

# The Impact of Talking Classroom in Teaching and Learning 3Rs in Public Pre-Primary Schools in Ilemela Municipality, Mwanza-Tanzania

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## Abstract

The study confined to public pre-primary schools based on assumption that early age is the best opportunity to teach children the skills of reading, writing and arithmetic (3Rs). The study aim is to assess the impact of talking classroom in teaching and learning basic 3Rs skills in public pre-primary schools in Ilemela Municipality, Mwanza, Tanzania. The study conducted in ten public primary schools which involved twenty participants whereby ten was pre-primary teachers and ten was public primary school head teachers. The study employed qualitative approach method with a case study design. In sampling technique, the study adopted convenience and purposeful sampling technique, which included critical case to obtain participants. Data collected through structured interviews, observation checklist and documentary review guideline. The study revealed that pre-primary teachers in public primary schools had positive perceptions on the use of talking classroom in teaching and learning 3Rs in pre-primary children. Also, the study revealed that for effective use of 3Rs in public pre-primary classroom, there must be enough teaching and learning materials. The study recommends that the government should ensure the increase of school capitation funds especially in primary schools.

**Keywords— 3Rs skills, Talking classroom, Teaching and learning:**

## I. INTRODUCTION

Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3Rs) are fundamental skills needed to be attained by every child in primary education. It is important that children learn to read, write and arithmetic in pre-primary level. However, many children fail to achieve the same in public primary schools in developing countries (Graham & Kelly, 2018). Many pupils complete primary education without acquiring the basic 3Rs skills (Word Bank, 2018). This suggests that entire education systems give limited attention to Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3Rs) activities (Gove & Cvelich, 2011). This raises questions about how pupils are prepared prior to actual primary schooling. Therefore, understanding methods used by teachers to teach 3Rs skills, and how they guide pre-school children toward achieving proficiency in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3Rs) is warranted.

Developed countries such as China, Canada and UK reported that most of the primary pupils face Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3Rs) difficulties. Example in China, primary school pupils especially in grade 4 and grade 5 faces reading and writing difficult in Chinese language and English language, in Canada, from grade 3 to grade 5 pupils had difficulties in reading and writing (Nasir & Rohiman, 2018). About 57 percent pupils in Mozambique in the test administered in Portuguese at the Mid-year grade three could not read and write one word (Gove & Cvelich, 2011). In Kenya, and Uganda, in the test administered in English, three-quarters of grade three pupils failed to comprehend the sentence such as, the name of the dog is 'Puppy' (Uwezo, 2014). This achievement trend provides a holistic view that Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3Rs) among pupils is still challenging.

The Tanzanian formal education system is based on one year for public pre-primary education, seven years for primary education, four years for ordinary secondary

education, two years for advanced level of secondary education and at least three years of higher education. The Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 2014 stipulates that public pre-primary education should be compulsory to children aged between three and five (URT, 2018). Therefore, it is in public pre-primary education that children are prepared for Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3Rs) competences and other competences for long life learning as well as for sustainable development of the future. Innovative and sustainable teaching and learning environment equipped with competent and motivated teachers become imperative for development of Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3Rs) skills among children. However, poor pupil Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3Rs) achievement imply that teachers and pupils might be inadequately prepared to influence meaningful teaching and learning.

The early grade syllabus emphasizes on effective teaching of Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3Rs). In this regard, the public pre-primary education syllabus for teaching Kiswahili and Mathematics pays great attention to the Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3Rs) skills for public pre-primary children. Moreover, Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3Rs) subjects are allocated more time than other subjects on the class timetable. The expectation is that by the end of grade two, children would have acquired basic competence skills in Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3Rs). It is important to understand how learners are made ready to read, write and counting contextual characteristics of learning Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (3Rs) and the capacity of teachers to create a more innovative, interactive, collaborative and conducive learning environment. In that regard, this study assess the impact of talking classroom on teaching and learning 3Rs in public pre-primary classes in government primary schools in Ilemela, Tanzania.

