

ASSESSMENT OF PREPARATION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TO TEACH WRITING SKILLS IN STANDARD ONE AND TWO IN TANZANIA

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The study aimed at investigating preparation of primary school teachers to teach writing skills in standard one and two in Tanzania where Kilimanjaro region was used as a case study. It was guided by two objectives: to determine the extent to which the curriculum used to prepare primary school teachers expose them to concepts related to writing components ; and to investigate how the curriculum used to prepare those teachers equips them with different strategies of teaching different concepts of writing components in Tanzania. Data were collected from teachers who teach Standard One and Two as well as those who do not teach such classes but who underwent the same kind of pre-service teacher training where tools used were questionnaire, interview, and observation. Reliability of instruments was tested by using Cronbach Alpha formula. Descriptive data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, and means where tables, narrations, and direct quotations were used to present findings. One-way ANOVA was used to test inferential data. Findings reveal that teachers were exposed to different concepts of writing skills as well skills of teaching those skills though the level of exposure differs considerably based on their years of graduation (the time at which they were enrolled into a programme). The study therefore concludes that the pre-service teacher education programme exposes teachers to some concepts of writing skills and strategies of teaching such concepts though not in a detailed way. Also, the programme offered in Tanzanian teachers' colleges is equipped with sufficient knowledge and skills for it to prepare Standard One and Two pupils. This study therefore recommends for the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, through Tanzania Institute of Education, to conduct regular in-service training and refresher courses to all language tutors as well as primary school teachers in order to help them improve on the way those teachers teach writing skills.

Key words: *pre-service primary teacher education programme, writing skills, Standard One and Two*

INTRODUCTION

Writing skills is a complex intellectual task, yet highly demanded in different aspects of life. It is the skills which is important during and after school life. Writing skills is critical for someone to become a good reader, communicator, and critical thinker. Before an individual be able to communicate ideas clearly and concisely in writing form; they need to possess the psychomotor ability to form and join letters, in order to produce symbols that represent the spoken language (Langan, 2013). The writing skill is measured by the competence in writing meaningful words or sentences as well as writing legibly and at a reasonable speed. While the importance of writing skills is well known, studies indicate that in Africa, some students cannot write confidently, fluently

and with comprehension (UNESCO, 2013, Metto & Makewa, 2014). Durance (2017) asserts that students who are not able to write precisely and concisely by the end of third grade are much more likely to face poor outcome in academic aspect. The reason is that writing skills helps students to express their ideas, arguments in different subjects across the curriculum easily in teaching and learning process (French, 2013, Daskalovska, 2014).

Teacher preparation has been attributed to pupil's inability in writing. For instance, studies indicate that there are serious problems of reading and writing in Tanzanian public primary schools where most of teachers do not have adequate skills of teaching reading and writing skills (c.f. Mmasa & Anney, 2016). These findings indicate that in Tanzania teacher trainees are not equipped with the knowledge and skills for teaching writing skills hence affect the quality of teaching writing skills in primary schools during their course of teaching. While studies report inadequacy in pre-service primary teacher education programme particularly on preparing teachers to teach writing skills in Tanzania; such studies do not indicate specifically, what is missing in the preparation. In light of that, it is therefore difficult to determine the extent to which these teachers were inadequately prepared in their pre-service primary teacher education programme in respect to the teaching of writing skills. Based on the aforesaid limitations, the present study therefore, investigated the extent to which the curriculum used to prepare primary school teachers equips teacher-trainees with knowledge of teaching writing skills in Tanzania.

General Objective

The general objective was to assess the effectiveness of the pre-service primary teacher education programme in preparing teachers to teach writing skills in Tanzania.

Specific Objectives

1. To determine the extent to which the curriculum used to prepare primary school teachers exposed teacher-trainees to concepts of writing skills components in Tanzania.
2. To investigate how the curriculum used to prepare primary school teachers equipped teacher trainees with strategies of teaching concepts of writing skills components in Tanzania.

