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Research Article

ACQUISITION OF TEACHER DISCRETION THROUGH WORKSHOP TRAINING IN SUDAN: THE CASE OF GRIFFITHS' 1990 MODULE 'OLIVER TWIST'

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the implicit notion of Teacher's Discretion (TD) inherent in teaching Supplementary Readers (SR) with reference to the context of Nile Course Syllabus (NCS) in Sudan. The main problem was to identify the ways that enable new teachers to acquire TD as required for teaching SRs in and out of class. Data was collected and analyzed by a form of evidence-based holistic approach to studying TD as a consciously acquired skill with particular reference to Griffiths' (1990) Module 'Oliver Twist' (GMOT). Besides, three anecdotal cases of teaching SRs in America, Tanzania and Hong Kong were reported to complement the formally introduced GMOT in Sudan. Findings revealed that acquisition of TD to handle SRs can be realized longitudinally through a trial and error *route* and through a short-training *course* as in the case of GMOT. The first route is subjective and has no fixed landmarks to be specified and the latter is time framed, traceable and has a principled co-operative approach. Moreover, GMOT was found to possess the power to transfer a first-hand experience of TD to novice NCS Sudanese teachers. Besides, other facts on TD as perceived in ELT textbook writing practices were also revealed. Accordingly, some recommendations were made to help more teachers upgrade their TD to be in line with the best practices of integrating SRs in the classroom.

INTRODUCTION

"No English course is self-sufficient. It must be supplemented with wide reading at appropriate linguistic levels. We assume as an *absolute minimum* that six class readers and six out-of-class readers will be read by any pupil every year" (Corbluth, 1979: 16-17).

Corbluth, the author of three 'Nile Course Syllabus' (NCS) books, had stated a vision for integrating 12 Supplementary Readers (SRs) every year in his textbooks (ibid). He had shrewdly grafted this idea of wider reading in a prime location in the NCS, i.e. in the first opening pages. Many students like curious onlookers, had cursorily perused the contents of these pages and then moved to the unit of the day's lessons. As for (novice) teachers, the idea of integrating 6 SRs was hardly discernable as no specific details were given in the teacher's books. Being a former student of NCS, the researcher has been harboring the contents of these opening pages, especially the idea of reading '*a great deal*' of simplified books. Lately, access to all the NCS teacher's books (Corbluth: 1979, 1981 & 1983) had prompted the writing of two papers on integrating SRs in NCS. The first was on "The Status of Supplementary Readers in Nile Course for the Sudan Syllabus: is it the Emperor in New Clothes?" (Musa, 2016); the second was a sequel to the first, it was on: "Evaluating the Reading Speed Campaign and its Inventory in Nile Course Syllabus" (forthcoming). Both papers had the aspect of Teacher Discretion (TD) as a common denominator. In the first paper, the teachers contemporaneous of NCS' author, the paper argued, were well-trained and TD was a-taken-for-granted or *assumed* 'right'; accordingly, lack of adequate details on SRs was seen as logical. The second paper found that SRs along with the picture illustrations, the reading speed advice, and 7 reading speed checks were elements of one inventory in which TD was the fulcrum. This paper is the third in line; it tries to investigate the unmarked route to acquire TD with a particular reference to a module on 'Oliver Twist' written for teacher training in Sudan during the1990s.

Statement of the problem

At the outset of NCS piloting stage and after, nothing was offered as to what forms of integration SRs had to take. Only after 10 years of teaching NCS (i.e. 1990), the In-Service Educational Training Institute (ISETI) in Sudan had produced a training module on 'Oliver Twist' by Gareth Griffiths who was a consultant in ELT. The module was introduced as the first of the *absolute minimum* 6 class-readers, states Griffiths (1990). What caused the ISETI to formally introduce Griffiths' module

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on 'Oliver Twist' (GMOT) was *probably* the absence of a specific paradigm on how to integrate SRs in NCS and the need to impart sound teaching experiences for their classroom integration. Therefore, in this paper, the covert nature of TD will be made explicit in general with specific reference to GMOT. Precisely, the quick, direct route to acquire TD in GMOT will be contrasted with another winding path that leads to TD by the anecdotes and reported experiences of individual teachers, all as specimens to probe into the inherent relation of TD and SRs. Accordingly, the assumed nature of TD can be closely studied by teacher-trainers and textbook writers. The paper's significance, therefore, resides in developing an awareness to set parameters for transmitting TD by a direct measurable approach, as the workshop training formula, rather than the usual route that relies on 'common sense' and idiosyncratic teaching experiences.

