

Effectiveness of Audio Instructional Materials in Enhancing Acquisition of Pre-Reading Skills Among Pre-School Learners in Narok County, Kenya

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to assess the effectiveness of audio instructional materials in enhancing the acquisition of pre-reading skills among preschool learners. The objectives of the study were to establish the: effectiveness of audio instructional materials in enhancing acquisition of pre-reading skills and effectiveness of teacher's pedagogical skills in enhancing acquisition of pre-reading skills among preschool learners. The study adopted a descriptive survey design to collect the required data. The target population was 294 Pre School teachers in Narok County. The sample size was 166 respondents selected using purposive and simple random sampling methods. Data was collected using questionnaires and observation schedules. Reliability and validity of the instruments was computed to ascertain the appropriateness of the instruments in collecting data and to ensure that the instruments provide consistent data. Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics while qualitative data was analysed and presented as per the emerging themes. The findings of the study revealed that the instructional materials were not effectively used in enhancing acquisition of pre reading skills among preschool learners. Audio instructional materials were least effectively used in most of the schools. Teachers indicated that they used their skills to develop their own instructional materials to assist in enhancing acquisition of pre-reading skills among the preschool learners. The results indicated that instructional materials facilitate acquisition of pre reading skills among the learners. The findings of the study shall be beneficial to the preschool teachers, instructional materials developers, policy makers in the education sector and other researchers.

Key Words: Audio Instructional Resources, Pre-Reading Skills, Preschool Learners, Teachers' Pedagogical Skills.

DOI: 10.7176/JEP/15-12-08

Publication date: December 30th 2024

1. Introduction

Pre-primary education refers to education provided to children usually aged 4-5 or 6 years in some countries, so as to prepare them for formal primary. A study carried out by UWEZO (2016) in Kenya reports that some standard seven pupils lacked reading skills to the extent that they could not read class two readers texts, due to a poor background at the preschool level. Natolia, 2011 reports that Educators have argued that using instructional materials by teachers is crucial to successful teaching and learning among pre-reading learners. *Instructional materials* are resources used by educators to facilitate teaching and learning processes such as: *textbooks, workbooks, handouts, worksheets, videos, audio recordings, multimedia presentations, simulations, models, games, and online resources* ((ASCD, 2007). The purpose of instructional materials is to support and enhance the delivery of educational content, making it more accessible, engaging, and effective for learners. These materials are designed to align with learning outcomes and should be tailored to different learning styles and preferences. Instructional materials play a vital role in supporting teaching and learning by enhancing comprehension, fostering active engagement, accommodating diverse needs, and facilitating the achievement of learning outcomes. They are essential for: *Enhanced Learning Experience*: Well-designed instructional materials can make learning more engaging, interactive, and enjoyable for students. Visual aids, multimedia presentations, hands-on activities, and other materials can help to reinforce concepts and make abstract ideas more concrete.

Differentiated Instruction: They can be tailored to meet the diverse learning needs of learners. They can accommodate different learning styles, abilities, and preferences, ensuring that all students have access to the content and can engage with it effectively.

Improved Comprehension: Visual aids, diagrams, charts, and other instructional materials help to clarify complex concepts and improve students' understanding. They can provide additional context, examples, and explanations that complement verbal instruction.

Advancement of Critical Thinking: instructional materials encourage students to think critically, analyze information, and solve problems. In addition, interactive materials, such as simulations and case studies, can prompt students to apply their knowledge in real-world contexts besides developing higher-order thinking skills.

Enabling of Active Learning: They support active learning by providing opportunities for students to actively

engage with the content. Hands-on activities, group discussions, role-playing exercises, and interactive simulations promote deeper learning and retention of information.

Accessibility and Inclusivity: They make educational content more accessible to students with diverse needs, including those with disabilities or language barriers. Materials can be adapted to accommodate different learning preferences and provide multiple means of representation.

Alignment with Curriculum Goals: They are aligned with curriculum goals, standards, and objectives. They help teachers effectively cover the required content and ensure that they achieve learning objectives.

Teacher Support: They support teachers in their instructional planning and delivery, providing ideas, and strategies that help them effectively communicate content, manage classroom activities, and assess student learning.

Enhanced Engagement and Motivation: Engaging instructional materials capture students' interest and motivation, making learning more enjoyable and meaningful. Multimedia presentations, interactive games, and other materials can stimulate curiosity and encourage active participation.

Continuous Improvement: They can be used to gather feedback from students and teachers, allowing for continuous improvement and refinement. By evaluating the effectiveness of materials through student performance and feedback, educators can make informed decisions about instructional practices (Tomlinson, C. A. 2017).