Null Hypothesis

Hi: There is no significant difference between agreements mean scores of primary school teachers in Kilimanjaro region on the extent they were exposed to writing skills concepts based on their year of graduation

Methodology

The study employed convergent parallel design under mixed methods. This design helped the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently (Creswell, 2012). The study sampled 57 teachers of Standard One and Two and 201 primary school teachers who are not teaching Standard One and Two pupils but underwent through pre-service teacher primary education programme by using purposive sampling technique. Questionnaires for teachers of Standard One and Two and primary school teachers who are not teaching Standard One and Two pupils were used to collect quantitative data. Interview and observation guides were used to collect qualitative data from teachers of Standard One and Two.

Findings

Concepts of writing skills components which teacher trainees were exposed to in pre-service primary teacher education programme in Tanzania

The first objective aimed to find out the concepts of writing skills components which teacher trainees were exposed to in pre – service primary teacher education in Tanzania. Primary school teachers' response are summarized in table 1

Table1

Primary School Teachers' Responses on the Extent to which they were Equipped with the Strategies of Teaching Concepts of Writing Skills Components in Pre-Service Teachers' Training Programme (N=201)

| Statements | SA % | A% | U % | D% | SD% | Mean |
|---|------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Pencil grasp in printing practice | 4.00 | 19.40 | 32.80 | 40.30 | 3.50 | 2.80 |
| Tracing in printing practice | 3.00 | 17.40 | 35.80 | 39.80 | 4.00 | 2.76 |
| Handwriting movement in printing practice component in writing skill | 3.00 | 16.90 | 36.80 | 39.30 | 4.00 | 2.76 |
| Pattern drawing | 2.50 | 16.90 | 35.30 | 41.30 | 4.00 | 2.73 |
| Forming capital letters in letter formation and construction component | 3.00 | 17.90 | 34.30 | 40.80 | 4.00 | 2.75 |
| Forming small letters in letter formation and construction component | 1.00 | 20.40 | 33.30 | 41.30 | 4.00 | 2.73 |
| Forming letters shape in letter formation and construction component | 1.50 | 17.40 | 36.80 | 40.30 | 4.00 | 2.72 |
| Width of the letters in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.00 | 17.90 | 35.30 | 41.80 | 4.00 | 2.70 |
| Height of the letters in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.00 | 20.40 | 34.30 | 40.30 | 4.00 | 2.74 |
| Copying in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 0.50 | 20.90 | 33.30 | 41.30 | 4.00 | 2.73 |
| Letter joining in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 2.50 | 16.40 | 34.30 | 42.30 | 4.50 | 2.7 |
| Spacing between the letters in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.50 | 18.40 | 32.30 | 43.80 | 4.00 | 2.7 |
| Spacing between words in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 2.00 | 16.90 | 33.80 | 42.80 | 4.50 | 2.69 |
| Spacing between the lines of writing in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.00 | 17.90 | 34.80 | 42.30 | 4.00 | 2.70 |
| Positioning of letter in relation to each other in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.00 | 18.90 | 33.80 | 42.30 | 4.00 | 2.71 |
| Word pattern in spelling component | 1.00 | 19.40 | 34.30 | 41.30 | 4.00 | 2.72 |
| Capitalization in punctuation component | 1.00 | 20.40 | 32.80 | 41.80 | 4.00 | 2.73 |
| Punctuation marks in punctuation component | 2.00 | 20.40 | 32.80 | 40.80 | 4.00 | 2.76 |
| Use of punctuation marks in punctuation component | 1.00 | 21.90 | 31.80 | 41.30 | 4.00 | 2.75 |

Source: Field data, (2019)

Key: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, U=Undecided, D=Disagree and SD=Strongly Disagree

Table 1, contains responses of primary school teachers on concepts in writing components which were exposed to them in pre-service primary teacher education programme and the grand mean

score for the level of agreement on concepts rating was 2.79. These findings indicate that the majority of teachers were not exposed fully to the writing concepts under the writing skills components. This suggests that pre-service training provided to primary school teachers was not adequate for teachers to teach writing skills to Standard One and Two pupils effectively. This may imply that teachers may fail to teach the same concepts to standard one and two pupils when required to do so to those classes. These findings are similar to those of Dlamini (2019), which showed that the pre-service institution in Swaziland did not lay a good foundation to teachers with regard to teaching writing skills, which in turn make teachers confused and frustrated when teaching writing skills or when required to do so.

