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MEMOIRE DE MAÎTRISE ÈS-LETTRES

Option: Didactique de la Langue Anglaise

THEME

**TEACHING READING SKILLS TO PROMOTE
ENGLISH LEARNING IN BENIN SECONDARY
SCHOOLS : A CASE STUDY OF FORM ONE AND
FORMFOUR IN LITTORAL DEPARTMENT**

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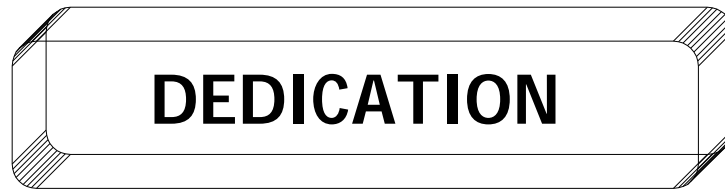
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Année académique : 2015-2016



I dedicate this work to:

- The Almighty and merciful GOD for his blessings.
- My late father **Andrew HOUNTIN-HOUNTONDJI** and my mother **Béatrice VODOUNON-AGOSSOU** who have played their role of parents, given me the necessary education and have made me what I am today.

Pascal Cossi HOUNTIN

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe this work to various groups of people: lecturers, teachers, acquaintances and relatives. It is impossible to express in words what each of them has contributed to the fulfillment of this work.

- ❖ My thanks go first to the Almighty God who makes my dream become a reality.
- ❖ I am particularly and sincerely grateful to my supervisor, Dr DATONDJI Coovi Innocent who didn't spare any of his efforts in supervising this research work.
- ❖ Special thanks to Dr Patrice AKOGBETO, the head of the English Department. May God help him to go ahead in his work.
- ❖ I am sincerely grateful to Mrs EGUE-CAMPOS Laetitia, mainly for her pedagogical advice, moral and financial supports.
- ❖ My endless thanks to my wife Irène Wanignon AZEGUE for her daily supports and affection.
- ❖ Special affection to my son Jules Precious Mahuton HOUNTIN
- ❖ I thank all my friends, brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts another major debt is to Tiburce AHOUANVOEKE who helps me in a variety of ways, which it may not be proper to mention here.
- ❖ I thank my friends Irené AYATODE, Thomas SEGLA, Haruna GANGNON, Eustance Sylva GBENOU and Raphaël MONTY for their daily supports

- ❖ My deepest gratitude is especially to my teachers MONNOU Madeleine and Gilles AVOCEVOU for their helping hand and affection
- ❖ May all the lecturers in the English department find in this work the outcomes of the long and laborious training they have given me
- ❖ I am also very grateful to the members of the board of examiners who did honor to me by agreeing to judge and improve the quality of this work.
- ❖ I am indebted to all the teachers of “secondary schools” for their substantial contribution to my education.
- ❖ I likewise thank all the teachers and students who voluntarily filled in the questionnaires I have addressed them.
- ❖ I thank the teachers of all the schools I visited when collecting data for my work.
- ❖ Finally, I would like to thank all the people who have directly or indirectly contributed to the completion of this work but whose names are not mentioned here. I cannot forget them. May God bless them.

Pascal Cossi HOUNTIN

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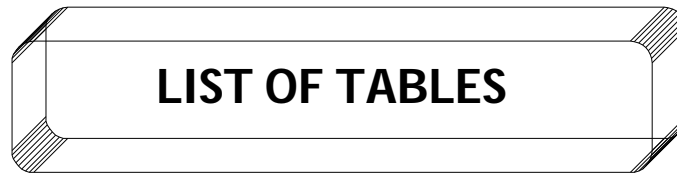
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

- ✓ **EFL:** English as a Foreign Language.
- ✓ **ESP:** English for Specific Purpose.
- ✓ **L1** :Language One (= first language or mother tongue).
- ✓ **SVO:** (Identifying) Subject Verb and Object.
- ✓ **USA:**United States of America.



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INTRODUCTION

General introduction

It is generally believed that the global objective of any language learning is the learner's desire to communicate with others. This viewpoint is all the more cogent since language learning provides working tools for enjoying basic profits from worldwide activities from which no nation can shake. Since the creation of mankind, language, no doubt, has been the most important means of communication. It plays an important role in our communities. By connecting people from different regions, languages such as, Spanish, French, Arabic, English and others have become globally predominant. On the other hand, the different industrial companies which had started in Great Britain before reaching the other parts of Europe and still before landing in America, also played a vital role in the expansion of English.

Nowadays, English is the official language in many countries. In addition, it is the most internationally used language in diplomacy, tourism, science and researches. Also many medical pamphlets and other instructions are written in English. In Benin context; English is used as a foreign language mainly for educational, commercial and diplomatic purposes. The English language is still important because it is spoken in the international meetings and also much needed in business. Due to the globalization potential of the English language in the field of commerce, diplomacy and science, most of French speaking countries have encouraged the teaching and learning of English as a foreign language both in real life and in the classroom context. Benin country is not an exception because English has become a subject matter studied in our schools.

A language is learned for communication purposes. Our country, Benin, which was colonized by France, has decided through the educational authorities to include teaching and learning English in our secondary schools as a foreign language which deserves to be learnt thoroughly for communication. As communication is one of our basic daily needs, English language is necessary, regarding its impact on our social, political and economic life.

This impact is highlighted by the number of the surrounding countries which use English as their official language.

As such, whether we like it or not, because of the cooperation which exists between the West African countries, the need of English has become a major necessity. In the same way, it is necessary to start learning it by using appropriate materials under good conditions. Language learning in general and English learning as a foreign language learning (EFL) in particular is a matter of the mastering of the reading skills and speaking skills. Learning English in Benin, a French speaking country, requires a rational teaching through the use of appropriate techniques.

But learning this language is a crucial problem in the sense that we are immersed in an environment where French has completely dominated every aspect of life. Like other languages, the teaching and learning English as a foreign language is carried out through the following four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Among these skills, this research work has focused on some of the problems encountered by teachers and learners in implementing reading because this skill deserves great care. Reading provides an opportunity for finding out all kinds of interesting information, raising curiosity and adding something to the general knowledge a person has already possessed. One important thing to keep in mind is that a language is learnt for communication in various circumstances. And this helps us to solve our problems in everyday life. But this communication is overpowered by the ability to read easily in the foreign language being dealt with.

To sum up, reading in a foreign language is so important that we are more and more exposed to English texts not only in classroom, but also in real life context. Reading in English plays a vital role in such a way that it lessens our dislike (mostly learners' one) for the language. In short, if these can be the advantage of reading in a foreign language, how do learners in our secondary schools view English class?

What are some attitudes learners have during reading sessions in their classroom? What problems do teachers and learners encounter during reading class, especially in Littoral Department?

In order to explore the importance of English learning, I would like to work on “Teaching reading skills to promote English learning in Benin secondary schools: A case study of form one and form four in Littoral Department.”

In choosing this subject, I am aiming at two specific goals: the first one is to describe reading skill in order to show whether it is well practiced or not. The second one is to design methods to improve the teaching of this skill so that after secondary school, the learners will be able to speak English fluently and accurately.

My global objective in this dissertation is to develop strategies that can help students improve their reading skills and enable them to read fluently in English in the adequate way. To achieve this objective of great importance, I think that the best way is simply to elaborate appropriate raw strategies of language teaching which can entice students’ interest. These strategies will be implemented in the students of form one and form four in Littoral Department classes in order to provide the learners with some appropriate methods which can develop their reading skills.

To carry out my research work, I have subdivided it into five chapters. The first one deals with the introduction of the problem, including the statement, the purpose, the significance and the scope of the study.

The second one is about the review of the related literature and its analysis in comparison with my work. The third chapter is related to the methodology of the study, displaying the way in which I collected the data for the study. The fourth one presents and analyzes the data collected in order to reveal the problems encountered by teachers and learners, whereas the fifth chapter gives recommendations and suggestions for some practical approaches. The last section of my dissertation is the conclusion.



**CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM**

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

This chapter deals with three main elements of research work: The problem statement, the purpose of the study, the significance and the scope of the topic.

1-1-The problem statement

English, which is one of the language students learn at schools in Benin, is taught at secondary schools from the first form to the upper sixth. It has become the most spoken language in the world and the number of people speaking it increases yearly. Within sixth billion inhabitants of the earth, roughly about four and a half billion speak English. Moreover, the best books about mathematics, biology, technology and so on, are written in English and most of jobs nowadays require English mastery among other criteria. As far as research on internet is concerned, many sites have their key information in English.

Considering that our learners learn English for seven years before going to the university, it could be assumed that they should be able to listen, speak, read and write it correctly. Unfortunately, after a survey in some Beninese schools, I have found out that learners are not especially good at reading. When you ask five students to read one paragraph, you will hear five different ways of pronouncing the same words. They cannot sustain a conversation for a few minutes in English; they lack the ability of listening, thus making you repeat over and over again what you are saying, they are unable to read without mistakes.

With regard to this poor picture, I have investigated the reasons for this phenomenon in order to find out if there is something bad in the way English is taught or learnt, or if there is a lack of students' interest.

Now, what is the purpose of this study?

1-2-The purpose of the study

In my capacities as a relatively beginner secondary school teacher of English, I have come to the realization that students may perform well in reading if good strategies are put in place in class and through sustained practice and repetition to reinforce whatever language pattern and grammatical structures that they are taught in class.

I have noticed that most students and teachers have many difficulties to be involved in the reading process. My aim is to investigate reading skill as it is taught and practised, and to propose methods to improve its teaching. In addition, the purpose of my research study is to make English teachers in secondary schools aware of the fact that reading skill is an important task to do in the process of teaching English as a foreign language at the first level, to explore how reading can be used to motivate students and to provide the materials and exercises that reflect the authentic purposes of reading.

Moreover, my study focuses on different techniques used to teach English as a foreign language in intermediate classes, in Benin which is one of the French speaking countries. This study aims at getting strategies to foster fluency in reading English as a foreign language (EFL) in Benin context in general, and particularly in form one and form four in littoral department. My goal is to share these strategies with my colleagues and students in English language classes.

Furthermore, through the study, I would like to find out whether the learners are slow, average or fast readers. If they are not fast, the study will look for strategies and procedures to help them increase their reading speed. But what is the significance of this study?

1-3- The significance of the study

Teaching English as a foreign language at a secondary school where learners are required to learn the target language in a real communication context presents a peculiar challenge. More importantly, we should not ignore the function of English as a communication interface with partners from countries such as: Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, South-

Africa, Great Britain, the USA, just to mention a few. But generally speaking, difficulties arise to hinder the process which normally aims at fluent learners.

That is why the theme: “Teaching Reading skills to promote English learning in Benin secondary schools: A case study of form one and form four in Littoral Department” is chosen to help the teachers of English improve the reading skills of their students.

The significance of the study lies in the fact that it will help teachers to reduce their talking time, learners to understand grammar and structural items. With the new strategies or solutions which I propose in this study, activities have become learner-centered. Learners become proficient readers, while the teacher becomes a simple manager and facilitator of learning.

My study is significant in the sense that it makes get rid of their traditional way of teaching. It suggests them how to organize or manage their classes in order to involve all the learners in classroom activities. And, instead of being the only proficient reader, teachers push students to the centre of the pedagogical activities. By doing that, his/her role is decentralized. This study is also significant because it tries to break the barrier existing between the language teachers and their learners. In fact, some teachers look down on their learners, mainly those who do not know anything and who must get everything from the teachers. My study has broken down this misconception and placed the students in the centre of the learning process.

Aware of the strategies proposed by this study, my own strategies of reading will certainly change. Moreover, this study can enable to explore, to extent, the different aspects of teaching/ learning English as a foreign language.

I hope that this study will throw some light on the teaching of English as a foreign language, in such a way that it could be interesting to be learnt by everyone who has the opportunity to do so. In addition, this study is significant, for it can serve as a source of inspiration to other researchers in the area related to reading.

1-4 The scope of the study

In most French speaking African countries, English is learned and taught as a foreign language. As Benin is one of these countries, I have focused my study on different strategies used to learn/teach English as a foreign language in intermediate classes. This means that teaching English as a first language (L1) is not the concern of my study. In the same way, English for specific Purpose (ESP) is not given specific attention in this study.

Though English is taught as a foreign language in Benin, the strategies which are applied to teach it in our secondary schools are not the same. The methodology which is used to teach beginners differs from the one used in Post-beginner classes.

In addition, the approach which is used in advanced classes differs from the one used in junior classes. This means that English learned as a foreign language is not taught haphazardly. Language teachers, in their teaching, take into account the level the learners and their interests in that language.

But due to limited time I have at my disposal, and owing to certain administrative constraints, I was not able to cover all the schools of the department.

However, efforts have been made to cover some schools:

“CEG Akpakpa–Centre”, “CEG Suru–Léré”, “CEG Gbégamey”, “CEG Dantokpa” and “College Padre-Pio” where the majority of the students don’t give much importance to the study of English, they don’t think that English would be useful in their future jobs.

Furthermore, as Benin is a French speaking country where English is not used daily, learners find it difficult to read and communicate in English. Therefore, suggestions or efforts have been made to help learners become more interested in the English language and be encouraged to read it fluently.