In Tanzania where Kiswahili is a language of instruction from public pre-primary education to standard seven in public schools, pupils lag behind in 3Rs skills. Statistics show that since 2010 many Tanzanian children were not gaining basic 3Rs skills in their early primary years (Uwezo, 2014). Most pupils are still not able to read grade one and two level stories by the end of the primary cycle (i.e., grade 7) (Uwezo, 2014). In 2014, according to Uwezo (2014), 16 percent in grade seven, pupils could not read grade one and two level stories. Uwezo (2014) concludes that only three in 10 grade three pupils could read a grade two story in Kiswahili. Even other grade 7 pupils still could not read Kiswahili; some could not even pronounce words and recognize syllables. Therefore, the question is why pupils are not able to manage 3Rs?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Mwananchi Newspaper dated Tuesday, 12 December, 2017 talking classroom is the one that has the ability to make pupils learn according to their needs even in the absence of a teacher. It is a class that adds value, a positive attitude, happiness and peace of mind to the pupils. The various teaching and learning materials or aids placed in the corners of the classroom and posted, make the pupils want to learn more and attend school without fail. Trainer and facilitator from the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE), Aisha Gguhiya explained that talking classroom is a classroom loaded with learning and teaching materials or aids. The class can vary depending on the class structure and the creativity of the teachers involved. Teaching and learning material or aids included in the class can be in the form of paintings, pictures of grain seeds, fabrics, leaves of various plants or sand etc. When prepared they are posted on the walls of the classroom for students to see. They are sometimes posted even on the ceiling depending on the creativity of the teachers. The talking classroom has a variety of learning angles for example, learning corners, mathematical corner (counting), painting corner, writing corner, reading corner and corner of some real objects that also cause attraction for children or students.

Also, there may be a corner of the toys used according to the student's own choice. In this the teacher does not choose pupils for the learning corner, but he or she will be in control of how each pupil decides which corner he or she likes. Talking classroom provides an opportunity for the teacher to identify the different talents of his pupils and their interests. This class is attractive and is often used by teachers who teach, especially in the pre-class, first, second and third grades. Many teachers have acknowledged that the talking classroom has helped them to a great extent in enabling their pupils to manage 3Rs basic skills.

According to trainer and facilitator from the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE), Aisha Gguhiya (Mwananchi Newspaper dated Tuesday, 12 December, 2017), talking classroom have a contribution to the pupils, teachers and schools. Some of these contributions are reducing the high number of truancy. The influence of schools and classrooms contributes significantly to making students want to go to school without coercion. The attractive classroom environment also adds value to schools and pupils in the community. It promotes inclusive education because children with different needs can use the talking classroom without discrimination. For example, pupils with special needs who are blind and deaf can all use it and

interact with other pupils. It makes the pupil creative. Pupils are built on creative skills and confidence because they are given the opportunity to go on their own to play or learn in the learning corner. It brings motivation to the pupils' learning. Pupil motivation to learn is influenced by how teachers can make their classrooms more attractive. The talking classroom enables the pupil to relate what he is learning in school or in the classroom to his real life. Talking classroom simplifies the teacher's work of teaching and learning because it significantly reduces violence and noise in the classroom. A class with calm and attentive students makes the topic well understood. Also, this class, which is designed with the best teaching and learning facilities or aids for teaching and learning, has the potential to inspire a child to want to learn more.

Talking classroom has many contributions for the pupil, teacher, parents, school and the nation as a whole. It is the responsibility of teachers, especially those who lay the foundation for education for children and young people, to commit themselves to fulfilling their responsibilities professionally in order to provide pupils with their due. Teachers are urged to guide learning and teaching activities using a variety of teaching and learning materials or aids, in order to achieve educational goals. Teachers, who feel incapable of doing so, should take the initiative to visit various schools nearby to learn and share experiences. Therefore, this study assess the impact of talking classroom on teaching and learning basic 3Rs skills in public pre-primary schools in Ilemela Municipality, Tanzania.