The similarities indicate that still Tanzania and Swaziland put little emphasis in teacher preparation in regard to teaching of writing skills despite the fact that it is well known that the skills is very important in learning other subjects across the curriculum.. This is an indication that the subject matter component in teacher preparation does not include some important concepts, that of writing in particular, which in turn affect the competence of teachers in teaching writing skills.

The researcher asked the same question to teachers of Standard One and Two to find out differences and/or similarities on the responses. Responses from teachers of Standard One and Two are summarized in table 2

Table 2

Standard One and Two Teachers' Responses on Extent to which they were Exposed to Concepts in Writing Skills Components in Pre-Service Teachers' Training Programme (N=57)

| Statements | SA % | A% | U % | D% | SD% | Mean |
|--|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|
| Pencil grasp in printing practice | 3.50 | 26.30 | 33.3 | 31.60 | 5.30 | 2.91 |
| Tracing in printing practice | 1.80 | 26.30 | 31.6 | 35.10 | 5.30 | 2.84 |
| Handwriting movement in printing practice component in writing skill | 1.80 | 28.10 | 33.3 | 33.30 | 3.50 | 2.91 |
| Pattern drawing | 3.50 | 22.80 | 33.3 | 36.80 | 3.50 | 2.86 |
| Forming capital letters in letter formation and construction component | 1.80 | 26.30 | 35.1 | 33.30 | 3.50 | 2.89 |
| Forming small letters in letter formation and construction component | 1.80 | 26.30 | 35.1 | 33.30 | 3.50 | 2.89 |
| Forming letters shape in letter formation and construction component | 3.50 | 28.10 | 31.6 | 33.30 | 3.50 | 2.95 |
| Width of the letters in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.80 | 22.80 | 35.1 | 36.80 | 3.50 | 2.82 |
| Height of the letters in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.80 | 28.10 | 33.3 | 33.30 | 3.50 | 2.91 |
| Copying in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.80 | 28.10 | 35.1 | 31.60 | 3.50 | 2.93 |
| Letter joining in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.80 | 22.80 | 36.8 | 35.10 | 3.50 | 2.84 |
| Spacing between the in letters sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.80 | 26.30 | 33.3 | 33.30 | 5.30 | 2.86 |
| Spacing between words in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 3.50 | 24.60 | 35.1 | 33.30 | 3.50 | 2.91 |
| Spacing between the lines of writing in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 3.50 | 22.80 | 35.1 | 35.10 | 3.50 | 2.88 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|
| Positioning of letter in relation to each other in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 3.50 | 24.60 | 35.1 | 31.60 | 5.30 | 2.89 |
| Word pattern in spelling component | 3.50 | 24.60 | 35.1 | 33.30 | 3.50 | 2.91 |
| Capitalization in punctuation component | 1.80 | 24.60 | 35.1 | 35.10 | 3.50 | 2.86 |
| Punctuation marks in punctuation component | 3.50 | 26.30 | 33.3 | 33.30 | 3.50 | 2.93 |
| Use of punctuation marks in punctuation component | 3.50 | 22.80 | 35.1 | 35.10 | 3.50 | 2.88 |

Source: Field data 20190

Key: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, U=Undecided, D=Disagree and SD=Strongly Disagree

Table 2 shows concepts in writing components which teachers of Standard One and Two were exposed to during their pre-service primary teacher education programme. Findings indicate that the majority of those teachers were either undecided or disagreed that they were exposed to different concepts of writing skills. The extent to which teachers were exposed to different concepts of writing skills differ as follows: forming letters in formation and construction component with the mean score of 2.95. Copying in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component and punctuation marks in punctuation component had mean score of 2.93 each. Furthermore, the general mean score for those components is 2.89. The findings suggest that not all concepts were exposed to teachers of Standard One and Two.

This might affect on how some of these teachers of Standard One and Two teach different concepts in writing skills since teachers can teach only what they know. These findings are in agreement with the findings obtained during the interviews. For example, one teacher who teaches Standard One from school “K” said; “No, we were not taught those writing concepts, we were only told that teachers should have good handwriting but were not taught about the different handwriting” (25/09/2019).