**CHAPTER TWO:
THE LITERATURE REVIEW**

CHAPTER TWO: THE LITERATURE REVIEW

This study aims at finding strategies to foster fluency in reading English as a foreign language (EFL) in Benin context, particularly in the Department of Littoral. My goal is to put forward these strategies which regard both the teachers' and learners' achievements in the English language.

I then, for the need of the study, have reviewed some books and educational papers related to reading. I have also gone on the internet in order to propose to our learners and teachers some credible reading tools so as to have proficient readers. I have also read some dissertations in order to have good inspiration.

2-1- Definitions of the key words

Skill

To succeed in anything, people need skill. If a writer is not skilled, people won't enjoy reading his/her books; if a singer is not skilled, his/her records won't be enjoyed.

According to Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English(new edition) "skill" is the special ability to do something well, especially as gained by training and practice.

2-1-1- Reading skill

In this part, after defining the verb "**to read**", I will try to state what "reading skill" means.

According to Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English(new edition), to read is: "**to look at**" and "**understand**" something printed or written. This definition states two facts which are: "**look**" and "**understand**". Through "**look**" can be seen the idea of perception, so the reader must first see what he/ she wants to read secondly know the meaning of the words which are read. If "**to look at a printed page**" is an easy exercise, "**to understand it**" is a more complex one.

In this trend, L. Bumpass (1950) advocates that "**reading**" has been called the process of decoding a particular writing system into language.

In addition, “**reading**” is receptive language process. It is a psycholinguistic guessing game (1967). There is an essential interaction between language and thought in reading.

The writers encode thought as language and the reader decodes language as thought. Kenneth Goodman 1988.

2-1-2- Reading skill as a discipline

According to *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English* (2nd edition) “**discipline**” is: a branch of learning studies at University (p.330).

In this work, discipline is considered as something to be learnt. Reading skill, regarded as a discipline must be taught and be given the same importance as other disciplines such as History, Geography, Mathematics and so on ... So, still according to Wilga Rivers and Mary S Temperley (1978: 214):

“Instead of observing that all high school students can read in the native language and presuming that they can therefore be expected to read in the foreign language without much help, the modern methodologist tries to understand the processes involved in the reading of a written test especially a test in a foreign language”(p. 214).

Taking into account this observation, teachers must consider reading as an important skill in language learning. If the student does not know how to read language, he will certainly find it difficult to write and to learn his lessons. For example, in our primary schools, the students in primary three cannot learn their notes. Therefore, reading skill must be seen as a discipline which must be taught step by step.

2-1-2-1- Reading as a means of learning a language

While listening and speaking are the starting point of language learning process, reading is a central point in that activity. When we start learning a language, after acquiring some words orally, we learn the alphabet of this language. When a French speaker is learning English for example, he must be taught that “**A**” is pronounced “**ei**” instead of “**a**”. Reading is very important in learning a language because this activity at school is closely linked to textbooks.

2-1-2-2- Reading as a means of acquiring knowledge

Here, it is important to note that the word “Reading” is often used to describe both what beginners do and what advanced readers do when they engage in fluent reading.

But what do these two kinds of readers do to become better readers in our classes? Taking into account what has been said so far, I can say that both beginners and advanced readers acquire knowledge when they are reading. A person who is unable to read will have difficulty to learn anything at school although there are other means of learning nowadays. To study mathematics, physics, history, and so on ..., one must know how to read, consequently, students must be taught how to read any book.

The way we read a magazine is quite different from how we read a poem; and from the way a history book is read. For example, the novel employs continuous text; on the contrary, the science text book employs running text, captions diagrams; tables, photographs, mathematical formulae and so on ...

2-1-3- The place of reading skills

It is undeniable that a language is first spoken. Nevertheless, after being able to listen to a language and speak it, a second language learner must be able to read it correctly.

Through reading, students can understand quite accurately written materials that they are not yet prepared to discuss orally. Thus, to master a new language, the skill students need most is reading, since second language learning is very closely tied to textbooks and reading is not a single skill but combines several skills, all operating together. Although we may read diction for pleasure, we often read non-fiction with an eye to performing other tasks. We may read in order to learn a grammar lesson to increase our vocabulary. Learning reading is very important because in many countries, foreign languages are learnt by numbers of students who will certainly never have the opportunity of conversing with a native speaker.

In the course of learning a foreign language, teachers must put a stress on reading. A person who read correctly will have less difficulty to speak and to write. So, reading is linked with writing and speaking.

2-1-4- Techniques of the reading skills

A technique is a method of doing something that needs skill. In this section, I will describe the reading techniques.

2-1-4-1- Skimming

In Longman Dictionary of contemporary English(Second edition)

“to skim” is:

“To read quickly to get the main idea”.

From this definition, I can draw the idea when a person skims, he doesn't look in detail at what he is reading.

Before he reads each chapter in a book, he will skim the whole chapter to get a general impression of what, he will be reading and to introduce himself to important vocabulary used by the author. Getting a general impression before he reads helps him anticipate what he will read in each section of the chapter and recall what he has already known about the subject. Remembering what he has already known about the subject will help him grasp the general meanings which are not completely clear to him and help him also to organize the ideas of the chapter in his mind. As he skims, he will notice words which appear again in the text. These are the basic words which he must look up in a dictionary if they are not familiar to him. The skimmer will be aware of the author's method of organization which will help locate quickly the answers of the questions that he will be asked. He will also find quickly the information he needs to prepare the answers to essay exam questions.

To skim a chapter for example, there are some stages that must be followed.

Stage 1:

One must read the main title of the chapter and all the headings and notice how the titles of each section of the chapter relate to one another.

Stage 2:

One will examine pictures, charts and other illustrations in the chapter and try to determine what they represent.

Stage 3:

One must look for clues in the passage that will tell us about the characters.

Stage 4:

One must look at the end of the chapter or at the bottom of the page if there is a footnote number.

Stage 5:

All italicized words and phrases will be looked at.

After acquiring this skimming technique, it will be easier for a student to read a chapter and also a whole book in a short time. Skimming is not the sole technique to acquire in order to be a good reader, there are other ones.

2-1-4-2- Scanning

To scan is to look at something quickly without careful reading, often looking for a particular item. Taking into account this definition, I can say that while scanning, the reader looks through the text rapidly to locate specific information. This rapid reading is done at a speed faster than the speed with which one usually reads a text of average difficulty and still faster than the average speed at which one reads a particularly important and difficult text. Rapid reading serves useful purposes such as evaluation (helping the reader decide whether the text is worth reading further), review (allowing a quick survey and review of something read earlier).

The learner who succeeds in acquiring this reading technique will be able to read a book quickly; furthermore, he will do better in a reading class and a reading examination.

Although this technique is important to master reading, there are other techniques which are not less important.

2-1-4-3- Guessing

Another ability that a good reader must have is the capacity of guessing words meaning from their context. In fact, one can never know all the English words that can be encountered in a text. Thus, it is very important to be able to make good guesses at the meaning of words.

Examining the context of words, that is to say words and phrases that come before and after them, is one way to make a logical guess about the words meanings. As a matter of fact, a student can also get clues to the meaning of words from punctuation. The acquisition of this method will be very helpful to both secondary school and university learners.

2-1-4-4- Inferring

“To infer, is to deduce, that is from a judgment about the meaning of something done, said or read, using one’s knowledge or reason”.For fluent reading, learners must be able to infer, that is to be able to detect rapidly meaningful groups of words, even when the lexical content is not clear to them. Students must learn to detect effortlessly the indicators of words classes, the auxiliary and in flexional features of the verbs phrase, including the markers of tense, aspect and modality, the words which introduce phrases and clauses and the particular modifications of meaning they indicate, the adverbs and adverbial expressions which limit the action in time, place and the indicators of interrogations and negations.

When a writer does not state an idea directly, but the reader understands what idea follows logically from what the writer says, the reader has made an inference. Readers must often make inferences because writers do not put all of their ideas on paper directly.

To be a good reader, one must be sure that the inferences one makes can be logically justified from what the writer says.

Practice in recognizing logical inferences is important for good reading. Teachers need to be aware of the inferences students can practice. In addition to what has been said so far, there are two groups of words that impede the understanding of students of English as a second language: references and connectives. In order to succeed in doing this task, teachers must train them to identify these words so as to understand their use while they are reading.

Inferences are words or phrases that are used as substitutes for words or phrases used either before or after them in the reading material. They are used to avoid unnecessary repetition of words or phrases. Connectives are words that are used to link ideas together in some kinds of relationship. They can also signal a conditional sentence in which one part of the sentence tells the conditions that must occur before the action described.

2-1-4-5- Reading rate

In order to present a good proposal research in teaching reading of English as a foreign Language to EFL students, I have devoted my time to read some of the specific English books.

Here are some of them:

❖ “*Teaching foreign language Skills*” by Rivers (1981). Nowadays, students do not actually grasp the importance of reading to achieve a specific purpose. Their attitudes in a class during a reading a session do not allow them to reach this purpose. That’s the reason why to point out the importance of reading, Rivers (1981). Said in the above mentioned book: “*Reading is the most important activity in any language class, not only as a source of information and pleasurable activity, but also a means of consolidating and extending one’s knowledge of the language*” (PP. 259).

From this, I can say that reading activities in our classes are not only for pleasure or for getting the marks in order to go up to the high class. And pointing out the competency-based approach ideology, the reading activities are to help learners get new knowledge and consolidate their own knowledge on the topic of the text. But the way learners deal with reading cannot be applied to the above quotation. I really feel unrewarded when at the end of a given reading lesson; students are not able to achieve specific tasks for consolidation. When learners are not able to gain much from a reading activity, it means that bad attitudes can always be observed.

❖ “*Reading Dynamics*”, by Evelyn wood et al (2003), is written especially for poor readers. The book presents the basic reading skills simply and one at a time; it also provides of these skills. The learner is trained to move his eyes easily and quickly over the page. He is then given exercises that train him to look at more than one word at a time.

The aim of the book is to make the teaching of reading more efficient, convenient and pleasant. Sharing the same viewpoint, Eskey (1988) says:

“Rapid and accurate” decoding of language is important to any kind of reading and especially to second-language reading. Good readers know the language. They can decode For the most part, by a kind of automatic identification that requires no precisely no this “automaticity” that frees the minds of fluent readers of a language to think about and interpret what they are reading.” (page 94)

In addition, for the need of the study, I have read some educational papers and consulted some research works (former dissertations) on the internet and in the library of University of Abomey-Calavi

They are listed below:

❖ “Problems in EFL reading, teaching and possible solutions” by JLAO LI- Juan (School of Foreign Languages, Dalian Polytechnic University, Dalian 116034, China) Sep 2007. Volume 4, N. 9 (Serial N. 45).

In this research work, the author exposes some strategies the teacher can use in order to have active classrooms during reading activities such as:

1-*Pre-read*: Pre-reading task provokes reader's interest, elicits or provides appropriate background knowledge and guarantees that the learners start to read on the right track.

2-*While-read*: while reading task focuses on the development of students' reading skills, trains students in applying reading strategies and improves their control of English.

3-*Post-read*: Post reading task checks students' comprehension, leads them to a deeper understanding of the text, and steers the students towards follow-up activities.

This research work also exposes credible reading strategies for both less-proficient readers and proficient readers.

Furthermore, I have consulted some books in libraries. Among these books, the following ones are to be mentioned:

❖ Charles Zinzindohoué. (2009: P17). "*Sunshine 6e*"

❖ Diller, C. K. (1978). "*The Language Teaching Controversy.*" New Hampshire: University of New Hampshire Press.

❖ Dobson, Julia. "*Making the most of Reading.*" *English Teaching Forum volume 1 number 2*. March 1973.

❖ Hatch, E. (1978). "*Reading a Second Language.*" Rowley, Massachusetts: Newbury House.

❖ Hyland (1989:104). "*Purpose and Strategy: Teaching Extensive Reading Skills*"

❖ Kenneth Crippwell; J. Keane, J. Alamou, J. Dado, A. Gueye, L. Kouffi.

"*GOFOR ENGLISH (6e and 5e).*" London: The Macmillan press Ltd/EDI CEF.

Moreover, some articles have also been read in order to improve my dissertation. Some of them are listed below:

● Dubin, F. (1979). "Selected articles from English teaching Forum".
New York: MC Graw-Hill.

● "Jeune Afrique N° 1069" (P. 74)

● Norris, W. R. (1995). "Getting students Personally Involved in their reading and literature classes". Japan: Fukuoka women's junior college Studies. Vol. 49: 35-48

●Takagaki, T. (2002).“The role of Literature in college EFL reading classes”. Japan: Papers from the third conference on English and learning.

2-1-4-6- Silent reading

Silent reading, the reading without spoken expression, is profitable for both learners and teachers.

During this reading, a passage is given to the learners and they have their attention concentrated on it. This activity is a valuable one in teaching, and is directed at understanding and thinking about what learners; although it is not a principal language activity in the classroom, it plays a double role.

First, it helps the learners to fix structures and vocabulary since they can read the text at their own speed and check the difficult words. Apart from this, learners can also take notes which will guide them when answering the teacher’s questions. Second, it facilitates the teacher’s job since his learners will already have had an idea of the text and will likely answer his questions more readily, taking a more active part in the class. It will also enable him, while the students are reading, to go through his preparations.

