

Teacher Classroom Practices in English Reading Comprehension in Selected Senior Secondary Schools in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated teacher classroom practices in English reading comprehension in senior secondary schools in the Ibadan Metropolis by focusing on the teachers' use of question, teachers' use of resources, and strategies of teaching reading comprehension. The survey design was adopted. Two LGAs and 10 schools (two per LGA) were randomly selected. The 20 SS2 English teachers in the sampled secondary schools were enumerated. Instruments used were Teacher Use of Questions Observation Scale ($r = 0.77$), Teacher Use of Resources Observation Scale ($r = 0.84$) and Teacher Use of Strategies Observation Scale ($r = 0.91$). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Results indicated that the strategy mostly employed by the teachers in teaching reading comprehension is expository (mean = 3.26), use of question (2.72), against the threshold of 3.00. The analysis showed that teacher asks low order questions (mean = 2.25), higher order questions (mean = 2.30), teacher gives students enough time to process the question and respond (mean = 2.35), and teacher prompts students to answer questions only at the end of the lesson (mean = 2.50). Teachers used motion pictures, word cards, projector and informative posters to aid comprehension (mean = 1.00).

Keywords: Reading, Comprehension, Teacher classroom practices, teaching strategies, Use of resources

Introduction

Effective reading is vital to the success of students in their academic pursuits and all-round exploits. Outside the academic setting, reading to understand road signs helps to avert accidents when driving. Reading to understand the prescription of drugs saves lives and helps an individual to prevent the misuse of drugs. Reading could, therefore, be said to be an information gathering process that activates the imaginative ability of an individual and stimulates quick learning.

Reading and comprehension could be said to be foundational in intellectual development. This means that both co-exist and reading is incomplete without comprehension. The absence of comprehension when reading makes reading an exercise in futility. Reading comprehension therefore goes beyond passing examinations, being an indispensable tool for coping with the demands of a complex society (Ezeokoli and Fasan, 2013). The good proof of reading is the extent to which the reader is able to comprehend what the reader has read, which is measured as the ability to make meaning out of a written text (Fakeye, 2017). Students' knowledge of comprehension is examined and tested in major

language examinations. Students therefore, need the expertise of teachers in reading comprehension in classrooms not only in English but in other subjects offered such as Mathematics, Government, Physics, and Accounting. As they progress in education, reading becomes one critical skill needed in all fields of human endeavour such as medicine, sciences and humanities. Very good reading comprehension skills enable students to go through schooling with great ease. Hence, reading takes a major part of the student's study time and his good performance at the university is directly related to a good reading ability. This informs why major examining bodies such as the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and the National Examination (NECO) lay unique emphasis on reading comprehension and allot more marks to it than some other sections of their language examinations.

As important as reading comprehension is, reports have shown that students are not performing well at it. Buttressing this argument, the WAEC 2020 report stated that it was a worry that some candidates lifted portions of the comprehension passages, which were irrelevant, as answers to the questions. It further stated that there were others who simply copied portions of

the passage and passed them off as answers without caring about whether they were appropriate responses to the questions.” This was tantamount to mindless lifting, a clear indication of poor comprehension which raises concerns on the teaching pedagogy or teacher classroom practices.