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to assess the effectiveness of instructional materials in teaching pre-reading skills among pre-school learners in Narok County, Kenya. The study sought to answer the following research questions:

- i. How effective were audio instructional materials in enhancing acquisition of pre-reading skills among preschool learners?
- ii. How effective were teachers' pedagogical skills in enhancing acquisition of pre-reading skills among preschool learners?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Audio Instructional Materials

These are instructional materials which provide children with the opportunity of seeing and hearing at the same time, such as radio, television and educational laptop. According to Zimmerman (2016), an audio device contributes a lot to the brain development of a child, helping children to remember and compare what they have seen and heard at the same time. When learners use audio instructional materials in class, their interest is stimulated and attention span increases. They can be used to give instructions to individuals and are very useful to slow learners. They can watch, listen and imitate the sounds made without fearing the teacher. A study by Oketunji (2015) stressed that audio materials when effectively used, lessen major problems of verbalism and enable the teacher to discuss the content with the learners clearly, providing interesting approach to new topics. Audio resources provide rich opportunities for children to develop communication skills and acquire enough vocabulary faster while actively involved in pre reading.

2.2. Benefits of Audio Instructional Materials

Audio instructional materials play a significant role in education, offering a versatile and effective medium for teaching and learning. Some of the benefits of audio instructional materials are:

Accessibility - they provide auditory content, educators can ensure that all students have equal access to the educational material, including those with visual impairments or learning disabilities.

Engagement - audio materials have the potential to engage learners in a unique way. The use of voice, sound effects, music, and storytelling to capture learners' attention and maintain their interest throughout the learning process. The engagement enhance motivation and promote active participation in learning activities (Mayer, 2009).

Multimodal Learning - audio recordings can be paired with visuals or hands-on activities to create a more immersive learning experience, hence, complementing other instructional modalities, such as text-based materials or visual aids. By presenting information through multiple channels, educators can accommodate different learning preferences and reinforce key concepts.

Flexibility - audio instructional materials offer flexibility in terms of when and where learning takes place. Learners can listen to audio content at their own pace, whether they're in the classroom, at home, or anywhere. The flexibility enables personalized learning experiences and allows students to review material as needed to reinforce their understanding.

Language Learning -they are particularly valuable for language learning. They provide opportunities for students

to listen to authentic pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm, hence developing listening comprehension skills. Furthermore, audio resources can expose learners to a variety of accents and dialects, supporting their language acquisition process.

Portability - audio materials are highly portable, making them convenient for learners who have limited access to traditional learning resources. With the proliferation of mobile devices and streaming platforms, students can easily access audio content anytime, anywhere, allowing for continuous learning outside the classroom.

Cost-Effectiveness - creating audio instructional materials can be relatively cost-effective compared to other multimedia formats. With basic recording equipment and editing software, educators can produce high-quality audio content without requiring extensive resources. This affordability makes audio materials a practical option for educational institutions with budget constraints.

Sensory Stimulation - audio materials stimulate auditory senses, which can enhance memory retention and cognitive processing. Research has shown that listening to information can activate different parts of the brain involved in language processing and memory formation, leading to more effective learning outcomes.

2.3 Audio Instructional Resources Used by Pre-school Learners

Pre-school learners benefit from a variety of audio instructional resources designed to engage their young minds and foster early development. Some of the types used in preschool education are summarized in Figure 1.

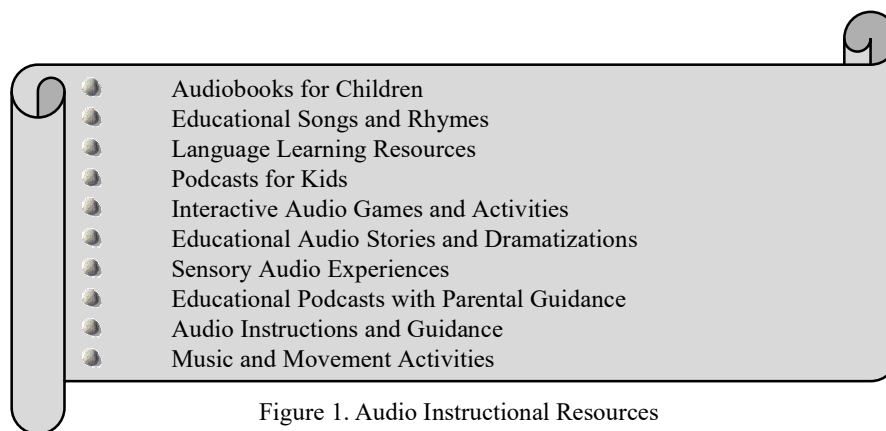


Figure 1. Audio Instructional Resources

Audiobooks for Children, narrated with expressive voices and sound effects, capture children's attention and imagination. They include classic children's stories, fairy tales, and educational content tailored to preschool learners.

Educational Songs and Rhymes, introduce young learners to letters, numbers, colours, shapes, and other foundational concepts. They feature repetition, rhythm, and memorable tunes that help reinforce learning in a fun and interactive way.

