
**NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES' ENGLISH TEACHERS' EDUCATION PROGRAMME
AND ITS RELEVANCE TO SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL READING CLASS**

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ABSTRACT: *The study assessed the English teachers' education programme in Nigerian Universities for senior secondary school reading class. The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of English education programme of some teachers on their service delivery; to look into adequacy of English curriculum in effective teaching and inculcation of reading skills to secondary school students, and to examine the factors affecting the reading curriculum implementation in secondary schools among other things. To achieve this, Twenty 400 level students of University of Ibadan grouped as pre-service teachers; and another twenty tagged as service teachers who were graduates from the same university; currently teaching in secondary schools; were randomly sampled for the study. Structured Interview as well as questionnaire in five point likert -type - scale was designed to collect data for the study. The results showed that English education programme offered for teachers empower their logical presentation of reading skills in classroom and also strengthen their level of reading. However, incompetence of some English teachers and inappropriate teaching methods affect implementation of reading curriculum. To further strengthen reading curriculum however, some pre-service teachers interviewed were of the opinions that readability and reading methodology should be included in the curriculum. Moreover, non - provision of reading textbooks is having negative effects on students' learning. The results reflect the opinions of some pre-service and service teachers who from their experiences in English classroom have seen that most students especially in public schools do not possess English textbooks. Recommendations were made based on the results..*

KEYWORDS: *assessing, English teachers, education, Nigerian Universities, reading*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is essential for students' success and educational attainment. Even in this present age of technological advancement, the success of any student lies in his ability to engage in self- study and learning. However, for a student to reach this stage, he has to pass through tutelage. Reading

is a literacy skill which involves learning environment. The teacher takes a vantage position here. Thus to avoid misleading and wrong modeling, the educational background of an English teacher in terms of what he also acquires from school is important. Since a teacher cannot teach beyond his knowledge, the reading curriculum that is being employed to teach him must be adequate and enriching. Thus the work is all out to assess the education programme that is being used in Nigerian Universities for senior secondary schools' reading class and the impact of the programme.

Reading is a skill in English which is an official language in Nigeria. When in the 1950's Nigerians rapidly took over senior civil service post from the British, SBE – the Queen's English was unquestionably retained by them as the standard for Nigeria. If Standard British English (SBE) was a badge of the old Administrative elite, the new administrative elite must wear it too. The same attitude was shared by the elite in general – lawyers, academics, leading journalists, bishop and many officers... (Jowitt 1991:15)

Thus English became the official language in Nigeria, the language of government, lawyer, of administrative, of religions, language of law and most importantly the medium of instructions from certain level in primary schools to tertiary institutions. English has assumed the enviable status in Nigeria; it is a mark of social acceptability, relevance, prestige, and privileges in Nigeria.

According to Okoh (1995:9), English enjoys the status of a second language in this country. But the average user or student of English may still consider it a 'foreign' language in the sense that it is not an L1 in this part of the English speaking world.

At the university level, English is initially only taught to the 100 level students. This is confirmed by Adetugbo (1999:iv) in the preface of his book – “Communicative English and Study Skills. According to him “the book is designed primarily for the compulsory GST 101 – course- Use of English for first year undergraduates. Lamidi (2012), an English course supervisor at University of Ibadan asserts that in 2010/2011 academic session, the GES 101 curriculum was reviewed and the course was split into two for thorough teaching. These two units are GES 101- Use of English 1, which is principally on grammar, and GES 201- Use of English (11), which is devoted to teaching speaking and writing skills. While the 100 level students of University of Ibadan takes GES 101, GES 201 is designed for 200 level students.

This is perhaps done to sharpen the English language competence and performance of university students. Jowitt (1991:25) opines that “one of the paradoxes of Nigeria's current language situation is that though the general positions of English in national life is perhaps stronger than it has ever been, the quality of the English spoken and written by Nigerians is perceived by most Nigerians qualified to judge to have been deteriorating over a long period”. Thus “ideas currently being put forward to remedy the evil at the level of higher education include revising and strengthening the Use of English or (General English) course that undergraduates are obliged to take along with their other courses... (Jowitt, 1999:26). Hermida views that the reality is that most first-year students lack academic reading skills, especially because University-level reading greatly differs from High School reading. Thus, most students employ non-university strategies to read academic texts, which results in students taking a surface approach to reading. Thus, the teaching and learning of Use of English emerged in the universities and the curriculum was designed. Adetugbo (1999) gave insight into the English curriculum designed for Use of English