Another Standard Two teacher from school “I” reported;

“During my time we did not learn much about teaching reading and writing. Mainly we were taught the methodologies of teaching in general. We were taught how to use the chalkboard” (22/08/2019).

These findings indicate that these teachers were prepared but not intensively on the writing skills concepts. Also, the findings indicate that teachers were prepared mainly to teach in higher grades. Additionally, these findings suggest that the curricula used to prepare these teachers were not insisting on all concepts of writing skills; rather teaching methodology. This is contrary to what was suggested by Pedagogical Reasoning and Action Model of Shulman (1987). The findings differ with what was reported by Stewart, Emery, TeRiele & Stratford (2018), that in Australia, all pre – service teachers are supposed to be prepared to teach literacy in English as specific learning area and in general capability across the curriculum, regardless of subject specialization.

According to them, pre–service teachers are prepared to teach listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating oral, print, visual and digital texts and using and modifying language for different purposes in a range of contexts as literacy skills. This difference suggests that countries which their students perform highly in writing skills, prepare their pre-service teachers intensively in writing skills as well as in other components of literacy.

To check whether there is significant difference between agreements mean scores of primary school teachers on the extent to which they were exposed to components of writing skills based on their year of graduation; one way ANOVA was used and the findings are summarized in Table 3.

Ho 1: There is no significant difference between agreements mean scores of primary school teachers in Kilimanjaro region on the extent to which they were exposed to components of writing skills based on their year of graduation.

Table 3

One way ANOVA Output of the Agreement Mean Scores of Writing Components for Primary School Teachers Based on their Years of Graduation

| | Sum of Squares | Degrees of freedom | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|--------------------|-------------|---|-------|
| Between Groups | 13.377 | 5 | 2.675 | | 0.004 |
| Within Groups | 147.813 | 195 | 0.758 | | |
| Total | 161.189 | 200 | | | |

Source: Field data, (2019)

The independent groups were categorized in years of graduation as: 1971-1980, 1981-1990, 1991-2000, 2001-2009, 2010-2018 and not underwent certificate of education. The findings determined by one way ANOVA were summarized as ($F = 3.529$, $P\text{-value} = 0.004$). The findings indicated that $P\text{-value}$ was less than the level of significance (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and concludes that there was statistically significant differences between agreements mean scores of primary school teachers on the extent to which they were exposed to components of writing skills based on their year of graduation.

Strategies of teaching concepts of writing skills components which teachers were exposed to in pre-service primary teacher education programme in Tanzania

The second objective intended to find out the degree to which primary school teachers were equipped with the strategies of teaching concepts of writing skills components in pre – service primary teacher education in Tanzania. Primary school teachers’ responses are summarized in Table 4

Table 4

Primary School Teachers’ Responses on Extent to which they were Equipped with the Strategies of Teaching Concepts of Writing Skills Components in Pre-Service Teachers’ Training Programme (N=201)

| Statements | SA % | A% | U % | D% | SD% | Mean |
|---|------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Pencil grasp in printing practice | 4.00 | 19.40 | 32.80 | 40.30 | 3.50 | 2.80 |
| Tracing in printing practice | 3.00 | 17.40 | 35.80 | 39.80 | 4.00 | 2.76 |
| Handwriting movement in printing practice component in writing skill | 3.00 | 16.90 | 36.80 | 39.30 | 4.00 | 2.76 |
| Pattern drawing | 2.50 | 16.90 | 35.30 | 41.30 | 4.00 | 2.73 |
| Forming capital letters in letter formation and construction component | 3.00 | 17.90 | 34.30 | 40.80 | 4.00 | 2.75 |
| Forming small letters in letter formation and construction component | 1.00 | 20.40 | 33.30 | 41.30 | 4.00 | 2.73 |
| Forming letters shape in letter formation and construction component | 1.50 | 17.40 | 36.80 | 40.30 | 4.00 | 2.72 |
| Width of the letters in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.00 | 17.90 | 35.30 | 41.80 | 4.00 | 2.70 |
| Height of the letters in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.00 | 20.40 | 34.30 | 40.30 | 4.00 | 2.74 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|
| Copying in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 0.50 | 20.90 | 33.30 | 41.30 | 4.00 | 2.73 |
| Letter joining in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 2.50 | 16.40 | 34.30 | 42.30 | 4.50 | 2.70 |
| Spacing between the letters in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.50 | 18.40 | 32.30 | 43.80 | 4.00 | 2.70 |
| Spacing between words in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 2.00 | 16.90 | 33.80 | 42.80 | 4.50 | 2.69 |
| Spacing between the lines of writing in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.00 | 17.90 | 34.80 | 42.30 | 4.00 | 2.70 |
| Positioning of letter in relation to each other in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.00 | 18.90 | 33.80 | 42.30 | 4.00 | 2.71 |
| Word pattern in spelling component | 1.00 | 19.40 | 34.30 | 41.30 | 4.00 | 2.72 |
| Capitalization in punctuation component | 1.00 | 20.40 | 32.80 | 41.80 | 4.00 | 2.73 |
| Punctuation marks in punctuation component | 2.00 | 20.40 | 32.80 | 40.80 | 4.00 | 2.76 |
| Use of punctuation marks in punctuation component | 1.00 | 21.90 | 31.80 | 41.30 | 4.00 | 2.75 |

