



## APPRAISAL OF SEVEN CRITICAL READING STRATEGIES EMPLOYED BY TEACHERS IN OGUN STATE SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS TO TEACH READING COMPREHENSION

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### Abstract

*Basic to success in every academic venture is the ability of the learner to be able to read in the language of instruction. The deterioration in reading ability of most Nigerians senior secondary school students is a source of worry. This is because underachievement in reading comprehension has denied them the opportunity to continue their studies beyond the secondary school level as most of them could not pass the various internal and external examinations required of them to further their academic. One of the factors pencilled down to be responsible for dismal performances in reading is the strategies being employed by teachers to effect the teaching of reading the Nigerian secondary schools. Thus in this study, an attempt was made to investigate how the secondary school teachers in Egba, Ijebu, Remo and Yewa dialectical zones of Ogun State, Nigeria adopt the use of previewing, contextualising, questioning, reflecting, outlining / summarising, evaluating / argument / comparing / contrasting strategies to teach reading comprehension classes. Four teachers were observed teaching reading comprehension in four different classrooms, one each from the four dialectical zones by the researcher and the frequency of occurrences of each of the strategies was analysed. The results showed that the strategy most frequently used to teach reading of the seven strategies above was the questioning strategy and that most of the other strategies emanated as a result of the teachers' ability to engage the students in skilful and well- framed questions. Recommendations were made to the teachers to be more dexterous and resourceful in their teaching of reading comprehension.*

**Key words:** Reading, comprehension, underachievement, Strategy, interactive

### INTRODUCTION

Facts emerging from the Nigeria education sector have continued to blame poor performance of the Nigerians' senior secondary school students in their English language and other examinations on underachievement in reading comprehension (Adebayo, 2009; Ademulegun, 2001; Ayodele, 2006; Adetunji & Omale, 2010). These researchers and others decry the poor reading state of the Nigerian students, blaming it on factors ranging from poor reading habit (Aina, Ogungbeni, Adigun, Ademola, & Ogundipe, 2011), socio-economic inequality (Udida, Uweyi, & Ogodo, 2012), type of family (Leoma, & Samson, 2012), dearth of



reading libraries in most learners' homes and schools (Ayedun, 2014) and the methodology being adopted to teach reading in the Nigerian senior secondary schools (Ayodele, 2006) among others.

Of parallel to the last stated factor is the strategies used by students to unlock the problem of under achievement in reading comprehension. This has been defined as "purposeful, cognitive actions that students take when they are reading to help them construct and maintain meaning" (Reading strategies, n.d., para. 1). Of concern to this definition however, is whether the students can take this action on their own without being guided by instructors or teachers. This last remark is the concern for this academic venture, an attempt to investigate the strategies that the Ogun state senior secondary school teachers are adopting to teach reading comprehension.

The Salisbury University (2013) reeled out what she referred to as 7 critical reading strategies that readers can employ to facilitate maximum efficiency in reading. These strategies include the following: Previewing, referred to as the ability to have an insight of what a text is all about before reading. This is the preparation that goes into reading before reading commences properly. Contextualising, this simply means the understanding of a text informed by the experiential background knowledge of the reader. Put succinctly as stated by Salisbury university (2013, n.d., para.2), "placing a text in its historical, biographical, and cultural contexts". Others include questioning, that is, a sort of assessing in either formative or summative form to ensure whether the content has been fully mastered. Another is reflecting on challenges since the reading done could constitute a challenge to your inherent attitude or former beliefs on issues of varying magnitude. The last three of these strategies are outlining / summarising, evaluating / argument and comparing / contrasting.

The first of the three is useful for breaking into fragments the main ideas discussed as well as succinctly placing the segments together as brief as possible, thus coming up with an organising paragraph. The second is essential for subjecting the proposition of a writer into logical reasoning. Of course, the claim made by a would-be writer should be subjected to some proves so that the authenticity of the argument made can be established. This also centres on establishing the area of discountenance as well as issues of equal degree between the reader and the writer to establish a sort of isomorphism. This is with a bid to judging the veracity of the argument the writer wants his/her audience to believe. The third centres on incorporating a text within the appropriate contemporary milieu so as to arrive at the rationale behind the choice made by the writers to choose the method adopted for his or her writing. A cursory insight into the just concluded postulation offered a panoramic view of what Baldrige (1970, cited in Keng, 2005, Review, para.3) earlier advocated as 7 reading strategies, which include:

survey (pre-reading technique); speed reading (reading for information  
phrase reading (reading for thematic ideas within paragraphs or sections  
close reading (reading with annotations, focussing on summarising &  
paraphrasing ideas); inquiry reading (questioning the author); critical reading  
(reading the lines, reading between the lines and reading beyond the lines);  
aesthetic reading (reading for enjoyment of literature) (Keng, 2005, Review, para.3)

Arising from the foregoing assertions is the theoretical and pedagogical underpinning of reading as interactive. This concept shall be clarified briefly before further inquiry into this discourse.