2-1-4-7- Reading Aloud

During this exercise, one learner is asked to read out a text that all of the students have previously read or not. This reading has a place in English language lesson, but in the first four or five years, it is a short text that is used.

When the learners are reading, the teacher discovers the words that are difficult for them and try to help them.

But before learners read new structures and new vocabulary, teacher must teach orally both new structures and new lexical items. If this oral preparation is not previously done, learners will bark at print, that is, they will read aloud clearly and well but won’t understand what they hear themselves saying. If oral preparation has been thorough aloud the prepared text will not take long. In fact, it will become a kind of revision rather than a teaching activity.

In this reading, teachers can teach how to read different texts: poetry, drama, narrative texts; the same thing will be done about punctuation, rhythm, stresses and unstressed words.

It is necessary to mention that silent reading and reading aloud are class activities and the duration of reading at school is limited, thus to become fluent, learners need another kind of reading called supplementary reading which they do individually after schools.

2-1-4-8- Supplementary reading

As the language field is so wide, and the time to teach it in school is so limited, the learners need some help during the hours when they are not at school. This would greatly help, even though it is rarely possible. There are other aids such as radio and films but usually however, radio and films are often help only to the advanced learner. The beginner rarely benefits from radio and films as the language used is not simple enough. The best aid we can hope to get is from books.

In teaching English in secondary schools we should give our students some help and encouragement in reading. We should introduce them and get them interested in books which are not necessarily textbooks. They need to be encouraged to read English outside school and continue this activity. It is most important, however, that books used for our learners should be carefully selected and adjusted to their level.

This does not mean that every word must be known, but it means that the reader who has to work alone should be given a book in which he knows most of the words.

2-1-4-9-Extensive reading

Extensive reading consists in reading a large amount of material in a large amount of time. It is an out of class activity in contrast with intensive reading which is a classroom activity. It is also an individualized or a shared activity; the learners read, for their own pleasure, short stories, plays, short novels, newspapers or magazines especially written for schools or selected articles and advertisements. Consequently, to paraphrase Wilga. M.

Rivers and Mary. Temperley (1978): “Extensive reading gives students the opportunity to use their knowledge of the language for their own purpose” (p.229).

In planning for extensive reading, the teacher should provide a favourable environment in which reading English yields enjoyment and pleasure. Seen in this perspective, reading in an English course comes closer to reading in the native language. Thus, while practicing extensive reading, learners attempt to increase their reading speed. During this exercise, the teacher should make use of relatively easier reading material depending on the concerned learners’ level.

Completely new vocabulary and grammatical patterns should be minimized if not avoided altogether for low level learners since the purpose is to provide a wide range of use and meaning context for known vocabulary and pattern. The learners thus develop their skills in deducing the meanings of known items.

In this reading, learner’s motivation and follow-up activities are still important. Reading matters that appeal to interest or need and which are somewhat less difficult than the classroom reading help encourage learners to read on their own since, to paraphrase Wilga M. Rivers and Mary S. Temperley M. “*Reading is not a reaction to a text but an interaction between writer and reader mediated through the text... reading efficiently is a matter of how effective a discourse the reader can create from the text*” (p.67).

An additional motivation can be provided by having the students read with the aim of using the information gained for some purposes such as solving a problem, forming a judgment or argument or making an evolution, all of which can be reported to the teacher or the class orally or in writing.

This kind of reading is important to learners since they can read at their own speed and increase their vocabulary, their grammar knowledge and discover the culture of English, of the native speaking people. This reading is very helpful for students since, to use Wilga M. Rivers’ words (1978): “*Reading, once developed, is the one which most easily maintains at a high level the student himself without help from his teacher*” (p45).

Although extensive reading encourages students to read on their own without the strict pressure from the teacher, the teacher must check students' reading because there can be some lazy students. Thus; Dobson, Julia (1973) Said:

“Instead of observing that all high school students can read in the native language and presuming that they can therefore be expected to read in the foreign language without much help, the modern methodologist tries to understand the processes involved in the reading of written text, specially a text in a foreign language” (pp.8-9).

2-1-5-Intensive reading

Intensive reading is a reading during which a short text is given to learners to process in a short time with their attention drawn on a particular item. The aim is to teach a specific point of the language. Intensive reading provides material for close study of problem areas as in the following example provided by Wilga Rivers and S. Temperley (1978: 225): *“The students often have difficulty understanding the English system for expressing action in the past” (p.225).*

To teach this tense for example, the teacher can choose one text, the students will become aware of the fact that in English, that has taken place can be expressed either in time value through the use of the simple past tense or as may combine tense with perfect, progress forms.

To illustrate their statement, they give the following example taken from Wilga Rivers and Mary S. Temperley, in *Teaching Foreign Language Skills, 2nd edition (p226).*;

“She came to New York in 1939 and has lived there ever since. Although she never studied English in school, and has never learned to speak it well, she has made many friends in the city, particularly among people from her native country. She failed to get a license because of her language, but her friends have her get enough work to live”.

Here is my commentary related to the example on intensive reading.

“Came” and “studied” are simple past tense. They refer to events which took place at definite time in the past. “Has lived”, “has made”, “have made”, all refer to actions which had begun in the past but which continue to be carried out or have bearing in the present. Intensive reading can also be used to teach contrastive problems of meaning since

it is in functioning in the language that students will begin to assimilate the differences in coverage semantic space of English words which seem to be equivalent in meaning to certain words in their own language. Another use of the intensive reading can be to inform learners about a fact.

Considering what has been said so far, I can say that intensive reading is stage that must not be neglected. And then, some approaches were made to reading.

2-1-6-Different approaches to reading

Linguistics and reading teachers agree that reading is a prominently cognitive activity carried out by our brain which process into meaning the visual information handled by our eyes. However, clear-cut controversy is gaining a currency on the leading role of our world knowledge in reading.

On that ground, many approaches are being held including the top down, the bottom-up and interactive approaches views which are to be explained.

2-1-7-The Top down or psycholinguistic model (concept Driven)

Approach

Knowledge/back ground/Schemata-based-Goodman, Smith or–Concept-Driver Approach
Knowledge/background/Schemata-base (Goodman, Smith).

Overreliance on top-down or knowledge-based processing Schema interference.

The “Top down” approach helps readers bringing meaning to text based on their experiential background and interpreting text based on their prior knowledge-whole language-

Top: higher order mental concepts such as the knowledge and expectations of the reader.

Bottom: the physical text on the text. The top- down model of reading focuses on the readers brings to the process (Goodman, 1967; Smith, 1971-1982). The readers sample the text for information and contrast it with their world knowledge, helping to make sense of what is written. The focus here is on the readers as they interact with the text.

This model starts with the hypotheses and predictions then attempts to verify then by working down to the printed stimuli. This view of reading was called the psycholinguistic guessing game.

According to Goodman (1979) readers use processes in reading (-p.16-)

- 1- recognition-initiation
- 2- prediction
- 3- Confirmation
- 4- Correction
- 5- Termination
- 6- Insights that are foundational to this top-down model: (pp12-14)
 - Language included, must be seen in its social context.
 - Competence must be separated from performance.

Competence: what readers are capable of doing. It results in the reader's control of and flexibility in using the reading process.

Performance: what we observe them to do. It is the observable result of the competence.

Researchers would be committing a serious error if they equated what readers do with what they are capable of doing.

- 1- Language must be studied in process
- 2- Language must be studied in its human context.

Impact of Goodman's model-pages 3, 23, 240

This model which has recently been characterized as a concept-driver, top-down pattern had the greatest impact on conceptions about native and second language reading instruction: it made the reader an active participant in the reading process from earlier views of SL reading as a passive linguistic decoding process to more contemporary views of SL reading as an active predictive process.

Problems- (Stanovich, 1980)

- 1- For many texts, the reader has knowledge of the topic and cannot generate predictions.
- 2- Even if a skilled reader can generate predictions, this would take much longer than it would to recognize the words.

2-1-8-The Bottom up or phonetics reading views (serial approach)

(Text- based) – (Laberge& Samuels, Mac Worth)(1971-1982)

(Overreliance on bottom-up or text-based=>processing text-boundedness).

The “bottom up” approach stipulates that the meaning of any text must be “decoded” but the reader and that student are “reading” when they “can sound out” words on a page (Phonics).

It gives the ability to de-code or put into sound what is necessary for the readers to recognize what they, as readers, bring to the information on the page. The model starts with the printed stimuli and works its way up to the higher level stages.

Problems: - (Stanovich 1980)-

This model has tendency to depict the information flow in a series of discrete stages, with each stage transforming the input and then passing the recorded information on the next higher stage.

An important shortcoming of this model is the fact that it is difficult to account for sentence-context effects and the role of prior knowledge of text topic as facilitating variables in word recognition and comprehension because of lack of feedback.

According to Eskey (1973), the decoding model is inadequate because it underestimates the contribution of the reader who makes predictions and processes information. It fails to recognize that students utilize their expectations about the text, based on their knowledge of language and how it works (p. 3).

2-1-9-The Interactive Approach – Rumelhart, Stanovich, Eskey

For those reading theorists who recognized the importance of both the text and the reader in the reading process, of an amalgamation of the two emerged the interactive approach. Reading here is the process of combining textual information with the information the reader brings to a text.

The interactive model (Rumelhart 1977, Stanovich 1980) stresses both what is on the written page and what a reader brings to it using both top-down and bottom-up skills. It views reading as the interaction between reader and text.

The overreliance on either mode of processing to the neglect of the other mode has been found to cause reading difficulties for SL learners (Carrell 1988, p.239).

The interactive models of reading assume that skills at all levels are interactively available to process and interpret the text (Grabe: 1988).

In this model, good readers are both good decoders and good interpreters of text, their decoding skills becoming more automatic but no less important as their reading skill develops (Eskey 1988).

According to Rumelhart's interactive model:

1-Linear models which information only in one direction and which do not permit the information contained in a higher stage to influence the processing of a lower stage contain a serious deficiency.

Hence the need for an interactive model which permits the information contained in a higher stage of processing to influence the analysis that occurs at a lower stage.

2-When an error in word recognition is made, the word substitution will maintain the same part of speech as the word for which it was substitutes, which will make it difficult for the reader to understand. (Orthographic knowledge)

3-Semantic knowledge influence word perception. (Semantic knowledge).

4-Perception of syntax for a given word depends upon the context in which the word is embedded. (Syntactic knowledge.)

5-Our interpretation of what we read depends upon the context in which a text segment is embedded. (Lexical knowledge.)

All the aforementioned knowledge sources provide input simultaneously. These sources need to communicate and interact with each other, and the higher-order should be able to influence the processing of lower order stages.

According to Stanovich's interactive- compensatory model:

*Top down processing may not be difficult for the poor reader who may be slow at word recognition but has knowledge of the text topic.

*Bottom-up processing may be easier for the reader who is skilled at word recognition but does not know much about the text topic.

Stanovich's model states, then, that any stage may communicate with any other and that any reader may rely on better developed knowledge sources when other sources are temporarily weak.

To properly achieve fluency and accuracy, developing readers must work at perfecting both their bottom-up recognition skills and their top-down interpretation strategies. Good reading- that is fluent and accurate reading-can result only from a constant interaction between these processes.

Fluent reading entails skilful decoding and relating information to prior knowledge (Eskey, 1988).

Reading is a bi-directional process that concerns both the Reader and the text. The level of reader comprehension of the text is determined by how well the reader variables (interest level in the text, purpose for reading the text, knowledge of the topic, foreign language abilities, awareness, of the reading process, and level of willingness to take risks) interact with the text variables (text type, structure, syntax, and vocabulary)

(Hosenfeld, 1979).

According to *Joanne Devine* (1988), one thing needs to be taken into consideration: readers' internalized model of the reading process is extremely important. There is convincing evidence that readers indeed have internalized models of the reading process that they bring to bear when they read. Sound-or-centered readers, those who equated good reading with sound identification or good pronunciation focused their attention on the graphic information in the text and failed to understand or recall what they had read. Meaning-centered readers demonstrated good to excellent recall and comprehension of text.

A reader's theoretical orientations toward reading may determine the degree to which low proficiency in the language restricts second language reading ability.

The models that readers hold may be of critical importance in allowing them to strike a successful balance between bottom-up and top-down processing necessary for the interpretation of text.

ESL researchers should be interested in interactive models for several reasons (p.59).

1-Several studies note that linguistic deficiencies are inhibiting factors in reading / Clarke, 1979; Singer, 1981; Carell, 1988/.

2-There is a need for extensive vocabulary for reading / Alderson and Urquhart, 1984; Singer, 1981 /

3-There is a need to account for poor readers who do guess extensively.

4-Good readers are not good simply because they are better predictors, or make better use of context.

2-2- General tools for making proficient readers

Making a skilled reader is a long process of featuring reading habit through the application of some strategies apt to promote learning through extensive reading.

Therefore, general tools for making brilliant readers are just the vital reading strategies and skills could apply to better their reading habits.

So, as Troyka / 1989 advises: learners need to read widely to increase their vocabulary and enlarge their knowledge base to ease their reading. They need to assess the difficulty of materials by clustering ideas, by pacing through the print and eliminating useless regressions while reading. They are to learn to sort out the main ideas and their supporting details from which they can draw inferences and their own conclusion.