Source: Field data, (2019)

Key: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, U=Undecided, D=Disagree and SD=Strongly Disagree

Table 4, indicates that the majority of teachers were not exposed to strategies of teaching writing skills concepts. From table 4, the general (grand) mean score was 2.73, representing that primary school teachers were provided with limited strategies for teaching writing concepts during their course of training. This implies that curriculums used to prepare these teachers did not equip them with enough skills of teaching different concepts of writing skills and this may affect how they teach different concepts to different pupils of standard one and two when needs arise.

These findings differ from those of Dockrell, Marshall, & Wyse (2016) who reported that in England teachers reported being well trained to teach writing skills since they covered all important concepts of writing skills including word-level work, spelling and sentence punctuation. This indicate that teachers were exposed to all important concepts of writing skills as well as the skills of teaching those concepts. This difference indicates that in Britain, the curriculum which is used to prepare teachers puts much emphasis on both the concepts of writing skills and the strategies of teaching the skills as compared to that of Tanzania. This then suggests that teachers who teach writing skills in Britain are sufficiently prepared since their preparation considered all important components of teacher training as proposed by Pedagogical Reasoning and Action Model of Shulman (1987) which are content knowledge component and pedagogical knowledge component.

The researcher asked the same question to teachers of Standard One and Two to find out differences and/or similarities on the responses. Responses from teachers of Standard One and Two are summarized in table 5.

Table 5
Teachers of Standard One and Two Responses on Extent to which they were Equipped with Strategies of Teaching Concepts of Writing Skills Components in Pre-Service Teachers' Training Programme (n=57)

| Statements | SA % | A % | U % | D % | Mean |
|---|------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| Pencil grasp in printing practice | 1.80 | 19.30 | 42.10 | 31.60 | 2.81 |
| Tracing in printing practice | 1.80 | 21.10 | 36.80 | 35.10 | 2.79 |
| Handwriting movement in printing practice component in writing skill | 1.80 | 19.30 | 38.60 | 33.30 | 2.75 |
| Pattern drawing | 1.80 | 17.50 | 40.40 | 35.10 | 2.75 |
| Forming capital letters in letter formation and construction component | 1.80 | 17.50 | 40.40 | 33.30 | 2.74 |
| Forming small letters in letter formation and construction component | 1.80 | 19.30 | 38.60 | 33.30 | 2.75 |
| Forming letters shape in letter formation and construction component | 1.80 | 21.10 | 36.80 | 35.10 | 2.79 |
| Width of the letters in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.80 | 17.50 | 38.60 | 36.80 | 2.74 |
| Height of the letters in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 3.50 | 17.50 | 36.80 | 35.10 | 2.75 |
| Copying in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.80 | 19.30 | 36.80 | 35.10 | 2.74 |
| Letter joining in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 3.50 | 14.00 | 40.40 | 36.80 | 2.74 |
| Spacing between the letters in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 3.50 | 17.50 | 38.60 | 35.10 | 2.79 |
| Spacing between words in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 3.50 | 19.30 | 38.60 | 33.30 | 2.82 |
| Spacing between the lines of writing in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 3.50 | 17.50 | 38.60 | 35.10 | 2.79 |
| Positioning of letter in relation to each other in letter sizing, spacing and alignment component | 1.80 | 19.30 | 40.40 | 33.30 | 2.79 |
| Word pattern in spelling component | 1.80 | 17.50 | 40.40 | 35.10 | 2.75 |
| Capitalization in punctuation component | 3.50 | 21.10 | 38.60 | 31.60 | 2.86 |
| Punctuation marks in punctuation component | 3.50 | 21.10 | 38.60 | 31.60 | 2.86 |
| Use of punctuation marks in punctuation component | 1.80 | 22.80 | 38.60 | 31.60 | 2.84 |