Language Learning Resources are critical to Preschool learners, they benefit from audio resources designed to introduce them to new languages or reinforce their native language skills. Language learning audio materials include vocabulary songs, simple phrases, and interactive activities.

Podcasts for Kids specifically created for preschool-aged children, offering a mix of storytelling, music, and educational content, cover diverse topics such as: science, nature, history, and social-emotional learning, presented in an engaging and age-appropriate format to facilitate language learning.

Interactive Audio Games and Activities, encourage active participation and stimulate children's cognitive skills. They comprise of interactive stories, listening comprehension games, and sound-based puzzles designed to develop early literacy and numeracy skills.

Educational Audio Stories and Dramatizations captivate Preschool learners' imaginations and enhance their listening comprehension. The resources feature engaging narratives, character voices, and sound effects that bring stories to life and promote vocabulary development and storytelling skills.

Sensory Audio Experiences enable Preschool learners to explore auditory sensory experiences through audio resources that incorporate nature sounds, musical instruments, animal noises, and environmental sounds. These resources support children to develop auditory discrimination skills and deepen their awareness of the world around them.

Educational Podcasts with Parental Guidance designed for older children or adults, can similarly be adapted for preschool learners with parental guidance. Parents or educators can select episodes that align with preschool learners' interests and developmental goals, providing opportunities for shared listening and discussion.

Audio Instructions and Guidance assist preschool learners in following directions, completing tasks, and engaging in activities independently. They provide clear and simple verbal cues, prompts, and encouragement to help children navigate learning experiences and build confidence.

Music and Movement Activities aligned Audio resources featuring lively music and movement prompts encourage preschool learners to dance, sing, and participate in physical activities (Mayer, 2009). The resources promote gross motor skills, coordination, and rhythmic awareness while fostering creativity and self-expression. The audio instructional resources avail a rich and engaging auditory learning experience that complements Preschool learner's early childhood education.

2.4. Pre-reading skills

Pre-reading skills are the fundamental abilities that individuals develop before they actually begin reading. They provide a strong foundation for later reading success, as they lay the groundwork for successful reading comprehension and fluency later on. Some of the key pre-reading skills are:

- *Print Awareness*: Understanding that print carries meaning and recognizing the basic features of print, such as *letters, words, and sentences*.
- *Phonological Awareness*: The ability to recognize and manipulate the sounds of spoken language. This includes skills like *rhyming, segmenting words into syllables, and identifying individual sounds (phonemes)* within words.
- *Vocabulary Development*: Building a strong foundation of words and their meanings is significant. This includes both *receptive vocabulary* (understanding words when heard or seen) and expressive vocabulary (using words when speaking or writing).
- *Listening Comprehension* is the ability to understand and interpret spoken language. It involves following directions, understanding stories, and making predictions based on verbal information.
- *Concepts About Print*, understanding how print works, including concepts such as directionality (left to right, top to bottom), spacing between words, and the difference between letters and words.
- *Book Handling Skills*, knowing how to hold a book, turn pages, and navigate through a book from front to back is a critical pre-reading skill.
- *Story Structure Awareness*, refers to understanding the basic elements of stories, such as characters, settings, and plot.
- *Letter Recognition*, being able to identify and name letters of the alphabet, both in and out of context, is also a fundamental pre-reading skill.
- *Sequencing Skills*, understanding the order of events, is essential for comprehending stories and following directions.
- Furthermore, *Visual Discrimination*, the ability to notice and recognize the differences and similarities between visual stimuli, such as letters and words, is a vital pre-reading skill.

The Pre-reading skills are developed through exposure to *language-rich environments, interactions with significant others, and structured activities* designed to promote literacy development (Brown, 2020). Language educators ought to cushion the crucial factors in learning institution besides parental engagement to facilitate acquisition of Pre-reading skills which provide the building blocks for literacy development and are essential for children to become proficient readers. By nurturing these skills from an early age, educators and parents can support children's language acquisition in addition to developing lifelong reading skills.

2.5. Audio Resources and Acquisition of Pre-Reading Skills among Preschool Learners

Preschool learners benefit significantly from audio resources as they facilitate the acquisition of pre-reading skills in numerous ways:

Phonological Awareness Development: Audio resources often include rhymes, songs, and spoken language, which help children develop phonological awareness—the ability to recognize and manipulate the sounds of spoken language. By listening to rhymes and songs, pre-school learners become familiar with the sounds of language, including rhythm, intonation, and phonemic patterns.

Vocabulary Building: Audio resources expose children to a wide range of vocabulary in context. Through listening to stories, songs, and conversations, preschoolers learn new words and their meanings, which is essential for vocabulary development—a critical aspect of pre-reading skills.

Listening Comprehension Skills: Listening to audio resources help preschoolers develop their listening comprehension skills. Stories, songs, and instructions enable children to learn how to understand and interpret spoken language, which is foundational for later reading comprehension.