## Reading as interactive activity

One postulation which has tenaciously stood the test of time for over three decades when dealing with the concept of reading at whatever level has been the Rumelhart (1977) reading interactive model. In this model, reading is conceived as interactive activity in which both the reader and the text being read are sharing a sort of common bargaining. Reading based on this model far transcends what can be regarded as one way traffic or a sort of robot. The reader, armed with the instrumentality of his /her background knowledge, approaches the task of reading in a sort of joint venture with the text. This interaction commences from the letter of the alphabets then proceeds to words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs and throughout the entire discourse. He/she uses his /her cognitive faculty to check whether the data already long stored is in consonance with the information encountered in the text thereby making judgement on what is to be discarded or approved.

As concurred Rumelhart and McClelland (19881):

It continues with the reader beginning with a set of expectations about what information is likely to be available through visual input. These expectations, or initial hypotheses, are based on our knowledge of the structure of letters, words, phrases, sentences and larger piece of discourse including non-linguistic aspect of the contextual situations (p.1).

The perception of reading as interactive pedagogy as postulated by the originators of interactive model of reading and others (Miller, 2001; Stanovich, 1980, & Walker,2001) who have made valuable contributions to the model left us with the following assumptions:

First, that reading has a lot doing with cognitive and meta cognitive constructs.

Secondly, the role of schemata in the task of reading cannot be underestimated.

Similarly, that the seven critical strategies of reading introduced by the Salisbury University (earlier mentioned), which in themselves are appendages of Baldrige's (1970) seven reading strategies, can be effectively subsumed under this all-embracing model.

The meaning of the foregoing is that the model can serve as effective theoretical underpinning of what goes on in the classroom should any of the strategies have any pedagogical implication. For example, the role of cognitive in phonemic awareness, that is, the ability to be able to recognise letters and match such letters with sounds or phonic reading, reading making use of syllables and affixes, phrase and sentence reading, paragraph and connected paragraphs reading, are restricted to the cognitive construct of reading, which the model refers to as top bottom (Ayedun, 2014, cited in Onukaogu, 2003). Likewise, at the meta cognitive level – a theory of reading described as “thinking about thinking” by Flavel (1976, as cited in Lai, 2011,p.2); Flavel's preoccupation in this theory deals with the knowledge that the learners have about themselves which often assist them to monitor and regulate their thinking processes. This knowledge guides them to take control of what might jeopardize their learning and eventual outcome or performance of a task. How applicable is the just remarked to reading? A reader expected to make meaning out of the contents being read should not be limited to word attack and mere comprehension levels of understanding but should be able, in addition to this, judge and evaluate the writers' line of thinking to examine whether it is in agreement with thinking brought to the reading task. This is the top –down described by Rumelhart's interactive model. The reading in which learners are being asked to summarise or suggest suitable title to what has been read would require a high level of meta cognitive activity



on part of the reader. Similar to this side of the coin, is the fact that the reader and the text must have shared a reasonable proportion of interaction.

Lastly, the place of the inherent background social contexts brought by the reader to the reading desk has also been accounted for in the model. This hinges on the premise that every reader has formed inherent concepts of the worldviews around his/her environment- the politics, economic situation, sports and recreation and a host of other constructs within the readers' domains. These are the issues being addressed by a would-be writer(s) and have been described as schema (singular) and schemata (plural). Bartlett (1932, 1958) was credited to bring to fore the concept of schema/ schemata, which was later developed by Rumelhart (1980). The theory forms the basis for cognition. By concept formation, an individual has a mental picture of an object of whatever kind, which can be applied to all walks of life. Reading is thus enhanced if these concepts are in line with what the reader encounters while reading as interaction begins to take place between these various constructs – the reader, the text being read, and background knowledge of the reader.

