

READING PERFORMANCE LEVEL OF SELECTED COLLEGE FRESHMEN: BASIS FOR CLASSROOM INTERVENTION STRATEGIES IN READING INSTRUCTION

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Abstract

This paper aimed to determine the reading performance level of college students in word recognition, speed, and comprehension. Using the Individual Reading Inventory (IRI) to gather the needed data, it also analyzed the miscues the students commonly committed while reading the text orally. The respondents came from two (2) evening classes taking English 1 (Study and Thinking Skills) taught by the teacher - researcher, One hundred percent (100%) in each class was taken purposively as respondents.

The findings revealed that the students' reading performance level in word recognition was instructional; in speed, average; and in comprehension, instructional, and their overall reading performance level instructional. The most commonly committed miscue was mispronunciation and the least committed refusal to pronounce. Causes of oral miscues were first language interference, lack of interest in English reading, anxiety, carelessness, semantic unfamiliarity, uncertainty in the pronunciation of the words, pauses, nervousness, poor eyesight, and text type. Intervention strategies in reading which could be applied in the classroom were short (10 to 20 minutes), intensive activities /sessions with one student or with a small group. The study

recommended that the IRI be used to assess students' reading performance in word recognition, speed, and comprehension starting with the first year students in all colleges moreover, teachers use reading intervention strategies in the classroom necessarily.

Keywords: Reading performance, oral miscues, classroom reading intervention strategies. IRI (Individual Reading Inventory)

Introduction

Rationale

Reading performance, a primary concern in every educational institution, holds equally true to Tarlac State University. It is the dominant medium through which students acquire information in disciplines such as science, law, technology, and mathematics. In general, many ESL college students do not read required materials before class; also, many are poor readers, unprepared to read at the level necessary to fully comprehend complex textbooks and primary literature required in many courses. At higher levels of education, student reading demands increase and the readability of literature becomes more difficult. Combined, these factors can result in poor reading comprehension and may affect academic performance. According to Pressley (2002) educators will more readily make changes in their reading curricula if they have a window on the reading performance of their students, and this includes determining their word recognition, reading speed, and reading comprehension skills. Having a complete understanding of these three skills may help English instructors make the appropriate decisions in improving their teaching of reading. Assessing students' reading problems and providing solutions by designing intervention plans could be instrumental in making college

students 'literately balanced', thus, helping the country solve illiteracy. To determine the reading performance level of college students in word recognition, reading speed and comprehension, this action research was conducted. The study likewise identified the miscues they committed while orally reading an English text, including the causes of these miscues. The data gathered served as basis for the proposed classroom intervention strategies in reading instruction for college freshmen. This study supported the Philippine government's program "No Non- Readers Left Behind" in addressing its major thrust on nationwide Literacy Development.

Theoretical Framework

Word recognition has been considered central to fluent reading in current models of reading processes of skilled adult L2 readers (Hudson, 1996). It is the process of recognizing strings of letters in print and of being able to rapidly identify meanings from visual input. Expectedly, ESL readers have to experience greater difficulty in processing letters in a word and identifying word meanings. During oral reading, students often say something other than what is actually printed in the book. Such miscues can be used to help teachers make decisions about their reading instruction. Deviations from text during oral reading are not simply random mistakes (Goodman 1995), but form patterns that reveal useful information about the students' reading abilities. In the context of academic reading, where large amounts of academic texts need to be processed, recognizing words and word meaning is extremely important. Insufficient word recognition and inadequate vocabulary would likely result in inefficient academic reading. Weaknesses in vocabulary, comprehension, speed, or a combination of all three may be the result of ineffective reading. As

regards speed in reading, many experts (e.g., Robertson 1999; Wilde 2000) claim that an average reading speed can range from 200 to 350 words per minute, but that rate can vary depending on the material and the reading experience of the reader.