at the University of Lagos thus. The book comprises study skills, skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, memory and test taking skills, and parts of speech. However, University of Lagos English curriculum (2016) shows that GST, that is, Use of English is now being offered as a general course in the two semesters at the 100 level as GST 105- Use of English 1 and GST 106- Use of English 11. The General English curriculum is designed so as to prepare the students, especially pre-service teachers for the task of teaching and learning after University Education. These are few examples of the brilliant steps taken by English scholars to remedy and improve students' reading skills among other skills at the tertiary level of education.

English teaching and learning in secondary schools

English is a second language to non-native users such as Indians Singaporeans, Ghanaians, and Philippians who learn after their mother tongue and use it in school as an official language (Gurt 1997 in Akinjobi; 2013). The above scenario is same in Nigeria as most Nigerians learn and employ English after acquisition of mother tongues. The English teacher, as a matter of compulsion, must get fully prepared for the task because they are the disseminators of English knowledge.

Akinjobi (2013:50) states that "...importance of English as a world language can no longer be contested. In present times, English has ridden on the rest of globalization and technology to dominate the world like no language has, and "some linguists are now saying it may never be dethroned as the king of languages." While English is the native language of some countries, it is the second or third language of some other countries. Kachru (1985) in Akinjobi (2013) refers to these three groups of users as inner, outer and expanding circles. Akinjobi further states that in some countries such as Britain, America and Australia, English is a native language (that is, mother tongue). In some other countries such as Nigeria, India, Singapore, Ghana, Philippines, it is a second language (that is, not a native language but used in schools as an official language). Others such as France, Japan, and Thailand use English as a foreign language (that is, some learn it at school and hardly use it outside English lesson context)

In Nigeria, English is the classroom language from upper primary to tertiary level of education. The National Policy on Education (2004) explains that (a.) the senior secondary school education shall be comprehensive with a core-curriculum designed to broaden pupils' knowledge and out-look. (b.) every student shall take all the six (6) core subjects in group A and a minimum of one and a maximum of two (2) from the list of elective subjects in groups B and C to give a minimum of eight (8) subjects. (c) One of the three elective subjects may be dropped in the last year of senior secondary school course.

The first core subject in group A, as it were, is English Language. This shows that the teaching and learning of the subject is compulsory at this level of education. According to Jibowo (2010), "the teacher is a crucial factor in teaching and learning activities, meaning that no worthwhile learning is achievable without teacher availability, development or preparation." This implies that an English teacher must reflect all positive attributes that are expected of an ESL teacher. He must engage in consistent self-reading and self-development. These among other things will empower his teaching profession and positively influence his students.

The English teacher must reflect all the positive attributes expected of an ESL teacher. He must engage in consistent self-reading and self-development. These among other things will empower

his teaching profession and positively influence his students. This is further confirmed by Jibowo (2005:174) who opines that “to teach English effectively the teachers themselves need to be effectively prepared for the job...” Moreover, the teacher educational background must be in tandem with his teaching career.

Teachers’ educational programme in Nigerian universities’ for senior school reading class

In Nigerian universities, using University of Ibadan as a case study, in order to prepare pre-service teachers for classroom teaching, at the 100 level, reading comprehension 1 is taught while at the 200 level reading comprehension 11 as well as reading vocabulary development, registers, reading for book review are taught. However, the interviewees are of the opinions that, among other things, reading methodology, as well as readability should be included in the curriculum to adequately prepare the pre-service and service teachers for the task of reading and teaching in secondary schools.

According to Tinto, (1993) in Hermida (2009), “success at the university level mainly depends on existing pre-entry college attributes, including the mastery of some fundamental academic skills. These include – reading, writing, critical thinking, oral presentation, and media literacy. Despite the importance of these skills for academic success, professors seldom teach them (Bean, 1996). They generally take them for granted as they tend to presuppose that all students already acquired these skills either as part of their secondary education or elsewhere in college.” Hence the reading curriculum at the universities should be enriching so as to effectively prepare teachers for secondary school teaching.