Learners deserve training to work out the writer's attitude, intension and to analyses the themes development by critically examining facts and opinions from the text.

Making an informed opinion rooted in logical illustration from the text is another reading ability they should get.

They should acquire the skill of writing on topic developed in their reading. Moreover, Fry (1991) corroborates those reading skills revealing the need for the learners to be motivated as to stay long on task to become accurate, to practise until they grow automatic, fluent in reading. "Automaticity" and fluency in reading are the end product of a long practice as revealed by Samuels in Fry (1991). In reading as in other matters, practice makes perfect" (p.92).

In short, we need to help learners realize that the more they use the reading skills, the more proficient readers they grow.

2-2-1- Skilled reader's attitudes.

Skilled reader's reading habit deserves scrutinizing so as to disclose the basic dynamism that conditions their reading dexterity. Looking minutely into the cunning reader's habit leads me to unmask three basic broad strategies for increasing learning from text. They include pre-reading, on-reading and Post-reading strategies.

2-2-2- Pre-reading strategies

The most prominent reading strategies apt to quicken the meaning-making process is obviously the ability to build up expectations on the text content. Indeed, before reading properly a text, crafty readers handle the text silent visual items to predict its vital gist.

In fact,foresighted readers usually survey the text boldface item mainly the pictures, content, preface, headlines, titles, subtitles that look into objectively to work out the gist. This built-in expectation will drive quickly and ease the reading when it is confirmed.

But, when the expectation is not confirmed, then the reading is made complex and slows down the process of making meaning from the text. In that case, good readers quickly adjust their former expectations and move on the reading.

2-2-3- While reading strategies

Good readers are usually believed to read for meaning. They do not read as mechanical a computer would. Indeed, while reading for meaning, talented readers do not rely heavily on the signals. On the contrary, they work out meaning from context clues that definitely imply the skill of heeding definition, examples, materials guessing the meaning of unfamiliar words.

Those context clues enable them to drive at the text meaning which depends on processing larger units for text by sampling the visual signals of the printed page. In clearer terms, context clues enable good readers to quickly sort out the text meaning by sampling, chucking the visual information.

And in this process, a series of words, phrases, clauses and even whole sentences may be skipped fully without impeding comprehension. Besides, working towards the text understanding, good readers read on, between and beyond the lines on focusing on the surface meaning of the print by processing it into its implied sense. This procedure will enable them to read beyond the lines by contrasting, comparing the state meaning with the implied one on which they will build their critical standpoint.

Furthermore, while reading, learned readers take great heed of the central theme, the main idea. They access the writer's craft, intention, the text salient linguistic resources to the detriment of minor, useless information. In short, as Goodman (1979) states it: "*Fluent reading is dependent to a considerable degree on the reader's ability to exploit redundancies in the text, to reduce uncertainty*" (p.26). This argument merely shows how proficient readers are good at penetrating the main insightful points of writing.

They are very quick at making inferences, drawing logical conclusions, providing a critical judgment of the writer's message.

They prioritize the text outline through the structure of each paragraph so as to quickly sort out the writing techniques used to convey the message home.

Concisely stated, while reading, good readers draw upon their linguistic knowledge to predict the coming up lexical items, which quickens the reading and eases their meaning prediction which is strengthened by their life experience background.

Learned readers usually tend to value the overall effect of diction and word formality and informality as an aid in correctly interpreting the writer's craft. They heed greatly the writer's intention by correctly accessing the tone used in the writing to drive at the right area of truthfulness of the message decoded.

2-2-4- Post reading strategies

Skilled readers believe that the reading process will be unrewarding if they fail to make later personal use of the interesting items of the text. Therefore, they shape post reading strategies liable to help them store the text gist their long term memories. After the reading, good readers usually trace back the key points without turning to the text. They take to repeating the text gist long enough to keep it fresh in their minds. They usually go back to reread patiently the confusing parts. Skilled readers go so far as to write about topics they met with in their reading. This is one of the best ways of internalizing and materializing the text comprehension which offers rooms for easing the text content for personal use. Pedagogically viewed, post reading strategies deserve to be integrated in our

learners reading habit since they can enable them to recite and review the text gist for their later valid use. Thus, unlighted by text resources, learners could hold foresighted standpoint on the policy matters of the society through their visiting and discussions.



**CHAPTER THREE:
THE METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

CHAPTER THREE: THE METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

In this chapter, I would like to describe the methods and techniques I have used for the collection of the data. So, the chapter includes:

- 1- The research procedure
- 2- The questionnaires
- 3- The classroom observations
- 4- The interviews

3-1 The research procedure

In order to get factual data on problems encountered when teaching reading skills, I have displayed the review of the appropriate literature on what has already been done about it. I have also devoted much time to observing reading classes. I have issued questionnaires to teachers and learners so as to enable them to feature their reading styles. I have interviewed some qualified EFL teachers in order to get their opinions about my research topic. I also find it important to make a quick survey on the content of the books and thesis I found.

My class observations procedure has consisted in observing English lessons dealing with reading. I've attended reading classes of different levels in five colleges. There are: "CEG Akpakpa-Centre"; "CEG Suru-Léré"; "CEG Dantokpa"; "CEG Gbégamey" and a private school named College "Padré-Pio". Many teachers have agreed to take part in my effort to turn our students into skilled readers, thanks to the classroom observations they allowed me to make in each of these schools.

3-2- The questionnaires

To reach my goal, I have addressed some questionnaires to both teachers and students. So four hundred and fifty students' questionnaires were given out and each of them was answered by a group of five or four students from 6e to 3e. (see the sample of students' and teachers' questionnaires in the annex). Before distributing the questionnaire, I explained the purpose of the task to the students.

Then, I invited them to tick only one answer, at the same time at the class. I also invited students to ask me any question that they had about the different questions. It is important to notice that I didn't influence the learner's answers. The sample of students' questionnaires contains 15(fifteen) questions. As far as teachers were concerned, 100 (one hundred) questionnaires have been distributed. I decided to leave the questionnaires with them as they promised to fill them in and return them to me as soon as possible.

But they only returned eighty (80) out of 100 (hundred) questions. The sample of teachers' questionnaires contains 11(eleven) questions. The teachers' questionnaires intended to know more about how teachers go about reading in their classes, the problems they encounter while teaching reading, the appropriateness of the materials under study and the alternative ways they may suggest fostering the teaching/learning of reading in their classes. Beside the above schools, students and teachers were contacted in the following schools: "CEG Sègbèya", "CEG Littoral", "CEG le Nokoué", and "CEG le Lac".

3-3- Classroom observation

In order to evaluate how theory is put into practice and to better appreciate the observation of both students and teachers, I have observed the Teaching/learning in 6e and 3eme classes for two months, that is, from October to November 2011. During this period, I observed each of the two classes once a week. On each occasion I was given a seat at the very back of the classroom, where I could better observe every step of the Learning / teaching process.

I paid special attention to such aspects as reading strategies, teacher's instructions, students' participation, problems encountered by students and teachers, errors corrections when students took the floor. I have to mention that I have carried out the observation in 6e and 3e at CEG Akpakpa-Centre where I teach. Before visiting the classes, some planning had been made with the English teachers who were to be visited. There was a common agreement between my colleagues and myself about what was to be observed in their classes. Here is an account of reading as managed in the observed classes.

Step 1: Motivation.

This section deals with the way teachers introduced their lessons. During my class observation, teachers would motivate their learners either through a short story or a picture drawn on the board.

Step 2: Vocabulary

At this stage, the teachers selected five or four key words that were likely to hinder learner's comprehension. They made learners repeat these words before asking them to put them in to sentences after a choral and individual repetition.

Step 3: Grammar

At this level, teachers selected the grammatical points which are unknown to learners. They explained them so that students were able to deduce the rules.

Step 4: Text exploitation consists of three different activities: silent reading, answering comprehension questions and reading aloud.

3-4- Interviews

Besides, the questionnaires and the class observation, I have also interviewed some teachers as to get their opinions, about the strategies which can be used to teach reading skills to promote English learning in Benin secondary schools in intermediate classes. So in order to get more information for my dissertation, I have decided to interview two qualified EFL teachers who have been taught English for many years, I mean who have taught English through other teaching approaches before the competency-based approach. It is important for me to have these interviews apart from the questionnaires; they may have some experiences about my research topic. I could learn from their comparison between the former teaching approaches and competency-based approach when teaching reading skills.



**CHAPTER FOUR:
FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, I have displayed the results of my investigations about the study.

4-1- DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4-1-1- The presentation of the interviews

For the first interviews I had with the experienced teacher, I asked some questions about the problems teachers encounter when teaching reading skills in their classes. He said:

“I’m sorry, my answers reveal the degree of my understanding of your questions. From the experience I have when teaching reading skills, I can say that not all our students interested in a reading class, but a reading class is the class in which learners are more interested if the lesson is well planned: To the Pre, during and Post-reading framework, I carry out tasks through integrated skills instructions. The reading skill is the most taught subskill. Students are familiar with it. So, they have developed cognitive strategies that help them follow activities related to it. They work effectively in collaboration and cooperation. Reading class is low anxiety class for the learners. The problems teachers encounter when implementing reading teaching are: the lack of material, the too large class, (number of students more than 80), the lack of furniture, the power failure, the inadequacy of the classroom, (paillottes) the biorythm (holding classes after 12 o’clock or after 6:00PM when students are no more ready to learn), the temperature in the classroom, the lighting, the sounds and the classroom environment as a whole. Others serious problems are: punctuation, pronunciation and vocabulary problems.

Many approaches to teaching reading have appeared over the years. Most of them, including the skill based approach, have adopted a general framework based upon pre, during and post reading instructions.

Integrated skills instructions and scaffolding added to the general framework make reading tasks more productive and learning effective.”

The second interviewed EFL teacher declared: “I’ve been teaching for fourteen years. To teach reading skill, we have to follow the steps that are necessary in this way such as: pre reading, while reading and post-reading. While having reading classes, some students are interested in, others are not. It depends at times on the theme, the motivation the lesson preparations. During the reading classes, some of them are troublesome, they find reading classes difficult because they are they are not interested by the English language. Some students want to read, seize the gist of the text and answer the questions on it, however others are not concentrated, ready to disturb those who want to follow.

All the problems teachers encounter when teaching reading skills lies in the students attitudes. And these attitudes from the students depend on the reading material and the teaching method. Not all students have their textbooks, that situation affects the reading lesson. So, they are not able to read at home. What the teacher starts can’t thrive. Some are sleepy during the reading session. Some make noise and distract from focusing on the real reading activity. In addition we have the problems of lack of classrooms, time devoted to teaching which is not sufficient. Furthermore, these attitudes our students have during reading sessions, depend also on the reading material, the teacher’s motivation and his ability to know what his / her students read. The major cause of such situation today can be the lack of good lesson planning, absence of textbooks, poor strategies in carrying out the lesson. Moreover I shall mention the problems of lack of teachers’ training. Students are also unwilling to communicate in the English language. A Well planned lesson, anticipates the situation in the class, taking into account all the needs in order for a successful class session.

Moreover my opinion is to sensitize our learners to practise the language, to communicate in English language and to be interested in reading classes.

Let’s improve the competency-based approach. The competency based approach leads learners to practise the language, by using vocabulary related to the themes studied in the classes. Reading teaching in the former approach is different from the competency-based approach because in the former one, learners read loudly the text whereas in the

competency- based approach, the reading is silent because reading loudly is another activity. The competency-based approach involves more learner's participation and productivity.'

4-1-2- Class observation

During my class observation, two points or parameters have been taken into account: the setting and the teacher's methodology.

The setting of all the activities is the classroom where all the interactions take place and the participants in the activities are teachers and learners. During my investigations for this section (class observation) I had the opportunity to visit two secondary-schools: "Complexe scolaire les Solidaires" and "College d'Enseignement Général Akpakpa-Centre". Two classes had been taken into consideration during my investigation: 4e and 3e. The first class was visited at "Complexe Scolaire Les Solidaires" at Sikècodji and the second class was visited at CEG Akpakpa-Centre.

In class n°1, all of the learners were not provided with the text selected from "Document D'accompagnement 6è" which was the reading material. Considering the arrangement, the learners sat side by side, or one behind the other. In such an arrangement, the learners were just there to listen or to memorize what the teacher presented to them. They were not there to use learning strategies because the seating arrangement did not facilitate their use. As far as the teacher was concerned, he was standing in front of the learners, always near the blackboard.

His presence was felt in the class. He was busy teaching whereas the learners were quiet and passive. Only the teacher talked, asked the learners questions, made them repeat sentences after him. These repetitions were constantly followed by error corrections. Genuine interactions between learner-learner or teacher-learner were non-existent. The only interaction, if there was any, consisted in learners repeating words or sentences after the teacher; some of them did not even understand what they were repeating or saying.

They just repeated statements without really knowing what they meant. Repeating in that way is parroting, and parroting is useless for learners for two reasons:

Firstly, teaching should take into account the students' interests or needs, in other words, what the teacher forces students to repeat or recite is not necessarily what they need or wish to know.

