and institutions for their cooperation, assistance, criticisms, and encouragement that contributed to the accomplishment of this report.

Prof. Kalafunja Osaki (co-author) devoted his time to read and comment on all drafts from the research proposal to the final report. Several colleagues read and gave advice as well. All are thanked.

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