### III. III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Qualitative approach used when the intention is to explore, clarify the situations, perception, feelings, attitude, believes and values of a group of people (Stake, 2010). This study, however, employed a qualitative approach. Typically, a qualitative study collects data in participants' natural contexts by using multiple ways (Creswell, 2009; Stake, 2010). The study was guided by the case study design. The reason behind of using case study design is that, it helps the researcher to get in depth investigation of the problem at hand in order to get detailed information about a certain issues.

#### Sample Procedure

The study employed purposeful non-probability sampling procedure. The reason of using purposive sampling in this study was that samples be selected basing on the purpose and the objective of the study in order to gather all relevant information. Convenience probability sampling technique

used to get ten public pre-primary school teachers who could provide specific information on what impact does talking classroom bring to public pre-primary schools in teaching and learning 3Rs at Ilemela Municipality.

#### Instruments of Data Collection

The study employed multiple data collection tools in order to enhance the quality of data and study findings. More specifically, the study used three data collection instruments, which were structured interviews, observation checklist and document review guideline.

#### Data Analysis Procedure

The researcher collect data through the use of interview, observation and documentary review the information obtained were categorized according to their themes whereby the information with similar theme are grouped together in order to create themes.

#### Findings of the study

The findings organized according to the objective of this study

#### Increase performance and understanding on 3Rs skills

The majority of the respondents agreed that talking classroom contributes much in teaching and learning 3Rs in pre-primary children. This implies that the use of talking classroom in school enable pre-primary teacher to teach effectively the 3Rs to the primary students through this the learner perform well and understand reading skills, writing skills and arithmetic skills. The findings corresponding with the information provided by Mwananchi Newspaper dated Tuesday, 12 December, 2017 that the talking classroom enable the learner to attend the school without failing and increase the performance of the students and understanding the readings, writings and arithmetic skills.

Also the findings supported with the information provided with the respondents during the interview with the primary head teachers at school J remarked that;

Among the method used in teaching 3Rs in school is the use of talking classroom. Teachers frequently use talking classroom as a method of teaching 3Rs skills among the pre-primary children. Talking classroom is more important in teaching 3Rs skills because they made the children recognize sounds, letters, vowels, consonants and numbers which resulted in improving performance and understanding of 3Rs among the learner (Interviewee, 2021).

This implies that pre-primary teachers use the talking classroom as a method of teaching and learning 3Rs in

school. Teachers use this methods to ensure effective achievement of reading, writing and arithmetic skills to the learner. Similarly, the findings corresponding with the information provided with the pre-primary teacher in school H who remarked that;

“Talking classroom helps me to teach 3Rs skills as well as helps pre-children in sounds, numbers and letters recognition. Pre-children who develop 3Rs fluency quickest in school are those who know the sounds, number and letter names first. Pointing out sounds, numbers or letters to child builds critical skills that pre-children can use to develop early reading, writing and counting later on” (Interviewee, 2020).

This implies that, the use of talking classroom in school enable the learner to perform well the reading, writing skill and counting skills which ensure effective performance of the 3Rs to the students. In the similar vein the findings supported with the information from the interview with a pre-primary teacher in school G who explained that

“The performance of students depends on the teaching and learning method employed by teachers. The use of talking classroom as a teaching technique will ensure effective understanding and achievement of the 3Rs which complies reading, writing and counting’ (Interviewee, 2021).

Likewise the findings supported with the information generated from the documentary review which is lesson plan of teachers and identified most of the teachers use the talking classroom as a teaching method to reinforce the teaching and learning 3Rs. Thus led to the raise in understanding to the students on the 3Rs though there, some challenges encountered which led to the ineffective use of talking classroom as a method of teaching and learning 3Rs.

### **Child motivation, interactivity, collaborative and creativity**

This means that talking classroom contribute to the learner motivation through inspiration of learner to learner; contribute to the learner interactive, collaborative and creativity. Furthermore, the findings show that majority of the pre-primary teachers perceive talking classroom as the means of motivating pre-children to manage 3Rs to learn-by-doing which allows children to engage in various reading, writing and counting activities under the guidance of the teacher.