Conceptual Framework

As teachers assess students’ performance and progress within reading speed (fluency), word recognition, and language comprehension processes, they have to identify their particular learning needs and use this analysis to guide further teaching by applying appropriate intervention strategies. The present study looked into the students’ reading performance level as to their speed and comprehension, reading the text silently, and their word recognition level, as they orally read it. Findings suggested using appropriate intervention strategies to help students enhance their reading performance regardless of their reading performance level. This framework is illustrated in the following paradigm.

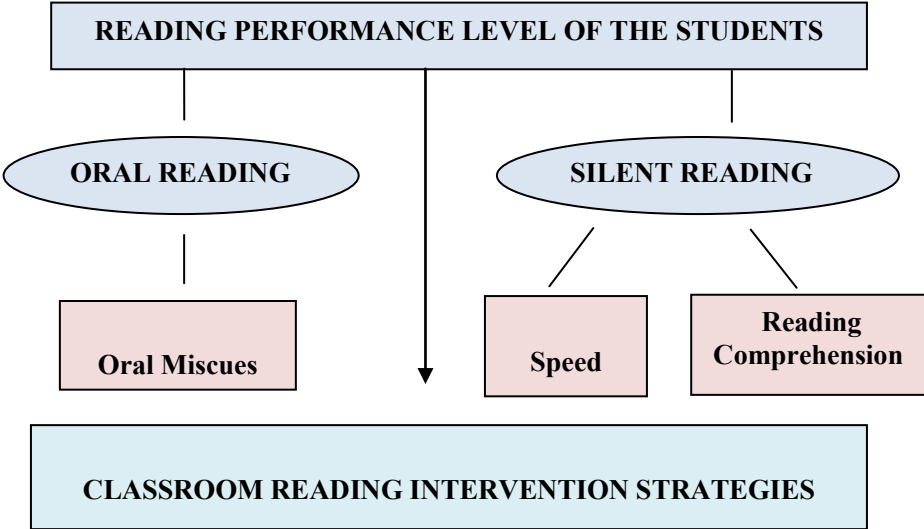


Figure 1: Conceptual Paradigm of the Study

Methodology

Research Design

This classroom-based action research applied the descriptive evaluative method and adopted the Individual Reading Inventory (IRI) assessment presently used by many schools to determine the students' reading speed as well as word recognition, and comprehension skills.

Research Locale

The research was conducted at Tarlac State University , Tarlac City. The assessment of students' reading performance was done in their English classrooms.

Samples and Sampling Techniques

Two (2) English 1 (Study and Thinking Skills) evening classes were assessed. The first set of students were enrolled in the College of Computer Studies at Tarlac State University, meeting Wednesday and Friday, whereas the second set enrolled in the College of Arts and Social Sciences, Tuesday and Thursday. Eighty-eight (88) freshmen were purposively taken as respondents, 45 belonged to English Class 1, while 43 to the English Class 2. Both classes were handled by the teacher-researcher.

Research Instrument

The Informal Reading Inventory (IRI) was adopted as the instrument to assess the students' reading speed, word recognition, and comprehension. Observation and interview guides were used to determine reading miscues and causes of such miscues.

The IRI directly addresses its goal to make every pupil/student a reader. Anchored on the flagship program of the Philippine government,

“Every Child A Reader Program,” it seeks to enable every learner to communicate both in English or in their first language through effective reading instruction. The IRI is the first validated instrument that intends to measure the learner’s reading comprehension level. The learner’s word recognition and comprehension ability as well as his/her reading speed are informally assessed quantitatively and qualitatively through stories and passages.

With this background, the researcher found the IRI a very appropriate tool to assess also the college students’ reading performance level. Similar word recognition marking system and computation formulae for reading speed, word recognition, and comprehension levels were used. Only the reading passage was changed.

An adopted English Zen story from Japan titled “The Tunnel” was used as the reading passage. This text of about 300 words was taken from the book “Gems in Afro-Asian Literature” (Calixihan and Diano, 1989: 42). Below the text were eight (8) questions which each student answered orally. Three (3) were literal, 4 interpretive, and another 2 critical comprehension questions.