Narrative Skills Development: Audio resources often feature storytelling, which help the learners to develop

narrative skills. Listening to stories with a flawless beginning, middle, and end, facilitate learning about the story structure, character development, and plot progression—all of which are important for comprehension and story retelling.

Print Awareness: Even though audio resources don't involve visual print, they can still promote print awareness. For example, many audio resources include accompanying text, such as lyrics to songs or captions for audio books. By listening to the audio while following along with the text, preschoolers learn about the relationship between spoken and written language.

Engagement and Motivation: Audio resources are often engaging and entertaining for pre-schoolers, which helps maintain their interest and motivation. When children are actively engaged in listening to stories, songs, or conversations, they are more likely to pay attention and absorb the language patterns and vocabulary presented. Audio resources support the development of pre-reading skills among preschool learners by providing exposure to: *spoken language, vocabulary, storytelling, and print concepts* in an engaging and accessible format.

2.6. Teacher Pedagogical Skills in Teaching Pre -Reading Skills Using Audio Resources

Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating the acquisition of pre-reading skills using audio resources. Some of the vital Teachers' pedagogical skills are:

Selection and Integration of Audio Resources: Effective teachers have the pedagogical skill to select and integrate appropriate audio resources into their curriculum. They choose resources that align with pre-reading skill development goals and cater to the diverse needs and interests of their students. For example, they may select audio books, songs, podcasts, or storytelling recordings that focus on phonological awareness, vocabulary building, or narrative skills.

Creating Engaging Learning Environments: Skilled teachers create engaging learning environments where audio resources are integrated seamlessly into daily activities. They set up listening centres or use technology to play audio resources in the classroom, making them readily accessible to students. By creating a stimulating atmosphere, teachers enhance student engagement and motivation to interact with audio materials.

Modeling and Scaffolding: Teachers model how to effectively engage with audio resources by demonstrating active listening strategies, such as making predictions, asking questions, and summarizing key points. They scaffold students' understanding by providing support and guidance as needed, gradually releasing responsibility for learning to the students themselves. Through modelling and scaffolding, teachers help students develop critical listening skills, which are essential for pre-reading skill acquisition. *Differentiation and Individualization:* Effective teachers differentiate instruction to meet the diverse needs of their students. They use audio resources in flexible ways, providing varied levels of challenge and support, based on students' abilities and interests. For example, they may offer different audio materials tailored to different skill levels or provide additional support for students who struggle with certain pre-reading skills.

Assessment and Progress Monitoring: Skilled teachers use ongoing assessment and progress monitoring to evaluate students' pre-reading skill development, using audio resources. They employ various formative assessment strategies, such as observation, questioning, and informal assessments, to gauge students' understanding and mastery of target skills. Similarly, teachers adjust their instructional strategies and select appropriate audio resources to address students' needs effectively.

2.7. Effectiveness of Teachers pedagogical skills on the use of instructional Materials in Enhancing Acquisition of Pre-Reading Skills

NACECE (2001) reported that preschool teachers HAVE an important role to play in the stimulation and learning process of children. The teacher should have a deeper understanding of children's characteristics, behavior, needs, abilities and interests so that he/she can support and provide proper care especially in number work. Waithaka (2015) observed that in Kenya, preschool children are subjected to academic work due to pressure from parents who would like to see their children read and write within weeks upon joining pre-school. Waithaka (2015) further emphasized the importance of training ECDE teachers since most ECDE centers in Kenya emphasize academic and give little or no time for learners to interact with instructional materials. The ECDE curriculum developed by KICD provides children with an opportunity to interact with instructional materials, but this is overlooked by parents and private school teachers. They insist that the pre-school children have to be taught numerical, literacy and have the ability to read to prepare them for oral and written interview for them to be admitted to standard one. This gives no room for learners to interact with instructional resources.

The incompetence of a teacher to improvise instructional materials has been said to be one of the factors responsible for the lack of instructional materials for the learners. Teacher's pedagogical skill is an underlying characteristic for an individual and it is usually related to effective or superior performance. These characteristics include enduring motives, traits, self-concepts, values, knowledge, and skills that can be assessed and differentiated. To be precise, teacher's pedagogical skills are appropriate prior skills in a given context that adjust

and develop with time, in order to effectively and efficiently accomplish a task and are measured against a minimum standard (Wittich & Schuller, 2003).

According to Brown & Garcia, (2019), to be competent means, the connection of knowledge and its application while teaching. In other word, a competent individual is the one who effectively and efficiently accomplish a task. A teacher with pedagogical skills selects, modifies and uses a wide range of instructional materials (printed, visual and audio-visual) appropriate to the content area and the reading needs and level of each learner. Effective teachers are equipped with skills of best teaching practices such as strategies, procedures, and approaches in presenting, implementing and assessing classroom instruction in accordance with the learning outcomes of the lesson. They are instilled with values, attitudes and dispositions that foster a classroom atmosphere of mutual trust for individual characteristics, especially student's needs, interests, and abilities.