Barton, Heidema, & Jordan, (2002) in Reading Research Quarterly (2008) opine that students who read at low levels often have difficulty understanding the increasingly complex narrative and expository texts that they encounter in high school and beyond. For example, one of the major hurdles in acquiring science literacy is the conceptual density of math and science materials. Students’ performance on these more difficult texts, which include context-dependent vocabulary, concept development, and graphical information, provides the strongest indication as to whether or not they are prepared to succeed in college and the workplace (ACT, Inc., 2006). Clearly, well-evaluated programs capable of enabling middle and high school students with poor reading skills to meet the demands of complex texts are needed to ensure that these students not only succeed in their high school coursework but also graduate ready for college and work-related reading tasks.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:

- 1) To examine the influence of English education programme of some teachers on their service delivery in selected secondary schools in Ogbomoso.
- 2) To examine the factors affecting the reading curriculum implementation in secondary schools.
- 3) To look into adequacy of English curriculum in effective teaching of English to secondary school students.
- 4) To investigate the prospects of English reading curriculum on senior school reading performance.

- 5) To find out effects of Nigerian university English curriculum on the reading class of service teachers.
- 6) To examine the usefulness of the curriculum to pre-service teachers' teaching career.

Research Questions

For the purpose of this research, the following questions are raised:

- a) How beneficial is the reading skill's curriculum to pre-service teachers' training?
- b) What is the influence of English education programme on some teachers' service delivery in selected secondary schools in Ogbomoso?
- c) What are the factors affecting the reading curriculum in the senior secondary schools?
- d) What are the effects of English reading curriculum on the senior secondary schools reading performance?
- e) In what ways can we improve the reading curriculum in the senior secondary schools?
- f) Do all the students possess needful materials for effective teaching and learning of reading skill?

Research method

Research Design

This study is descriptive in nature. The researcher employed descriptive survey to carry out the study.

Sample and sampling technique

The target population was 400 level students of University of Ibadan. The students were grouped as pre-service teachers; while the second group interviewed was tagged service teachers who were graduates from the same university and are now teachers in secondary schools all over Oyo State. The schools were chosen from Ogbomoso North and Ogbomoso south Local Government. Twenty pre-service teachers were interviewed while twelve service teachers were equally interviewed. Two out of the twelve teachers that were studied had masters' degree while the remaining ones were first degree holders.

Instrumentation

Structured Interview as well as questionnaire in five point likert -type - scale was designed to collect data for the study. The reliability coefficient of the research was calculated to be 0.78 using Cronbach Alpha which affirms that the instrument is reliable.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaire were carefully scored and analysed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). descriptive analysis and t-test were used for mean scores.

Table 1: Shows Gender of the Respondents

Parametre	N	%
Female	7	58.3
Male	5	41.7

Table 1 shows there are seven female respondents (58.3%) and five male respondents (41.7%).

Table 2: Shows Age of the Respondents

Parametre	N	%
26-30	1	8.3
31-35	2	16.7
36-40	2	16.7
41-45	2	16.7
47 and above	5	41.7

Table 2 shows the age of the respondents.

Table 3: Shows Marital Status of the Respondents

Parametre	N	%
Married	9	75.0
Single	3	25.0
Divorcee	0	00

Table 4: Shows Duration of Teaching Experience

Parametre	N	%
1-5	3	25
6-10	3	25
11-15	2	16.7
16 and above	4	33.3

Table 5: Shows Influence of English Education program on English teaching at Secondary Schools

Items	Mean	Std	Rank
Logical presentation of reading skills in classroom presentation.	4.58	.515	1 st
Teachers level of reading is strengthened.	4.33	.779	2 nd
Teachers level of pronunciation mastery has influence on students phonetical symbols	4.25	.623	3 rd
Acquaint the teachers with different genres of literature.	4.08	.792	4 th
Familiarizes the teachers with different novels	3.92	.669	5 th
Competence in styles of reading.	4.17	.718	6 th

Table 5 reveals that English education programme offered for teachers empower their logical presentation of reading skills in classroom and also strengthened their level of reading. This is in line with Ajibade (2015), who says that “the teacher of English like that of any subject must have adequate professional knowledge, competence and experience about the basic techniques of classroom instruction.” Aboderin (2002) also quips that “...when students are taught by an untrained or an incompetent teacher, the result will be confusion and lack of motivation.”