While each student was orally reading the text, observations as to the miscues committed, including their possible causes were noted. The students were also interviewed to find out what they felt while reading and why they committed such miscues.

Data-Collection Procedure

1. Word Recognition: Recording Miscues

Given similar passage to read, they were asked to read the prompt, then the passage orally. If the students hesitated and looked at

the professor for assurance, they were encouraged to go on. As each student read, all words read erroneously were marked. Word miscues were noted, recorded, tallied, and categorized as *mispronunciation* (student attempted to pronounce the word but produced an imperfect or incorrect one), *correction* (during the oral reading, the student realized he/she had made an error and re-read the section/word without prompting), *insertion* (as the student was reading, he/she would insert a word or two that wasn't on the page), *omission* (during the oral reading, the student left out a word/s), *repetition* (student repeated a word or portion of the text), *reversal* (student reversed the order of the print or the word), *substitution* (instead of reading a specific word, the student inserted a different word), *pausing and intonation* (unnecessary pausing and unexpected intonation was made), and *refusal to pronounce* (student neither pronounced the word nor attempted to do so).

2. Recording Reading Speed

As regards the reading speed, it was explained to the students that their silent reading would be timed. As soon as each finished reading the last word, the student tapped the table and the professor recorded the reading time first in the reading passage sheet and later in her record sheet. The reading passage was then handed back to the teacher.

3. Assessing Comprehension

To assess the student's comprehension level, he/she was required to silently read the text. After reading, the student gave the material back to the teacher who orally asked 8 questions categorized as literal, interpretive, and critical based on the text answers. One point was awarded for every correct answer.

4. Statistical Treatment

Frequency of students who were described as independent, instructional, and frustration in terms of their reading performance was calculated. The frequencies were converted into percentages to have a clearer view of the number of students who obtained such level. Then they were ranked.

Moreover, the following statistical formulae adopted from the IRI were applied to determine their reading speed and comprehension levels in the silent reading tests and their word recognition level in the oral reading test. Average grade or mean grade/score was then calculated to get the overall reading performance of each class and both classes. For reading speed, the following formula was applied:

$$\text{Reading Speed} = \frac{\text{No. of Words in the Passage}}{\text{Reading Time in Seconds}} \times 60$$

The IRI-Oral Test uses a predetermined set of criteria in identifying the students reading levels. These criteria include the percentage of word recognition accuracy and the percentage of correct answers to comprehension questions. It has adapted the set of criteria for the reading levels proposed by Johnson, Kress, and Pikulski (1987). To calculate the word recognition and reading comprehension level, the formulae respectively shown below were adopted:

$$\text{Word Recognition (WR)} = \frac{\text{No. of major miscue (M)}}{\text{No. of words in the passage (N)}} \times 100 = \% \text{ of M}$$
$$\% \text{ correct} = 100\% - \% \text{ of M}$$

$$\text{Comprehension (C)} = \frac{\text{No. of Correct Answers} \times 100}{\text{No. of Questions}} = \% \text{ of CR}$$

Below are charts of the IRI Silent Reading Test Criteria and IRI Oral Test Criteria adopted from the Philippine IRI Manual which teachers in many public and private institutions follow to evaluate their ESL readers reading performance.

IRI Silent Reading Test Criteria

Reading Level	Reading Speed (Word per Minute)	Comprehension
Independent	Fast Readers 190 above	90 – 100% correct answers
Instructional	Average Readers 161 – 189	75 – 89 % correct answers
Frustration	Slow Readers 160 below	74% below correct answers

IRI Oral Test Criteria

Level	Word Recognition
Independent	97 – 100%
Instructional	90 – 96%
Frustration	89%below

Results and Discussion

1. Students Performance Level in the Oral and Silent Reading

1.1. Word Recognition Level of the Students (In Each English Class and In Both Classes)

Word recognition, the most basic reading components, is the ability of a reader to recognize written words correctly and effortlessly.

The following tables show the statistical data that suggested the word recognition level.