Source: Field data, (2019)

Key: SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, U=Undecided, D=Disagree and SD=Strongly Disagree

As the training is believed to prepare teachers in various strategies in teaching writing concepts; this study determined the extent to which teachers of Primary One and Two were equipped with strategies seen in Table 5. Findings indicate that most of teachers of Standard One and Two were equipped with strategies of teaching capitalization and punctuation marks concepts as compared to other concepts. The capitalization had a mean score of 2.86 while use of punctuation marks in punctuation component had a mean score of 2.84. The general (grand) mean score for all strategies is 2.78 indicating that these teachers were not adequately exposed to most of the strategies needed for effective teaching of writing skills.

These findings relate with what Baggot (2012) reported that, teachers teaching in schools located in small suburbs in Western New York lack the formal preparation to teach writing skills and modeling. This is an indication that teacher training programme in these two countries put less

emphasis in strategies of teaching writing skills as compared to strategies of teaching other aspects. It seems like teaching of strategies on how to teach writing skills was handled as general teaching course or was given fewer sessions if at all it is handled as a specific course. These findings relate to what the researcher obtained from the interview. One teacher teaching in Standard One from school “A” said: “What I saw in college is that they did not focus on strategies of teaching writing to young children, everything we were taught was in general form” (09/07/2019).

Similarly, another teacher teaching Standard One pupils from School “D” claimed; “No, we were not taught the content and the teaching strategies for lower primary. In our time we were choosing subjects and I chose maths, science and English, so I was not taught those things at all” (13/08/2019)

Likewise, another teacher teaching standard one pupils from school “B” reported; “Currently am using the strategies I learnt during the seminar in Dodoma mostly, for example songs as a way of keeping the class awake since during my time when I was in college KKK (3’Rs) had not been introduced” (10/07/2019).

These findings suggest that the curriculum used to prepare these teachers during their time did not expose them to all strategies of teaching all concepts of writing skills. Also, the findings suggest that teachers were prepared mainly to teach in higher grades, hence even the teaching techniques used were mainly for higher grades as well. Furthermore, the findings indicate that most of teachers of Standard One and Two use the teaching techniques they acquired during seminars and from their own experience. This implies that some teachers of Standard One and Two who had not attended any seminar might fail to teach pupils different concepts of writing skills, since they lack some means of communicating the skills to their pupils.

However, these findings raises number of questions regarding the curriculum used to prepare these teachers. One, while one teacher claimed that during their time, they were required to select subjects of specialisation, among the subject mentioned was English; yet reported that strategies for teaching writing skills were not taught to them. On the other hand, while another teacher claimed that during their time they were not taught the strategies of teaching different concepts of writing skills since 3’R’s were not yet introduced, yet the teaching of reading and writing skills were taught to Standard One and Two before 1970’s. This is because the effort to improve the teaching of reading and writing skills to pupils in the early grades in Tanzania started since 1970, according to Ngorosho, (2017). These findings suggest that teaching of strategies of teaching writing skills were under emphasised for some years in Tanzania, which might have affected on how pupils were taught the skills.