With the scenario just painted, and bearing in mind the fitting links of theoretical postulation and what actually takes place in the classrooms, the researcher tried to examine which and how the 7 critical reading strategies recommended to students for effective reading by Salisbury University, are being used to teach reading in Ogun State senior secondary schools. Although the strategies are recommended for effective reading to students, the researcher is of opinion that the teachers through their teaching should reflect these strategies while teaching reading so that the learners will imbibe them while reading. The researcher believes that it is only by doing this that their teaching will be more meaningful and highly rewarding. The outcome of the teaching observation carried out by the researcher to examine which of these strategies are operational and the extent to which the teachers in the Ogun State, Nigeria senior secondary school classrooms are adopting them in their classrooms is the focus of this study.

Basic to maximum comprehension in reading is the readers' ability to be able to adopt fitting strategies for a variety of reading challenges they are likely to face. Hence, the Salisbury University introduced what she referred to as seven critical reading strategies. Students are however at sea in regard to how to employ these various strategies to combat their reading deficiencies; in fact, quite a lot of them are not even aware of their existence. It is also not clear whether the teachers saddled with the responsibility of teaching reading comprehension are even aware of all of these strategies too. The problem of this study is therefore centres on whether the teachers use, and the frequency with which they use the seven critical reading strategies recommended by Salisbury University while teaching English language reading comprehension.

### **Research Questions**

On the basis of the foregoing, the following research questions were generated for this study:

- (1) Are teachers of English language in Egba, Ijebu, Remo and Yewa dialectical zones of Ogun State, Nigeria adopt the use of previewing, contextualising, questioning, reflecting, outlining / summarising, evaluating and argument / comparing / contrasting strategies to teach reading comprehension classes?
- (2) Of the above listed strategies, which of them is most frequently used?

The significance of this study lies on the extent to which it can unearth the purpose to which it was designed. The study would unfold what is actually happening in most Nigerian senior secondary school English language classrooms with particular reference to the teaching of reading. This, the researchers believe, would help to recommend appropriate solutions to the problem of underachievement in the teaching and learning of reading. Readers and



researchers alike would be better informed about the situations in the Nigerian classrooms generally as well as the need for prompt intervention.

## **METHODOLOGY**

In as much as the ability to read and understand fully is enshrined on interactive principle, this portends that the teaching of reading for effective learning far transcends the traditional method of “open your textbook to page so and so, then read and answer the questions underneath the passage”. What belies the assumption just made is that teaching reading in the classroom is expected to be as interactive as possible. Thus, the research methodology for this study was postulated on this theory, that reading is interactive activity among the readers, the text and the background knowledge of the readers. What then goes on in the reading classroom also can be said to be interactive in nature as the teachers employ various strategies to ensure that the task of teaching reading leads to the set objective – facilitate learning. The intention of the researchers is to examine the extent to which what the teacher actually does in the reading classroom can bring about maximum achievement in reading comprehension thus facilitating learning in its entirety.

### **Research Design**

This qualitative study employed the use of observation to investigate how teachers use these 7 critical reading strategies - previewing, contextualising, questioning, reflecting, outlining / summarising, evaluating /argument as well as comparing / contrasting to teach reading comprehension classes in Ogun state, Nigeria senior secondary schools. These strategies were recommended by the Salisbury University Counselling Centre to students for reading efficiency but the researchers are of the opinion that observing what goes on in the reading classroom will afford us a better understanding of how teachers saddled with the responsibility of teaching reading comprehension in the senior secondary school in Ogun state, Nigeria, are guiding their students to know how to use these strategies. By observing the interaction between the teachers and the students, the researchers intend to investigate whether the teachers know how to employ the use of these strategies in their classrooms. By objective reporting and direct word for word recapitulation of the actual conversation of the participants, the researcher intends to reduce to the barest minimum distortion of facts regarding the observed phenomenon in line with qualitative method of researching (PPA 696 Research Method, n.d).

Data for the study was collected by observing four English language teachers in a natural classroom environment. The researcher watched them teach English language reading comprehension passages. One school each from Egba, Ijebu, Remo and Yewa dialectical zones was selected to participate in the study. These four zones constitute the Ogun state South Western part of Nigeria. The students were made up of 75%, Yoruba speaking followed by 22% children of the Igbo origin and only about 3% of them were Hausa speaking and other ethnic groups that constitute the Nigeria nation. Three of the four schools selected were from the Local government headquarters of Egba, Ijebu and Remo dialectical zones while the last school was from the remote part of Ogun state that is, from Yewa dialectical zone of the state. All the schools are owned by the Ogun State government and are co-educational. Two of the teachers who took part in the study were females and the remaining were males between the age brackets of 30- 55 years. The students' ages ranged between 16- 19 years. Most of the students' parents are civil servants, farmers or artisans of various forms. The data was collected for a period of four weeks from the mid December, 2013 to mid- January, 2014.



