



## INFLUENCE OF ASSESSMENT METHODS ON STUDENTS' ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH READING SKILLS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KENYA

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### **Abstract:**

This article examines assessment methods used when teaching English reading. The study sought to ascertain the most frequently used assessment methods in the teaching of English reading and the influence of assessment methods used on the acquisition of English reading skills in Kenya. This study employed a descriptive survey research design and involved form three students and 40 teachers of English language from 20 public secondary schools drawn from Teso North Sub-county. The sample size was obtained using stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Data was generated using questionnaires, interview schedules, and classroom observation schedules. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics involves the computation of frequencies, means, standard deviations, and percentages. Inferential statistics included pairwise correlation and logistic regression analysis. The results show that teachers frequently used comprehension tests, diagnostic reading, and Cloze test to assess learners' acquisition of English reading skills. While oral presentation, timed reading, and book reports were the least used assessment methods. The study findings confirmed that there was a significant relationship between assessment methods used and the acquisition of English reading skills. The study concludes that teachers of English language should use effective assessment methods as provided in the syllabus. There is a need for teachers' professional development in pedagogy as they require knowledge of effective assessment methods for English reading skills.

**Keywords:** reading skills, assessment, instruction, acquisition, pedagogy, professional

### **1. Introduction**

Assessment is an important component of the instructional process for it helps the teacher to establish whether the set objectives have been achieved and relevant concepts have been mastered (Maphalala, 2016). Secondly, assessment helps the teacher to determine

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learners' entry behavior so that appropriate action for instruction can be taken (Bukonya et al., 2004; KIE, 2006). Furthermore, assessment helps the teacher to determine whether the methods, resources, and teaching activities used in the instructional process have been effective (Maphalala, 2016). In view of the foregoing, teachers should ensure that appropriate assessment procedures are carried out at every level of the instructional process.

In this paper, the assessment was taken to mean ways in which teachers of English Language obtain information related to their student's learning and actions to be undertaken to remedy problems identified. All that the instructors need most is the use of appropriate and effective assessment methods when teaching English reading skills. Among them is the use of timed reading, diagnostic reading, oral presentation, comprehension tests, summary tests, book reports, interpretive reading, and essay writing (KIE, 2006). It is highly expected that the results of the assessment will help the teachers to identify learners' problems in English reading skills and consequently adjust their mode of instruction accordingly (Black & William, 2003). Generally, reading not only assists learners in the mastery of English language but also enhances their performance in other subjects in the school curriculum. Hence, proper assessment ought to be put in place to aid the laying of a solid reading foundation. Research in the field of education has clearly demonstrated that effective feedback obtained through assessment impacts positively on students' academic achievement (Black & William, 1998; Boumediene & Hamzaoui-Elachachi, 2017; Miller, 2019).

Tyler (2003) postulates that integrating assessment into the instructional process will improve learners' academic achievement. Umar (2018) posits that assessment effectively helps teachers to pinpoint their learners' academic problems. On that account, learners get motivated to learn; hence, improving their academic performance. On that account, Stiggins (2008) pointed out that students' achievement can be maximized by paying greater attention to the improvement of assessment practices. Hoover and Abram (2013) contend that there was a statistically significant relationship between assessment and students' academic achievement. Given this, teachers of English language should use effective assessment methods in the teaching and learning of English reading skills if the intended learning outcomes are to be realized.

In spite of the importance of assessment in the instructional process, studies indicate that many teachers still do not carry out effective assessments in the classroom. For instance, Khatab (2012) observed that classroom assessment tasks were rather low for secondary school teachers of English in Malaysia and proposed the need for a comprehensive development of classroom assessment. While commenting on this issue, Stiggins (2008) reckons that there was a worryingly low level of assessment by teachers of English in the United States. This implies that failure to conduct appropriate assessments in the teaching of reading skills may greatly hamper the mastery of English language and academic achievement in general.

Being a vital component of the teaching and learning process, appropriate assessment methods can improve students' achievement in English reading and

consequently, their academic performance. Therefore, measures ought to be put in place to ensure that assessment is part and parcel of every lesson. It was in this context that the study sought to investigate the assessment methods used when teaching and learning English reading skills and how they influence the acquisition of English reading skills in Kenya.

### 1.2 Study Objectives

The objectives of this paper were to:

- 1) Examine the assessment methods frequently used when teaching English reading.
- 2) Determine the influence of assessment methods used on the acquisition of English reading skills.