The study aims to

1. Provide an insight into acquiring the aspect of TD as planned by GMOT and as revealed by anecdotal experience with reference to SRs.
2. Reduce GMOT's workshop activities into a template applicable to teaching other SRs.
3. Raise teachers' awareness on the values of workshops for acquiring the assumed 'right' of TD in a systematic way as opposed to the subjective ways of teaching SRs.

Method and procedures

It should be made clear now that the study is not meant to examine TD in NCS per se, rather it is geared to explore the implicit notion of TD and to provide a route for its realization. Therefore, a form of evidence-based holistic approach is adopted to elicit a two-sided perspective on TD: one as formally presented by GMOT (1990); the other as viewed and perceived by specific anecdotal evidences and textbook writing practices in ELT literature (i.e. John Holt, 1970; Hill, 2008; Prowse, 2011; and Wu, 1994). Hence, the related literature on the nature and function of TD will be outlined first; secondly, the published cases of Holt, Hill, and Wu on teaching SRs will be reported and; lastly, the instructional design of GMOT will be highlighted and its implications on TD will be assessed.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In phrases such as: 'absolute *discretion'*, 'the soul of *discretion'*, and 'a great *discretionary* power', the exact meaning of *discretion* can be manipulated in many metaphoric language encounters. However, when the phrase 'absolute teacher's discretion' is used in an educational textbook (as NCS) it cannot always be overlooked, especially if it is the only aspect that explicitly collocates with the teaching of SRs. In this section, therefore, a coherent perspective on the term TD will be rendered to fit the set aims of the study.

Firstly, in Psychology, the cognitive and behavioral dimension of *discretion* is approximated to *intuition* and *common sense*. As for intuition in one hand, "We size up strangers within the first few seconds of meeting them. We do this by intuition, a way of knowing based on spontaneous, "instinctive" processes rather that logic or reasoning" state McBurny & White, (2007: 3). McBurny & White further explain,

"Think for a moment how you decide whether to step off the curb in front of an oncoming car at a traffic light. You make a life-or-death decision in split second. How do you do it? Probably your decision is based on a number of factors, including whether the traffic light has changed to red, whether the driver looks you in the eye, and whether the car is decelerating. Somehow you take all these factors into account. This "somehow" is what we call intuition" (ibid).

As for common sense on the other, it is inseparable from intuition because it represents a sort of intuition that relies on 'informal methods' (ibid). Most importantly, common sense is found to be a judgmental aspect and contains 'attitudes' that are in line with the larger "shared attitudes and experiences" of a society; thus it can be described as something practically accepted by perceived experience and is scientifically unchecked (ibid). **Secondly** in the realm of language teaching as general, McCarthy (1991) points that experienced teachers possess 'sound instincts' as to what goes against 'sensible intuition' in their 'authentic' and 'artificial' language teaching. However, these teachers, McCarthy adds, "… cannot hope to have an instinctive possession of the vast amount of detailed insight that years of close observation by numerous investigators has produced …" (ibid: 1). This means that some trained teachers, when exposed to new language teaching encounters, can resort to using their discretion as dictated by common sense or intuitive experiences. Contrariwise, some others may refer to specific learning/teaching techniques to handle these new encounters as if guided by a general principle. As an example, in some textbooks as Alexander's (1967), TD is assumed as a traditional 'right', particularly visible in lesson division. Alexander states that "Obviously a class of bright students will cover more ground than a class of less able ones. This problem can be overcome if the lesson contains material which can be omitted at the discretion of the teacher, providing that these omissions do not hamper students' progress" (Alexander, ibid: xi). So, TD is like schemata. It is structured, accumulative and is called upon when needed as more new experiences are met. In other words as Boote (2006: 462) puts it, "A teacher has adequate professional discretion for a particular task when that teacher has the ability to make professional judgments and the capacity to act on those judgments". However, in teaching set-textbooks within certain countries, the *absolute* right of TD is on its way to being demarcated; Boote (2007: 462) points that:

"Many Anglophone countries in the last two decades have seen the implementation of standardized curriculum and instruction, high stakes testing, inspection and accreditation, increasing external control of teacher preparation program, and legislation and policies that seek the remote control of teachers"

In fact, Boote's inquiry was about the responsibilities of improving teachers' professional discretion in teaching main curricula where two opposing forces compete; in the first, "The assumption is that, left on their own, teachers are in the best position to mediate between the needs of students and external expectations of their learning, professional development and policy should free teachers to help students" (ibid: 462). In the second, the powers of curriculum policy makers and many other factors intentionally work to restrict TD as for the above-

mentioned Anglophone countries (ibid). However, for additional materials or SRs as opposed to core curricula textbooks, TD seems to be the only unquestionable route for their classroom implementation. Teachers are given an *absolute* TD to mediate between students and SRs. Proof of this is the ubiquitous subordination of SRs in textbook or curriculum assumptions in many ELT current research practices. To be more specific, Prowse's (2011) revelations are particularly useful here; he states:

"Writing teams are often put together by publishers and considerable 'getting to know you' needs to take place before writing can start. A rough rule of thumb is that team-working on supplementary materials is like an affair; team-working on coursebook is more like marriage! 'Getting to know you' works on different levels, and the human one of shared response to experience is as important as shared methodological presuppositions" (ibid: 152).

So, TD as demanded for teaching supplementary materials is less welcome in curricula planning discussions as more textbook-writers acquiesce to a 'rule of thumb'. Thus, the unwillingness to discuss the issue SRs renders its inherent TD to a periphery. In short, the statement made by Prowse (2011), is a textbook example of how adamant curriculum writers seem to be on keeping SRs as an 'affair' (and, of course, Corbluth is one such writer). Now, a number of anecdotal experiences will be reported to give more light on TD; one encountered by John Holt in America, one by David Hill in Tanzania, and another by Kam-yin Wu in Hong Kong.

The experiences of Holt (1970), Hill (2008) and Wu (1994)

Firstly, Holt's story with SRs is reported here as an *anecdotal foil* to GMOT and also to extend "the human shared response to experience" pointed by Prowse (2011). Holt's encounter with SRs as a teacher is informative from beginning to end in that it reveals a longitudinally acquired TD. It is taken from his book "The Underachieving School" in which the chapter: 'Making Children Hate Reading' is the one of concern to this inquiry. Due to its importance, longer quotations will be cited as deemed necessary to draw lessons. Holt's story begins as follows:

"My sister was the first person who made me question my conventional ideas about teaching English. She had a son in the seventh grade in a fairly good public school. His teacher had asked the class to read Cooper's The Deerslayer. The choice was bad enough in itself; whether looking at man or nature, Cooper was superficial, inaccurate and sentimental, and his writing is ponderous and ornate. But to make matters worse, this teacher had decided to give the book the microscope and X-ray treatment. He made the students look up and memorize not only the definition but the derivation of every big word that came along – and there were plenty. Every chapter was followed by close questioning and testing to make sure the students 'understood' everything." (ibid: 71)

This is the exposition of the story. Action developed as Holt's growing consciousness centered on the predicament of these students; however, he admitted that he was 'a conventional' teacher and as the class teacher was his friend, he supported the teacher's strategy against his sister. He continued to state:

"The argument soon grew hot. What was wrong with making sure that children understood everything they read? My sister answered that until this class her boy had always loved reading, and had read a lot on his own; now he had stopped. (He was not really to start again for many years.)

Still I persisted. If children didn't look up the words they didn't know how would they ever learn them? My sister said, 'Don't be silly! When you were little you had a huge vocabulary and were always reading very grown-up books. When did you ever look up a word in the dictionary?'

She had me. I never looked at our dictionary. I don't use one today" (pp: 71-2).