### Data collection Procedure

Participants in this study were the researcher, the students and the teachers. The researcher after obtaining permission from the principals of the four senior secondary schools selected was present in the natural environment of classrooms examining the interaction taken place between the teachers and the students from the four participating schools. The researchers took a place at the back seat of the classroom taken note of how each of the strategies highlighted were being used by recording and taking note of the general activities between the teachers and the students. The period devoted for the teaching was 40 minutes each. Actions taken place in the classrooms were coded for easy reference during analysis.

### Data Analysis

This qualitative study categorised the behaviour observed in the classroom by employing content analysis style. The phenomena observed was the teaching interaction between the teachers and the students of senior secondary school 2 students of Ogun state, Nigeria with the researcher noticing the use of the stated 7 critical reading strategies and the frequency of their occurrences in the classrooms. The researcher was able to do this by subjecting the observed data to coding so that we can arrive at the intended themes in accordance with our research questions (teachers' use of the 7 critical reading strategies and the frequency of use). The behaviour thus observed was described through narrative technique. Not only that, the researchers also made use of the descriptive method of analysis to show the frequency of the observed behaviours. Through verbal interpretation of the observed teaching strategies, the researcher was able to classify and summarise what was witnessed in the English language reading comprehension classes. To ease the analysis of the phenomenon observed, the researchers catered for a situation whereby the employment of a strategy while teaching the classes could attract or accommodate as many as two or more strategies. For example, the use of a well- framed question could bring about strategies such as reflecting, evaluating / argument and comparing / contrasting. The researcher took care of this in the analysis.

### RESULTS

| Strategies             | Codes | Frequencies of occurrences |      |                       |                      | E  |
|------------------------|-------|----------------------------|------|-----------------------|----------------------|----|
|                        |       | ar                         | Bi   | Cy                    | de                   |    |
| Previewing             | P     | 1                          | 1    | 1                     | 1                    | 4  |
| Contextualising        | C     | 111                        | 11   | 111                   | 1                    | 9  |
| Questioning            | Q     | <del>1111 1111</del><br>1  | 1111 | <del>1111</del><br>11 | <del>1111</del>      | 26 |
| Reflecting             | R     | 11                         | 1    | 111                   | <del>1111</del><br>1 | 11 |
| Outlining/ Summarising | O/S   | 1                          | 11   | 0                     | 0                    | 3  |
| Evaluating/ Argument   | E/A   | 111                        | 11   | 11                    | 1                    | 8  |
| Comparing /Contrasting | C/C   | 1                          | 0    | 1111                  | 0                    | 5  |

KEY= ar: Teacher (a) from Remo dialectical zone  
bi: Teacher (b) from Ijebu dialectical zone  
cy: Teacher (c) from Yewa dialectical zone  
de: Teacher (d) from Egba dialectical zone

### DISCUSSION



From the result, looking at the first research question: Are teachers of English language in Egba, Ijebu, Remo and Yewa dialectical zones of Ogun State, Nigeria adopt the use of previewing, contextualising, questioning, reflecting, outlining / summarising, evaluating and argument / comparing / contrasting strategies to teach reading comprehension classes?

It can be seen that most of the teachers make use of the 7 critical reading strategies in their English language comprehension classrooms. Only teachers C and D did not make use of the outlining/ summarising strategies all the other teachers did. However, the frequency of use differed among the four teachers dealing with the second research question that says:

Of the above listed strategies, which of them is most frequently used?

As noticed on the frequency distribution table, the strategy commonly or frequently used by all the teachers observed was the questioning strategy followed by reflecting strategy. Evaluating/argument strategy came next in this order; then contextualising strategy. Comparing/contrasting closely next in the ranking of the frequency of occurrences of the strategy being adopted in these classrooms. The lowest in this order is the preview strategy sparingly used by the teachers.