### 1.3 Hypothesis of the Study

The hypothesis was tested at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no statistically significant relationship between assessment methods used and the acquisition of English reading skills.

### 1.4 Theoretical Framework

This study employed the input hypothesis advanced by Krashen (1985) which states that we acquire language by receiving “comprehensible input.” According to Krashen, a learner moves from ‘*i*’ (learner's current level of competence) to ‘*i*+1,’ (learner’s next level of competence) along a natural order by understanding input containing *i*+1. Assessment methods are input used to develop English reading skills. Krashen (1998) observes that exposing learners to an appropriate environment where they can increase their reading input can enhance their performance. Hence, teachers of the English language should use appropriate assessment methods to know the ability and needs of their learners in reading (Brown, 2003).

## 2. Literature Review

Literature was reviewed under the following subheadings: what is assessment, types of assessment, purpose of assessment, assessment of reading, and influence of assessment on students’ reading skills.

### 2.1 What is Assessment?

Assessment is a systematic collection and analysis of information on what learners know with a view to improving the teaching and learning process (Stassen et al., 2001; Nitko & Brookhart, 2007). From this perspective, the assessment provides teachers with information on the quality of their teaching hence planning for an appropriate remedial action (Clarke, 2012). Jimaa (2011) sums up assessment as the means of helping students to learn, a way of reporting on student progress, and a way of making decisions about the instructional process. In the same vein, Palomba and Banta (1999) contend that

assessment is the systematic collection, review, and use of information about educational programs undertaken for the purpose of improving learning.

According to KICD (2019), assessment is a means by which teachers establish how far learners have mastered specified knowledge, skills, values, attitudes, abilities, and competencies. The feedback obtained from the assessment helps the teacher to plan for appropriate remedial teaching.

## **2.2 Types of Assessment**

Educationists categorize assessment either as formative or summative depending on the purpose and the time it is carried out. Formative assessment also known as assessment for learning involves collecting data before an instructional process is completed. The purpose of formative assessment is to establish learners' mastery of specified learning outcomes throughout the learning process (KICD, 2019). Formative assessment provides teachers with data that enables them to understand the learners' nature of ZPD hence enabling them to design the right amount of scaffolding needed to improve learning (Vygotsky, 1978). Hence, teachers of the English language must devise appropriate assessment procedures at every level to determine the overall picture of each learner's acquisition of English reading skills.

On the other hand, summative assessment also known as assessment of learning is an assessment that is implemented at the end of a defined learning process such as at the end of a unit, term, or year (Irons, 2008). Summative assessment is used to evaluate a learner's current capability, skill acquisition, and academic achievement (KICD, 2019). A major drawback of summative assessment is that it is isolated from the teaching and learning process. It was on this basis that this study sought to establish the frequency of assessments administered during the teaching and learning of English skills.

## **2.3 Purpose of Assessment**

Assessment serves numerous purposes. Lynch (2018) posits that assessment is used to gather relevant information about learner's progress and make judgments about their learning process. The information obtained helps the teacher to reflect on each learner's level of achievement and adjust their mode of instruction accordingly. KICD (2019) contends that assessment aims at establishing the extent to which learners have acquired the specified learning outcomes to conduct remedial teaching for further mastery of the expected learning outcomes. Related to this, Bukenya, Kioko, Njegere, and Njue (2003) highlight the purpose of assessment as follows: to determine whether the set objectives have been achieved, find out whether the relevant principles and concepts have been mastered, determine the level of mastery of each topic, thereby determining the appropriate remedial teaching, ensure that learners revise the covered content and facilitate selection into the next stage of learning (p. x).

In this regard, assessment of English reading skills is necessary since it enables the teachers to know where their students are and how well they have acquired competence in reading. The importance of assessment leads this study to explore teachers'

understanding and experiences in implementing the assessment policy in English language teaching (ELT).

#### **2.4 Assessment of Reading**

Andima (2013) claims that teachers must learn to develop reading assessment tools as they plan to teach and as they teach. Assessment guides both ongoing and long-term decision-making. Tools and strategies for assessment must be provided as part of any lesson and should be aligned with instructional goals.

There are different methods of assessing English reading skills in ELT. For instance, KIE (2006) identifies diagnostic reading, timed reading, comprehension tests, summary tests, oral presentations, book reports, interpretive reading, and essay writing as some of the methods of assessing English reading.