Wittich and Schuller (2003) Noted that teachers should have knowledge of ensuring that the instructional materials to be used are easily available before the date of use. It means that the materials should be in the school learning resource Centre, the teacher should look at it and test it before the day of the lesson. If the teacher has to prepare it himself, he should do so at least a day before the lesson. It is the duty of the teacher to ensure that the instructional materials are not only available but also accessible.

Ikerionwu (2000) reports that instructional materials to be used should be simple to operate or manipulate.. There should not be any technical problem and where electricity is to be used, provision should be made for alternative power. No teacher should use electric failure as an excuse for non-performance. The instructional materials selected for teaching should be of good quality.

The Ministry of Education (2009) emphasized that, a preschool teacher should provide children with learning opportunities to enable them to perform advanced activities that will link them to class one. The Ministry of Education emphasized that children should perform addition and subtraction problems up to digit 10. The children need to be mentally and physically stimulated and helped to mix and live with others as well as learn how to control their emotions. Mugenda, & Mugenda (2012) the preschool teacher should have knowledge of planning, organization and management skills. The teacher should have the ability to mobilize children in carrying out numerical activities using various instructional materials.

Hewett (2001) stated that a preschool teacher should always be involved in the learning process. Hewett (2001) further stated that teachers play a major role in fostering children's learning abilities in various areas. The study provides an insight in understanding the effectiveness of instructional materials in learning.

National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (2012) noted that teachers should note interests, strengths and assess each child's prior experiences and informal knowledge. It is the role of the teacher to provide materials and books that promote learning. Ikerionwu (2020) noted that the teacher should have skills to collect small objects, number puzzles, counting books and games, egg cartons, used up kitchen utensils and others. The teacher allocates time for in-depth, planned, small group experiences that include interaction, problem solving and reflection during number and numerical operations. The focus of this study is on pre-reading skills.

3. Methodology

The study used Descriptive survey research design which describes the current state of a particular phenomenon without seeking to establish causality or relationships between variables (Kothari 2014, and (Smith, & Jones, 2023). It was appropriate for the study because it enabled the researcher to gather information about effectiveness of audio instructional materials and teacher's pedagogical skills in enhancing acquisition of pre-reading skills among preschool learners. The study was conducted in Narok North Sub County in Kenya. The researcher chose the location because it had a high number of pre-schools, both in urban and sub-urban locations. There were 294 ECDE teachers in Narok North Sub County in Kenya then, as reported by the sub county education officer. The target population of the study was 294. Mugenda (2012) suggested a sample size that can form a representative of the entire population to be between 10% to 30% of the target population. A comparable view was held by Orodho (2009) and Kothari (2014). The target population was 294 Preschool teachers and the sample size was 166, which was 56.40%, above the recommended representation. The study used stratified random sampling to sample every education zone in Narok county. Next, simple random sampling was used in each stratum to select the schools and teachers to be included in the study, ensuring that all the respondents in a population had equal chances of participating.

Questionnaires, and observation checklists were the instruments used to collect data. The researcher designed questionnaires for teachers., which had both open ended and closed ended questions. They covered a high number of respondents in a short period. The respondents had freedom in answering the questions at their own time. Data analysis was done both quantitatively and qualitatively. Once the data was collected and checked, coding was done *in line with the observations of* Kothari (2014) that categories of responses are identified, *organized* and copied on a prepared sheet as per research questions. Open ended questions were arranged as per

the responses in sub-headings, relating the sub-headings to the research questions. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages. Qualitative data collected from the observation schedule and questionnaires was analyzed thematically as per the emerging themes. The data was presented using tables and figures.

4. Findings and Discussion

The results answer the research questions: How effective were audio instructional materials in enhancing acquisition of pre-reading skills among preschool learners? and how effective were teachers' pedagogical skills in enhancing acquisition of pre-reading skills among preschool learners?

Table 1: Effectiveness of Instructional Materials in Schools

Response According to teachers	Frequency	Percentage
Effective	40	29.4%
Not Effective	96	70.6%
Not sure	0	0
Total	136	100.0%

The results revealed that most of the preschool teachers 70.6% indicated that the instructional materials used were not effective for enhancing acquisition of pre-reading skills among preschool learners. Effectiveness of instructional materials in preschools ensures that the teachers give their best and are motivated to assist the learners. Mweru's (2012) further noted that instructional materials promote teachers' efficiency and improve learners' performance, in addition, they make learning more interesting, practical, realistic and appealing. Instructional Materials enable teachers and learners to participate actively and effectively in the learning process. Afolabi and Adeleke (2010) indicated that non-effectiveness of materials could be as a result of teacher's poor knowledge and a factor responsible for the use of lecture method.