Secondly, what a learner learns should be important or useful for his daily life.

Moreover, traditional approach of teaching fails to take this into consideration and that explains its weakness. *Scott (1986) in Phonic Workbooks: Blacken Masters and Answers* noticed those weaknesses of the traditional approach and said:

“A boring teacher will soon create for himself a bored class, which is a boring class, and leads to a bored teacher: this vicious circle and can become worse and worse. On the other hand, an enthusiastic teacher is hard to resist, and except in the presence of very adverse additional factor, will generate a responsive enthusiasm in his class: the students' enthusiasm reaches him as feedback and stimulus for further enthusiasm in a reciprocal process which leads to a rewarding experience for students and teacher”(p.275).

To sum up, the teacher's role in class N°1 was too domineering. He was the only person who possessed all the knowledge. He never gave any opportunity to students to freely express their minds. Under these conditions, learners were aware of their ignorance. This feeling prevented them from developing positive attitudes towards their learning of the language. Unlike what happened in class N°1, the setting in class N°2 was totally different.

In class N°2, one could see each student with his/her text and appropriate strategies for the overall understanding of the text were well applied. The seating arrangement was also different.

In class N°2, learners were arranged in such a way that they faced one another. Such an arrangement allowed them to take part in different classroom interactions such as: pair work, group work, debates etc...The interactions also placed learners in the center of the process of teaching. They were not dominated by the teacher as was it was done with students in class N°1. They talked freely, found answers to the questions posed by the

teacher. The teacher did not interrupt them for error correction. The way in which they used strategies of reading in the classroom interactions quickly fosters their reading abilities. Through a statistical table, I show the characteristic inputs of the two classes.

Table n°1:Arousing learners’ interests for reading teaching

Nature of the interaction	Teacher’s Student’s
Error corrections	100%00%
Reading and responding time	85%15%
Text comprehension	90%10%

Table n°2: Teacher’s motivation in reading classes.

Nature of the interaction	Teacher’s	Student’s
Error corrections	Very few	20%
Reading and responding time	10%90%	
Text comprehension	100%90%	

Class N°1: Commentary

Error corrections were frequent

The reading and responding were mostly done by the teacher (About 85%).

The learners did not comprehend the text (15%).

Class N°2: Commentary

Error corrections sometimes the teacher repeated the correct form the students have wrongly uttered but without interrupting the course of interaction. The teacher read and responded less (10%).

The students’ participation (90%).

Text comprehension: the students comprehended the text they were working on (90%).

From this analytical comparison, I can conclude that the conditions of learning English as a foreign language are not the same in the two classes, in terms of classroom setting, and of methodology. In class N°1, it is only the teacher who was the proficient

reader and he did not take into account the students' needs. What was very important for him was to teach learners grammatical items whereas in class N°2, the main objective of teaching was to help students to foster reading ability through different strategies.

In conclusion for this section, there seems to be a gap between Beninese students reading styles and the reading teaching handled by their teachers. This remark is the great inadequacy of reading materials with students' expectations. Indeed, many follow up sessions enabled the students to reveal their yearning for reading short stories, stories, current news while their teachers endeavor to provide them with little interesting text from the prescribed textbook owing to curriculum pressures. I do believe that promoting students' reading skill implies them with materials they enjoy reading.

"Anyway, teachers should offer possibilities for getting learners to maximize (their) comprehension while minimizing (their) reading time". (Troyka 1989:32). To sum up, students' poor reading performance is definitely due to the inadequate reading pedagogy applied through English lesson. I'd rather some teachers looked into that matter duly for solution seeking purposes.

4-1-3-Questionnaires

First of all I have collected the results and then gathered them in different tables.

As the questions are designed for students and teachers, I have divided the responses into two parts, one for each category.

A- Students' questionnaire table

Here are the results of the questionnaires addressed to the students of the first and the fourth years. As I have already mentioned, those classes constitute the main source of this study. Four hundred and fifty have been distributed to learners.

All of them have been returned. As a result, the returning rate is one hundred per cent (100%). It might be important to explain how I have achieved this satisfactory returning rate. In fact, it is because of the way I administered the questionnaires. Once the students were identified, I grouped them in a classroom and had them fill in the

questionnaires forms. I waited to collect them. Going through this questionnaire one could notice that it intended to help the researcher know more about how learners read, the problem they encounter while reading, and the strategies used to get meaning from texts and the appropriateness of their materials. Below is presented the table of students' questionnaire.

Table N°3: Students' responses

Questions main focus	Probable answers	Number of answer	Percentage	Total	
				Number of answer	Percentage
Q1: Do you think the study of English in general is important for you?	Yes	388	86,22%	450	100%
	No	62	13,78%		
Q2: Do you like reading English materials?	Yes	84	18,67%	450	100%
	No	366	81,300%		
Q3: How often do you read outside the classroom?	Once a week	273	60,67%	450	100%
	Twice a week	87	19,33%		
	Three times	69	15,33 附		
	Over	21	04,67%		
Q4: Do you read outside the classroom?	Yes	150	33,33%	450	100%
	No	300	66,67%		
Q5: Which reading materials do you use to read?	Go for English	95	21,11%	450	100%
	Newspapers	75	16,67%		
	Document d'accompagnement	250	55,55%		
	Magazines	21	04,67%		
	Others	09	02%		
Q6: Do you enjoy reading?	Loudly	25	05,56%	450	100%
	Silently	425	94,44%		
Q7: Problems encountered while reading English	Vocabulary	35	07,78%	450	100%
	Pronunciation	300	66,67%		
	Punctuation	109	24,22%		
	Phonetics	04	0,89%		
	All of them	02	0,44%		
Q8: Which interests do you expect from reading?	Text comprehension	250	55,56%	450	100%
	Pronunciation	145	32,22 附		
	Others	55	12,22 附		
Q9: Before comprehending a text, do you worry about the meaning of each unknown word?	Yes	432	96%	450	100%
	No	18	04%		
Q10: Would you like reading to be separated from?	Vocabulary lesson	110	24,44%	450	100%
	Phonetic lesson	260	57,78%		
	Grammar lesson	80	17,78%		

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Q11: Are you a slow reader?	Yes	450	100%	450	100%
	No	00	00%		
Q12: Do you need to be taught useful skills that can help you understand English text without the teacher's guidance?	Yes	450	100%	450	100%
	No	00	00%		
Q13: Do strategies used nowadays allow you to read critically?	Yes	225	50%	450	100%
	No	225	50%		
Q14: What do you expect from your teachers if they want you to learn much more than usual from English text?	-More information -Features			450	100%
Q15: Do you think the books or texts you are studying this year in English are:	Too short	60	13,33%	450	100%
	Too long	390	86,67%		

✓ INTERPRETING THE TABLE OF STUDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

86, 22% of the target students think that English is a very important language whereas 13, 78% of them do not find it more important than the other language and ignore its importance in the worldwide communication.

The results of my investigations revealed the learners' burning lack of enthusiasm for reading. This tangible truth is all the more unquestionable since an enormous majority 81,30%(N°2) of learners do not take the trouble of practicing purely optional reading and a tiny majority 18,67% do read for meaning.

Most of the students read according to their school time table. That is they have occasions to read though the classroom activities; only 60, 67% of the informants read once a week whereas 19, 33% read twice a week (N°3).

As regards the class, most of students 66, 67% (N°4) complain about the lack of the time beside the fact that reading, when not involved in homework, is useless in their curricular. However, few learners 33,33% try to occasionally read some short stories, newspapers, grammatical books just to mention a few.

As far as question (N°5) is concerned, 55, 55% of the respondents have “Document D’accompagnement” as the only reading materials; 25, 78% read Magazines, “Go For English”, grammatical books and dictionaries (English-French).

94, 44% of the students like silently reading whereas 05, 56% of the students prefer loudly reading.

(Question N°6) 66, 67% of the learners have pronunciation problems and 24, 22% students have punctuation problems (Question N°7). 55, 56% of the learners expect text comprehension and 32, 2% of them expect pronunciation from reading. (Question N°8).

It clearly granted that few students 96 % (Question N°9) succeed in extracting meaning from text visual signals. Most students, at least those I have met, have a basically wrong standpoint on reading since they view it as the vital avenue for pronunciation testing. Eskey (1992) clearly stresses the crucial need to arm learners with reading skills apt to promote learning so as enable them give up reading as mechanically as a computer would. And to give support to this striking reality it is emphasized that “The lack of appropriate background knowledge was a more significant factor in the ability of second language learners to comprehend school texts than the linguistic complexity as measured readability formulae” (p.43). 57, 79% of the students would like phonetic lesson to be separated from reading whereas 24, 44% of them would like vocabulary lesson to be separated from reading. (Question N°10).

95, 56% of the students do not read fast because when reading, they want to understand every word and its pronunciation. However, most of them are under 200 words per-minute which means that they are very slow on the scale of speeds of reading.

As Dubin and Olshtan (1986) state “A rate of 200 words per-minute would appear to be absolute minimum in order to read with full comprehension” (p.198). Therefore, 04, 44% of the learners claim they are fast readers; even if they do not easily get the gist of the extracts, nevertheless, they are conscious of the fact that they need not know every word for comprehension (Question N°11). 100% of learners (Question N°12) need to build

up a wide knowledge linguistic competence so they could process easily text messages. It logically follows that learner's complaints about reading are rooted in their unrewarding mechanical print decoding.

This risky enterprise deserves redressing and improving with a recursive practice of reading activities likely to top their background knowledge which is the core foundation of fast reading comprehension. It is proved that Benin culture values emphatically orality to the detriment of literacy since our forbearers were greatly illiterate.

The other striking factor resides in the social environment which greatly impedes any optional sustained reading since students' parents, mostly illiterate, fail to urge them to read both for pleasure and life-problem solving. So, society plays a significant part in literacy advancement as Wallace (1991) openly puts it: "if the use of literacy skills is a normal and accepted part of the behavior of those with whom learners come into contact, then, there is a much greater likelihood that the learners are going to want to read" (p 72).

Wallace merely stresses that if learners are living in a society serving as a "community of readers", they are likely to want to read.

86,67% of the teachers state that reading texts or books are long, but interesting whereas 13,33% of the informants prove that, they are short (question N° 15).

B-Teachers' questionnaire table

As for teachers, one hundred questionnaires have been distributed to those with, at least, five years of experience in EFL teaching. But I have not proceeded the same way as for the students. Since teachers are considered to be more responsible than learners, I left the questionnaires with them as they promised to fill them in and return them as possible. This approach was not as successful as I expected, because only eighty (80) out of one hundred (100) questionnaires have been returned.

Through these questionnaires, I intended to know more about how teachers deal with reading in their classes, the problems they encountered while teaching reading, the

appropriateness of the materials under study and the alternative ways they may suggest to improve the teaching of reading in their classes.

I tried my best to know about the qualification of the teachers with the collaboration of the principals that I thank a lot once more. So, table N°4 below shows the results and then gathers them in various tables. As the questions are designed for English teachers and learners, I have then divided the responses into two parts i.e. one for each category

Table N°4: Teachers' highest qualification

Qualification	Number	Percentage
DUEL	10	10%
LICENCE	50	50%
MAITRISE	7	7%
CAPES	05	05%
BAPES	08	08%
TOTAL	80	100%

❖ The table above shows the qualification of some of the English teachers in the different schools (Private schools and Public schools) where I carried out my investigations.

As it can be noticed throughout the table, only 7% went through a teacher training school before starting their job.

In this case, learners' failure becomes obvious and even conspired. The statistical table below is the recapitulation of the collected data as far as teachers' answers are concerned.

Table N°5: Teachers' responses

Question main focus	Probable answers	Numbers of answers	Percentage	Total	
				Numbers of answers	Percentage
Q1: Do your pupils enjoy reading English materials?	Yes	24	30%	80	100%
	No	56	70%		
Q2: How often a week do you have reading lesson with your students?	Once	42	52,5%	80	100%
	Twice	14	17,5%		
	Three times	11	13,75%		
	Over	13	16,25%		
Q3: Do you think that the frequency of reading session given by you in question n°2 is sufficient?	Yes	17	21,25%	80	100%
	No	63	78,75%		
Q4: If your answer in question n°3 is No, account for your answer	-Lack of time devoted to finish the planning -High sizes of the classes -Absence of libraries			80	100%
Q5: Do you teach reading skill to your students?	Yes	80	100%	80	100%
	No	00	00%	00	00%
Q6: How useful is reading skill in the students training as far as EFL is concerned?	As important as the other skills	80	100%	80	100%
	The most important	00	00%	00	00%
Q7: Do you give the opportunity to your students to read materials apart from the required books?	Yes	80	100%	80	100%
	No	00	00%	00	00%
Q8: If yes, which one (S)?	Newspapers	27	33,75%	61	76,25%
	Magazines	15	18,75%		
	Pen pals	09	11,25%		
	Others	10	12,5%		
Q9: How do you appreciate the reading performance of your pupils students?	15 卩 of them	00	00%	00	00%
	Under average	00	00%	00	00%
	Average	80	100%	80	100%
	30% of them	00	00%	00	00%
	Under average	00	00%	00	00%
	Above average	00	00%	00	00%
Q10: what reading problems	Pronunciation	35	43,75%	35	100%

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do you face as far as reading is concerned?	Learner's slowness in text grasping	45	56,25%	45	100%
	Lack of reading materials	00	00%	00	00%
	Difficulties in managing classes	00	00%	00	00%
	Learner's lack of enthusiasm for reading	00	00%	00	00%
Q11:If you are to take part in English curriculum design, what will be your reading methodology priorities to reach the expectation of your learners?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Skip words -Predict meaning -Guess meaning -Try to figure out meaning -Have knowledge about the topic 			45	100%

✓ INTERPRETING THE TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE TABLE

The results of the investigation related to the teachers of English revealed that:

The answers to question (N°1) show that 70% of pupils don't like reading. This is mainly due to the fact that they are not taught how to read, teacher's responsibility is therefore clearly addressed.