Diagnostic assessment aims at finding out how well children are reading to help them improve (Herbert, 2003). Diagnostic assessment is about giving feedback and assistance to learners. The information obtained helps the teacher to detect learner difficulties early enough and hence put appropriate measures in place to correct the problem. Diagnostic assessment is important because it helps the teacher locate the source of the reading problem. Teachers can also use diagnostic assessment to evaluate the appropriateness of the reading materials. This is because text reading performance is related to text difficulty (Morris et al., 2018)

Timed reading assessment aims at timing the learner's reading speed. The teacher selects reading material that is appropriate to the learner's level and sets the target time for the learner to read the text. At the end of the reading task, learners are given exercises to assess how much information they can retain.

Herbert (2003) suggests that reading assessment can be done as a form of text comprehension. Comprehension test entails written or oral questions of varying levels of difficulty to test comprehension. Comprehension questions should focus on recall, application, analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and comprehension. Summary tests entail asking the learner to summarize specific aspects of a particular reading material. This form of assessment aims at pinpointing the key points of the text and summarizing them. Once the learners accomplish the task, they need not go back to the longer text for future reference.

In book reports assessment, learners are asked to prepare a report based on the key points of the text such as the introduction, setting, characters, themes, styles, and conclusion of the text. On the other hand, interpretive reading assessment requires the learners to read aloud in a manner that brings out the intonation, rhythm, and meaning intended by the writer. Simply put, interpretive reading determines the writer's intention in using language in a particular way.

Reading miscue analysis is a procedure for assessing student's reading comprehension based on samples of oral reading. It is predicated on the belief that students' mistakes when reading are not random errors but, actually their attempt to make sense of the text with their experiences and language skills (Mercer & Mercer, 2001).

Therefore, close attention to what students is saying can become a rich source of information on what students are capable of, where they may need to go next, and what might be taught. When students substitute one word for another or even pause in their reading, teachers decide how to intervene. Interventions are based on whether they think the student's miscue is significant to the whole meaning of the reading at hand.

The Cloze test is an assessment consisting of a portion of text with certain words removed, where the learner is asked to replace the missing words (RTI International, 2011). Cloze tests require the ability to understand context and vocabulary in order to identify the correct words that belong in the text. Cloze test can also be used to measure reading level and comprehension informally (Tompkins, 2004). It allows the teacher to estimate the difficulty the learner will have with a specific reading material and therefore, helps the teacher to determine whether a book is of appropriate level or not (Mercer and Mercer, 2001). The Cloze test is also used to assess reading strategies used by readers or to develop learners' reading strategies.

Teachers can also assess the learners through observation. Choate et al. (1995) point out that direct observation can be used to give more information on instructional time, methods, and evaluation procedures. According to Lipson & Wixson (1997), observation in the hands of an experienced evaluator is one of the most powerful assessment tools a teacher can possess; information about every component of teaching and writing can be collected by use of observation. Based on this, the current study sought to establish the evaluation methods the teachers frequently used to assess English reading skills.

### **2.5 Influence of Assessment on Students' Reading Skills**

Research in the field of education has demonstrated that assessment positively influences students' academic achievement (Black & William, 1998). Gibbs (2006) asserts that student learning can be poor largely because the assessment system does not work well. A study by Umar (2018) revealed that classroom assessment motivated learners to learn and helped them to improve their performance in English. Surgenor (2010) explains that assessment practices can assist teachers improve classroom instruction by showing children's strengths and weaknesses. It is very clear from the foregoing that to a larger extent, assessment practices influence learning, and as such care must be taken when carrying out the assessment.

## **3. Research Design and Methodology**

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A mixed methods approach was employed where qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The study was carried out in Teso North Sub County of Busia County, Kenya. The target population consisted of 59 teachers of English language, and 1625 from three students from 26 public secondary schools. A proportionate stratified random sampling technique was employed to obtain a sample size of 400 students, and 40 teachers drawn randomly from 20

secondary schools in Teso North Sub-county. Data was generated using a questionnaire, an interview, and an observation checklist for complementary purposes. The validity of the instruments was assessed through expert judgment. Reliability of the instruments was ascertained using the test-retest method and a correlation coefficient of 0.84 was obtained and was considered to be acceptable. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive analysis was used to compute percentages, frequencies, means, and standard deviation. Inferential statistics were used to make deductions and generalizations about the whole population. Pair-wise correlation analysis and logistic regression analysis were used to determine whether there was a significant correlation between independent and dependent variables. Regression analysis was used to ascertain variables that were significantly correlated with the dependent variable at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance.

## 4. Findings

This section presents the findings of the study which are presented as per the research objectives.