Oso (2011) noted that the best way for teachers to make use of their manipulative skills is to improvise so as to achieve their lesson objectives to a reasonable extent. In this case, teachers are trained and have the experience but might not be ready or willing to improvise learning materials. This is a disadvantage to the learners' acquisition of pre-reading skills as they require materials to manipulate and explore for them to understand and to enhance their creativity.

4.1 Effectiveness of Audio Instructional Materials in Enhancing Acquisition of Pre-Reading Skills

The first research question of the study was: How effective were audio instructional materials in enhancing acquisition of pre-reading skills among preschool learners? The respondents were asked to rate various audio materials by indicating their effectiveness on a 5 scale Likert. The results were as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Effectiveness of Audio Instructional Materials in Enhancing Acquisition of Pre reading Skills Among Preschool learners

Audio-instructional materials	Effective	Less effective	Not effective
	Teachers	Teachers	Teachers
Computer CDS/DVDS	0%	0%	100%
Radio	0%	8.2%	91.8%
Tapes/ Video	0%	5.1%	94.9%
TV	0%	11.6%	89.4%

The results of the study show that in all preschools (100%) of the teachers indicated that the CDS/DVDS were not effective in their respective schools. The results also show that majority of the teachers 91.8% indicated that the radio was not effectively used at the school as an instructional material. Only 8.2% of the respondents indicated that the school had the radio but it was less effective for use in enhancing acquisition of pre reading skills. This implies that majority of the schools have not embraced the use of CDS/DVDS and radio as instructional material in teaching preschool learners pre reading skills. The study also sought to establish whether the tapes and videos were effective in enhancing acquisition of pre reading skills among the learners. The results show that only 5.1% of the teachers indicated that the tapes and videos were less effective for use in enhancing acquisition of pre reading skills. Majority of the respondents 94.9% indicated that the materials were

not effective. The study also sought to find out whether the schools used TVs as an instructional material. The results showed that majority of the respondents 89.4% indicated that TVs were not effective in the schools. Only 11.6% of the respondents indicated that TVs were less effective for use in teaching pre reading skills. This implies that though audio instructional materials are effective in the teaching of pre reading skills to preschool learners, they were not effectively used in most of the schools.

The results presented implies that audio instructional materials are not commonly used in the preschools to teach pre reading skills among the learners. Esther (2009) and Nyokabi (2009) noted that audio instructional materials were very important in aiding teaching pre reading skills to the preschool learners. Audio instructional materials are very effective in aiding the learners master the correct sounds and pronunciation of different words. Audio devices assist the teachers to give the same pronunciation of words to the learners. They assist the teachers and the learners to be very precise in pronunciation of words by simply playing a recording of the sound. Most audio instructional materials are very expensive and most schools are not able to afford them. Despite audio being one of the most ineffective institutional material among the pre-learners especially in acquisition of their vocabulary and phonology skills, it was noted that teachers tried to improvise and effectively use their available audio resources such as the mobile phones which was one of the most commonly used audio devices in the schools.

The research went ahead to have sessions of observations on the use of audio devices in teaching in pre reading skills. Among the key issues of concern of the researcher was to observe the effectiveness of using the devices. The researcher established that radio and television were not used in teaching in preschools. The only devices that were seen in the classes were the mobile phones and in some schools the tablet. Most of the teachers were found to have limited knowledge and skills in the use of these electronic devices to effectively help the learners master some vocabulary and phonological skills effectively. Teachers used some form of recordings on the tablet and were also able to download some lessons on their phones for use. This was observed to be very limited in its content and context and hence was not considered an effective method used in acquisition of pre reading skills among the preschool learners. The observation clearly showed that there is need for schools task force to assist the teachers use audio facilities which are very effective in enhancing acquisition of pre reading skills among preschool learners.

4.2 Effectiveness of Teacher’s Pedagogical Skills in Enhancing Acquisition of Pre-Reading Skills

The second research question of the study was: How effective were teachers’ pedagogical skills in enhancing acquisition of pre-reading skills among preschool learners?

The respondents were required to rate various teachers’ skills on a 5 scale Likert to assess teachers in teaching pre reading skills. The findings were as presented in table 3.