Table 1 Word Recognition Level of English Class 1 N = 45

Average Grade	Level	f	P	R
92	Instructional	21	47%	1
97	Independent	19	42%	2
88	Frustration	5	11%	3

The table shows 21 or 47% of the students had word recognition level categorized as instructional, 19 or 42% belonged to the independent level, while 5 or 11% in the frustration level. The data suggest that a majority of the students can read text with 90% accuracy, i.e., no more than one error per 10 words read (Francis et al 2006). Such reading level engages the student in challenging, but manageable text.

Table 2 Word Recognition Level of English Class 2 N = 43

Average Grade	Level	f	P	R
94%	Instructional	28	65%	1
89%	Frustration	13	30%	2
99%	Independent	2	5%	3

The table reveals that 28 or 65% belonged to the instructional level, 13 or 30% to the frustration level, while only 2 or 5% were

classified in the independent level. Though instructional level is the reading level expected in the classroom, the data suggest that many students still needed the teachers or guidance from other persons to fully read and understand the text. The text seemed slightly challenging, but readable to the students. Interestingly enough, many students still had difficulties recognizing some English words, as reflected in the number of students categorized in the frustration level. Francis et al (2006) considered this level as the level at which a reader reads at less than a 90% accuracy (i.e., no more than one error per 10 words read). Frustration level text means using a difficult text for the reader. Such groups need to be taught how to read with complete recognition, thus the teacher has to design intervention strategies intended to help them improve their reading skill.

Table 3 Overall Word Recognition Level of Both Classes N = 88

Classes	Average Grade/Score	Word Recognition Level
English Class 1	93.66	Instructional
English Class 2	92.72	Instructional
Overall WR Level	93.19	Instructional

Clearly, the table shows that in general, the overall word recognition level of the students in both classes was instructional. The passage read seemed to be a challenging, but a manageable text for the majority of the students, with no more than approximately 1 in 10 words difficult for the reader (93% success). The findings concurred with those of Francis (2006) who argued that the text is at students' independent reading level, if they can read it with about 95% accuracy, or misread

only about 1 of every 20 words. If the text is more difficult, students will focus so much on word recognition that they will not have an opportunity to develop fluency. As suggested by reading specialists, the text the students practice reading orally should be relatively short—probably 50–200 words, depending on their age. The teacher should also use a variety of reading materials. Activities that require explicit instruction, modeling, guided practice, student practice, application, and feedback can help accelerate their level.

1.2. Reading Speed Level of English Class 1 and English Class 2

Reading speed is the rate at which a person reads words on a page. According to the Virginia Tech Cook Counseling Center, the average student who is a native speaker of English reads between 250 and 350 words per minute. An optimal educated adult reading rate for speed and comprehension is between 500 and 700 words a minute. However, in the Philippine IRI adapted to Filipino ESL readers, a student is a fast reader, if he can read 190 (and above) words per minute; average, if he can read between 161 – 189 WPM, and slow, if he can only read 160 (or below) WPM.

The following tables show the students’ reading speed levels of the students from English Classes 1 and 2.

Table 4 Reading Speed Level of the English Class 1 N = 45

No. of Words Per Minute	Speed Level	f	P	R
161 - 189	Average	34	76%	1
190 above	Fast	6	13%	2
160 below	Slow	5	11%	3

Table 4 shows that 34 or 76% of the students had average speed level since they were able to read between 161 – 189 words per minute. The number of fast and slow readers was almost comparable. According to reading experts from Speed Reading Center (2009), an average reading speed of less than 200 words per minute is considered basic for ESL learners. They surmised, however, that average reading speed may signify low comprehension.

Table 5 Reading Speed Level of the English Class 2 N = 43

No. of Words Per Minute	Speed Level	f	P	R
161 - 189	Average	28	65%	1
190 above	Fast	13	30%	2
160 below	Slow	2	5%	3

Table 5 shows that 28 or 65% of the students were also average readers. However, there were more fast readers than slow readers. The data suggest that the teachers still had to assist students in speeding up their reading pace to enhance not only their word recognition but also their comprehension level.