### 4.1 Frequency of using Assessment Methods

The first objective examined assessment methods frequently used to assess English reading skills. The findings are presented as follows:

#### 4.1.1 Results from the Questionnaire

The results obtained from the questionnaire are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Frequency of Using Assessment Method (n = 400)

Assessment Method	Frequently		Occasionally		Rarely		Never		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Timed reading	72	18	133	28.25	91	22.75	124	31	400	100
Diagnostic reading	84	21	144	28.5	113	28.25	89	22.25	400	100
Oral presentations	77	19.25	141	35.25	144	36	38	9.5	400	100
Close tests	82	20.5	192	48	123	30.75	3	0.75	400	100
Comprehension tests	169	42.25	91	22.75	136	34	4	1	400	100
Essay writing	81	20.25	119	29.75	99	24	10	25.25	400	100
Summary writing	78	19.5	132	33	123	30.75	67	16.75	400	100
Book reports	53	13.35	80	20.15	79	19.9	185	46.6	400	100

Table 1 indicates that 169 (42.25%) students reported that their teachers frequently used comprehension tests, diagnostic reading 84 (21%), close test 82 (20.5%), essay writing 81 (20.25%), summary writing 78 (19.5%), oral presentation 77 (19.25%), timed reading 72 (18%) and book report 53 (13.35%). The findings reveal that the most frequently used assessment method in the teaching and learning of English reading skills was comprehension tests 169 (42.25%) while the book report was the least used method 53 (13.25%).

#### 4.1.2 Results from the Interview Schedule

Results revealed that English language teachers used some assessment methods more than others. For instance, comprehension tests were the most frequently used assessment methods. For example, Respondent 7 remarked, *“after every reading lesson I ask my students to answer comprehension questions which I use to gauge them.”* Furthermore, Diagnostic reading, oral presentations, and timed reading were also used by some teachers. Respondent 18 confirmed this in the following words: *“I always ask my students to read aloud. As the student reads the text, I pay attention in order to detect areas of difficulty.”* On the other hand, Respondent 34 remarked *“students should be able to read loudly in class. This will enable me to detect the common reading mistakes they may be having.”*

#### 4.1.3 Results from the Observation Schedule

Ten (10) lessons were observed. For confidentiality reasons, pseudonyms (1-10) were used in order to protect the identity of the schools. The results of the observation revealed that a comprehension test was used as the method of assessment. This was observed in schools 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 10. However, it was observed that in addition to comprehension tests, schools 2, 4, 7, and 8 also used diagnostic reading and oral presentation. In conclusion, the findings of the study from the sampled schools reveal that most teachers do not use a variety of assessment methods in their English reading lessons. This limits the acquisition of reading skills. It is important to note that for the learners to acquire reading skills, a good classroom environment should be put in place.

### 4.2 Influence of Assessment Methods on Acquisition of English Reading Skills

The second objective investigated the influence of assessment methods on the acquisition of English reading. The data was analysed using inferential statistics.

#### 4.2.1 Dichotomous Dummy Variables for Running Logistic Regression

The variables in Table 1 were transformed into dummies to run a pairwise correlation analysis and binomial logistic regression.

The results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Dichotomous Dummy variables for running logistic regression (n = 400)

Assessment Method	Frequently		Infrequently		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Timed reading	72	18	328	82	400	100
Diagnostic reading	84	21	316	79	400	100
Oral presentations	77	19.25	323	80.79	400	100
Close tests	82	20.5	318	80.75	400	100
Comprehension tests	169	42.25	231	79.5	400	100
Essay writing	81	20.25	319	57.75	400	100
Summary writing	78	19.5	322	79.75	400	100
Book reports	53	13.35	347	80.5	400	100



Table 2 summarizes the frequency distribution of assessment methods used in the instruction of English reading. Comprehension tests 169 (42.25%). Assignment 84 (21%), close test 82 (20.5%) essay writing 81(20.25%) summary writing 78 (19.5%), oral presentation 77 (19.25%), timed reading 72 (18%) and book report 53 (13.35%). The findings reveal that the most frequently used assessment method was comprehension tests 169 (42.25%) while the book report was the least used method 53 (13.25%).

#### 4.2.2 Descriptive Statistics for Assessment Methods

To compare the assessment methods frequently used by the teacher, descriptive statistics were obtained. This was analysed through the mean and standard deviation.