Teacher-classroom practices are those pedagogical activities the teacher engages in for effective instruction during classroom teaching and learning activities. These practices include the way the teacher use of questions, the use of instructional materials, use of allotted time for the lesson, the teachers' assessment and interaction with students during teaching. Chado, (2016) defines teacher classroom practices as activities that teachers are involved in during the instructional process of teaching reading. Teacher use of questions refers to teachers' questioning behaviour. Apart from referring to the way the teacher uses questions in teaching and learning process, it is also concerned with the extent to which this practice is observed during reading comprehension. Thus, teachers' questioning behaviour is the various uses into which questions are put in class by the teacher and the style of doing it in the course of a lesson (Fakeye and Ayede, 2013). There is a positive relationship between teachers' questioning behaviour and student achievement in English language (Fakeye and Ayede, 2013). From the foregoing, it can be observed that questioning, as teacher classroom practice has the propensity to improve students' learning. Teacher use of resources refers to the effective use of materials such as textbooks and word cards during teaching reading comprehension. The availability of these materials facilitates teaching and learning. It provides the teacher with the mental framework on what and how to teach. Resources make learning more interesting, practical, realistic and appealing. They also enable both the teacher and the students to participate actively and effectively during lesson sessions. Thus, resources can influence the students learning outcome (Omuna, Onchera and Kimutai, 2016; Fruzan and Bohman 2017). This accounts for the reason why the study seeks to investigate teacher use of resources in teaching reading comprehension.

The teacher use of strategy also covered how the teacher leads the students into the purpose

of the comprehension passage. Purpose is the foundation of effective reading (Oyetunde 2015). It is very important to define the reason for reading a given material before reading. If the purpose is not defined, the reader may find it difficult to understand what he has read and much of what is read may be forgotten.

Statement of the Problem

Reading is fundamental to learning and therefore, remains a major ingredient for educational advancement. However, the extent of failure and poor performance of students in English language in most external examinations has been worrisome to the stakeholders - students, parents, teachers, policy makers and researchers. Many students find it difficult to interact meaningfully with reading materials before them and this persistent unsatisfactory performance of students in the examinations could be traced to the fact that they do not read. Previous researchers alluded to the fact that the poor performance of students in English language especially in reading comprehension can be caused by learners' unwillingness to read, school or environment related factors and home factors. Teacher classroom practices have also been identified as wielding significant influence on students' performance outcome in reading comprehension. However, it was observed that teacher classroom practices in reading comprehension in secondary schools in Ibadan have not been focused on adequately. This study therefore investigated teacher classroom practices in reading comprehension with specific reference to teacher use of reading comprehension strategies, use of questions and use of resources in reading comprehension in senior secondary schools in Ibadan metropolis, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the research:

1. What is teacher use of strategies in teaching reading comprehension?
2. What is teacher use of questions in teaching reading comprehension?
3. What is teacher use of resources in teaching reading comprehension?

Scope of the Study

The study investigated teacher classroom Practices in reading comprehension in Selected Senior Secondary Schools in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria. It covered SS2 English language teachers from 10 selected secondary schools in Ibadan metropolis. The aspects of classroom practices covered were teachers' use of strategies, use of questions and use of resources in teaching reading comprehension.

Significance of the Study

The study has complemented the existing literature in the study of teacher classroom practices in teaching reading comprehension. It will assist teachers in knowing the areas of deficiencies in teaching reading comprehension and what should be done to improve considerably. Furthermore, the research is expected to assist various schools management and state ministry of education.in monitoring and supervision activities in the schools. It will also help them in drawing up curriculum for effective teaching of reading comprehension in Ibadan metropolis, Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted the survey design. There are five Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Ibadan Metropolis. The researcher therefore, used simple random sampling technique to select two LGAs. The researcher also used simple random sampling to select 5 schools each from the 2 LGAs making a total of 10 schools. For the interview session, the researcher used purposive sampling to select two teachers each from the two LGAs making a total of four teachers. In addition, the researcher adopted purposive sampling to select the secondary schools' English language teachers teaching SS2 English. In all, a total of 20 English language teachers participated in the study. Instruments used were Teacher Use of Strategies Observation Scale($r=0.78$), Teacher Use of Questions Observation Scale ($r=0.82$) and Teacher Use of Resources Observation Scale ($r=0.76$). The study adopted descriptive statistics in the analysis of quantitative data by using frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation.

Results

Research question one: What is teacher use of strategies in teaching reading comprehension?