Table 6 Students Overall Reading Speed Level in Both Classes N = 88

Classes	Average WPM	Speed Level	Overall Reading Speed Level
English Class 1	183	Average	Average
English Class 2	189	Average	

The data show that the students, in general, had an average reading speed level, suggesting that they could read only between 161–189 words per minute. Individuals who have this average reading speed should start checking out some techniques, exercises and programs aimed to increase their average reading speed and, at the same time, enhance their level of comprehension and word recognition. The students' not-so-fast reading speed may be attributed to several factors such as unfamiliar words, uncertainty in the pronunciation of the words, pauses, nervousness, poor eyesight, or lack of eye muscle coordination. Another possible reason was that there might have been trying to memorize some points from the text which might have caused slight pauses or had slowed them down within readings. If the students regularly and deliberately practice different reading exercises and techniques, they will be able to achieve the reading speed they have been aspiring for sooner than what they have expected.

1.3. Students' Comprehension Level

Comprehension is the capacity for understanding fully; the act or action of grasping with the intellect; likewise, it is the ability to receive or take in the sense of (as letters or symbols) by scanning; to understand the meaning of written or printed matter; to learn from what one has seen or found in writing or printing. When the readers understand the words so that transcend the pages to become thoughts and ideas, then they are truly reading.

Table 7 reveals the students' reading comprehension level in English Class 1 and English Class 2.

Table 7 Comprehension Level of the English Class 1 N = 45

Level of Comprehension Questions	Average Grade	Level	f	P	R
Literal Level	100%	Independent	45	100%	1
Interpretive	77%	Instructional	36	80%	2.5
Critical	77%	Instructional	36	80%	2.5

The table shows that 45 or 100% of the students were independent readers in terms of their comprehension on questions categorized in the literal level. They were able to answer literal questions that required them to give what were explicitly stated or given in the passage. The questions asked in this study started with question word “what”. The same number or percentage of students (36 or 80%) was categorized as instructional enough data to suggest that they could understand the passage, but not much. Such questions that required reading between the lines and doing analysis or judgment seemed not quite easy for them to do is expected among ESL students, reading scholars’ insets.

Table 8 Comprehension Level of English Class 2 N = 43

Level of Comprehension Questions	Average Grade	Level	f	P	R
Critical	73%	Frustration	41	95%	1
Literal	98%	Independent	40	93%	2
Interpretive	79%	Instructional	39	91%	3

Forty-one (41) or 95% of the students that comprised the majority fell under the category of frustration level, but that was along the critical questions where they had to analyze, synthesize, or judge the passage. Several factors may have been attributed to such low result. One of these is that the students perhaps knew the answer, but due to their limited English vocabulary, they could not give their answers correctly. Another reason might be due to lack of self-trust, as they must have doubted their answers and to avoid embarrassment, they chose not to say them.

Table 9 Overall Reading Comprehension Level of the Students N = 88

Level of Comprehension Questions	Average Grade	Comprehension Level
Literal	99%	Independent
Interpretive	78%	Instructional
Critical	75%	Instructional
Comprehension Level	84%	Instructional

It could be gleaned from the table that the overall grade of the students in the comprehension test was 84% to indicate that they had instructional reading performance as to comprehension. This is not a bad scenario in an ESL classroom context. Expectedly, many hold that ESL learners would be between the independent and frustration levels to further suggest that that the reading passage though challenging was readable and manageable, since they comfortably read and understood around 80% of the text.

2. The Student's Over-all Performance Level in the Silent and Oral Reading

2.1. Over-All Performance Level in Oral Reading - Word Recognition

The ability to read proficiently and recognize words is a fundamental skill that affects the learning experiences and school performance of children and adolescents. Reading scholars believe those students who are competent readers, as measured by their performance on reading tests, are more likely to perform well in other subjects.

