CAUSES OF READING DIFFICULTY OF STUDENTS

by:
Benjie M. Manila
Master Teacher I, Mt. View Elementary School

Reading is the most essential skill that a learner should know. Without the ability to read, one will not be able to comprehend the meaning of the text which contains the idea or the information that the learner should understand so that he will acquire the knowledge. And understanding will never occur if the thought is hindered. The hindrance to understanding the text is difficulty in learning to read. Several reasons caused difficulty of children in reading. Sometimes this difficulty can be a disorder. (Shaywitz and Shaywitz, 2004) stated that Reading Disorders are, “characterized by an unexpected difficulty in reading in children and adults who otherwise possess the intelligence, motivation, and education necessary for developing accurate and fluent reading”.

According to (Rutter and Yule, 1975), there are two main types of reading disorders. The first, reading disability (or reading difficulties / specific reading difficulties / developmental dyslexia / specific reading retardation) is viewed as being due to biological and genetic factors, and mainly affecting boys. The second category comprises poor readers who do not meet the discrepancy criterion, and have traditionally been categorized as being garden-variety poor readers or as exhibiting general reading backwardness. This category of reading disability is assumed to be due to factors such as low intelligence, lack of adequate instruction, and poor motivation.

It is important to understand the underlying cause of the student’s difficulty to read. Thus, assessment is an essential tool to determine what is needed to develop his reading capability. In general, all possible measures must be applied to teach reading
skills. Research findings of the (National Reading Panel, 2000) showed that in order to read, all children must be taught alphabetics, comprising phonemic awareness and phonics; reading fluency; vocabulary; and or reading comprehension. The findings further stated that these elements must be taught systematically, comprehensively, and explicitly; it is inadequate to present the foundational skills of phonemic awareness and phonics incidentally, casually, or fragmentally. Children do not learn how letters represent sounds by osmosis; we must teach them this skill explicitly. Once a child has mastered these foundational skills, he must be taught to read words fluently. Good evidence now indicates that we can teach reading fluency by means of repeated oral reading with feedback and guidance (Shaywitz and Shaywitz, 2004)

References:
Shaywitz and Shaywitz, (2004), Reading Disability and the Brain, https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/daef/a5e2a6791291b3e21c73bb7030349b39ed1b.pdf