According to the Pedagogical reasoning and Action Model of Shulman (1987), preparation of teachers on teaching strategies is very important since it helps them to provide brief but clear explanations of different concepts of writing skills; handing out and assessing pupil’s activities; and interacting effectively with learners during teaching and learning process. During the class observation; the researcher discovered that most of teachers observed used techniques which could stimulate these young learners when learning different concepts under writing skills. Games and songs were not used effectively during teaching and learning process. While in all the 20 schools where the researcher made observation, no any teacher used games in teaching and learning process. The songs which were used were not related with what learners were learning that day in writing skills. For example, in school “J”, while the focus of the lesson was writing capital and small letter (Ww); the teacher started the lesson with the following song:

Nilipoanza shule sikujua kusoma – kusoma, sasa najua kusoma – namsifu mwalimu X
2 (07/09/2019)

Translation

I did not know how to read when I started attending to school, but now I can read, I appreciate my teacher X 2 (07/09/2019)

Looking at the song, it was observed that while the lesson was on writing skills; the introductory song was about reading skills. However, in the song, letter ‘w’ were featured in one word nonetheless the teacher did not refer to it in the teaching.

Similarly, in school ‘E’ while the focus of the lesson was writing three letter words, the teacher started the lesson with the following song:

Song - Stand up sit down, jump, jump, jump, stand up sit down x3 for warm up while the focus of the lesson was on forming three letter words (15/08/2019)

From the observation, there was no association between the introductory song and the focus of the lesson since the teacher did not refer that song to any three letter words found in the song despite the fact that there was one word featured in the song. The three letter word found in the song was sit.

Likewise, in school ‘R’, while the focus of the lesson was pupils copying the sentences on their notebook after reading them; the teacher started the lesson with the following songs:

Afya ni kitu kizuri sana eee, afya ni kitu bora – kwa kwanza ni mayai, cha pili mchicha na maharage X 2 (26/09/2019)

Translation

Good health is something good eee, Good health is important – First it is eggs, secondly lettuce and beans X2

Twende tukawinde leo ndege tukawinde vipepeo haiehaie vipepeo vipepeo X 2 (26/09/2019)

Translation

Let’s go hunt birds today, let’s catch butterflies haie haie butterflies butterflies X 2

From the song, it was observed that the song did not relate with the focus of the lesson due to two main reasons. Firstly, there were no connection between what pupils were copying from the chalkboard and what they sung at the beginning of the lesson. Secondly, the teacher did not refer to the song at any point during the lesson.

The findings suggest that these teachers used the song to draw pupils’ attention rather than stimulate pupils and get them ready for the lessons, since the song they used did not relate with what such teachers were about to teach. This is an indication that teachers lack skills of composing and selecting songs which are in line with what they were teaching in a particular lesson. This could have been attributed by the way they were prepared during their training in pre-service primary teacher education programme, hence affecting how Standard One and Two pupils learn different concepts in writing skills. Using songs which relate with what a teacher intends to teach during the lesson helps pupils to have the focus from the beginning of the lesson and concentrate throughout the lesson. Also singing develops young pupil’s imagination, hence become creative during the lesson. Also, pupils will continue singing the songs after the lessons and by doing so they will be reviewing what they learnt on that day.

Generally, findings indicate that teachers were inadequately prepared to teach every concepts of writing skills. Teacher-trainees were not taught some concepts of writing skills and the strategies of teaching those concepts to Standard One and Two pupils. These findings suggest that teachers were not prepared effectively to become teachers of writing skills, specifically for Standard One and Two. These findings are in agreement with what Shulman (1987) explained in his model of

Pedagogical Reasoning and Action, that for the teacher to become effective teacher; the teacher education programme should prepare the teacher-trainees in both subject matter and strategies of teaching the subject matter.

Conclusion

The pre – service primary teacher education programme exposed teachers to some concepts of writing skills as well as the strategies of teaching those concepts, though not that much detailed. Nevertheless, teachers possess knowledge and skills sufficient for them to teach the basic knowledge and skills of writing skills to Standard One and Two pupils. Also the study conclude that preparation of teachers on teaching writing skills was underscored differently in different years. Thus even the teaching of writing skills to standard one and two pupils differs depending on teachers' years of graduation.

Recommendation

The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology through Tanzania Institute of Education should conduct regular in-service trainings to all language tutors as well as primary school teachers in order to improve their teaching, specifically, in writing skills. This will equip language tutors and primary school teachers with new understanding and instructional skills in respect to the teaching of writing skills. Moreover, in-service trainings will help primary school teachers and language tutors acquire knowledge and skills necessary for addressing challenges they face in their course day to day teaching of writing skills.

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