This was how it dawned on him. He pointed that "Since then I have talked about this with a number of teachers" (p: 72). As for vocabulary, he wondered: "Why should children understand everything they read? Why should anyone? Does any one?" (ibid). After a lapse of four years and different encounters with many teachers, reading classes, maverick students, trials and errors, and self-reflections, Holt was able to identify the many school aspects "that make book reading a constant source of possible failure and public humiliation" (ibid: 73). Eventually, he decides to rid his students of the nightmare of reading books "to get them to read oftener and more adventurously" (ibid: 74). He narrated:

"One day soon after school had started, I said to them, "Now I'm going to say something about reading that you have probably never heard a teacher say before. I would like you to read a lot of books this year, but I want you to read them only for pleasure. I am not going to ask you questions to find out whether you understand the books or not. If you understand enough of a book to enjoy it and want to go on reading it, that's enough for me. Also, I'm not going to ask you what words mean.

'Finally, 'I said, 'I don't want you to feel that just because you start a book you have to finish it. Give the author thirty or forty pages or so to get his story going. Then if you don't like the characters and you don't care what happens to them, close the book, put it away, and get another. I don't care whether the books are easy or hard, short or long, as long as you enjoy them. Furthermore, I'm putting all this in a letter to your parents, so they won't feel they have to quiz and heckle you about books at home." (pp: 74-5).

The end of the story was marvelous. Here is how Holt reacted to the effects of his new experiment on one student who was first lagging behind her classmates prior to the new reading strategy:

"One girl, who had just come to us from a school where she had had a very hard time, and who proved to be one of the most interesting, lively, and intelligent children I have ever known, looked at me steadily for a long time after I had finished. Then, still looking at me, she said slowly and solemnly, 'Mr. Holt, do you really mean that?' I said just as solemnly, 'I mean every word of it.'[…….] One day, in one of our many free periods, she was reading at her desk. From the glimpse of the illustration, I thought I knew what the book was. I said to myself, 'It can't be,' and went to take a closer look. Sure enough, she was reading *Moby Dick,* in the edition with the woodcuts by Rockwell Kent. When I came closer to her desk she looked up. I said, 'Are you really reading that?' She said she was. I said, 'Do you like it?' She said, 'Oh, yes, it's neat! I

said, 'Don't you find parts of it rather heavy going?' She answered, 'Oh, sure, but I just skip over those parts and go to the next good part' (pp: 75-6).

Holt's final statement on the girl's reading strategy was precise; He said, "This is exactly what reading should be and in school so seldom is- an exciting, joyous adventure" (ibid). **Secondly** and more interestingly, Hill's (2008) teaching experience was also informed by a girl and a mother who worked as a teacher. The little story started with the mother taking a whole set of out-of-class SRs home with her. The girl, Hill demonstrates, had read this whole set of readers that her mother brought and alone; thus, the girl's vacation passed smoothly. Hill states that the girl "read them all, starting with the easiest and working up to the most difficult. The holidays passed quickly and when the new school term started, she was far a head of her classmates in English" (ibid: 1). As opposed to Holt's experiment in a context of English as a foreign/second language, Hill states "It is certainly no fun to read when the language is difficult and you have to keep looking words up in a dictionary. But that is why graded readers are so helpful" (ibid). Moreover, the significance in Hill's account of this girl is that: having a set of books at home is as important as in a school, exactly as having a 'big' 'unabridged' dictionary at home in Holt's words:

"Children, depending on their age, will find many pleasant and interesting things to do with a big dictionary. They can look up funny-sounding words, which they like, […], or forbidden words, which they like best of all. At a certain age, and particularly with a little encouragement from parents or teachers, they may become very interested in where words came from and when they came into the language and how their meanings have changed over the years. But exploring for the fun of it is very different from looking up words out of your reading because you're going to get into trouble with your teacher if you don't" (Holt, 1970: 73).