A possible submission for the preferred frequent use of the question strategy in these classrooms could be the style of the writers, who most of the times, at the end of each passage, have structured questions to be answered by the students knowing full well that the ability to generate thoughtful questions during reading classroom determine effectiveness in reading (Lewin, 2010). Irrespective of whether a reading teacher has prepared questions before the commencement of his or her classes or not, questions set by writers beneath a given comprehension passage are most of the times attempted by the students after a given reading class. This accounts for the situation witnessed in these classrooms. Also, using question strategy to teach reading over the years had long been established and what was witnessed in these classrooms were similar. Questions used in these classrooms served as signal to understand the purpose of reading; sparked-off students' thinking ability and served as weapon to monitor their comprehension. As observed by Adler (2013), four different types of questions, namely, right there, think and search, author and you and on your own questions, have been found to be very effective in teaching comprehension passages and there was no exception in these classes. In other words, questions within the bowels of the passage (WH item questions); the ones based on the readers' ability to call forth or recall (think and search) what has been read from any portion of the paragraphs read; the ones in which they were expected to use cues familiar with them to understand what they have learned from the passage(s) (author and you); and the last, almost like the latter, that is, "on your own" type of questions, were used in these classes to monitor comprehension. For example, teacher "A" from Yewa Local Government of Ogun State used this "right there question": what makes the tropic forest to be compared to a library? This was used in order to evaluate the students' understanding of the passage they read. Answer to this type of question is contained in the passage and the students are expected to locate it. Likewise, teacher "B" from Ijebu Ode Local government of Ogun State used "think and search question" such as, "do you think Etim Essien could score a goal?"(Teacher B, December 21, 2013) in the course of his classroom discussion when teaching a comprehension passage titled: The match that broke the myth. Unlike the first question, students are expected to think before arriving at the choice to be made from the passage.

One of the questions from the passage used by teacher "A" is the "author and you" type of question. The question was "what is the grammatical name of the expression, what makes this environmental loss to be especially sad?" (Teacher A, December 20, 2013). The second part of this question (What is the grammatical function?) demanded for the work of the expression in the passage. Lastly, teacher "D" again used "On your own" question type, "Have you or your relatives been a victim of threat of attacks, harassments or molestations of any form from any cultists' group before?"(Teacher D, 8 January, 2014). Answering this type of question would require both the teacher who asked this type of question and the students



to have an in depth understanding of their environment, which is in a way, contextualised form of reading.

Regrettably, however, two of these teachers (C&D) relied heavily on the questions set by the authors as most of the self- framed questions they asked were not thought- provoking as expected. As opined by Adler (2001), thought –provoking questions often brings about the following:

Give students a purpose for reading (2). Focus their attention on what they are reading (3). Help to reinforce thinking as they read (4). Encourage them to monitor their comprehension, and (5) help students to review contents and relate what they have learned with what they already knew (p.22).

A look at the submissions just stated offered an insight into what was witnessed in these classrooms. This is because other strategies naturally emanated in the course of the lesson as the teachers used either the questions set by the writers, or the ones that developed in the course of their interaction in the classroom, to instigate the students' meta-cognitive ability. For example, reflecting strategy, which is the next in the order of frequency developed as questions were being raised. A teacher of reading is said to be effective when he / she is able to successfully impart knowledge in such a way that the learners are able to examine whether their personal experiences tally with what they are being taught in reading, investigate the areas of challenges and contradictions to their tenaciously held beliefs and attitudes.

For example, in one of the classes examined, a student asked her teacher as the class was being brought to a close, "how come a forest serving as haven for wild animals could still be used as tourist centre?" (Student, December 20, 2013). This question arose as a result of the reading passage engaged in the classes where the writer as well as the teacher beautifully painted the inherent advantages of preserving the tropical forest and decried the effects of deforestation. The student through this question having seriously engaged in reflecting on the reading passage, opened the doors for further strategies in the course of the teachers' explanation and the students' contributions. These strategies included comparing/contrasting, evaluation/argument as well as contextualising. One weapon used explicitly thus enhancing reflecting strategy, was the endless explanations decked with illustration and demonstration in the classrooms. For example, a female teacher engaged in making analogy to a text written by a famous Nigerian writer (deceased), D.O. Fagunwa's "Ogboju Ode Ninu Igbo Irunmole", (1938) interpreted by Wole Soyinka as "Forest of the Thousand Daemons" in 1968 to illustrate her lesson. According to this teacher, the then famous forest, that is, "Igbo" (forest), located at Oke Igbo in Ondo State, Nigeria, metaphorically used by the writer as the setting of the story, had long disappeared due to the deforestation of the tropical forest in Nigeria. Another teacher compared the old method of communication with the modern one, illustrating it with a locally sent message called "Aroko" (coded message) used in the old Western Nigerian setting. "Aroko" was usually coded messages sent via symbols of varying forms, depending on the types of messages being conveyed to the receiver. This illustration was used while teaching modern form of communication. These two techniques were used to place the story being read in their historical and sociological perspectives, otherwise known as contextualising.