In question (N°2), 52,5% of the teachers have reading sessions with their students once a week, 17,5% of the teachers teach reading twice a week.78, 75% of the teachers, think that the frequency of reading session they have with their learners is not sufficient.

100% of the teachers in question (N°4) justify the insufficiency of the frequency of reading session by the lack of time devoted to finish the planning, the high size of the classes and the absence of libraries. The answers to question(N°5) mention that all the teachers teach reading skills to their students.

100% of the involved teachers think that reading is to be considered as important as the other skills.

In addition, they point out that reading is decoding what is written to get a message. That implies a certain number of actors and types of reading. 100% of the teachers in question (N°7) give the opportunity to their students to read materials apart from the required book.

33,75% of teachers in question (N°8) said the reading materials which interest their students most are: newspapers dealing with living facts, youth problems and civilization matters. 25% of the teachers say that students are interested most in articles dealing with economic and politic matters. 18, 75% of the involved teachers point out that learners are also interested in magazines.

All the teachers that I have investigated are discouraged by the performance of their students as far as teaching reading skills are concerned.

All of the teachers (100%) have indicated some of the problems their learners encounter in their reading lessons (N°10) 56, 25% of the teachers say that their students are slow readers whereas 43, 75% of the teachers have pronunciation problems with their students. 100% of the teachers in question (N°11), the choice of methodologies depends on the level of each learner. Among other things, they point out the following strategies:

- ❖ Skip words
- ❖ Predict meaning
- ❖ Guess meaning
- ❖ Draw inferences from the title.
- ❖ Try to figure out meaning
- ❖ Have knowledge about the topic

4-1-4- Analysis and interpretation of the interviews

Both the two interviews reveal that motivation, teaching method and teaching material are the most outstanding points to achieve a better teaching learning process during the reading classes.

Learners considered in my dissertation have started learning English as a foreign language from the first year to the third or the fourth year for example. They cannot be considered as those who have mastered the language and who have enough vocabulary items which can be assessed with any reading texts taken at random without any preliminary clues. According to the two qualified teachers who have been interviewed, “learners” difficulties to read or to acquire the reading skill are mainly due to their teachers’ strategies / methods and to some extent, to the environment. Some teachers keep on using the traditional method of teaching. The pedagogical strategies consist in shifting from teacher-centered to learner-centered approach are not seriously taken into account in some schools.

As far as teachers are concerned, I can notice that we still have a lot of efforts to make if we want to turn today’s English learners into skilled readers. Reading is not appropriately mastered or handled by teachers and this situation is the result of the socio-political factors at work in the field of English teaching.

Since my research work is strictly limited to the first level of secondary school, I would like teachers to be faithful to different reading strategies in the competency- based approach’s curriculums. I would also like them to think before selecting the reading materials, to be sure of the validity and the readability of the texts given for reading activity. In addition, I have to mention that generally speaking, teachers are not well- paid. Furthermore, they lack teaching aids or make use of outmoded ones.

In such a difficult situation, I don’t know how efficient or powerful teachers can be at work. Large classes, lack of teacher, remain to some extent the overwhelming difficulties impeding a genuinely credible and adequate English teaching.

Moreover, mention is to be made of the lack of time for English and also the lack of time for English teaching and also the lack of interest manifested by some students. I notice through the interviews that the problems encountered by teachers in their reading classes are not caused by the competency-based approach. But it is up to teachers to well manage their reading classes with EFL learners in order to hope a challenged and vivid reading class.

4-1-5- General Interpretation of the findings of my study

The findings have shown that not all students display positive attitudes toward reading classes. Talking about the table which deals with students' responses, the interpretation of this table may be perceived through step by step.

In fact, to the first question dealing with the importance for English, the table shown the majority of students know the value of this language. This means that's the 13.78% of the students still ignore what this language is used for. The EFL teacher should convince or sensitize learners about the importance of the language in order to entice them to like the language, this kind of motivation should be performed by the teacher through adequate steps. To be successful in this task, teachers should motivate the students to learn English, appreciate the students' works and mark them regularly in order to motivate them. In addition, teachers should organize periodical reading text, always plan what to do before coming to class, pay attention to their students' needs so as to reinforce their students' learning capacity, create penpals, clubs and classes of the same school, different towns or countries. Moreover teachers should slow down their reading speeds, so that learners can follow and understand them, be well equipped with sufficient teaching strategies and materials which can foster students' reading skills.

Furthermore, Educational authorities should reduce the size of our classes in order to create good condition for teaching and learning to take place, train English teachers on a regular basis, provide each school library with documents such as newspapers, novels, short stories, magazines appropriate to the learners level.

In so doing, the teacher will try to cope with the problem raised in question (N°4) about the reading manner to which only 33,33% of students read alone. As a matter of fact, through successful motivation, learners should be encouraged to read not only at school but also at home and regularly. The teacher can teach learners what to read and how to read it.

As a matter of fact, according to LukongNyukonge Nicholas (Ecole Normale Supérieure), reading aloud is one of the classroom techniques most widely condemned by language-teaching experts. To improve learner's skill in reading, teachers should focus on silent reading which confirms the result generated by my study. So, one of the techniques to equip learners with efficient reading speed is the silent reading. This technique stands also as adequate suggestion to improve reading skill in intermediate classes, regarding the second interview (question 8).

Moreover, the different problems learners' encounter while reading may be due to many factors. Among these factors I can point out the fact that students become more and more dependent on the teacher, with fewer and fewer creative activities of their own in the classroom (class observation; In class N°1). Indeed, the bad performance of students is surely related to students themselves as well as to the teachers and the educational environment. 52,5% of the teachers have reading sessions with their students once a week whereas 17,5% of the teachers teach reading twice a week. (Teachers' questionnaire table N°2).

Most of the students bored and so, lose interest in studying English. Therefore, in teaching; teachers should try to improve this situation. One of the measures to improve this matter of fact is to have the students take over part of teacher's work in the classroom.

All this considered, I have made or suggested the following teaching teacher's process regarding to the reading could be useful to EFL teachers applying the approach based on learning by competencies.

Step 1: assignment: ask the students to read through the text a few day before it will be taken up in class. Then ask as student who is interested in a certain of the text to take part and make preparations for explaining it.

Step 2: requirement: the student should know clearly what he is supposed to do with the text he has chosen

- a) Explain the important words and expressions
- b) Analyses grammatically the structure of certain long and difficult sentences
- c) Try to answer the questions raised by other students and the teacher
- d) Offer his own idea and suggestions concerning the understanding and the appreciation of that part of the text
- e) Tell class the problems for which he cannot find answers.

Step 3: warn up:

Before the actual explaining start, the teacher briefly gives main ideas of that part of text. Then he asks a student to read that part, and he corrects mistakes in pronunciation and intonation. The purpose of doing is to leave some time for the teaching students to mentally prepare for the task and also to draw the other students' attention to the part to be explained.

Step 4: Explanation

First ask the other students to raise question they might have for the student to answer. Then student gives these explanations and offers suggestion and comments. Finally, he presents his own problems: those he cannot solve by himself.

4-1-6- Problems students have while reading

On the basis of the data collected about the students,(Table N°3: students' responses, question N°7/ Table N°5: teachers' responses, question N°10) and the two interviews I have carried out, it appears that our students have difficulties while reading. In the following part of my research work, I will point out some problems of the English reading classes. I will also consider the possible causes of these problems.

Before talking about the problems, the learners encounter in their reading in English, I would like to elicit some general problems that impede the readers while reading; they are:

- ❖ Reading “word by word”, which consists of reading words one by one and slowly.

❖ Turning the head from side to side, the head following each written line from the left to the right and from the right to the left.

❖ Regression, that is the eyes moving back to check previous words instead of sweeping steadily forwards, even though this makes reading slower than it would normally be.

❖ Subvocalizing consists of forming the sound of the words you are reading and even murmuring them aloud.

After these problems, let's mention the other problems faced by the students while reading English as a Foreign Language.

❖ Punctuation problems

Punctuation problems differ from language to language. It has a close connection with meaning and the learners need to be as familiar with it as possible. But it is not the case with our learners. While reading because they are asked to read or they have to read, they read roughly without paying attention to the punctuation. They read without intonation.

Here is a sentence having different intonations.

a- Ali, the journalist, is here. In this sentence, "the journalist" is redundant.

Ali and the journalist are the same persons. So, Ali is the journalist who is here. Ali is the doer of the action then the sentence becomes: Ali is here or the journalist is here.

b- Ali: "The journalist is here"

In this sentence Ali and the journalist are not the same persons. But it means that Ali is telling someone else that the journalist is here. About two sentences I can say that sentence (a) means a different thing in relation to sentence (b) because of the inverted commas (" ") in the second sentence. Reading the sentence roughly without the appropriate intonation would lead to bad interpretation or meaning. So, our learners need more training in punctuation in order to become proficient readers.

➤ **Pronunciation problems**

In our English classes, it is quite frequent to encounter learners that have been trained by 3 (three) different English teachers during successive academic years with each teacher displaying an individual accent of English in class.

For instance, an Anglophone teacher is the first year, an African teacher in the second year, then a British or an American one in the third year. In addition, because of the lack of sufficient training in phonetics and phonology, learners pronounce certain English words like French words.

English	French
Mobile / mɔʊbəl / mobile (mɔʊ)	→
Determine / di'ta: min /	→ determine (detɛmin)
Save / seiv / save (sav)	→
Capable /keɪpəbəl /capable (kaPabɛ)	→

In short, in order to make our learners read efficiently inside and outside the class, we, as teachers of English as a foreign language, must teach them how to read different materials. For example, I wish that a systematic teaching of phonetic (the standard British one) should be done.

This activity must begin with the first cycle learners, so that, gradually they are able to pronounce English words correctly. It would generate the ability to pronounce words in the appropriate ways and would give the students courage and self-confidence while reading, speaking now and later. Furthermore, learners must be taught that English is not read like French. For example (K) in “know” is not pronounced; (S) in “island” is not pronounced and so on.

❖ Vocabulary problems

After four or five years of English study, our learners' vocabulary background is not extended enough. It is limited to the reading they have to do. In that perspective "Jeune Afrique" N° 1069 (Page 74) establishes that only 10% of African population can speak one of the European language. This is quite significant in the present context. Our learners don't read enough and we have noticed that some learners don't like short stories.

Some of these learners complain that they waste time in checking words meaning. But I propose, in order to solve vocabulary problems, extensive reading, and the use of dictionaries. In addition, through extensive reading, our learners will gain more words and will be able to use them inside or outside the classes.

Furthermore, the use of dictionaries is an important means of information about language. It is, therefore, a valuable aid of acquiring reading as well as writing skill. So, to solve vocabulary problems, I propose that every learner should possess EFL bilingual and monolingual dictionaries. For effective classroom instructions, every learner and teacher must have the same dictionary – *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*; -*Robert and Collins Dictionary*- bases standard British pronunciation i.e. #Received pronunciation#.

❑ THE CAUSES OF THESE PROBLEMS

❑ The Environment influence

The Francophone students learning English find it difficult to follow what the teacher says in the classroom for different reasons. Generally speaking, they do not encounter this language, in a classroom context before they start Secondary Schools; even through this situation is changing now. And even during their stay in Secondary Schools, they have rather only sporadic contacts with this language: two or four hours a week. Beside these scanty occasions, they rarely have the opportunity to practise this language if we exclude the occasional homework their English teachers might assign to them.

They are francophone learners and spend most of their time in the streets or in their houses speaking French or their mother tongues. Such a situation, obviously, is not to facilitate the English language learning. Some English teachers encourage their learners to use English whenever the occasion is offered. The learners read and speak so little English inside and outside their classes. Students say that they don't encounter Anglophone interlocutors or don't practise in language laboratories. And since they don't often possess any English dictionary, the few English books they may set their hands on are quite to comprehend.

❖ Another problem is the proliferation of what I may call here "Street English" I put under this label, all the slangy forms of English that are daily broadcast through a category of pop-music of Pidgins available on the western coast of Africa. The students sometimes tend to reproduce in their English assignments some forms of English they have heard from Anglophone travelers from Ghana, Nigeria just to mention a few or from English Pop music.

A decorative scroll graphic with a light beige background and a dark border. The scroll is partially unrolled, with the top and bottom edges curving upwards. The text is centered within the scroll.

CHAPTER FIVE: RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

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This chapter of my work is about some recommendations and suggestions to all the educational actors, especially to EFL teachers in competency-based approach. And, I think that taking these into account could, in some ways, diminish the problems encountered during teaching and reading skills in our EFL classes.