Table 6: Shows Factors Affecting the Reading Curriculum

Items	Mean	Std	Rank
Inadequate English Teachers	3.83	.718	7 th
Incompetence of some English Teachers	3.83	.833	1 st
Inappropriate and inactive teaching methods.	4.25	.623	1 st
Inadequate allotted time for English reading class.	4.25	.623	3 rd
Irresponsibility on the part of parents	4.17	.718	4 th
Poor maintenance culture of reading materials on the parts of schools	4.08	.669	5 th
Failure of government to equip the schools' libraries	4.23	.754	5 th

From Table 6, it is evident that incompetence of some English teachers and inappropriate cum inactive teaching methods affect implementation of reading curriculum. Moreover, inadequate allotted time for English reading class takes the third position showing that inability to get

enough time for teaching is constituting hindrance and set back in English classroom. Hence Ogbonna (2000), advocates for the need to engage the services of qualified teachers who are trained in the use of instructional materials and the available teaching techniques to teach English language.”

Table 7: Shows Effects of English Reading Curriculum on Senior Secondary School Reading Performance

Items	Mean	Std	Rank
Reduces Sub-vocalization	4.50	.674	1 st
Reduces Regression	4.42	.718	2 nd
Solves Pointing at words	4.25	.621	3 rd
Ameliorates poor reading culture	4.25	.867	3 rd
Solves Vocalization problem	4.17	.577	5 th
Mass failure in SSCE	4.00	.853	6 th
Corrects mispronunciation of some words	3.75	.623	7 th

Table 7 reveals that the present English reading curriculum is reducing sub-vocalisation and regression in the reading skill of students in focus.

Table 8: Shows Prospects of English Reading Curriculum on Senior School Reading Performance

Items	Mean	Std	Rank
Assists students’ performance in formative and summative examination	4.58	.515	1 st
Results into production of English experts among the students.	4.58	.515	1 st
Familiarizes students with standard styles of writing	4.42	.669	3 rd
Empowers students in English oral expression	4.33	.651	5 th
Develops good reading culture among the students	4.42	.515	4 th
Leads students to acceptability and relevance in the society.	4.33	.492	5 th
Familiarizes students with standard styles of reading	3.92	.793	7 th

Table 8 shows that English Reading Curriculum assists students' performance in formative and summative examination, and also a result into production of English experts among the students and in the third place familiarizes students with standard styles of writing. This shows that teachers' efforts bear fruits in some instances.

Table 9: Shows Ways of Improving the Reading Curriculum

Items	Mean	Std	Rank
Provision of reading textbooks	4.50	.674	1 st
Sensitizing the parents on their responsibility	4.33	.492	2 nd
Constant submission of report of students performance in reading English to the NERDC	4.33	.651	2 nd
Provision of teaching that will meet the needs of the students	4.00	.853	4 th

Table 9 reflects that provision of reading textbooks is germane to attempt to improve reading curriculum and also the need to sensitize the parents on their responsibility. The results reflect the opinions of some service teachers who from their experiences in English classroom have seen that most students especially in public schools do not possess English textbooks. This is affecting students' reading skills as most of them cannot read.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study assessed the English teachers' education programme in Nigerian universities for senior secondary schools. From the study, it is revealed that English education programme offered for teachers empower their logical presentation of reading skills in classroom and also strengthen their level of reading however incompetence of some English teachers and inappropriate cum inactive teaching methods affect implementation of reading curriculum. Moreover, non-provision of reading textbooks is having negative effects on students' learning. The results reflect the opinions of some pre-service and service teachers who from their experiences in English classroom have seen that most students especially in public schools do not possess English textbooks. The interview conducted for pre-service teachers showed that although reading curriculum is effectively prepared for students teaching practice however, pre-service teachers opine that readability and reading methods should be part of the curriculum.

Based on the results, the following recommendations are given,

1. Curriculum planners should enforce allotment of more time to English teaching and learning.

2. Parents in public schools especially should be alert to their responsibilities especially the in the area of provision of materials to students.
3. Government should assist the indigent parents by providing free education.
4. Readability and reading methods should be included in the curriculum to further strengthen reading curriculum in the universities.