Table 3: Effectiveness of teacher’s pedagogical skills in enhancing acquisition of pre-reading skills among preschool learners

Teacher skills in instructional materials	Agree	Not sure	Disagree
	Teachers	Teachers	Teachers
Induction skills			
Teachers had Experience in using instructional pre reading material in introducing the lessons.	81%	19%	0%
Lesson development			
Teachers were effectively using instructional materials in the class room	73%	8.2%	18.8%
Closure skills			
Teachers had the required Attitude to assist learners acquire pre reading skills	61%	11.6%	27.4%

The results revealed that 81% agreed that teachers had Experience in using instructional material, while 19% indicated that they were not sure about the experience in using instructional materials for teaching pre reading skills. It implied that in most schools, teachers had experience in using the instructional materials in enhancing acquisition of pre reading skills. The findings showed that 73% of the teachers had prior knowledge acquired during their training in using instructional materials. It was noted that 8.2% were not sure and the rest, 18.8% disagreed with the statement. It implied that most of the teachers had skills in using instructional materials for teaching prereading skills. Only 11.6% of the teachers were not sure and the rest 27.4% disagreed with the statement. Mwangi and Wanyama, (2012) stated that, when teachers have the skills and knowledge required to

perform their duties effectively, they are likely to have an impact on the teaching of pre reading skills among the learners in preschools..

Teacher’s pedagogical skills play a critical role in the teaching of pre reading skills among the preschool learners. Teachers felt that pedagogical skills among the preschool teacher was a key requirement for success in the teaching of pre reading skills. The results support the findings of Salandanan (2005) who noted that to be competent means the ability of a teacher to be able to connect knowledge and skills to use in teaching different aspect including pre-reading. It was also distinguished that competency includes a combination of pedagogical skills, values, attitudes and dispositions that foster a classroom atmosphere of mutual trust for individual characteristics, especially learner’s needs, interests, and abilities.

Teachers pedagogical skills on the use of instructional materials play a critical role in enabling them to understand the different instructional materials that are required to enhance the teaching skills desired. The results indicated that the pedagogical skills in instructional materials and experience were evident, however; from earlier assessments, such materials were less effective or not effectively used. Data from observation revealed that teachers with the right skills provided quality teaching, facilitating acquisitions of pre reading skills among the learners

The progress records were also closely examined to establish how children were performing in acquiring pre-reading skills. In addition, the researcher was able to observe teaching in the classroom and ascertain what was available, indicating whether the instructional materials were effective, less effective or not effective in enhancing acquisition of pre reading skills.

4.3 Effectiveness of Audio Instructional Materials in Enhancing Acquisition of Pre-Reading Skills.

Learning listening is one of the most important tools to enhance the phonological skills of the learners. The learners were able to pronounce different words as they hear them being articulated in an audio resources such as: radio, mobile phone and television. The results were as presented in table 4.

Table 4: Effectiveness of Audio Instructional Materials in Enhancing Pre-Reading Skills

No.	Audio-visual instructional materials	Indicate whether used or not	Pre-reading skills enhanced	Remarks Effective / not effective
A	Radio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of the lesson • Development of the lesson • Conclusion of the lesson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative skills • Vocabulary skills • Print awareness • Phonological skills • Motivational skills • Letter sound knowledge 	Not effective
B	Mobile phone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of the lesson • Development of the lesson • Conclusion of the lesson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative skills • Vocabulary skills • Print awareness • Phonological skills • Motivational skills • Letter sound knowledge 	Not effective
C	Television	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of the lesson • Development of the lesson • Conclusion of the lesson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrative skills • Vocabulary skills • Print awareness • Phonological skills • Motivational skills • Letter sound knowledge 	Not there

Radios were not available in most of the schools hence their effectiveness could not be established. The only available device was the teachers mobile phone which could not be relied on. As much as audio materials were very effective in teaching learners pre reading skills, the instructional devices needed were lacking in majority of the schools.

4.4 Effectiveness of teachers’ pedagogical skills in enhancing acquisition of pre reading skills

Teachers with the required knowledge and skills are therefore at the centre of success of the effectiveness of the

instructional materials in enhancing acquisition of pre reading skills among the preschool learners. The results were presented in table 5.

Table 5: Effectiveness of Teachers pedagogical skills in Enhancing Acquisition of Pre-Reading Skills

Teachers pedagogical skills	Learners activities	Remarks Effective / not effective
<p><u>Set induction skills</u> Introduce the lesson asking learners oral questions such as,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name the items found in the class <p>rooms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify pictures on the wall charts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mention items found in the classroom eg. Books and tins. Identifying the pictures. 	Effective
<p><u>Lesson development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show some visual instructional materials. Explain the use of audio instructional materials. Mention realia instructional materials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observing the visual instructional materials Listening to the audio instructional materials. Observing realia instructional materials. 	Effective
<p><u>Closure skills</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conclude the lessons by reviewing the effectiveness of instructional materials in enhancing acquisition of prereading skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asking and answering oral questions. 	Effective
<p><u>Learning styling</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visual learning Audio learning Realia learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening and observing 	Effective

All the teachers who agreed to have a guest in their classroom effectively used induction skills to introduce the learners to a new topic and developed their lessons very well to teach pre reading skills. It was also observed that they asked questions after the lesson and were able to check the learners work to ensure that the learning outcomes were achieved. The learners were asked questions about repeating a phrase, identifying a picture and sounding the correct word to the teacher. The researcher was able to assess the rationale of using instructional materials in teaching pre reading skills to pre-school learners.