Table 10 Overall Reading Performance Level (RPL) of the Students

N = 88

Classes	Reading Speed	Word Recognition	Comprehension	Overall RPL
Class 1	Average	Instructional	Instructional	Instructional
Class 2	Average	Instructional	Instructional	Instructional
Reading Level	Average	Instructional	Instructional	Instructional

The table clearly shows that in general the students' reading level was instructional to suggest that they needed the mentor's guidance while reading the text. The students may have some word recognition, speed and/or comprehension issues that need to be addressed. Reading intervention strategies may help in accelerating the reading level of the students. Such strategies may be focused on the key problems the students encounter while readings, thus helping them meet their specific learning needs.

3. Most and Least Commonly Committed Word Miscues

A miscue is any unexpected utterance of a word or section of text. A miscue “says” something other than the exact printed text gives. Some might label such miscalling as errors, no matter how the term implies something negative. Miscues include mispronunciation, repetitions, insertions, substitutions, omissions, and hesitations.

Table 11 Most and Least Commonly Committed Miscues N = 88

Category of Miscues	f	P	R
Mispronunciation	29	41%	1
Pausing and Intonation	20	29%	2
Omission	19	27%	3.5
Self-Correction	19	27%	3.5
Repetition	15	21%	5
Substitution	11	16%	6
Insertion	8	11%	7
Reversal	5	7%	8
Refusal to Pronounce	4	6%	9

Table 11 shows that the majority (29 or 41%) of the students mispronounced many words, a marked, un-mastered word-attack skill that ranked 1st. Twenty (20) or 29% made unnecessary pausing and intonation, and this was ranked 2nd. Omission and correction of words read/misread garnered the same frequency or percentage, thus, both ranked 3rd. Only 4 or 6% refused to pronounce words; the statistical data reveal that the most commonly committed miscue was mispronunciation, as contrasted to the least committed refusal to pronounce.

As observed by the researcher, the students attempted to pronounce the words, but produced a less acceptable one. Some of the mispronounced words from the text were: Zenkai (as *Senkay*, *Zinkay*, *Zenkey*, *Zenki*), journeyed (as *dyorneyd*, *jornid*), there (as *their*, *der*), woman (as *woman*, *weman*), caused (as *cowst*, *kowz*), through (as *tru*), etc. Some of the likely reasons for mispronunciation are reading difficulties, nonstandard spellings, local or regional pronunciations, nervousness, visual deficiency, and hearing problems. All of these can cause people to say words differently from the standard pronunciation.

Other students paused, too, when unsure of the way words should be pronounced; still others would squint or rub their eyes trying to recognize words very well. Moreover, most of them did not stop when there was a period after the sentence or just stopped when there was no period at all. They did not pause, despite seeing a comma after the word. In addition, a few students tended to omit words, syllables or sounds (e.g. Zenkai's – *Zenkai*, months – *month*, awaited – *await*, asked – *as* and, at times, omitting article and other words). A few students even omitted a sentence or two. For words which they were uncertain of, these were oftentimes repeated. Substitution was also noticed among students who would say *fast* for *past*, *boat* for *both*, *form* for *from*, *saw* for *so*, *san* for son.

4. Causes of Miscues

During oral reading, students often say something other than what is actually printed in the book. Such miscues can be used to help teachers make decisions about upcoming reading instructions. Deviations from text during oral reading are not simply random mistakes (Goodman 1969), but form patterns that reveal useful information about students'

reading abilities. Research had shown several factors that contribute to committing miscues.

The following chart shows a list of these causes. The data were obtained from the interview with the students and from the instructor’s observation.

Table 12 Causes of Oral Miscues

Type of Miscue	Possible Causes
1. Correction	The student lacked confidence. She/he did not see himself/herself as a good reader.
2. Insertion	The student read too fast.
3. Omission	The student’s visual tracking was very weak. She/he also lacked focus, read too fast, or had weak sight vocabulary.
4. Repetition	The text level was a bit difficult to the student, or he/she was not sure of the right way to read the word.
5. Reversal	The student was either careless in reading, too fast, or was uncertain of the word.
6. Substitution	The student did not understand the word he/she read
7. Pausing and Intonation	The student may be ‘buying some time’ to prepare to decode the word. She/he often hesitated. Other students did not think that punctuation marks are important to consider in reading.
8. Mispronunciation	Regional accent or L1 interference may have caused difficulty in pronouncing a word. Semantic unfamiliarity may be another.