The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Assessment Methods (n = 400)**

Variable	Mean	Std. Err.	SD	Range	Min	Max
Timed reading	2.6675	.0548852	1.097705	3	1	4
Diagnostic reading	2.5175	.0528556	1.057113	3	1	4
Oral presentation	2.3575	.0449085	.8981707	3	1	4
Close tests	2.1175	.0364012	.7280239	3	1	4
Comprehension tests	1.9375	.044738	.8947599	3	1	4
Easy writing	2.55	.053861	1.077219	3	1	4
Summary writing	2.4475	.049363	.9872591	3	1	4
Book reports	2.997481	.0550827	1.097515	3	1	4

Table 3 reveals that most teachers infrequently assessed reading skills. The mean for using book reports was (mean = 2.997481, Std. Dev. 1.097515). The other infrequently used methods were: timed reading (mean = 2.6675, Std. Dev. 1.097705), essay writing (mean = 2.55, Std. Dev. 1.07719), diagnostic reading (mean = 2.5175, Std. Dev. 1.057113), summary writing (mean = 2.4475, Std. Dev. 2.4475, Std. Dev. 0.9872591), oral presentation (mean = 2.3575, Std. Dev. 0.8947599), close tests (mean = 2.1175, Std. Dev. 0.7280239) and comprehension tests (mean = 1.9375, Std. Dev. 0.8947599).

#### 4.2.3 Testing the Significance of the Dependent Variables

Using pairwise correlation at the  $p < 0.05$  significance level, independent variables (timed reading, diagnostic reading, oral presentations, close tests, comprehension tests, essay writing, summary writing, and book reports) were cross-tabulated with each of the dependent variables (reading skills). The researcher first ran a pairwise correlation analysis between the dependent variable and all the independent variables to determine the variables for further statistical analysis using logistic regression analysis. Then, only independent variables that were significantly correlated with the dependent variable at  $p < 0.05$  were pursued. The null hypothesis to be tested was:

**H0:** There is no statistically significant relationship between the utilization of assessment methods and the acquisition of English reading skills.

#### 4.2.4 Correlation between Assessment Methods and English Reading Skills

A pairwise correlation analysis was computed to establish the relationship between the utilization of assessment methods and the acquisition of reading skills at  $p < 0.05$ .

Results are presented in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Correlation between Assessment Methods and English Reading Skills

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Reading Skills	1.0000								
Timed reading	<b>0.1053*</b> 0.0353	1.000							
Diagnostic reading	<b>0.2218*</b> 0.0000	0.3176 0.0000	1.0000						
Oral presentation	<b>0.1223*</b> 0.0144	0.0848 0.0902	0.3243* 0.0000	1.0000					
Close tests	<b>0.1520</b> 0.0023	0.5842* 0.0000	0.3768* 0.0000	0.2233* 0.0000	1.0000				
Comprehension tests	<b>0.3733*</b> 0.0000	0.3897* 0.0000	0.4537* 0.0000	0.1729* 0.0005	0.4809* 0.0000	1.0000			
Easy writing	<b>0.1837*</b> 0.0002	0.4764* 0.0000	0.5039* 0.0000	0.4325* 0.0000	0.5300* 0.0000	0.3246* 0.0000	1.0000		
Summary writing	<b>0.1991*</b> 0.0001	0.3935* 0.0000	0.3814* 0.0000	0.1598* 0.0013	0.5160* 0.0000	0.5371* 0.0000	0.5685* 0.0000	1.0000	
Book report	0.2138* 0.0000	0.4887* 0.0000	0.1606* 0.0013	0.2581* 0.0000	0.6783* 0.0000	0.4569 0.2497	0.4820* 0.0000	0.4963* 0.0000	1.0000

\* Correlation is significant at ( $p < 0.05$ ) level

Table 4 indicates that there was a statistically significant relationship between utilization of assessment methods and the acquisition of English reading skills. The computed p- p-values (timed reading  $p = 0.0353$ , diagnostic reading  $p = 0.0000$ , oral presentation  $p = 0.0144$ , close tests  $p = 0.0023$ , comprehension tests  $p = 0.0000$ , essay writing  $0.0002$ , summary writing  $p = 0.0001$  and book reports  $p = 0.0000$ ) were less than the set alpha value (0.05). The null hypothesis was rejected. This means that students acquire English reading skills when these assessment methods are used.