Table 4.1: Teacher use of strategies in teaching reading comprehension

S/N	ITEMS	Excellent	V. Good	Good	Fair	Poor	X	St.D
1.	Teacher poses questions to activate students' prior knowledge	-	4 (20%)	13 (65%)	3 (15%)	-	3.0 5	.604
2.	Teacher appraises previous lesson	-	2 (10%)	11 (55%)	7 (35%)	-	2.7 5	.638
3.	Teacher states the major objectives of the lesson	-	-	10 (50%)	9 (45%)	1 (5%)	2.4 5	.604
4.	Teacher uses previewing technique to lead the students into the comprehension lesson	-	1 (5%)	11 (55%)	8 (40%)	-	2.6 5	.587
5.	Teacher writes out the main points and difficult words	-	3 (15%)	16 (80%)	1 (5%)	-	3.1 0	.447
6.	Teacher explains topics and indicates turns of events	-	3 (15%)	9 (45%)	8 (40%)	-	2.7 5	.716
7.	Teacher methodically notes the beginning and end of story parts	-	2 (10%)	9 (45%)	9 (45%)	-	2.6 5	.670
8.	Teacher uses context cues to assist students' comprehension	-		12 (60%)	7 (35%)	1 (5%)	2.5 5	.604
9.	Teacher distributes students in small groups to build their own thought processes for effective participation and comprehension	-		1 (5%)	15 (75%)	4 (20%)	1.8 5	.489

10.	Teacher uses meaningful examples and illustrations to aid comprehension	-	2 (10%)	13 (65%)	5 (25%)	-	2.8 5	.587
11.	Teacher uses planned repetition to emphasize important points	-	2 (10%)	14 (70%)	4 (20%)	-	2.9 0	.552
12.	The teacher interjects methodically to help students think about what they are reading	-	1 (5%)	15 (75%)	4 (20%)	-	2.8 5	.489
13.	Teacher relates the lesson to real life situations	-	2 (10%)	12 (60%)	6 (30%)	-	2.8 0	.615
14.	Teacher uses verbal and non-verbal cues during explanations	-	-	8 (40%)	12 (60%)	-	2.4 0	.502
15.	Teacher elicits feedback from students to assess level of comprehension	-	2 (10%)	16 (80%)	2 (10%)	-	3.0 0	.458
16.	Teacher marks and corrects students' class work	-	1 (5%)	4 (20%)	12 (60%)	3 (15%)	2.1 5	.745
17.	The teacher re-caps the main points	-	3 (15%)	16 (80%)	1 (5%)	-	3.1 0	.447
18.	The teacher asks recall questions	-	4 (20%)	14 (70%)	2 (10%)	-	3.1 0	.552
19.	Teacher summarises the lesson	-	1 (5%)	16 (80%)	3 (15%)	-	2.9 0	.447
20.	Teacher gives take home assignment to the students	1 (5.3%)	6 (31.6%)	9 (47.4%)	3 (15.8%)	-	3.2 6	.805
Weighted Mean = 2.76; Threshold =3.00								

Table 4.1 shows the strategies employed by the selected teachers in teaching reading comprehension. The result indicates a weighted mean of 2.76 which is lower than the threshold set at 3.00. This implies that the strategies mostly employed by the teachers in teaching reading comprehension are that teachers give take home assignment to the students, teachers write out the

main points and difficult words, the teachers re-cap the main points, the teachers ask recall questions, teachers pose questions to activate students' prior knowledge, and teachers elicit feedback from students to assess level of comprehension.

Research question two: What is teacher use of questions in teaching reading comprehension?