Other reasons for committing miscues were: defective eyesight, unwillingness to guess, anxiety or nervousness, difficult text, impulsiveness, lack of confidence, lack of practice in English oral reading.

5. Reading Intervention Strategies Applicable in the Classroom

Interventions are short (10 to 20 minutes), intensive sessions with one student or a small group. They are intended to help students improve a specific skill, such as reading fluency, comprehension or word recognition. The matrix of strategies below can be used in the classroom context to enhance students' reading skills.

Classroom Intervention Reading Strategies

Reading Components	Intervention Strategies
Word Recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seat struggling readers near proficient readers who display positive models and behaviors in relation to reading. • Provide time to talk before, during, and after reading in small-group experiences. • Consider partner reading (either with another student or another adult). • Use cloze activities. • Develop knowledge of spelling patterns, root word sight vocabulary, adding common prefixes and

	<p>suffixes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students should have a personal word bank.• Reinforce and praise the use of self-correcting in oral reading.• Tape record students' reading, allowing them to hear errors, lack of fluency and expression.
<p>2. Reading Speed or Fluency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have struggling students read silently most of the time.• Provide opportunities for students to experience wide reading of assorted materials• Provide opportunities to practice fluency (timed drills).• Tape record a paragraph, listen to the tape, record it again with attention to units of meaning, and listen for improvement. Repeat this process until fluency is reached.• Read a paragraph silently and underline groups of words that go together.• Teacher models the way a text should be read.• Commercial or teacher-made story tapes also may be used.• The student imitates or echoes the teacher's oral rendition, one sentence or phrase at a time.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Choral Reading</i>: Less fluent readers are grouped with fluent readers as they read a selected passage in unison. • <i>Text Chunking</i>: Students read aloud a passage that has been marked with slash marks to show phrase boundaries. • <i>Readers Theater</i>: Each student is assigned a particular role to dramatize a story that is then presented to classmates. • Read different genres to create different moods and show voice (prosody). • Choose easy material to start with – when you begin speed reading, don't use a challenging textbook. • Perform jazz chant and rap.
3. Reading Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use context clues. • Use graphic organizers • Brainstorm with other students lists of synonyms and antonyms. • <i>Reading Centers</i>: Provide students with special places organized in the classroom for students to work in small groups or pairs, either cooperatively or individually • Give guide questions before reading the passage.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use read- aloud strategy• Ask questions arranged according to their level of difficulty
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Conclusions

1. Although the reading text seems manageable, college freshmen still need their mentor's guidance during reading to fully recognize words in print, speed up their reading, and understand the content of the text.
2. Many college freshmen still consider reading English texts as challenging, though they are readable.
3. ESL students tend to mispronounce many English words.
4. L1 interference, hesitation, impulsiveness, anxiety, poor eyesight, and semantic unfamiliarity are some reasons student - readers commit miscues when reading English texts.
5. Intervention strategies that help students improve specific reading skill, such as reading with speed and fluency, comprehension or word recognition should be applied in the classroom.

Recommendations

1. The IRI should be used to assess students' reading performance in word recognition, speed and comprehension starting with the first year students in all colleges.

2. A pre-assessment every semester or every year, followed by post-assessment of students' reading abilities have to be conducted in their English or Reading subjects.
3. English teachers must assess their students' reading performance in terms of their reading speed, word recognition, and comprehension.
4. Teachers must use reading intervention strategies in the classroom whenever necessary.
5. Students found to be struggling, while reading should be tutored intensively.
6. Encourage students to ask questions to make sure they understand what the passage or text is all about.
7. It is important to give students access to a wide variety of books and other reading materials.
8. Teachers should make reading a regular part of students' life by giving them varied, interesting, and more challenging reading assignments.
9. This research may be replicated using a more sophisticated design, more respondents, or different variables.

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