It revealed that the learning process and materials were effective in enhancing acquisition of pre reading skills among preschool learners.

4.5 Pedagogical Approaches

As earlier discussed and supported by (Ornstein & Hunkins 2018), teaching pre-reading skills requires a range of pedagogical approaches and skills that cater for the developmental stages of learners as summarized in *Table 6*.

Table 6: Pedagogical Approaches and Skills

Pedagogical Approaches and Skills Required	<i>Application in Teaching Pre-Reading Skills</i>	
<i>Understanding Developmental Stages</i>	Tailor activities to the learner's age and developmental readiness. Younger children might start with simple picture books, while older preschoolers can begin recognizing letters.	
<i>Phonemic Awareness</i>	Develop learner's ability to hear, identify, and manipulate sounds in words. Use rhymes, songs, and games that focus on sounds and syllables. For example, clapping out the number of syllables in a word helps children understand that words are made up of sounds.	
<i>Interactive Read-Aloud</i>	Engage learners through expressive reading and questioning. Read books aloud with enthusiasm, asking predictive and open-ended questions. Encourage children to make predictions and connect the story to their own experiences.	
<i>Print Awareness</i>	Teach learners about the nature of print and its functions. Point to words as you read, explain that text runs from left to right, and discuss the function of spaces between words. Label objects in the classroom to show that print carries meaning.	
<i>Letter Recognition</i>	Guide learners recognize letters and their corresponding sounds. Incorporate activities like letter matching, alphabet puzzles, and tracing letters. Use multi-sensory approaches, such as sandpaper letters or writing in sand, to reinforce letter shapes and sounds.	
<i>Vocabulary Building</i>	Develop learner's vocabulary through numerous activities. Introduce new words during story time and in daily conversations. Use picture books with rich illustrations to discuss new words and concepts.	
<i>Storytelling and Narrative Skills</i>	Encourage learners to comprehend and create narratives. Use picture sequences to help learners tell stories. Ask them to retell stories in their own words or create their own stories based on pictures.	
<i>Encouraging Emergent Writing</i>	Fostering early writing skills as a precursor to reading. Provide opportunities for scribbling, drawing, and early attempts at writing. Offer materials like crayons, markers, and paper for free exploration.	
<i>Positive Reinforcement</i>	Using praise and encouragement to motivate learners. Praise efforts and progress, no matter how small. This builds confidence and a positive attitude toward reading.	
<i>Differentiated</i>	Adapting teaching methods to meet diverse needs.	
Pedagogical Approaches and Skills	<i>Application in Teaching Pre-Reading Skills</i>	
<i>Instruction</i>	Provide varying levels of support based on individual needs. For example, use more visual aids for learners who are visual learners or incorporate more hands-on activities for kinesthetic learners.	
<i>Parental Involvement</i>	Engaging parents in the learning process. Communicate regularly with parents about their child's progress and suggest activities they can do at home to reinforce pre-reading skills.	
<i>Assessment and Observation</i>	Continuously assessing learner's progress and adjusting instruction accordingly. Use informal assessments like observations and checklists to monitor progress and identify areas where additional support is needed.	
<i>Creating a Print-Rich Environment</i>	Surrounding children with text in various forms. Fill the classroom with books, labels, posters, and other printed materials. Encourage learners to explore these materials freely.	

Brown & Garcia (2019) asserts that collectively, the pedagogical strategies create a supportive and motivating environment that inspires young children to develop the foundational skills necessary for effective reading.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Effective audio instructional materials enhance acquisition of pre-reading skills among preschool learners. Likewise, to develop pre-reading skills among preschool learners, teacher pedagogical skills are critical in ensuring appropriate integration of audio instructional materials through exposure to language-rich environments, interactions, and activities designed to promote literacy development. Schools had qualified and skilled teachers but lacked resources such as audio instructional materials. Consequently, teaching pre reading skills was not effective, affecting acquisition of the pre-reading skills by preschool learners.

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that:

- i. Teachers should establish appropriate ways of enhancing the effectiveness of instructional material in acquisition of pre-reading skills for preschool learners.
- ii. Preschool teachers should frequently attend appropriate workshops, seminars and vocational courses to enable re-tooling in required skills to enhance development and use of learning and teaching materials for preschool learners.
- iii. Teachers should embrace use of ICT in language teaching and learning.
- iv. Teachers Professional Development should cultivate their skills and knowledge in the use of instructional materials in teaching besides being innovative and improvising materials from the local environment.

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7.0 Acknowledgement

We are grateful to all teachers who participated in the study, the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) for licensing and accrediting the research to be carried out and the Ministry of Education officials in Kenya, for facilitating access to schools.

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