Table 4.2: Teacher use of questions in teaching reading comprehension

S/N	ITEMS	Excellent	V. Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Mean	St.D
1.	The teacher asks refresher questions to kick start the lesson	-	1 (5%)	13 (65%)	6 (30%)	-	2.75	.550
2.	The teacher uses open-ended questions at intervals	-	2 (10%)	14 (70%)	4 (20%)	-	2.90	.552
3.	The teacher asks low order questions	-	-	5 (25%)	15 (75%)	-	2.25	.444
4.	The teacher asks higher order questions	-	-	6 (30%)	14 (70%)	-	2.30	.470
5.	The teacher calls on specific students to answer questions	-	3 (15%)	17 (85%)	-	-	3.15	.366
6.	The teacher prompts students to answer questions only at the end of the lesson	-	2 (10%)	7 (35%)	10 (50%)	1 (5%)	2.50	.760

7.	The teacher distributes questions evenly among the students	-	4 (20%)	16 (80%)	-	-	3.20	.410
8.	The teacher provokes students' thinking with questions	-	1 (5%)	13 (65%)	6 (30%)	-	2.75	.550
9.	The teacher elicits response by repeating the questions when students fail to attempt the question	-	1 (5%)	18 (90%)	1 (5%)	-	3.00	.324
10.	The teacher rephrases the question when students show lack of comprehension	-	4 (20%)	16 (80%)	-	-	3.20	.410
11.	The teacher gives students enough time to process the question and respond	-	-	7 (35%)	13 (65%)	-	2.35	.489
12.	The teacher uses questions to draw attention to salient points and make clarifications	-	1 (5%)	3 (15%)	16 (80%)	-	2.25	.550
13.	The teacher uses questions to keep the students' attentive	-	-	5 (25%)	15 (75%)	-	2.25	.444
14.	The teacher inspires students to ask questions	-	-	13 (65%)	7 (35%)	-	2.65	.489
15.	The teacher answer students' questions effectively	-	6 (30%)	14 (70%)	-	-	3.30	.470
Weighted Mean = 2.72; Threshold = 3.00								

Table 4.2 shows the teachers use of questions in teaching reading comprehension. The result indicates a weighted mean of 2.72 which is lower than the threshold set at 3.00. This implies that the teachers' use of questions was rated low.

Hence, teachers' use of question is poor (mean = 2.72) against the threshold of 3.0.

Research question three: What is teacher use of resources in teaching reading comprehension?

Table 4.3: Teacher use of resources in teaching reading comprehension

S/N	Items	Excellent	V. Good	Good	Fair	Poor	X	St.D
1.	The teacher uses textbooks effectively during reading comprehension	-	15 (78.9%)	4 (21.1%)	-	-	3.78	.418
2.	Teacher ensures students have required textbooks for reading comprehension	-	-	16 (84.2%)	3 (15.8%)	-	2.84	.374
3.	The teacher uses physical things to give illustration	-	1 (5.3%)	13 (68.4%)	5 (26.3%)	-	2.78	.535
4.	The teacher uses motion pictures to give illustrations	-	-	-	-	19 (100%)	1.00	.000
5.	Teacher uses word cards to aid students' understanding of difficult words	-	-	-	-	19 (100%)	1.00	.000
6.	The teacher dramatizes the content of the passage	-	-	3 (15.8%)	12 (63.2%)	4 (21.1%)	1.94	.621
7.	The teacher makes use of a projector in teaching reading comprehension	-	-	-	-	19 (100%)	1.00	.000

8.	The teacher uses dictionaries for word search	-	-	4 (21.1%)	14 (73.7%)	1 (5.3%)	2.1 5	.501
9.	The teacher uses students to make meaningful illustrations that aid comprehension	-	-	7 (36.8%)	11 (57.9%)	1 (5.3%)	2.3 1	.582
10.	The teacher uses informative posters to support teaching and comprehension	-	-	-	-	19 (100%)	1.0 0	.000
11.	The teacher uses cardboard drawings to aid teaching	-	-	-	-	19 (100%)	1.0 0	.000
12.	The teacher uses reading logs to monitor students' reading activities	-	-	-	-	19 (100%)	1.0 0	.000
13.	The teacher uses maps to make illustrations during reading comprehension	-	-	-	-	19 (100%)	1.0 0	.000
14.	The teacher makes use of pictures to aid comprehension	-	-	-	-	19 (100%)	1.0 0	.000
15.	Teacher answer questions forwarded by the students	-	4 (21.1%)	15 (78.9%)	-	-	3.2 1	.418
Weighted Mean = 1.80; Threshold =3.00								

Table 4.3 shows the teachers use of resources in teaching reading comprehension. The result indicates a weighted mean of 1.80 which is far lower than the threshold set at 3.00. This implies that the teachers' use of resources in teaching reading comprehension was rated low. Hence, teachers use of resources in poor (mean = 1.80) against the threshold of 3.0.