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Appendix 1

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SERVICE TEACHERS ON ASSESSING THE ENGLISH TEACHERS' EDUCATION PROGRAMME IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY FOR SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS' READING CLASS (AETEPNUSSRC)

Dear Respondent,

The following statements are meant to find out the ways in which teachers' educational program influence reading skills teaching in the classroom. For each statement, choose the response that best suits you in the appropriate column. Be assured that your response will only be used for the purpose of this research.

Thank you.

Fatiloro, Oluwayemisi Florence.

SECTION A: Demographical Data

1. Name of your school
2. Sex (a) Male (b) Female
3. Age of Respondent (a) 20-25 yrs (b) 26-30 yrs (c) 31-35 yrs
(d) 36-40 yrs (e) 41- yrs (f) 47 and above
3. Marital Status (a) Married (b) Single Divorce
4. Duration of teaching experience (a) 1 – 5 yrs (b) 6 - 10 yrs (c) 11 – 15 yrs (d) 16 yrs and above

SECTION B: INFLUENCE OF ENGLISH EDUCATION PROGRAMME ON ENGLISH TEACHING AT SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Please, tick (✓) the appropriate option that is your view from the list of options provided.

S = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree; and

NS = Not sure

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	NS
1.	Logical presentation of reading skills in classroom teaching.					
2.	Familiarizes the teachers with different novels.					
3.	Competence in styles of reading.					
4.	Acquaint the teachers with different genres of literature.					
5.	Teachers' level of reading is strengthened.					
6.	Teachers' level of pronunciation mastery has influence on students' phonetical symbols acquisition.					

SECTION C: FACTORS AFFECTING THE READING CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION

Instruction: Rate the extent to which the following can affect reading curriculum:

Please, tick (✓) the appropriate option that is your view from the list of options provided.

S = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree; and

NS = Not sure

S/No	Items	SA	A	D	SD	NS
1.	Inadequate English Teachers.					
2.	Incompetence of some English Teachers.					
3.	Inappropriate and inactive teaching methods.					
4.	Inadequate allotted time for English reading class.					
5.	Failure of government to equip the schools' libraries					
6.	Poor maintenance culture of reading materials on the part of schools.					
7.	Irresponsibility on the parts of parents.					

SECTION D: EFFECTS OF ENGLISH READING CURRICULUM ON SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLSTUDENTS' READING PERFORMANCE

Rate the extent to which the following statements show the effects of English reading curriculum on senior secondary school students' reading performance

Please, tick (✓) the appropriate option that is your view from the list of options provided.

S = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree; and
NS = Not sure

S/No	Effects	SA	A	D	SD	NS
1.	Mass failure in SSCE					
2.	Ameliorates poor reading culture					
3.	Corrects mispronunciation of some words					
4.	Solves vocalization problem					
5.	Reduces sub-vocalization fault					
6.	Reduces Regression fault					
7.	Solves Pointing at words					

SECTION E: PROSPECTS OF ENGLISH READING CURRICULUM ON SENIOR SCHOOL READING PERFORMANCE

Please, tick (✓) the appropriate option that is your view from the list of options provided.

S = Strongly Agree; A = Agree; D = Disagree; SD = Strongly Disagree; and
NS = Not sure

S/No	Items Prospects	SA	A	D	SD	NS
1.	Familiarizes students with standard styles of writing					
2.	Familiarizes students with styles of reading					
3.	Develops a good reading culture among the students					
4.	Assists students' performance in formative and summative examination					
5.	Empowers students in English oral expression					
6.	Results into production of English experts among the students.					
7.	Leads students to acceptability and relevance in the society.					

SECTION D: WAYS OF IMPROVING THE READING CURRICULUM

S/ No	Items Prospects	SA	A	D	SD	NS
1.	Provision of reading textbooks					
2.	Provision of reading curriculum that will meet the needs of the students					
3.	Sensitizing the parents on their responsibility					
4.	Constant submission of report of students performance in reading English to the NERDC					

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FOR PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS

1. How beneficial is the reading skill curriculum to pre-service teachers' training?
2. How well do senior secondary schools' class comprehend reading skill?
3. Did you enjoy teaching reading skill in secondary schools?
4. In your own opinion, is the reading curriculum adequate for effective teaching and learning of reading in the secondary school?
5. In what ways can the program be reviewed?