5-1- Recommendations

According to the findings of my study, I would like to propose or to make the following recommendations as my modest contribution to present or to pave the way to improvement in teaching and learning reading skills in our English classes in Benin.

Through the investigation, I have done in each sampled school and specifically regarding question (N°1) ... 86, 22% it is proved or shown most students know that English is important for them. So they need more information about reading strategies and features to become proficient readers. To be successful in this goal, some explanations about the importance or the necessity of reading English, in nowadays society, need to be reminded to both learners and anyone who has not yet perceived the English powerful role in the social, political cultural and technological integration. In this aspect, the following recommendations have to be taken into account:

1-Teachers have an important duty to carry out by providing learners with task oriented activities: such activities will make the interaction effective between them and their students and between learners themselves. Through activities of teaching reading, teachers, can make reading learning purposeful and meaningful. The ministry of education has a duty to instruct the English Department of our universities to devote a given time in which Benin Secondary schools teachers should be trained in such activities.

Teachers must inform learners about the different advantages of considering English as an important language nowadays.

Furthermore, I recommend the Benin educational authorities to endow each school library with documents such as: newspapers, novels, short stories, magazines ... appropriate to the learners' level. In a teaching class, current official textbooks should be available for each student.

The government and all the educational authorities should employ true and well trained teachers. In fact, many people "go to chalk" or become teachers because they don't find the job they have been trained for. The headmasters in our schools hastily recruit teachers without the required diploma or qualification. Those pseudo-teachers, being untrained, are somehow cheaper mainly in our private schools. For the success of students we are looking for in Benin, we need qualified teachers and educators.

Many teachers 52, 50% don't teach reading in their classes. Even the remaining 13, 75% who teach reading haven't got appropriate materials and the available time to teach reading skills.

2-To oblige students to be more interested in reading according to its influence in the world, it is necessary for the government and educational authorities to organize competitions in English matters. These competitions should include dictions, rapid reading and comprehension, structures and oral tests to encourage the best learners or students by rewarding them. For example, the best winners should offered prize for a trip to Nigeria, USA OR Ghana during the holidays.

We also think that before teachers' tasks become adequate and convincing, pure educational officers should find a solution to the problem of infrastructure, the size of classes and lack of teachers. In fact, to solve the problem of numerous students in a language class, it is very important to build more classes. More schools should be created. In addition, it is necessary to limit the number of the students to (35). Moreover, qualified English teachers have to be recruited to solve the problem of teacher shortage.

3-As reading is fundamentally based on books and the methodology used to teach it, the authorities of education and institutions who are concerned with the promotion of English in Benin, should try to put at the disposal of each school a required given number of English books, so as to permit everybody to read them at least when students have English class.

4-The government should regularly control both private and state schools for the follow-up of the given recommendations. As far as the teacher's working conditions are concerned, the government should create encouragements for teachers in state and private schools. I recommend the ministry of education to better the working and the living conditions of teachers. Furthermore, the professional seminars are real means to get great deal of advantages. Teachers will have native or near-native speakers, to speak with them about academic and pedagogic issues.

Apart from the recommendations which have been addressed to the government and educational authorities, suggestions which can help to foster students reading skills should also be made.

5-2-Suggestions

5-2-1-Shifting from teacher-centered to Learner-centered Approach

The existing teacher-centered strategies tend to make EFL reading learners into passive students of knowledge. No opportunity is given to the students to interact or communicate with teachers or among themselves. All this is in contrast with current methodological thinking, particularly with communicative language teaching, where the objective is to achieve communicative competence and language learning is regarded as a developmental process that involves the creative functioning of the students mind.

Only student's personal active efforts can contribute to the development of such competence.

By changing the strategy from passive memorizing and lecture method to developing reading skills through free communication in the class, where students interact with each other, help and evaluate themselves in Pair/group works, the system should change from teacher-centered to learner-centered.

5-2-2- Imperative insertion of basic reading skills lesson into English curriculum

When trying to know their reading teaching priorities in as newly shaped English curriculum, an overwhelming majority of teachers say clearly the prominent want of teaching reading skills for quickening text comprehension. It logically follows that English curriculum itself hardly offers a way whatever to genuine reading skills teaching lesson enlightening reading for dynamiting learning on that ground; there is no wonder that Beninese students should be poor readers who hardly undertake optional reading whenever the “knowledge owner” that the teacher is supposed to be is out of scene. Therefore, English curriculum hides some that challenge the fostering of students reading performance. That is pretty much what stems from Freire’s 1987 criticism of curriculum pressures when he cunningly points out that:

“Schools are given the responsibilities to encourage a sense of autonomy and trust in students, but teachers in this study were constantly monitored within a network of administrative surveillance suggesting that they could neither be trusted nor work independently” (p.19).

In fact, Freire is preaching for a newly framed and balanced curriculum that can enable teachers to exercise mature judgments to risk a weigh alternative in their crusade for meeting learners expectations consequently applied to teaching reading skills; this open-ended curriculum could help our teachers to investigate their students’ reading styles so as to frame an authentic reading working towards solving reading problems. The curriculum prioritizing the teachers’ open mindedness could help learners to grasp their world realities through soundly selected materials drawing on their cultural, ethnic backgrounds.

But, the reading of those materials should be oriented towards warranty to accuracy and automaticity of the previously taught reading skill as strongly recommended by Troyka (1989). Indeed, the balanced curriculum should outline mainly teachers' task long enough as to grow accurate in having them practice recursively the skill until they become fluent readers. Every factor considered, curriculum pressures deserve lessening and reorienting so as to assure certain autonomy to the teachers who should feel free to search into their students' favorite reading materials in order to inculcate to them the cogent skills whose accuracy and automaticity should be triggered off by the reading materials drawn from students' cultural, ethnic, socio-political realities.

5-2-3-Practical issues

✓ Pronunciation

About the problem of teaching pronunciation, I wish that a systematic teaching of phonetics (the standard British one) could be done. This teaching must begin with the first cycle (6e, 5e, 4e, 3e) learners so that gradually they are able to pronounce English words correctly. It would give the students the ability to pronounce words in the appropriate ways and would give the learners courage and self-confidence while reading or speaking. It is not a study of one year; it is a task, which I think will be performed year after year.

Some persons would think that it is not necessary to teach learners phonetics and that appropriate dictionaries would help them. I don't have the same viewpoint since most of the time, learners do not pay attention to the transcribed words in a dictionary as they know nothing about the letter "O" becoming ð in a word like Mobile /mðvbði/ or "th" becoming /θ/ in the word "thirteen" /,θɜ:ˈti:n/.

I would like to confirm my suggestion by the fact it is during my English study particularly through phonetics and phonology classes at the English department at the University of Abomey-Calavi that I have improved my English pronunciation.

So, to avoid such a situation, I recommend a systematic teaching of pronunciation with beginners to facilitate their own study usage of EFL in a real life.

Moreover, I think that as the English language is taught in our schools, it is the duty of the English teacher to create confidence in her/his learners. In this regard, I propose that both learners and teachers possess for instance Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English.

After each phonetic lesson, the teacher must regularly give assignments about transcription to the current reading text to transcribe. He/she must be consistent by correcting the assignment together with the students. The assignment must include home assignment so that the students work on their own and with the aid of a dictionary. Dictation would be welcomed in this field. Dictation will allow the teacher to test how much his/her students are capable of writing on their paper what they listen to and it will help the learners measure their individual efforts and the importance of this teaching of pronunciation.

✓ **The punctuation**

Concerning punctuation, the teacher must be aware that the features or the principles of punctuation differ from language to language, that is why it must be taught, so that learners will be able to write comprehensively and to understand what they read.

So, the teacher must teach a rule at a time, give learners a lot of sentences without any punctuation and all the sentences must be small letters to practise with. I wish he/she were consistent by correcting learners about errors of punctuation in every work they do and not the errors themselves, that is he/she must point out the remarkable and frequent errors from assignment and explain to the learners why those kinds of errors cannot be permitted or admitted. This is important with the students of 4e and 3e. Here is an example of text for punctuation exercise picked from *SUNSHINE 6e*, written by Charles Zinzindohoué (First edition; Collection: A New Dimension (2009: Page 17).

“My name is Nasser I’m a student at CEG Ocean in Cotonou in my school there are many classrooms to go to school I wear my uniform and carry my books, copy-books, pens and pencils in my bag at school I write my lessons in my copy-book with a blue pen I draw pictures with my pencil and rub them out with an eraser I draw lines a long ruler and I write on the black board with a piece of chalk”

Instruction: write out this paragraph, putting in full stops and capital letters.

Note: The misplacing of punctuation would lead to semantically wrong and intoned sentences. The punctuated text is presented as follows:

“My name is Nasser. I’m a student at CEG Ocean in Cotonou. In my school there are many classrooms. To go to school I wear my uniform and carry my books, copy-books, pens and pencils in my bag. At school I write my lessons in my copy-book with a blue pen. I draw pictures with my pencil and rub them out with an eraser. I draw lines with a long ruler and I write on the black board with a piece of chalk. ”

5-2-4-Speeding up learners’ reading rate

In order to help students to avoid reading word by word, the teacher must induce his/her students to abandon or to forget the word by word approach to reading by introducing exercises, like time reading which force or oblige the learners to read faster, and exercises which, for similar reasons, force learners to read in meaningful chunks. In timing, the teacher should write down the time the learner starts reading. As he/she has finished reading, he/she notes time and writes it down. Powerful texts for timing reading are full texts and not texts with gaps like cloze texts.

To succeed in doing this, an unfamiliar text that is not difficult should be chosen. The teacher must explain that he/she wants to find out how fast they read. In order to force students’ reading speed, Leslie Ono et al (2004) have set up tips for reading extensively. In number of ten, they encourage learners to improve their reading and become efficient / proficient readers.

- Tip 1: Read, read and read some more
- Tip 2: Read easy books
- Tip 3: Read interesting books
- Tip 4: Read books you found particularly interesting.
- Tip 5: Read for general understanding
- Tip 6: Ignore unknown or difficult words and skip them and continue reading
- Tip 7: Avoid using dictionary
- Tip 8: Expand your reading comfort Zone
- Tip 9: Set reading goals and keep a reading log
- Tip 10: Enjoy! Enjoy! Enjoy:

5-2-5-Teacher's goals in EFL Reading class

To succeed in developing reading skills through English as a foreign language, I have proposed task-oriented activities. These activities should make the interaction effective between the teacher and the readers and between the readers themselves. Through the task-oriented teaching reading, the teacher can make the language learning purposeful and meaningful. Task-oriented activities are backbone of teaching. Base on the fact that the teacher's success or failure depends on the way she/he plans, organizes and controls the tasks.

The exercise types devised in the sample tasks can be very helpful or successful if used appropriately and if necessary modified to the readers' level and needs. The tasks mostly focus on answering the questions before and after reading the text. The purpose of these activities is to help teachers to teach various reading skills and strategies to Benin secondary students.

Teachers must therefore:

- Train students to comprehend text by using knowledge of the world and by using different skills such as skimming and scanning.
- Train learners to recognize the main idea of the passage or a text,

- Train students to infer meaning making use of the textual clues,
- Train students to recognize and understand relations between parts of a text through references
- Train learners to make predictions and intelligent guesses when reading a text.
- Develop reading learners' understanding, of the communicative value of the text and sentences.
- Train learners to make the difference between main and subordinate clauses by identifying subject / verb object (SVO) relations,
- Train the learners how to recognize the main idea of the text,

The teacher must train his learners how to infer meaning of unknown words through the textual clues.

At last, teachers must train their learners how to comprehend and form new words.

5-2-6- Reading and the other skills

Although the reading program emphasizes reading; the four language skills are never separated but integrated. This makes students listen better, speak better, read better and write better. So, the integration of skills as defined by Read (1986) is a "series of activities or tasks which use any combination of the four skills that are listening (L) speaking (S); reading R and writing (W) in a continuous and related sequence" (page.72) The combination of skills may be used as follows:

- 1- The teacher introduces a topic and asks learners pre-questions (written on the board) about it.
- 2- Learners are given a short passage to read in order to find out the answers to questions in (1)
- 3- The interaction at this stage enables learners to compare how many answers they get right in (1) and ones which are wrong.
- 4- Learners are asked to work in pairs. They discuss and take notes about a topic close to the one introduced by the teacher.

- 5- Learners use the original passage as a model to write a short passage of their own (individual work) based on their notes.
- 6- Such activities give learners occasion to use the English language through the four skills, even in the case of large classes.

5-2-7-Suggestions to teachers, students, parents and authorities

Suggestions are very important to teachers. I would like teachers to be creative in order to be able to organize their classrooms to the type of activities or exercises they are going to have. Teachers must also motivate learners for English clubs normally created in the school with support of the school administration. Teachers should create reading activities by giving books or texts to learners from varied domains, considering the need / or the wish of each or the majority of the students. I suggest this because the reading text must take into account the needs of the students. If a learner likes sport for example, it is preferable to give him a sport text ...