Discussion of Findings

Teacher use of strategies in teaching reading comprehension

The findings of this study revealed that the strategies mostly employed by teachers in teaching reading comprehension are giving take home assignments to the students, writing out the main points and difficult words, re-caping the main points, asking recall questions, posing questions to activate students' prior knowledge, and eliciting feedback from the students to assess their level of comprehension. The finding corroborates the findings of the studies conducted by Okeke (2013), Akinmusire (2014), Chikwendu (2014), Chikwendu (2014), Ochogwu, (2014), Kaya, (2015), and Fakeye, (2017) who all found in their respective studies that teachers' use of different innovative strategies improved their reading

comprehension classroom practices. However, the finding negates the finding of the study conducted by Tilla, (2020) who found that teachers did not provide opportunity to support learners' independent comprehension strategy use. Furthermore, the study disclosed that the teachers' inability to engage learners in reading comprehension strategies might signify teachers' lack of knowledge of how to incorporate reading comprehension strategies as an instructional tool during reading comprehension lessons.

Teacher use of questions in teaching reading comprehension

The study found that teachers' use of questions was low. According to the items used, the teachers scored low in their use of low order questions; use of questions to draw attention to salient points and make clarifications; use of questions to keep the students' attentive; use of higher order questions; giving students enough time to process the question and respond; prompting students to answer questions only at the end of the lesson; and inspiring students to ask questions. This evidently implies that the teachers only fairly used questions during reading comprehension instruction. This could be

attributed to the class size in the school selected and the teachers' level of pedagogical competence. Many of the classes whose teachers were observed were relatively large and this presented a pedagogical challenge to the teachers. The finding is not in line with the findings and submissions of previous studies like Fakeye and Ayede, (2013), Ethel de Leon-Abao (2014), Davonah and Sadeghi (2015), and Ardhy, (2019) who all found and submitted that the use of questioning is germane to teachers' classroom practices in reading comprehension.

Teacher use of resources in teaching reading comprehension

The study found that the teachers' use of resources in teaching reading comprehension was low. According to the items used, the teachers observed were not using motion pictures to give illustrations; word cards to aid students' understanding of difficult words; projector in teaching reading comprehension; informative posters to support teaching and comprehension; cardboard drawings to aid teaching; reading logs to monitor students' reading activities; maps to make illustrations during reading comprehension; and pictures to aid comprehension. This could be attributed to many factors, among which are the class size, lack of resources and teachers' improvisation deficiency. The finding corroborates the findings of the studies conducted by Effiong and Igiri (2015) and Omuna, et al (2016), who both found that resources in form of textbooks were not available in schools for teaching students. The study also supports the finding of Samson (2017) who revealed that most of the teachers consider any class of thirty-one students and above as large, and the teachers are ill-disposed to large classes which made the use of resources ineffective.

Conclusion

The study has assessed teachers' classroom practices in reading comprehension. The assessment was done on the teachers' use of strategies, questions and resources in teaching reading comprehension. Based on the findings of the study, it could be concluded that teachers' classroom practices in terms of use of strategies, questioning and resources in teaching reading comprehension were not satisfactory.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are hereby made:

1. Teachers should regularly attend workshops, seminars and in-service trainings where they will be exposed to contemporary innovative strategies of teaching reading comprehension and the strategic use of questioning and resource improvising skills.
2. Teachers should improvise resources and aids in the teaching of reading comprehension.
3. Teachers should devise effective strategies of coping with large classes during reading comprehension.

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