#### 4.2.5 Regression Analysis for Assessment Methods and English Reading Skills

A logistic regression analysis was conducted to determine the influence of assessment methods on the acquisition of English reading skills. The regression results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Regression Results for Assessment Methods and English Reading Skills

Reading Skills	Odds Ratio	Std .Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf.	Interval]
Timed reading	.590675	.2307706	-1.35	0.178	.2746585	1.270294
Diagnostic reading	1.570034	.5437271	1.30	0.193	.7963884	3.095233
Oral presentation	1.035903	.335479	0.11	0.913	.5491056	1.954259
Close tests	.4819583	.2141986	-1.64	0.101	.2017003	1.151628
Comprehension tests	5.457892	1.666981	5.56	0.000	2.999481	9.93125
Essay writing	1.700361	.7003057	1.29	0.197	.7585212	3.811663
Summary writing	.7321749	.2699774	-0.85	0.398	.3554253	1.508278
Book reports	2.510675	1.242685	1.86	0.063	.9516546	6.623715

N = 400, LR  $\chi^2(8) = 66.04$ ,  $\text{prob} > \chi^2 = 0.0000$  pseudo  $R^2 = 0.1329$  log likelihood = -215.41342.

Table 5 indicates that the odds of acquiring English reading skills increased by 5.46 times (5.46 -1x100 = 446%) p = 0.000 at 95% level of confidence when comprehension tests were used, increased by 2.5 times (2.5 -1x100 = 150%) p = 0.063 at 95% level of confidence when book reports were used, increased by 1.7 times (1.7 -1x100 = 70%) p = 0.197 at 95% level of confidence when essay writing was used. There was an increase of 1.57 times (1.57 -1x100 = 57%) p = 0.193 at 95% level of confidence when diagnostic reading was used and by 1.03 times (1.03 -1x100 = 3%) p = 0.913 at 95% level of confidence when oral presentation was used. However, there was a decrease of 0.73 times (0.73 -1x100 = -27%) p = 0.398 at 95% level of confidence when summary writing was used, decrease of 0.59 times (0.59 -1x100 = - 41 %) p = 0.178 at 95% level of confidence when timed reading was used and decrease by 0.48 times (0.48 -1x100 = -52%) p = 0.101 at 95% level of confidence when close tests was used.

## 5. Discussion of Findings

Discussion of the findings is presented as per the research objectives.

### 5.1 Frequency of using Assessment Methods

The first objective investigated assessment methods frequently used to assess English reading. The results show that the most frequently used assessment methods were comprehension test 169 (42.25%) and diagnostic reading 84 (21%). These findings are supported by the results of the interview schedule as well as those of the observation schedule. This implies that teachers do not use a wide range of assessment methods when assessing English reading skills. This constitutes a form of ineffective teaching. These findings concur with those of Mupa and Chinooneka (2015) who affirm that teachers do not employ a variety of teaching methods. They concluded that different questioning techniques promote teacher effectiveness. N'Namdi (2005) contends that the purpose of assessment is to test whether the lesson objectives are met. He further explained that forms of assessment must be based on reflection of what is taught in the classroom as well as be varied and relevant to the lessons.

## 5.2 Influence of Assessment Methods on Acquisition of English Reading Skills

The second objective investigated the influence of assessment methods used on the acquisition of English reading. The findings reveal that there was a statistically significant relationship between the utilization of assessment methods and the acquisition of English reading skills. Results of the logistic regression analysis revealed that the odds of acquiring English reading skills increased by 5.46 times when a comprehension test was used. Other increases were as follows: book reports 2.5 times, essay writing 1.7 times, diagnostic reading 1.57 times, and oral presentation which increased by 1.03 times. This implies that comprehension tests, book reports, essay writing, diagnostic reading, and oral presentation were effective methods of assessing English reading skills. These findings are in line with those of Ugodulunwa and Okolo (2015) who affirm that assessment can improve students' academic achievement significantly. Furthermore, Sonmez and Cetinkaya (2022) submit that the assessment method contributes to reading comprehension success positively. Similarly, Sumardi (2017) ascertains that assessment motivates students to learn more leading to their success in learning. Bayat, Jamshidipour, and Hashemi (2017) explain that assessment enables students to understand concepts and retain more information.

## 6. Conclusion

The study concludes that teachers of English language do not use a variety of assessment methods as provided for in the syllabus during the instruction of English reading skills. The findings reveal that assessing reading skills using comprehension tests, book reports, essay writing, diagnostic reading, and oral presentation increases students' chances of acquiring reading skills. Acquisition of reading skills was found to be correlated with the assessment methods under study. This means that assessment methods have a positive influence on the acquisition of English reading skills.

### Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

### About the Author

Dr. Macdonald Omuse Omuna is an English Language Educator, a Secondary school teacher of English, and a researcher.

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