These findings relate with the study by Maneno (2018) in Kenya which argues that pre-primary teachers must find the activities that motivate children to read, write and count. The study suggested that game, tree of numbers and alphabets, play, text and group work influence pre-children to engage in reading, writing and counting during teaching and learning 3Rs process (Maneno, 2018).

Also the findings also corresponding with the information provided during the interview with the pre-primary teacher in school C who quoted that;

“Talking classroom contribute a lot in teaching 3Rs, because it helps pre-primary children to be active when they are reading vowels, syllables, words and counting numbers written on the cards. Although I have had no seminars and short training on how to use talking classroom in teaching and learning 3Rs in pre-primary children. I think it would be much better if the government gave us training we could be able to use talking classroom in teaching 3Rs” (Interviewee, 2021).

This implies that in school the use of talking classroom in teaching led to the active class. Though teachers are aware on the use of talking classroom still there is a challenge in the effective implementation of the methods thus, led to the poor teaching and learning. Hence the government should give seminar and workshop on the effective use of the talking classroom as a method of teaching and learning 3Rs in schools.

In addition to that, the findings consistent with the findings from the interview with the head teacher in school E quoted that;

“The use of talking classroom ensures collaboration among the learner regarding that the learner they share knowledge on what is displayed in the class thus led to the collaboration and interaction among the learner. Teacher may use the talking class as a means of interacting students in their learning process since learner can be guided to discuss the observable teachings aid in the class with thus led to the interaction” (Interviewee, 2021).

This means that talking classroom is the method which led to the effective learning and teaching of 3Rs in school. Through bringing learner together exchanging idea and sharing their experience which finally led to the increase in

performance and understanding of reading, writing and arithmetic's in school.

Furthermore, the pre-primary teacher in school B declared that talking classroom help children to engage actively in the lesson and learning became meaningful. The interviewee quoted stating that;

The presence of different teaching and learning material within the class design a talking class. The use of talking class in the process of teaching and learning will enlighten the pupil's brain to be active. For the brain to be active engaged in study pre-primary teacher use talking classroom thus led to effective acquisition of the teaching and learning of 3Rs (Interviewee, 2021).

This implies that in school to ensure actively learning of the pupils in class the pre-primary teachers should adopt the use of talking classroom. Where the pupils will be active in recognizing the available teaching and learning aid which facilitates teaching and learning of 3Rs. Moreover, the findings supported with the information extracted from the observation on the pupil's behavior, performance on mastering basic 3Rs skills. The observation revealed that through the use talking classroom pupils interact and collaborate themselves through sharing knowledge and skills concern reading, writings and arithmetic's. Further the findings reinforced by social cultural theory, by Vygotsky who emphasizes on the active learning and collaboration among learners in order to acquire knowledge intended. This consistence with the findings which shows the use of talking classroom enable the pupil's to collaborate together in the achievement of knowledge and skills of writing, reading, and arithmetic's. Also the active of learner reinforced with the use of talking classroom. Therefore talking classroom contributes to the active learning and collaboration among the learner.

### **Reducing the higher number of truancy**

The findings show that, the majority of the respondents realize that the decrease of truancy among the pupils contributed with the use of talking classroom as a method of teaching and learning. This means that talking classroom is important aspect in motivating learner to attend school since they are inspired hence reduce the number of truancy in schools. The findings consistence with the information provided with Gguhiya in Mwananchi Newspaper (Tuesday, 12 December, 2017). The information explain that the use of talking classroom in teaching and learning attract learner to attend school several times without delaying. This means that talking

classroom motivate and inspire the learner to acquire the skills of reading, writing and counting numerical.

Likewise, the findings corresponding with the information provided during the interview with the pre-primary teacher in school A who quoted that;

Trend of pupils attending to the school regulated with the way teacher teach, teaching method employed and teaching material used. The use of talking classroom as a teaching method in school, motivate and inspire the learner to enjoy learning. This makes the learner to attend the school always since they are enjoying learning process (Interviewee, 2021).