Very often, learners have problems or difficulties in following or understanding their teachers when these teachers are teaching because they are too fast. Then, learners remain inactive in the classroom. Teachers have to slow down, so that learners can follow and understand them. If this suggestion is not respected, teachers cannot reach their aims, that is to bring learners to participate actively in classroom activities which allow learners to foster their reading skills. Teachers should always prepare their lessons in order to avoid confusion in classroom in front of students; they will also avoid jumping from one topic to another.

Although Beninese teachers are not well-paid, they must try to buy themselves appropriate textbooks and materials which can help them teach efficiently / powerfully in class. The teachers also need to be well equipped with sufficient teaching strategies which can foster students' reading skills. To promote English learning, teachers could choose variety of materials: newspapers, magazines, books, articles ... Teachers could also create penpal, clubs between classrooms of the same school, different towns or countries. A sample of this penpal could be seen in "Go For English 6e & 5e".

It helps students to read what they received and what they have to send to their friend (s). The pen pals should help have our learners to read English when they have left schools as the letters should be written in English.

Teachers should have in mind that their responsibilities will be to transmit their knowledge and experiences to their students. They have to know which strategies to adopt in teaching and how to apply them in order to meet the students' needs or reach their goals.

As far as students are concerned, I want them to avoid regarding reading as difficult and boring or annoying activity since this conception / or opinion about the language often don't motivate them to make an effort to overcome the reading difficulties. Students should cease considering English as a pet hate subject and start having positive attitudes towards it. Learners should always seek occasions to practise English. By so doing this, they will be proficient readers and will be able to speak fluently. I would like to invite them to follow the instructions of their teachers carefully.

As far as the parents are concerned, they have the duty to send their children to school and take care of their training. Parents should provide their children with materials which can contribute to their success in learning English as a foreign language. Among the materials need to improve their reading skills, I can name textbooks, audio-tapes for those who can afford them. That will give their children the occasion to practise easily.

Suggestions are also addressed to educational authorities to organize regularly seminars and workshops for the English teachers. This will help them to catch up with the new dimension in teaching English as a foreign language. Furthermore, educational authorities must recruit each year new English teachers because new schools are created. As the Ministry of Education has got the total number of secondary schools, it should evaluate the developing rate of each school and then, find the right teacher's number to send in these schools and those which have just been created. My recommendations and suggestions are expected to contribute to the real teaching of reading of English as a foreign language.



CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Nowadays, everybody knows that English is a powerful means of communication, especially at scientific and economic level. In this trend, our country receives many speaking people such as: Ghanaians, Canadians and Nigerians who work in our offices as well as in informal activities. All of them, especially businessmen, need a satisfactory linguistic setting for the prosperity of their economic activities. So, the more Beninese learners improve their speaking communicative abilities in English, the more opportunities they will have to get jobs, even at the international level. It is therefore important to encourage our learners of the secondary schools in reading and speaking English as a foreign language.

In my dissertation, I investigated learners' behaviors and perspectives about English learning in general and what their fears are about reading in English learning process in particular. In other words, does reading play a major role in their academic performance to a point where they distinctively show positive or negative attitudes? It is not fair to demonstrate equal interest among EFL learners due to the fact that what this investigation has found is that while some groups of learners may generally be accepted as having better English ability, this doesn't exclude other learners as having fears or unpleasant ideas or attitude about reading with a different emphasis and differences in attitudes. The special interest was the way different learners showed preferences for different teaching material and teaching method as well. While it may be difficult to measure objectively, it is generally observed by English teachers that some learners behave overtly as passive readers or participants while others show confidence and enthusiasm and thus are viewed as active readers.

My fieldwork on teaching reading skills to promote reading in EFL classes in Benin secondary schools is to contribute to the improvement of our learners' performance in English, mainly in reading. It has helped me to discover that reading English texts or textbooks is a real problem to our learners in Benin. So, my purpose in this research work was to develop beginner learners' reading skills. To succeed in this task, I have first gone to the libraries, on the internet where I have consulted some books related to my theme.

The authors' opinion or concern about motivation, reading rate and reading comprehension have been taken into account in my work. Language learning requires physical and intellectual activities and is not an easy task.

Secondly, I have conceived or given questionnaires to both EFL teachers and learners in order to have their viewpoints about techniques or strategies to foster reading skills. I have also interviewed some EFL teachers and undertaken class observations for the same goal. The collected data and its analysis expose or reveal that learners and teachers lack materials and techniques which can enable them to reach their goals in reading activities.

This situation leads most of the learners to a lack of interest. Moreover, the collected data have exposed the inefficiency of the reading methods used by learners in intermediate classes. Through my study I have also discovered some of the learners' problems: poor vocabulary, poor punctuation, bad pronunciation, bad comprehension, poor rate of reading. Furthermore, a large number of learners in the classes do not facilitate the teaching process to EFL teachers. In order to help our learners to read fluently, I suggest the teaching of pronunciation, punctuation, phonetics, the use of dictionaries and others strategies.

To sum up, the cooperative learning must be encouraged; the analysis of my data collection makes me be aware of the fact that most of the EFL teachers in Benin are unqualified. So, I would like the government, not only to recruit many teachers, but also to train them in order to increase their performance.

Considering the teachers' bad working conditions and regarding the economic crisis prevailing all over the world, Benin government should undertake measures to better their working conditions by increasing their salaries and providing them with adequate equipment for their motivation.

Finally, I have made some suggestions to the schools authorities and learners so as to have an approach of solutions to the above mentioned problems. Indeed, appeals have been made to the government to invest money in education and in the learners training.

Such an investment, I hope, will help to build libraries where books could be available to the learners and laboratories where they can hear prerecorded cassettes to acquire the correct pronunciation.

As for EFL teachers, I would like them to know that reading is an active activity in the class. Teachers need to select activities and tasks which can contribute to good reading practices for the learners to have reading performance. Our learners need to be good at reading in English because of the importance of the English in the world today.

As far as learners are concerned, I would like them to stop considering English as a difficult subject which they lose interest in. If learners don't show positive behaviors or attitudes towards the English language, a teacher, no matter how competent he may be, could not do anything to help them to be proficient readers.

For the school administrations who recruit part time teachers with no training and no pedagogical instruction, I suggest they train them and recruit at least those who have the required diploma. To solve the problem of shortage of teachers, the government has to play its role since education is the "key" to success.



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Appendices

Questionnaire n°1 /for students/

I am dealing with a research work on reading skills in the process of teaching and learning EFL and your collaboration through your answers and opinion is highly requested in the improvement of teaching reading skills to beginners in EFL classes in Benin context. Your identity will be kept secret and your responses can be used as illustrations only.

Please check the box which best illustrates your opinions /answers.

1- Do you think the study of English in general is important for you?

Yes No

2- Do you like reading English materials?

Yes No

3- How often do you read English materials?

Once a week twice a week

Three times over

4- Do you read outside classroom?

Yes No

5- Which reading material do you use to read?

Required book "Go for English" Newspapers

Document d'accompagnement Magazine Others ?

6- Do you enjoy reading?

Loudly Silently

Why?.....

7- What problems do you encounter while reading English?

Vocabulary Pronunciation Fluency

all of them

8- Which interests do you expect from reading?

Text comprehension pronunciation others.

If your answer is others name them and account for them

.....
.....
.....

9- Before comprehending a text, do you worry about the meaning of each unknown word?

Yes No

10 - Would you like reading to be separated from:

Vocabulary lesson? Phonetic lesson? Grammar lesson?

If any, account for it

.....
.....
.....

11 a) Are you a slow reader?

Yes No

b) Do you read fast?

Yes No

c) Are you an average reader?

Yes No

12- Do you need to be taught useful skills that can help you understand English text without the teacher's guidance?

Yes

No

13- Do strategies used nowadays allow you to read critically?

Yes

No

If your answer is no, account for it

.....

.....

14-What do you expect from your teachers if they want you to learn much more than usual from English texts?

.....

.....

.....

15-Do you think the books or texts you are studying this year in English are:

- a) Too short?
- b) Too long?
- c) Too long and boring?
- d) Quite on average?
- e) Short but interesting?
- f) Too long but interesting?
- g) Too short and boring?

Thank you for your collaboration.

Questionnaire N°2/ For teachers/

I am dealing with a research work on reading skills in the process of teaching and learning EFL and your collaboration through your answers and opinion is highly requested in the improvement of teaching reading skills to beginners in EFL classes in Benin context. Your identity will be kept secret and your responses can be used as illustrations only.

Please check the box which best illustrates your opinions/answers.

1- Do your students enjoy reading English materials?

Yes No

2- How often a week, do you have reading lesson with your students?

One Twice Three times Over

3- Do you think that the frequency of reading session (give, by you in question n°2) is sufficient?

Yes No

4- If your answer in question n°3 is No, account for it

Suggest one frequency.

.....
.....

5- Do you teach reading skills to your students?

Yes No

6- How useful is reading skill in the students training as far as EFL is concerned?

a) As important as the other skills

b) The most important please, account for your answer.....

.....
.....

7- Do you give the opportunity to your students to read materials apart from the required book?

Yes No

8- If yes, which one?

Newspapers/Magazines Pen pals Articles Oth

Please, name them

.....

9-How do you appreciate the reading performance of your students?

15% of them under average average
30% of them under average above average average.
50% of them under average average
70% of them under average average

10- What problems do you face as far as reading is concerned?

Pronunciation learners' slowness in grasping text
Lack of reading materials difficulties in managing classes
Learners' lack of enthusiasm for reading

11- If you are to take part in English curriculum design, what will be your reading methodology priorities to reach the expectation of your learners'?

.....

..... Thank you for your collaboration.

FIRST INTERVIEW

- 1- Please sir, I am collecting information for a research work. I would want you to share your experiences with me on teaching of the reading skills
 - With pleasure, you can see below my answers to your questions. I'm sorry, my answers reveal the degree of my understanding of your questions.
- 2- Are all your students interested in your reading classes?
 - Not all our students interested in a reading class, but a reading class is the class in which learners are more interested if the lesson is well planned: To the Pre, during and post reading framework, I carry out tasks through integrated skills instructions.
- 3- What are some of the students' attitudes during the reading classes?
 - It is the most taught subskill. Students are familiar with it. So, they have developed cognitive strategies that help them follow activities related to it. They work effectively in collaboration and cooperation. Reading class is a low-anxiety class for the learners.
- 4- Apart from these attitudes, could you tell me other problems teachers encounter when implementing reading teaching?
 - The lack of materials (books, worksheet, document d'accompagnement), the too large class (number of students more than 80), the lack of furniture, the power failure, the inadequacy of the classroom, (paillottes), the biorythm (holding classes after 12 o'clock or after 6: 00 P.M when students are no more ready to learn), the temperature in the classroom, the lighting, the sounds and the classroom environment as a whole. Others serious problems are: punctuation, pronunciation, and vocabulary problems.
- 5- What comparison could you make between reading teaching in the former approach and the competency-based approach?
 - Many approaches to teaching reading have appeared over the years. Most of them, including the skill based approach, have adopted a general framework based upon, pre, during, and post reading instructions. Integrated skills instructions and scaffolding added to the general framework make reading tasks more productive and learning effective.

SECOND INTERVIEW

- 1- Please sir, I am collecting information for a research work. I would want you to share your experiences with me on teaching of the reading skills.
- I've been teaching for 14 years. To teach reading skills, we have to follow the steps that are necessary in this way such as: Pre-reading, while reading and post-reading.
- 2- Are all your students interested in your reading classes?
- Some are interested in, others are not. It depends at times on the theme, the motivation, the lesson preparations
- 3- What are some of the students' attitudes during classes?
- During the reading classes, some of them are troublesome. They find reading classes difficult because they are not interested by the English language. Some students want to read, seize the gist of the text and answer the questions on it; however others are not concentrated, ready to disturb those who want to follow.
- 4- Apart from these attitudes, could you tell me other problems teachers encounter when implementing reading teaching?
- Not all students have their textbooks, that situation affects the reading lesson. So they are not able to read at home. What teacher starts can't thrive. Some are sleepy during the reading session. Some make noise and distract from focusing on the real reading activity. In addition we have the problems of lack of classrooms, time devoted to teaching which is not sufficient. Furthermore these attitudes our students have during reading sessions, depend also on the reading material, the teacher's motivation and his ability to know what his / her students read.
- 5- Please sir, what could be the cause of such situation today?
- The major cause can be lack of good lesson planning, absence of textbooks, poor strategies in carrying out the lesson. Moreover I shall mention the problems of lack of teachers' training. Students are also unwilling to communicate in the English language.
- 6- Could you shortly explain your opinion, please?

- A well planned lesson, anticipates the situation in the class, taking into account all the needs in order for a successful class session.

Moreover, my opinion is to sensitize our learners to practise the language to communicate in English language and to be interested in reading classes.

7- So, you would prefer the former approaches to the competency-based approach, wouldn't you?

- No, I wouldn't anymore. Let's improve the competency-based one. The competency-based approach leads learners to practise the language, by using vocabulary related to the themes studied in the classes.

8- What comparison could you make between reading teaching in the former approach and the competency-based approach?

- Reading teaching in the former approach is different from the competency-based approach because in the former one, learners read loudly the text whereas in the competency based approach, the reading is silent because reading loudly is another activity. The competency based approach involves more learner's participation and productivity.