Thirdly an in the same vein, Wu's (1994) reported classroom experience "Read and share: a way of teaching reading that has worked" (in Hong Kong) confirms that if students are given motivating opportunities to read the texts they choose and under a teacher's guidance, reading will not be a chore but a favorable adventure. Wu's strategy is telling in that he was guided by a principled TD and was also able to design a three-staged classroom strategy for its implementation. In stage 1, students are requested to select 'a text they have enjoyed reading', one week a head of their classroom presentation and prepare two questions based on their selected text with answers ready on separate paper. Wu states in brackets, "(As my students are advanced learners of English, I ask them to avoid questions that are too simple or factual)" (ibid: 38). The rationale for this stage, according to Wu, is that learners will be prompted to collaborate indirectly to browse different texts and thus the skill of extensive reading is activated. In addition, Wu states, "To write good reading comprehension questions, students must study the texts they have chosen very carefully. This gives them the opportunity to practice reading outside class" (ibid). In stage 2 within the class, students are requested to present their prepared work briefly in pairs and in the process learning becomes student-centered. In fact, Wu's strategy assumes that "As students are not always motivated to read texts chosen by course book writers or teachers, a chance is created here to allow them to read texts selected by their peers" (ibid: 38). In stage 3, students rate each others' performance, and the teacher spurs class into a lively discussion to be followed by students recommending texts for extra reading and homework. The rationale is to get students to read well by having them to select texts for classroom presentation. Wu states "A reading course should not, and indeed cannot, focus on reading skills only. In *Read and Share*, speaking and writing skills are incorporated into reading practice" (ibid: 39). Eventually, Wu reported many inspiring comments written by students at the end of the reading course as feedback on this strategy. Interestingly, Holt, Hill, and Wu's experiences, despite their brevity, being disparate in time, geography and principle, share the aspect of TD as perceived and voiced first hand by experienced teachers and are fortunately published. Unfortunately, however, other (school) teachers with similar experiences can best be named '*souls of* discretion' simply because their ideas are not written and thus are left in limbo. Therefore, given the challenges of engaging teachers in research writing (Borg, 2010), organizing professional workshops is probably the optimum method to share teachers' acquired ideas and classroom strategies. Sowell's (2016) statement captures the most important thing a workshop can offer to TD, she states

"While many teachers feel comfortable delivering paper presentations and lecturing in front of class, they are often unfamiliar with workshops and are therefore fearful of conducting them. However, workshops are a great way for English language teaching (ELT) professionals to share their interests and talents with colleagues at their own institutions or at conferences. As English teaching professional, we all have areas of interest and expertise; therefore, it would be a shame for us to not share our best practices." (ibid: 2).

GMOT as workshop training to acquire TD

GMOT is introduced during the NCS period; therefore, any related remarks by Corbluth on training can be informative here. One such a remark is "A class is a workshop; a lesson is a series of student activities" (Corbluth, Teacher's Book 6, 1982: 31). Corbluth points, when teachers try to establish discipline in class, they normally 'insist on': 'punctuality', 'clean and tidy work', 'neat handwriting', 'bringing the necessary books to class', 'getting down to any task quickly and silently', 'pair and group work', 'working quickly' and, 'switching from one activity to another easily and speedily' (ibid: 30-31). For the earlier NCS teachers, these remarks are located in teachers' books to share ideas on 'getting' students ready to 'work', especially at the outset of a term or teaching new students. Corbluth remarks, "One of the problems all teachers face is the time it takes for students to settle down at the beginning of a lesson. This is really a question of training and discipline throughout their school career starting from primary school …" (ibid: 30). He continues to tell teachers cordially, "And in the examination – and any other exam- they have to do a lot in a limited time: they will always be grateful to you if you train them well" (ibid: 31). The crucial observation here is that Corbluth's ideas had inspired the writing of GMOT. In fact, the series of instruction at the outset of GMOT is a characteristic of NCS. GMOT begins with the rubric: 'TO THE

PARTICIPANT'. Teacher-participants in the workshop were told that: "This book is the first of six literature books that you will read in your ISETI English course" (Griffiths, 1990: i). Given the assumed integration of 6 class readers in NCS, Griffith's statement marks a turning point for the late NCS teachers; namely, TD is no longer a taken-for-granted aspect. This is visible in the objectives of GMOT which are precisely spelled in this way:

"(a) to help participants read "Oliver Twist" with enjoyment: (b) to introduce the idea that different materials should be read in different ways; (c) to give participants an opportunity to use and develop their ability in English language; (d) for participants to use in their own learning, teaching techniques and classroom strategies that they will subsequently use in teaching their own pupils" (ibid).