These two outstanding teachers did not only subject their students to reflective form of reading, they have in addition, engaged in contextualising strategy. This account for the reasons contextualising strategy ranked next in our investigation of the classroom interaction. Inherent also in the explanations produced by these teachers is comparing/contrasting strategy.

Another strategy that is of interest based on the investigation is the evaluation/argument. As the teachers engaged in different types of questions, they were invariably evaluating their students. For example, one of the teachers raised a question, "apart from using animals, how else were they communicating in the olden days?" (Teacher C, January 8, 2014). The teacher





through this question was assessing his students' level of comprehending the text, thus generating question not directly from the passage but such that can provoke thinking.

All writers are interested in self-made truth that they want their reader to believe but all these assertions should not be taking hook line and sinker by a critical reader, thus leading to argument/comparing. Reference was earlier made to the inquiry by a student who was interested in the rationale for making an abode of wild animals as tourist attraction centre. With such an investigation, the student was probing the writer so as to make quest into his/her proposition. Let us illustrate this by two good questions raised by one of the teachers that were not from the passages but which were coloured with evaluation/ argument strategy:

- 1) Apart from horses and camels mentioned in the class, what other form of animals were used in the early days for communicating and transporting goods? (Teacher C, January 8, 2013).
- 2) Apart from using animals, how else do they communicate in the early days?"(earlier cited).

One can see the ingenuity in these questions with the first question paving way for the second. The questions led to evaluation/argument among the students as they engaged one another during the lesson. It must also be stressed that these questions equally brought about comparing / contrasting, which is next in the order of frequency of use. A teacher while explaining was comparing/contrasting the forest in Ondo state, Nigeria with the modern tropical forest. By making use of explicit teaching style through direct explanation (Reading Rocket, n.d), she was able to draw the mental picture of the forest in her students' mind.

Preview strategy was not however effectively used by the teachers but it is of note that some questions were raised to generate previews. Some of the questions include:

- (1) What is commerce? (Teacher C, January, 2014).
- (2) Have you ever seen a forest before? (Teacher A, December 20, 2013).
- (3) How many of you have heard or read about cultists? (Teacher D, January 20, 2014).

These questions were raised before the commencement of the class interaction to introduce the topic, which is all about previewing the reading task before the actual reading.

In outlining/ summary, a teacher would allow the reading of a paragraph, then asked one of the students to summarise while he was busy writing the responses of his students on the chalkboard. Paragraphs were then formed by asking another student to use the sentences outlined on the chalkboard. These last two strategies were not frequently used and it accounts for why they were rated lowest in the study.

## CONCLUSION

Arising from the foregoing is the fact that the strategy that was frequently used as described in this study was the questioning strategy, which served as clue to the development of most of the other strategies used in all of the classrooms observed as exemplified in this study. The interpretation of this submission is that a strategy could lead to the development of more strategies in a given reading classroom as noticed in this academic exercise. For instance, explanation given by the teacher regarding a reading topic could lead to comparing /contrasting, argument/evaluation, which could also generate reflecting. This is the experience shared in these classrooms. The conclusion drawn here is that questioning strategy is the most potent of all the strategies advocated for reading by the Salisbury University experts.



## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

As beautiful as the classroom interaction shared may appear, they are bereft of some essential qualities. First, they were too teacher- centred or were dominated by the teachers. Students should have been given more opportunity by employing student-oriented approach. Secondly, in teaching outlining /summary, students should have been made to work in group so that they can share ideas. This should be encouraged. There was also heavy reliance on the questions set by the writers at the expense of the ones which the teacher supposed to have brought to the classrooms. This showed inadequate preparation. Improvement is required on this.

Lastly, two of the classrooms were too congested with over 70-100 students. This should be discouraged. A situation whereby this is impossible as in the Nigerian case corporate teaching is recommended. It must however be stressed that strategies that can be used to teach reading to any category of students are numerous and different with particular reference to the age of the learners and the location. Teachers are therefore admonished to opt for those they considered suitable for them. The teaching of reading has far gone beyond the traditional style of "open your textbooks, read page so and so, then answer the questions underneath the passage". Therefore, teachers saddled with the responsibility of teaching reading in our classrooms should avail themselves of wider opportunity around them by going for training, workshops and seminars, to learn all these new techniques and innovations on the teaching of reading.



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