This implies that in teaching and learning process in order to ensure learner acquire intended knowledge effectively and attending the schools effectively teacher should play a great role through the adoption of a good approach of teaching like the use of talking classroom which ensure the decrease of the pupils truancy. The information is similar with the information provided during the interview with the head teacher in school F who quoted saying that;

“Now-days the trend of truancy among the pupils in school is low. This is due to the fact that most of the pre-primary teachers adopt the use of talking classroom as a means to enable the learner to attend the lesson and enjoy it. This this situation the tendency of truancy in schools reduced due to the fact that teachers inspire the pupils to attend the school due to their means of teaching” (Interviewee, 2021).

This means that, approach of teaching and learning used by pre-primary teachers led to the reduction of student truancy. Hence, students are able to attend the school and learn effectively which impact positively the process of teaching and learning of 3Rs. Moreover, the findings corresponding with the information obtained during the documentary review. The observation on the attendance book of the pupils revealed that the trend of pupil's truancy reduced day by day. This is corresponding with the review made on the lesson plan document, the document shows that most of the pre-primary teachers employ talking classroom as a method of teaching and learning 3Rs. The findings consistence with the information provided with the theory of Social-cultural theory which emphasis on the creation of conducive teaching and learning environment. This related to the findings which

involve the creation of the talking classroom for the aim of reinforcing teaching and learning process in school.

#### **Reduce violence and noise in the classroom**

In the process of teaching and learning the use of talking classroom keep the pupils busy and engage in the learning in the class through reading, writing and counting. The findings supported with the information provided by Gguhiya in Mwananchi Newspaper, (Tuesday 12, December, 2017). The author insisting that the use of talking classroom will enable the learner to interact with one another to ensure effective teaching and learning of 3Rs. The talking classroom will enable the pupil who are disable to use effectively the available teaching and learning material to learn effectively the 3Rs, also to interact with the pupils who are not disadvantaged to ensure effective acquisition of knowledge and skills to the pupils.

In addition to that, the findings consistent with the information provided during the interview with a pre-primary teacher from School K who said that;

“Talking classroom simplify the teaching and learning 3Rs for pre-primary children. Also, facilitate interaction between pre-primary teacher and pre-children during the teaching and learning of 3Rs. It also make children with low ability be able to read, write and counting hence enjoy the lesson. It also helps children to get friends therefore helping each other in mastering 3Rs” (Interviewee, 2021).

This means that, the use of talking classroom in the process of teaching and learning of 3Rs enable the teacher to eliminate violence since teachers use the available teaching and learning material to ensure interaction of both disable and non-disable students. Likewise the findings relay on the findings obtained during the observation where is observed that the talking classroom comprise both the disable and non-disable pupils. Also, observed that the disable students use to touch the available and see the available teaching and learning material which facilitate effective acquisition of knowledge and skills on the 3Rs and reduce violence among the pupils. The theory of social cultural related with the findings in a sense that the theory emphasis on the creation of good teaching and learning environment which facilitate effective teaching and learning. The use of talking classroom will facilitate effective teaching and learning in the classroom through ensuring cooperative and eradication of the violence.

#### **IV. IV. CONCLUSIONS**

Pre-primary teachers in public primary schools had positive perceptions on the use of talking classroom in teaching and learning 3Rs in pre-primary children. However, the process faced by different challenges that hinder teaching and learning 3Rs in the actual pre-primary classroom context. The effective use of talking classroom in teaching and learning 3Rs in public pre-primary classroom must have enough teaching and learning materials/aids such as books, cards, flipcharts, models and textbooks for pre-primary children.

#### **V. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study recommend that government is advised to ensure the increase of school capitation funds especially in primary schools to buy enough teaching and learning materials/aids for teaching and learning 3Rs, building of classrooms corresponding to the number of children enrolled. School leaders and government should cooperate to ensure that teachers' needs are met including teaching allowance, good facilities of teaching and learning, motivation, availability of teachers' houses and provision of breakfast and lunch for teachers.

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