Most importantly, TD is still covertly stated and all teacher-participants were treated as real students despite being addressed as 'participants'. The method of instruction in the module's opening is indicative of that.

"This module, which is intended to help you with your work on "Oliver Twist", is divided into seven sections. After the introductory seminar, each section will take two weeks to cover and will give you work that you must prepare for the seminar that comes at the end of the section. It is very important that you do the reading and the exercises before the seminar. The activities that you will carry out in the seminar depend on this. If you come to the seminar without having done the reading and exercises, you will not only waste your own time, you will also waste the time of one of your colleague who will be unable to do pair work with you as you do not have the knowledge of the story to enable you to work in a pair. You must prepare for the seminars.

If you can work through the exercises together with another participant or participants, you will probably find this more interesting and will help you to talk about the book with others. It is also useful to get another participant to read through your work and see if he can find errors in language. (You can be reading through his work as he is reading through yours!) Again, talking about whether something is an error or not is a productive way for both of you to improve your English language.

You will need an exercise book just for work on "Oliver Twist" so that all the work you do is together and ready for revision for the examination. Make sure that the work you do in this book is clearly headed and shows which exercises from the module are being answered. Your field tutor will not mark everything that you write in your exercise book but s/he will certainly mark some of it." (Griffiths, 1990: i-ii)

This type of instructions at the outset of GMOT is meant to get participants ready to work in a disciplined way in the seminar activities. It is evident now that: "A class is a workshop; a lesson is a series of student activities". In the related literature on TD, "Deciding who has adequate professional discretion varies greatly from one school culture to another and can only be judged meaningfully in relation to the necessities of working within a particular domain of curriculum practice" states Boot (2006: 467). The earlier '*affair'* of SRs is formally discussed now and documented (in *marriage*). Analysis of the module's set of directions, from beginning to end, has uncovered a well-planned teaching formula for SRs based on interactive activities. It is also clear now that the four objectives of GMOT are SMART; they are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-framed. Unfortunately, this study is not meant to examine the whole text of GMOT by itself, rather it is to explore the process of acquisition of TD with 'Oliver Twist' at the backdrop. Therefore, the instructional design of GMOT will be reduced into a template so as to elicit its implications on TD. The following synoptic description can be illustrative of GMOT.

Firstly at the outset of GMOT, teachers are exposed to cognitive and behavioral orientation to prepare for the seminars. Corbluth's phrase: "A class is a workshop; a lesson is a series of student activities" captures the essence of GMOT. Teacher-participants' apprenticeship lasts 14 weeks, and after which they are requested to transform their *acquired* classroom experiences to teaching techniques. **Secondly,** in the introduction, teachers are prepared to: read 'Oliver Twist' (OT), identify its characters, and write or talk about its story. Here, the skills of extensive and intensive reading and their applications are introduced; simple ways to differentiate between characters as needed in a reading class of OT are explained, and even how to write about Oliver's story is standardized. For the latter, the module shows teachers to use either the present simple tense or the past simple tense. For example, "Oliver meets the Artful Dodger at Barnet. The two go to Fagin's home, where Oliver is taught to pick pockets …"; "Oliver met the Artful Dodger at Barnet. The two went to Fagin's home, where Oliver was taught to pick pockets" (GMOT: 4). **Thirdly** from section 1 to 7, the chapters of OT as a textbook are fully covered as follows: the chapters 1-5 (3 tasks, 4 seminar activities, assignment in task 1), 6-10 (2 tasks, 7 seminar activities, preparation for next seminar), 11-13 (2 tasks, 5 seminar activities, marking assignment in task 1), 14-16 (2 tasks, 4 seminar activities), 17-21 (2 tasks, 4 seminar activities), 22-25 (2 tasks, 4 seminar activities, marking of a question in task 1), and 26-30 (2 tasks, 3 seminar activities) for each section respectively. The sections are designed in one pattern. An abstract from section one can illustrate this.

SECTION ONE (Chapters 1-5)

Reading

Read pp 1-17 to get a general understanding of the story. This is extensive reading; if you are not sure how you should be reading these chapters, look back at sub-section 1(a), p1, in the introduction to this module.

Tasks to follow the reading of Chapters 1-5

Task 1. (General Questions)

Answer these questions in your exercise book after your have finished your extensive reading. You will need to number the answers clearly in your book, giving the section as well as the task and question numbers, or in short while you will not be able to check back on what you have done. (Remember how angry it makes you when your pupils do not number their work properly!)

a) What can you say about the character of Oliver from these chapters? Try and think of 3 or 4 keywords, (e.g. "brave") and find examples from each word (e.g. "Fights Noah Claypole, a

much bigger boy, when he insults Oliver's mother.") Write very short notes ….

b) Apart from Oliver himself, is there anyone who appears in Chapter 1-5 that you would describe as a "good person". Justify (give reasons for) your answer … (GMOT: 5-7)

is a series of student activities" cannot be ignored in this respect. To use Nuttal's (1996) analogy, novice teachers can position themselves as readers in a carpenter's workshop to experience TD; and in Nuttal's (ibid: 12) words, "A reader tackling a text resembles the amateur furniture maker unpacking his do-it-yourself kit and trying to work out how the pieces fit together". Workshop Training for novice teachers, therefore, should be mandatory to help them acquire an informed TD for integrating SRs in EFL classes.

Table I shows the map of Section One in GMOT (chapters 1-5).

Items	Task 1 General Questions (extensive reading)	Task 2 Faster Reading	Task 3 Intensive Reading	Pair work	Group or class-work	Field Tutor
Section 1	a, b, c, d	a, b, c, d	a, b, c, d, e			
Seminar activities		Activity 1		Activity 2	Activity 3 on task 1 (a) & (b)	Consulted if there is disagreement activity 2
assignments	Participants hand books, to be checked: (c) & (d) in task 1					

The instructional design of section one epitomizes the rest of the module; all the other 6 sessions are arranged in this pattern in which certain questions' are dedicated to 'extensive reading', 'faster reading', and 'intensive reading'. **Fourthly,** the module gives specific guidelines on the examination policy. This examination contains: writing continuous prose (3 questions), intensive reading (similar to the task activities), faster reading (30 -45 minutes, here all participants are to start at one time even if they have completed the earlier questions quickly); interestingly, books are allowed in the exam room but: "All people marking the examination will know "Oliver Twist" very well and they will certainly recognize if you copy out directly from the story. ANY ANSWER THAT IS JUST COPIED OUT WILL GET ZERO AUTOMATICALLY" (GMOT: 30-31). Of course, books are only allowed in the part of writing continuous prose. **Lastly**, a matrix of the characters in OT is attached in the appendix to help participant in their tasks and the seminar activities.

CONCLUSION

It is obvious now that GMOT shows a divergence from the mainstream culture that reveals great latitude when the issue of teaching SRs is discussed. The apparent 'common sense' inference, therefore, is that novice teachers should cross their own Rubicon to acquire the assumed TD as the recipe to acquire it is not yet standardized. The mosaic accounts of John Holt in America, David Hill in Tanzania, Kam-yin Wu in Hong Kong epitomize this culture. Interestingly, there is also a coincidence between these experiences. They represent pedagogical mavericks harboring a love of teaching and helping others to read well beyond the classroom. In Holt's case, the girl who "had had a very hard time" will always be 'grateful' to him; in Hill's case, the girl will be ever grateful to her mother; the same is with Wu's students. However, GMOT can be placed in the vanguard of pedagogical reform in helping teachers acquire a 'sound' TD; therefore, its workshop participants will be much more grateful as they were trained in SMART way. Moreover, the commendable experiences of Holt, Hill and Wu's indicate that students, with the help of an experienced teacher, can be reading prodigies.

In a nutshell, the shortest route to acquire TD is to be apprenticed. Corbluth's phrase "A class is a workshop; a lesson

Most importantly, trained teachers with *sound commonsense* should be encouraged abandon *'the soul of discretion'* by writing their anecdotes with SRs or at least share them in local forums. As for the initiatives of ISETI, it can be further explored to standardize the 'right' of TD as the best practice in Sudan. Thus, average students will be spurred to a reading culture at the right 'linguistic levels', especially as "No English course is self-sufficient" (Corbluth, 1979: 16-17).

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